

1900.

14087

NEW SOUTH WALES.

VOTES

AND

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

DURING THE SESSION

OF

1900,

WITH THE VARIOUS DOCUMENTS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

IN SIX VOLUMES:

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

SESSION 1900.

(IN SIX VOLUMES AND SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME.)

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New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways.

REPORT

OF THE

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

30 JUNE, 1900.

Printed under No. 10 Report from Printing Committee, 30 August, 1900.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND
TRAMWAYS.

(REPORT OF THE RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1900.)

Printed under No. 10 Report from Printing Committee, 30 August, 1900.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 18th August, 1900.

TO THE HONORABLE THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS,—

SIR,

In accordance with the provisions of the 45th clause of the Government Railways Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 35, we have the honor to present, for the information of Parliament, our Report upon the working of the Railways and Tramways for the year ended June 30th, 1900.

The result of the year's working may be summarised as follows :—

	Year ended 30th June, 1900.			Year ended 30th June, 1899.		
	Railways.	Tramways.	Total.	Railways.	Tramways.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Earnings	3,163,572	409,724	3,573,296	3,145,273	348,556	3,493,829
Expenditure	1,769,520	341,127	2,110,647	1,690,442	288,022	1,978,464
Balance after paying working expenses	1,394,052	68,597	1,462,649	1,454,831	60,534	1,515,365

		1900.	1899.		
Railway Passengers	Number	26,486,873	24,726,067	Increase	1,760,806
Merchandise and Minerals	Tons	5,342,916	5,025,315	Increase	317,601
Live Stock	Tons	188,595	223,005	Decrease	34,410
Tramway Passengers	Number	66,244,334	51,705,453	Increase	14,538,881

RAILWAYS.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The number of miles of line open for traffic on the 30th of June last was 2,811 $\frac{1}{4}$.

The following lines were opened for traffic during the year :—

	Mileage.		Date opened.
	m.	c.	
Broken Hill to Tarrawingee... ..	40	7	7 September, 1899.
Tamworth to Manilla	29	41 $\frac{2}{3}$	15 ,, 1899.
Moree to Gravesend	35	0	1 February, 1900.

The Government having purchased the line (3 ft. 6 in. gauge) from Broken Hill to Tarrawingee, we entered into an agreement with the Silverton Tramway Company to work it for a period of five years, the company to receive the receipts, pay the cost of working and maintenance, and 3 per cent. per annum on the capital outlay.

Further extensions of the Pioneer class are now under construction, viz. :—

Byrock to Brewarrina	58 miles.
Moree to Inverell (2nd section)	60 $\frac{3}{4}$,,
Goulburn to Crookwell	35 ,,
The Rock to Green's Gunyah	24 $\frac{1}{4}$,,
Koorawatha to Grenfell	32 ,,
Dubbo to Coonamble	93 $\frac{1}{2}$,,

It is gratifying to be able to record that, after having been open for eight years, the line between Nyngan and Cobar has been for the first time, and, we hope permanently, removed from the list of non-paying lines, and we have, therefore, in accordance with our usual custom, abolished the two local, and adopted the through, rates and fares.

This satisfactory result has been brought about by the development of the mines in the district.

In this connection we may mention that, while during the past year the aggregate loss on the non-paying lines was reduced by £11,368, owing mainly to the South Coast and Northern lines having improved, it still shows that on about 46 per cent. of the lines of the Colony there was a loss of £318,040, and this points to the desirability of giving most careful consideration to the location and construction of new lines.

In reporting upon proposed new lines in accordance with clause 13 of the Public Works Act, and clause 29 of the Railway Act of 1888, we invariably, after personally inspecting the routes and acquiring the fullest information as to existing and prospective business, recommend their construction if it can be shown that the prospects are sufficient to pay working expenses within a reasonable time, leaving the interest as a charge against the trunk lines during the course of their development.

The capital cost of the lines open for traffic on the 30th June amounted to £38,477,269. The interest on this sum, at 3.639 per cent. (the average interest paid on the debt of the Colony), is £1,400,187; the earnings, after providing for all working expenses, embracing extensive renewals, amount to £1,394,052, the result of the year's working being a deficit of £6,135.

REVENUE.

Passenger traffic shows the satisfactory increase of £57,025—£20,047 being from first and £36,078 from second class passengers. Parcels, &c., also yielded an increase of £9,699, and rents and miscellaneous receipts, £2,433.

Merchandise and live stock, on the contrary, show a decrease of £50,858, notwithstanding that 283,191 additional tons were carried, thus clearly indicating that the traffic from these sources has been carried at much less profitable rates, which has consequently had a serious effect upon the working expenses.

The principal increases and decreases from these sources are as follow :—

	Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£
Live stock ... ..	.....	63,091
Wool ... ..	.....	55,234
Hay, straw, and chaff ... ..	.....	17,546
General merchandise	36,389	.....
Grain	26,309	.....
Coal and coke	10,080	.....
Other minerals	12,235	.....
	£85,013	£135,871

The net increase from all sources was, therefore, only £18,299.

Rebates, amounting to £40,000, have been allowed off the ordinary rates in connection with the carriage of starving stock, and on fodder in cases where the removal of stock was not considered practicable. The concessions given were of incalculable benefit to pastoralists and the country generally, as being the means of saving the lives of an immense quantity of stock which, but for the assistance afforded, would probably have perished, and although considerable increase to the expenditure has been thereby entailed, the course followed will in the future prove of advantage to the railways.

Reductions have also been made in rates and fares which have affected the past year's revenue to the extent of about £15,000, mainly affecting season tickets, general merchandise in truck-loads, and coal.

EXPENDITURE.

The working expenses increased during the year by £79,078, or from 53·75 to 55·93 per cent. of the earnings, due in a large measure to the foregoing causes; to the urgent necessity for removing iron rails from the Northern line and substituting steel; the renewal of the timber viaduct over the Murrumbidgee by a steel structure; more extensive repairs and renewals of rolling stock (the increase under this head being £28,596); increased cost of coal and material generally, and the granting of increased wages to the staff on a more extensive scale than has operated since 1892.

It may be stated that many timber bridges and culverts are now becoming due for renewal, and that in nearly all cases they are being replaced by steel and concrete structures, which, although considerably increasing the present debit against working expenses, will prove economical, as they will be of a more secure and permanent character and involve less cost for future maintenance.

CITY RAILWAY.

It is much to be regretted that such an important question as the extension of the railway into the city still remains unsettled.

The number of passengers conveyed to and from Redfern Station increased from 9,904,864 in 1890 to 13,511,096 during the year now under review, and, as the present terminus is daily becoming more congested and difficult to work, and an undue strain is being placed upon the officers and men responsible for the safe conduct of the traffic, we cannot too strongly urge that the provision of a suitable terminal station be not longer delayed.

The City Railway would, by relieving George-street of about one-half of its present tramway traffic, afford permanent relief to the rapidly-increasing congestion of the City streets, and thereby enable an improved tram service to be given to those suburbs not served by railway.

SAFETY APPLIANCES.

The interlocking of points and signals is steadily progressing. Nearly all the by-sidings on the main lines have been completed, and the signal and interlocking arrangements at several large station yards have been improved.

We are pleased to be able to state that the year has been entirely free from any passenger train accident, and that the expenditure generally under the head of Compensation is small.

RATES AND FARES.

Several important concessions have been made in rates and fares during the year, involving an annual loss of about £25,000. The fares in connection with season tickets, the rates for goods in full truck loads, coal for shipment, and sugar-cane on the Lismore line, have all been materially reduced.

ACCOMMODATION FOR TRAFFIC, AND CONDITION OF THE LINES AND ROLLING-STOCK.

The passenger and goods rolling-stock, machinery, and locomotive plant generally have been maintained in good order, and the traffic requirements have been fully met.

Pullman sleeping-cars have been placed on the Western Mail-trains, and new cars, on a somewhat smaller scale, are now being built for the Southern Mail.

With the view of improving the accommodation in connection with branch lines, 12 bogie carriages have been fitted with corridors, and the lavatory accommodation made accessible to all compartments. During the next few months it is anticipated that all the branch lines will be equipped with carriage stock of this description.

Two Pullman sleeping-carriages and 135 merchandise vehicles have been added to stock and charged to Capital.

During the year six powerful goods engines have replaced nine old ones of a smaller type. Four passenger tender-engines were rebuilt and converted into tank-engines for suburban lines, and four other passenger tender-engines and three goods tender-engines were also rebuilt and all were charged to Working Expenses.

The carriage and wagon stock has been strengthened by the rebuilding of 98 vehicles, and the construction of 251 vehicles of larger carrying capacity to replace others worn out, the cost of which has been charged to Working Expenses.

The total amount spent on repairs and renewals of stock exceeds that of last year by £28,596.

Sixteen locomotive boilers and one boiler for a locomotive crane have been constructed in the Eveleigh shops during the year.

A large air-compressor, of the Ingersoll-Sergeant Duplex Compound type, capable of compressing 950 cubic feet of free air per minute to 100 lb. pressure per square inch, has been added to the machinery plant, thus providing up-to-date appliances for working lifts, jacks, drills, hammers, riveters, and other portable tools now being introduced, so as to facilitate and economise the output of the workshops. The large new erecting-shop, referred to in our last report, has been completed, and is in full operation. All the powerful overhead, high-speed cranes, machines, and shafting in this shop are driven by electricity, generated at the Electric Power-house, Ultimo. A number of special machines of recent designs have been ordered, so as to place the workshops on the most modern basis.

The Permanent Way, Works, and Buildings have been efficiently maintained. A large amount of relaying has been done, but the work has been somewhat retarded owing to delay in obtaining rails and fastenings from the manufacturers. These are now arriving, and the work will be vigorously proceeded with.

The renewal of the Wagga Wagga viaduct with steel spans has been completed on the north side of the Murrumbidgee River, and the southern portion will, it is expected, be completed before the close of the year.

GRADE IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER WORKS.

The grade improvements on the Northern line have been completed. Those on the Southern and Western lines have made good progress, but have been recently delayed by unusually heavy rains.

The completion of the duplication of the North Shore line between St. Leonards and Lindfield is delayed, pending Parliamentary authority in connection with proposed closing of level crossings.

FORECAST.

Owing to the serious drought of the last few years and the consequent enormous loss of sheep, no material increase in the carriage of wool and live stock is anticipated during the current year. As, however, the country has recently had the benefit of splendid rains, the present outlook with regard to grain and agricultural products of all kinds, together with the development of mining, is more encouraging than it has been for some years. It may reasonably be expected that the revenue estimated will be realised, but it will be earned under conditions similar to those of the past year; and, in view of the necessity for replacing a large mileage of iron rails on the Main Northern line by steel, renewing a number of old engines, and carrying out extensive repairs on engines purchased about ten years ago, it is more than probable that the percentage of expenditure to earnings will not be reduced.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the number of Miles of Line open, Earnings, Working Expenses, and Capital for a period of years.

Year.	Open to 30 June.			TOTAL EARNINGS.			NET EARNINGS AFTER PAYING WORKING EXPENSES.			CAPITAL EXPENDED.		
	Railways.	Tramways.	Total.	Railways.	Tramways.	Total.	Railways.	Tramways.	Total.	Railways.	Tramways.	Total.
	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1882	1,268	22	1,290	1,701,016	126,202	1,827,218	763,661	23,066	786,727	15,843,616	447,940	16,291,556
1883	1,320	26	1,346	1,934,694	190,699	2,125,393	751,220	11,822	763,042	16,905,014	585,062	17,490,076
1884	1,618	27½	1,645½	2,089,749	219,942	2,309,691	786,010	4,775	790,785	20,080,138	686,402	20,766,540
1885	1,732	27½	1,759½	2,178,172	223,340	2,401,512	717,555	15,345	732,900	21,831,276	751,730	22,583,006
1886	1,889	20	1,918	2,163,803	230,410	2,394,213	668,577	23,957	692,534	24,071,454	857,483	24,928,937
1887	2,036	38½	2,074½	2,212,718	225,348	2,438,066	752,375	12,893	765,268	26,532,122	923,603	27,455,730
Year ended 30 June, 1888	2,114	38½	2,152½	2,295,124	236,519	2,531,643	764,573	17,323	781,896	27,722,748	877,244	28,599,992
Railway Act came into operation 22nd October, 1888.												
1889	2,171	38½	2,209½	2,538,477	243,563	2,782,040	803,875	21,728	825,603	29,839,167	909,595	30,748,762
1890	2,182	39½	2,221½	2,633,086	268,962	2,902,048	967,251	44,889	1,012,140	30,555,123	933,614	31,488,737
1891	2,182	42½	2,224½	2,974,421	292,850	3,267,271	1,143,050	53,171	1,196,221	31,768,617	1,004,212	32,772,829
1892	2,185	48	2,233	3,107,296	305,090	3,412,386	1,193,044	56,499	1,249,543	33,312,608	1,099,659	34,412,267
1893	2,351	49	2,400	2,927,056	295,367	3,222,423	1,188,540	61,559	1,250,099	34,657,571	1,118,471	35,776,042
1894	2,501½	58½	2,559½	2,813,541	278,194	3,091,735	1,221,699	48,911	1,270,610	35,855,271	1,248,986	37,104,257
1895	2,531½	61	2,592½	2,878,204	282,316	3,160,520	1,310,615	51,323	1,361,938	36,611,366	1,428,518	38,039,884
1896	2,531½	61	2,592½	2,820,417	289,181	3,109,598	1,268,529	52,898	1,321,427	36,852,194	1,434,896	38,287,090
1897	2,639½	62½	2,702	3,014,742	306,695	3,321,437	1,413,524	57,814	1,471,338	37,369,205	1,452,670	38,821,875
1898	2,691½	65	2,756½	3,026,748	313,871	3,340,619	1,412,143	54,730	1,466,873	37,719,402	1,478,251	39,197,653
1899	2,706½	66½	2,772½	3,145,273	318,556	3,493,829	1,454,831	60,534	1,515,365	37,992,276	1,516,343	39,508,619
1900	2,811½	71½	2,882½	3,163,572	409,724	3,573,296	1,394,052	68,597	1,462,649	38,477,269	1,924,720	40,401,989

RESULTS OF THE WORKING.

RAILWAYS.

Year ended 30 June, 1900, compared with 1899 and 1888.

PARTICULARS.	1900.	1899.	1888.
Amount expended on construction and equipment ...	£38,477,269	£37,992,276	£27,722,748
Debentures finally paid off	£1,904,875	£1,904,875	£1,017,875
Cost per mile open for traffic (including Workshops, Rolling Stock, &c., &c.)	£13,687	£14,037	£13,114
Total miles open for traffic	2,811½	2,706½	2,114
Average miles open for the year	2,777	2,703½	2,044
Earnings	£3,163,572	£3,145,273	£2,295,124
Working expenses	£1,769,520	£1,690,442	£1,530,551
NET PROFIT (After paying Working Expenses).	£1,394,052	£1,454,831	£764,573
PERCENTAGE OF WORKING EXPENSES TO EARNINGS	55'93	53'75	66'69
Earnings per average mile open	£1,153	£1,163	£1,123
Working expenses per average mile open	£645	£626	£749
NET RETURN PER AVERAGE MILE OPEN ...	£508	£538	£374
Earnings per train mile	s. d. 7 1½	s. d. 7 1½	s. d. 6 10½
Working expenses per train mile	3 11½	3 10	4 7
NET PROFIT PER TRAIN MILE (After paying Working Expenses).	3 1½	3 3½	2 3½
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£ s. d. 3 12 7	£ s. d. 3 16 7	£ s. d. 2 17 0
Number of passenger journeys	26,486,873	24,726,067	15,174,115
Goods tonnage	5,342,916	5,025,315	3,331,671
Live-stock tonnage	188,595	223,005	68,101
Train mileage... ..	8,894,352	8,806,647	6,689,313

RETURN showing Mileage per Ton and Earnings per Ton per Mile of Goods Traffic carried during the following years:—

	COAL AND SHALE.				FIREWOOD.			
	December.			June.	December.			June.
	1883.	1891.	1898.	1900.	1883.	1891.	1898.	1900.
Tons carried	1,596,408	2,673,378	2,902,466	3,406,769	160,662	176,790	203,466	204,820
Miles carried	25,363,800	46,882,655	47,263,697	54,273,267	4,349,344	4,734,019	5,739,654	5,928,689
Average miles per ton	15.88	17.53	16.28	15.93	27.07	26.77	28.21	28.95
Gross Earnings	£ 85,820	148,299	124,540	136,650	18,601	21,709	19,450	19,481
Earnings per ton per mile	d. 0'81	d. 0'76	d. 0'63	d. 0'60	d. 1'03	d. 1'10	d. 0'81	d. 0'79
	GRAIN AND FLOUR.				HAY, STRAW, AND CHAFF.			
	December.			June.	December.			June.
	1883.	1891.	1 .	1900.	1883.	1891.	1898.	1900.
Tons carried	65,736	198,491	340,040	361,052	35,119	64,967	109,628	118,631
Miles carried	7,756,369	22,130,334	57,313,853	61,359,264	2,712,396	10,024,149	21,643,936	20,925,585
Average miles per ton	117.99	111.49	168.55	169.95	77.23	154.29	197.43	176.39
Gross Earnings	£ 26,493	61,521	132,965	142,945	11,739	19,797	33,732	29,714
Earnings per ton per mile	d. 0'82	d. 0'66	d. 0'56	d. 0'56	d. 1'04	d. 0'46	d. 0'37	d. 0'34
	WOOL.				LIVE STOCK.			
	December.			June.	December.			June.
	1883.	1891.	1898.	1900.	1883.	1891.	1898.	1900.
Tons carried	63,887	111,797	98,451	84,678	68,059	128,211	204,409	188,595
Miles carried	15,184,040	30,282,222	25,881,115	20,941,076	13,224,154	34,650,831	50,393,492	45,994,741
Average miles per ton	237.67	270.86	262.88	247.30	194.30	270.26	246.53	243.88
Gross Earnings	£ 140,791	314,151	247,622	203,594	151,557	267,661	356,882	295,798
Earnings per ton per mile	d. 2'23	d. 12'49	d. 2'30	d. 2'33	d. 2'75	d. 1'85	d. 1'70	d. 1'54
	General Merchandise, including all other goods.							
	December.			June.				
	1883.	1891.	1898.	1900.				
Tons carried	652,067	1,008,599	1,028,190	1,166,966				
Miles carried	67,991,304	92,037,454	106,761,222	110,942,230				
Average miles per ton	99.68	91.30	103.83	95.07				
Gross Earnings	£ 693,740	806,332	807,388	849,823				
Earnings per ton per mile	d. 2'45	d. 2'10	d. 1'81	d. 1'84				

Summary of Ton Milcage for the Year ended 30th June, 1900.

Description of Traffic.	Total Tons carried.	Total Miles carried.	Average Miles per Ton.	Earnings, exclusive of Terminal Charges.	Earnings per ton per Mile.	Percentage of each class to Total Tonnage.
	tons	miles	miles	£	d.	per cent.
Coal, Coke, and Shale...	3,406,769	54,273,267	15'93	136,650	'60	61'59
Firewood ...	204,820	5,928,689	28'95	19,481	'79	3'70
Grain, Flour, &c. ...	361,052	61,359,264	169'95	142,945	'56	6'53
Hay, Straw, and Chaff...	118,631	20,925,585	176'39	29,714	'34	2'14
Miscellaneous ...	525,503	36,821,437	70'07	102,265	'67	9'50
Wool ...	84,678	20,941,076	247'30	203,594	2'33	1'53
Live Stock ...	188,595	45,994,741	243'88	295,798	1'54	3'41
A and B Classes ...	354,908	34,066,102	95'09	189,387	1'33	6'42
All other Goods ...	286,555	40,051,691	139'78	558,171	3'34	5'18
Total ...	5,531,511	320,361,852	57'92	1,678,005	1'26	100'00

Miscellaneous traffic consists of timber, bark, agricultural and vegetable seeds, in 5-ton lo's, firewood, in 5-ton lots, bricks, drain-pipes, and traffic of a similar nature.

A and B Classes consist of lime, fruit, vegetables, hides, tobacco leaf, lead and silver ore, caustic soda and potash, cement, copper-ingots, fat and tallow, mining machinery, ore tailings, leather, agricultural implements, in 5-ton lots, and other traffic of a similar nature.

Summary of the Mileage of Suburban Passengers on All Lines of Railway during the years ended 30th June, 1900, 1899, and 1888.

DESCRIPTION.	1900.	1899.	1888.
NUMBER OF ORDINARY PASSENGERS ... No.	12,123,088	11,776,834	7,413,868
NUMBER OF WORKMEN'S JOURNEYS	5,560,528	4,873,044	1,738,284
NUMBER OF SEASON TICKET HOLDERS' JOURNEYS	5,665,423	5,167,422	3,227,760
TOTAL NUMBER OF PASSENGERS' JOURNEYS	23,339,044	21,817,300	12,379,912
NUMBER OF MILES TRAVELLED MILES	137,629,474	127,606,212	70,172,793
AVERAGE MILEAGE PER PASSENGER	5'90	5'85	5'67
AMOUNT RECEIVED FROM PASSENGERS £	£285,127	£274,202	£186,393
AVERAGE RECEIPT PER PASSENGER PER MILE d.	0'50	0'52	0'64

Note.—Suburban Lines include only distances within 22 miles of Sydney and Newcastle, Liverpool and Morpeth included.

Summary of the Mileage of Passengers on the Sydney Extended Suburban Section for the years ended 30th June, 1900 and 1899.

Includes all Stations beyond the 22-mile area but within 34 miles from Sydney.

	1900.	1899.
Number of Passengers No.	441,870	416,468
Number of Miles Travelled Miles	10,918,771	10,109,438
Average Mileage per Passenger	24'71	24'27
Amount Received from Passengers £	24,026	22,774
Average Receipt per Passenger per Mile d.	0'53	0'54

The following statement shows the earnings and expenses in connection with a number of lines for the years ended the 31st December, 1898 and 1899.

Line.	Length.	Capital Cost.	Interest on Capital.	Working Expenses.		Total Earnings.		Loss after providing for Working Expenses and Interest.	
				Year ended December, 1899.	Year ended December, 1898.	Year ended December, 1899.	Year ended December, 1898.	Year ended December, 1899.	Year ended December, 1898.
	Mls. ch.	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Sydenham to Belmore ...	5 3½	207,613	6,986	4,972	4,888	4,430	3,937	7,528	7,934
Sydney to Kiama ...	71 52½	2,188,467	73,993	117,214	106,127	167,818	152,798	23,389	27,259
Kiama to Nowra ...	22 43½	381,066	13,343	4,910	5,042	6,732	6,253	11,521	12,123
Goulburn to Cooma ...	130 40	1,462,887	51,201	28,628	25,215	34,192	34,092	45,637	42,381
Murrumburrah to Blayney..	110 63	1,146,353	40,122	34,164	32,394	33,783	33,914	40,503	33,551
Cootamundra to Temora ...	38 69	193,451	7,209	5,036	4,979	8,732	9,300	3,513	2,866
Cootamundra to Gundagai..	33 45½	286,134	9,846	6,348	5,606	13,294	11,278	2,900	4,161
Juncie to Hay ...	167 35½	1,067,280	42,669	38,570	35,231	66,357	63,268	14,882	14,476
Narrandera to Jerilderie, } Berrigan and Finley }	100 32½	514,995	17,695	11,656	11,585	15,545	15,821	13,806	12,536
Culcairn to Corowa ...	47 39	233,155	8,202	4,512	3,781	6,998	4,969	5,716	7,008
Blacktown to Richmond ...	16 12	198,101	8,300	9,308	8,370	11,668	12,412	5,940	4,237
Wallerawang to Mudgee ...	85 6	1,043,476	40,108	21,641	0,292	36,590	34,830	25,159	25,563
Orange to Molong, Parkes, } and Forbes, Bogan } Gate and Condoumlin }	153 29½	856,683	29,296	26,750	24,831	53,540	50,489	2,506	3,206
Nevertire to Warren ...	12 33½	47,968	1,439	2,204	2,277	3,058	2,937	585	865
Hornsby to Milson's Point	13 27½	635,455	23,129	17,222	16,096	29,631	25,765	10,720	12,856
Tamworth to Armidale ...	76 76	1,215,910	47,559	26,507	23,724	52,228	42,871	21,838	28,367
Armidale to Jennings ...	132 42½	1,540,535	58,821	37,779	32,787	43,976	34,668	52,624	56,931
Lismore to Murwillumbah	63 57	921,137	32,291	8,383	7,369	11,401	11,515	29,273	28,138
	1,286 68½	14,140,666	512,209	405,804	370,594	599,973	551,117	318,040	329,408

TRAMWAYS.

On the 30th of June, 1900, $71\frac{1}{4}$ miles of line were open for traffic. The following lines were opened during the year, viz. :—

	Miles.	Chains.
8th December, 1899—George and Harris-street line—Circular Quay to John-street, Pyrmont	3	19
24th February, 1900—Falcon-street to near Westbourne-street, North Sydney	1	4
25th June, 1900—Military Road Extension to Neutral Bay Wharf	0	74

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The capital cost of the lines open for traffic on the 30th of June amounted to £1,924,720, and the return upon the capital invested £3 16s. 5d.

The earnings amounted to £409,724, an increase of £61,168 over the previous year, and the working expenses show an increase of £53,105, the net result being an improvement of £8,063.

CONDITION OF LINES.

The permanent-way has been maintained in good order. A large amount of relaying has been done on the steam lines, where necessary, in anticipation of the conversion to electric power.

The North Shore cable line was converted to electric, and commenced running on the 11th of February last, the whole of the lines at North Sydney now being operated by electric traction.

The Dulwich Hill and St. Peters steam line was also converted to electric, and commenced running under the new system on the 2nd of April last.

ACCOMMODATION FOR TRAFFIC AND CONDITION OF ROLLING STOCK.

The condition of the rolling-stock has been well maintained. 43 electric cars have replaced a similar number of steam cars, the cost of which has been charged to working expenses. 133 new electric cars have been added to stock. Large orders are at present in hand for the manufacture in the Colony of a further supply of electric tram cars, so as to equip the various lines as they are converted to electric traction.

The introduction of penny sections simultaneously with the opening of the electric line in George-street induced a traffic that largely exceeded expectations. On the section between the Circular Quay and the Railway Station alone, an average of about 70,000 persons are carried each week day, being upwards of 50 per cent. in excess of the number arriving at and departing from the railway terminus at Redfern.

The number of passengers conveyed by the electric trams since the opening of the George and Harris Street line on the 8th December, and the conversion of the Dulwich Hill and St. Peter's line on the 2nd of April last, was 13,246,533. It has been found impossible to deal with this enormous traffic through the busiest

street in the city without overcrowding during the busy hours of the morning and evening, and particularly in the evening, consequent upon the operation of the Early Closing Act. Every effort has been made to minimise the trouble by running relief steam trams through Elizabeth-street, but they have been poorly patronised, passengers being apparently indifferent to the inconvenience of overcrowding so long as they can avail themselves of the readiest service.

We desire to point out that it will not be possible to increase the number of trams passing through George-street to any great extent during the busy hours, and the most speedy remedy appears to be the construction of the line, now under the consideration of the Government, from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh, Bligh, Loftus and Young streets, returning by way of Pitt-street. We therefore strongly advise that this scheme be pushed forward with all possible despatch.

Very satisfactory results with regard to traffic have followed the conversion of the Dulwich Hill and St Peter's lines from steam to electric traction, together with the introduction of penny sections and reduced through fares.

But on those sections which are still served by steam trams, and also on the North Shore Electric Lines, the reduction has so far resulted in a loss of revenue. Although there has been a considerable increase of traffic it has not been sufficiently large to compensate for the reductions and increase of expenditure. However, we look forward with confidence to satisfactory results in the near future.

FARES.

It may be stated that, having regard to the cost of material and labour conditions, the fares charged on the Sydney Tramway Lines are probably unequalled in the world.

In the United States of America, where more tramway lines are operated than in all other countries combined, the minimum fare is 5 cents ($2\frac{1}{2}$ d.) as compared with one penny (1d.) in Sydney.

ACCIDENTS.

It is exceedingly to be regretted that since the opening of the George-street line an unusually large number of street accidents have occurred. Each one has been the subject of exhaustive inquiry, and in almost every instance they have been demonstrated to be due to want of care on the part of the injured persons.

Special care has been exercised in training the tramway staff, and, by the adoption of the best known air-brakes and safety appliances, everything possible is being done to guard against accident.

WORK OF CONVERSION.

The work of converting the remainder of the steam trams to electrical traction is receiving every attention, but it will not be possible to do much more in this direction until additional machinery, now under contract, has arrived from America. In the meantime the necessary rolling stock is being constructed and housing accommodation prepared.

An extensive and complete depôt is now nearing completion at Newtown for the purpose of providing accommodation for the bulk of the electric cars working on the Western Tramway System. It will afford the necessary protection from the weather, and facilitate the working and repairs of the rolling stock.

RESULTS OF THE WORKING.

TRAMWAYS—ALL LINES.

Year ended 30 June, 1900, compared with 1899 and 1888.

PARTICULARS.	1900.	1899.	1888.
Amount expended on construction and equipment ...	£1,924,720	£1,516,343	£877,244
Cost per mile open (including Workshops and Rolling Stock)	£27,014	£22,888	£22,786
Miles open for traffic	71½	66½	38½
Earnings	£409,724	£348,556	£236,519
Working expenses	£341,127	£288,022	£219,196
NET PROFIT (After paying Working Expenses) ...	£68,597	£60,534	£17,323
PERCENTAGE OF WORKING EXPENSES TO EARNINGS	83'26	82'63	92'67
Earnings per average mile open	£6,003	£5,281	£6,224
Working expenses per average mile open	£4,998	£4,364	£5,708
NET RETURN PER AVERAGE MILE OPEN ...	£1,005	£917	£456
Earnings per tram mile	1/10½	1/11½	3/4½
Working expenses per tram mile	1/6½	1/7½	3/1½
NET PROFIT PER TRAM MILE (after paying Working Expenses)	d. 3½	d. 4	d. 3
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£ s. d. 3 16 5	£ s. d. 4 0 1	£ s. d. 1 19 7
Number of passengers carried	60,244,334	51,705,453	Not obtainable.
Tram mileage... ..	4,355,024	3,504,485	1,388,786

Further information regarding the working of the various sections will be found as an Appendix, page 44.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

Staff.

During the past four years advances have been given to the Staff, as follows :—

Year ended.	Per annum.
30 June, 1897	£24,378
30 June, 1898	£26,925
30 June, 1899	£34,976
30 June, 1900	£46,315

Of the advances granted during the past year, 83·71 per cent., or £38,023, were given to the wages staff, mainly affecting those in receipt of from 5s. to 10s. per day, and, in addition, increased expenditure to the extent of over £5,000 per annum has recently been authorised for the employment of additional staff to enable reductions to be made in the working-hours. The balance of £8,292 was given to the salaried staff, consisting principally of those engaged in working the traffic, such as station-masters, officers-in-charge, night officers, clerks, and others.

Much anxious consideration has been given to the question relating to the hours of labour, with the view, wherever practicable, of improving the conditions. In January last the working-hours of the wages staff were as follows :—

	Percentage to total Wages Staff.
8 hours a day	65·44
Over 8 and up to 9 hours per day ...	8·83
Over 9 and up to 9½ hours per day ...	10·60
Over 9½ and up to 10 hours per day...	14·78
Over 10 and up to 12 hours per day...	0·35

Since then the hours of a large number of men have been reduced, so that now no man employed on the running staff of either Railways or Tramways in the capacity of engine-driver or fireman, guard, shunter, signaller, tramway driver, or conductor is required to work more than an average of nine hours per day, and in busy station-yards and signal-boxes where the work is continuous the hours are limited to eight per day.

The duties of those who work over nine hours per day are of an intermittent and irresponsible character, a considerable number of them being gatekeepers.

We again desire to express our cordial appreciation of the efficiency and zeal of the Executive Officers and the hearty co-operation of the Staff generally.

Appeals.

During the year we personally heard, as provided for by the 71st clause of the Railway Act, 120 appeals from employees. Of these, 23 were decided in favour of the appellants; in 24 cases the decisions of the officers were modified and 73 were not sustained.

The Chief Commissioner being absent on a visit to America, where he is negotiating for the supply of further electrical appliances, and to Europe, for the purpose of attending the International Railway Congress, accounts for his name not being appended to this report.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servants,

W. M. FEHON,

Deputy Chief Commissioner.

DAVID KIRKCALDIE,

Commissioner.

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Diagram of Railway transactions.
 Maps showing Railway systems and Lines.
 Return of Appointments and Removals.

APPENDIX 1.

Sir,

Chief Mechanical Engineer's Office,

Eveleigh, 13 July, 1900.

I have to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the rolling stock, the machinery, pumping plant, and water supplies of the Railways have been maintained in efficient order.

Locomotives.

Sixteen new locomotive boilers and 1 new boiler for a locomotive crane have been constructed in the Eveleigh shops during the year on Stores account.

Four passenger tender-engines, Nos. 149, 157, 411, and 415, were rebuilt, and converted into tank-engines for suburban lines. Four passenger tender engines and 3 goods tender engines were rebuilt. All were fitted with new boilers, and charged to working expenses.

Three hundred and twelve engines have been repaired during the year—217 of them at Eveleigh, 50 at Newcastle, and the remaining 45 at smaller depôts; 217 of them received heavy repairs, and the remaining 95 had general repairs of a lighter character.

Two hundred and eighty-nine boilers were overhauled during the year—201 of them at Eveleigh, 50 at Newcastle, and the remaining 38 at smaller depôts. One hundred and thirty-six of them, as they fell due, were internally examined, heavily repaired, refilled with tubes, and returned to locomotives. Forty stationary boilers were overhauled; 13 of them entailed heavy expenditure. The boiler repairs, generally speaking, during the year have been of a particularly heavy character. Six new stationary boilers and 1 old locomotive boiler have replaced wornout plant for stationary purposes, and 1 new stationary boiler and 5 old locomotive boilers were used to equip additional stationary plant.

Carriages and Wagons.

Ninety-eight vehicles were rebuilt as replacements during the year, of which 66 wagons of the open bogie type (Class G) were strengthened and converted into bogie bolster wagons (Class F). Twelve Redfern type bogie carriages have been fitted with corridors, thus making lavatory accommodation accessible to all compartments. One thousand three hundred and thirty-five passenger vehicles were repaired—1,049 of them at Eveleigh, and the remaining 286 at Newcastle. Three hundred and twenty-three of these vehicles received heavy repairs, and the remaining 1,012 had general repairs of a lighter character. Five thousand five hundred and sixty-six wagons and vans passed through the Eveleigh and Newcastle shops during the year, 1,917 of which were heavily repaired. Five thousand and fifty-three axle-boxes of defective designs were removed and replaced by standard axle-boxes, charged to working expenses.

New Stock charged to Capital.

Two new Pullman sleeping-carriages and 135 new merchandise vehicles were added to the stock during the year. These carriages and 71 of the other vehicles were built in the Eveleigh shops, and the remainder were ordered from contractors. The cost of these new vehicles, amounting to £25,727, was charged to Capital Account.

New Stock charged to Working Expenses.

Six powerful goods engines have been charged to Working Expenses during the year; they replace 9 smaller engines. Only 3 of them have, so far, gone into traffic; the remainder, now under erection, will soon follow.

Four 4-wheel carriage trucks have been built in the Eveleigh shops to replace similar vehicles worn out, and 251 merchandise vehicles were built as replacements, of which 221 were made by contractors, and the remaining 30 in the Eveleigh shops.

£59,782 was charged against the working expenses of the year on account of the above engines and vehicles.

A large air-compressor of the Ingersoll-Sergeant Duplex Compound type, capable of compressing 950 cubic feet of free air per minute to 100 lb. pressure per square inch, has been added this year to the machinery plant, thus providing compressed air to actuate lifts, jacks, drills, hammers, riveters, and other portable tools now being introduced so as to facilitate the output of the workshops. And during the year a large new erecting-shop 400 feet long by 111 feet wide—a very fine building—has been opened and put into full operation. All the powerful, overhead, high-speed cranes, machines, and shafting in this shop are driven by electricity, generated at the Electric Tramway Power-house, Ultimo. A number of special machines of heavy designs have been ordered, so as to place these workshops on an up-to-date basis for the purpose of manufacturing locomotive parts, such as boilers, tanks, &c., rapidly and at reduced cost.

For some years past a marked and gradual increase has taken place in the unproductive mileage when compared in percentages of the train mileage executed. In 1895 year this percentage was 37·53, and in the year just closed it was 43·63. This accounts for the increase in the Locomotive Department cost per train mile, and also for the rise in its percentage of expenditure to revenue; but it is hoped that the introduction to a greater extent of large engines and other changes will produce more favourable results in future.

The following statement shows the relative mileage executed and the working costs of the Locomotive Branch for 1899 and 1900:—

	1900.	1899.	Increase.	Decrease.
Train miles	8,894,352	8,806,647	87,705	.....
Engine miles	12,774,883	12,557,316	217,567	.....
Percentage of unproductive to train miles	43·63	42·59	1·04	.....
Revenue	£3,163,572	£3,145,273	£18,299	.....
Expenditure	£808,397	£777,087	£31,310	.....
Do percentage to revenue	25·55	24·71	0·84	.....
Cost in pence per train mile	21·813	21·177	0·636	.....
Do engine mile... ..	15·187	14·852	0·335	.....

The relative positions of the locomotive, carriage, and wagon stock on the 30th June, 1899 and 1900, are shown on the statement below.

W. THOW,
Chief Mechanical Engineer.

To the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.

APPENDIX 2.

RAILWAYS.—RETURN OF WORKING ROLLING STOCK, 30TH JUNE, 1900.

	LOCOMOTIVES.		COACHING.							MERCHANDISE.						DEPART- MENTAL STOCK.	TOTAL GOODS.
	Engines.	Tenders.	Special and Sleeping Cars	First Class.	Composites.	Second Class.	Brake-vans.	Horse-horses, Carriage, trucks, &c	Total.	Goods open.	Goods covered.	Meat-trucks.	Live Stock Trucks.	Brake-vans.	Total.	Loco. Coal Rollers, &c., Wagons.	
Stock, 30th June, 1899...	491	408	45	171	86	267	182	293	1,044	7,697	627	110	1,130	205	9,769	1,037	10,806
Stock, 30th June, 1900...	489	402	45	168	86	272	164	290	1,025	7,771	652	110	1,130	217	9,880	1,049	10,929

A.—Five powerful goods engines, with a tractive power of 143,885 lb., replace 7 small type engines with an aggregate tractive power of 127,008 lb. Three goods tender and 8 passenger tender engines have been rebuilt and fitted with new boilers; 4 of the latter engines have been converted to passenger tank.

B.—Two new Pullman sleeping-cars have been added to stock; 20 4-wheel brakes have been replaced by 8 bogie brakes and 4 4-wheel brakes in the goods stock; 5 carriage trucks have been replaced—4 by other carriage trucks, and 1 by a "D" wagon in the goods stock; 10 carriages of various types have been rebuilt, and 9 converted into other classes. Three 1st class corridor cars were included in "Special and Sleeping cars," last year.

C.—Ninety-five open 4-wheel 10-ton wagons, 25 lowered vans, 14 water-trucks, and 1 gas-van have been added to stock; 88 vehicles were rebuilt, 239 vehicles with a carrying capacity of 2,187 tons replaced 264 of 1,633 tons capacity, and 12 goods brakes (8 being bogie) replaced 20 4-wheel brakes, and 68 wagons were converted to other types.

APPENDIX 3.

REPORT on Condition of Permanent Way and Works for the year ending
30th June, 1900.

Sir, Office of Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines,
2 July, 1900.

I have the honor to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the Permanent Way, Works, and Buildings have been efficiently maintained during the past year.

Relaying, Reballasting, &c.

On account of the delay in obtaining rails and fastenings the operations under the head of relaying have not been so extensive as it was hoped they would be. A length of 74 miles 35 chains has been completely relaid, rerailed, or resleepered, and 22 miles 73 chains partially resleepered to strengthen the road where desirable until complete resleepering can be done. The expenditure for the year includes the purchase for immediate use of materials for 20 miles of road, and relaying—which should not be any longer deferred—is now being vigorously pushed on.

In addition to the work described above, 39,962 new sleepers and 26,456 good second-hand sleepers have been put in the road, adding a further length of 30 miles put into perfect order during the year.

Reballasting and lifting have been done over 223 miles 16 chains of road, and 90,786 cubic yards of ballast distributed, and a large quantity—11,573 cubic yards—of sand has been used for making up the cesses in the black-soil country on the North-western Branch Line, effecting a very material improvement in this part of the lines.

One hundred and sixty-six miles 23 chains of fencing has been renewed out of working expenses, and 38 miles 69 chains of new fence erected in connection with deviation works.

The station and other buildings throughout the system have been carefully maintained, repairs and painting being carried out where necessary. A large number of additional works have been completed, including many which, though fairly chargeable to Capital, have been debited to Working Expenses.

A systematic inspection has been made of all bridges and culverts, repairs or renewals being effected where necessary.

The renewal of all that portion of the Wagga Wagga viaduct north of the river has been completed. Further progress has been delayed by the difficulty in obtaining the necessary material from England.

Improvement of Grades and Curves.

The grade improvements in the vicinity of Carlingford, Berowra, and Woy Woy, and between Muswellbrook and Scone, on the Northern Line, have been completed.

On the Southern Line similar works between Harden and Cootamundra are nearly finished, while on the Western Line others between Gresham and Blayney and between Blayney and Springhill have made fair progress, but they have latterly been delayed through the heavy rains.

The greater portion of the work of duplicating the North Shore Line, between St. Leonards and Lindfield, has been carried out, but completion is delayed waiting for Parliamentary authority for some of the alterations.

The above works have been carried out by gangs working under the direction of departmental officers.

Extensions opened.

The following extensions were opened for traffic during the year :—

Tamworth to Manilla, 29 miles 42 chains, on 15th August, 1899.

Moree to Gravesend, 35 miles, on 1st February, 1900.

Both are of the Pioneer type.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS R. FIRTH,

Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines.

The Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.

Sidings laid in and extended 6 miles 69 chains.
 Sidings relaid 10 chains.

	New.	Second-hand.	Total, year ended 30 June, 1900.	Total, year ended 30 June, 1899.
Sleepers used—				
In Sidings laid in and extended	2,518	12,434	14,952	20,859
In Main Lines—				
For relaying and resleeping	155,486	66	155,552	153,867
For repairs and respacing	39,962	26,456	66,418	72,071
For deviations to improve grades and curves	24,044	7,902	31,946	20,513
Total	222,010	46,858	268,868	267,310

	Blue-metal and other hardstone.	Sandstone and gravel.	Total, year ended 30 June, 1900.	Total, year ended 30 June, 1899.
Ballast used—				
On old lines	Cubic yards. 82,524	Cubic yards. 8,262	Cubic yards. 90,786	Cubic yards. 86,128
On deviations to improve grades and curves	15,012	1,900	16,912	33,586
Total	97,536	10,162	107,698	119,714

Length of new fencing erected 205 miles 12 chains.

Length of fence wired 14 „ 68 „

Culverts and flood-openings constructed and extended, 175 s. ft. additional waterway.

APPENDIX 4.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT OF THE EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1900, AS COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD IN 1899.

DR.

RAILWAYS.

CR.

EXPENDITURE.	SEE ABSTRACT.	YEAR ENDED	YEAR ENDED	REVENUE.	SEE APPENDIX.	YEAR ENDED	YEAR ENDED
		30TH JUNE,	30TH JUNE,			30TH JUNE,	30TH JUNE,
		1900.	1899.			1900.	1899.
		£ s. d.	£			£ s. d.	£
TO MAINTENANCE OF WAY, WORKS, AND BUILDINGS	A	406,044 3 4	370,197	By PASSENGERS—			
LOCOMOTIVE POWER	B	648,766 16 5	635,145	FIRST CLASS	VI	265,832 5 2	248,759
CARRIAGE AND WAGGON REPAIRS AND RENEWALS	C	159,630 7 4	141,942	SECOND CLASS	VI	614,932 5 10	583,600
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	D	478,817 15 6	471,532	FIRST CLASS SEASON	VI	61,056 1 10	57,182
GENERAL CHARGES	H	66,597 7 11	62,273	SECOND CLASS SEASON	VI	33,644 12 11	33,523
COMPENSATION—PASSENGERS	E	1,642 7 11	2,379	Do WORKMAN'S WEEKLY	VI	36,331 6 5	31,707
Do GOODS	E	2,521 4 9	3,072	PARCELS, HORSES, CARRIAGES, &c.	VI	119,277 6 4	110,264
GRATUITIES TO WIDOWS AND CHILDREN OF EMPLOYEES AND PAYMENTS TO STAFF RETIRED	F	4,250 4 0	2,652	MAILS	VI	64,421 13 3	63,737
FIRE INSURANCE FUND	G	1,250 0 0	1,250				
		£ 1,769,520 7 2	1,690,442	TOTAL COACHING		£ 1,195,495 11 9	1,128,772
				MERCHANDISE	VI	1,126,557 4 3	1,081,405
				WOOL	VI	224,762 13 11	279,997
				LIVE STOCK	VI	305,228 7 10	368,319
				MINERALS—COAL AND COKE AND SHALE	VI	214,693 6 9	204,613
				Do. OTHER THAN COAL AND COKE	VI	64,975 17 4	52,741
				TOTAL GOODS		£ 1,936,217 9 1	1,987,075
				RENTS	VI	27,300 13 11	25,983
				MISCELLANEOUS	VI	4,558 11 5	3,443
BALANCE, NET REVENUE AFTER PAYING WORKING EXPENSES		£ 1,394,051 19 0	1,454,831	GRAND TOTAL		£ 3,163,572 6 2	3,145,273
GRAND TOTAL		£ 3,163,572 6 2	3,145,273				

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This Statement does not include £25,444 for services performed for Government Departments for which no payment is made. The details in 1899 have been slightly rearranged for comparison with this year's figures.

THOMAS HALL,
Chief Accountant.

APPENDIX 6.

COMPARATIVE Analysis of Revenue and Expenditure for the years ended 30 June, 1900 and 1899.

Particulars.	Year ended 30 June, 1900.				Year ended 30 June, 1899.				
	Numbers or Tonnage.	Revenue.	Per mile open.	Per train mile.	Numbers or Tonnage.	Revenue.	Per mile open.	Per train mile.	
	Miles. Average miles open for traffic ... 2,777				Miles. Average miles open for traffic ... 2,703½				
	Train mileage— Passenger ... 4,234,009 Goods ... 4,610,343 8,894,352				Train mileage— Passenger ... 4,189,005 Goods ... 4,637,642 8,806,647				
REVENUE.									
	Numbers.	£	£	d.	Numbers.	£	£	d.	
First-class Passengers	2,190,877	265,832	96·8	14·89	2,099,141	245,759	92·0	14·32	
Second-class do	12,435,476	614,932	224·1	34·45	11,973,544	583,600	215·9	33·60	
Season Tickets, 1st class	10,189	61,056	22·2	3·42	8,852	57,182	21·1	3·29	
Do 2nd class	37,113	33,645	12·3	1·88	33,953	33,523	12·4	1·93	
Workmen's Weekly Tickets, 2nd class	464,416	36,331	13·2	2·04	406,087	31,707	11·7	1·83	
Horses, Carriages, Parcels, &c.		119,278	43·5	6·68		110,264	40·8	6·34	
Mails		64,422	23·5	3·61		63,737	23·6	3·67	
Total, Coaching		1,195,496	435·6	66·97		1,128,772	417·5	64·08	
General Merchandise									
	Tons.	£	£	d.	Tons.	£	£	d.	
Wool	1,512,616	1,126,557	410·5	53·64	1,471,863	1,081,405	309·9	55·96	
Wool	84,678	224,763	81·9	11·70	98,745	279,997	103·6	14·49	
Live Stock	188,595	305,228	111·2	15·89	223,005	368,319	136·2	19·06	
Minerals—Coal and Coke	3,406,769	214,693	78·2	11·18	3,184,014	204,613	75·7	10·59	
Minerals, other than Coal and Coke	339,853	64,976	23·7	3·38	270,693	52,741	19·6	2·73	
Total, Goods	5,531,511	1,936,217	705·5	100·79	5,243,320	1,987,075	734·9	102·83	
Rents		27,301	9·9	0·74		25,988	9·6	0·72	
Miscellaneous		4,558	1·7	0·12		3,443	1·3	0·09	
Total Revenue		3,163,572	1,152·7	85·36		3,145,273	1,163·3	85·72	
EXPENDITURE.									
WORKING EXPENSES.									
	Expenditure.	Per mile open.	Per train mile.	Per cent. to Revenue.	Expenditure.	Per mile open.	Per train mile.	Per cent. to Revenue.	
	£	£	d.		£	£	d.		
Maintenance of Way, Works, and Buildings...	406,044	147·9	10·96	12·83	370,197	136·9	10·09	11·77	
Locomotive Power	648,767	236·4	17·51	20·51	635,145	234·9	17·32	20·20	
Carriage and Waggon Repairs and Renewals	159,630	58·1	4·31	5·05	141,942	52·5	3·87	4·51	
Traffic Expenses	478,818	174·5	12·92	15·14	471,532	174·4	12·85	14·99	
General Charges	66,597	24·3	1·80	2·10	62,273	23·0	1·70	1·98	
Compensation—Passengers	1,643	0·6	0·04	0·05	2,379	0·9	0·06	0·08	
Do Goods	2,521	0·9	0·07	0·08	3,072	1·1	0·08	0·10	
Gratuities to Widows and Children of Employés, and payments to Staff retired	4,250	1·7	0·11	0·13	2,652	1·0	0·07	0·08	
Fire Insurance Fund	1,250	0·4	0·03	0·04	1,250	0·5	0·03	0·04	
Total Expenditure	1,769,520	644·8	47·75	55·93	1,690,442	625·2	46·07	53·75	
Expenditure percentage to gross revenue,				55·93	EXPENDITURE PERCENTAGE TO GROSS REVENUE,				53·75

Percentage of Expenditure in each Division.

Divisions of Expenditure.	Year ended 30 June, 1900.	Year ended 30 June, 1899.
	%	%
Maintenance of Way, Works, and Buildings	22·95	21·90
Locomotive Power	36·66	37·57
Carriage and Waggon Repairs and Renewals	9·02	8·40
Traffic Expenses	27·06	27·90
General Charges	3·77	3·68
Compensation (Passengers)	0·09	0·14
Do (Goods)	0·14	0·18
Gratuities to Widows and Children of Employés, and payments to Staff retired	0·24	0·16
Fire Insurance Fund	0·07	0·07
	100·00	100·00

APPENDIX 7.

RETURN showing the Number of Passengers, Tonnage of Goods, Earnings, Working Expenses, Train Mileage, Percentage of Working Expenses to Gross Earnings, Net Earnings, Capital spent on Lines open, and Interest on Capital Invested each year, from 1855 to 1900, inclusive.

Year.	Miles of Line.	Number of Passengers.	Tonnage of Goods and Live Stock.	Earnings from Coaching, Rents, &c.	Earnings from Goods and Live Stock Traffic.	Total Earnings.	Working Expenses.	Train Mileage.	Earnings per Train Mile.	Working Expenses per Train Mile.	Percentage of Working Expenses to Gross Earnings.	Earnings, after paying Working Expenses.	Total Capital expended on Lines open.	Interest on Capital Invested.
	Miles.	No.	Tons.	£	£	£	£	No.	d.	d.	%	£	£	%
1855	14	98,846	140	9,093	156	9,249	5,959	14,107	157'34	101'37	64'43	3,290	515,347	·68
1856	23	350,724	2,469	29,526	2,757	32,283	21,788	68,371	113'32	76'48	67'49	10,495	683,217	1'53
1857	40	329,019	20,847	34,970	8,417	43,387	31,337	107,822	96'58	69'75	72'23	12,050	1,023,838	1'17
1858	55	376,492	33,385	45,858	16,451	62,309	43,928	141,495	105'69	74'51	70'50	18,881	1,231,867	1'49
1859	55	425,877	43,020	46,502	15,258	61,760	47,598	147,618	100'41	77'38	77'07	14,162	1,278,416	1'10
1860	70	551,044	55,394	45,428	16,841	62,269	50,427	174,249	83'37	67'52	80'98	11,842	1,422,672	·83
1861	73	595,591	101,130	40,637	25,367	75,004	61,187	214,881	83'77	68'34	81'55	13,817	1,536,032	·89
1862	97	642,431	205,139	62,096	41,775	103,871	68,725	274,565	90'79	60'07	66'16	35,146	1,907,807	1'84
1863	124	627,164	218,535	71,297	52,644	123,941	96,867	315,177	94'38	73'70	78'16	27,074	2,466,950	1'09
1864	143	693,174	379,661	81,487	66,167	147,654	103,715	415,422	85'30	59'92	70'24	43,939	2,631,790	1'66
1865	143	751,587	416,707	92,984	73,048	166,032	108,926	483,446	82'42	64'07	65'60	57,106	2,746,373	2'07
1866	143	668,330	500,937	85,636	82,899	168,535	106,230	490,475	82'49	51'99	63'64	62,395	2,786,094	2'23
1867	204	616,375	517,022	87,564	101,508	189,072	117,324	600,751	82'02	46'87	62'08	71,748	3,282,320	2'18
1868	247	714,563	596,514	99,408	124,951	224,359	144,201	768,529	70'06	45'03	64'29	80,158	4,060,950	1'97
1869	318	759,635	714,113	100,427	155,548	264,975	176,362	893,552	71'17	47'37	66'57	88,613	4,681,329	1'89
1870	339	776,707	766,523	117,854	189,288	307,142	206,003	901,139	81'81	54'86	67'08	101,139	5,566,092	1'81
1871	358	759,062	741,986	129,496	225,826	355,322	197,065	931,333	91'57	50'79	55'46	158,257	6,887,258	2'68
1872	398	763,910	825,360	164,862	260,127	424,989	207,918	1,036,255	98'43	48'15	48'92	217,071	6,388,727	3'39
1873	403	875,602	923,788	178,216	306,020	484,236	238,035	1,109,879	104'71	51'47	49'16	246,201	6,739,918	3'65
1874	403	1,085,501	1,070,938	188,595	347,980	536,575	257,703	1,249,233	103'09	49'51	48'03	278,872	6,844,546	4'07
1875	473	1,288,225	1,171,354	205,941	408,707	614,648	296,174	1,472,204	100'20	48'28	48'18	318,474	7,246,379	4'39
1876	509	1,727,730	1,244,131	233,870	459,355	693,225	339,406	1,688,964	98'50	48'22	48'96	353,819	7,990,601	4'42
1877	598	2,957,144	1,430,041	271,588	544,332	815,920	418,985	2,106,802	92'95	47'73	51'35	396,935	8,883,177	4'46
1878	688	3,705,733	1,625,886	306,308	596,681	902,989	536,988	2,655,176	81'62	48'54	59'47	366,001	9,784,645	3'74
1879	734	4,817,864	1,720,815	319,950	682,416	952,366	604,721	2,932,463	77'94	49'49	63'49	347,645	10,406,495	3'34
1880	849	5,440,138	1,712,971	390,149	770,868	1,161,017	647,719	3,239,462	86'02	47'99	55'79	513,298	11,778,819	4'35
1881	995	6,907,312	2,033,850	488,675	955,551	1,444,226	738,334	3,923,929	88'33	45'16	51'12	705,892	13,301,597	5'30
1882	1,268	8,984,313	2,619,427	587,825	1,111,038	1,698,863	934,635	4,851,157	84'05	46'24	55'02	764,228	15,843,616	5'13
1883	1,320	10,272,037	2,864,566	661,751	1,269,713	1,931,464	1,177,788	5,937,261	78'07	47'61	60'97	753,676	16,905,014	4'48
1884	1,618	11,253,109	3,124,425	745,665	1,340,572	2,086,237	1,301,259	6,403,041	78'19	48'77	62'37	784,978	20,080,138	4'20
1885	1,732	13,506,346	3,273,004	830,904	1,343,464	2,174,368	1,458,153	6,638,399	78'61	52'72	67'06	716,215	21,831,276	3'37
1886	1,889	14,891,604	3,218,532	849,253	1,310,817	2,160,070	1,492,992	6,479,265	80'01	55'30	69'12	667,078	24,071,454	2'90
1887	2,036	14,451,303	3,339,253	850,499	1,357,796	2,208,295	1,457,760	6,472,107	81'88	54'05	66'01	750,535	26,532,122	2'96
1887-88 ..	2,114	15,174,115	3,399,772	918,975	1,376,149	2,295,124	1,530,551	6,689,313	82'34	54'21	66'69	764,573	27,722,748	2'85
1888-89 ..	2,171	16,086,223	3,485,839	1,025,601	1,512,876	2,538,477	1,634,602	7,641,769	79'72	51'34	64'39	903,875	29,839,167	3'14
1889-90 ..	2,182	17,071,945	3,788,950	1,059,791	1,573,295	2,633,086	1,665,835	8,008,826	78'90	49'91	63'26	967,251	30,555,123	3'17
1890-91 ..	2,182	19,037,760	3,802,849	1,177,087	1,797,384	2,974,471	1,831,371	8,410,421	84'88	52'26	61'57	1,143,050	31,768,617	3'59
1891-92 ..	2,185	19,918,916	4,296,713	1,189,231	1,918,065	3,107,296	1,914,252	8,356,036	89'25	54'98	61'60	1,193,044	33,312,608	3'58
1892-93 ..	2,351	19,932,703	3,773,843	1,115,042	1,812,014	2,927,056	1,733,516	7,505,310	93'60	55'60	59'39	1,188,540	34,657,571	3'48
1893-94 ..	2,501½	19,265,732	3,493,919	1,047,029	1,766,512	2,813,541	1,591,842	7,169,785	94'18	53'29	56'58	1,221,699	35,855,271	3'46
1894-95 ..	2,531½	19,725,418	4,075,093	1,022,901	1,855,303	2,878,204	1,567,689	7,594,281	90'96	49'54	54'46	1,310,615	36,611,366	3'60
1895-96 ..	2,531½	21,005,048	3,953,575	1,013,922	1,776,495	2,820,417	1,551,888	7,719,618	87'68	48'24	55'02	1,268,529	36,852,194	3'44
1896-97 ..	2,639½	22,672,924	4,567,041	1,038,696	1,916,046	3,014,742	1,601,218	8,130,405	88'99	47'26	53'11	1,413,524	37,360,205	3'79
1897-98 ..	2,691½	23,233,206	4,630,564	1,126,257	1,900,491	3,026,748	1,614,605	8,340,338	87'10	46'46	53'34	1,412,143	37,719,402	3'75
1898-99 ..	2,706½	24,726,067	5,248,320	1,158,198	1,987,075	3,145,273	1,690,442	8,806,647	85'72	46'07	53'75	1,454,831	37,992,276	3'83
1899-1900 ..	2,811½	26,486,873	5,531,511	1,227,355	1,936,217	3,163,572	1,769,520	8,894,352	85'36	47'75	55'93	1,394,052	38,477,269	3'63

The accounts were made up to the 31st December in each year up to 1887, since that time up to the 30th June in each year.

Camden and Sans Souci Tramways not included prior to 1888 in this return.

* Includes 40 miles rented to the Silverton Tramway.

APPENDIX 8.

RETURN of the Total Amount paid for Wages on the different Branches of the Railways during the years ended 30th June, 1900 and 1899.

Branches.	1900.	1899.
RAILWAYS:—	£	£
Maintenance Branch	430,556	374,711
Locomotive "	541,411	527,187
Traffic "	270,258	250,446
TOTAL	£ 1,242,225	1,161,344

NOTE.—Includes all wages paid by the Department, whether on Maintenance or New Works.

APPENDIX 9.

STATEMENT of the Staff employed on the Railways and Tramways of New South Wales in June, 1900, as compared with June, 1899.

Branch.	June, 1900.			June, 1899.		
	No. of Salaried Staff.	No. of Wages Staff	Total Staff.	No. of Salaried Staff.	No. of Wages Staff.	Total Staff.
RAILWAYS.						
Commissioners' and Secretary's Office	15	4	19	15	4	19
Chief Accountant	41	1	42	40	1	41
Traffic Audit	65	1	66	62	1	63
Stores	24	38	62	22	45	67
Permanent-way	114	3,376	3,490	110	3,319	3,429
Locomotive	146 ^a	4,008	4,149	140	3,800	3,940
Traffic	766 ^b	2,723 ^d	3,489	752	2,588	3,340
Electrical	58 ^c	87	145	53	68	121
Interlocking	14	243	257	14	224	238
General	18	7	25	16	5	21
	1,261	10,483	11,744	1,224	10,055	11,279
TRAMWAYS.						
Permanent-way	8	418	426	8	325	333
Locomotive	22	726	748	23	744	767
Traffic	36	899	935	25	432	457
Electrical	4	226	230	.....	25	25
Stores	3	1	4	3	1	4
	73	2,270	2,343	59	1,527	1,586
TOTAL, RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS ...	1,334	12,753	14,087	1,283	11,582	12,865

^a Includes 48 officers in charge of locomotive running-sheds, and timekeepers.

^b Includes 465 officers and night-officers in charge of stations and sidings, and 167 clerks employed at stations.

^c Includes 34 telegraph operators.

^d The Wages Staff does not include 152 gatekeepers with "free house" only, as compared with 159 in June, 1899,

APPENDIX 10.

STATEMENT showing cost of Additions to Stations, Buildings, Siding Accommodation, &c., Machinery and Rolling Stock, the cost of which was charged to Capital Account, during the year ended 30th June, 1900.

	Amount.
	£
Additions to Stations, Buildings, &c.	96,746
Rolling Stock and additional appliances, including continuous brakes.....	53,948
	£150,694

APPENDIX 11.

STATEMENT showing the dates on which the various sections of the Railways were opened for traffic.

Date of opening.	From where opened.	To where opened.	Distance.	Date of opening.	From where opened.	To where opened.	Distance.
6 Sept., 1855.	Sydney.....	Parramatta.....	m. c. 14 22½	4 July, 1882.	Carrathool.....	Hay.....	m. c. 34 57½
26 „ 1855.	Redfern.....	Darling Harbour.....	1 42½	11 „ 1882.	Gunnedah.....	Boggabri.....	24 80½
28 „ 1856.	Granville.....	Liverpool.....	8 64½	2 Aug., 1882.	Moonbi.....	Uralla.....	51 46½
5 April, 1857.	Near Newcastle.....	East Maitland.....	17 8	1 Oct., 1882.	Boggabri.....	Narrabri.....	31 50½
9 Mar., 1858.	Near Newcastle.....	Newcastle.....	1 0	20 „ 1882.	Dubbo.....	Nevertire.....	63 4
17 May, 1858.	Liverpool.....	Campbelltown.....	11 60½	3 Feb., 1883.	Uralla.....	Armidale.....	14 04½
27 July, 1858.	East Maitland.....	West Maitland.....	2 10½	9 June, 1883.	Nevertire.....	Nyngan.....	38 1
2 „ 1860.	West Maitland.....	Lochinvar.....	6 10½	14 „ 1883.	Albury.....	River Murray.....	1 41
4 „ 1860.	Parramatta.....	Blacktown.....	7 16	3 Jan., 1884.	Joppa Junction.....	Tarego.....	23 30
12 Dec., 1861.	Blacktown.....	Rooty Hill.....	3 65	9 June, 1884.	Capertee.....	Rylstone.....	30 79
24 Mar., 1862.	Lochinvar.....	Branxton.....	8 12½	19 Aug., 1884.	Armidale.....	Glen Innes.....	63 51½
1 May, 1862.	Rooty Hill.....	South Creek.....	5 7	2 Sept., 1884.	Nyngan.....	Dyrock.....	78 10
7 July, 1862.	South Creek.....	Penrith.....	4 11	10 „ 1884.	Rylstone.....	Mudgee.....	31 52
1 Sept., 1862.	Campbelltown.....	Menangle.....	6 67½	16 „ 1884.	Narrandera.....	Jerilderie.....	64 54½
7 May, 1863.	Branxton.....	Singleton.....	14 40½	15 Oct., 1884.	Sydney.....	Hurstville.....	8 63½
1 July, 1863.	Menangle.....	Pictou.....	12 10½	4 Mar., 1885.	Tarego.....	Bungendore.....	19 20½
2 May, 1864.	East Maitland.....	Morpeth.....	3 37½	28 „ 1885.	Murrumburrah.....	Young.....	17 26
1 Dec., 1864.	Blacktown.....	Richmond.....	16 12	26 „ 1885.	Murrumburrah—De	mondville fork.....	0 26
1 Mar., 1867.	Pictou.....	Mittagong.....	24 6½	21 Sept., 1885.	Byrock.....	Bourke.....	48 30
11 July, 1867.	Penrith.....	Weatherboard.....	27 10	12 Dec., 1885.	Orange.....	Molong.....	22 60
2 Dec., 1867.	Mittagong.....	Sutton Forest.....	8 64	20 „ 1885.	Hurstville.....	Sutherland.....	6 8
1 May, 1868.	Weatherboard.....	Mount Victoria.....	15 18	9 Mar., 1886.	Sutherland.....	Waterfall.....	8 74½
6 Aug., 1868.	Sutton Forest.....	Marulan.....	28 03½	9 „ 1886.	Loftus Junction.....	National Park.....	1 14½
19 May, 1869.	Singleton.....	Muswellbrook.....	30 73	1 June, 1886.	Cootamundra.....	Gundagal.....	33 45½
27 „ 1869.	Marulan.....	Goulburn.....	19 68½	1 Sept., 1886.	Glen Innes.....	Tenterfield.....	57 41½
18 Oct., 1869.	Mount Victoria.....	Bowenfels.....	19 48	17 „ 1886.	Strathfield.....	Hornsby.....	14 0½
1 Mar., 1870.	Bowenfels.....	Wallerawang.....	7 48	1 Nov., 1886.	Young.....	Cowra.....	46 25
1 July, 1870.	Wallerawang.....	Rydal.....	6 5	7 April, 1887.	Hornsby.....	Hawkesbury.....	14 28½
20 Oct., 1870.	Muswellbrook.....	Aberdeen.....	7 38½	21 June, 1887.	Clifton.....	Wollongong.....	12 27½
17 April, 1871.	Aberdeen.....	Scone.....	3 49	15 Aug., 1887.	Gosford.....	Waratah.....	49 65
1 Aug., 1871.	Scone.....	Wingen.....	10 34½	15 „ 1887.	Woodville and Islin	gton loop.....	0 28
1 Jan., 1872.	Liverpool.....	Sidings, Collingwood, &c.	0 34	8 Sept., 1887.	Bungendore.....	Queanbeyan.....	17 27½
5 April, 1872.	Wingen.....	Murrurundi.....	12 78½	10 „ 1887.	Kogarah.....	Sans Souci.....	4 71
22 „ 1872.	Rydal.....	Locke's Platform.....	18 70	9 Nov., 1887.	Wollongong.....	North Kiama.....	21 42½
1 July, 1872.	Locke's Platform.....	Macquarie Plains.....	5 49	7 Dec., 1887.	Queanbeyan.....	Michelago.....	30 20½
4 Mar., 1873.	Macquarie Plains.....	Raglan.....	5 13	16 Jan., 1888.	Mullet Creek.....	Gosford.....	9 63½
4 Feb., 1875.	Raglan.....	Kelso.....	2 52	16 „ 1888.	Tenterfield.....	Wallangarra.....	11 29½
9 Nov., 1875.	Goulburn.....	Gunning.....	30 20	13 Feb., 1888.	Cowra.....	Blayney.....	46 66
4 April, 1876.	Kelso.....	Bathurst.....	1 34	3 Oct., 1888.	Waterfall.....	Clifton.....	11 68½
3 July, 1876.	Gunning.....	Bowling.....	29 31	1 May, 1889.	Brooklyn.....	Mullet Creek.....	4 67½
1 Nov., 1876.	Bowling.....	Binalong.....	14 43	31 „ 1889.	Michelago.....	Cooma.....	40 21½
1 „ 1876.	Bathurst.....	Blayney.....	27 79	1 Jan., 1890.	Hornsby.....	St. Leonards.....	10 29½
12 Mar., 1877.	Binalong.....	Murrumburrah.....	21 9	1 July, 1890.	Wollongong.....	Harbour.....	0 74
19 April, 1877.	Blayney.....	Orange.....	19 75	1 „ 1891.	Honebush loop.....	.....	0 22½
18 Aug., 1877.	Murrurundi.....	Quirindi.....	21 79	20 April, 1892.	Railway Station.....	Yass.....	2 73
1 Nov., 1877.	Murrumburrah.....	Cootamundra.....	23 37	1 July, 1892.	Nyngan.....	Cobar.....	81 27½
2 April, 1878.	Newcastle.....	Bullock Island Branch.....	1 45½	3 Oct., 1892.	Culcairn.....	Corowa.....	47 39
2 „ 1878.	Cootamundra.....	Bethunga.....	15 21½	1 May, 1893.	St. Leonards.....	Milson's Point.....	2 78
6 July, 1878.	Bethunga.....	Junee.....	18 28½	2 June, 1893.	Kiama.....	Nowra.....	22 43½
3 Sept., 1878.	Junee.....	North Wagga Wagga.....	17 37	1 Sept., 1893.	Cootamundra.....	Temora.....	38 69
14 Oct., 1878.	Quirindi.....	Tamworth.....	37 24½	18 Dec., 1893.	Molong.....	Forbes.....	72 69
25 Mar., 1879.	Werris Creek.....	Breca.....	14 30½	15 May, 1894.	Lismore.....	Mullumbimby.....	38 57
1 Sept., 1879.	North Wagga.....	South Wagga Wagga.....	4 49½	24 Dec., 1894.	Mullumbimby.....	Murwillumbah.....	*25 0
11 „ 1879.	Breca.....	Gunnedah.....	26 4½	1 Feb., 1895.	Sydenham.....	Belmore.....	5 8½
1 June, 1880.	Orange.....	Wellington.....	65 66	14 Oct., 1896.	Jerilderie.....	Berrigan.....	21 65
1 Sept., 1880.	South Wagga.....	Gerogery.....	59 13½	15 Dec., 1896.	Parkes.....	Bogan Gate.....	23 38
1 Feb., 1881.	Wellington.....	Dubbo.....	30 35	1 April, 1897.	Narrabri.....	Moree.....	63 10
3 „ 1881.	Gerogery.....	Albury.....	18 39½	26 May, 1897.	Rookwood Cemetery	extension.....	1 22
28 „ 1881.	Junee.....	Narrandera.....	60 5	1 Jan., 1898.	Nevertire.....	Warren.....	12 36½
28 „ 1881.	Junee, north fork.....	.....	0 22	1 Mar., 1898.	Bogan Gate.....	Condobolin.....	39 22½
1 Sept., 1881.	Narrandera.....	Darlington.....	38 13½	16 Sept., 1898.	Berrigan.....	Finlay.....	13 73
9 Jan., 1882.	Tamworth.....	Moonbi.....	12 1½	7 „ 1899.	Broken Hill.....	Tarrawingee.....	40 7
1 Mar., 1882.	Darlington.....	Carrathool.....	34 7½	15 Sept., 1899.	Tamworth.....	Manilla.....	29 42
10 Mar., 1882.	Campbelltown.....	Camden.....	7 65	1 Feb., 1900.	Moree.....	Gravesend.....	35 0
15 May, 1882.	Wallerawang.....	Capertee.....	22 35				

* Includes the extension to Condong Mills.

Single lines.....	2,643 77½
Double „.....	158 56½
Quadruple lines.....	8 42½

Total..... 2,811 16½

APPENDIX 12.

RETURN of the number of Bales of WOOL forwarded from each Station during the years ended 30th June, 1900 and 1899.

Stations.	Number of Bales.		Stations.	Number of Bales.		Stations.	Number of Bales.	
	1900.	1899.		1900.	1899.		1900.	1899.
Darling Harbour	19,163	16,209	Bringagee	789	1,872	Mandurama	1,212	1,144
Alexandria	.....	6	Carrathool	2,727	5,562	Lyndhurst	1,291	1,418
Grainville	.....	3	Hay	5,718	8,529	Woodstock	1,331	1,135
Fairfield	661	247	Morundah	2,081	2,369	Cowra	8,783	8,075
Liverpool	7,418	9,059	Jerilderie	3,130	3,736	Borenore	1,361	1,302
Ingleburn	1	4	Berrigan	353	340	Molong	5,868	5,312
Minto	57	148	Finley	1	.....	Manildra	1,426	1,298
Menangle	1	.....	Walla Walla	732	520	Parkes	5,233	5,529
Douglas Park	23	23	Brocklesby	1,140	1,145	Hogan Gate	4,942	2,238
Pictou	.....	.....	Corowa	303	153	Condobolin	8,017	10,766
Thirlmere	.....	1	Sydenham	.....	.....	Forbes	8,850	11,870
Mittagong	211	224	Dapto	.....	.....	Warren	17,783	26,110
Bowral	27	8	Gerrigong	4	1	Hermidale	1,649	3,249
Moss Vale	527	444	Parramatta	.....	3	Cobar	4,111	6,811
Exeter	6	4	Mount Drutt	100	68	Hornsby	6	.....
Bundanoon	2	.....	St. Mary's	.....	1	Awaba	6	4
Wingello	29	20	Kingswood	.....	2	Newcastle	87	65
Marulan	1,125	1,121	Penrith	17	.....	Thornton	1	1
Towrang	1,409	1,439	Emu Plains	10,502	10,207	Morpeth	52	105
Goulburn	7,304	6,665	Blackheath	25	13	West Maitland	754	1,169
Broadalbane	1,037	645	Mount Victoria	160	377	Branxton	3	.....
Sunning	3,229	3,239	Bowenfels	200	64	Whittingham	40	78
Jerrawa	217	371	Wallerawang	859	829	Singleton	187	128
Yass Junction	1,464	1,452	Rydal	96	152	Glennie's Creek	19	24
Yass Town	2,198	1,817	Tarana	744	960	Ravensthorpe	154	402
Bowling	3,298	2,745	Locksley	61	97	Muswellbrook	7,058	6,683
Binalong	3,510	3,277	Brewongle	323	308	Aberdeen	1,002	860
Galong	2,306	2,123	Raglan	160	196	Scone	5,577	4,950
Harden	1,277	1,099	Kesco	2,100	1,715	Wingen	27	96
Murrumburrah	211	217	Bathurst	2,625	2,378	Blandford	1,848	1,802
Demondrille	286	306	Perth	1,054	1,176	Murrurundi	296	304
Wallendbeen	1,302	1,500	George's Plains	98	61	Ardglen	860	987
Cootamundra	3,027	3,416	Wimbleton	425	183	Willow Tree	4,473	4,665
Bethunga	1,210	1,111	Newbridge	1,514	1,494	Quirindi	9,292	8,452
Ilabo	1,072	1,031	Blayney	710	565	Werris Creek	553	645
Junee Junction	2,781	2,807	Milthorpe	221	179	Currabubula	2,838	2,472
Harcfield	494	427	Spring Hill	325	266	West Tamworth	5,613	13,614
Bomen	323	6	Orange	1,567	1,258	Tamworth	694	961
Wagga	4,202	5,110	Mullion Creek	1,129	776	Moombi	1,698	1,605
Uranquinty	791	641	Kerr's Creek	71	171	Woolbrook	563	484
The Rock	1,746	1,826	Euchareena	1,351	1,176	Walcha Road	5,820	5,862
Yerong Creek	1,741	1,524	Stuart Town	383	367	Uralla	8,669	8,656
Henty	739	718	Mumbil	1,293	1,199	Armidale	5,224	5,001
Calcairn	3,746	2,435	Dripstone	363	438	Black Mountain	410	254
Gerogery	351	64	Wellington	4,281	3,451	Guyra	3,223	2,781
Table Top	1,181	871	Mary Vale	129	362	Ben Lomond	923	942
Albury	2,037	859	Gourie	362	313	Glencoe	289	253
Camden	65	43	Murrumbidgee	1,838	2,080	Glen Innes	12,506	10,184
Tarago	1,080	967	Dubbo	18,497	26,085	Deepwater	1,965	1,721
Bungendore	2,732	2,359	Narromine	5,776	6,454	Tenterfield	163	176
Queanbeyan	4,297	4,282	Trangie	8,012	9,985	Jennings	80	77
Michelago	1,970	2,210	Neverare	4,332	3,407	Breeza	1,512	1,845
Cooma	9,953	10,606	Nyngan	2,894	4,210	Curlewis	630	1,064
Young	6,349	6,316	Girilambone	2,735	6,462	Gunnedah	7,763	8,003
Koorawatha	2,041	1,863	Coolabah	914	2,633	Boggabri	2,932	2,930
Coolac	1,773	1,562	Byrock	2,334	8,735	Baan Baa	285	834
Gundagai	5,552	4,632	Bourke	26,092	43,886	Narrabri West	22,384	39,276
Temora	3,161	4,352	Riverstone	64	3	Narrabri	2,885	8,608
Old Junee	525	711	Richmond	10	.....	Woolabra	3,455	.....
Coolamon	733	1,012	Piper's Flat	56	49	Moree	25,792	32,223
Gannan	206	149	Cupertee	868	770	Gravesend	187	.....
Grong Grong	742	1,283	Rylstone	1,694	1,420	Attunga	60	.....
Narrandera	9,130	12,572	Lue	614	620	Manilla	8,863	.....
Yanco	855	1,450	Mudgee	20,904	21,194			
Whitton	2,090	3,758	Carcoar	917	1,000			
Darlington	2,359	4,541				Total	519,723	607,863

APPENDIX 13.

RETURN of the number of LIVE STOCK forwarded from each Station for the year ended 30th June, 1900.

Table with columns: Stations, Number carried (Horses, Cattle, Calves, Sheep, Pigs), Stations, Number carried (Horses, Cattle, Calves, Sheep, Pigs). Lists various stations and their corresponding livestock counts for 1900.

APPENDIX 14.

STATEMENT of COAL, COKE, and SHALE forwarded from the various Collieries during the years ended 30th June, 1899-1900.

Collieries	1900.		1899.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	Tons.	£	Tons.	£	Tons.	£	Tons.	£
Coal and Coke.								
A.A. Company	7,884	262	15,911	579	.....	.....	8,027	317
Black Jack	617	236	772	294	.....	.....	155	58
Blacksall	2,340	836	2,592	824	.....	12	552	.....
Burwood	409	81	20	6	380	25	.....	.....
Burwood No. 3	181,065	6,879	167,711	6,740	13,354	139	.....	.....
Cardiff .....	.....	.....	502	22	.....	.....	502	22
Co-operative	164,424	12,484	201,341	14,020	.....	.....	36,917	1,536
Curlewis	1,106	322	865	229	288	93	.....	.....
Dudley	83,265	4,681	5,633	285	77,632	4,396	.....	.....
Dulwich	2,548	628	3,960	818	.....	.....	1,412	290
East Maitland	67	8	48	6	19	2	.....	.....
Elanore Vale.....	26,409	1,040	32,989	1,353	.....	.....	6,580	313
Elliotts	63	20	85	40	.....	.....	22	20
Greta	74,171	5,625	53,649	4,475	20,522	1,150	.....	.....
Greta East	105,518	6,113	63,224	3,775	42,294	2,338	.....	.....
Greta South	6,127	412	5,068	335	1,059	77	.....	.....
Hetton	201,699	9,035	192,331	7,251	9,368	1,784	.....	.....
Lambton	92,914	3,209	99,071	3,575	.....	.....	6,157	366
Lambton South New	32,406	1,131	27,179	1,061	5,227	70	.....	.....
Minni.....	287,776	12,003	297,120	13,028	.....	.....	9,344	1,025
Muswellbrook.....	13	3	38	6	.....	.....	25	3
Newcastle	339,419	11,434	363,254	11,828	.....	.....	23,835	394
Northern Extended	74,768	5,874	23,028	1,145	51,740	4,729	.....	.....
Northumberland	7,691	865	5,902	601	1,789	264	.....	.....
Oak Vale	799	77	792	83	7	.....	.....	6
Pacific Co-operative	82,045	3,853	102,735	5,253	.....	.....	20,690	1,400
Purified	21,015	1,233	17,928	1,270	3,087	.....	.....	37
Rix's Creek.....	15,754	17,190	14,002	16,344	1,692	852	.....	.....
Seaham	211,909	10,458	146,332	7,707	65,577	2,751	.....	.....
Sneddon's	32,375	1,299	32,651	1,349	.....	.....	276	50
Shortland	1,903	115	304	12	1,599	103	.....	.....
West Maitland	44	6	120	46	.....	.....	76	40
Wallsend	210,537	8,236	308,854	12,607	.....	.....	98,267	4,371
Wallsend South .....	.....	.....	4,349	309	.....	.....	4,349	309
Wallsend West	157,080	6,833	131,191	5,967	25,889	866	.....	.....
Waratah.....	103,102	3,995	85,138	3,766	17,964	229	.....	.....
Wickham and Bullock Island	189,770	4,736	190,948	4,654	.....	82	1,178	.....
Total, North	2,719,082	141,068	2,598,000	131,663	339,446	19,962	218,364	10,557
Bellambi	11,408	2,284	10,526	2,270	882	5	.....	.....
Bulli	20,681	1,630	18,267	1,673	2,414	.....	.....	43
Carson's	3,648	1,050	3,190	416	458	634	.....	.....
Collins	2,645	363	2,847	417	.....	.....	202	54
Corrimal	187,266	3,111	148,497	2,517	38,769	594	.....	.....
Irondale	3,201	755	1,750	387	1,451	368	.....	.....
Lithgow Coal Association	67,609	23,160	99,036	25,231	.....	.....	31,337	2,065
Metropolitan	113,307	16,132	117,955	16,054	.....	78	4,648	.....
Mount Kembla	20,268	2,145	11,809	2,268	8,459	.....	.....	123
Mount Keira	102,092	1,509	76,925	501	26,077	1,008	.....	.....
Mount Pleasant.....	17,270	2,064	7,710	660	9,560	1,404	.....	.....
South Clifton.....	96,602	14,515	44,942	7,673	51,660	6,842	.....	.....
Wallerawang.....	2,428	768	297	99	2,131	669	.....	.....
Woonona	8,327	1,483	2,477	485	5,850	998	.....	.....
Total, South and West.....	656,752	70,975	545,228	60,660	147,711	12,600	36,187	2,285
Total, Coal and Coke	3,375,834	212,043	3,143,228	192,323	487,157	32,562	254,551	12,842
Shale.								
Hartley Vale	254	63	179	57	75	6	.....	.....
Joadja	2,909	877	3,533	1,094	.....	.....	624	217
Torbane	13,976	5,576	16,943	8,597	.....	.....	2,967	3,021
Total, Shale	17,139	6,516	20,655	9,748	75	6	3,591	3,238
Coal Re-consigned.....	13,796	2,135	20,131	2,542	.....	.....	6,335	407
Grand Total	3,406,769	220,694	3,184,014	204,613	487,232	32,568	264,477	16,487

APPENDIX 15.

STATEMENT of the Number of Bags of **WHEAT** forwarded from each Station on New South Wales Railways for the years ended 30th June, 1899 and 1900.

Stations.	1900.	1899.	Stations.	1900.	1899.
Darling Harbour	14,013	31,444	Mumbil	4,580	5,552
Marulan	728	204	Dripstone	13,895	11,715
Towrang	669	599	Wellington	36,682	47,981
Goulburn	1,352	847	Maryvale	18,893	10,061
Bredalbane	1,937	298	Geurie	26,341	32,318
Gunning	2,292	1,066	Murrumbidgee	2,336	2,873
Jerrawa	176	267	Dubbo	8,466	14,264
Yass	247	209	Narromine	66,200	41,396
Bowling	1,528	243	Trangie	3,342	265
Binalong	4,462	1,210	Nevertire	1,599	504
Galong	11,904	1,864	Nyngan	659	.....
Harden	6,800	2,176	Girilambone	265	.....
Murrumburrah	4,576	6,749	Piper's Flat	129	414
Demondrille	5,250	2,845	Capertee	68	225
Wallendbeen	23,362	9,683	Rylstone	951	315
Cootamundra	54,512	25,914	Mudgee	627	1,516
Bethungra	10,703	6,007	Carcoar	55	691
Illabo	29,253	9,904	Mandurama	2,857	1,077
Junee	6,183	2,572	Lyndhurst	8,465	2,170
Harefield	12,084	3,102	Woodstock	34,148	9,543
Bomen	11,166	1,266	Cowra	78,919	17,959
Wagga	17,072	16,740	Borenore	9,627	6,550
Uranquinty	26,949	9,775	Molong	50,636	41,887
The Rock	26,359	14,582	Mamildra	41,527	22,687
Yerong Creek	14,983	9,754	Parkes	41,181	24,774
Henty	43,773	48,573	Forbes	2,887	3,361
Culcairn	63,089	107,492	Bogan's	15,641	14,715
Geogery	12,491	21,928	Condobolin	2,941	3,184
Table Top	9,542	11,752	Singleton	330	7,182
Albury	9,865	18,897	Glennie's Creek	456	1,297
Tarago	1,223	819	Ravensthorpe	895	714
Bungendore	2,211	542	Muswellbrook	7,099	5,932
Queanbeyan	300	54	Aberdeen	3,222	1,970
Michelago	373	29	Scone	6,664	3,843
Young	19,180	7,601	Wingen	1,718	612
Koorawatha	66,340	4,072	Blandford	849	429
Gundagai	30,174	27,158	Murrurundi	504	337
Coolac	14,594	4,037	Arglen	100	49
Temora	41,505	16,363	Willow Tree	1,241	876
Old Junee	53,540	22,553	Quirindi	10,212	5,562
Coolamon	43,989	12,043	Werris Creek	7,571	2,263
Ganmain	12,469	792	Currabubula	28,228	13,262
Grong Grong	4,514	2,479	West Tamworth	24,285	9,861
Narrandera	2,393	3,998	Tamworth	7,608	9,734
Yanko	459	949	Moonbi	8,421	2,713
Whitton	467	150	Woolbrook .....	.....	28
Darlington	81	412	Walcha Road	1,420	3,668
Morundah	970	535	Uralla	1,172	1,241
Jerilderie	13,012	7,429	Armidale	1,013	150
Berrigan	38,524	28,745	Black Mountain	290	3,123
Finley	14,617	16,075	Guyra	1,402	7,818
Walla Walla	25,216	44,303	Ben Lomond	160	2,213
Brocklesby	59,155	67,264	Glencoe	5	894
Corowa	36,507	54,801	Glen Innes	31	46
Rydal .....	.....	273	Deepwater	69	60
Tarana	30	2,504	Tenterfield	382	1,065
Locksley	40	.....	Jennings	81	.....
Brewongle	11	1,144	Breeza	4,478	743
Raglan	219	957	Curlew	10,618	2,234
Perth	164	167	Gunnedah	15,304	3,051
George's Plains	2,496	641	Boggabri	5,706	839
Wimbleton	1,689	1,181	Baan Baa	1,592	133
Newbridge	7,366	3,203	Narrabri	1,079	993
Blayney	5,603	1,975	Woolabra	80	.....
Millthorpe	5,604	7,601	Moree .....	.....	660
Spring Hill	2,837	4,782	Gravesend	3,240	.....
Orange	5,850	2,706	Attunga	5,245	.....
Mullion Creek	150	759	Manilla	59,579	.....
Euchareena	6,410	3,893			
Stuart Town	457	172			
			Total	1,634,825	1,136,705

The figures for 1899 are approximate.

APPENDIX 16.

Port of Newcastle.

RETURN of the Quantity of Coal Exported from Newcastle to Foreign and Intercolonial Ports for the Year ended 30th June, 1900, compared with the same period in 1899.

Countries.	1899-1900.	1900-01.	Increase.	Decrease.
	tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
Victoria	711,693	617,085	94,608	.....
New Zealand	182,906	170,722	12,274	.....
South Australia	466,790	387,404	79,386	.....
Tasmania	94,152	66,318	27,834	.....
West Australia.....	147,873	135,098	12,775	.....
Fiji.....	12,151	14,826	.....	2,675
Queensland	46,294	33,449	12,845	.....
Total Intercolonial	1,661,949	1,424,902	237,047	.....
FOREIGN.				
Peru	37,241	38,290	.....	1,049
New Caledonia	14,334	15,872	.....	1,538
India	33,089	31,681	1,408	.....
United States	137,379	163,570	.....	26,191
Hongkong.....	13,052	23,855	.....	15,803
Mauritius	2,335	11,971	.....	9,636
Philippine Islands	78,001	112,871	.....	34,870
Chili	322,585	367,939	.....	45,354
Sandwich Islands.....	179,119	82,180	96,939	.....
Java	79,802	82,351	.....	2,549
Mexico	16,052	19,884	.....	3,832
South Sea Islands.....	5,960	8,074	.....	2,114
Singapore	48,687	61,056	.....	12,369
Other Countries	29,837	70,630	.....	40,793
Total Foreign	997,473	1,095,224	.....	97,751
Grand Total (Intercolonial and Foreign)...	2,659,422	2,520,126	139,296	.....

NUMBER of Tons and Value of Coal Exported to Foreign and Intercolonial Ports.

1899-1900.		1900-01.		Increase.	
tons.	£	tons.	£	tons.	£
2,659,422	963,708	2,520,126	874,516	139,296	89,192

FOREIGN and Intercolonial Shipping out of Newcastle.

1899-1900.		1900-01.		Number of Vessels.		Tonnage.	
Number of Vessels.	Tonnage.	Number of Vessels.	Tonnage.	Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.
1,348	1,846,169	1,366	1,782,942	.....	18	63,227	.....

APPENDIX 18.

REPORT of the Tramway Locomotive Superintendent.

Randwick, 17 July, 1900.

To the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners,—

Sir,

I have the honor to submit, for the information of the Railway Commissioners, the following report on the work performed by the Locomotive Department during the year ending 30th June last :—

SYDNEY CITY AND SUBURBAN LINES.

The rolling-stock, machinery, and plant have been maintained in efficient working order, and although the expenditure shows an increase over that of the previous year, it is mainly due to the provision made for the renewal of wornout cars.

The opening of the George-street electric tramway on 8th December, and the conversion of the steam system on the Newtown and Dulwich Hill sections to electric working on 2nd April, have resulted in a reduction of 75,768 miles in the steam-tram service for the year. It was expected that a very much larger reduction would have been possible, but the popularity of the electric cars with the travelling public, here as elsewhere, brought about a large increase in the traffic, and so marked was this that only a portion of the steam service could be withdrawn.

The following is a summary of the repairing work performed in the maintenance of the existing rolling-stock :—

Motors : 53 received general overhaul ; 64, heavy repairs ; 742, more or less extensive repairs, occupying from 1 to 8 days each, and 568 light repairs.

Cars : 103 thoroughly overhauled and repainted ; 35 repaired and partially repainted ; and 1,967 received minor repairs, occupying about 1 day each.

There were also repaired 76 trucks and road-watering tanks, as well as 122 cars for other tramway lines.

In addition to the foregoing, a very large amount of work in fitting up the new rolling-stock for the electric system was carried out, viz.,—83 motor-cars fitted with trucks, electric motors, air-brakes, and other necessary fittings ; 16 bogie motor-cars, imported from America, put together, painted, and fitted with trucks, air-brakes, and electrical equipment ; 47 trail-cars fitted with trucks, air-brakes, &c. ; 1 road-watering tank, constructed and fitted with truck, electric motors, &c.

The rolling-stock, cable, power plant, &c., on the North Shore cable tramway were maintained in good working order up to 11th February, when the system was converted to electric traction. The grip-cars have been altered to run on the King-street to Ocean-street cable tramway, and the trail-cars were fitted with the necessary gear, and continued in service as trailers behind the electric motor-cars.

The rolling-stock, machinery, and plant on the Newcastle, Kogarah to Sans Souci, and Morpeth to East Maitland lines steam tramway lines have been maintained in good working condition, and the requirements of the traffic fully met.

GEO. DOWNE,

Locomotive Superintendent.

APPENDIX 19.

Report of Engineer for Tramways.

Office of Engineer for Tramways, 20 July, 1900.

The Secretary to the Railway Commissioners,—

Sir,

I have the honor to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the Permanent-way, Works, and Buildings have been maintained in an efficient manner.

During the past year the following additional mileage has been added :—Circular Quay, along George-street, to Redfern Railway Station and Harris-street, Ultimo, 3 miles 19½ chains of double track ; North Sydney Road to Gore Hill, 1 mile 4 chains of single track ; and Neutral Bay to Military Road, 74 chains of single track.

The following lines were also duplicated :—From Edinburgh loop to Dulwich Hill, 1 mile 58 chains, exclusive of extension of 6½ chains to form a circular loop ; also the Crown-street line, from Collins-street to Cleveland-street, 22½ chains.

Total additional mileage, 10 miles 44 chains of single track.

A fair amount of relaying has been carried out during the year. The length of track laid, however, would have been greater had the work not been greatly retarded by the continuous wet weather experienced during the last few months. The following is the relaying done :—Botany line, from Cleveland-street to Waterloo, 67 chains ; Waverley line, from Ocean-street to Bondi junction, 56½ chains ; Leichhardt line, from Nelson-street to Marion-street, 1 mile 15 chains ; Dulwich Hill line, from Victoria Road to Illawarra Road, 22 chains ; also along Oxford-street (City), from College-street to Darlinghurst junction, 50½ chains. The latter line has also been repaved with wood blocks. Total length relaid, 3 miles 51 chains.

During the year the steam line from Harris-street junction to Dulwich Hill, 4 miles 42 chains, was converted to electric traction. The North Sydney cable line, from Milson's Point to Ridge-street, 1 mile 32½ chains, has also been converted electrically. The whole of the lines, therefore, north of the harbour are now worked by electricity.

A number of waiting-sheds, the Locomotive Superintendent's offices at Randwick and Bridge-street ; store and offices, Randwick ; car and engine-house and offices, Rushcutter's Bay, have been painted and renovated, and other buildings are being similarly treated.

An addition has been made to the car-house, North Sydney ; and an addition to the car-house, Rushcutter's Bay, is in progress. A large car-house at Newtown, capable of holding 112 cars of the bogie combination, or 166 of the four-wheeled enclosed type, is approaching completion.

Owing to the large amount of rain during the last three months of the year, the use of a large quantity of metal has been necessary, 15,995 tons, as against 12,325 last year.

I have, &c.,

G. R. COWDERY.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT OF THE EXPENDITURE AND
COMPARED WITH THE

DR.

TRAM

EXPENDITURE.	YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1900.	YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1899.
CITY AND SUBURBAN (STEAM).	£ s. d.	£
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY, WORKS, AND STATIONS	48,040 2 1	40,309
LOCOMOTIVE POWER	112,041 8 8	110,118
REPAIRS AND RENEWALS OF CARS, &c.	14,879 16 0	18,400
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	44,652 16 4	42,656
COMPENSATION	2,804 14 2	4,035
GENERAL CHARGES	4,156 7 4	4,476
	226 375 4 7	220 193
CITY AND SUBURBAN (ELECTRIC).		
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY AND STRUCTURES	2,174 16 10	<i>George and Harris Street Line opened 8th December, 1899.</i>
MAINTENANCE OF PLANT	10,741 6 6	<i>Dulwich Hill and St. Peters Line converted to Electric, 2nd April, 1900.</i>
POWER EXPENSES	4,608 16 11	
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	22,792 3 9	
GENERAL CHARGES	1,811 6 2	
	42,128 9 2	
TOTAL, CITY AND SUBURBAN	£ 268,503 13 9	220,193
NORTH SHORE (CABLE).	<i>Converted to Electric, 11th February, 1900.</i>	
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY, WORKS, AND STATIONS	615 8 0	2,549
POWER EXPENSES, &c.	3,189 8 8	3,949
REPAIRS AND RENEWALS OF CARS, GRIPPERS, &c.	660 12 1	1,025
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	1,683 3 1	2,602
GENERAL CHARGES	85 9 7	186
	6 224 1 5	10,311
NORTH SHORE (ELECTRIC).		
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY AND STRUCTURES	2,428 6 4	1,320
MAINTENANCE OF PLANT	3,133 16 1	1,292
POWER EXPENSES	1,983 6 11	1,372
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	6,244 15 8	3,577
GENERAL CHARGES	328 15 2	19
	14,117 0 2	7 580
TOTAL, NORTH SHORE	£ 20 341 1 7	17,891
NEWCASTLE AND PLATTSBURG (STEAM). (INCLUDING TIGHE'S HILL AND MEREWETHER.)		
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY, WORKS, AND STATIONS	2,274 18 10	1,663
LOCOMOTIVE POWER	10,280 1 8	9,496
REPAIRS AND RENEWALS OF CARS, &c.	1,895 17 10	3,478
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	4,820 0 6	4,630
GENERAL CHARGES	189 1 10	158
	19,410 0 6	19 425
ASHFIELD TO ENFIELD (STEAM).		
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY, WORKS, AND STATIONS	293 2 5	324
LOCOMOTIVE POWER	1,081 3 4	1,079
REPAIRS AND RENEWALS OF CARS, &c.	107 8 3	71
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	346 13 11	367
GENERAL CHARGES	28 17 8	29
	1,857 5 7	1 870
OCEAN-STREET TO KING-STREET (CABLE).		
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY, WORKS, AND STATIONS	3,270 3 5	1,450
POWER EXPENSES, &c.	10,289 3 9	10,811
REPAIRS AND RENEWALS OF CARS AND GRIPPERS	5,698 14 2	6,654
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	9,303 3 8	7,899
	28,561 5 0	26 814
ROSE BAY (ELECTRIC).		
To MAINTENANCE OF WAY AND STRUCTURES	63 11 5	128
MAINTENANCE OF PLANT	691 10 10	395
POWER EXPENSES	402 4 4	332
TRAFFIC EXPENSES	1,290 0 2	974
	2,453 6 9	1,829
TOTAL WORKING EXPENSES	£ 341,126 13 4	288,022
BALANCE, NET PROFIT AFTER PAYING WORKING EXPENSES.	£ 68,597 10 7	60,534
GRAND TOTAL	£ 409,724 3 11	348,556

REVENUE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1900, AS
CORRESPONDING PERIOD 1898-1899.

WAYS.

CR.

REVENUE.	YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1900.	YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 1899.
CITY AND SUBURBAN (STEAM).	£ s. d.	£
<p style="text-align: center;">PASSENGER.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1900. 1899.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No. No.</p>		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 40,224,000 41,021,150	253 373 9 0	262,045
CITY AND SUBURBAN (ELECTRIC).		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 13,248,533	62,556 14 4	.....
TOTAL, CITY AND SUBURBAN ...	315 930 9 4	262,045
NORTH SHORE (CABLE).		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 1,501,737 2,053,603	8 664 14 4	12,478
NORTH SHORE (ELECTRIC).		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 2 945,444 1,467,715	17,429 13 2	10,519
TOTAL, NORTH SHORE.....	26,094 7 6	22,997
NEWCASTLE AND PLATTSBURG (STEAM). (INCLUDING TICHE'S HILL AND MEREWETHER.)		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 2,700,365 2,398,182	25 673 1 0	24,455
ASHFIELD TO ENFIELD (STEAM).		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 212,363 182,341	1,308 15 3	1,168
OCEAN-STREET TO KING-STREET (CABLE).		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 4,732,591 4,116,175	37,466 16 10	35,611
ROSE BAY (ELECTRIC).		
By PASSENGERS, &c. ... 681,301 466,287	3 251 0 0	2,282
GRAND TOTAL... 66,244,334 51,705,453	409,724 3 11	348,556

THOMAS HALL,
Chief Accountant.

APPENDIX 21.

SCHEDULES under Working Expenses for the Year ended 30th June, 1900, as compared with the corresponding period in 1898-1899.

CITY AND SUBURBAN STEAM TRAMWAYS.

Branches.	Year ended 30 June, 1900.	Year ended 30 June, 1899.	Branches.	Year ended 30 June, 1900.	Year ended 30 June, 1899.
Maintenance of Way and Works.			Traffic Expenses.		
	£	£		£	£
Salaries, office expenses, and general superintendence	1,767	1,653	Traffic Manager's office and staff	2,187	2,037
Maintenance and renewals of permanent way, viz. :	25,370	24,474	Clerks	2,147	1,988
{ Wages	20,141	13,783	Staffmen, pointsmen, and flagmen	3,938	3,635
{ Materials	762	399	Conductors	22,657	22,371
Repairs and renewals of buildings, &c.			Car-cleaners, shunters, and lamp-trimmers ..	3,689	3,729
			Stores	1,737	1,360
£	48,040	40,309	Advertising, printing, and stationery	2,618	2,240
			Travelling and incidental expenses	289	304
			Sundries	4,983	4,802
			Greasing and oiling { Wages	241	245
			{ Materials	167	144
			£	44,653	42,855
Locomotive Power.			Compensation.		
Superintendence and clerks	2,327	2,261	For personal injury	2,649	3,807
Foremen and Clerks	1,870	1,887	For damage to vehicles, &c.	156	228
Drivers and firemen	46,326	47,249	£	2,805	4,035
Cleaners, coalmen, and labourers	8,386	8,575			
Coal, coke, and wood	22,330	21,118	Gratuities to widows and children of employees who have met with accident, also gratuities to staff on retirement and payments to the Civil Service Fund on account of pension allowance.....	130	210
Water	1,815	1,814			
Oil, tallow, waste, &c.	2,752	2,533	General Expenses.		
Sundries	1,375	1,447	Commissioners, Secretary, and office staff	1,332	1,332
Repairs and renewals of motors	18,830	19,497	Accountant's Branch	1,250	1,250
{ Wages			Audit Branch	520	511
{ Materials	5,930	3,737	Stores Branch	498	490
£	112,041	110,118	Sundries	426	683
			£	4,026	4,266
Cars.			GRAND TOTAL.....		
Car repairs and renewals ... { Wages	4,810	6,960	£	226,375	220,193
{ Materials	9,870	11,440			
£	14,680	18,400			

APPENDIX 22.

SCHEDULES under Working Expenses.

CITY AND SUBURBAN ELECTRIC LINES.

(George and Harris Street Line from the 8th December, 1899, to the 30th June, 1900, inclusive, and Dulwich Hill and St. Peters Lines from the 2nd April, 1900, to the 30th June, 1900, inclusive.)

Particulars.	Amount.	Total.	Particulars.	Amount.	Total.	
Maintenance of Way and Structures.			Traffic Expenses.			
Repairs to Permanent way	£ 1,705	£ 2,175	Superintendence, &c.	711	£ 22,793	
" Overhead Wiring, &c.	410		Wages of Conductors	8,780		
" Buildings and Improvements	60		" Motor-men	7,915		
Maintenance of Plant.			" Car-house Employees	1,075		
Repairs to Power Plant.....	842	£ 10,741	" Pointsmen, Signalmen, and others	803		
" Cars	9,834		Car and Motor Supplies	882		
" Shop Tools and Machinery	65		Miscellaneous Expenses, including Uniforms, Printing Tickets, &c.....	2,304		
Power Expenses.			Cleaning, Watering, and Sanding Way	424		
Power-house—Wages	2,168	£ 4,609	General Charges.			
" Fuel	1,441		General Superintendence and Clerks	1,238		£ 1,811
" Water	284		Injuries and Damages	322		
" Lubricants and Waste	352		Miscellaneous Expenses	251		
" Miscellaneous Expenses	364		Total			
			£ 42,129			

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APPENDIX 23.
SCHEDULES under Working Expenses.
NORTH SHORE TRAM LINES.

For the year ended the 30th June, 1900, as compared with the corresponding period in 1898-1899.

North Shore Cable Line. (Converted to Electric, commenced running under new system from 11th February, 1900.)			North Shore Electric, All Lines.		
Branches.	From 1 July, 1899, to 10 February, 1900.	Year ended 30 June, 1899.	Branches.	Year ended 30 June, 1900.	Year ended 30 June, 1899.
Permanent Way Branch.	£	£	Maintenance of Way and Structures.	£	£
Superintendence and Office Expenses	59	55	Repairs to Permanent Way	1,950	1,203
Repairs and Renewals of Line, Sidings, Buildings, &c.	556	2,494	" Overhead Wiring	438	113
	£ 615	2,549	" Buildings and Improvements	38	4
				£ 2,426	1,320
Locomotive Branch.			Maintenance of Plant.		
RUNNING, &c.			Repairs to Power-plant	533	197
Superintendence and Office Expenses	203	238	" Cars	2,593	1,095
Repairs to Machinery, Tools, &c.	56	56	Shop-tools and Machinery	3	...
Wages of Drivers, Firemen, Cleaners, Grippers, and others	1,650	2,294		£ 3,134	1,292
Cost of Fuel, Running Stores, &c.	574	655	Power Expenses.		
Repairs to Stationary Engines, Cables, &c.	762	706	Power-house Wages	1,017	701
	£ 3,189	3,949	" Fuel	515	350
			" Water	115	71
Repairs to Cars, Grippers, &c.	651	1,025	" Lubricants, Waste, &c.	108	47
			" Miscellaneous Expenses	223	203
Traffic Branch.				£ 1,953	1,372
Management and Office Expenses	508	665	Traffic Expenses.		
Wages of Conductors and others	920	1,453	Superintendence	293	.....
Sundry charges, including Stores, &c.	255	479	Wages of Conductors	1,894	1,189
	£ 1,683	2,602	" Motor-men	2,146	1,423
			" Car-house Employees	457	205
General Charges.			" Pointsmen, Signalmen, and Others	313	184
Proportion of General Establishment, &c.	86	186	Car and Motor Supplies	174	68
			Miscellaneous Expenses, including Uniforms, Printing Tickets, &c.	470	194
GRAND TOTAL	£ 6,224	10,311	Cleaning, Watering, and Sanding Way	498	314
				£ 6,245	3,577
			General Charges.		
			General Superintendence	215	.....
			Injuries and Damages	47	19
			Miscellaneous Expenses	67
				£ 329	19
			GRAND TOTAL	£ 14,117	7,580

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APPENDIX 24.

NEWCASTLE.—Plattsburg, Tighe's Hill, and Merewether Lines (Steam).

For the Year ended the 30th June, 1900, as compared with the corresponding period 1898-1899.

Branches.	Year ended 30 June, 1900.	Year ended 30 June, 1899.
Permanent Way Branch.		
Superintendence and Office Expenses.....	£ 42	£ 39
Maintenance of Lines, Sidings, Bridges, Buildings, &c.	2,233	1,624
£	2,275	1,663
Locomotive Branch.		
Locomotive Superintendent, Foremen, and Clerks	267	265
Locomotive Drivers, Firemen, Cleaners, and others.....	5,393	5,309
Coal, Coke, Water, Oil, Tallow, Waste, &c.	2,291	2,040
Repairs and Renewals of Engines	2,309	1,882
£	10,260	9,496
Repairs and Renewals of Cars, &c.	1,896	3,478
Traffic Branch.		
Traffic Manager and Office Staff	668	647
Conductors, Staffmen, Pointsmen, Car-cleaners, &c.	3,434	3,404
Sundry charges, including Stores, &c.....	718	579
£	4,820	4,630
General Charges.		
Proportion of General Establishment, &c.....	159	158
GRAND TOTAL	£ 19,410	19,425

APPENDIX 25.

The working of the Tram-lines in sections for the year ended 30th June, 1900, as compared with corresponding period in 1899 and 1888, as under:—

	1900.	1899.	1888
CITY AND SUBURBAN—STEAM.			
<i>Length, 34 miles 39 chains.</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment	£869,545	£977,107	£742,555
Gross Revenue	£253,373	£262,045	£221,060
Working Expenses	£226,375	£220,193	£204,027
Profit on Working	£26,998	£41,852	£16,833
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	89·34	84·03	92·38
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£2 16 4	£4 5 8	£2 6 4
CITY AND SUBURBAN—ELECTRIC.			
<i>Length, 8 miles 62 chains.</i>			
<i>(Includes George and Harris Streets, Dulwich Hill, and St. Peters Lines.—Opened 8 December and 2 April respectively.)</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment	£468,461		
Gross Revenue	£62,557		
Working Expenses	£42,129	Not open.	Not open.
Profit on Working	£20,428		
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	67·34		
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£9 19 10		
NORTH SHORE—CABLE.			
<i>Length, 1 mile 31 chains.</i>			
<i>(Included under Electric, as from the 11th February, 1900.)</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment*	Included under Electric. £84,663	£84,663	£71,519
Gross Revenue	£8,665	£12,478	£7,248
Working Expenses	£6,224	£10,311	£6,833
Profit on Working	£2,441	£2,167	£415
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	71·83	82·63	94·26
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£4 10 8	£2 11 2	£0 11 7
NORTH SHORE—ELECTRIC.			
<i>Length, 10 miles 18 chains.</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment*	£222,533	£100,307	
Gross Revenue	£17,429	£10,519	
Working Expenses	£14,117	£7,580	Not open.
Profit on Working	£3,312	£2,939	
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	81·00	72·06	
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£2 4 3	£2 18 7	
NEWCASTLE TO PLATTSBURG—STEAM.			
<i>Merewether and Tighe's Hill Sections.</i>			
<i>Length, 12 miles 1 chain.</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment	£139,085	£138,204	£63,170
Gross Revenue	£25,673	£24,455	£8,211
Working Expenses	£19,410	£19,425	£8,136
Profit on Working	£6,263	£5,030	£75
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	75·60	79·43	99·08
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£4 10 1	£3 12 9	£0 2 4
ASHFIELD TO ENFIELD—STEAM.			
<i>Length, 2 miles 10 chains.</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment	£17,061	£16,371	
Gross Revenue	£1,309	£1,166	
Working Expenses	£1,857	£1,870	Not open.
Interest on Capital	£597	£573	
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	141·86	160·38	
LOSS ON WORKING	£1,145	£1,277	
OCEAN-STREET—CABLE.			
<i>Length, 2 miles 32 chains.</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment	£186,216	£179,160	
Gross Revenue	£37,467	£35,611	
Working Expenses	£28,562	£26,814	Not open.
Profit on Working	£8,905	£8,797	
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	76·23	75·30	
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£4 15 8	£4 18 2	
ROSE BAY—ELECTRIC.			
<i>Length, 1 mile 24 chains.</i>			
Total Cost of Construction and Equipment	£21,819	£20,531	
Gross Revenue	£3,251	£2,282	
Working Expenses	£2,453	£1,829	Not open.
Profit on Working	£798	£453	
Percentage, Working Cost to Revenue	75·45	80·15	
PERCENTAGE OF PROFIT TO CAPITAL INVESTED	£3 13 2	£2 18 10	

* Includes £37,321 Cable Capital on which interest was charged to that line to the 11th February, and the balance to the Electric.

APPENDIX 26.

RETURN showing the Number of City and Suburban Passenger Fares collected, Tram Mileage, Earnings, Working Expenses, Percentage of Working Cost to Earnings, Capital Spent on lines open, and Interest on Capital Invested for each year from 1879 to 1900 inclusive.

CITY AND SUBURBAN.

Year.	Length of Line.	Number of Passenger Fares collected.	Tram mileage.	Total Earnings.	Working Expenses.	Earnings per Tram Mile.	Working Cost per Tram Mile.	Percentage of Working Cost to Gross Earnings.	Net Earnings.	Capital spent on lines open.	Interest on Capital invested
1879*	Miles. 1½	443,341	13,270	£ 4,416	£ 2,278	79·87	41·19	51·59	£ 2,138	£ 22,269	33·00
1880	4	2,086,897	84,074	18,980	13,444	54·18	38·38	70·83	5,536	60,218	12·34
1881	9½	7,090,125	296,906	62,549	52,107	50·56	42·12	83·31	10,442	160,450	6·16
1882	22	15,269,100	670,649	126,202	103,186	45·16	36·91	81·72	23,066	412,561	6·80
1883	25	25,684,285	1,076,096	190,699	178,877	42·53	39·89	93·80	11,822	544,105	2·22
1884	27½	30,202,303	1,242,491	219,942	215,167	42·48	41·56	97·83	4,775	643,111	0·76
1885	27½	†39,594,753	1,220,500	223,340	207,995	43·91	40·90	93·13	15,345	708,109	2·17
1886	27½	52,977,578	1,222,943	226,367	201,737	44·42	39·59	89·12	24,630	742,113	3·37
1887	29½	60,103,256	1,220,026	214,125	201,468	42·12	39·63	94·08	12,657	731,582	1·76
1888	29½	51,563,197	1,246,543	221,060	204,227	42·56	39·32	92·38	16,833	742,555	2·22
1889	29½	52,810,026	1,338,386	225,833	206,092	40·49	36·95	91·25	19,741	771,255	2·56
1890	30½	57,463,650	1,474,646	249,508	207,517	40·60	36·46	83·17	41,991	790,555	5·31
1891	33½	62,676,636	1,553,018	270,365	221,505	41·78	34·23	81·92	48,860	857,455	5·74
1892	37	65,299,063	1,613,443	279,321	229,145	41·55	34·09	82·04	50,176	932,907	6·54
1893	38	63,588,885	1,681,232	271,041	214,824	38·69	30·67	79·26	56,217	947,775	5·94
1894	40½	58,773,094	1,737,846	250,809	206,554	34·64	28·53	82·35	44,255	954,035	4·64
1895	40½	54,173,917	1,740,235	230,583	186,081	31·80	25·66	80·70	44,502	962,037	4·62
1896	40½	53,317,979	1,845,626	227,525	187,811	29·59	24·42	82·54	39,714	961,778	4·13
1897	40½	55,859,740	2,121,017	233,023	195,142	26·93	22·08	81·98	42,881	968,925	4·43
1898	40½	56,319,743	2,198,351	239,858	201,904	26·18	22·04	84·18	37,954	973,419	3·90
1899	40½	61,563,035	2,329,751	262,045	220,143	26·99	22·68	84·03	41,852	977,107	4·28
1900	43½	No of Passengers. 53,470,533	3,106,185	315,930	263,504	21·41	20·75	84·09	47,426	1,338,006	4·06

* The line was opened for three and a half months only in 1879, and for part of this period was worked with horse-power.
† Up to the year 1885, 1d. cash fares and 2d. tickets were counted as single fares; from 1886, inclusive, all tickets issued were at 1d. values, and cash fares paid are in this Return calculated at same rate.

APPENDIX 27.

RETURN of the total Amount paid for Wages on the different Branches of the Tramways, year ended 30th June, 1900 and 1899.

Branches.	1900.	1899.
TRAMWAYS:—	£	£
Maintenance Branch	58,394	34,526
Locomotive "	106,751	102,187
Traffic "	70,403	49,719
TOTAL, TRAMWAYS	£ 235,548	£ 186,432

NOTE.—Includes all wages paid by the Department, whether on maintenance or new work.

APPENDIX 28.

TRAMWAY Rolling Stock.

	Motors.	Steam cars.	Cable.		Electric.		Trucks.	Total.
			Grip.	Trail.	Motor.	Trail.		
Stock, 30th June, 1899.....	114	214	41	50	20	18	23	480
Stock, 30th June, 1900.....	114	171	33	33	140	74	24	589

1c £23,339 were charged to Working Expenses, and renewed 43 steam cars, cost £15,283.

APPENDIX 29.

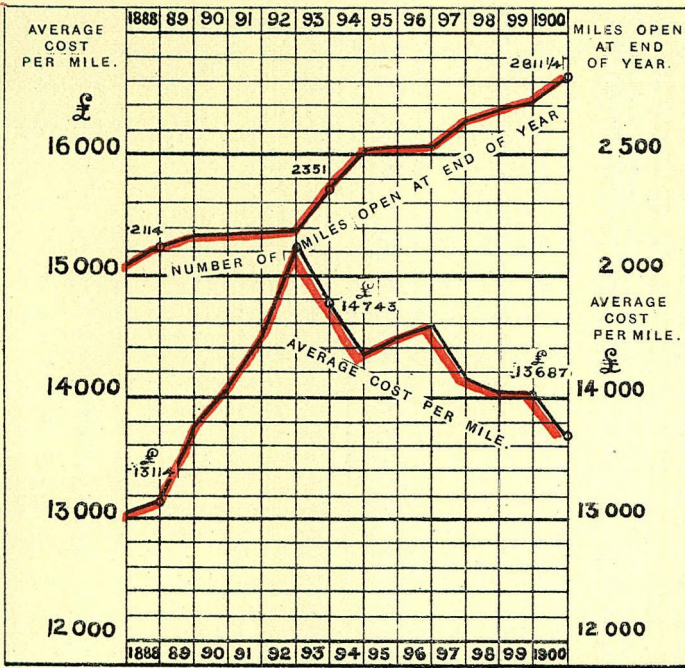
STATEMENT showing date of opening and length of line of the different sections of the New South Wales Tramways, to 30th June, 1900.

		Mls. Chs.	
RAILWAY TO BRIDGE STREET.			
15 Aug., 1882	Bridge-street to Hunter-street	0	19
15 Sept., 1879	Hunter-street to Railway Junction	1	34
		1	53
RANDWICK AND COOGEE.			
14 Sept., 1880	Liverpool-street Junction to Darlinghurst Junction	0	43
14 " 1880	Darlinghurst Junction to Randwick Racecourse	2	6
19 Mar., 1881	Randwick Racecourse to High-street	1	6
25 Jan., 1883	High-street to Coogee	1	34
	Cricket Ground Loop	0	24
		5	33
WAVERLEY AND BONDI.			
12 Mar., 1881	Darlinghurst Junction to Ocean-street	1	47
13 April, 1881	Ocean-street to Waverley old Terminus	1	25
4 June, 1887	Waverley old Terminus to Macpherson-street Junction	0	12
20 Oct., 1890	Macpherson-street Junction to Waverley Cemetery	0	49
24 May, 1884	Bondi Junction to Fletcher-street	1	12
28 Sept., 1887	Fletcher-street to Bondi Aquarium Junction	0	25
19 Feb., 1894	Bondi Aquarium Junction to Bondi Beach	0	45
		5	55
WAVERLEY TO RANDWICK.			
4 June, 1887	Macpherson-street Junction to Allison Road Junction	1	18
CROWN STREET TO CLEVELAND STREET.			
15 Sept., 1881	Oxford-street to Cleveland-street	0	66
24 Aug., 1896	Crown-street into Cleveland-street	0	4
		0	70
RAILWAY STATION TO GLEBE AND FOREST LODGE.			
15 Aug., 1882	East side Terminus-street to Forest Lodge Junction	0	49
15 " 1882	Forest Lodge Junction to St. John's Road	0	82
15 " 1882	St. John's Road to Forest Lodge (Pymont Bridge Road)	0	25
15 " 1882	Glebe Junction to Glebe Point old Terminus	0	78
12 Dec., 1896	Glebe Point old Terminus to Leichhardt-street	0	4
		2	28
FOREST LODGE TO BALMAIN.			
2 May, 1892	Forest Lodge Junction to Merton-street	1	58
24 Oct., 1892	Merton-street to Gladstone Park (Balmain)	1	8
		2	66
NEWTOWN TO DULWICH HILL.			
2 Oct., 1882	Newtown Junction to Newtown Bridge	1	27
31 Dec., 1881	Newtown Bridge to Marrickville (Illawarra Road)	1	69
14 Aug., 1889	Marrickville to Dulwich Hill	0	75
		4	11
FOREST LODGE JUNCTION TO LEICHHARDT, FIVE DOCK, AND ABBOTSFORD.			
18 June, 1883	Forest Lodge Junction to Johnson-street	1	33
1 May, 1884	Johnson-street to Short-street	1	1
10 Dec., 1887	Short-street to Leichhardt Terminus	0	39
14 Oct., 1890	Marion-street Junction to Five Dock	2	39
1 Aug., 1893	Five Dock to Abbotsford	1	25
		6	57
RAILWAY STATION JUNCTION TO BOTANY.			
17 May, 1882	Devonshire-street Junction to Botany Terminus	6	65

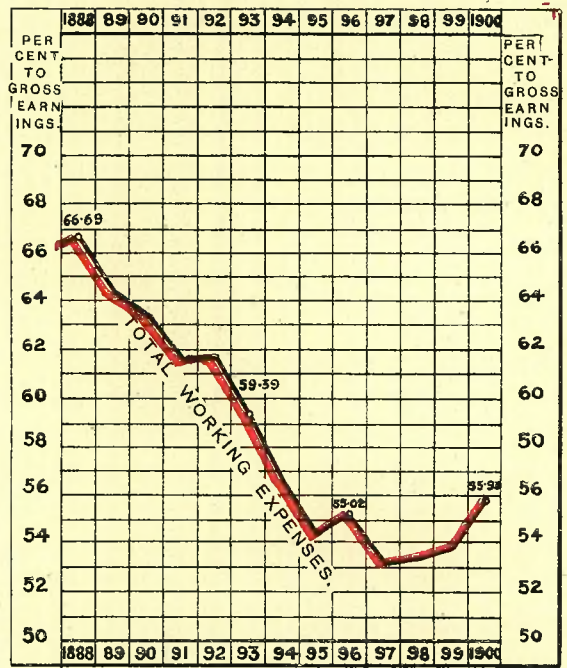
		Mls. Chs.
NEWTOWN BRIDGE TO ST. PETERS.		
24 Dec., 1891	Newtown Bridge to St. Peters	0 63
REDFERN TO MOORE PARK.		
25 Aug., 1891	Castlereagh-street to Junction with Randwick Line	1 6
" "	Cricket Ground Loop	0 20
		1 26
ASHFIELD TO ENFIELD.		
15 Sept., 1899	Ashfield Railway Station to Liverpool Road	0 12
23 " 1891	Liverpool Road to Enfield	1 78
		2 10
OCEAN-STREET.		
19 Sept., 1894	King-street to Ocean-street	2 32
ROSE BAY.		
4 Oct., 1898	Ocean-street to Rose Bay	1 24
NORTH SHORE.		
22 May, 1886	Milson's Point to Ridge-street	1 31
17 July, 1893	Ridge-street to Lane Cove Road	0 60
25 April, 1898	Lane Cove Road to Willoughby	2 44
20 Sept., 1893	Falcon-street Junction to Spit Road Junction	2 6
1 Mar., 1897	Spit Road Junction to Mosmans	1 39
		8 20
GORE HILL.		
21 Feb., 1900	Lane Cove Junction to Gore Hill	1 4
NEUTRAL BAY.		
25 June, 1900	Neutral Bay Junction to Neutral Bay... ..	0 74
GEORGE STREET.		
8 Dec., 1899	Circular Quay to John-street (Pymont)	3 20
	George-street Junction to Railway	0 16
		3 36
NEWCASTLE.		
31 Dec., 1887	Perkin's-street to Plattsburg	7 31
23 " 1893	Perkin's-street to Parnell Place	0 62
19 April, 1894	Union-street to Merewether	1 69
19 " 1894	Linnell-street to Tighe's Hill	1 79
		12 1
TOTAL		71 26

RAILWAYS

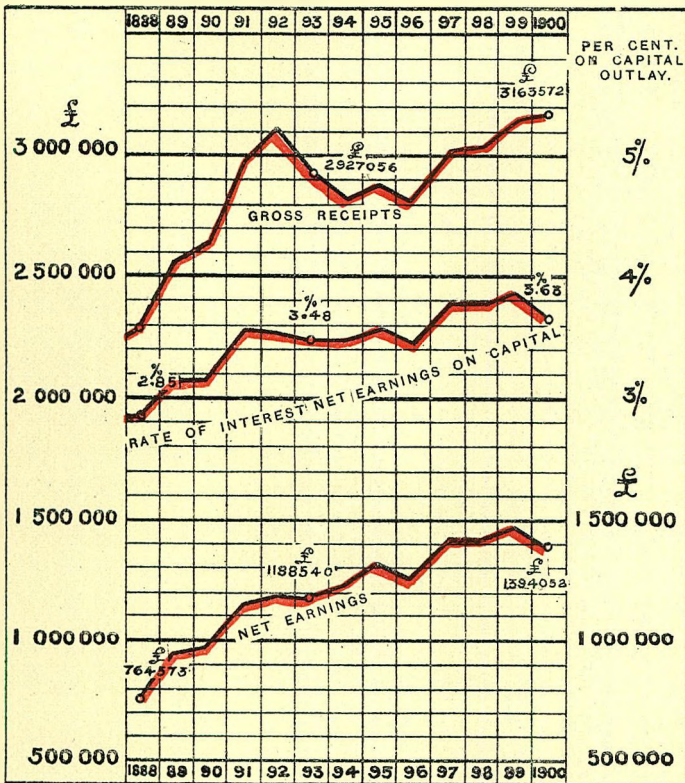
MILES OPEN AND AVERAGE COST PER MILE.



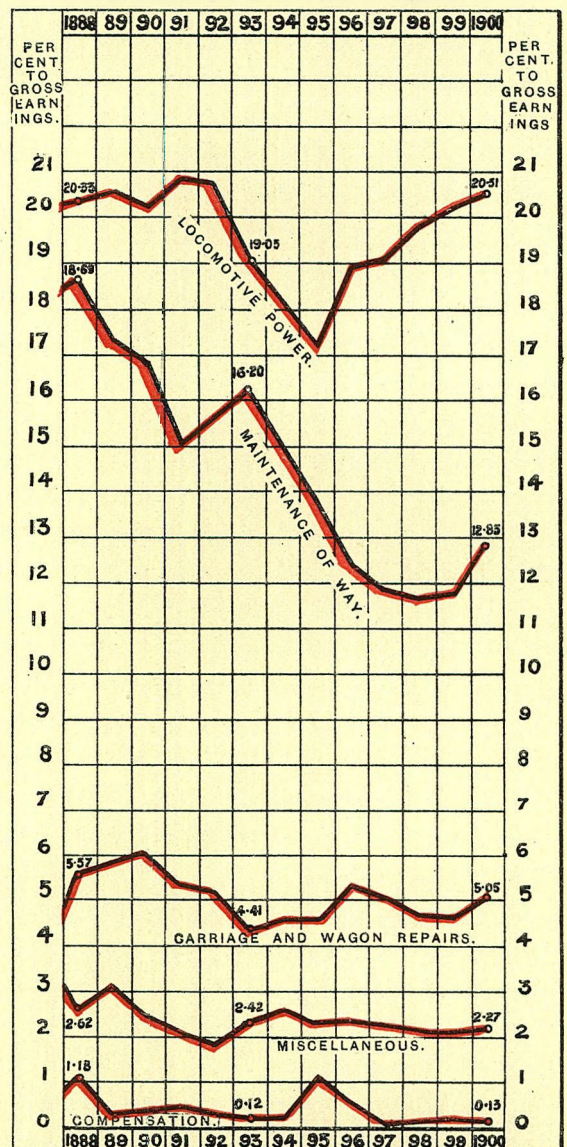
WORKING EXPENSES % OF GROSS EARNINGS.



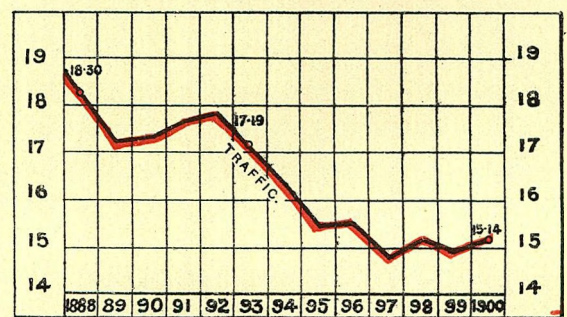
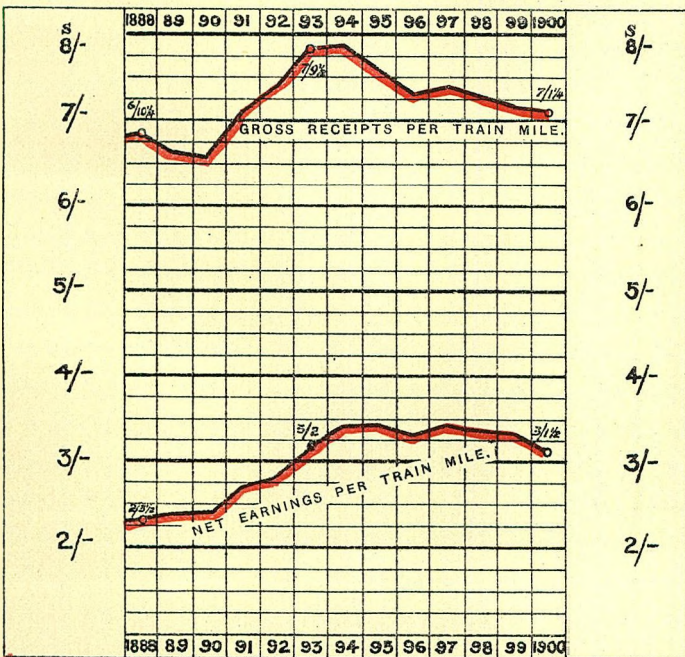
GROSS AND NET EARNINGS



DEPARTMENTAL WORKING EXPENSES.



GROSS AND NET EARNINGS PER TRAIN MILE.





MAP
 SHEWING THE PRINCIPAL
RAILWAY SYSTEMS
 OF
AUSTRALIA
 1900
 SCALE

STATURE 0 10 20 30 40 MILES

Railway Lines shown thus



MAP
of
NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAYS
showing
COACH AND OTHER ROUTES FROM THE VARIOUS STATIONS

Scale, 60 Miles to an Inch

- Explanation
- Railway lines marked thus
 - Coach routes do do
 - Railways under construction do do

1900

APPENDIX.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 79 of the Railway Act, showing the Appointments of Employees from the 1st July, 1899, to the 30th June, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1890.				
TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH.				
29 Mar.	Moanson, Francis	Office boy	10/- per week	Vice J. McCulloch.
1 April	McCarthy, Charles A.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 May	Easton, Alexander	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice R. Dacey.
1 "	Weekley, Alfred V.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice E. Fisher.
14 "	Swinbourne, Charles A.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice P. Diamond.
11 June	Whitehead, Edward J.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	
1899.				
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
1 July	Piggott, Charles	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Walsh.
3 "	Bendall, Frederick	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice F. Hayler.
5 "	Woodbury, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice P. McGill.
5 "	Thornicroft, Henry	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice J. Duggan.
7 "	Ward, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice G. Collins.
11 "	Dalley, Thomas	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice H. Sawkins.
14 "	Doughan, Hugh	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice E. Doughan.
19 "	Beddoe, Francis	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Heap.
22 "	Moore, Luke	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Hastie.
24 "	Twiford, Ernest	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Betts.
21 "	Wright, Cecil	Messenger	10/- per week	
2 Aug.	Edsir, Jonathan	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Smith.
21 "	Graham, Frederick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Breen.
29 "	Thomas, John	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice H. Hunting.
2 Sept.	Rilley, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice T. Leahy.
4 "	McKenzie, David	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice J. Gaultfoyle.
11 "	Peacock, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Robinson.
11 "	Mcneary, Albert	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice G. Webster.
18 "	Abrahams, Robert	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Leape.
29 "	Woolfe, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice D. McGinley.
29 "	Yarham, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice B. Ryder.
4 Oct.	Baker, Alfred	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Acheson.
12 "	Watson, Albert	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice G. Spear.
13 "	Hyde, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Haines.
13 "	Handcock, Peter	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Jamieson.
16 "	Randell, Frederick	Fettler	6/6 per day	
16 "	Good, Daniel	Fettler	7/0 per day	
20 "	Robertson, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Spike.
31 "	Dowd, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
31 "	Braggett, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	
3 Nov.	Roser, William	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice M. Carroll.
9 "	Sweeney, Patrick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice T. Bath.
10 "	Dawes, Walter	Labourer	6/6 per day	
14 "	Lowing, William	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice J. Cook.
15 "	Jeffrey, Arthur	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice P. Egan.
24 "	Hudson, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	Vice J. Crofts.
25 "	Hogan, Patrick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Goddard.
1 Dec.	Nelson, Alexander	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice R. Daly.
1 "	Curtis, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Long.
1 "	Sharpe, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 "	Fisher, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Norris.
11 "	Peavey, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Stanlan.
11 "	Liddle, Neil	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Roche, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice P. Wright.
14 "	Sorrell, Thomas	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice M. Gearing.
15 "	Harris, Arthur	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice M. Reilly.
15 "	Coaldrake, William	Bridge carpenter	8/- per day	
15 "	Keavors, Alfred	Timber inspector	7/- per day	
18 "	Leaver, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
18 "	Beddoe, Benjamin	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Bridger.
18 "	Hoare, Benjamin	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Veness
20 "	Spinks, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
21 "	Moran, Lawrence	Labourer	6/6 per day	
21 "	Lindsay, Benjamin	Painter	9/- per day	
22 "	Bendall, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
22 "	Callaway, Charles	Labourer	6/6 per day	
28 "	Taylor, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
28 "	Taylor, Henry	Assistant driller	5/- per day	
29 "	Davies, Peter	Carpenter	9/- per day	
1900.				
1 Jan.	Malcolm, Roderick	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1 "	Jeston, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	
3 "	Jones, Frederick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice G. Chambers.
3 "	Cook, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	
4 "	Johns, William	Carpenter	9/- per day	
4 "	Gower, William	Striker	7/- per day	
4 "	Johnson, George	Labourer	7/- per day	
5 "	McKenzie, Kenneth	Tool collector	3/- per day	Vice G. James.
6 "	Wiburd, Amos	Carpenter	8/- per day	
5 "	Bauer, Walter	Labourer	6/6 per day	
5 "	Imms, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
8 "	Bewes, Peter	Painter	8/- per day	
8 "	Goman, George	Painter	8/- per day	
8 "	Hogg, Andrew	Painter	8/- per day	
8 "	Huggan, Daniel	Labourer	6/6 per day	
10 "	Iye, Albert	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Costello, Patrick	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Ewing, John	Machinist	8/- per day	
19 "	Ellis, Edwin	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Lewis.
19 "	Turner, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	
19 "	Kelly, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	
23 "	Lansdowne, Reginald	Office boy	9/- per day	Vice E. Walker.
25 "	McGill, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1 Feb.	Glover, Clarence	Labourer	6/6 per day	
2 "	Hudson, Charles	Fettler	7/6 per day	Vice J. Flanagan.
2 "	Quetch, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	
2 "	Powor, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	
2 "	Thomas, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
6 "	Coote, Ernest	Office boy	2/- per day	
6 "	Irwin, Alexander	Fettler	7/6 per day	
7 "	Green, Benjamin	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 "	Father, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	
7 "	Walsh, Daniel	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 "	King, Samuel	Labourer	6/6 per day	
13 "	Bryant, Samuel	Fettler	7/6 per day	
16 "	Matthews, Gena	Office cleaner	25/- per week	Vice E. Cronack.
22 "	Long, Denis	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Duggan, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH—continued.				
6 Mar.	Day, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	
7 "	McKenzie, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
9 "	Nash, Edward	Fettler	7/6 per day	
9 "	Sawyer, Arthur	Labourer	6/6 per day	
9 "	Pearce, Herbert	Labourer	6/6 per day	
15 "	Gosden, Henry	Labourer	6/0 per day	Vice P. Hamill.
15 "	Wood, William	Labourer	6/0 per day	Vice W. Taylor.
15 "	Guy, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. McMillan.
15 "	Morris, Owen	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Sheedy
17 "	Bastable, Charles	Fettler	7/6 per day	
19 "	Wilson, William	Carpenter	9/- per day	
19 "	Harrison, Ivan	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice R. Forward.
23 "	Roberts, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Lander, Herbert	Carpenter	10/- per day	
20 "	Betts, David	Labourer	6/6 per day	
2 April	Ferns, Henry	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice F. Cotter.
8 "	Roach, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	
10 "	Finns, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice B. Madin.
11 "	Rowlands, Frederick	Labourer	6/6 per day	
13 "	Wessell, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Higgins
13 "	James, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Clarke.
10 "	Quelch, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice M. Fogarty.
23 "	Sellick, Emanuel	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice F. McCann
27 "	Leitch, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Martin.
3 May	Bedford, George	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice A. Ladd.
6 "	Higham, Walter	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice T. Fryar.
7 "	Knight, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Moore.
9 "	O'Brien, Edward	Labourer	8/6 per day	
11 "	Brown, Ernest	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Perkins.
14 "	Hannan, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	
16 "	Miles, James	Labourer	6/0 per day	Vice G. Ross.
18 "	Dunn, Arthur	Blacksmith	9/- per day	
25 "	McMillan, Angus	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Crabtree.
1 June	Hathaway, Henry	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1 "	Price, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Farquharson
1 "	Cox, David	Labourer	6/6 per day	
4 "	Perrin, John	Tool collector	3/- per day	Vice J. Cook
8 "	Hammond, Leonard	Labourer	6/6 per day	
8 "	Pearce, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Hartigan
8 "	Whelan, Peter	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Hughes.
9 "	Taper, John	Bridge ganger	10/6 per day	
15 "	Cooke, Thomas	Bricklayer	11/- per day	
18 "	Bain, William	Carpenter	9/- per day	Vice E. Woolcott
18 "	Ryan, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Smith
19 "	McGoldrick, William	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice J. Farry.
25 "	Goodwin, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Mills.
1899.				
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
1 July	Auton, Frederick	Cleaner	5/- per day	
1 "	Fleck, Edwin	Cleaner	5/- per day	
3 "	McNeil, George	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
4 "	McArthur, George	Electric light attendant	5/- per day	Vice W. Marrant.
14 "	Pullham, James	Fuelman	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
14 "	Gibbens, Martin	Messenger	10/6 per week	Vice J. Miller.
18 "	Tadeswell, Morris	Carriage builder	10/- per day	Vice W. Baker.
19 "	Butcher, Edwin	Boilermakers' assistant	6/8 per day	Vice T. Grimes.
19 "	Bronnand, James	Fitter	9/6 per day	Vice H. C. Edwards.
20 "	McShane, William	Cleaner	5/- per day	
21 "	Pensley, Charles H.	Call boy	2/6 per day	Vice G. Garratt.
24 "	Beveridge, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
25 "	Lynch, John L.	Apprentice	10d. per day	
25 "	Norris, Frederick	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Northcott, Julian	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Koch, Heinrich	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Cosgrove, John	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Dean, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Maxwell, Robert	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Bathgate, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Cobb, John	Apprentice	10d. per day	
27 "	Simmonds, Herbert	Shop boy	1/9 per day	
27 "	Maloney, Mrs.	Office cleaner	£1 per week	Vice J. Miller.
27 "	Vernon, Alexis	Apprentice	10d. per day	
27 "	Eekersley, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
1 Aug.	Keggen, James	Apprentice	1/3 per day	
1 "	Morrison, David	Apprentice	10d. per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
1 "	Hinds, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	
2 "	Brown, Frederick	Apprentice	10d. per day	
2 "	Russell, Alexander	Fitter	9/6 per day	Vice J. Dickson.
4 "	Hackett, Alfred	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice E. Reid.
7 "	Hood, Walter B.	Shop boy	3/- per day	Vice J. Ashworth.
8 "	Higgs, Samuel	Apprentice	10d. per day	
8 "	Davson, David	Apprentice	10d. per day	
8 "	McAnally, John G.	Apprentice	10d. per day	
8 "	Hanks, Stewart	Apprentice	10d. per day	
8 "	Walsh, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
10 "	Gleeson, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
10 "	Howe, George P.	Apprentice	10d. per day	
11 "	Lloyd, Edward	Fuelman	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
11 "	Boyd, Henry	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
14 "	Felton, George H.	Cleaner	5/- per day	
18 "	Carroll, John	Shop boy	2/5 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
19 "	Lovering, Joseph	Cleaner	5/- per day	
21 "	Edwards, Hercules	Apprentice	10d. per day	
21 "	Tinckam, Arthur	Apprentice	10d. per day	
24 "	Haycox, William	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice W. Rushell.
25 "	Keay, David	Fitter	9/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
21 "	Sotheren, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
1 Sept.	Blatchford, Richard	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Band.
1 "	Barnes, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 "	Huges, Thomas	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/3 per day	
4 "	James, Reginald	Apprentice	10d. per day	
6 "	Walker, Frederick	Fireman	10/- per day	Re-employed.
14 "	Johnson, Samuel	Shop boy	2/- per day	
15 "	Martin, Walter	Apprentice	10d. per day	
20 "	Ferraro, Herbert	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Mortimer.
22 "	Hughes, Alexander	Cleaner	5/- per day	
23 "	McFayden, Henry	Fuelman	6/8 per day	Vice W. Munro.
26 "	McKenzie, George	Fireman	10/- per day	Re-employed
28 "	Woods, Harris	Messenger	10/6 per week	Vice J. Fitzpatrick.
26 "	Burns, James	Shop Boy	2/6 per day	
26 "	Baxter, Alfred C.	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Lyons, Frederick	Apprentice	10d. per day	
28 "	Barnes, Albert	Fitter	9/6 per day	
28 "	Mortimer, James	Washer-out	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
28 "	Wilson, Aibert	Machinist	8/- per day	

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH—continued.				
1899.				
3 Oct.	Charlton, John W.	Cleaner	5/- per day	New opening, Manilla.
3 "	Morris, Thomas	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
3 "	Clark, William	Call boy	3/3 per day	
4 "	Wolf, William	Shop boy	3/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Duigan, George O.	Apprentice	10d. per day	
6 "	Richards, David	Cleaner	5/- per day	
10 "	Riddle, Victor	Call boy	3/3 per day	
10 "	Morrin, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
12 "	Wright, Thomas	Cleaner	5/- per day	
12 "	Russell, William	Telephone boy	3/3 per day	Vice S. Yates.
12 "	Bennett, Charles	Waggon-builder	9/8 per day	Vice R. Doyle.
12 "	Matthews, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
13 "	Shanks, William	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
18 "	Russell, Alexander	Fitter	9/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
13 "	Bourke, James	Boilermaker's assistant.	6/5 per day	
17 "	Blackshaw, John	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice A. Love
17 "	Randell, William	Gasman	7/6 per day	Vice R. Clingan.
17 "	Hobson, Stuart	Cleaner	5/- per day	
13 "	Bressington, David	Cleaner	5/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	Harvey, Herbert	Turner	9/6 per day	Vice H. Boaz.
20 "	Brooks, Peter	Cleaner	5/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Hobbs, Frederick	Cleaner	5/- per day	
23 "	Dalzell, George	Cleaner	5/- per day	
24 "	Hall, Ernest	Telephone boy	3/3 per day	
31 "	Bennett, John	Cleaner	2/6 per day	
1 Nov.	Rodgers, Robert	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice J. Carroll
2 "	Johnson, Charles	Shop boy	1/8 per day	
4 "	Long, George	Telephone boy	2/6 per day	
6 "	Ratcliffe, Augustus	Call boy	2/6 per day	
18 "	Crawford, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
18 "	Allen, Stanley	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
18 "	Ogden, Reginald	Apprentice	10d. per day	
18 "	Ring, John W.	Labourer	0/6 per day	
18 "	Coleman, Joseph P.	Labourer	0/6 per day	
23 "	Goodwin, James	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
23 "	King, Albert	Cleaner	5/- per day	
23 "	Latham, Frank	Apprentice	10d. per day	
28 "	Sharp, Archibald	Shop boy	2/3 per day	Vice A. Greaves.
1 Dec.	Darcy, James	Telephone boy	3/3 per day	Vice G. Ronch
1 "	Melver Francis	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 "	Reid, Edward	Carriage and waggon examiner.	7/- per day	
1 "	M'Fayden, Henry	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
1 "	Wagner, John	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Lees, Harold	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Handley, Sydney	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Wilkinson, Leslie	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Metcalfe, John	Call boy	2/6 per day	
4 "	Griffith, Arthur	Electro-plater	10/- per day	
7 "	Ingrall, Carl	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Foster.
7 "	Ureth, Willie	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
7 "	Giddy, John G.	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
7 "	Hood, Herbert C.	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
11 "	Rosewell, William	Cleaner	5/- per day	
11 "	Harrison, Thomas	Waggon-builder	9/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
12 "	Doody, Elizabeth	Upholsteress	4/- per day	
1900.				
0 Jan.	Fishburn, Wilfred	Call boy	2/6 per day	
6 "	Hancock, Frank	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice R. McKellar.
6 "	Rigney, William	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
6 "	Cooney, Owen	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
12 "	Clatworthy, Edwin	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Lessels, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
15 "	Rees, Ernest	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Goodman, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Emerson, George	Fitter	9/8 per day	Vice N. McNeil.
16 "	Coutie, Mrs.	Upholsteress	4/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	McQueen, Mrs.	Upholsteress	4/- per day	
16 "	Coleman, Herbert	Apprentice	10d. per day	
25 "	Chamberlain, James	Apprentice	10d. per day	
29 "	Thompson, Robert	Apprentice	10d. per day	
29 "	Walford, James	Shop boy	2/6 per day	Vice S. Deeproose.
1 Feb.	Trotter, William	Shop boy	2/6 per day	Vice G. Sutton.
1 "	Felton, Richard	Boilermaker's assistant.	6/3 per day	
1 "	Parker, William	Gasfitter	9/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 "	Holt, Thomas	Fuelman	7/- per day	
2 "	Vine, John D.	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice G. Oates.
2 "	Giles, Alfred	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Vine.
2 "	McDougal, Frederick	Washer-out	7/- per day	
2 "	Denver, Edward	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 "	Rodgers, Robert	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
2 "	Goodwin, James	Cleaner	8/- per day	
5 "	Baynall, Francis	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Howard.
7 "	Liddle, John	Cleaner	6/- per day	
8 "	Ailinson, Henry	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice G. Burgess.
12 "	Pearse, Robert	Shop boy	1/9 per day	
16 "	Woodhead, George	Blacksmith	10/- per day	Vice J. Neal
16 "	Breen, Thomas	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice M. Donohoe.
16 "	Richardson, Charles	Fitter	9/6 per day	Vice C. Kemsley.
16 "	Wardman, George	Oiler	7/- per day	Vice A. Polglase
16 "	Johnston, Robert	Boilermaker's assistant.	6/3 per day	
16 "	Phillips, Oscar	Boilermaker's assistant.	6/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	Taylor, George	Boilermaker's assistant.	6/3 per day	
20 "	Nettleship, Walter	Shop boy	4/- per day	
23 "	Bailey, John	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
27 "	Hurt, Alfred G.	Shop boy	3/- per day	
8 Mar.	Tilman, John D.	Carriage-builder	10/- per day	Vice W. Sadler.
6 "	Tye, Charles	Firefighter	6/6 per day	Vice J. Hickson.
6 "	Rufus, Ernest	Tube cleaner	5/- per day	Vice W. Harnan.
7 "	Loughry, Edward	Apprentice	10d. per day	
8 "	Murray, James F.	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice G. Brett.
8 "	Bolton, George	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Bourko
9 "	Woodhouse, Herbert	Shop boy	4/- per day	
9 "	Davidson, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	Vice J. Davidson.
9 "	Thomas, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice O. Boulter.
12 "	Staines, Samuel	Apprentice	10d. per day	
12 "	Seddon, Abraham	Apprentice	10d. per day	
12 "	Meredith, Charles	Shop boy	3/- per day	
12 "	Parker, Victor	Apprentice	10d. per day	
14 "	Rochaix, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
15 "	Kerr, Stanley	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Soutler, Sydney	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Lodge, John	Apprentice	10d. per day	

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH—continued				
1900.				
10 Mar.	Young, Thomas	Fitter	10/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	O'Donnell, James	Fitter	10/- per day	
16 "	Collins, Frederick	Fitter	10/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	Green, Percy	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
19 "	Hilaire, Stephen	Shop boy	2/- per day	} Vice E. Reardon.
20 "	Wickham, Archibald	Apprentice	1/6 per day	
20 "	Cochrane, Thomas	Apprentice	1/6 per day	} Vice G. Gee.
20 "	Brown, Frank	Apprentice	1/6 per day	
23 "	Coleman, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
27 "	Martz, Albert	Messenger	10/6 per week	
28 "	Smith, Charles	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
29 "	O'ell, Charles	Fitter	10/- per day	
29 "	Anderson, George	Angle iron smith	11/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
29 "	Scully, John	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
29 "	MacKenzie, Sydney	Striker	6/8 per day	} Vice A. Johnston.
30 "	Smith, Alfred	Store boy	2/6 per day	
3 April	Simmons, Charles	Call boy	4/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
3 "	Crawford, George	Apprentice	10/- per day	
3 "	Staples, Percy	Shop boy	2/6 per day	} Vice J. Elford.
6 "	Wild, Luke	Apprentice	10/- per day	
6 "	Grimshaw, Frederick	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
6 "	Stedman, Reginald	Apprentice	10/- per day	
6 "	Austin, George	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
6 "	Murray, Charles	Apprentice	10/- per day	
6 "	Lovell, Richard	Shop boy	2/6 per day	} Vice J. Elford.
7 "	Schofield, Richard	Fuelman	6/8 per day	
9 "	Wolley, William	Cleaner	6/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
10 "	Rowe, William	Apprentice	10/- per day	
17 "	Grey, Cecil	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
17 "	Ford, Charles	Apprentice	10/- per day	
17 "	Baker, Edwin	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
8 "	Thomas, Alexander	Apprentice	10/- per day	
13 "	Westbrook, George	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
19 "	Kerridge, Stanford	Apprentice	10/- per day	
19 "	Souter, Ernest	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Elford.
20 "	Brannley, John	Apprentice	10/- per day	
24 "	Rose, John	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
26 "	Skee, James	Fitter	10/- per day	
26 "	McGuirk, John	Striker	6/8 per day	} Vice J. Williams.
26 "	Foley, James	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
27 "	Percy, Frederick	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	} Vice G. Shear.
27 "	Tiley, Ernest	Fitter	10/- per day	
27 "	Weslan, Michael	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	} Vice J. Morgan.
27 "	Johnson, John	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
27 "	Puyn, Roland	Labourer	6/6 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
27 "	Mecham, Walter	Fitter	10/- per day	
27 "	O'Keefe, James	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
27 "	Scudder, William	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
27 "	Rippingale, Joseph	Turner	9/6 per day	} Vice J. Elford.
27 "	Edwards, James	Turner	10/- per day	
1 May	Ailee, Thomas	Fuelman	6/6 per day	} Vice J. Banborough.
2 "	Wilson, George	Apprentice	10/- per day	
2 "	Ritcho, Alexander	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 "	Samuels, Charles	Apprentice	10/- per day	
11 "	Horsfield, Ernest	Cleaner	6/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
11 "	Lusk, Herbert	Fitter	10/- per day	
11 "	Gillan, Charles	Shop boy	2/3 per day	} Vice C. Selby.
17 "	Tuting, Charles	Apprentice	10/- per day	
17 "	Bell, Thomas	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice C. Tye.
17 "	Cottle, Arthur	Apprentice	10/- per day	
17 "	Moore, Thomas	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice S. Robson.
21 "	Simmonds, William	Apprentice	10/- per day	
21 "	Millington, Alfred	Labourer	6/6 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
21 "	Cavanagh, John	Fire-lighter	6/6 per day	
21 "	Neste, Edgar	Shop boy	4/- per day	} Vice S. Robson.
22 "	Conroy, Thomas	Apprentice	10/- per day	
25 "	Griffiths, Daniel	Fuelman	7/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
25 "	Vorco, Frederick	Turner	10/- per day	
25 "	Dempsey, Arthur	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
25 "	Hennessey, Robert	Labourer	6/6 per day	
28 "	Fanton, William	Shop boy	2/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 June	Allen, Mack	Fitter	10/- per day	
3 "	Howard, Albert	Fuelman	6/6 per day	} Vice G. Fewkes.
7 "	Portus, Albert	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
8 "	Wilmott, John	Fuelman	6/6 per day	} Vice T. White.
8 "	Rendall, Sydney	Shop boy	3/- per day	
8 "	McKellar, Thomas	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	Stanton, Joseph	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
8 "	Goodman, John	Fitter	10/- per day	} Vice J. Harper.
15 "	Smith, Frederick	Fitter	10/- per day	
19 "	Rampling, James	Apprentice	10/- per day	} Vice J. Harper.
19 "	Smith, John H. D.	Pumper	8/- per day	
21 "	Pawley, Percy	Apprentice clerk	£230 per annum	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
22 "	Fetton, Albert	Striker	6/8 per day	
22 "	Rimoldi, Ambrosio	Fitter	10/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Henderson, Frederick	Apprentice	10/- per day	
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
1890.				
6 July.	Barber, Johanna	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice R. Little
7 "	O'Brien, Sidney	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Blinco.
12 "	Hamilton, James	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Vice M. O'Leighlin
14 "	Norris, Henry	Porter	7/- per day	Vice W. Knight
14 "	Lowe, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice A. McDermott.
20 "	Maloney, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice E. Hoare.
24 "	Swift, Ruth	Barrack attendant	5s per week	
24 "	Gibbons, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
25 "	Stuckey, Hubert	Probationer	2/6 per week	
27 "	Peacock, Clara	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice A. Kirkland
27 "	Bullock, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice W. Bullock.
30 "	Finlay, Isabella	Barrack attendant	Free house	
1 Aug.	Cooner, Mrs.	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Labimer.
1 "	Woods, Ellen	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice B. Lewis.
2 "	Cousins, Ellen	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Cousins.
4 "	Burt, Alexander	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice T. Murray.
5 "	Ashford, Sarah	Gatekeeper and platform attendant.	7/- per week	Vice S. Shepherd.
7 "	Hindley, Arthur	Probationer	2/8 per week	
8 "	Thomson, Charles	Junior porter	2/8 per day	Vice P. O. Donnell.
16 "	Taylor, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice M. Martin.
19 "	O'Neill, Clarence	Probationer	2/6 per week	

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
23 Aug.	Lloyd, Lilla	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Hansen.
25 "	Atkinson, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Wilkins.
26 "	Hansen, Clara	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Strophair.
28 "	Gosper, David	Probationer	2/6 per week	
1 Sept.	Tynan, Mrs.	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice A. Foster.
1 "	Haydon, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice D. Reid.
4 "	McKenzie, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice H. Nugent.
8 "	Kirkland, Annie	Platform attendant	1/6 per week	
16 "	Finn, John	Postal assistant	10/- per week	
16 "	Giddy, James	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice M. Summergreen
15 "	Taylor, Charles	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Knight.
16 "	Pettit, Claude	Probationer	2/6 per week	
18 "	Miller, Frederick	Probationer	2/6 per week	
21 "	Pellatt, Bertie	Probationer	2/6 per week	
22 "	Avis, Arthur	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
29 "	McCaill, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice J. Dries.
29 "	O'Sullivan, Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice M. Kelleher.
29 "	Watson, Mary Ann	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice H. Norberry.
29 "	Bennett, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice W. Bennett.
29 "	Cantrill, Sylvester	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 "	Humbly, Cecil	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice J. Lyon.
2 Oct.	Doig, William	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
2 "	Helleman, Benjamin	Porter	6/- per day	
6 "	Woodward, Eva	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. McDonald.
7 "	Gregory, Kate	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Travnor.
9 "	Harlicher, Herbert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice M. Hogan.
10 "	Mullins, Maude	Platform caretaker	Free house	Vice M. Collins.
13 "	Anos, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice H. Miles.
13 "	Harvey, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	
14 "	Cavanaugh, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Petrie.
17 "	Hickey, Michael	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Ward.
19 "	Creswick, Norman	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice T. Allen.
20 "	Gain, Archibald	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice R. Kerr.
21 "	Outred, Francis	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice R. Miller.
27 "	Sayce, Lillian	Caretaker and post-mistress	7/- per week and house.	Vice T. Hughes.
28 "	McDonald, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Haines.
30 "	Pritchard, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	Vice B. Stewart.
30 "	Smith, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice A. Keane.
30 "	Power, Catherine	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice P. Miller.
31 "	Potter, George	Porter	6/- per day	Vice W. Cavers.
1 Nov.	Clinton, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Blackett.
8 "	Loughridge, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice M. O'Toole.
11 "	Prives, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Reeve, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Roberts, Joseph	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Jones, Robert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice H. Primrose.
23 "	Coulson, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	
23 "	Babbage, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	
24 "	Robinson, Nicholas	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice J. Field.
24 "	Maher, Richard	Porter	6/- per day	Vice T. Westlake.
27 "	Chamberlain, Christopher	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 "	Meyer, Herman	Probationary porter	10/- per week	Vice G. Buckley.
30 "	Shpton, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 "	Johnson, Sydney	Probationer	2/6 per week	
1 Dec.	Weston, Alfred	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice R. Dunn.
1 "	McKinnon, Connor	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. Lilley.
1 "	Lowry, May	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice V. Loosemore.
4 "	Southwell, Hayden	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Outred.
4 "	Tooth, Percy	Probationer	2/6 per week	
4 "	Stephen, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice B. Budd.
5 "	Nicholson, James	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice H. Bostock.
5 "	Hogan, Michael	Junior porter	5/- per day	Re-employed
6 "	O'Neil, John	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Brennan, Emma	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice N. Veness.
7 "	Badcock, William	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	Coudon, Mary	Platform attendant	7/- per week	
8 "	Fletcher, Emily	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice E. Richards.
8 "	Jamieson, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	Haggett, Bridget	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Foster.
11 "	Bostock, Stanley	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice A. Lusher.
13 "	Horan, Bridget	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Bell.
13 "	Schwensberg, Henry	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
16 "	Davis, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice P. Cameron
21 "	Morris, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Brown.
29 "	Edser, Mary Ann	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Cole.
1900.				
1 Jan.	Playford, James	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Beach.
2 "	Hemming, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice S. Malone.
3 "	Riordan, William	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
5 "	Robertson, Charles	Shunter	7/- per day	
5 "	Grugcon, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice T. Haywood
5 "	Ryan, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	
6 "	Mason, Agnes	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice Mrs. Bailey.
8 "	Worton, Clara	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice G. Clarke.
8 "	Marshall, John	Probationer	2/6 per week	
11 "	Thomson, Frederick	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice N. Davery.
11 "	Muston, Edgar	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice C. Giles.
12 "	Olsson, Rebecca	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice L. Coombes.
13 "	Sheedy, Michael	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice D. West.
15 "	Jennings, Percy	Probationer	2/6 per week	
16 "	McGrath, Arthur	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice A. Magennis.
18 "	Madden, Joseph	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice C. Royer.
18 "	Andrews, William	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
19 "	Irwin, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Jamieson.
20 "	Lambert, Arthur	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice H. Wauhop.
22 "	Stewart, Ethelbert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice R. Cosgrove.
25 "	Devenish, Elizabeth	Caretaker and post-mistress.	10/- per week	Vice M. Hartigan
26 "	Spark, Catherine	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Taylor.
26 "	Stutchbury, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice C. Clark.
26 "	White, Arthur	Porter	6/- per day	Vice T. Bruce.
30 "	Farnie, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Jeffery.
30 "	Jones, Magdaline	Platform attendant	10/- per week and house.	
1 Feb.	Maudsley, Arthur	Porter	6/- per day	
2 "	Greaves, Edwin	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	Wallace, Thomas	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	McGregor, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	Vincent, James	Probationer	5/- per week	
2 "	Reardon, Henry	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
2 "	Lloyd, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice L. Lloyd.
2 "	Ings, Leah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Ings.
2 "	Black, Frank	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Winter.
2 "	Pratt, Matthew	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice W. Johnstone.
5 "	Haasard, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. McJannet.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
10 Feb.	Houghton, Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice C. Hess.
16 "	Collins, John	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice S. Groville.
16 "	Abbott, William	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
16 "	Gundlock, Robert	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
16 "	Vincent, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice F. Lee.
18 "	Brackenbury Charles	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice M. Burns.
19 "	Downie, Peter	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
20 "	Kerr, Leslie	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice W. Brayne.
20 "	Bradley, Emily	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice Mrs. Vincent.
23 "	Payne, Madeline	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	
23 "	Donoghue, Denis	Probationer	2/6 per week	
23 "	Upton, Richard	Porter	6/- per day	Vice A. Dunshea.
24 "	Markham, Daniel	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice Mrs. J. Markham.
27 "	Huthnance, Emma	Gatekeeper	5/- per week	
1 Mar.	Seaton, Edmund	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Vice G. Alley.
2 "	Coulter, William	Porter	6/- per day	Vice H. Cannon.
2 "	Dewhurst, Clara	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice T. Dewhurst.
6 "	Harvey, Margaret	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice J. Drummond.
6 "	Williams, Mrs.	Ladies' attendant	2/- per week	Vice E. O'Brien.
7 "	Luklaster, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Pendergast, James	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
9 "	Rutter, Herbert	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Dicker.
9 "	Finley, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice Mrs. H. Bennett.
12 "	Wrightson, Thomas	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
13 "	Baisbeck, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
16 "	Smith, Norman	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Small
16 "	Clooney, James	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
16 "	Warren, Helena	Platform attendant	5/- per week	
16 "	McLennan, Alice	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice A. McLennan.
16 "	Loekwood, Albert	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Pyc.
18 "	Cuthbert David	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice W. Long.
18 "	Kirby, Alice	Platform attendant	Free house	
19 "	Betts, William	Gatekeeper	15/- per week & house.	Vice M. Knudson.
22 "	Ball, Alice	Gatekeeper	7/6 per week	Vice E. Ball.
22 "	Almond, John	Porter	6/- per day	Vice F. Dowling.
23 "	Simpson, Norman	Probationer	2/6 per week	
24 "	Matthews, Robert	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice E. Jennings.
24 "	Bruce, John	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
26 "	Marr, William	Porter	6/- per day	
30 "	Anand, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice S. Clarke.
30 "	Squires, Alfred	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
31 "	Duncan, Ernest	Block lad	10/- per week	Vice W. Lackey.
31 "	Bretel, Decimus	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 April	Henderson, James	Block lad	10/- per week	Vice J. White.
2 "	Mansfield, Horace	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	Marr, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 "	Filton, Alexander	Probationer	2/6 per week	
4 "	Dowling George	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice I. Atkinson.
4 "	Pryor, Alice	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice K. Hartigan.
6 "	Lambert, Paul	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Pendergast.
6 "	Stanley, George	Porter	6/- per day	
6 "	Webb, Walter	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice P. Scage
6 "	Daley, Roy	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice R. Small.
9 "	Beavis, Henry	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Ryan.
11 "	Simpson, William	Porter	6/- per day	
12 "	Stevens, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Hutchinson, Sydney	Porter	6/- per day	
13 "	Evans, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	Vice C. Hanson.
13 "	Lindsay, Jane	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice L. Nye.
13 "	Ryan, William	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice W. Davis
14 "	McGhee, Effania	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice K. Cavanaugh.
20 "	King, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	Vice D. Fitch.
25 "	Mitchell, Stanley	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
25 "	Wilbow, Aubrey	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice G. Butt.
27 "	McKenna, Ranolph	Porter	6/- per day	Vice G. Cather.
28 "	Heighington, Frank	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice P. Carroll.
30 "	Buckingham, Marcus	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 "	Crook, Sydney	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice A. Webb
1 May.	Summersgreen, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice G. Whitely.
1 "	Ahern, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice A. McAskill.
3 "	Hax, George	Porter	6/- per day	
4 "	Denton, George	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	
4 "	Bull, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice B. Murphy.
5 "	Church, Mrs. Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice L. Kellicar.
7 "	Coulston, Richard	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Smith, William	Porter	6/- per day	
8 "	Barratt, Louisa	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice J. West.
14 "	Barker, Arthur	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice A. Joyce.
15 "	Love, George	Porter	6/- per day	Vice P. Clarke.
16 "	Reagan, Emma	Carshaker & gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Sykes.
16 "	Kershan, Francis	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice W. Grant.
19 "	Beatson, Bridget	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice M. Hay.
21 "	Hogers, James	Porter	6/- per day	
22 "	Lovett, Clarence	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
25 "	Davis, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Chickon.
25 "	Addison, Harley	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
25 "	Clements, Nathan	Porter	6/- per day	
25 "	Walley, Felix	Porter	6/- per day	
25 "	Walsh, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice E. Mills.
25 "	Churchill, Emily	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice L. Lee.
28 "	Castles, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
28 "	Allen, Frederick	Probationer	2/6 per week	
28 "	Smith, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 "	Deattie, William	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice F. Eyles.
31 "	Darby, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Dewhurst.
1 June	Watson, Henry	Post-office and platform attendant.	15/- per week	Vice M. Priest.
1 "	Jackson, Edward	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Vice C. Hardwick
1 "	Greaves, Thomas	Post-office and platform attendant.	3/4 per day	Vice A. Corcoran.
2 "	Fahy, Francis	Porter	6/- per day	
2 "	Hudson, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Pierce.
4 "	Wakefield, James	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice T. Lambert.
4 "	Penrose, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Feroside.
4 "	Tully, Ellen	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Loughridge.
8 "	Hayter, Alfred	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Thomas, John	Porter	6/- per day	
8 "	Haining, Clarence	Porter	6/- per day	Vice M. Ward.
9 "	Hill, Frederick	Porter	6/- per day	
9 "	Clatworthy, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	
11 "	Happ, Frank	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice J. Buckley
11 "	Collier, Walter	Junior porter	2/6 per day	
11 "	Wade, Archibald	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice H. Rose.
11 "	Hansaker, Thomas	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice E. Ward

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
14 June.	Smith, Patrick	Porter	6/- per day	Vice T. Ash.
14 "	Piper, Louisa	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice E. Phillips.
16 "	Skeiton, Margaret	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice F. Jackson.
18 "	Thew, Cecil	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice C. Sayer.
18 "	Grant, Harold	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice S. Butterworth.
18 "	Dawson, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	
21 "	Parsons, Albert	Night gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice I. Watson.
23 "	Carey, John	Postal assistant	10/- per week	Vice G. Christie.
25 "	Burke, Mary	Gatekeeper	20/- per week & house.	Vice C. Sutherland.
25 "	Small, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. McDonald
26 "	Heiler, Thomas	Probationer	2/6 per week	
1899. SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
10 Nov.	O'Grady, William	Driller	7/6 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
10 "	Cochrane, Thomas	Spike boy	2/8 per day	
22 "	Adams, Claudio	Spike boy	2/- per day	
1900.				
19 Jan.	Casson, Joseph	Carpenter	9/- per day	Vice W. Hamilton.
22 "	Moody, George	Assistant signal fitter	7/6 per day	
5 Feb.	Anderson, Ross	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice D. Childs
12 "	Slaco, Frederick	Assistant signal fitter	7/- per day	
19 Mar.	Stickler, William	Relief boy	2/- per day	Vice T. Cochrane.
19 April	Brown, Thomas	Labourer	7/- per day	Vice Wm. Buchanan.
28 June	Bishop, Edward	Relief boy	2/- per day	Vice Ernest Lewis.
1899. ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
27 July	Joyce, Thomas	Improver	6/- per day	
27 "	Haydon, Henry A.	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
28 "	Laws, Ernest	Improver	5/- per day	
28 "	Hayward, Ernest T.	Improver	5/- per day	
31 "	Ford, Albert E.	Improver	5/- per day	
2 Aug.	Kneeshaw, Frederick	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
4 "	Hughes, Bernard T.	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
30 "	Wilson, John H.	1st Engineer	14/- per day	
11 Sept.	Hutchison, James P.	2nd Engineer	12/6 per day	} George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway.
11 "	Arnott, James	3rd Engineer	12/- per day	
17 Nov.	Rowe, Norman E.	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
23 "	Brown, Frank	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
21 Dec.	Wright, Horace H.	Probationer	2/6 per week	
1900.				
17 Jan.	Bernberg, Colman P.	Fitter	8/- per day	
1 Feb.	Harrison, Howard	Assistant electrical engineer.	£200 per annum	
23 "	Medcalf, William	Telegraph messenger	16/- per week	Vice E. Dean
16 Mar.	Darby, James A.	Telegraph probationer	2/6 per week	Vice A. Cummings.
2 April	Twoasdale, James W.	Foreman	70/- per week	Vice F. Lind.
13 "	Huntley Guy E.	District inspector	54/- per week	
16 "	Sharp, James	Telegraph probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Sullivan.
17 "	Rabbidge, Parnell	District assistant	9/- per day	
8 May	Matheson, Albert	Telegraph probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. H. Davis.
25 "	Murray, Quinton	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
4 June	Bode, Charles W.	Improver	6/- per day	
1899. CONTROLLER OF STORES BRANCH.				
11 Sept.	Reid, Harold	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice A. Tankard.
13 "	Lewis, Archer	Office lad	10/- per week	
14 "	Shields, Richard	Office lad	10/- per week	
1900.				
13 April	Wilkinson, Edmund	Shoe repairer	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
11 May	Martin, Thomas C.	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice L. Hart.
16 "	Reid, Walter M.	Office lad	10/- per week	
PROPERTY AND ESTATE BRANCH.				
8 June	Garland, Lewis H.	Clerk	£180 per annum	
1899. TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
8 July	Lavender, Frederick	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice T. Graham.
11 "	Bradley, William R.	Cleaner	4/6 per day	Vice J. Fletcher.
23 Aug.	Rawlings, Francis	Apprentice	10d. per day	
23 "	Hill, Thomas C.	Fulley oiler	2/6 per day	Vice T. Searle.
30 "	Tyrer, Thomas	Fuelman	8/6 per day	Vice E. Esleton.
11 Sept.	Smallman, Edward	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice H. Fletcher.
11 "	Smith, Henry	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice E. McLaughlin.
11 "	Masters, Ernest	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice J. Morrison.
11 "	Stott, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice G. Thomas.
11 "	Gillies, Peter	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice A. Coleman.
11 "	McRoberts, Oswald	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice F. Dodd.
11 "	Manning, William	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice A. Grumble.
11 "	Haddrell, Jonas	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice A. Hinton.
11 "	Payne, Arthur E.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice K. Evans.
11 "	Nelmes, Frederick G.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice J. Montgomery.
11 "	Draper, Arthur E.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice G. Swan.
11 "	Long, Richard H.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice H. Kyle.
11 "	Lathlaen, John R.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice S. Harrison.
11 "	Atkluson, John	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice P. Mitchell.
12 "	Barratt, David	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice C. Fletcher.
12 "	Hensworth, Edward	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice J. Macklejohn.
12 "	Jackson, Edward	Cleaner	4/6 per day	Vice J. Hatvig.
12 "	Innan, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice C. Catford.
12 "	Humphries, William	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice W. Power.
12 "	Gimbert, Alfred G.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice W. Waters.
13 "	Long, George	Cleaner	4/8 per day	Vice P. Austin.
14 "	Mills, Robert J.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice E. Baker.
14 "	Burns, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice C. Boxall.
3 Oct.	Buulin, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	Vice H. Hodgson.
8 "	Webb, James H.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice E. Willis.
6 "	Mearns, Frederick	Fitter	10/- per day	Vice F. Macnab.
6 "	Bingham, William	Machinist	8/4 per day	
11 "	Fair, Joseph W.	Shop boy	2/3 per day	Vice T. Marr.
30 "	Kinsella, Arthur H.	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice J. Dickie.
17 Nov.	Martin, William	Fuelman	4/6 per day	Vice F. Lee.
12 Dec.	Warburton, Henry	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice J. Harris.
14 "	Haron, Michael	Stationary engine fireman.	7/8 per day	Vice T. Tyrer.
18 "	Sattler, George W.	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice E. Johnson.
1900.				
16 Jan.	Cook, Henry	Machinist	8/4 per day	Vice A. Bell.
1 Feb.	Eaton, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice G. Sattler.
16 "	Doyle, Edwin	Painter's assistant	6/6 per day	Vice J. Duffy.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH—continued.				
21 Feb.	Mcakin, Charles	Striker	7/- per day	Vice M. Bayfield.
9 Mar.	Daley, Thomas	Pitter	10/- per day	Vice T. Couper.
22 "	Cahill John	Stationary engine fireman	7/6 per day	Vice J. Leary.
10 May	Kennedy, James R.	Driver	11/- per day	Re-employed.
30 "	White, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 June	Harrison, Scott	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1890.				
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
1 July	Yates, William F.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. Claridge.
25 "	Mitchell, William	Board attendant	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
11 Aug.	Anderson, William E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Ballmain and Leichhardt Lines.
17 "	Watson, Daniel	Conductor	6/- per day	
17 "	Lonchan, Francis E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice H. Bradney.
4 Sept.	Tierny, Michael	Telephone lad	10/- per week	
4 "	Rogers, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Reid, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Truine, George R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Gant, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Prudoux, Matthew	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Salkeld, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Wilson, Henry R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Sheldon, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Ranger, Alfred W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Perkins, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Parker, James H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Comer, Archibald W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Hoss, James M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Brenner, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Palmer, James W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Oakes, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	O'Brien, Walter S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Hutchinson, George E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Cronin, Mark	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Wyane, Wilfrid P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Parsons, Sydney H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	O'Keefe, Thomas J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Black, George J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Burgis, William G.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Dale, Benjamin A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Atkinson, George C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Lees, Edward J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Jenkins, Francis J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Freckleton, Albert J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Cooper, Charles L.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Charker, George E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Charker, Albert E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Morgan, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	McGrath, John C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Pidding, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Pollack, Robert W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Payne, William C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Quinn, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Head, Edward A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Roberts, Henry T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Cressl, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Anderson, Norman C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
6 "	Lackey, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Chadwick, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Porter, Leslie	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Coady, Edward J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Colgan, John J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Coxhead, Albert D.	Conductor	6/- per day	George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway
7 "	Johnson, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Paine, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Burns, Lawford W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Watkins, William R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Warton, George M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Watt, Julius T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Wiggins, Thomas W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Heazlett, John H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Hickey, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Reynolds, Edward J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Horniman, Frank G.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Scott, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Pike, Valentine	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	James, Samuel H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Murray, Milton R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Reardon, William T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Wilson, Albert H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Kennedy, Frederick A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Vaughan, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Johnstone, Edward M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Murphy, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Naylor, Alexander	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Smith, Norman J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Love, Charles J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Kavanagh, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Napier, Robert E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Hollier, Herbert S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Rodgers, Oliver	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Viles, Edward E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Kelly, Myles A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	McCarthy, James F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Martin, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Clarke, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Sutton, George T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Tucker, Jesse	Conductor	6/- per day	
9 "	Lund, Soren C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
11 "	Drewe, Leslie E.	Telephone lad	10/- per week	
12 "	Lewis, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Galney, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	McDonogh, Charles B.	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Aikman, John C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Blake, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Walters, Henry H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Rorison, William G.	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Bernie, Adam	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Hodges, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Swindlehurst, Harold	Conductor	6/- per day	
30 "	Hill, Ernest W.	Conductor	6/- per day	Rose Bay Line.
30 "	Casey, William T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
1 Oct.	McCardell, John	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice Z. Jeffrey.
3 "	Kopper, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway
4 "	Brighton, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Lackey.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued.				
12 Oct.	Lawton, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Montgomery, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Flegg, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Robinson, James E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Blair, James K.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Teece, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Dolan, John M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Bevan, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Bard, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Roach, Thomas H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	McSweeney, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Gilroy, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Wright, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Gosling, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Gumperts, Gustave	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Quigley, Henry E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Hackinson, Halmond	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Hawkes, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
10 Nov.	Potter, Charles	Telephone lad	10/- per week	Vice W. Stephenson.
13 Dec.	Tierney, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. Chadwick.
14 "	Riley, Albert B.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Coxhead.
1900.				
1 Jan.	Algir, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
1 "	Slattery, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 "	Paulson, Alfred S.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. O'Donnell.
4 "	Budge, Joseph C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
5 "	Lotter, William H.	Junior lamp trimmer	2/6 per day	
19 "	Martin, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice T. Green.
22 "	Wright, Reginald	Office lad	10/- per week	
31 "	Evans, Sidney J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice T. Meyn.
31 "	Cannano, James	Car-cleaner	6/- per day	Vice J. Campbell.
6 Feb.	Wilson, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
5 "	Huntley, Frank	Conductor	6/- per day	Re-employed.
7 "	Gorman, Charles E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Henry, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Buchanan, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice W. O'Brien.
23 "	French, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Gaston, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice H. Cowdroy.
26 "	Johnson, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Slocumbe, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 Mar.	O'Connor, John D.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. McGrath.
9 "	Head, Albert E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Foster.
15 "	Laverack, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
19 "	Brodie, John A.	Office lad	10/- per week	
20 "	Teale, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Auld, John C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
21 "	Hay, Sidney A.	Office lad	10/- per week	
22 "	Cabot, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
22 "	Wilson, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
22 "	Vaughan, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Chanther, Cyrus	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	De Tores, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Galeward, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	McHynn, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Parlington, Herbert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Moran, John J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Ashby, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Tame, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Alexander, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Leader, Sydney	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Harris, Albert P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Anderson, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Crawford, John F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Smith, Horace A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	O'Halloran, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Booth, James H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Douglas, David R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Lyons, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Mulder, Gustave	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Denecker, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Bruce, Norman	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Dengate, Archibald	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Kennedy, Daniel S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Jordan, George H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	McGrath, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Love, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Sciffert, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Keane, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Connolly, John	Flagman	6/- per day	
26 "	Anderson, George W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Brown, Frederick E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Hambly, Walter T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Hilder, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Hayes, William A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	James, Walter P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Meredith, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	McWilliam, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Pril, Frederick A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Robinson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Trickett, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Tansett, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Turner, Alfred H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Trivett, Walter H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Buckman, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Foster, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Neale, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Emery, Thomas	Office boy	10/- per week	Vice R. Brown.
28 "	Albertson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Burke, James S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Bentley, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Cook, William A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Greenan, Leopold	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Dunn, Arthur W.	Conductor	5/- per day	
28 "	Dunry, Francis	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Ferry, Patrick J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Fox, Montagu	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Face, Bertie C.	Conductor	5/- per day	
28 "	Garforth, George A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Giles, George A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Huson, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hume, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hampshire, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hughes, William N.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Jones, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Kain, Prosper	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Kiryan, James	Conductor	6/- per day	

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.	
1900. TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued.					
23 Mar.	Love, George R.	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.	
23 "	Moon, Edmond V.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Morgan, James J.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Mazin, Donald	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Pike, Frank H.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Ward, Hubert T.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Williams, Daniel	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Russell, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Samuels, James	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Randall, Edwin M.	Conductor	6/- per day		
11 April	Walker, Edward T.	Conductor	6/- per day		
11 "	Poole, William	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice L. Drewe.	
12 "	Butt, Richard H.	Telephone lad	10/- per week		
20 "	Dunn, John J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice W. Bedford.	
20 "	Deadman, Stephen	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum.	Vice A. Parker.	
20 "	Walker, Robert F.	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum.		
7 May	Thompson, John	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.	
7 "	Stone, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Morrish, James J.	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Condon, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Patterson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Fulljames, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day		Vice M. Leaney.
7 "	Hennessey, Thomas J.	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Mathews, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Callahan, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Crocker, Arthur	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Bernard, David	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Abbott, James	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Hughes, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Tucker, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Redding, Bertie P.	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Coleman, Sidney	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Weatherstone, Benjamin	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.	
7 "	Farrar, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Atkinson, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Southwell, William	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Fisk, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Goldsmit, William	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Bellughan, William	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Collier, Alexander	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Ganack, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Brown Leslie A.	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Brighton, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day		
7 "	Giddens, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. Rees.	
14 "	Ronan, Charles P.	Conductor	6/- per day		
14 "	Bindoff, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day		
16 "	Parker, Augustino	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Vellenoweth, John	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Sinclair, William	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Freeman, George	Labourer	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.	
1 June	Longhead, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day		
1 "	Thorley, George	Conductor	6/- per day		
1 "	Vaughan, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day		
8 "	Wall, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day		
8 "	Hear, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day		
8 "	Brandon, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day		
12 "	Power, Nicholas	Conductor	6/- per day		
12 "	Abell, William M.	Conductor	6/- per day		Vice S. Deadman.
14 "	Hope, George	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum		
16 "	Byron, Alfred J.	Conductor	6/- per day		
21 "	Innan, James	Labourer	6/- per day		
23 "	Mulholland, Joseph J.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	McMahon, Otho P.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	McLean, John	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Lloyd, Frederick W.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Bacon, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Woodroff, Arthur C.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Degolarid, John H.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Platau, Julius	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.	
23 "	Cochrane, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Jesse, George	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Garlick, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Clarke, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Cafe, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Bath, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Boulton, Charles H.	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Sharpham, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day		
23 "	Draper, John	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Cupitt, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day		Re-employed.
25 "	Warton, George M.	Car-cleaner	6/- per day		
25 "	Robson, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Brown, Walkden	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Bresnahan, Daniel	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Sanderson, William	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	McIntosh, Alexander	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Wilson, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Henson, Thomas A.	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	O'Sullivan, John	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	O'Neill, John	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.	
25 "	Dickson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day		
25 "	Loomes, William	Conductor	6/- per day		
26 "	Whyte, John A.	Conductor	6/- per day		
27 "	Williams, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day		
27 "	Peters, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day		
28 "	Kulmar, Stanley	Conductor	6/- per day		
28 "	White, Bernard	Conductor	6/- per day		
29 "	Dun, John T.	Conductor	6/- per day		
29 "	Douglas, John A.	Conductor	6/- per day		
29 "	Crowley, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day		
30 "	Hussey, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day		
1899. TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH					
1 July	Brennan, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Dennison.	
1 "	Mullally, William	Labourer	6/6 per day		
14 Aug.	Stephens, Theodore	Messenger	10/- per week	Vice M. Hourigan.	
8 Nov.	Heron, James	Striker	6/6 per day	Vice P. Tucker.	
6 Dec.	Faris, Arthur	Tool collector	4/- per day	Vice W. James.	
6 "	Brown, Norman	Tool collector	2/6 per day		
13 "	Green, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway.	
13 "	Malone, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day		
19 "	Edwards, John	Labourer	6/6 per day		
19 "	Heavey, Andrew	Labourer	6/6 per day		
19 "	Morley, Luke	Labourer	6/6 per day		
19 "	Crouch, William	Labourer	6/6 per day		

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued.				
12 Jan.	McNamara, Daniel	Labourer	7/6 per day	Vice S. Heath.
1 Feb.	Conway, Thomas	Office boy	15/- per week	Vice F. Rutledge.
16 "	Wood, Charles H.	Labourer	0/6 per day	
9 Mar.	Bennett, Frederick	Labourer	0/6 per day	Vice J. O'Connor.
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
8 Jan.	Bailey, Gregory	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
8 "	Kenway, George A.	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
10 "	Jansen, Walter	Lineman	50/- per week	
10 "	McIntosh, James	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
22 "	Shirley, Frank L.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
24 "	Weeks, William	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
29 "	Wilkinson, William	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
31 "	Richards, Arthur	Improver	5/- per day	
1 Feb.	Napier, William G.	Brake-fitter	10/- per day	
1 "	Boland, Thomas W.	Pitman	7/6 per day	
5 "	Kemmis, Stanley	Improver	5/- per day	
9 "	Coxall, William J.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
8 "	Flanagan, Francis	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
9 "	Sprouton, Archibald	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Sampson, Albert H.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Schrader, Augustine	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Hogg, Thomas P.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Thornley, Charles	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
9 "	Bailey, William M.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Ogg, Charles R.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Beckenham, Sydney	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Hebblewhite, Charles	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
10 "	Fellows, Robert	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
12 "	Witcoxon, Walter L.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
26 "	Woodward, John	Labourer	0/6 per day	
7 Mar.	Robinson, Henry	Labourer	0/6 per day	
9 "	Ashworth, Charles	Storeman	7/6 per day	
10 "	Beavan, Frank C.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
16 "	Swan, Percival E.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
19 "	Furphy, James	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
22 "	Rogers, Leonard	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
22 "	Bickley, Edward W.	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
22 "	Cantwell, William A.	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
22 "	Kirwan, Maurice	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
23 "	Warner, Joseph E.	Labourer	0/6 per day	
23 "	Heron, John	Labourer	0/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Hair, John C.	Labourer	7/- per day	
26 "	Wirth, Augustus	Improver	0/- per day	
28 "	Waddell, Hugh	Labourer	0/6 per day	
29 "	Berg, France W.	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
29 "	Talbot, William	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
29 "	Lang, Robert	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
21 "	Hankin, James C.	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
2 April	Murphy, Joseph	Fireman	8/- per day	
2 "	Boshier, Herbert F.	Engineer	12/- per day	
2 "	Sym, William G.	Fireman	8/- per day	
3 "	Cardwell, John B.	Controller cleaner	9/- per day	
3 "	Kirk, Robert	Fireman	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
3 "	Bell, Robert	Labourer	0/0 per day	
4 "	Kirk, William	Pitman	7/6 per day	
4 "	Crane, Sydney F.	Improver	5/- per day	
4 "	Symons, Walter R.	Greasier	3/- per day	
5 "	Phillipott, John A.	Controller cleaner	3/- per day	
6 "	Feigson, Daniel	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Armstrong, John	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
6 "	Scarfe, Henry J.	Engineer	12/- per day	
6 "	Shinclair, William	Fireman	8/- per day	
6 "	Butler, Edward	Greasier	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Lube, Ernst W.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
6 "	Kavanagh, Victor G.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
8 "	Keaty, William	Fireman	8/- per day	
9 "	Sproule, Albert H.	Improver	5/- per day	
11 "	Coutts, Hubert K.	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
14 "	Kiley, William	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
17 "	Goble, William M.	Brassfinisher	10/- per day	
20 "	Somers, Eugene	Pitman	7/6 per day	
24 "	Lockwood, Alfred	Draftsman and clerk	12/- per day	
27 "	Kennedy, Thomas E.	Pitman	7/6 per day	
5 May.	Henderson, George	Engineer	12/- per day	
8 "	Haynes, Herbert E.	Improver	5/- per day	
12 "	Norman, Frederick	Fitter	9/6 per day	
14 "	Leahy, George A.	Fireman	8/- per day	
15 "	Curchod, Henry	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
17 "	McDeed, Reginald	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
17 "	Lewis, Norman E.	Improver	8/- per day	
18 "	Lambert, Stanley	Boy labourer	3/6 per day	
21 "	Kendall, Alfred W.	Electrical assistant	£140 per annum	Vice H. N. Stee.
26 "	Dickson, James M.	Boy labourer	3/6 per day	
28 "	Burkitt, George W.	Labourer	7/- per day	
30 "	Vernon, Arthur	Fitter	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
31 "	Bennett, Charles J.	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
4 June	Booth, Arthur W.	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
7 "	Fleming, Sydney	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	Eldershaw, Archie	Pitman	7/6 per day	
11 "	McFarlane, James M.	Labourer	7/- per day	
12 "	Ingle, Frederick	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
12 "	Jones, Hambrook R.	Compressor-oiler	3/- per day	
13 "	Kirchner, Mary Jane	Office-cleaner	12/6 per week	
22 "	Russell, George	Turner	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
25 "	Law, Lewis L.	Labourer	7/- per day	
24 "	Gravford, David	Improver	3/6 per day	
28 "	Eather, Thomas	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
28 "	Volkman, George	Fitter	9/6 per day	
29 "	Gawler, Arthur C.	Pitman	7/6 per day	
29 "	Howison, Colin	Pitman	7/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
29 "	O'Brien, Patrick	Pitman	7/6 per day	
29 "	Hodge, Henry	Carpenter	0/- per day	
29 "	Frost, Victor	Labourer	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.

APPENDIX.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with clause No. 79 of the Railway Act, showing the Removals of Employees from the 1st July, 1899, to the 30th June, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH				
1 July	Dent, Frederick	Apprentice clerk	£50 per annum	Resigned.
9 Dec.	Kelly, Edward	Apprentice clerk	£70 per annum	Resigned.
1900.				
27 Feb.	McCulloch, John	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Resigned.
31 Mar.	Fisher, Edward	Apprentice clerk	£70 per annum	Resigned.
1899. ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
30 June	Smith, William	Striker	7/6 per day	Retired.
5 July	Doughan, Edward	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
21 "	Leape, James	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
29 "	Robinson, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
17 Aug.	Webster, George	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
24 "	Hunting, Henry	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
24 "	Sawkins, Henry	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
31 "	Daley, Richard	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
31 "	Leahy, Thomas	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
31 "	Marshall, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 Sept.	Goddard, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
20 "	Janieson, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
24 "	Long, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
26 "	Acheson, Joseph	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
28 "	Stanlan, James	Ganger	9/- per day	Resigned.
29 "	Spears, George	Ganger	8/- per day	Retired.
30 "	Haines, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
9 Oct.	Norris, William	Labourer	7/6 per day	Deceased.
26 "	Croft, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
2 Nov.	Harris, Arthur	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
2 "	Carroll, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	Resigned.
6 "	O'Toole, William	Ganger	9/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Cook, John	Office boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
15 "	Reilly, Michael	Office boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
16 "	Veness, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
16 "	Egan, Patrick	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
14 Dec.	Gearing, Michael	Office boy	2/- per day	Discharged.
21 "	Kirwan, Maurice	Fettler	7/- per day	Deceased.
21 "	Flanagan, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
1900.				
30 Jan.	Williams, George	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
31 "	Cromack, Ellen	Office cleaner	25/- per week	Resigned.
7 Feb.	McCann, Francis	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
8 "	McMillan, Angus	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
26 "	Hughes, John	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
1 Mar.	Perkins, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
1 "	Fryar, Thomas	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
3 "	Farquharson, Alfred	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
8 "	Moore, Horace	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
8 "	Fogarty, Martin	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
10 "	Clark, Abraham	Fettler	7/6 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Stewart, Kenneth	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
15 "	Hanmill, Patrick	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
22 "	Ladd, Albert	Messenger	4/6 per day	Resigned.
23 "	Schwind, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
14 April	Smith, Albert	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
19 "	Martin, John	Fettler	7/- per day	Discharged.
30 "	Pickin, William	Sub-inspector	£250 per annum	Retired.
3 May.	Mills, Henry	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
10 "	Cramtree, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
11 "	Woolcott, Edward	Leading carpenter	11/3 per day	Retired.
18 "	Pouchard, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
19 "	Hughes, Henry	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
1 June	Roberts, Henry	Labourer	7/6 per day	Discharged.
8 "	Reidy, Patrick	Ganger	9/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Farry, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
12 "	Lewis, Henry	Fettler	7/- per day	Written off hoc s.
16 "	Kelton, Thomas	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
21 "	Quelch, George	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
21 "	Johnson, Hobart	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
30 "	Flood, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
1899. CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
4 July	Dickson, James	Fitter	10/2 per day	Deceased.
6 "	Bracewell, Charles	Fitter	9/6 per day	Deceased.
15 "	Scott, William	Fuelman	7/- per day	Deceased.
20 "	Smith, John H. D.	Examiner	7/- per day	Resigned.
11 Aug.	Mortimer, James	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
14 "	Doyle, Richard	Wagon builder	10/- per day	Resigned.
19 "	Love, Andrew	Labourer	7/- per day	Retired.
19 "	Fitzpatrick, James	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
21 "	Roach, George	Cleaner	4/- per day	Discharged.
22 "	Allen, William	Driller	6/2 per day	Retired.
30 "	Lewis, John	Fitter	8/- per day	Resigned.
8 Sept.	Boag, Henry	Turner	11/- per day	Deceased.
19 "	Polglase, Alfred	Oiler	7/- per day	Resigned.
25 "	Clingun, Robert	Gasmaker	8/6 per day	Resigned.
23 "	Spence, Horace	Fireman	9/- per day	Resigned.
1 Oct.	Donohoe, Michael	Fireman	9/- per day	Deceased.
5 "	Innis, Robert	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Hickson, John F.	Froelghter	6/6 per day	Resigned.
8 "	Fewkes, George	Driver	11/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	Wallace, James	Driver	15/- per day	Deceased.
20 "	Brears, Albert	Apprentice	5/- per day	Resigned.
23 "	Neal, James	Blacksmith	10/8 per day	Retired.
26 "	McKellar, Robert	Oiler	7/- per day	Written off books.
26 "	Greenfield, Hugh	Striker	7/- per day	Resigned.
26 "	Howard, William	Driver	14/- per day	Deceased.
31 "	Greaves, Arthur	Cleaner	6/- per day	Resigned.
3 Nov.	Candrick, Edward	Timekeeper	£160 per annum	Discharged.
"	Foster, William	Gatekeeper	7/6 per day	Deceased.
4 "	Boulter, Oliver	Labourer	7/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Burgess, George	Fireman	10/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Morgan, Joseph	Boilermaker's assistant.	7/- per day	Deceased.
10 "	Foot, William	Fireman	10/- per day	Deceased.
11 "	Osborne, George	Labourer	7/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Young, John	Labourer	6/- per day	Retired.
21 "	Love, John	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
24 "	Sutton, George	Driver	14/- per day	Resigned.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH—continued.				
28 Nov.	Moon, Alice	Upholsteress	7/4 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Deeprose, Stephen	Brake cleaner	9/- per day	Resigned.
3 Dec.	Kemsley, Charles	Fitter	19/- per day	Deceased.
4 "	Milgate, William	Steam crane fireman	8/- per day	Resigned.
5 "	Burke, William	Driver	13/- per day	Deceased.
8 "	Hannon, William	Cleaner	5/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	McNeil, Neil	Fitter	10/- per day	Resigned.
14 "	Norman, George	Machinist	9/8 per day	Written off books.
17 "	Williams, James	Striker	6/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Crawford, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Mutton, Friend	Shop boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
1900.				
6 Jan.	Davidson, James	Fitter's improver	7/- per day	Resigned.
6 "	Sailler, William	Carriage builder	11/- per day	Retired.
12 "	Cameron, Donald	Fireman	9/- per day	Deceased.
16 "	Douglas, George	Fireman	9/0 per day	Discharged.
18 "	Hobson, Stuart	Cleaner	5/- per day	Discharged.
21 "	Vine, William	Driver	15/- per day	Deceased.
25 "	Edgar, William	Boilermaker	10/- per day	Discharged.
25 "	Stelde, Alfred	Fitter	9/4 per day	Written off books.
3 Feb.	Brett, George	Driver	14/- per day	Retired.
11 "	Gea, George	Fitter	10/- per day	Deceased.
1 Mar.	Selly, Christopher	Labourer	6/- per day	Retired.
2 "	Kelly, John	Wagon builder	10/- per day	Retired.
2 "	Mills, James	Striker	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Drinkwater, Theophilus	Fitter	10/2 per day	Retired.
2 "	Foster, Matthew	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Sullivan, John	Boilermaker's assistant	7/0 per day	Retired.
2 "	Elford, John	Labourer	6/8 per day	Retired.
2 "	White, Thomas	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Reardon, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Retired.
3 "	Polterson, Frederick	Turner	11/8 per day	Retired.
8 "	Johnston, Arthur	Shop boy	4/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	Bamborough, John	Labourer	7/3 per day	Deceased.
12 "	Sherar, George	Boilermaker	10/3 per day	Deceased.
12 April	Tye, Charles	Fire-lighter	6/6 per day	Discharged.
18 "	Carruthers, William	Driver	12/- per day	Deceased.
9 May	Bruderlin, Percival	Fitter	6/6 per day	Deceased.
19 "	Nicholson, Malcolm	Labourer	7/- per day	Retired.
26 "	Fewkes, Howard	Office boy	2/6 per day	Resigned.
26 "	Cavanagh, Thomas	Stationary engine fireman	5/2/- per week	Discharged.
31 "	Harper, John	Pumper	8/- per day	Retired.
5 June	Sheil, Thomas	Fireman	9/- per day	Resigned.
6 "	Latimer, George	Cleaner	7/- per day	Discharged.
6 "	Murphy, Stephen	Labourer	5/- per day	Retired.
7 "	Darling, Henry	Oiler	7/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	Asheroff, James	Fireman	10/- per day	Resigned.
14 "	Paisley, Frederick	Apprentice	5/- per day	Resigned.
18 "	Prideaux, John	Fireman	9/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Durham, David	Driller	8/- per day	Retired.
23 "	Moyes, Henry	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Walton, John H.	Cleaner	6/6 per day	Discharged.
1899. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH				
24 June	Latimer, Mary J.	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
5 July	Little, Rachael	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
12 "	O'Donnell, Patrick	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
17 "	Hoare, Emma	Platform attendant	15/- per week and house.	Discharged.
21 "	Stewart, Bruce	Assistant berthing-master	9/6 per day	Discharged.
22 "	Reid, Duncan	Gatekeeper	30/- per week and house.	Deceased.
23 "	McDonald, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
24 "	Nugent, Hannah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
26 "	Kirkland, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
27 "	Bullock, William	Gatekeeper	7/1 per week	Resigned.
31 "	DeLaney, Robert	Guard	11/- per day	Retired.
31 "	Lewis, Betsy	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
2 Aug.	Cousins, Mrs. Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Deceased.
3 "	Forde, Isabella	Platform attendant	10/- per week and house.	Discharged.
4 "	Shepherd, Selina	Gatekeeper and platform attendant	7/- per week	Resigned.
5 "	Stuyck, George	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
7 "	Parker, Thomas	Porter	7/6 per day	Discharged.
7 "	Harris, Charles	Junior porter	5/- per day	Discharged.
12 "	Hawes, Charles	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
15 "	Martin, Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
18 "	Chin, Benjamin	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
18 "	Foster, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
23 "	Dries, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
23 "	Hansen, Clara	Gatekeeper	7/6 per week	Resigned.
24 "	Greenhead, Joseph	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
25 "	Cavers, Walter	Porter	7/6 per day	Deceased.
25 "	Strophair, Margaret	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
31 "	Playar, Thomas	Guard	9-8 per day	Resigned.
2 Sept.	Howe, Frederick	Officer-in-charge	£160 per annum	Retired.
4 "	Miles, Henry	Signalman	9/- per day	Discharged.
13 "	Ward, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
15 "	Knight, Alice	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
16 "	Hogan, Michael	Junior porter	5/- per day	Discharged.
16 "	Westlake, Thomas	Porter	7/6 per day	Resigned.
16 "	Outred, Francis	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Discharged.
19 "	Keane, Arthur	Porter	7/- per day	Resigned.
21 "	Allen, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Summergreene, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
28 "	Norberry, Hannah	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Resigned.
29 "	Kelleher, Margaret	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
29 "	Bennett, William	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
30 "	Haines, Ada	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
30 "	Lyon, John	Gatekeeper	7/- per day	Retired.
4 Oct.	Maudsley, Mary	Gatekeeper	6/- per week & house	Resigned.
7 "	Traynor, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
9 "	Collins, Mary	Platform caretaker	Free house	Resigned.
11 "	Bickley, George	Shunter	7/6 per day	Deceased.
13 "	Primrose, Henry	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
18 "	Naylor, Peter	Porter	8/- per day	Discharged.
14 "	Kerr, Robert	Porter	7/- per day	Written off the books.
19 "	Miller, Richard	Junior porter	4-2 per day	Resigned.
23 "	Bailey, George	Porter	8/- per day	Deceased.
28 "	Brown, William	Guard	10/6 per day	Deceased.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
20 Oct.	Hughes, Teresa	Caretaker & postmistress	7/- per week & house.	Resigned.
20 "	Miller, Phoebe	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Resigned.
21 "	Dunne, Roderick	Officer in-charge	£150 per annum	Retired.
21 "	Blackett, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
1 Nov.	Bailey, Catherine	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Deceased.
1 "	Beach, John S.	Station-master	£183 per annum	Retired.
1 "	Clark, Charles	Clerk	£120 per annum	Discharged.
6 "	Carroll, Patrick	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
6 "	O'Toole, Matilda	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
10 "	Lawrence, Antoni	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
11 "	Cosgrove, Richard	Guard	9/- per day	Deceased.
13 "	Burns, Martha	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Deceased.
19 "	Whitely, George	Gatekeeper	20/- per week	Deceased.
25 "	Thompson, Thomas	Gatekeeper	7/- per day	Retired.
29 "	Percy Arthur	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Discharged.
30 "	Loosemore, Violet	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
30 "	Dicker, Wilton	Messenger	8/- per day	Retired.
4 Dec.	Richards, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Deceased.
4 "	Croft, Jane	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
5 "	Royer, Charles	Clerk	£120 per annum	Resigned.
6 "	Veness, Naomi	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
7 "	West, David	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Foster, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
12 "	Bell, Susan	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
14 "	Cameron, Percy	Probationer	2/4 per week	Resigned.
21 "	Collitta, Joseph	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Resigned.
29 "	Cole, Caroline	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
29 "	Murkham, Mrs. Julia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Deceased.
30 "	Green, William	Officer in-charge	£220 per annum	Deceased.
1900.				
1 Jan.	Malone, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
1 "	Brayne, Walter	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Resigned.
4 "	Corcoran, Anthony	Post office and platform attendant.	3/4 per day	Resigned.
6 "	Dunshea, Andrew	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
8 "	Clark, Gwendolyn	Gatekeeper	Free house	Discharged.
9 "	Jamieson, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
11 "	Coomes, Lucy	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
13 "	Jennings, Edward	Porter in-charge	£130 per annum	Deceased.
19 "	Cannon, Horace	Porter	7/- per day	Resigned.
19 "	Greville, Stanley	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
22 "	Hicks, William	Night porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
22 "	Hartigan, Mary	Platform caretaker	5/- per week	Resigned.
25 "	Taylor, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
26 "	Maunsell, William	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Joffay, Caroline	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
1 Feb.	Ings, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
2 "	Lloyd, Lily	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
3 "	Priest, Margaret	Post office and platform attendant.	11/- per week and house.	Resigned.
3 "	Pierce, Joseph	Guard	10/6 per day	Retired.
6 "	Pendergast, James	Traffic inspector	£250 per annum	Deceased.
7 "	Atkinson, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
9 "	Cather, George	Porter	8/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Lackey, William	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
9 "	Hess, Catherine	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
12 "	Ryan, John	Porter	6/- per day	Deceased.
12 "	Vincent, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
14 "	Krudson, Mary	Gatekeeper	10/- per week and house.	Deceased.
15 "	Lee, Eleanor	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
15 "	Kelhear, Louisa	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
15 "	Harris, James	Signaller	8/6 per day	Deceased.
16 "	Clarke, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
17 "	Long, William	Probationer	12/6 per week	Discharged.
22 "	Dewhurst, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
28 "	Fitch, David	Relieving officer	£150 per annum	Resigned.
6 Mar.	Drummond, Jeannetta	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
7 "	O'Brien, Ellen	Ladies' attendant	12/6 per week	Resigned.
8 "	Bennett, Mrs. H.	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
9 "	Clarke, Patrick	Porter	6/6 per day	Discharged.
9 "	Kelly, Matthew	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
9 "	Ward, Robert	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
10 "	Lambert, Tom	Coal attendant	8/- per day	Deceased.
14 "	Hartigan, Katherine	Gatekeeper	Free house	Deceased.
15 "	McLennan, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
16 "	Davis, William	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Written off books.
22 "	Ball, Ellen	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
27 "	Gleeson, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
28 "	Grant, William J.	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
29 "	Bennett, Thomas	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
29 "	Kelly, William	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
31 "	Nield, Frederick	Station-master	£275 per annum	Retired.
2 April	Butt, George	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Resigned.
2 "	Webb, Arthur	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
2 "	Chicken, William	Junior porter	5/- per day	Off sick indefinitely.
4 "	Cavanough, Kate	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
6 "	Nye, Laura	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
17 "	Wallace, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Retired.
17 "	Ashe, Thomas	Porter	6/6 per day	Resigned.
20 "	Williams, John	Station-master	£200 per annum	Deceased.
21 "	Fernside, William	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Castles, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
25 "	Stewart, Ethelbert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Deceased.
26 "	Davis, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
27 "	Haywood, Samuel	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
29 "	Attwill, William	Officer-in-charge	£145 per annum	Deceased.
30 "	Pye, Frederick	Clerk-in-charge	£290 per annum	Retired.
30 "	Hayes, Albert	Night officer	£140 per annum	Retired.
30 "	O'Rourke, William	Officer-in-charge	£160 per annum	Retired.
30 "	McAkill, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
1 May.	Sayer, Charles	Guard	9/- per day	Deceased.
3 "	Murphy, Bridget	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Discharged.
7 "	West, Julia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
12 "	Butterworth, Samuel	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
14 "	Sykes, Catherine	Gatekeeper & caretaker	7/- per week	Resigned.
17 "	Jones, Catherine	Gatekeeper	7/6 per week	Position abolished.
17 "	Daley, Roy	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
18 "	Hay, Myra	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
19 "	Wood, Archibald	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
21 "	McDonald, Joseph	Junior porter	5/- per day	Deceased.
21 "	Rose, Henry	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
21 "	Smith, Charles	Porter	7/- per day	Resigned.
21 "	Eyles, Frank	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1903. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
22 May	Aitken, George	Gatekeeper	39/- per week	Retired.
24 "	Lee, Lydia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
24 "	Mills, Ellen	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
26 "	Cox, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Discharged.
30 "	Dewhurst, Clara	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Discharged
2 June	Watson, Edwin	Shunter	7/- per day	Deceased.
4 "	Loughridge, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
5 "	Douglas, John	Shunter	8/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Wright, Alice	Post office and platform attendant.	13/- per week	Resigned.
8 "	Dunno, James	Shunter	7/6 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Sutherland, Christina	Gatekeeper	20/- per week	Resigned.
13 "	Farr, Hilary	Junior porter	3/6 per day	Resigned.
13 "	Tanuer, Edgar	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
14 "	Phillips, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
15 "	Harrison, William	Clerk	£150 per annum	Discharged.
16 "	Shaw, John	Porter	6/6 per day	Discharged.
16 "	Badley, John	Junior porter	5/- per day	Discharged.
16 "	Jackson, Francis	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
19 "	Hines, Mary	Gatekeeper & platform attendant.	7/- per week and house.	Resigned.
25 "	Armstrong, George	Gatekeeper	30/- per week	Deceased.
25 "	Edwards, George	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Discharged.
29 "	McLean, Angus	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Deceased.
1899. SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
10 Aug.	Kitchener, Horaco	Driller	8/2 per day	Resigned.
23 Sept.	Buchanan, William	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
4 Jan.	Hamilton, William	Carpenter	10/- per day	Resigned.
21 April	Firkin, John	Blacksmith	10/8 per day	Deceased.
1899. ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
19 Aug.	Bartlett, Alfred P.	Fitter	10/- per day	Resigned.
10 Sept.	Edwell, Paul R.	Electrical engineer	£200 per annum	Deceased.
2 Nov.	Hardley, Lawrence	Fitter	9/- per day	Resigned.
17 "	Pelletier, John	Electric light attendant	8/- per day	Resigned.
2 Jan.	Lind, Frederick	Foreman fitter	12/6 per day	Resigned.
10 Feb.	Shee, Herman U.	Electrical assistant	£140 per ann.	Resigned.
6 Mar.	Davis, John H.	Probationer	2/8 per week	Discharged.
1899. CONTROLLER OF STORES BRANCH.				
23 Sept.	Ferguson, Alexander	Foreman	10/- per day	Retired.
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
5 July	Yanhan, John	Car-lifter	3/6 per day	Discharged.
2 Aug.	Searle, Thomas	Driver	12/- per day	Resigned.
18 "	Hodgson, Harold	Apprentice	10d. per day	Discharged.
11 Sept.	Dash, David	Fireman	7/6 per day	Deceased.
24 "	Harris, James C.	Fireman	8/- per day	Discharged.
28 "	Marr, Thomas D.	Shop boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
13 Nov.	Tyrer, Thomas	Stationary engine fireman.	7/8 per day	Resigned.
23 "	Johnston, Edward	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
22 Dec.	Duffy, Joseph	Painter's assistant	7/- per day	Discharged.
24 "	Deil, Alexander	Turner	10/- per day	Resigned.
2 1900.				
6 Jan.	Bavfield, William	Striker	7/6 per day	Discharged.
10 "	Sattler, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Burns, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
13 "	Hensworth, Edward	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
21 "	Long, George	Cleaner	4/6 per day	Discharged.
24 "	Webb, James H.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Warburton, Henry	Cleaner	5/3 per day	Discharged.
29 "	Humphries, William	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
23 Feb.	Lamont, Robert E.	Cleaner	6/- per day	Discharged.
17 April	Kuncely, James K.	Driver	11/- per day	Discharged.
23 "	Inman, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	} Not required.
24 "	Jackson, Edward A.	Cleaner	4/6 per day	
25 "	Payne, Arthur	Cleaner	5/6 per day	} Not required.
27 "	Manning, William	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
21 "	Boyce, Joseph	Fuelman	7/- per day	Deceased.
10 May	Lane, James	Cleaner	7/6 per day	Not required.
19 "	Edwards, Harry	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
29 "	Byrne, Laurence	Labourer	8/- per day	Written off books.
29 "	Arnott, James H.	Driver	12/- per day	Deceased.
31 June	Hayes, James	Labourer	6/3 per day	Deceased.
1 "	Long, Richard	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Resigned.
1899. TRAMWAYS TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
31 July	Clement, William E.	Senior conductor	9/- per day	Retired.
3 Aug.	Bradley, Herbert	Junior conductor	6/6 per day	Discharged.
3 Oct.	Lackey, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
7 "	Coxhead, Albert D.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
19 "	Wilson, Albert H.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
23 "	Pike, Valentine	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
25 "	Chadwick, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
6 Nov.	Smith, Norman	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
16 "	Campbell, James T.	Car cleaner	7/- per day	Discharged.
1 Dec.	Huntley, Frank	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
2 "	Swindhurst, Harold	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
5 Jan.	Meyn, Thomas	Ticket Clerk	7/6 per day	Discharged.
10 "	Green, Theophilus V.	Conductor	7/6 per day	Discharged.
11 "	McGrath, John C.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
22 "	Cowdroy, Hubert	Conductor	6/6 per day	Resigned.
6 Feb.	McCarthy, Joseph	Conductor	6/6 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Bedford, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day	Deceased.
15 "	Gaffney, Andrew F.	Conductor	6/6 per day	Resigned.
17 "	Foster, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
10 Mar.	Jenkins, Daniel	Watchman	7/- per day	Discharged.
13 April	Robins, William	Starter	9/- per day	Deceased.
23 "	Wolfenden, Horace	Driver	7/6 per day	Resigned.
2 May	Sheldon, William	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Bevan, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.

APPENDIX—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued.				
7 May	Mongan, Michael	Conductor	6 - per day	Discharged.
17 "	Warton, George M.	Conductor	6 - per day	Discharged.
17 "	Lund, Soren C.	Conductor	6 - per day	Discharged.
21 "	Parker, Albert E.	Shorthand clerk	£125 per annum	Resigned.
31 "	Roberts, James	Tramway manager	£700 per annum	Retired.
		House allowance	£100 per annum	
		Sundays	£52 per annum	
4 June	Deadman, Stephen	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Resigned.
6 "	O'Halloran, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
6 "	Clines, James A.	Driver	8 - per day	Discharged.
9 "	Leancy, Michael	Starter	9 - per day	Deceased.
16 "	Abell, William	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Thorley, George	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
1899.				
TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH.				
26 July	Flynn, Patrick	Labourer	7 6 per day	Discharged.
17 Aug.	James, William	Striker	7 6 per day	Retired.
7 Sept.	Heath, Samuel	Labourer	7 6 per day	Resigned.
1900.				
8 Mar.	O'Connor, John	Labourer	7 6 per day	Retired.
9 June	Walls, Michael	Cart and driver	10 6 per day	Discharged.
1900.				
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
12 May	Waddell, Hugh	Labourer	6 6 per day	Discharged.
30 June	Kirk, Robert	Fireman	8 - per day	Resigned.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

(REPORT OF RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS, QUARTER ENDING DECEMBER, 1899.)

Printed under No. 1 Report from Printing Committee, 26 June, 1900.

Offices of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
25th January, 1900.

To THE HONORABLE THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS,—

Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of the 44th clause of the Railway Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 35, we have the honor to submit, for the information of Parliament, our Report for the quarter ended 31st December, 1899, upon the subjects specified, viz. :—

I.—STATE OF THE TRAFFIC.

RAILWAYS.	Quarter ended 31st Dec., 1898.	Quarter ended 31st Dec., 1899.
Miles open	2,705½	2,736
Revenue ... {		
1898. 1899.		
Passenger ... £300,290 £323,028	£934,854	£925,284
Merchandise... £634,564 £602,256		
Expenditure	£444,420	£460,100
Train miles run	2,397,651	2,326,979
Earnings per train mile	7s. 9½d.	7s. 11½d.
Expenditure per train mile	3s. 8½d.	3s. 11½d.
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	47·54	49·73
Number of passengers	6,344,015	6,796,140
Tonnage of goods traffic	1,268,027	1,292,805
Tonnage of live stock traffic	68,941	50,722

TRAMWAYS.	Quarter ended 31st Dec., 1898.	Quarter ended 31st Dec., 1899.
Miles open	66½	69½
Revenue from all sources	£88,913	£97,372
Expenditure	£76,328	£83,411
Tram miles run	880,661	956,458
Earnings per tram mile	2s.	2s. 0½d.
Expenditure per tram mile	1s. 8½d.	1s. 9d.
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	85·85	85·66
Number of fares collected	21,017,421	23,034,053

RAILWAYS.

II.—CONDITION OF THE LINES.

A report as to the condition of the lines will be found as an Appendix, page 4.

III.—SPECIAL RATES.

A statement of the special rates, and the reasons for making the same, will be found attached, page 4.

IV AND V.—STAFF.

These returns are given as an Appendix, pages 5 to 8.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The Passenger department shows an increase of £22,737, all classes of traffic having contributed thereto, viz., first-class passengers, £7,194; second-class, £13,798; and miscellaneous, £1,745.

In the Goods department, General Merchandise shows an increase of £5,693; Coal and Coke, £2,194; and other minerals, £3,273. Wool shows a decrease of £15,841; Live Stock, £21,984; Hay, Straw, and Chaff, £4,928, and Grain and Flour, £714.

The net Earnings for the quarter show a decrease of £9,570.

The General Goods tonnage shows a decrease of 36,110 tons, viz., General Merchandise, 1,356 tons; Hay, Straw, and Chaff, 9,860 tons; Grain and Flour, 2,531 tons; Wool, 4,144 tons; Live Stock, 18,219 tons. Coal and Coke shows an increase of 17,967 tons, and other Minerals, 24,702 tons.

The Passenger journeys show an increase of 452,125.

In consequence of an unusual amount of necessary repairs and renewals to Rolling Stock, as compared with the corresponding quarter of last year, the expenditure shows an increase of £15,671.

CONDITION OF THE LINES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR THE TRAFFIC.

The Permanent Way Lines, Works, and Buildings have been well maintained.

The grade improvements near Carlingford and Aberdeen, and the earthworks, culverts, and bridges connected with the deviation works between Harden and Cootamundra have been completed, and good progress has been made with similar works between Gresham and Blayney.

The duplication of the North Shore line has made fair progress, but several important alterations proposed to be carried out are deferred, pending Parliamentary authority.

The Wagga Wagga Viaduct, north of the river, has been completed, and satisfactory progress is being made with the remainder of the work.

TRAMWAYS.

TRAMWAYS.

The Earnings during the past quarter have increased £8,459, and the Expenditure £7,083, the net result being an improvement of £1,376.

The George and Harris Streets Electric line, Circular Quay, Sydney, to John-street, Pyrmont, a distance of 3 miles 19 chains, was opened for traffic on the 5th of December last. During the 24 days in December, 1,136,852 passengers were carried, and the traffic continues to give gratifying results.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.

W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.

DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

APPENDIX I.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

Report on the Condition of Permanent Way and Works for the Quarter ending 31st December, 1899.

Sir, Office of Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines, 1 January, 1900.

I have to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the Permanent Way and Works have been efficiently maintained during the past quarter.

Reballasting, resleepering, and rerailling operations have progressed steadily.

The grade improvements near Carlingford and Aberdeen Station are completed, the earthworks, culverts, bridges, &c., in connection with those between Harden and Cootamundra are finished, and good progress has been made with similar works between Gresham and Blayney.

Fair progress has been made with the duplication of the North Shore line, between St. Leonards and Lindfield, but several important alterations proposed to be carried out are deferred until Parliamentary authority has been obtained.

The work of renewing the Wagga Wagga viaduct has advanced so far that all work north of the river has been completed, and it is expected that delivery of all materials required for the completion of the work will shortly be given.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS R. FIRTH.

Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines.

The Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.

APPENDIX II.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

STATEMENT, in accordance with clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Special Rates which have been made, and the reasons for making such rates, quarter ended 31st December, 1899.

Article.	Rate or Particulars.	Reason for Rate.
Horses	Twenty-three trucks, Scone to Newcastle, for shipment—25 per cent. off usual rate.	To secure traffic.
Oil	Loaded in owner's tank of not more than 9 tons capacity and carried on 4-wheels, Torbane to Darling Harbour;—£5 per vehicle, tank to be hauled back empty free.	To encourage industry.
Crude ores	Newcastle to E. and A. Copper Works, 1s. per ton in full ton truck loads ...	New rate.
Oil (kerosene)	Conveyed in owner's tanks of not more than 6½ tons capacity, Hartley Vale to Eskbank, 14s. per tank; B class rate when in drums or cases, and carried with candles, gasoline, and benzine, in 6 ton loads, Hartley Vale to Darling Harbour.	do
Alabastine	B class rates and conditions	To encourage traffic.
Pipes, castings, valves, &c.	Darling Harbour to Moree for Moree Water Supply, £4 10s. per ton in 6-ton loads, forwarded at the convenience of the Department.	To secure traffic.
Machinery—gold dredging..	B rate, in 6-ton loads, per 4-wheeled wagon	To equalise rates.

APPENDIX III.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Appointments of Employees from the 1st October to the 31st December, 1899.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
29 Sept.	Woolfe, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice D. McKinley.
29 "	Yurham, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice B. Ryder.
4 Oct.	Baker, Alfred	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Acheson.
12 "	Watson, Albert	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice G. Spear.
13 "	Hyde, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Haines.
13 "	Handcock, Peter	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Jamieson.
16 "	Randall, Frederick	Fettler	6/6 per day	
16 "	Good, Daniel	Fettler	7/6 per day	
30 "	Robertson, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Spike.
31 "	Dowd, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
31 "	Brugrett, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	
3 Nov.	Roser, William	Fettler	6/6 per day	Vice M. Carroll.
9 "	Sweeney, Patrick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice T. Bath.
10 "	Dawes, Walter	Labourer	6/0 per day	
14 "	Lowing, William	Office-boy	2- per day	Vice J. Cook.
15 "	Jeffrey, Arthur	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice P. Egan.
24 "	Hudson, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	Vice J. Crofts.
28 "	Hogan, Patrick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Goddard.
1 Dec.	Nelson, Alexander	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice R. Daly.
1 "	Curtis, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Long.
1 "	Sharpe, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 "	Fisher, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Norris.
11 "	Pearcy, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Stanlan.
11 "	Liddle, Neil	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Rosch, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice P. Wright.
14 "	Sorrell, Thomas	Office-boy	2- per day	Vice M. Gearing.
15 "	Harris, Arthur	Office-boy	2- per day	Vice M. Reilly.
15 "	Coldrake, William	Bridge carpenter	8/- per day	
15 "	Keavers, Alfred	Timber inspector	7- per day	
18 "	Leaver, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
18 "	Baddoe, Benjamin	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Bridger.
18 "	Hoare, Benjamin	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Veness
20 "	Spinks, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
21 "	Moran, Lawrence	Labourer	6/6 per day	
21 "	Lindsay, Benjamin	Painter	6/- per day	
22 "	Bendell, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
22 "	Callaway, Charles	Labourer	6/6 per day	
28 "	Taylor, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
28 "	Taylor, Henry	Assistant driller	5/- per day	
29 "	Davies, Peter	Carpenter	9/- per day	
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
3 Oct.	Charlton, John W.	Cleaner	5/- per day	New opening, Manilla.
3 "	Morris, Thomas	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
3 "	Clark, William	Call-boy	3/3 per day	
4 "	Wolf, William	Shop-boy	3/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Duigan, George O.	Apprentice	-10 per day	
6 "	Richards, David	Cleaner	5/- per day	
10 "	Riddle, Victor	Call-boy	3/3 per day	
10 "	Morrin, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
12 "	Wright, Thomas	Cleaner	5/- per day	
12 "	Russell, William	Telephone-boy	3/3 per day	Vice S. Yates.
12 "	Rennett, Charles	Waggon-builder	9/6 per day	Vice R. Doyle.
12 "	Mathews, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
13 "	Shanks, William	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
13 "	Russell, Alexander	Fitter	9/6 per day	
13 "	Tideswell, Morris	Carriage-builder	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
13 "	Bonrke, James	Boilermaker's assistant	6/3 per day	
13 "	Blackshaw, John	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice A. Love.
13 "	Randell, William	Gasman	7/6 per day	Vice R. Clingan.
13 "	Robson, Stuart	Cleaner	5/- per day	
13 "	Bressington, David	Cleaner	5/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	Harvey, Herbert	Turner	9/6 per day	Vice H. Boag.
20 "	Batchford, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	
20 "	Hackett, Alfred	Labourer	6/6 per day	
20 "	Brooks, Peter	Cleaner	5/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
20 "	Havcox, William	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
20 "	Auton, Frederick	Cleaner	5/- per day	
23 "	Hobbs, Frederick	Cleaner	5/- per day	
23 "	Dalzell, George	Cleaner	5/- per day	
24 "	Hall, Ernest	Telephone-boy	3/3 per day	
31 "	Bennett, John	Cleaner	2/6 per day	
1 Nov.	Rodgers, Robert	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice J. Carroll
2 "	Johnson, Charles	Shop-boy	1/6 per day	
6 "	Long, George	Telephone-boy	2/6 per day	
6 "	Ratcliffe, Augustus	Call-boy	2/6 per day	
13 "	Crawford, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	
18 "	Allen, Stanley	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
18 "	Ogden, Reginald	Apprentice	-10 per day	
18 "	Ring, John W.	Labourer	6/6 per day	
18 "	Coleman, Joseph P.	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Goudwin, James	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
23 "	King, Albert	Cleaner	5/- per day	
23 "	Latham, Frank	Apprentice	-10 per day	
23 "	Sharp, Archibald	Shop-boy	2/3 per day	Vice A. Greaves.
28 "	Darcy, James	Telephone-boy	3/3 per day	Vice G. Roach.
1 Dec.	Ferraro, Herbert	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Mortimer.
1 "	Melver, Francis	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 "	Reid, Edward	Carriage and waggon examiner	7/- per day	
1 "	M'Fayden, Henry	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
1 "	Wagner, John	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Lees, Harold	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Handley, Sydney	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Wilkinson, Leslie	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
1 "	Metcalfe, John	Call-boy	2/6 per day	
4 "	Griffith, Arthur	Electro-plater	10/- per day	
7 "	Ingrall, Carl	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Foster.
7 "	Urah, Willie	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
7 "	Giddy, John G.	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
7 "	Hood, Herbert C.	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
11 "	Rosewell, William	Cleaner	5/- per day	
11 "	Harrison, Thomas	Waggon builder	9/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
12 "	Doody, Elizabeth	Upholsterness	4/- per day	

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
1890.				
29 Sept.	Bennett, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice W. Bennett.
29 "	Cantrill, Sylvester	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 Oct.	Doig, William	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
2 "	Helleman, Benjamin	Porter	4/- per day	
6 "	Woodward, Eva	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice McDonald.
7 "	Gregory, Kate	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Traynor.
9 "	Hartcher, Herbert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice M. Hogan.
10 "	Mullins, Maude	Platform caretaker	Free house	Vice M. Collins.
13 "	Amos, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice H. Miles.
13 "	Harvey, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	
14 "	Cavanaugh, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Petrie.
17 "	Hickey, Michael	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Ward.
19 "	Creswick, Norman	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice T. Allen.
20 "	Gain, Archibald	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice R. Kerr.
21 "	Outred, Francis	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice R. Miller.
27 "	Sayers, Lillian	Caretaker and Post Mistress	7/- per week and house.	Vice T. Hughes.
28 "	McDonald, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Haines.
30 "	Pritchard, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	Vice B. Stewart.
30 "	Smith, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice A. Keane.
30 "	Power, Catherine	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice P. Miller.
31 "	Potter, George	Porter	6/- per day	Vice W. Cavers.
1 Nov.	Clinton, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Blankett.
8 "	Loughridge, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice M. O'Toole.
11 "	Prives, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Reeve, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Roberts, Joseph	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Jones, Robert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice H. Primrose.
23 "	Coulson, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	
23 "	Babbage, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	
24 "	Robinson, Nicholas	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice J. Field.
24 "	Maher, Richard	Porter	6/- per day	Vice T. Westlake.
27 "	Chamberlain, Christopher	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 Nov.	Meyer, Herman	Probationary porter	10/- per week	Vice G. Buckley.
30 "	Shipton, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
30 "	Johnson, Sydney	Probationer	2/6 per week	
1 Dec.	Weston, Alfred	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice R. Dunn.
1 "	McKinnon, Connor	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. Lilley.
1 "	Lowry, May	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice V. Lossemore.
4 "	Southwell, Hayden	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Outred.
4 "	Tooth, Percy	Probationer	2/6 per week	
4 "	Stephen, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice B. Budd.
5 "	Nicholson, James	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice R. Bostock.
5 "	Hogan, Michael	Junior porter	5/- per day	Re-employed.
6 "	O'Neil, John	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Breunan, Emma	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice N. Veness.
7 "	Radcock, William	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	Condon, Mary	Platform attendant	7/- per week	
8 "	Fletcher, Emily	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice E. Richards.
8 "	Jamieson, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	Piggott, Bridget	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Foster.
11 "	Bostock, Stanley	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice A. Lusher.
13 "	Horn, Bridget	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Bell.
13 "	Schweinsberg, Henry	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
15 "	Davis, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice P. Cameron.
21 "	Morris, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Brown.
29 "	Edser, Mary Ann	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Cole.
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
10 Nov.	O'Grady, William	Driller	7/6 per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
10 "	Cochrane, Thomas	Spike boy	2/3 per day	
22 "	Adams, Claude	Spike boy	2/- per day	
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
17 Nov.	Rowe, Norman E.	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
28 "	Brown, Frank	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	
21 Dec.	Wright, Horace H.	Probationer	2/6 per week	
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
3 Oct.	Butlin, Thomas	Apprentice	10/- per day	Vice H. Hodgson.
7 "	Webb, James H.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice R. Wills.
6 "	Mearns, Frederick	Fitter	10/- per day	Vice F. Macnab.
6 "	Bingham, William	Machinist	5/4 per day	
11 "	Fair, Joseph W.	Shop boy	2/3 per day	Vice T. Marr.
30 "	Kinsella, Arthur H.	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice J. Dickie.
17 Nov.	Martin, William	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice F. Lee.
12 Dec.	Warburton, Henry	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Vice J. Harris.
14 "	Hareu, Michael	Stationary engine fireman.	7/6 per day	Vice J. Tyrer.
18 "	Sattler, George W.	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice E. Johnson.
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
1 Oct.	McCardell, John	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice Z. Jeffrey.
7 "	Kopper, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway
4 "	Brighton, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Lackey.
12 "	Lawton, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Montgomery, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Flegg, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Robinson, James E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Blair, James K.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Tecce, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Dolan, John M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Bevan, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Baird, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day	George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway
14 "	Reach, Thomas H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	McSweeney, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Gillroy, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Wright, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Gosling, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Gumpert, Gustave	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Quigley, Albert B.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Hankinson, Halmond	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Hawkes, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
10 Nov.	Potter, Charles	Telephone lad	10/- per week	Vice W. Stephenson.
13 Dec.	Tierney, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. Chadwick.
14 "	Riley, Albert E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Coxhead.
TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH.				
8 Nov.	Heron, James	Striker	6/0 per day	Vice W. James.
6 Dec.	Fairls, Arthur	Tool Collector	4/- per day	
6 "	Brown, Norman	Tool Collector	2/6 per day	
13 "	Green, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
13 "	Malone, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	George and Harris Streets Electric Tramway.
19 "	Edwards, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
19 "	Heavey, Andrew	Labourer	6/6 per day	
19 "	Morley, Luke	Labourer	6/6 per day	
19 "	Crouch, William	Labourer	6/0 per day	

APPENDIX IV.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Removals of Employees from the 1st October to the 31st December, 1899.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899. TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH.				
9 Dec.	Kelly, Edward	Apprentice clerk	£70 per annum	Resigned.
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
28 Sept.	Stanlan, James	Ganger	9/- per day	Resigned.
9 Oct.	Norris, William	Labourer	7/6 per day	Deceased.
26 "	Croft, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
2 Nov.	Harris, Arthur	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
2 "	Carroll, Michael	Labourer	6/0 per day	Resigned.
6 "	O'Toole, William	Ganger	9/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Cook, John	Office boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
15 "	McCilly, Michael	Office boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
15 "	Veness, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
10 "	Egan, Patrick	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
14 Dec.	Cearing, Michael	Office boy	2/- per day	Discharged.
21 "	Kirwan, Maurice	Fettler	7/- per day	Deceased.
21 "	Flanagan, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
22 Aug.	Allen, William	Driller	9/2 per day	Retired.
1 Oct.	Donohoe, Michael	Fireman	9/- per day	Deceased.
5 "	Innis, Robert	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Hickson, John F.	Freight	6/0 per day	Resigned.
8 "	Lewkes, George	Driver	11/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	Wallace, James	Driver	15/- per day	Deceased.
20 "	Brears, Albert	Apprentice	6/- per day	Resigned.
23 "	Neal, James	Blacksmith	10/8 per day	Retired.
25 "	McKellar, Robert	Oiler	7/- per day	Written off books.
26 "	Greenfield, Hugh	Striker	7/- per day	Resigned.
26 "	Howard, William	Driver	14/- per day	Deceased.
31 "	Greaves, Arthur	Cleaner	6/- per day	Resigned.
3 Nov.	Candrick, Edward	Timekeeper	£150 per annum	Discharged.
3 "	Foster, William	Gatekeeper	7/6 per day	Deceased.
4 "	Boulter, Oliver	Labourer	7/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Burgess, George	Fireman	10/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Morgan, Joseph	Boilermaker's assistant	7/- per day	Deceased.
10 "	Foot, William	Fireman	10/- per day	Deceased.
11 "	Osborne, George	Labourer	7/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Young, John	Labourer	6/- per day	Retired.
21 "	Love, John	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
24 "	Sutton, George	Driver	14/- per day	Resigned.
28 "	Moon, Alice	Upholsteress	3/4 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Deerpore, Stephen	Brake cleaner	8/- per day	Resigned.
3 Dec.	Kensley, Charles	Fitter	10/- per day	Deceased.
4 "	Milgate, William	Steam crane fireman	8/- per day	Resigned.
5 "	Burke, William	Driver	13/- per day	Deceased.
8 "	Harmon, William	Cleaner	5/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	McNeil, Neil	Fitter	10/- per day	Resigned.
14 "	Norman, George	Marchmist	9/8 per day	Written off books.
17 "	Williams, James	Striker	6/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Crawford, John	Cleaner	5/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Mutton, Friend	Shop boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
29 Sept.	Bennett, William	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
30 "	Haines, Ada	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
4 Oct.	Maudsley, Mary	Gatekeeper	5/- per week & house.	Resigned.
7 "	Traynor, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
9 "	Collins, Mary	Platform caretaker	Free house	Resigned.
11 "	Bickley, George	Shunter	7/6 per day	Deceased.
13 "	Primrose Henry	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
13 "	Naylor, Peter	Porter	9/- per day	Discharged.
14 "	Kerr, Robert	Porter	7/- per day	Written off the books.
19 "	Miller, Richard	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Resigned.
23 "	Bailey, George	Porter	8/- per day	Deceased.
26 "	Brown, William	Guard	10/6 per day	Deceased.
26 "	Hughes, Teresa	Caretaker & postmistress	7/- per week & house.	Resigned.
29 "	Miller, Phoebe	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Resigned.
31 "	Dunne, Roderick	Officer in charge	£150 per annum	Retired.
31 "	Blackett, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
1 Nov.	Bailey, Catherine	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Deceased.
1 "	Beech, John S.	Station-master	£160 per annum	Retired.
1 "	Clark, Charles	Clerk	£120 per annum	Discharged.
6 "	Carroll, Patrick	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
8 "	O'Toole, Matilda	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
10 "	Lawrence, Antoni	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
11 "	Cosgrove, Richard	Guard	9/- per day	Deceased.
13 "	Burns, Martha	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Deceased.
19 "	Whitely, George	Gatekeeper	30/- per week	Deceased.
25 "	Thompson, Thomas	Gatekeeper	7/- per day	Retired.
29 "	Percy Arthur	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Discharged.
30 "	Loosmore, Violet	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
30 "	Dicker, William	Messenger	8/- per day	Retired.
4 Dec.	Richards, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Deceased.
4 "	Croft, Jane	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
5 "	Royor, Charles	Clerk	£130 per annum	Resigned.
6 "	Veness, Naomi	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
7 "	West, David	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Foster, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
12 "	Bell, Susan	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
14 "	Cameron, Percy	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
21 "	Collitts, Joseph	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Resigned.
29 "	Cole, Caroline	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
29 "	Markham, Mrs. Julia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Deceased.
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
2 Nov.	Hartley, Lawrence	Filter	9/- per day	Resigned.
17 "	Pelletier, John	Electric light attendant	9/- per day	Resigned.

APPENDIX IV—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1899.				
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
18 Nov.	Tyrer, Thomas.....	Stationary engine fire man.	7/6 per day ...	Resigned.
18 "	Johnston, Edward	Labourer	7/- per day ...	Resigned.
12 Dec.	Duffy, Joseph	Painter's assistant	7/- per day ...	Discharged.
14 "	Bell, Alexander	Turner	10/- per day ...	Resigned.
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
3 Oct.	Lackey, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day ..	Discharged.
7 "	Coxhead, Albert D.	Conductor	6/- per day ...	Discharged.
19 "	Wilson, Albert H.	Conductor	6/- per day ...	Discharged.
23 "	Pike, Valentine	Conductor	6/- per day ...	Discharged.
25 "	Chadwick, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day ...	Resigned.
6 Nov.	Smith, Norman	Conductor	6/- per day ...	Resigned.
16 "	Campbell, James T.	Car cleaner	7/- per day ...	Discharged.
1 Dec.	Huntley, Frank	Conductor	4/- per day ...	Resigned.
2 "	Swindiehurst, Harold	Conductor	6// per day ...	Resigned.

Sydney : William Applegate Guilhek, Government Printer. —1900.

[6d.]

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

(REPORT OF RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS, QUARTER ENDED 31st MARCH, 1900)

Printed under No. 1 Report from Printing Committee, 26 June, 1900.

Offices of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 10th April, 1900.

To THE HONORABLE THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS,—

Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of the 44th clause of the Railway Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 35, we have the honor to submit, for the information of Parliament, our Report, for the quarter ended 31st March, 1900, upon the subjects specified, viz. :—

I.—STATE OF THE TRAFFIC.

RAILWAYS.	Quarter ended 31st March, 1899.	Quarter ended 31st March, 1900.
Miles open	2,705 $\frac{1}{4}$	2,771
Revenue		
1899. 1900.		
Passenger ... £317,025 £338,372	£753,713	£816,755
Merchandise... £436,691 £178,383		
Expenditure	£410,056	£430,904
Train miles run	2,146,076	2,304,558
Earnings per train mile	7s. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.	7s. 1d.
Expenditure per train mile	3s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	3s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	51.40	52.76
Number of passengers	6,302,432	6,807,078
Tonnage of goods traffic	1,231,700	1,386,086
Tonnage of live stock traffic... ..	55,248	50,782

TRAMWAYS.	Quarter ended 31st March, 1899.	Quarter ended 31st March, 1900.
Miles open	66 $\frac{1}{4}$	70 $\frac{1}{2}$
Revenue	£90,100	£113,099
Expenditure	£68,797	£85,929
Tram miles run	878,188	1,127,797
Earnings per tram mile	2s. 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	2s.
Expenditure per tram mile	1s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.	1s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	76.36	75.98
Number of fares collected	21,324,710	26,825,200

II.—CONDITION OF THE LINES.

A report as to the condition of the lines will be found as an Appendix, page 4.

III.—SPECIAL RATES.

A statement of the special rates, and the reasons for making the same, will be found attached, page 4.

IV.—STAFF.

These returns are given as an Appendix, pages 5 to 8.

RAILWAYS.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The Earnings for the past quarter show an increase of £63,039 over the corresponding quarter of last year; the Expenditure an increase of £20,848, the result being an improvement of £42,191.

With few exceptions all classes of traffic contributed to the increase, viz.:—
First-class passengers, £9,079; Second-class, £7,927; Parcels, &c., £4,341; General Merchandise, £15,124; Grain, Flour, &c., £25,887; Minerals, other than Coal and Coke, £4,331; Coal and Coke, £894. Wool shows a decrease of £830, and Live Stock, £3,714.

The Passenger traffic shows an increase of 504,646 passenger journeys, and the Goods Traffic, 154,386 tons.

CONDITION OF LINES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR THE TRAFFIC.

The Permanent-way and works generally have been efficiently maintained.

The grade improvements between Harden and Cootamundra are approaching completion, and satisfactory progress has been made with similar works between Gresham and Blayney.

The first section of the pioneer line, Moree to Inverell, a distance of 35 miles, Moree to Gravesend, was opened for traffic on the 1st of February last.

TRAMWAYS.

TRAMWAYS.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The Earnings show an increase of £22,999 and the Expenditure an increase of £17,132, the net increase over the March quarter of last year being £5,867.

In connection with the increased Earnings, 5,500,490 additional fares were collected.

The George and Harris Streets Electric line continues to give satisfactory results.

A further extension of the Electric Tramway from Falcon-street to a point near Westbourne-street, North Shore, a distance of 1 mile 4 chains, was opened for traffic on the 24th of February.

The conversion of the North Shore Cable line to Electric was completed, and commenced running under the new system on the 25th of February.

The conversion of the western section of the Sydney Suburban Steam lines to Electric is being proceeded with as rapidly as circumstances permit. The Electric Tram commenced working on the Dulwich Hill-St. Peters line on the 2nd instant. The Glebe line will probably be completed for Electric running by the 1st July, the Leichhardt line by the 1st September, and the Balmain line by the 1st of November.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.

W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.

DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

APPENDIX I.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

REPORT on Condition of Way and Works for the Quarter ending 31st
March, 1900.

Sir, Office of Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines, 1st April, 1900.

I have to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the Permanent-way and Works have been efficiently maintained during the past quarter.

Owing to the difficulty in obtaining materials, only moderate progress has been made with relaying and resleepering, but better deliveries of rails are now anticipated, and work will be proceeded with more rapidly.

The grade improvements between Harden and Cootamundra are approaching completion, and the similar works between Gresham and Blayney have made satisfactory progress.

The duplication between St. Leonards and Lindfield is not quite completed, Parliament not being in session, the necessary authority required for a portion of the works could not be obtained, and progress has been retarded.

The first section of the Pioneer line, Moree to Inverell, a distance of 35 miles to Gravesend, was opened on the 1st of February last.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS R. FIRTH,
Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines.

The Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.

APPENDIX II.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

STATEMENT, in accordance with clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Special Rates which have been made, and the reasons for making such rates, Quarter ending 31st March, 1900.

Article.	Particulars of Rate.	Reason for Rate.
Gas oil.....	In 9-ton tanks from Torbane to Darling Harbour, £5 per tank, to include haulage of empty return tanks; Company to provide approved tanks.	To encourage traffic.
Lime screenings.....	Up journey the same rate as crude ores	do
Produce	Manilla to Tamworth to be treated as in up transit	do
Cotton	In bales hydraulic pressed, 2nd class	do
Do	Do unpressed, 3rd class	do
Paper shavings	In bags. "A" rate and usual conditions	do
Putty	2nd class rate	do
Carbonic gas tubes	Measuring not more than 5 feet in length and 12 inches in diameter and not exceeding 1 cwt. in weight, to be charged same as hogsheads when being returned empty.	do

APPENDIX III.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Appointments of Employees from the 1st January to the 31st March, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH.				
23 Mar.	Moanson, Francis	Office boy	10/- per week	Vice J. McCulloch.
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
1 Jan.	Malcolm, Hoderick	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1 "	Jeston, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	
3 "	Jones, Frederick	Labourer	6/3 per day	Vice G. Chambers.
3 "	Cook, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	
4 "	Johns, William	Carpenter	9/- per day	
4 "	Gower, William	Striker	7/- per day	
4 "	Johnson, George	Labourer	7/- per day	
5 "	McKenzie, Kenneth	Tool collector	3/- per day	Vice G. James.
5 "	Wilurd, Amos	Carpenter	3/- per day	
5 "	Thamer, Walter	Labourer	6/6 per day	
5 "	Innis, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
8 "	Bewes, Peter	Painter	8/- per day	
8 "	Gonnan, George	Painter	8/- per day	
8 "	Hogg, Andrew	Painter	8/- per day	
8 "	Horgan, Daniel	Labourer	6/6 per day	
10 "	Bye, Albert	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Costello, Patrick	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Ewing, John	Mechanic	8/- per day	Vice A. Lewis.
15 "	Ellis, Edwin	Labourer	6/6 per day	
19 "	Turner, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	
19 "	Kelly, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	
23 "	Lansdowne, Reginald	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice E. Walker.
25 "	McGill, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1 Feb.	Glover, Clarence	Labourer	6/6 per day	
2 "	Hudson, Charles	Fettler	7/6 per day	Vice J. Flanagan.
2 "	Quelch, John	Fettler	7/4 per day	
2 "	Power, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	
2 "	Thomas, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
5 "	Coots, Ernest	Office boy	2/- per day	
6 "	Irwin, Alexander	Fettler	7/6 per day	
7 "	Green, Benjamin	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 "	Eather, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	
7 "	Walsh, Daniel	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 "	King, Samuel	Labourer	6/6 per day	
13 "	Bryant, Samuel	Fettler	7/6 per day	
16 "	Matthews, Gena	Office cleaner	25/- per week	Vice E. Cromack.
22 "	Long, Denis	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Duggan, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	
6 Mar.	Day, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	
7 "	McKenzie, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
9 "	Nash, Edward	Fettler	7/6 per day	
9 "	Sawyer, Arthur	Labourer	6/6 per day	
9 "	Pearce, Herbert	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice P. Hamill.
15 "	Gosden, Henry	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Taylor.
15 "	Wood, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. McMillan.
15 "	Guy, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Sheedy.
15 "	Morris, Owen	Labourer	6/6 per day	
17 "	Bastable, Charles	Fettler	7/8 per day	
19 "	Wilson, William	Carpenter	9/- per day	
19 "	Harrison, Ivan	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice R. Forward.
26 "	Botts, David	Labourer	6/6 per day	
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
6 Jan.	Fishburn, Wilfred	Call boy	2/6 per day	
6 "	Hancock, Frank	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice R. McKellar.
6 "	Rigney, William	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
6 "	Cooney, Owen	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
12 "	Clatworthy, Edwin	Labourer	6/6 per day	
12 "	Lessels, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
15 "	Rees, Ernest	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Goodman, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	Vice N. McNeil.
16 "	Emerson, George	Fitter	6/6 per day	
16 "	Coutle, Mrs.	Upholsteress	4/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	McQueen, Mrs.	Upholsteress	4/- per day	
16 "	Coleman, Herbert	Apprentice	10d. per day	
25 "	Chamberlain, James	Apprentice	10d. per day	
29 "	Thompson, Robert	Apprentice	10d. per day	
29 "	Walford, James	Shop boy	2/6 per day	Vice S. Deeprose.
1 Feb.	Trotter, William	Shop boy	2/6 per day	Vice G. Sutton.
1 "	Folton, Richard	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
1 "	Parker, William	Gasfitter	9/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 "	Holt, Thomas	Fuelman	7/- per day	
2 "	Vine, John D.	Cleaner	6/6 per day	Vice G. Oates.
2 "	Giles, Alfred	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Viro.
2 "	McDougal, Frederick	Washer-out	7/- per day	
2 "	Denver, Edward	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 "	Rodgers, Robert	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
2 "	Goodwin, James	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Howard.
5 "	Bagnall, Francis	Cleaner	6/- per day	
7 "	Liddle, John	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice G. Burgess.
9 "	Allinson, Henry	Cleaner	6/- per day	
12 "	Pearse, Robert	Shop boy	1/3 per day	
16 "	Woodhead, George	Blacksmith	10/- per day	Vice J. Neal.
16 "	Breen, Thomas	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice M. Donohoe.
16 "	Richardson, Charles	Fitter	9/6 per day	Vice C. Kemsley.
16 "	Wardman, George	Oiler	7/- per day	Vice A. Polglase.
16 "	Johnston, Robert	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	Phillips, Oscar	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
16 "	Taylor, George	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
20 "	Nettleship, Walter	Shop boy	4/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Bailey, John	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
27 "	Burt, Alfred G.	Shop boy	2/- per day	
3 Mar.	Tilman, John D.	Carrriage builder	10/- per day	Vice W. Sadler.
7 "	Tye, Charles	Firefighter	6/6 per day	Vice J. Hickson.
7 "	Rufus, Ernest	Tube cleaner	5/- per day	Vice W. Harman.
7 "	Loughry, Edward	Apprentice	10d. per day	
8 "	Murray, James F.	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice G. Brett.
8 "	Bolton, George	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Bourke.
9 "	Woodhouse, Herbert	Shop boy	4/- per day	
9 "	Davidson, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	Vice J. Davidson.
9 "	Thomas, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice O. Boulter.
12 "	Staines, Samuel	Apprentice	10d. per day	
12 "	Seddon, Abraham	Apprentice	10d. per day	
12 "	Meredith, Charles	Shop boy	3/- per day	
12 "	Parker, Victor	Apprentice	10d. per day	

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH—continued.				
14 Mar.	Rochaix, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
15 "	Kerr, Stanley	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Soutier, Sydney	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Lodge, John	Apprentice	10d. per day	
16 "	Young, Thomas	Fitter	10/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	O'Donnell, James	Fitter	10/- per day	
18 "	Collins, Frederick	Fitter	10/- per day	
18 "	Green, Percy	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
19 "	Hillive, Stephen	Shop boy	2/- per day	
20 "	Wickham, Archibald	Apprentice	10d. per day	
20 "	Cochrane, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
20 "	Brown, Frank	Apprentice	10d. per day	
27 "	Martz, Albert	Messenger	10/6 per week	
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
1 Jan.	Playford, James	Porter	6s. per day	Vice J. Bench.
2 "	Henning, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice S. Malone.
3 "	Niordan, William	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
5 "	Robertson, Charles	Shunter	7/- per day	
5 "	Grugeon, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice T. Haywood.
6 "	Ryan, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	
6 "	Mason, Agnes	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice Mrs. Bailey.
8 "	Worton, Clara	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice G. Clarke.
8 "	Marshall, John	Probationer	2/6 per week	
11 "	Thomson, Frederick	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice N. Devery.
11 "	Muston, Edgar	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice C. Giles.
12 "	Olsson, Rebecca	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice L. Coombes.
13 "	Sneedy, Michael	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice D. West.
15 "	Jennings, Percy	Probationer	2/6 per week	
18 "	McGrath, Arthur	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice A. Magennis.
18 "	Madden, Joseph	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice C. Royer.
18 "	Andrews, William	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
19 "	Irwin, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Jamieson
20 "	Lambert, Arthur	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice H. Wauhop.
22 "	Stewart, Ethelbert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice H. Cosgrove.
25 "	Devenish, Elizabeth	Caretaker and Post-mistress.	10/- per week	Vice M. Hartigan.
26 "	Spark, Catherine	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Taylor.
26 "	Stutchbury, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice C. Clark.
26 "	White, Arthur	Porter	6/- per day	Vice F. Bruce.
30 "	Farnis, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice C. Jeffery
30 "	Jones, Magdeline	Platform attendant and house.	10/- per week	
1 Feb.	Maurisley, Arthur	Porter	6/- per day	
2 "	Greaves, Edwin	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	Wallace, Thomas	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	McGregor, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	Vincent, James	Probationer	6/- per week	
2 "	Reardon, Henry	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
2 "	Lloyd, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice L. Lloyd.
2 "	Ings, Leah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Ings.
2 "	Black, Frank	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Wander.
2 "	Pratt, Matthew	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice W. Johnstone.
5 "	Hassard, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. McLannett.
10 "	Houghton, Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice C. Hess.
15 "	Collins, John	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice S. Greville.
16 "	Abbott, William	Junior Porter	3/4 per day	
16 "	Gundlock, Robert	Telephone Boy	10/- per week	
16 "	Vincent, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice E. Lee.
19 "	Brackenbury, Charles	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice M. Burns.
19 "	Downie, Peter	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
20 "	Kerr, Leslie	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice W. Brayne.
20 "	Bradley, Emily	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice Mrs. Vincent.
23 "	Payne, Madeline	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	
23 "	Donoghue, Denis	Probationer	2/6 per week	
23 "	Upton, Richard	Porter	6/- per day	Vice A. Dunshen
24 "	Markham, Daniel	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice Mrs. J. Markham.
27 "	Huthnance, Emma	Gatekeeper	5/- per week	
1 Mar.	Scanlon, Edmund	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Vice G. Alley.
2 "	Coulter, William	Porter	6/- per day	Vice H. Cannon.
2 "	Dewhurst, Clara	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice T. Dewhurst.
5 "	Harvey, Margaret	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice J. Drummond.
6 "	Williams, Mrs.	Ladies' attendant	20/- per week	Vice E. O'Brien.
7 "	Linklater, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Pendergast, James	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
9 "	Rutter, Herbert	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Dicker.
9 "	Bailey, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice Mrs. H. Bennett.
12 "	Wrightson, Thomas	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
13 "	Raisbeck, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
16 "	Smith, Norman	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Small.
16 "	Clooney, James	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
16 "	Warren, Helena	Platform attendant	5/- per week	
16 "	McLennan, Alice	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice A. McLennan.
16 "	Lockwood, Albert	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Pye.
18 "	Cuthbert David	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice W. Long.
18 "	Kirby, Alice	Platform attendant	Free house	
19 "	Betts, William	Gatekeeper	10/- per week & house.	Vice M. Knudson.
24 "	Bruce, John	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
26 "	Marr, William	Porter	6/- per day	
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
19 Jan.	Casson, Joseph	Carpenter	9/- per day	Vice W. Hamilton.
22 "	Moody, George	Assistant Signal Fitter.	7/6 per day	
5 Feb.	Anderson, Ross	Laborer	6/6 per day	Vice D. Childs.
12 "	Stace, Frederick	Assistant Signal Fitter	7/- per day	
19 Mar.	Stuekler, William	Relief boy	2/- per day	Vice T. Cochrane.
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
17 Jan.	Bernberg, Colman P.	Fitter	8/- per day	
1 Feb.	Harrison, Howard	Assistant Electrical Engineer.	£200 per annum	
23 "	Medcalf, William	Telegraph messenger	10/- per week	Vice E. Dean.
16 Mar.	Darby, James A.	Telegraph probationer.	2/6 per week	Vice A. Cummings.
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
16 Jan.	Cook, Henry	Machinist	8/4 per day	Vice A. Bell.
1 Feb.	Faton, Thomas	Laborer	0/6 per day	Vice G. Sattler.
16 "	Doyle, Edwin	Painters' assistant	0/6 per day	Vice J. Duffy.
21 "	Mcakin, Charles	Striker	7/- per day	Vice M. Bayfield.
9 Mar.	Daley, Thomas	Fitter	10/- per day	Vice T. Conper.
22 "	Cahill John	Stationary engine fireman.	7/0 per day	Vice J. Leary.

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
1900.				
1 Jan.	Aigie, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
1 "	Slattery, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 "	Paulson, Alfred S.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. O'Donnell.
4 "	Bridge, Joseph C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
5 "	Potter, William H.	Junior lamp trimmer	2/6 per day	
19 "	Martin, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice T. Green.
22 "	Wright, Reginald	Office lad	10/- per week	
31 "	Erans, Sidney J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice T. Meyn.
31 "	Cannane, James	Car-cleaner	6/- per day	Vice J. Campbell.
5 Feb.	Wilson, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
5 "	Huntley, Frank	Conductor	6/- per day	Re-employed.
7 "	Gorman, Charles E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Henry, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Buchanan, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice W. O'Brien.
23 "	French, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Gaston, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice H. Cowdroy.
26 "	Johnson, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Slocombe, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 Mar.	O'Connor, John D.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. McGrath.
9 "	Head, Albert E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Foster.
15 "	Laverack, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
19 "	Brodie, John A.	Office lad	10/- per week	
21 "	Hay, Sidney A.	Office lad	10/- per week	
22 "	Cabot, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
22 "	Wilson, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
22 "	Vaughan, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH				
12 Jan.	McNamara, Daniel	Labourer	7/6 per day	Vice S. Heath.
1 Feb.	Conway, Thomas	Office boy	15/- per week	Vice F. Rutledge.
16 "	Wood, Charles H.	Labourer	6/6 per day	
9 Mar.	Bennett, Frederick	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. O'Connor.
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
8 Jan.	Bailey, Gregory	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
8 "	Konway, George A.	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
16 "	Jansen, Walter	Lineman	50/- per week	
19 "	McIntosh, James	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
22 "	Shirley, Frank L.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
24 "	Weeks, William	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
29 "	Wilkinson, William	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
31 "	Richards, Arthur	Improver	6/- per day	
1 Feb.	Napier, William G.	Brake-fitter	10/- per day	
1 "	Boland, Thomas W.	Fitter	7/6 per day	
5 "	Kenmis, Stanley	Improver	5/- per day	
8 "	Coxall, William J.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
8 "	Managan, Francis	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
9 "	Sprouster, Archibald	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Sampson, Albert H.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Schrader, Augustine	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Blagg, Thomas P.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Thornley, Charles	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Bailey, William M.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Ogg, Charles R.	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Buckingham, Sydney	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
9 "	Hobblewhite, Charles	Electrical cleaner	3/6 per day	
10 "	Fallows, Robert	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
12 "	Wilcoxon, Walter L.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
26 "	Woodward, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
7 Mar.	Robinson, Henry	Labourer	6/6 per day	
9 "	Ashworth, Charles	Storeman	7/6 per day	
16 "	Boavan, Frank C.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
16 "	Swan, Percival E.	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
19 "	Farrelly, James	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
22 "	Rogers, Leonard	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
22 "	Bickley, Edward W.	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
22 "	Cantwell, William A.	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	

APPENDIX IV.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Removals of Employees from the 1st January to the 31st March, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH.				
1900.				
27 Feb.	McCulloch, John	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum.	Resigned.
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
30 Jan.	Williams, George	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
31 "	Cromack, Ellen	Office cleaner	25/- per week	Resigned.
7 Feb.	McCann, Francis	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
8 "	McMillan, Angus	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
26 "	Higgins, John	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
1 Mar.	Perkins, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
1 "	Lryar, Thomas	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
3 "	Farquharson, Alfred	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
8 "	Moore, Horace	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
8 "	Pogarty, Martin	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
10 "	Clark, Abraham	Fettler	7/6 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Stewart, Kenneth	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
15 "	Hamill, Patrick	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
22 "	Ladd, Albert	Messenger	4/6 per day	Resigned.

APPENDIX IV—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
6 Jan.	Davidson, James.	Fitters' improver	7/- per day	Resigned.
6 "	Sadler, William	Carriage builder	11/- per day	Retired.
12 "	Cameron, Donald	Fireman	9/- per day	Deceased.
16 "	Douglas, George	Fireman	9/6 per day	Discharged.
16 "	Robson, Stuart.	Cleaner	5/- per day	Discharged.
24 "	Vine, William	Driver	13/- per day	Deceased.
25 "	Edgar, William	Boilermaker	10/- per day	Discharged.
25 "	Stride, Alfred	Fitter	9/4 per day	Written off books.
3 Feb.	Brett, George	Driver	14/- per day	Retired.
11 "	Geo, George	Fitter	10/- per day	Deceased.
1 Mar.	Selby, Christopher.	Labourer	6/- per day	Retired.
2 "	Kelly, John	Wagon builder	10/- per day	Retired.
2 "	Mills, James	Striker	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Drinkwater, Theophilus	Fitter	10/2 per day	Retired.
2 "	Foster, Matthew	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Sullivan, John	Boilermakers' assistant.	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Elford, John	Labourer	9/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	White, Thomas	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
2 "	Reardon, Edward	Labourer	9/6 per day	Retired.
3 "	Pettersen, Frederick	Turner	11/8 per day	Retired.
8 "	Johnston, Arthur	Shop boy	4/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	Bamborough, John	Labourer	7/- per day	Deceased.
22 "	Sherr, George	Boilermaker	10/3 per day	Deceased.
1899.				
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
30 Dec.	Green, William	Officer-in-charge	£220 per annum	Deceased.
1900.				
1 Jan.	Malone, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
1 "	Brayne, Walter	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Resigned.
4 "	Corcoran, Anthony	Post-office and platform attendant.	3/4 per day	Resigned.
6 "	Dunshca, Andrew	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
8 "	Clark, Gwendolin	Gatekeeper	Free house	Discharged.
9 "	Jamieson, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
11 "	Coomes, Lucy	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
13 "	Jennings, Edward	Porter-in-charge	£130 per annum	Deceased.
19 "	Causton, Horace	Porter	7/- per day	Resigned.
19 "	Greville, Stanley	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
22 "	Hicks, William	Night porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
22 "	Hardigan, Mary	Platform caretaker	5/- per week	Resigned.
26 "	Taylor, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
28 "	Maunsell, William	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Jeffery, Caroline	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
1 Feb.	Ings, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
2 "	Lloyd, Lily	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
4 "	Priest, Margaret	Post-office and platform attendant and house	11/- per week	Resigned.
3 "	Pierce, Joseph	Guard	10/8 per day	Retired.
6 "	Pendergast, James	Traffic inspector	£250 per annum	Deceased.
7 "	Atkinson, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
9 "	Cather, George	Porter	8/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Lackey, William	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
9 "	Hess, Catherine	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
12 "	Ryan, John	Porter	6/- per day	Deceased.
12 "	Vincent, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
14 "	Knudson, Mary	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Deceased.
15 "	Leo, Eleanor	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
15 "	Kehear, Louisa	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
16 "	Clarke, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
16 "	Harris, James	Signaller	8/6 per day	Deceased.
17 "	Long, William	Probationer	12/6 per week	Discharged.
22 "	Dewhurst, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
23 "	Fitch, David	Relieving Officer	£150 per annum	Resigned.
5 Mar.	Drummond, Jeannette	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
7 "	O'Brien, Ellen	Ladies' Attendant	12/6 per week	Resigned.
8 "	Bennett, Mrs. H.	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
9 "	Clarke, Patrick	Porter	6/6 per day	Discharged.
9 "	Kelly, Matthew	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
9 "	Ward, Robert	Junior Porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
10 "	Lambert, Tom	Coal Attendant	8/- per day	Deceased.
14 "	Hardigan, Katherine	Gatekeeper	Free house	Deceased.
15 "	McCannan, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
16 "	Davis, William	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Written off books.
27 "	Gleeson, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
28 "	Grant, William J.	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
31 "	Butt, George	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Resigned.
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
4 Jan.	Hamilton, William	Carpenter	10/- per day	Resigned.
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
2 Jan.	Lind, Frederick	Foreman fitter	12/6 per day	Resigned.
10 Feb.	Sloe, Herman C.	Electrical assistant	£140 per ann.	Resigned.
6 Mar.	Davis, John H.	Probationer	2/6 per week	Discharged.
TRAMWAYS-LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH				
6 Jan.	Rayfield, William	Striker	7/6 per day	Discharged.
10 "	Sattler, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Burns, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Hemsworth, Edward	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Long, George	Cleaner	4/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Webb, James H.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
23 "	Warburton, Henry	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
29 "	Humphries, William	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Discharged.
23 Feb.	Lamont, Robert B.	Cleaner	6/- per day	Discharged.
TRAMWAYS TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
5 Jan.	Meyn, Thomas	Ticket Clerk	7/6 per day	Discharged.
10 "	Green, Theophilus V.	Conductor	7/6 per day	Discharged.
11 "	McCrath, John C.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
22 "	Cowdroy, Hubert	Conductor	6/6 per day	Resigned.
5 Feb.	McCarthy, Joseph	Conductor	6/6 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Bedford, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day	Deceased.
15 "	Gaffney, Andrew F.	Conductor	8/6 per day	Resigned.
17 "	Foster, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
10 Mar.	Jenkins, Daniel	Watchman	7/- per day	Discharged.
TRAMWAYS MAINTENANCE BRANCH				
8 Mar.	O'Connor, John	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

(REPORT OF RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS, QUARTER ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1900.)

Printed under No. 7 Report from Printing Committee, 2 August, 1900

Offices of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 25 July, 1900.

TO THE HONORABLE THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS,—

Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of the 44th clause of the Railway Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 35, we have the honor to submit, for the information of Parliament, our Report for the quarter ended 30th June, 1900, upon the subjects specified, viz. :—

I.—STATE OF THE TRAFFIC.

RAILWAYS.	Quarter ended 30th June, 1899.	Quarter ended 30th June, 1900.
Miles open	2,706½	2,811½
Revenue	£690,114	£696,666
{ Passenger ... 1899. 1900. } { Merchandise... £280,539 £291,296 } { £409,575 £405,370 }		
Expenditure	£399,459	448,091
Train miles run	2,170,063	2,153,053
Earnings per train mile	6s. 4¼d.	6s. 5¼d.
Expenditure per train mile	3s. 8¼d.	4s. 2d.
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	57·88	64·32
Number of passengers	6,310,896	6,578,931
Tonnage of goods traffic	1,231,136	1,376,691
Tonnage of live stock traffic	54,643	47,895

TRAMWAYS.	Quarter ended 30th June, 1899.	Quarter ended 30th June, 1900.
Miles open	66½	71½
Revenue	£90,067	109,917
Expenditure	£76,469	99,625
Tram miles run	887,617	1,378,040
Earnings per tram mile	2s. 0½d.	1s. 7¼d.
Expenditure per tram mile	1s. 8¾d.	1s. 5¼d.
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	84·90	90·63
Number of fares collected	21,124,905	25,911,620

II.—CONDITION OF THE LINES.

A report as to the condition of the lines will be found as an Appendix, page 4.

III.—SPECIAL RATES.

A statement of the special rates, and the reasons for making the same, will be found as an appendix, page 4.

IV.—STAFF.

These returns are given as an Appendix, pages 5 to 10.

RAILWAYS.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The Earnings show an increase of £6,552 over the corresponding quarter of last year, but owing to a largely increased volume of goods traffic of a much less remunerative character, heavier repairs and renewals of Rolling Stock, and an unusually large amount of relaying on the Northern Line, the Working Expenses show an increase of £48,632.

The first-class Passenger Earnings show an increase of £257; second-class, £5,308; Parcels, &c., £5,192; Grain, Flour, &c., £5,408; Coal and Coke, £10,929, and other Minerals, £1,839. Hay, Straw, and Chaff show a decrease of £5,682; General Merchandise, £2,065; Wool, £1,910; and Live Stock, £12,724.

268,035 additional passengers were carried, and the Goods Traffic increased by 145,555 tons.

CONDITION OF THE LINES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR THE TRAFFIC.

The Permanent-way and works generally have been efficiently maintained.

Good progress has been made with the relaying and resleepering works, but owing to the recent wet weather and the scarcity of men the grade improvements have been retarded.

TRAMWAYS

TRAMWAYS.

The earnings give an increase of £19,850, and the additional fares collected amount to 4,786,715. The expenditure includes £5,713 for relaying in excess of the corresponding quarter of last year and this, together with the initial expenses connected with the electric running, shows an increase of £23,156.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

W. M. FEHON,
Deputy Chief Commissioner.

DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

APPENDIX I.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

Report on Condition of Permanent Way and Works for the Quarter ending
30th June, 1900.

Sir, Office of Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines, 2 July, 1900.
I have to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the Permanent Way and Works have been efficiently maintained during the past quarter.

Good progress has been made with the relaying and resleepering works.

The recent wet weather and the scarcity of men have retarded the progress of the various grade improvements. Those between Harden and Cootamundra are still incomplete, and similar works between Gresham and Blayney have progressed very slowly.

The duplication of the line between St. Leonards and Lindfield has been practically stopped waiting for the necessary Parliamentary sanction for some of the works.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS R. FIRTH.

The Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.

Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines.

APPENDIX II.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

STATEMENT, in accordance with clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Special Rates which have been made, and the reasons for making such rates, Quarter ended 30th June, 1900.

Article.	Rate.	Reason for Rate.
Coke	In owners' wagons hauled by Departmental engine from Mt. Kembla to Dapto, 9d. per ton.	To equalise rates.
Goods for Indian Famine Relief Fund.	Free, if consigned to Secretary of Indian Famine Relief Fund, and certificate is given by Secretary that goods are for purpose stated.	Special concession.
Bichromate of potash and iron liquor.	Sydney to Aberdeen, "B" rates in lots of not less than 6 tons per 4-wheeled truck.	To encourage traffic.
Milk (separated and returned to original sending station).	Half rates on certificate that the milk has passed through the process of separation.	do
Wine	Allandale to Ettamogah, through "A" rate—34s. 10d. per ton	To secure traffic.
Cement	Merrylands and Portland Siding to Newcastle, "M." rates with minimum of 5 tons per 4-wheeled truck.	To equalise rates.
Coal	Wallsend Colliery to Sulphide Association Siding in owners' wagons, 1s. per ton for large coal and 10d. per ton for small coal.	New rate.
Coal	Yass Tramway, 1s. 3d. per ton	do
Cococide	"B" rates and conditions	do

APPENDIX III.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Appointments of Employees from the 1st April to the 30th June, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH.				
1 April	McCarthy, Charles A.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Transferred from Extra Staff
1 May	Easton, Alexander	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice R. Dacey.
1 "	Weekley, Alfred V.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice E. Fisher.
14 "	Swinbourne, Charles A.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice P. Dimond.
11 June	Whitehead, Edward J.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
23 Mar.	Roberts, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Lander, Herbert	Carpenter	10/- per day	
2 April	Ferris, Henry	Office-boy	2/- per day	Vice E. Cotler.
9 "	Roach, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	
10 "	Timms, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice B. Madin.
11 "	Rowlands, Frederick	Labourer	6/6 per day	
13 "	Wessell, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Higgins.
13 "	James, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Clarke.
19 "	Quelch, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice M. Fogarty.
23 "	Selluck, Emanuel	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. McCann.
27 "	Leitch, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Martin.
3 May	Hedford, George	Office-boy	2/- per day	Vice A. Ladd.
5 "	Higham, Walter	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice T. Fryar.
7 "	Knight, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Moore.
9 "	O'Brien, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	
11 "	Brown, Ernest	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Perkins.
14 "	Hannan, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	
16 "	Miles, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice G. Ross.
18 "	Dunn, Arthur	Blacksmith	9/- per day	
25 "	McMillan, Angus	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice J. Crabtree.
1 June	Hathaway, Henry	Labourer	6/6 per day	
1 "	Price, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Farquharson.
1 "	Cox, David	Labourer	6/6 per day	
4 "	Perrau, John	Tool collector	3/- per day	Vice J. Cook.
8 "	Hammond, Leonard	Labourer	6/6 per day	
8 "	Pearne, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice W. Hartigan.
8 "	Whelan, Peter	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Hughes.
9 "	Taper, John	Bridge ganger	10/6 per day	
15 "	Cooke, Thomas	Bricklayer	11/- per day	
18 "	Bain, William	Carpenter	9/- per day	Vice E. Woolcott.
18 "	Ryan, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice A. Smith.
19 "	McGoldrick, William	Fitter	6/0 per day	Vice J. Farry.
25 "	Goodwin, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice H. Mills.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS' BRANCH.				
23 Mar.	Coleman, Edward	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice E. Reardon.
23 "	Smith, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	Vice G. Gee.
29 "	Gell, Charles	Fitter	16/- per day	
29 "	Anderson, George	Angle-iron Smith	11/- per day	
29 "	Scully, John	Boilermakers' Assistant	6/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
29 "	Mackenzie, Sydney	Striker	6/8 per day	
30 "	Smith, Alfred	Store-boy	2/6 per day	
3 April	Simmons, Charles	Call-boy	4/- per day	
3 "	Crawford, George	Apprentice	10d. per day	
3 "	Staples, Percy	Shop-boy	2/6 per day	Vice A. Johnston
5 "	Wild, Luke	Apprentice	10d. per day	
5 "	Grimshaw, Frederick	Apprentice	10d. per day	
5 "	Stedman, Reginald	Apprentice	10d. per day	
6 "	Austin, George	Apprentice	10d. per day	
6 "	Murray, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	
6 "	Jovell, Richard	Shop-boy	2/6 per day	
7 "	Schofield, Richard	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
9 "	Wolley, William	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice J. Elford.
10 "	Rowe, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
17 "	Grey, Cecil	Apprentice	10d. per day	
17 "	Ford, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	
17 "	Baker, Edwin	Apprentice	10d. per day	
18 "	Thomas, Alexander	Apprentice	10d. per day	
18 "	Westbrook, George	Apprentice	10d. per day	
19 "	Korridge, Stanford	Apprentice	10d. per day	
19 "	Souter, Ernest	Apprentice	10d. per day	
20 "	Brannley, John	Apprentice	10d. per day	
24 "	Rose, John	Apprentice	10d. per day	
26 "	Skee James	Fitter	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
26 "	McQuirk, John	Striker	6/8 per day	Vice J. Williams.
26 "	Foley, James	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	Vice G. Shear.
27 "	Percy, Frederick	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/8 per day	Vice J. Morgan.
27 "	Tiley, Ernest	Fitter	10/- per day	
27 "	Weelan, Michael	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/8 per day	
27 "	Johnson, John	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/8 per day	
27 "	Payn, Roland	Labourer	6/6 per day	
27 "	Mecham, Walter	Fitter	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff
27 "	O'Keefe, James	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
27 "	Scudder, William	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
27 "	Ripplingale, Joseph	Trimmer	9/6 per day	
27 "	Edwards, James	Turner	10/- per day	
1 May	Viles, Thomas	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice J. Banborough.
2 "	Wilson, George	Apprentice	10d. per day	
2 "	Ritchie, Alexander	Apprentice	10d. per day	
2 "	Samuels, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	
11 "	Horsfield, Ernest	Cleaner	6/- per day	
11 "	Lusk, Herbert	Fitter	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
14 "	Gillan, Charles	Shop-boy	2/6 per day	
17 "	Tating, Charles	Apprentice	10d. per day	
17 "	Bell, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
17 "	Cottle, Arthur	Apprentice	10d. per day	
17 "	Moore, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
21 "	Simmonds, William	Apprentice	10d. per day	
21 "	Millington, Alfred	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice C. Selby.
21 "	Cavanaugh, John	Fire-lighter	6/6 per day	Vice C. Tye.
21 "	Neate, Edgar	Shop-boy	3/- per day	
22 "	Conroy, Thomas	Apprentice	10d. per day	
25 "	Griffiths, Daniel	Fuelman	7/- per day	Vice S. Robson.
25 "	Veroo, Frederick	Turner	10/- per day	
25 "	Denpsey, Arthur	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
25 "	Hennesy, Robert	Labourer	6/6 per day	
28 "	Fenton, William	Shop-boy	2/- per day	
1 June	Allen, Mark	Fitter	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
3 "	Howard, Albert	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice G. Fewkes.

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH—continued.				
7 June	Portus, Albert	Shop boy	2/6 per day	Vice T. White.
8 "	Wilmott, John	Fuelman	0/0 per day	
8 "	Rendall, Sydney	Shop-boy	3/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
8 "	McKellar, Thomas	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/8 per day	
8 "	Stanton, Joseph	Boilermaker's Assistant	6/8 per day	
8 "	Goodman, John	Fitter	10/- per day	
15 "	Smith, Frederick	Fitter	10/- per day	Vice J. Harper.
15 "	Hampling, James	Apprentice	10d. per day	
18 "	Smith, John H. D.	Pumper	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
21 "	Pawley, Percy	Apprentice Clerk	£32 per annum	
22 "	Felton, Albert	Striker	6/8 per day	
22 "	Rimoldi, Ambrose	Fitter	10/- per day	
28 "	Henderson, Frederick	Apprentice	10d. per day	
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
22 Mar.	Ball, Alice	Gatekeeper	7/6 per week	Vice E. Ball.
22 "	Almond, John	Porter	6/- per day	Vice F. Dowling.
23 "	Simpson, Norman	Probationer	2/0 per week	Vice E. Jennings.
24 "	Matthews, Robert	Probationer	10/- per week	
30 "	Ammand, Sarah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice S. Clarke.
30 "	Squires, Alfred	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	Vice W. Lacey.
31 "	Duncan, Ernest	Block-lad	10/- per week	
31 "	Brettel, Decimus	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 April	Henderson, James	Block-lad	10/- per week	Vice J. White.
2 "	Mansfield, Horace	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
2 "	Marr, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	
2 "	Fitton, Alexander	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice L. Atkinson.
4 "	Dowling George	Probationer	2/6 per week	
4 "	Pryor, Alice	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice K. Hartigan.
6 "	Lambert, Paul	Porter	0/- per day	Vice J. Pondergast.
6 "	Stanley, George	Porter	6/- per day	Vice P. Senge.
6 "	Webb, Walter	Probationer	2/6 per week	
9 "	Daley, Roy	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice R. Small.
9 "	Beavis, Henry	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Ryan.
11 "	Simpson, William	Porter	6/- per day	Vice C. Hanson.
12 "	Stevens, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Hutchinson, Sydney	Porter	6/- per day	Vice L. Nye.
13 "	Evans, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	Vice W. Davis.
13 "	Linbury, Jane	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice K. Cavanaugh.
13 "	Ryan, William	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	Vice D. Fitch.
14 "	McGhee, Effenia	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice G. Butt.
20 "	King, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	
25 "	Mitchell, Stanley	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	Vice G. Cather.
25 "	Wilbow, Aubrey	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	Vice P. Carroll.
27 "	McKenna, Randolph	Porter	6/- per day	Vice A. Webb.
28 "	Heighington, Fredk.	Probationer	10/- per week	
30 "	Buckingham, Marcus	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice G. Whately.
30 "	Crook, Sydney	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	Vice A. McAskill.
1 May.	Summergreene, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice B. Murphy.
1 "	Ahern, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	
3 "	Bax, George	Porter	6/- per day	Vice L. Kelhear.
4 "	Denton, George	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice E. Stewart.
4 "	Bull, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice J. West.
5 "	Church, Mrs. Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	
7 "	Wilkins, Frederick	Gatekeeper	8/- per day	Vice A. Joyce.
7 "	Coulston, Richard	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice P. Clarke.
8 "	Smith, William	Porter	6/- per day	Vice C. Sykes.
8 "	Barrett, Louisa	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice W. Grant.
14 "	Barker, Arthur	Gatekeeper	16/- per week	Vice M. Hay.
15 "	Love, George	Porter	0/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
15 "	Regan, Emma	Caretaker & Gatekeeper	7/- per week	
16 "	Kershaw, Francis	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice W. Chicken.
18 "	Bentson, Bridget	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice E. Mills.
21 "	Rogers, James	Porter	0/- per day	
22 "	Lovett, Clarence	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Vice L. Lee.
25 "	Davis, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice M. Ward.
25 "	Addison, Harley	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	
25 "	Clements, Nathan	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Buckley.
25 "	Walley, Felix	Porter	0/- per day	
25 "	Walsh, Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice H. Rose.
26 "	Churchill, Emily	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice R. Ward.
26 "	Castles, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice T. Ash.
28 "	Allen, Frederick	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice E. Phillips.
28 "	Smith, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice F. Jackson.
30 "	Boattie, William	Junior Porter	2/6 per day	Vice C. Sayer.
31 "	Darby, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice S. Butterworth.
1 June	Watson, Henry	Post-office and Platform Attendant	15/- per week	Vice E. Watson.
1 "	Jackson, Edward	Junior Porter	3/4 per day	Vice G. Christie.
1 "	Greaves, Thomas	Post-office and Platform Attendant	3/4 per day	Vice C. Sutherland
2 "	Fahy, Francis	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. McDonald.
2 "	Hulson, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Vice Wm Buchanan.
4 "	Wakefield, James	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	
4 "	Penrose, Arthur	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice Ernest Lewis.
4 "	Tully, Ellen	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice J. Pierce.
8 "	Hayter, Alfred	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Thomas, John	Porter	6/- per day	Vice T. Lambert.
8 "	Haining, Clarence	Porter	6/- per day	Vice W. Fernside.
9 "	Hill, Frederick	Porter	6/- per day	Vice A. Loughridge.
9 "	Clatworthy, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice M. Ward.
11 "	Hupp, Frank	Telephone-boy	10/- per week	
11 "	Collier, Walter	Junior Porter	2/6 per day	Vice J. Buckley.
11 "	Wade, Archibald	Probationer	2/6 per week	
11 "	Hansaker, Thomas	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice H. Rose.
14 "	Smith, Patrick	Porter	6/- per day	Vice R. Ward.
14 "	Piper, Louisa	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice T. Ash.
15 "	Skelton, Margaret	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice E. Phillips.
18 "	Thew, Cecil	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice F. Jackson.
18 "	Grant, Harold	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice C. Sayer.
18 "	Dawson, George	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice S. Butterworth.
21 "	Parsons, Albert	Night Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Vice E. Watson.
23 "	Carey, John	Postal Assistant	10/- per week	Vice G. Christie.
26 "	Burke, Mary	Gatekeeper	20/- per week & house.	Vice C. Sutherland
25 "	Small, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. McDonald.
26 "	Heiler, Thomas	Probationer	2/6 per week	
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
19 April	Brown, Thomas	Labourer	7/- per day	Vice Wm Buchanan.
18 June	Bishop, Edward	Relief-boy	2/- per day	Vice Ernest Lewis.

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
2 April	Tweeddale, James W.	Foreman	70/- per week	Vice F. Lind.
13 "	Huntley Guy E.	District Inspector	54/- per week	
16 "	Sharp, James	Telegraph Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice W. Sullivan.
17 "	Rabidge, Parnell	District Assistant	9/- per day	
8 May	Mulhison, Albert	Telegraph Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. H. Davis.
25 "	Murray, Quinton	Electrical Cadet	10/- per week	
4 June	Bode, Charles W.	Improver	6/- per day	
CONTROLLER OF STORIES BRANCH.				
18 April	Wilkinson, Edmund	Sheet Repairer	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
11 May	Martin, Thomas C.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice L. Hart.
16 "	Reid, Walter M.	Office-lad.	10/- per week	
PROPERTY AND ESTATE BRANCH.				
8 June	Garland, Lewis H.	Clerk	£180 per annum	
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
10 May	Kennedy, James R.	Driver	11/- per day	Re-employed.
30 "	White, George	Labourer	6/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
1 June	Harrison Scott	Labourer	6/6 per day	
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
20 Mar.	Teale, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Auld, John C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Chanter, Cyrus	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	De Tores, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Gateward, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	McGlynn, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Partington, Herbert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Moran, John J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Ashby, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Taine, John W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Alexander, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Leeder, Sydney	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Harris, Albert P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Anderson, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Crawford, John F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Smith, Horace A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	O'Halloran, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Booth, James H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Douglas, David R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Lyons, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Mulder, Gustave	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Demecker, Wilham	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Bruce, Norman	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Dengate, Archibald	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Kennedy, Daniel S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Jordan, George H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	McGrath, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Love, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Suffect, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Keane, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Connolly, John	Flagman	6/- per day	
26 "	Anderson, George W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Brown, Frederick E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Hambly, Walter T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Hilder, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Hayes, William A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	James, Walter P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Meredith, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	McWilliam, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Priol, Frederick A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Robinson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Trickett, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Tansett, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Turner, Alfred H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Trivet, Walter H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Buckman, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Foster, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Neate, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Emery, Thomas	Office-boy	10/- per week	Vice R. Brown.
28 "	Albertson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Burke, James S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Beatty, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Cook, William A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Crennan, Leopold	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Dunn, Arthur W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Dunry, Francis	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Ferry, Patrick J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Fox, Montague	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Faco, Bertie C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Garforth, George A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Giles, George A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hudson, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hulme, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hampshire, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Hughes, William N.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Jones, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Kain, Prosper	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Kirgan, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Love, George R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Moon, Edmund V.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Morgan, James J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Mazlin, Donald	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Pike, Frank H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Ward, Hubert T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Williams, Daniel	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Russell, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Samuel, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
28 "	Randall, Edwin M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
11 April	Walker, Edward T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
11 "	Pool, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Butt, Richard H.	Telephone-lad	10/- per week	Vice L. Drewe.
20 "	Dunn, John J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice W. Bedford.
30 "	Deadman, Stephen	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	
30 "	Walker, Robert J.	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice A. Parker
7 May	Thompson, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Stone, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Morrish, James J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Condon, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Patterson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Fullames, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice M. Lenney.

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1800. TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued				
7 May	Hennessey, Thomas J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Matthews, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Cahalan, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Crocker, Arthur	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Bernard, David	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Abbott, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Hughes, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Tucker, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Redding, Bertie P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Coleman, Sidney	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Weatherstone, Benjamin	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Farrar, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Atkinson, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Southwell, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Fisk, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Goldsmith, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Bellingham, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Collier, Alexander	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Garnack, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Brown Leslie A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Brighton, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
7 "	Giddens, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Ronan, Charles P.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. Rees.
14 "	Hindoff, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
16 "	Parker, Augustine	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Vellenoweth, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Sinclair, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Freeman, George	Labourer	6/- per day	
1 June	Longhead, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
1 "	Thorley, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
1 "	Vaughan, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Wall, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
8 "	Iear, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 "	Brandon, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Power, Nicholas	Conductor	6/- per day	
12 "	Abell, William M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Hope, George	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Vice S. Deadman.
15 "	Hyton, Alfred J.	Apprentice Clerk	6/- per day	
21 "	Inman, James	Labourer	6/- per day	
23 "	Mulholland, Joseph J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	McMahon, Otho P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	McLean, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Lloyd, Frederick W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Bacon, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Woodroff, Arthur C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Degotardi, John H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Platau, Julius	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Cochrane, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Jesse, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Garlick, Andrew	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Clarke, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Cafe, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Bath, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Boulton, Charles H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Sharpnam, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Draper, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Cupitt, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Warton, George M.	Car-cleanner	6/- per day	Re-employed.
25 "	Robson, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Brown, Walkden	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Presnahan, Daniel	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Sanderson, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	McIntosh, Alexander	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Wilson, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Henson, Thomas A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	O'Sullivan, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	O'Neill, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Dickson, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
25 "	Loomes, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
26 "	Whyte, John A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Williams, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Peters, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Kulnar, Stanley	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	White, Bernard	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Dun, John T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Douglas, John A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Crowley, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
30 "	Hussey, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
22 Mar.	Kirwan, Maurice	Electrical Cleaner	3/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Warner, Joseph E.	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Heron, John	Labourer	6/6 per day	
23 "	Hair, John C.	Labourer	7/- per day	
26 "	Wirth, Augustus	Improver	6/- per day	
26 "	Waddell, Hugh	Labourer	6/6 per day	
29 "	Berg, France W.	Electrical Cleaner	3/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
29 "	Talbot, William	Electrical Cleaner	3/- per day	
29 "	Lang, Robert	Electrical Cleaner	3/- per day	
31 "	Hankin, James G.	Electrical Cleaner	3/- per day	
2 April	Murphy, Joseph	Fireman	8/- per day	
2 "	Boehier, Herbert P.	Engineer	12/- per day	
2 "	Sym. William G.	Fireman	8/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
3 "	Cardwell, John B.	Controller Cleaner	3/- per day	
3 "	Kirk, Robert	Fireman	8/- per day	
3 "	Reil, Robert	Labourer	6/6 per day	
4 "	Kirk, William	Patman	7/6 per day	
4 "	Crane, Sydney F.	Improver	5/- per day	
4 "	Symons, Walter R.	Greaser	3/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
5 "	Phillipott, John A.	Controller Cleaner	3/- per day	
6 "	Ferguson, Daniel	Dynamo Attendant	3/- per day	
6 "	Armstrong, John	Electrical Cadet	10/- per week	
6 "	Scarfe, Henry J.	Engineer	12/- per day	
6 "	Sinclair, William	Fireman	8/- per day	
6 "	Butler, Edward	Greaser	3/- per day	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Lube, Ernst W.	Electrical Cleaner	3/6 per day	
6 "	Kavanaugh, Victor G.	Electrical Cleaner	3/6 per day	
8 "	Keaty, William	Fireman	8/- per day	
9 "	Sproule, Albert H.	Improver	5/- per day	
13 "	Goulat, Hubert K.	Dynamo Attendant	8/- per day	
14 "	Kiley, William	Dynamo Attendant	8/- per day	
17 "	Gobie, William M.	Brassfinisher	10/- per day	

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH—continued.				
20 April	Somers, Eugene	Pitman	7/6 per day	
24 "	Lockwood, Alfred	Draftsman and clerk	12/- per day	
27 "	Kennedy, Thomas E.	Pitman	7/6 per day	
5 May	Henderson, George	Engineer	12/- per day	
8 "	Haynes, Herbert E.	Improver	6/- per day	
12 "	Norman, Frederick	Fitter	2/6 per day	
14 "	Leahy, George A.	Fireman	8/- per day	
15 "	Churchod, Henry	Electrical cleaner	3/- per day	
17 "	McDeed, Reginald	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
17 "	Lewis, Norman E.	Improver	3/- per day	
18 "	Lambert, Stanley	Boy labourer	3/6 per day	
21 "	Kendall, Alfred W.	Electrical assistant	£140 per annum	Vice H. N. Slee
26 "	Dickson, James M.	Boy labourer	3/6 per day	
28 "	Burkitt, George W.	Labourer	7/- per day	
30 "	Vernon, Arthur	Fitter	8/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
31 "	Bennett, Charles J.	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
4 June	Booth, Arthur W.	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
7 "	Fleming, Sydney	Electrical cleaner	5/- per day	
8 "	Eldershaw, Archie	Pitman	7/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
11 "	McFarlane, James M.	Labourer	7/- per day	
12 "	Ingle, Frederick	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
12 "	Jones, Hambrook R.	Compressor-oler	3/- per day	
18 "	Kirchner, Mary Jane	Office-cleaner	12/6 per week	
22 "	Russell, George	Turner	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
25 "	Law, Lewis L.	Labourer	7/- per day	
26 "	Crawford, David	Improver	3/6 per day	
28 "	Eather, Thomas	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
28 "	Volkman, George	Fitter	9/6 per day	
29 "	Gawler, Arthur C.	Pitman	7/6 per day	
29 "	Howison, Colin	Pitman	7/6 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
29 "	O'Brien, Patrick	Pitman	7/6 per day	
29 "	Hodge, Henry	Carpenter	9/- per day	
29 "	Frost, Victor	Labourer	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.

APPENDIX IV.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Removals of Employees from the 1st April to the 30th June, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. TRAFFIC AUDITOR'S BRANCH.				
31 Mar.	Fisher, Edward	Apprentice clerk	£70 per annum	Resigned.
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
28 Mar.	Schwind, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
14 April	Smith, Albert	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
19 "	Martin, John	Fettler	7/- per day	Discharged.
30 "	Pickin, William	Sub-inspector	£250 per annum	Retired.
8 May	Mills, Henry	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
10 "	Crabtree, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
11 "	Woolcott, Edward	Leading carpenter	11/3 per day	Retired.
18 "	Pouchard, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
19 "	Hughes, Henry	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
1 June	Roberts, Henry	Labourer	7/6 per day	Discharged.
8 "	Reidy, Patrick	Ganger	9/- per day	Deceased.
9 "	Farry, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
12 "	Lewis, Henry	Fettler	7/- per day	Written off books.
16 "	Kelton, Thomas	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
21 "	Quelch, George	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
21 "	Johnson, Hobart	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
30 "	Flood, John	Fettler	7/6 per day	Resigned.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
12 April	Tye, Charles	Fire-lighter	6/6 per day	Discharged
19 "	Carruthers, William	Driver	12/- per day	Deceased.
24 "	Kornfeld, Leopold	Fitter	10/2 per day	Discharged.
9 May	Bruderlin, Percival	Fuelman	6/0 per day	Deceased.
19 "	Nicholson, Malcolm	Labourer	7/- per day	Retired.
26 "	Fewkes, Howard	Office boy	2/6 per day	Resigned
26 "	Cavanagh, Thomas	Stationary engine fireman.	52/- per week	Discharged.
31 "	Harper, John	Pumper	8/- per day	Retired.
5 June	Sheil, Thomas	Fireman	9/- per day	Resigned.
6 "	Lathiner, George	Cleaner	7/- per day	Discharged.
6 "	Murphy, Stephen	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
7 "	Darling, Henry	Oiler	7/- per day	Resigned.
12 "	Ashcroft, James	Fireman	10/- per day	Resigned.
14 "	Paisley, Frederick	Apprentice	5/- per day	Resigned.
18 "	Prideaux, John	Fireman	9/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Durham, David	Driller	8/- per day	Retired.
28 "	Moyes, Henry	Labourer	7/6 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Walton, John H.	Cleaner	6/6 per day	Discharged.
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
22 Mar.	Ball, Ellen	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
29 "	Bennett, Thomas	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
29 "	Kelly, William	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged.
31 "	Nield, Frederick	Station-master	£275 per annum	Retired.
2 April	Bull, George	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Resigned.
2 "	Webb, Arthur	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Discharged
2 "	Chicken, William	Junior porter	5/- per day	Off sick indefinitely.
6 "	Cavanough, Kate	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
14 "	Nye, Laura	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
17 "	Wallace, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Retired.
17 "	Ashe, Thomas	Porter	6/6 per day	Resigned.
20 "	Williams, John	Station-master	£200 per annum	Deceased.
21 "	Fernside, William	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Castles, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
25 "	Stewart, Ethelbert	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Deceased
26 "	Davis, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.

APPENDIX IV—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
27 April	Haywood, Samuel	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
29 "	Attwill, William	Officer-in-charge	£165 per annum	Deceased.
30 "	Pye, Frederick	Clerk-in-charge	£200 per annum	Retired.
30 "	Hayes, Albert	Night-officer	£140 per annum	Retired.
30 "	O'Rourke, William	Officer-in-charge	£160 per annum	Retired.
30 "	McAskill, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
1 May	Snyder, Charles	Guard	9/- per day	Deceased.
3 "	Murphy, Bridget	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Discharged.
7 "	West, Julia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
12 "	Butterworth, Samuel	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
14 "	Sykes, Catherine	Gatekeeper & caretaker	7/- per week	Resigned.
17 "	Jones, Catherine	Gatekeeper	7/6 per week	Position abolished.
17 "	Daley, Roy	Probationer	2/6 per week	Resigned.
18 "	Hay, Myra	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
19 "	Wood, Archibald	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
21 "	McDonald, Joseph	Junior porter	5/- per day	Deceased.
21 "	Rose, Henry	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
21 "	Smith, Charles	Porter	7/- per day	Resigned.
21 "	Eyles, Frank	Porter	6/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Aitken, George	Gatekeeper	30/- per week	Retired.
24 "	Lee, Lydia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
24 "	Mills, Ellen	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
25 "	Cox, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	Discharged.
30 "	Dewhurst, Clara	Gatekeeper	and house. 7/- per week	Discharged.
2 June	Watson, Edwin	Shunter	7/- per day	Deceased.
4 "	Loughridge, Annie	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
5 "	Douglas, John	Shunter	8/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Wright, Alice	Post office and platform attendant.	15/- per week	Resigned.
8 "	Dunn, James	Shunter	7/6 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Sutherland, Christina	Gatekeeper	20/- per week and house.	Resigned.
13 "	Farr, Hilary	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Resigned.
13 "	Tanner, Edgar	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
13 "	Phillips, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
15 "	Harrison, William	Clerk	£160 per annum	Discharged.
16 "	Shaw, John	Porter	6/0 per day	Discharged.
16 "	Bailey, John	Junior porter	5/- per day	Discharged.
16 "	Jackson, Francis	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
19 "	Hines, Mary	Gatekeeper & platform attendant.	7/- per week and house.	Resigned.
25 "	Armstrong, George	Gatekeeper	30/- per week	Deceased.
25 "	Edwards, George	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Discharged.
26 "	McLean, Angus	Junior porter	2/6 per day	Deceased.
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
21 April	Firkin, John	Blacksmith	10/8 per day	Deceased.
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
17 April	Kennedy, James R.	Driver	11/- per day	Discharged.
23 "	Innan, James	Cleaner	6/6 per day	} Not required.
24 "	Jackson, Edward A.	Cleaner	4/6 per day	
26 "	Payne, Arthur	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
27 "	Manning, William	Cleaner	5 6 per day	
29 "	Royce, Joseph	Fuelman	7/- per day		Deceased.
10 May	Lane, James	Cleaner	7/6 per day	Not required.
19 "	Edwards, Harry	Cleaner	5/8 per day	Discharged.
20 "	Byrne, Laurence	Labourer	8/- per day	Written off books.
30 "	Arnott, James H.	Driver	13/- per day	Deceased.
1 June	Hayes, James	Labourer	6/6 per day	Deceased.
21 "	Long, Richard	Cleaner	5/6 per day	Resigned.
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
13 April	Robins, William	Starter	9/- per day	Deceased.
23 "	Wolfenden, Horace	Driver	7/6 per day	Resigned.
2 May	Sheldon, William	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
7 "	Bevan, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
7 "	Mongan, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
17 "	Watson, George M.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
17 "	Lund, Soren C.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
21 "	Parker, Albert E.	Shorthand Clerk	£125 per annum	Resigned.
31 "	Roberts, James	Tramway Manager	£700 per annum	} Retired.
		House allowance	£100 per annum	
		Sundays	£52 per annum	
4 June	Deadman, Stephen	Apprentice Clerk	£30 per annum	Resigned.
6 "	O'Halloran, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
6 "	Clines, James A.	Driver	8/- per day	Discharged.
9 "	Leaney, Michael	Starter	9/- per day	Deceased.
16 "	Abell, William	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
22 "	Thorley, George	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH.				
9 "	Walls, Michael	Cart and Driver	10/8 per day	Discharged.
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
12 May	Waddell, Hugh	Labourer	6/6 per day	Discharged.
20 June	Kirk, Robert	Fireman	8/- per day	Resigned.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

(REPORT OF RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS, QUARTER ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1900.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 17 October, 1900.

Offices of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
17th October, 1900.

TO THE HONORABLE THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS,—

Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of the 44th clause of the Railway Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 35, we have the honor to submit, for the information of Parliament, our Report for the quarter ended 30th September, 1900, upon the subjects specified, viz. :—

I.—STATE OF THE TRAFFIC.

RAILWAYS.								Quarter ended 30th September, 1899.	Quarter ended 30th September, 1900.
Miles open	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,736	2,811½
				1899.	1900.				
Revenue	...	{ Passenger	...	£274,659	£288,953	...	£724,867	£782,625	
		{ Merchandise	...	£450,208	£493,672	...			
Expenditure	...	...	...	...	...	...	£430,425	£467,720	
Train miles run	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,109,762	2,351,168	
Earnings per train mile	...	...	...	...	...	...	6s. 10½d.	6s. 8d.	
Expenditure per train mile	...	...	...	...	...	...	4s. 1d.	3s. 11¼d.	
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	...	...	...	...	...	...	59.38	59.76	
Number of passengers	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,304,724	6,686,919	
Tonnage of goods traffic	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,287,334	1,527,112	
Tonnage of live stock traffic	...	...	...	...	...	...	39,196	39,674	

TRAMWAYS.								Quarter ended 30th September, 1899.	Quarter ended 30th September, 1900.
Miles open	...	...	...	...	...	...	66½	76½	
Revenue	...	...	...	...	...	...	£89,336	£116,200	
Expenditure	...	...	...	...	...	...	£72,162	£97,125	
Tram miles run	...	...	...	...	...	...	892,729	1,525,673	
Earnings per tram mile	...	...	...	...	...	...	2s. 0d.	1s. 6¼d.	
Expenditure per tram mile	...	...	...	...	...	...	1s. 7½d.	1s. 3¼d.	
Percentage—Expenditure to earnings	...	...	...	...	...	...	80.78	83.58	
Number of passengers carried	...	...	...	...	...	...	12,716,514	19,664,510	

RAILWAYS.

II.—CONDITION OF THE LINES.

A report as to the condition of the lines will be found as an Appendix, page 4.

III.—SPECIAL RATES.

A statement of the special rates, and the reasons for making the same, will be found attached. [Appendix, page 4.]

IV.—STAFF.

These returns are given as an Appendix, pages 5 to 11.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The earnings for the quarter show an increase of £57,758 over the corresponding quarter of last year; the expenditure an increase of £37,295; the net result being an improvement of £20,463.

All classes of traffic contributed to the increase, viz., first-class passengers, £3,127; second-class, £6,948; parcels, &c., £4,219. Total coaching increase, £14,294. General merchandise, £128; hay, straw, and chaff, £6,536; grain, flour, &c., £15,842; wool, £6,372; live stock, £3,906; coal and coke and other minerals, £10,680. Total goods increase, £43,464.

The passenger traffic shows an increase of 382,195 journeys, and the increase in general merchandise and live stock is 240,256 tons.

CONDITION OF LINES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR THE TRAFFIC.

The Permanent Way and Works generally have been well maintained.

Relaying and resleepering operations continue to make fair progress.

The grade improvements and deviations between Jindalee and Demondrille have been completed; the works between Harden and Murrumburrah are nearly finished, and those on the Western line, between Newbridge and Blayney, have made fair progress.

Parliamentary sanction having now been obtained for closing the level crossings, &c., the work of duplicating the line between St. Leonards and Lindfield will be completed as early as possible.

TRAMWAYS.

TRAMWAYS.

The Earnings show the largest increase upon record, viz., £26,864; the Expenditure, owing to considerable additional service, an increase of £24,963, the net improvement being £1,901.

6,947,996 additional passengers were carried.

The following lines have been opened for traffic, viz. :—

	mls.	chs.
6th Aug.—St. Peters Railway Bridge to Cook's River Dam	1	78
13th Aug.—Belford-street to Glebe-road, Adamstown ...	1	2
10th Sept.—Rose Bay Wharf to Dover-road ...	1	3
12th Sept.—Cleveland-street to Kensington Racecourse ...	1	30

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

W. M. FEHON,

Deputy Chief Commissioner.

DAVID KIRKCALDIE,

Commissioner.

APPENDIX I.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

REPORT on Condition of Way and Works for the Quarter ending 30th
September, 1900.

Sir, Office of Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines, 4th October, 1900.
I have to report, for the information of the Commissioners, that the Permanent-way and Works have been efficiently maintained during the past quarter.

Relaying and resleeping operations continue to make fair progress.

The gradient improvements and deviations between Jindalee and Demondrille have been completed, and between Harden and Murrumburrah they are nearly finished. Those on the Western Line, between Newbridge and Blayney, have made fair progress.

The duplication of the line between St. Leonards and Lindfield has been carried on, and Parliamentary sanction having now been received for the closing of level crossings, &c., the whole of the work will be completed as early as possible.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS R. FIRTH,
Engineer-in-Chief for Existing Lines.

The Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.

APPENDIX II.

RETURN of Goods Rates approved for the quarter ended 30th September, 1900.

Article.	Particulars of Rate.	Reason for Rate.
Broom millet	In up direction, in less lots than 6 tons per 4-wheeled truck, "A" class rates with a minimum of 1 ton.	To encourage traffic.
Cement	Merrylands to Newcastle, Miscellaneous rates and conditions	do
Coal	South Bulli to Mt. Keira, in owners' wagons and hauled by owners' engine, 3d. per ton; if hauled by Department's engine, 9d. per ton.	do
Dairy plant (old)	Aberdeen to Moss Vale, "B" rates	do
Flour and mill offal	Forwarded from stations Darling Harbour to Granville inclusive to stations on the Illawarra Line, "A" class rates and conditions—maximum rate, 5s. per ton.	do
Limestone	In full truck loads, Lime Siding to Annandale Siding, 10d. per ton	do
Cabbages and pumpkins ...	Wagga to Darling Harbour, 12s. 7d. per ton for lots of not less than 6 tons per 4-wheeled truck.	do
General goods	Taken across the temporary bridge over the Gwydir River from Gravesend, 5s. per truck to be charged.	do
Ore bags (second-hand) ...	Free on down journey when sent to country stations for purpose of being filled and then forwarded by rail.	do
Monier pipes	"B" rates	do
Coal	Ellermore Vale Colliery to Purified Coke Works, Wallsend, 7d. per ton as from 1/1/00.	do
Wire collapsible poultry pens.	Free carriage on return journey for pens sent from Sydney to country stations for use at shows.	do
Kerosene oil, in tanks	In owners' tanks and vehicles approved by the Chief Mechanical Engineer, and conveying not less than 9 tons of oil, "B" rates plus 50 per cent.; empty tanks to be returned free. In cases where the existing maximum rates for kerosene are less than "B" plus 50 per cent., the maximum rates to be charged, less 10 per cent.	do
Coal, small	South Wallsend Colliery to Sulphide Corporation in owners' trucks, 8d. per ton.	do
Coal and coke	Eskbank and Wallerawang to Annandale Copper Company's Siding, 5s. and 4s. 4d. per ton respectively, provided tonnage hauled from both stations is at rate of 7,500 tons per annum for three months, and 10,000 tons per annum afterwards. From other stations a rebate of 10 per cent. will be allowed on condition that not less than 1,500 tons are forwarded per annum in 4-wheeled truck-loads of not less than 9½ tons.	do
Copper	Annandale Copper Company's Siding to Darling Harbour, £1 per ton in 25-ton consignments.	do
Copper matte	Matte and antimonist dross from Dapto to Darling Harbour in lots of not less than 8 tons per 4-wheeled truck, 3s. 9d. per ton.	do
Crude ores	From Western Line or from stations on the Murrumburrah-Blayney Line to Annandale Siding, up journey rates throughout to be charged.	do
Engines, portable	Used for operating chaff-cutting machines, "B" rates	do
Gas liquor	In drums, Miscellaneous rates; trucks need to be loaded to their full carrying capacity, a minimum charge as for 7 tons per 4-wheeled truck being made.	do
Metal	From Bombo to Hurstville and stations north thereof, rebate of 6d. per ton on freight to be allowed on all metal over 5,000 tons forwarded per annum as from 1st July, 1900, exclusive of that forwarded for the Railways and Tramways.	do
Do	Narrandera to Hay for Municipal Council, 5s. 1d. per ton at convenience of Department for three months from 1st September, 1900.	do
Do broken	Russell's Siding to Waratah Junction, 1s. per ton	do
Pipes (cast-iron and steel), water supply.	Sydney to Wollongong (800 tons), "A" rates, with a minimum of 5 tons per 4-wheeled truck.	do
Rags, old	For paper-making, "A" rates and conditions	do
Soil	Bellambi to Alexandria, 3s. 2d. per ton	do
Wool	Nevertire to Warren to be scoured; 3s. 9d. per ton for greasy wool, Nevertire to Warren, and scoured rate from Warren to Darling Harbour.	do

APPENDIX III.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Appointments of Employees from the 1st July to the 30th September, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINES BRANCH.				
22 June	Kelley, William	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice G. Quelch.
22 "	Thomas, Edward	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice H. Johnson.
22 "	Lockhart, James	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice P. Reidy.
4 July	Borrowdale, Joseph	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice R. Stewart.
16 "	Garrham, Michael	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice G. Williams.
16 "	Fetherstone, John	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice J. Pouchard.
16 "	Heeger, Frederick	Office boy	2/- per day	Vice W. Heeger.
20 "	Murray, Edmund	Labourer	6/8 per day	
20 "	Cook, Ernest	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice M. Wilson.
30 "	Stewart, Donald	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice J. Schwind.
1 Aug.	Collins, George	Fitter	7/6 per day	
2 "	Edwards, William	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice M. Kirwan.
3 "	Bates, William	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice T. Kelton.
3 "	Baldwin, Walter	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice C. Delaney.
10 "	Wright, Percy	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice H. Roberts.
10 "	Wadwell, Richard	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice A. Peterson.
20 "	McPadden, Patrick	Fitter	7/6 per day	
25 "	Hartgan, Edward	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice C. Davison.
31 "	Colley, Benjamin	Labourer	7/8 per day	Vice C. Cavan.
10 Sept.	M'Inerney, Michael	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice J. Flood.
10 "	Preston, William	Labourer	6/8 per day	
10 "	McDonald, Edwin	Fitter	6/8 per day	Vice T. King.
14 "	Downey, Edward	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice J. Martin.
14 "	Spears, Albert	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice H. Mook.
14 "	Currey, Frederick	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice J. Broderick.
18 "	Rich, Alfred	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice H. Lewis.
28 "	Reese, James	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice C. Reynolds.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
2 July	Hallett, Ernest	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
2 "	Hurst, John A.	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
3 "	Thomas, Thomas	Fitter	10/- per day	
3 "	Hood, John	Labourer	6/8 per day	
4 "	Coppin, George	Labourer	6/8 per day	
4 "	Byrne, George	Fitter	10/- per day	
4 "	Sullivan, Thomas	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
4 "	Ostinga, Henry	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
4 "	Overton, John	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
4 "	Weslan, William	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
4 "	Troys, John	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
5 "	Bradley, Charles	Fitter	10/- per day	
5 "	Chandler, George	Shop boy	3/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
6 "	Macdonald, Reginald	Brass-finisher	9/6 per day	
6 "	Harden, William	Brass-finisher	9/6 per day	
9 "	Berner, Philip	Labourer	6/8 per day	
10 "	Filseil, Clark	Fitter	10/- per day	
11 "	Ashworth, Alfred	Fitter	10/- per day	
11 "	Smith, Warren	Office boy	2/6 per day	Vice H. Fewkes.
12 "	Cullen, Nesbit	Fitter	10/- per day	
17 "	Dunn, Alfred	Fitter	10/- per day	
17 "	Histop, Henry	Fitter	10/- per day	
17 "	Robertson, Joseph	Brass-finisher	9/6 per day	
18 "	Cairns, Daniel	Fitter	10/- per day	
18 "	Salisbury, George	Fitter	10/- per day	
18 "	Glass, Nicol	Fitter	10/- per day	
19 "	Neill, James	Machinist	8/6 per day	Vice G. Norman.
19 "	Worboys, Albert	Cleaner	6/- per day	Vice W. Carruthers.
19 "	Brooks, Michael	Striker	6/8 per day	
20 "	Firkin, Albert	Striker	6/8 per day	
20 "	Barr, Hugh	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
20 "	Wilson, John	Fitter	10/- per day	
23 "	Brown, Arthur	Fitter	10/- per day	
23 "	Tisdale, James	Apprentice	10d. per day	
23 "	Gayner, Joseph	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice M. Foster.
24 "	Grayson, Walter	Fitter	10/- per day	
24 "	Eglin, Peter	Fitter	10/- per day	
27 "	Reed, Joseph	Fitter	10/- per day	
1 Aug.	McFarlane, John	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	Vice J. Sullivan.
2 "	White, Frederick	Hammer boy	2/3 per day	
2 "	Kemlo, Thomas	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
6 "	Sproule, Leslie	Cleaner	6/- per day	
7 "	Gannoni, Frederick	Call boy	3/3 per day	
7 "	Doohan, Daniel	Apprentice	10d. per day	
7 "	Harkin, Maurice	Apprentice	10d. per day	
7 "	Wakely, William	Call boy	4/- per day	
7 "	Woolmer, Edward	Call boy	2/3 per day	
7 "	Warren, James	Hammer boy	2/3 per day	
13 "	Jones, Thomas	Brass-finisher	9/6 per day	
13 "	Coates, Leslie	Shop boy	2/- per day	Vice T. Sheil.
15 "	Gubb, Charles	Labourer	6/8 per day	Vice J. Mills.
18 "	Starky, Benjamin	Call boy	3/3 per day	
17 "	Hutchinson, Christopher	Boilermaker	10/6 per day	
17 "	Fowles, Stephen	Striker	6/3 per day	
17 "	Hughes, John	Fuelman	7/- per day	Vice G. Latimer.
17 "	Shaw, George	Wagon-builder	9/8 per day	Vice J. Kelly.
17 "	Fletcher, Michael	Moulder	10/- per day	Vice J. Marshall.
17 "	Sheidan, Michael	Labourer	6/6 per day	Vice M. Nicholson.
17 "	Shannahan, Daniel	Fuelman	7/- per day	
17 "	Heagarty, John	Labourer	6/8 per day	
17 "	Lawler, Alfred	Labourer	6/8 per day	
17 "	Brooks, Edward	Labourer	7/- per day	
17 "	Hinds, Arthur	Striker	6/8 per day	
17 "	Teagle, James	Striker	6/8 per day	
17 "	Meadows, James	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
17 "	Meehan, Denis	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
17 "	Best, Walter	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
17 "	O'Keefe, John	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
17 "	Wilby, Herman	Fitter	10/- per day	
17 "	Swift, Denn	Fitter	10/- per day	
17 "	Guttridge, Loftus	Fitter	10/- per day	
18 "	Sutherland, Robert	Striker	6/8 per day	Vice J. Garratt.
18 "	Miller, Gilbert	Blacksmith	10/- per day	Vice I. Wyke.
21 "	Jack, William	Cleaner	3/3 per day	
22 "	Wakely, George	Store boy	2/6 per day	
22 "	Petrie, Frank	Call boy	2/6 per day	
22 "	Gilbert, Reginald	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
22 "	Crawford, Henry	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
22 "	Wilson, Robert	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH—continued.				
22 Aug.	Amour, John	Telephone boy	2/6 per day	Vice E. Broad.
23 "	Hutchison, Alexander	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
27 "	Sharp, Alfred	Shop boy	2/3 per day	
28 "	Wright, William	Striker	6/8 per day	
28 "	Simpson, Charles	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice H. Darling.
30 "	O'Sullivan, James	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
30 "	Everson, William	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
30 "	Tomlin, Frank	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
30 "	Crum, Duncan	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
30 "	Abbott, William	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
30 "	Kirkland, Henry	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
30 "	Geary, Thomas	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
31 "	Templeton, William	Fitter	10/- per day	
31 "	Mason, Thomas	Fitter	10/- per day	
31 "	Griffiths, Stephen	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
31 "	Moeller, Louis	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
31 "	Fennen, Frederick	Painter	8/- per day	Vice J. Kirwin.
3 Sept.	Smalley, William	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Vice J. Vine.
3 "	Watson, Harvey	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
8 "	Worrell, Robert	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
2 "	Anderson, William	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
3 "	Howitt, Andrew	Boilermaker's assistant	6/8 per day	
8 "	Bernie, Jeremiah	Turner	10/- per day	
8 "	Le Cavelier, Henry	Fitter	10/- per day	
8 "	Shaw, Edward	Fitter	10/- per day	
3 "	Jones, Phillip	Fitter	10/- per day	
3 "	Wiles, William	Fitter	10/- per day	
4 "	Dwyer, Frederick	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
4 "	Neilson, Ernest	Shop boy	2/- per day	
5 "	Irwin, William	Cleaner	2/6 per day	
7 "	Douglas, George	Fuelman	7/- per day	Re-employed.
10 "	Coles, Ernest	Call boy	2/6 per day	
10 "	Flanagan, Claude	Cleaner	6/- per day	
10 "	Cullen, James	Boilermaker	9/4 per day	
10 "	Gill, Eugene	Fitter	10/- per day	Vice J. Brennan.
11 "	Shields, Richard	Call boy	3/3 per day	
11 "	Stenberg, Mortimer	Cleaner	2/6 per day	
12 "	Gibbeson, Charles	Cleaner	4/- per day	
13 "	Webb, James	Cleaner	6/- per day	
13 "	Sedgars, Phillip	Office boy	10/- per week	
13 "	Hensworth, Edward	Cleaner	6/- per day	
14 "	Baggs, Donald	Call boy	3/3 per day	
17 "	Roff, Bruce	Fuelman	6/6 per day	
17 "	McKenzie, William	Blacksmith	10/- per day	
17 "	Cleary, Edmund	Driller	7/6 per day	Vice D. Durham.
17 "	Hudson, Tom	Call boy	3/3 per day	Vice J. Walton.
18 "	Childrey, William	Apprentice	10/- per day	
19 "	Ellison, Henry	Striker	6/8 per day	
21 "	Devenport, Arthur	Carriage and wagon examiner.	9/- per day	Vice C. Welch.
24 "	Chaffey, Joseph	Messenger	10/6 per week	
26 "	Payne, Clement	Call boy	2/6 per day	
26 "	Young, David	Labourer	6/6 per day	
26 "	Cook, Henry	Machinist	8/6 per day	Vice T. Cavanagh.
28 "	Wilson, John	Fitter	10/- per day	
27 "	Rau, William	Coppersmith	10/- per day	
27 "	Firkim, Joseph	Oliversmith	10/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
27 "	Firkim, Albert	Striker	6/8 per day	
27 "	Cleary, Patrick	Fuelman	7/- per day	
27 "	Pope, William	Fitter	10/- per day	
27 "	Miles, Samuel	Machinist	8/6 per day	
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
22 June	Clarke, Wallace	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	Vipan, Cyril	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice C. Lyne.
29 "	Searl, James	Porter	6/- per day	
29 "	McNamara, Joseph	Porter	6/- per day	
29 "	Tucker, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	
30 "	Kouster, Ethel	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice K. Clarke.
2 July	Stead, Florence	Gatekeeper and platform attendant.	7/- per week and house.	Vice M. Hines.
2 "	McLean, Mrs. Caroline	Platform attendant	15/- per week	
4 "	Smith, Julia	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice A. Bullock.
4 "	Cook, Elgar	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice G. Aitken.
5 "	Hoare, Mrs. Jane	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice M. Wilson.
6 "	Donoghue, John	Probationer	2/6 per week	
6 "	Tout, William	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
7 "	Green, Walter	Probationer	2/6 per week	
7 "	Jackson, William	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	
10 "	Fairburn, Abner	Probationer	2/6 per week	
11 "	Loton, Alfred	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice H. Farr.
12 "	Bruce, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	McAuliffe, Patrick	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. Shaw.
13 "	Hermann, Phillip	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. Bailey.
18 "	Dedman, Martha	Gatekeeper	10/- per week and house.	Vice E. Dedman.
14 "	Mayo, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice T. Jones.
16 "	Bennett, Thomas	Porter	7/- per day	Vice J. O'Donnell.
17 "	Cashman, Albert	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice R. Daley.
18 "	Wilson, Michael	Porter	6/- per day	Vice E. Tannor.
19 "	Conway, Frederick	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
20 "	Clark, Henry	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Dunn.
20 "	Beattie, Frank	Probationer	2/6 per week	
20 "	Williams, William	Porter	6/- per day	
20 "	Naylor, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Vice E. McCartney.
23 "	Ollington, Thomas	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice C. Smith.
23 "	Mitchell, George	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice G. Edwards.
23 "	Cuell, John	Porter	6/- per day	Vice G. Arms.
24 "	Armstrong, Louis	Gatekeeper	20/- per week	Vice G. Armstrong.
24 "	Baker, Percy	Probationer	2/6 per week	
27 "	Simpson, William	Platform caretaker	3/4 per day	Vice A. Brough.
27 "	Calnan, John	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	
30 "	Nichols, Percy	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Vice J. Douglas.
31 "	Peterson, Alfred	Porter	6/- per day	
1 Aug.	Clarke, Benjamin	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
3 "	Harris, George	Junior porter	5/- per day	
3 "	Rooth, Percy	Office lad	10/- per week	
4 "	Davis, Jane	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice E. Woods.
6 "	Hussell, Patrick	Porter	0 per day	Vice J. Connell.
6 "	Jones, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice E. Bennett.
6 "	Dobson, Claude	Probationer	2/6 per week	

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH—continued.				
7 Aug.	Harris, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Re-employed.
7 "	Gleeson, James	Gatekeeper	15/- per week	
7 "	Faux, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
9 "	Suppel, Patrick	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
9 "	Whittle, Edwin	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
9 "	Grant, George	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
9 "	Agnew, Alfred	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
10 "	Flower, Joseph	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
10 "	Jeffreys, Mary	Gatekeeper and platform attendant.	7/- per week	
10 "	Wheat, Charles	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Smith, Thomas	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
13 "	Scott, Harold	Junior porter	3/4 per day	Vice E. Arrowsmith.
13 "	Overall, Albert	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Vice W. Higlitt.
13 "	Stephens, Thomas	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
13 "	Sinclair, William	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
13 "	Peake, Leonard	Porter	6/- per day	
13 "	Stevens, Cecil	Probationer	2/6 per week	
13 "	Meyer, Oscar	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
14 "	Fulton, Joseph	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Curtis.
14 "	Longford, John	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
14 "	Cavanagh, Edward	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
14 "	Cornack, John	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
15 "	Gallagher, Bernard	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
16 "	Smith, Mary	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice L. Piper.
17 "	Fugh, Joseph	Probationer	2/6 per week	
17 "	Kay, John	Porter	6/- per day	
17 "	French, Walter	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
17 "	Nesbitt, Anthony	Porter	6/- per day	
17 "	Cotter, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	
17 "	Stevens, Alfred	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
17 "	Coates, Ernest	Probationer	2/6 per week	
17 "	Duckett, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	
17 "	Byrnes, William	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
17 "	Cade, Theodore	Porter	6/- per day	
17 "	Whiteford, Andrew	Probationer	2/6 per week	
18 "	Upton, Isaac	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
18 "	Taunton, Frederick	Probationer	2/6 per week	
18 "	Evans, John	Porter	6/- per day	
20 "	Dwyer, Walter	Porter	6/- per day	
20 "	Bell, James	Porter	6/- per day	
20 "	O'Shea, Cyril	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
20 "	Kiltson, Raymond	Probationer	2/6 per week	
20 "	Richens, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
20 "	St. George, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
21 "	Scott, Charles	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
21 "	Brewer, Samuel	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Harker.
21 "	Fisher, Janet	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice A. Hastie.
22 "	Cook, Sarah	Gatekeeper and post-mistress.	15/- per week and house.	
23 "	Reed, James	Junior porter	2/6 per day	
23 "	Whitehead, Harold	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. Wolencroft.
23 "	Easton, Arthur	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
23 "	McKenna, Ellen	Barrack attendant	10/- per week	Vice C. Tansey.
24 "	Maude, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	
24 "	Davidson, Gordon	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
24 "	Chapman, James	Porter	6/- per day	
24 "	Young, Samuel	Porter	6/- per day	Vice T. Williams.
27 "	Wallace, Colin	Porter	6/- per day	
28 "	Wood, Elizabeth	Barrack attendant	15/- per week	Vice C. Sheedy.
29 "	Chaseling, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	
29 "	Smith, Thomas	Apprentice clerk	£20 per annum	
30 "	Kearton, Charles	Apprentice clerk	£50 per annum	
31 "	Moon, John	Probationer	10/- per week	Vice W. Downie.
31 "	Hutson, Kiziah	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice E. Green.
31 "	Watson, James	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
31 "	Donaldson, John	Porter	6/- per day	
31 "	Lapraik, Robert	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
31 "	Wilson, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	
31 "	Mikkelsen, Peter	Porter	6/- per day	
31 "	Yeatman, John	Porter	6/- per day	
31 "	Maber, Hubert	Porter	6/- per day	
31 "	Sweetman, Edward	Porter	6/- per day	
31 "	Kelly, Michael	Junior porter	5/- per day	
31 "	Mitchell, Alexander	Probationer	2/6 per week	
1 Sept.	Porter, Horace	Probationer	2/6 per week	
3 "	Malcolm Mrs. Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	
3 "	Elliott, Herbert	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
4 "	Blackburn, Richard	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
4 "	Clements, Arthur	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
4 "	Perkins, James	Telephone boy	10/- per week	
4 "	Smith, William	Porter	6/- per day	
4 "	Simpson, Peter	Porter	6/- per day	Vice W. Harrison.
4 "	Gould, Louisa	Gatekeeper	Free house	Vice C. Morris.
5 "	Cooper, Frederick	Porter	6/- per day	
6 "	Eslick, Richard	Probationer	2/6 per week	
6 "	Roberts, Leslie	Porter	6/- per day	
7 "	Brooks, Arthur	Porter	6/- per day	
7 "	King, Albert	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
7 "	Johnston, George	Porter	6/- per day	
7 "	Clarke, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	
7 "	Deed, Herbert	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Dudding, William	Porter	6/- per day	
8 "	Torrans, Robert	Probationer	2/6 per week	
8 "	Mortimer, Henry	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
10 "	Nagle, John	Probationer	2/6 per week	
11 "	Walker, Arthur	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
11 "	Chln, Harman	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
11 "	Jones, Aubrey	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
11 "	Whitelaw, Robert	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
12 "	Lgar, George	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
12 "	Aiden, William	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
12 "	Goodhead, Frederick	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Vice J. Tiernan.
12 "	Grimsby, Robert	Probationer	2/6 per week	Transferred from Extra Staff.
12 "	Thompson, Augustus	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
12 "	Evans, Leslie	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice J. Collitts.
13 "	Johnson, William	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
13 "	Wilmott, Robert	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
13 "	Cranney, Vincent	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
14 "	Ma-son, Edward	Telephone boy	10/- per week	Vice J. Dunne.
14 "	Tiller, Herbert	Porter	6/- per day	
14 "	Briggs, Charles	Porter	6/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
14 "	Peacock, John	Probationer	2/6 per week	
14 "	Peat, Thomas	Porter	6/- per day	Vice J. Turner.

APPENDIX III--continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH--continued.				
17 Sept.	Coghlan, Leo	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
17 "	Galway, Edward	Probationer	2/6 per week	
17 "	Davis, Edwin	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
17 "	Bailey, Sarah	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	
17 "	Phillips, Joseph	Porter	0/- per day	Vice M. Chicken.
17 "	Cartwright, Louis	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
17 "	Green, Emanuel	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
17 "	Cooke, Alfred	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
19 "	Swan, Francis	Junior porter	3/4 per day	
20 "	Atkins, Alfred	Porter	6/- per day	
20 "	Rossiter, William	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
20 "	Hanley, Michael	Junior porter	4/2 per day	
21 "	Sweeney, Thomas	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Vice E. Woodward.
22 "	Keil, Werner	Porter	0/- per day	
23 "	Harris, Martha	Gatekeeper	10/- per week	Vice Mrs. M. Williams.
24 "	Moffatt, William	Shunter	7/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
25 "	Hines, Albert	Probationer	2/6 per week	
25 "	Barry, Ellen	Gatekeeper	7/- per week & house.	Vice E. Faulkner.
25 "	Rankin, William	Porter	6/- per day	Vice W. McGuarr.
26 "	Everett, Henry	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice E. Gamble.
26 "	Wyatt, Arthur	Porter	0/- per day	Transferred from Extra Staff.
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
3 Aug.	Casson, Joseph	Carpenter	10/- per day	Vice Wm. Hamilton.
19 Sept.	Roche, Francis	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
5 July	Cooper, George	Improver	5/- per day	Vice Harold Davis.
12 "	Croft, Alfred	Probationer	2/6 per week	
3 Aug.	Price, John J.	Junior clerk	£103 per annum	Transferred from Extra Staff.
14 "	Taylor, George	Probationer	2/0 per week	
27 "	Fecney, Ernest	Probationer	2/6 per week	Vice James S. Watson.
17 Sept.	Nasmyth, Robert	Draftsman	£150 per annum	
17 "	Rattray, Benjamin	Brass-fitter	9/- per day	
PROPERTY AND ESTATE BRANCH.				
7 Aug.	Harvey, Frederick O	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	Vice C. Paull.
13 "	Pearce, William	Messenger	10/- per week	
4 Sept.	Keyes, Thomas	Labourer	6/6 per day	
COMPTROLLER OF STORES BRANCH.				
10 Sept.	Layman, Frederick	Office lad	10/- per week	Vice R. Shields.
TRAMWAYS--LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
6 July	Robins, William J.	Cleaner	4/6 per day	Vice R. Lonz.
19 "	Hayes, John W.	Shop boy	3/- per day	Vice J. Hayes.
30 "	Williams, Matthew	Apprentice	10/- per day	
30 "	King, Francis	Apprentice	10/- per day	
7 Aug.	Bennett, William T.	Painter's assistant	6/6 per day	
11 "	Curnow, Howard	Blacksmith	10/- per day	Vice W. Potter.
11 "	Young, Enoch T.	Filter	10/- per day	Vice T. Marsh.
13 "	McCann, Ernest	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
13 "	Sneddon, James	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
14 "	Newman, Ethelbert	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
14 "	Scott, John	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
17 "	Wright, Benjamin	Cleaner	3/9 per day	
17 "	Mahoney, David C.	Shop boy	2/6 per day	
17 "	Dykes, James A.	Apprentice	10/- per day	
18 "	McFinn, David H.	Cleaner	6/3 per day	
26 "	Muller, Alfred E.	Cleaner	5/6 per day	
18 Sept.	Treble, Arthur W.	Boy labourer	5/6 per day	Vice J. Lee.
18 "	Boiland, Michael	Boy labourer	4/- per day	Vice F. Beckhouse.
18 "	Robertson, Charles H.	Cleaner	5/- per day	
27 "	Lawrence, William	Shop boy	2/0 per day	
TRAMWAYS--TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
29 June	Dwyer, William H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Gledhill, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Lambeth, Alfred C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Parker, Edward J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Carter, Theodore M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Cowell, Leslie	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Favle, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Shortis, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Hunt, Vere	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Foster, George F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Hannam, George F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Jackson, Arthur	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Looney, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Lucas, Capel	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Le Breton, Alphonse	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Shumack, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Taylor, Herbert	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Uebel, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	White, Russell	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Wallace, Herbert B.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	York, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.
29 "	Lynch, Dean W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Hyland, Francis	Car-cleaner	6/- per day	
29 "	Spillstead, Spencer	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Phelps, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Davies, Arthur J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Craddock, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ellison, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Callagher, John T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Hodge, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Goldsworthy, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ingham, Luther	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Cunningham, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Muirhead, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Spiers, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Jenkin, Edmund	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	O'Neill, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	McMullan, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Palmer, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Clapham, Arthur	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Hurdley, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Fletcher, Herbert	Conductor	6/- per day	

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900. TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued.				
29 June.	Headford, William	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.
29 "	Swift, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ryan, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Shorrocks, Edward	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Warr, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Jarvis, Edgar	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Martin, Francis	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Wilson, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ewing, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Fern, Joseph	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	McGann, Peter	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Chaffer, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Piercy, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Lee, Septimus	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Lee, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ley, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Henry, Aldridge J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Cassin, Daniel	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	O'Connor, Morris	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Guy, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Binskin, Arthur	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Bethel, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Falloon, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Lance, Herbert	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Elyard, Walter	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Gaskill, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ireland, Arthur	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Myers, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	McNamee, Peter	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	O'Brien, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Murray, James F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Bennett, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Ridge, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Starr, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Blunden, Herbert	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Magner, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Montgomerie, Hugh	Conductor	6/- per day	
29 "	Gunter, Edgar	Conductor	6/- per day	
1 July.	Asher, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. McAnulty. Vice A. Gaffney. Vice N. Bruce.
2 "	Lloyd, Francis	Conductor	6/- per day	
2 "	Barnes, Rockley	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 "	Walker, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.
3 "	Hejburn, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
3 "	Swinbourne, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Greenwell, George	Conductor	6/- per day	Holiday Relief Staff.
4 "	Schroder, Frank	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Flatau, Leopold	Conductor	6/- per day	
4 "	Casey, Patrick T.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice M. Murphy.
18 "	Owen, Sydney C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
18 "	Thornton, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
18 "	Harland, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	Electric Tramway System.
21 "	Steel, Hugh	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Noble, William S.	Apprentice clerk	£30 per annum	
27 "	Lamb, Peter	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Withers, Edward A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Mossman, Francis E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Morrison, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Poole, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Hastie, Archibald	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Counnelly, Francis	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Lube, Archibald	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Watson, George F.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Waddell, Theodore	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Cheeseman, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	De Tora, Ernest	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Burrell, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Carroll, Christopher	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Chapman, Leslie	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Maher, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Hastin, Henry H.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Boardman, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Calvert, William S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Cunningham, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Chapman, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Gould, James E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Hocking, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	James, William G.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Paul, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Stanton, William C.	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Smith, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Tyrell, Alfred	Conductor	6/- per day	
27 "	Watson, Arthur W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 Aug.	Whiteman, Norman	Conductor	6/- per day	Improved Service, Ocean-street Line.
14 "	Birch, Richard	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Bracegirdle, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Clendenning, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Dickson, Cecil M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Hoad, Walter S.	Conductor	6/- per day	
14 "	Edson, George	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Anderson, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Chin, Alfred E.	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Laws, Robert J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Macnamara, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Templeton, William R.	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Senge, John	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Collis, William J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Burgolf, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
16 "	Smith, Percy	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Lynch, Joseph M.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Johnson, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Gauctly, John T.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Hawtree, Francis W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
21 "	Donohoe, Edward B.	Conductor	6/- per day	
23 "	Smith, Francis J.	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Keefe, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Gazzard, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Waddell, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Keevers, Harmon	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Russell, Albert	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Curry, John P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Contes, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Mannix, Peter	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Egan, Thomas	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Mosson, James	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Crocker, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
Cook's River Extension.				

APPENDIX III—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH—continued.				
24 Aug.	Adrian, John J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. E. Hulme.
24 "	Prevost, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. O'Connor.
24 "	Maloney, William	Conductor	6/- per day	
24 "	Peck, James H.	Conductor	8/- per day	
10 Sept.	Mitchell, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice F. Knight.
13 "	Hudson, Samuel	Conductor	6/- per day	
13 "	Parnham, Arthur J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice A. Dangate.
14 "	Livingstone, Alex. W.	Conductor	6/- per day	
15 "	Gannon, Oscar V.	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice J. J. Mulholland.
20 "	Pritchard, Frederick	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Watson, Frederick A.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Fraser, Herbert P.	Conductor	6/- per day	
20 "	Carter, Sidney E.	Conductor	8/- per day	
21 "	Arrowsmith, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	Vice W. Cook.
24 "	Bland, Frederick E.	Office lad.	10/- per week.	Vice J. Brodie.
TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH.				
2 Aug.	Clark, Walter	Labourer	7/- per day	
2 "	Jackson, William H.	Labourer	7/- per day	
7 Sept.	Bond, James	Tool collector	2/- per day	Vice P. Nicholls.
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
3 July	Cardwell, Frederick	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
3 "	Nelson, Harold	Fitter	9/6 per day	
3 "	Blumer, John W.	Brake fitter	9/6 per day	
3 "	Moore, John	Fireman	8/- per day	Vice Joseph Murphy.
4 "	Craig, Henry	Fireman	8/- per day	Vice Robert Kirk.
10 "	Bingham, Herbert	Electric mechanic	9/- per day	
11 "	Johnson, Lindsay	Electrical cleaner	2/6 per day	
13 "	Cook, Thomas	Lineman	5/0 per week	} Transferred from Extra Staff.
13 "	Bishop, Frederick	Licetrical cadet	10/- per week	
14 "	Hunter, David H.	Arc-lamp trimmer	7/- per day	Vice William Hencherry.
20 "	Roberts, Wytham	Carpenter	9/- per day	
21 "	Wood, Alfred	Fireman	8/- per day	
24 "	Richardson, Frederick	Wagon driver	7/- per day	
24 "	Jumford, Richard	Mechanical improver	4/6 per day	
24 "	Heeley, Edward John	Assistant timekeeper	3/6 per week	
30 "	Sawford, Charles	Fireman	8/- per day	
31 "	Nuth, James	Fireman	8/- per day	Vice John Leary.
2 Aug.	Gates, George	Pitman	7/6 per day	
7 "	Sullivan, Francis	Labourer	7/- per day	Vice James Dowsett.
8 "	O'Brien, James	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
9 "	Rogers, Alfred	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
9 "	Hutton, Thomas	Dynamo attendant	8/- per day	
13 "	Cannon, William	Fitter	8/- per day	
13 "	Casley, Richard	Fitter	9/- per day	
28 "	Denyer, Walter	Fireman	8/- per day	Vice John Hodgson.
30 "	Muspratt, James	Armature winder	12/- per day	
14 Sept.	Robinson, Paul	Electrical cadet	10/- per week	Vice Francis Bishop.
18 "	Carr, George J.	Mechanical improver	4/6 per day	
26 "	Young, George H.	Labourer	7/- per day	
26 "	Grocott, Alonzo	Turner	10/- per day	
27 "	Campbell, Joseph	Mechanical improver	3/6 per day	

APPENDIX IV.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN, in accordance with Clause No. 44 of the Railway Act, showing the Removals of Employees from the 1st July to the 30th September, 1900.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF ACCOUNTANT'S BRANCH.				
19 July	Cromack, Cecil H.	Apprentice clerk	£70 per annum	Resigned.
ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR EXISTING LINE BRANCH.				
8 July	Ryan, Thomas	Fettler	7/- per day	Deceased.
13 "	Delaney, Charles	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
21 "	King, Thomas	Labourer	7/6 per day	Written off books.
18 Aug.	Brodenick, John	Labourer	7/- per day	Resigned.
23 "	Baldwin, Richard	Fettler	7/6 per day	Deceased.
25 "	Lavenock, Joseph	Blacksmith	9/- per day	Resigned.
27 "	Reynolds, Charles	Fettler	7/6 per day	Discharged.
6 Sept.	Briggs, Henry	Flagman	7/- per day	Retired.
6 "	Lennon, James	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
6 "	Humphries, Robert	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
8 "	McIntosh, Charles	Labourer	7/6 per day	Retired.
8 "	Walshaw, Joseph	Carpenter	10/8 per day	Retired.
8 "	Kidd, Richard	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
8 "	Funnell, Henry	Ganger	9/- per day	Retired.
29 "	Adgwy, Samuel	Labourer	6/0 per day	Retired.
29 "	Good, William	Fettler	7/6 per day	Retired.
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
21 June	Wyke, Illidge	Blacksmith	12/2 per day	Retired.
7 July	Ellis, Henry	Fuelman	7/6 per day	Deceased.
13 "	Vine, John	Fuelman	6/6 per day	Discharged.
19 "	Kirwin, John	Painter	8/6 per day	Discharged.
21 "	Welch, Charles	Car and wagon examiner	12/8 per day	Retired.
26 "	Garratt, John	Boilermaker's assistant	7/6 per day	Deceased.
31 "	Warner, Austin	Fitter's improver	7/- per day	Resigned.
3 Aug.	Marshall, Joseph	Moulder	11/2 per day	Retired.
9 "	Arbuckle, Robert	Boilermaker's assistant	7/6 per day	Written off.
14 "	Ellis, James	Foreman moulder	£315 per annum	Deceased.
18 "	Palmer, James	Gland packer	9/- per day	Retired.
23 "	Giles, Alfred	Fuelman	7/- per day	Retired.
23 "	Baker, Jeremiah	Machinist	8/- per day	Retired.
23 "	Lodge, John	Boilermaker	11/6 per day	Retired.
30 "	Gale, Walter	Shop boy	3/- per day	Discharged.
8 Sept.	Newman, George	Fitter's improver	7/- per day	Resigned.
13 "	Dodd, William	Fuelman	7/- per day	Retired.
17 "	Bagnall, Frank	Cleaner	6/- per day	Deceased.
18 "	Campbell, George	Driver	18/- per day	Retired.
24 "	Leyland, John	Pumper	3/8 per day	Resigned.
30 "	Naish, Michael	Timekeeper	£165 per annum	Retired.

APPENDIX IV—continued.

Date.	Name.	Position.	Rate.	Remarks.
1900.				
CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S BRANCH.				
30 June	Clarke, Kate	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
2 July	Elliott, Agnes	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Position abolished.
3 "	Field, Walter	Porter	7/6 per day	Resigned.
4 "	Wilson, Mrs. Mary	Gatekeeper	7/6 per week	Resigned.
4 "	Bullock, Annie	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
5 "	Faulkner, Elias	Porter	7/6 per day	Deceased.
10 "	McCarney, Edward	Shunter	7/6 per day	Discharged.
11 "	Tierman, James	Junior porter	5/- per day	Discharged.
12 "	Curtis, James	Guard	10/6 per day	Resigned.
12 "	Dedman, Emily	Gatekeeper	10/- per week and house.	Resigned.
16 "	Connell, John	Porter	7/- per day	Deceased.
22 "	Woodward, Eva	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Resigned.
30 "	Brough, Annie	Platform attendant	2/6 per week	Resigned.
1 Aug.	Williams, Thomas	Clerk	£165 per annum	Retired.
1 "	Jones, Thomas	Night officer	£150 per annum	Off sick, indefinite
2 "	Woods, Ellen	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
6 "	Bennett, Elizabeth	Gatekeeper and receiving office keeper.	7/- per week	Resigned.
8 "	Morrison, Cecil	Junior porter	5/- per day	Discharged.
8 "	Hastie, Annie	Gatekeeper and post-mistress.	15/- per week and house.	Resigned.
10 "	Gamble, Robert	Operator and clerk	£100 per annum	Deceased.
13 "	McGuarr, William	Porter	7/- per day	Off sick, indefinitely.
16 "	Piper, Louis	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
20 "	Hickey, Mary	Gatekeeper	7/- per week	Position abolished.
20 "	Barker, Johanna	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
22 "	Tansy, Catherine	Barrack attendant	10/- per week	Resigned.
23 "	Downie, William	Guard	11/- per day	Off sick, indefinitely.
22 "	Dunne, John	Ticket collector	8/- per day	Discharged.
27 "	Sheedy, Catherine	Barrack attendant	20/- per week	Resigned.
30 "	Green, Louisa	Charwoman	25/- per week	Resigned.
30 "	McNamara, Ann	Gatekeeper	10/- per week & house.	Deceased.
31 "	Morgan, Charles	Station-master	£206 per annum	Retired.
31 "	Green, Ellen	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
1 Sept.	Christie, George	Guard	10/- per day	Off sick, indefinitely.
1 "	Turner, Jesse	Officer-in-charge	£160 per annum	Resigned.
5 "	Morris, Cecilia	Gatekeeper	Free house	Resigned.
10 "	Webb, Walter	Probationer	2/6 per week	Discharged.
10 "	Arms, George	Porter	7/- per day	Discharged.
10 "	Burton, Robert	Junior porter	4/2 per day	Discharged.
12 "	Rorke, Henry	Junior porter	5/- per day	Resigned.
18 "	Henderson, William	Gatekeeper	30/- per week & house.	Retired.
20 "	McAlister, George	Clerk	£190 per annum	Deceased.
23 "	Williams, Mrs. Mary	Gatekeeper & platform attendant.	10/- per week	Discharged.
29 "	Barker, Mrs. Sarah	Gatekeeper	15/- per week & house.	Resigned.
SIGNAL AND INTERLOCKING ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
30 June	Anderson, James	Signal-fitter	10/- per day	Resigned.
ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S BRANCH.				
23 July	Heagney, Thomas	Operator	£190 per annum	Resigned.
19 Sept.	Katray, Benjamin	Brass fitter	9/- per day	Discharged.
24 "	Tweedale, Joseph	Foreman	70/- per week	Discharged.
COMPTROLLER OF STORES BRANCH.				
1 Aug.	Richardson, Alexander	Comptroller of Stores Chairman of Staff Committee.	£300 per annum £130 do	Retired.
TRAMWAYS—LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.				
14 July	Lee, Jeremiah J.	Fireman	8/- per day	Discharged.
16 "	Markham, Henry	Blacksmith	12/2 per day	Deceased.
1 Aug.	Beckhouse, Frederick	Fireman	8/- per day	Resigned.
2 "	Quirk, John	Fireman	8/- per day	Resigned.
23 "	Hopper, Allan	Cleaner	7/6 per day	Discharged.
27 Sept.	Elphinstone, James	Fitter	10 2 per day	Discharged.
TRAMWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.				
4 July	Murphy, Michael	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
5 "	Willson, Henry B.	Car-cleaner	6/- per day	Discharged.
6 "	Swainbourne, Charles	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
26 "	Lyons, Henry	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
2 Aug.	Denecker, William G.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
4 "	Love, George R.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
7 "	Anderson, Norman	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
15 "	Farrar, Robert	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
20 "	Hulms, Arthur E.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
21 "	Comer, Archibald W.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
4 Sept.	Cooce, William A.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
10 "	Stumbles, Samuel	Conductor	6/8 per day	Resigned.
14 "	Low, Andrew S.	Apprentice clerk	£70 per annum	Resigned.
15 "	Mulholland, Joseph J.	Conductor	6/- per day	Resigned.
17 "	Rees, Sidney J.	Driver	8/- per day	Discharged.
19 "	Brown, Leslie A.	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
2 "	Cahalan, Patrick	Conductor	6/- per day	Discharged.
TRAMWAYS—MAINTENANCE BRANCH.				
3 Sept.	McDonald, Malcolm	Labourer	7 6 per day	Deceased.
6 "	Woolford, James	Labourer	7 6 per day	Retired.
10 "	Corr, Francis	Labourer	7 6 per day	Deceased.
TRAMWAYS—ELECTRICAL BRANCH.				
1 July	Murphy, Joseph	Fireman	8/- per day	Resigned.
28 "	Leary, John	Greaser	8/- per day	Discharged.
17 Aug.	Hodgson, John A.	Greaser	8/- per day	Resigned.
14 Sept.	Taylor, Alfred	Pitman	8/- per day	Discharged.
17 "	Mumford, Richard	Mechanical improver	4/8 per day	Discharged.
26 "	McEvoy, Charles	Greaser	8/- per day	Discharged.
29 "	Oakley, Henry	Greaser	8/- per day	Discharged.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PAY TO RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.
(RETURN RESPECTING.)

Printed under No. 15 Report from Printing Committee, 1 November, 1900.

[Laid upon the Table of the House in accordance with a promise made by the Honorable the Minister for Railways, in answer to Question No. 1, Votes and Proceedings No. 55, 11th October, 1900.]

- (1.) Having in view the statement made by the Railway Commissioners in their Annual Report that advances in pay of employees were made during the half-year ending June 30th last amounting to a total of £46,315, what number of employees participated in those advances who were previously in receipt of less than 5s. per day; and what portion of this amount was distributed among employees previously receiving less than 5s. per day?
- (2.) Like information regarding those receiving from 5s. to 6s. per day?
- (3.) Like information regarding those receiving 6s. to 7s. per day?
- (4.) Like information regarding those receiving 7s. to 8s. per day?
- (5.) Like information regarding those receiving 8s. to 9s. per day?
- (6.) Like information regarding those receiving 9s. to 10s. per day?
- (7.) Like information regarding those receiving over 10s. per day?
- (8.) Like information *re* salaried officers receiving from £150 to £200 per annum?
- (9.) Like information *re* salaried officers receiving from £200 to £300 per annum?
- (10.) Like information *re* all officers receiving more than £300 per annum?

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS.

RETURN of the number of employees advanced in pay, and the amount per annum represented by such advances, during the year ended 30th June, 1900.

Rates.	Numbers.	Amounts.
<i>Wages Staff.</i>		
Employees receiving less than 5s. per day	879	£ 12,705 10 5
" " 5s. and under 6s. per day	339	5,005 13 0
" " 6s. " 7s. "	511	4,856 5 0
" " 7s. " 8s. "	623	6,382 11 6
" " 8s. " 9s. "	315	3,564 13 5
" " 9s. " 10s. "	487	3,927 11 4
" " over 10s. per day	99	1,580 19 4
Total	3,313	£38,023 4 0
<i>Salaried Staff.</i>		
Employees receiving less than £150 per annum	394	4,287 0 0
" " £150 and under £200 per annum	133	1,617 0 0
" " £200 " £250 "	51	733 0 0
" " £250 " £300 "	39	735 0 0
" " over £300 per annum	27	920 0 0
Total	644	£8,292 0 0

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAYS.

(RETURN SHOWING VEHICLES FITTED WITH STANDARD DRAW-GEAR AT EVELEIGH WORKSHOPS.)

Printed under No. 15 Report from Printing Committee, 1 November, 1900.

[Laid upon the Table of the House in accordance with a promise made by the Honorable the Minister for Railways, in answer to Question No. 12 in Votes and Proceedings No. 44, of the 19th September, 1900.]

VEHICLES FITTED WITH STANDARD DRAW-GEAR AT EVELEIGH WORKSHOPS.

(1.) *Question.*—With reference to the Eveleigh Workshops, how many vehicles have been fitted with standard draw-gear?

Answer.—About 11,189 vehicles.

(2.) *Question.*—The weight and cost of parts purchased from outside firms.

**Answer.*—Approximate weight, 1,272 tons, costing £48,414.

(3.) *Question.*—The weight and cost of parts made in the Eveleigh Workshops (cost to be given in wages, materials, and charges).

Answer.—Approximate weight, 826 tons.

Approximate cost, £27,482, made up as under:—

	£
Wages	13,677
Material	10,427
Shop charges	3,378

£27,482

(4.) *Question.*—What amount of same has been charged to capital account?

Answer.—2,302 sets of draw-gear, costing (approximately) £16,149, were fitted to new vehicles, and charged to capital account.

(5.) *Question.*—And what amount has been charged to working expenses?

Answer.—8,887 sets of draw-gear, costing (approximately) £59,747, were charged to working expenses.

* *Note.*—709 tons, costing £27,001, supplied on new vehicles, and charged as part cost of same.
563 tons, costing £21,413, supplied and fitted to existing stock.
1,272 tons, costing £48,414.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT ON THE ZIG ZAG.
(PAPERS RESPECTING.)

Printed under No. 17 Report from Printing Committee, 22 November, 1900.

The Secretary for Railways to The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 3 October, 1900.

I am directed to report, for the information of the Minister for Railways, that an accident occurred to the goods train which started from Wallerawang for Sydney at 9.22 p.m. on the 29th ultimo.

On arrival at the Zig Zag Bottom Points, at 11.28 p.m., following the usual practice of working heavy goods trains over the Zig Zag, the train was divided, and the engine propelled twenty-three of the vehicles towards the Top Points. On passing the Top Points, the driver should have stopped his train preparatory to drawing forward on to the main line, but it would appear that he continued to push his train until the three rear waggons were pushed off the road. D 3,944, loaded with wool, and D 2,873, loaded with chaff, were pushed over the face of the rocks and fell into the valley, and D 1,744, loaded with hay, was jammed against the rocks. Slight damage was also done D 3,478, D 7,723, and X 31. The permanent way also was slightly damaged.

Steps were taken to put the permanent way in order as quickly as possible, and the work of recovering the wool, &c., is in hand. A joint inquiry is being held into the cause of the occurrence.

I am to add that the method of working over the Zig Zag herein referred to is adopted in connection with heavy goods trains only.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Seen by Minister (Mr. See), 16/10/00. No. 792, Records.

The Secretary for Railways to The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 8 October, 1900.

With reference to the recent accident at the top of the Zig Zag, three trucks being pushed off the road, I am directed to inform you that the Railway Commissioners are in possession of the report of the Inquiry Board concerning the accident, from which it would appear that the mishap occurred to a goods train which left Bathurst on the night of the 29th September. On arriving at the bottom points of the Zig Zag, in accordance with the usual practice, the train was divided, the engine propelling twenty-three trucks as the first division of the train. The train was pushed up at the usual speed; but instead of stopping at the usual place at the top the driver overran it, two waggons being pushed over the end of the road, while a third waggon went off the rails.

In the opinion of the officers making the inquiry, the accident was due to the action of the driver in pushing his train too far after clearing the lock-bar at the Top Points. The permanent way was not damaged to any great extent; but the two trucks which were pushed over the end of the road were damaged beyond repair.

With regard to the fears that have been expressed as to the possibility of the accident happening to a passenger train, it is pointed out that special precautions are taken in connection with the working of the passenger traffic, and the system of working adopted would prevent such an accident occurring.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Seen by Minister, and ret'd. by Mr. Bingle, 15/11/00. Records.

The Secretary for Railways to The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

Sir, Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 9 November, 1900.
The Commissioners notice by the *Herald* of this morning that the Premier, in answer to Mr. W. W. Young, said he could not understand the delay in the Railway Commissioners presenting to Parliament the report by the Board appointed to inquire into the Zig Zag railway accident.

I beg to draw your attention to the fact that a report of the accident was sent to you, for the information of the Minister, on the 3rd October, and a further communication was addressed to you on the 8th October, intimating the nature of the report made by the Inquiry Board concerning the accident. The Commissioners will be glad if you will bring this matter under the notice of the Premier.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Secretary for Railways to The Under Secretary for Trade and Finance.

Sir, Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 19 November, 1900.
In compliance with the request contained in your communication of the 16th instant, relative to the accident at the Zig Zag on the 29th September last, I am directed to enclose herein a copy of the report received, together with the evidence taken at the inquiry held.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

New South Wales Railways, Sydney, 2 October, 1900.

To the Chief Traffic Manager and Chief Mechanical Engineer.

29/9/00. Derailment of trucks on first portion of No. 38 Up in the wing at Top Points. We beg to report that we have this day, at Eskbank, held an inquiry into the accident to the first portion of the 6.15 p.m. Goods train from Bathurst to Penrith, on the night of the 29th September.

The train was worked by Acting Driver T. Leighton and Acting Fireman A. Clappinson, engine No. 546, "T" class.

In accordance with usual practice the train was divided at the Zig Zag Bottom Points, the "T" class engine being sent up propelling twenty-three waggons. Brakesman Fulton rode on the engine from the Bottom Points. On approaching Top Points all signals were off, and the driver when passing the signal cabin delivered up the staff for the Middle road, and took the staff for the section Top Points to Clarence, together with the bank-engine notice. According to the evidence the engine passed the cabin at the usual speed, about 3 miles per hour, but instead of stopping at the usual place about over the lock-bar, the driver continued steaming until brought to a stand by a full application of the Westinghouse brake. Upon examination he found that he had pushed two waggons over the cliff and the third waggon off the road on to the rocks.

The following witnesses were examined:—Night officer, C. F. Jones; G. H. D. Fulton, brakesman; A. Clappinson, acting fireman; T. Leighton, acting driver; and Guard Robinson; after we had taken them to the scene of the accident, and had their various movements pointed out to us.

The night officer in his evidence maintains that as soon as the engine passed over the lock-bar, he set the road and lowered the starting signal, in accordance with his usual practice, and not until he found that the train did not return over the points had he any idea that anything was wrong, as it had passed his box at the usual speed. The brakesman corroborates the night officer with regard to the speed, but is unable to speak as to whether the starting signal was lowered or not. The driver states that immediately after passing the cabin he was busy signing the bank-engine notice form. Having done that he watched the starting signal expecting to see it lowered, being at some doubt as to whether he was over the lock-bar, and continued steaming gently backwards until he felt a jerk and immediately afterwards a sudden stop by the application of the air-brake, and then he asserts the starting signal was lowered. He is corroborated in this throughout by his fireman.

Conclusion.

We are of opinion that this accident was due to the wrongful action of the driver in pushing his train too far after clearing the lock-bar. We measured the distance and found that he took his engine 76 yards past the lock-bar. In his evidence he states that this was only his second trip as driver of a goods train over this part, the first having been three days previously, in daylight, but he insists that he has a thorough knowledge of the road, and admits that for about three years he was fireman on the mail. This alone should have given him an intimate knowledge of the signals and points.

We are unable from the evidence to decide whether the starting signal was lowered or not, but even if this was not done, it does not in any way exonerate the driver. The custom is for enginemen to stop after they pass the starting signal post, and there wait until the signal is lowered, and hitherto the work has been so satisfactory that we cannot recall a previous case.

The damage to the rolling stock is as follows:—

- D 2873.—Totally destroyed: will have to be burnt and ironwork recovered.
- D 3947.—" " " "
- D 1744.—Slightly damaged.
- D X 31.—Two buffer castings broken.
- D 7723.—One " "
- D 3477.—One " "

We will forward an estimate of the value of the above as early as possible, and also of the damage to the permanent way.

H. RICHARDSON,
Superintendent of the Lines.
C. H. STANGER,
Out-Door Loco. Superintendent.

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE taken at joint inquiry, held at Eskbank on the 2nd October, 1900, respecting the derailment of trucks on the first portion of No. 38 Up goods in the wing at Top Points, 29/9/00.

T. Leighton, acting driver, states:—I have been first-class fireman for over five years, and acting driver about four years, off and on; for about three years I was working as fireman on the Sydney mail, but have not had much experience on goods trains as fireman between Bathurst and Penrith; I, however, know the road thoroughly; on Saturday night last, with No. 38 goods, was my second trip as driver to Penrith; the first trip was on the previous Wednesday, when I worked No. 84 passing over the Zig Zag during daylight; I then had a double train load drawn by a "T" class engine; the train was divided at Bottom Points, and I propelled the first portion up the middle road; on that occasion I continued pushing at Top Points until I could see my engine was clear of the points, when the starting signal was immediately lowered; before leaving Bathurst with No. 38, on the 29th, I made no objection to taking my first goods train at night with a fireman who had not much experience on the section, having confidence in my own knowledge of the road; I had no difficulty in pushing my load up the middle road; I eased off a bit on approaching the signal cabin at the Top Points, and passed it at about 3 miles an hour; I afterwards made a further reduction in the speed by partly closing the regulator, and was steaming very little when stopped by the application of the brakes; with the staff for the Clarence section the fireman handed me the bank-engine form, and after signing the latter I handed it back to the fireman; by this time I had passed the starting signal by 2 or 3 yards; I was still steaming back slightly, and looking towards the starting signal waiting for it to be lowered before stopping, as I feared, if I stopped too soon, I might have a difficulty in pushing my train further back; I then felt a slight jerk, which had a tendency to pull the engine back, then the Westinghouse brake went on with full force; I am positive the starting signal was not lowered up to the time the train was brought to a standstill by the application of the air-brakes, but the moment the train stopped the signal was taken off; directly after stopping I saw a hand signal, as if from somebody on the platform of the signal-box, waved violently, calling me ahead; shortly after the accident I saw who I thought was the brakeman, and he asked me what was the matter; I told him that a truck had been pushed on to the rocks; immediately after this the night officer came up, and he also inquired what was wrong, and I informed him; at the same time I said, "Why were you so long pulling that signal off?" but he made no reply; when I first felt the jerk, I estimate I was about 40 or 50 yards on the western side of the starting signal; at that time I was not sure that the starting signal-post stood clear of the western end of No. 10 lock-bar; since then, however, I have seen that it is clear, and that if I had stopped at the post I should have been clear of the points.

T. LEIGHTON.

Alfred Clappinson, acting fireman, states:—I have been acting fireman about ten months; I have only been about eight or ten trips to Penrith; I was fireman with Driver Leighton on No. 38 Up goods on Saturday night last; after the train was divided at Bottom Points we got the usual signals to proceed up the middle road to Top Points; all the fixed signals at Top Points were lowered for us to go into the top wing; the engine passed the signal cabin at Top Points at about 2 miles an hour; in passing the box I exchanged the Bottom Point's staff with that for the Clarence section, and at the same time took the banking-engine notice with it; so far as I could judge, we ran past the box about 50 yards before coming to a stand, when we were stopped by the air-brake going on; I watched for the starting signal to be lowered as an indication that we were clear of the points, and the road set for us to go ahead, but the signal was not lowered until we felt a jerk; I was not aware until after the accident that the site of the starting signal was a few yards clear of No. 10 lock-bar; I fired with Driver Leighton from Bathurst to Penrith on the previous Wednesday, working No. 84 goods, which passed over the Zig Zag during daylight; the driver said nothing to me while travelling up the middle road as to his not knowing where to stop his engine at the Top Points, and I said nothing to him about it; after exchanging the staff, I remained on the driver's side of the engine.

To the Driver: The brakeman jumped off the engine and went into the signal-box when we arrived at Top Points.

(Recalled). I heard nothing pass between the night officer and the driver relative to the signals.

A. CLAPPINSON.

J. F. Jones, Night Officer, Top Points, states:—I was on duty at Top Points on the night of the 29th September, 1900; I have been night officer about eleven months at Top Points; the last train to pass over the section Clarence Top Points was No. 57a down passenger, which crossed No. 38 Up goods at Bottom Points; on arrival of No. 57a at Bottom Points, I gave the staff for the first section of No. 38, and lowered the distant (No. 3), home (No. 4), and stop signal (No. 5); the train arrived about 11.35, and as the engine passed my box, I collected the Bottom Points staff and handed the staff for the Clarence section, and also banking-engine form to the driver; as soon as the engine passed No. 10 lock-bar, and the lamp was visible which was fixed on the rock opposite the Up starting signal, I placed No. 5 stop signal at "danger," set the road for Clarence, and lowered No. 15 starting signal; I do not think the engine could have gone more than 20 yards over the lock-bar before I set the road and lowered the starting signal; when I lowered this signal I turned to the train-book to enter the times, so that I cannot say whether the driver came to a stand the moment the signal was lowered, or when the train came to a stand; immediately after this, the brakeman was passing my box, and I asked him to wave the driver ahead; at that time I did not notice that the train had gone too far back; the brakeman gave the hand signal, but as there appeared to be no response to it, he went to the engine; I came out of my box on to the platform, and there waited a few minutes, but as the train did not come, I went up to it and met the driver on the other side of the engine, and he told me they had a truck on the rocks; I then proceeded to the rear of the train to look for myself, and found a truck on the rocks, but did not know whether any vehicles had gone over the cliff; I did not ask the driver why he had pushed his train so far, and he did not offer any explanation; No. 15 starting signal cannot be lowered until the train is clear of No. 10 lock-bar, and the lowering of this signal is an indication to the driver that he is clear of No. 10 lock-bar, and that the road is set for the train to be drawn forward in the direction of Clarence; I have been lowering No. 5 stop signal for the first portion of a goods train coming up the middle road, as one of the drivers complained some time ago to me that it should be pulled off; I have had no instructions from the Traffic Inspector to lower this signal for such trains;

trains; a driver on an engine propelling a number of trucks cannot, without much difficulty, see No. 5 stop signal from his engine; since I have been at Top Points, I have never given drivers a red light showing that they are past No. 15 starting signal, because they nearly all whistle as soon as they have passed this signal-post clear of No. 10 lock-bar; I have frequently had to wave them back a little because they have stopped their engines short of the lock-bar; Driver Leighton backed his train past my signal-box at about the usual speed; my only reason for not lowering the starting signal in all cases for the first portion is that I want to instruct the driver regarding the bank engine by giving him the usual form; on the night in question there was no difficulty about the movement of the bank engine, therefore I gave the driver the staff and the usual bank-engine form; in working a down goods train through Top Points, the Distant Home and No. 5 stop signals are lowered to admit the train to the Top Wing; the stop signal is put to "Danger" as soon as the rear portion of the train is clear of No. 10 lock-bar; the train is then brought back by No. 16 repeater for the middle road, which is a repeating signal for No. 16 proper.

To Driver Leighton: The brakeman did, I believe, jump off your engine, and brought a parcel and left it on the platform; I do not remember you saying anything to me with reference to my being a long time pulling the starting signal off.

(Recalled): I have heard that portion of Driver Leighton's statement read, wherein he says he spoke to me about my being slow in taking the signals off, and I am positive that no such remark was made; the driver only spoke to me of the truck being on the rocks.

J. F. JONES.

J. H. D. Fulton, brakeman, states:—I am brakeman on the Zig Zag, and have been in this position for about three weeks; prior to this I was porter at Mount Victoria; I have been temporarily employed in the Department about three years, and received my permanent appointment last month; I was on duty as brakeman on Saturday night last; on arrival of No. 38 goods at Bottom Points, I counted the trucks on the engine as they passed me, as I intended at first to cut off behind the 21st truck, but the guard instructed me to uncouple at the rear of the 23rd truck; after uncoupling I gave the driver a green light to go ahead, got on the engine, and the train proceeded up the middle road; on arrival at Top Points, I alighted at my usual place between the signal-box and the points; the engine was going at the usual speed at the time and I was able to step off easily; after getting off the engine, it is my duty to go back, clear of the crossover, to sprag the trucks to prevent them running back; as I was going back the night officer called me and told me to wave the driver ahead; I did so, and as the driver did not respond to my hand-signal, I walked to the engine to ascertain what was wrong, and found only the fireman on the engine, who told me that he could not release the brakes and that the driver had gone back to see what was wrong; I then went along the train and asked the driver what was the matter; he said he had pushed a truck up on to the rocks; I then went to the rear of the train and examined the air pipe and couplings; finding the air tap open, I remarked to the driver that I thought there were trucks over the cliff; I then counted the vehicles on the train and found that two were missing; I had a parcel in my hand when I got off the engine; there was a photo. in it addressed to Davidson, my predecessor, which had come by parcels post, and was handed to me at Bottom Points out of the mail train; it is usual for the mails and parcels to be given to me; I placed the parcel alongside the signal-box near the steps at Top Points; it was during the time I was thus engaged that the night officer asked me to wave the driver ahead; I do not always ride on the engine, but sometimes on a suitable truck, if there is one on the train, as it saves me running down to get on the engine at Bottom Points; when riding on the engines I never give any signal to the driver to stop; he always stops of his own accord after crossing No. 10 lock-bar at Top Points; as we went up the middle road, the driver made no remark to me about being strange to the job; he seemed to handle the train in the ordinary way; he had no difficulty in propelling his portion of the train up the middle road; I have never had to give a hand-signal for a driver to stop, or, before this occasion, for a driver to come ahead; when I started as brakeman, I had the previous man with me for a couple of nights; when I gave the hand-signal, at the request of the night officer, Top Points, for the driver to come ahead, I cannot say whether the points had been set or the starting signal lowered; when I got to the engine neither the fireman nor the driver said anything to me regarding the starting signal not being lowered; the night officer came to the door of the signal-box when he asked me to signal the driver ahead.

J. H. D. FULTON.

Guard W. Robinson states:—I have been running as guard and assistant for about twenty years; on Saturday last I worked No. 38 from Wallerawang to Penrith; the train was divided at Bottom Points, the first portion being taken up by the brakeman, and I worked the second part; I did not know that an accident had occurred to the first portion until I arrived at Top Points; I travelled over the middle road in my brake-van, and alighted before reaching the signal-box and spragged the vehicles; as I did not see anyone about, I walked up to the train engine, and there saw the fireman and asked him what was the matter; he replied that he thought there was something wrong; I then met the driver, and he told me that they had pushed a little too far, but he made no remark as to the working of the signals; when I reached the rear of the first portion I saw the night officer and brakeman, and they told me there was a truck on the rocks and they thought that some had gone over the cliff, but said nothing as to the cause of the accident; I have frequently ridden on the engine when it has been propelling its load up the middle road; the practice is to get off the engine at Top Points and go forward to sprag the trucks when the train stops; on some occasions when I have ridden on the engine to the Top Points, I have given the driver a signal when the engine has been clear of No. 10 lock-bar; Driver Leighton did not mention to me on the journey from Wallerawang that it was his first trip at night, and there was nothing in his working to lead me to think that he was strange to his work; the first portion left Bottom Points at 11.28 p.m., with twenty-three vehicles; trucks Nos. 3,947, loaded with wool for Darling Harbour, and 2,873, containing chaff for Redfern, were pushed over the cliff; D trucks Nos. 3,477 and 7,723 had each one buffer broken, while X 31 had two buffers broken, the latter being detached at Katoomba; truck D 1,744 was pushed off the road at the end of the top wing, and was left there.

W. ROBINSON.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

ENGINE-DRIVERS, &c., HARDEN TO NARRANDERA.

(RETURN RESPECTING HOURS OF DUTY OF ENGINE-DRIVERS, FIREMEN, AND GUARDS WORKING NIGHT GOODS TRAINS BETWEEN JUNEE AND HARDEN, AND BETWEEN JUNEE AND NARRANDERA.)

Printed under No. 17 Report from Printing Committee, 22 November, 1900.

[Laid upon the Table of the House in accordance with a promise made by the Honorable the Minister for Railways, in answer to Question No. 5 in Votes and Proceedings, No. 69, of the 6th November, 1900.]

HOURS OF DUTY OF ENGINE-DRIVERS, FIREMEN, AND GUARDS WORKING NIGHT GOODS TRAINS BETWEEN JUNEE AND HARDEN, AND BETWEEN JUNEE AND NARRANDERA.

- (1.) *Question.*—Is it a fact that engine-drivers, firemen, and guards working night goods trains, Nos. 56 and 91, Junee to Harden and return, also 9A, Junee to Narrandera, and 16 up, Narrandera to Junee, are on duty never less than 12 hours, and sometimes as much as 14 hours, at a stretch?

Answer.—I am informed that the drivers and firemen working the Junee and Harden trains run a total distance of 120 miles, and are on duty 11½ hours. This time includes 1½ hours allowed at their home station for preparing engines and putting them away. The Junee and Narrandera men run an equal distance, and are on duty 11½ hours. This includes 1½ hours allowed at their home station for preparing and putting engines away. During the three months ending with October last there have not been any cases of 14 hours with the trains in question; two cases of 13½ hours occurred, and six others of slightly over 13 hours. These were due to accidental causes. In regard to the guards working the goods trains referred to, it is not a fact that they are on duty never less than 12 hours. During the months of August, September, and October, 1900, the guards of Nos. 56 and 91 were over 12 hours on duty on nine occasions only. The hours of the guards running Nos. 9A and 16 did not exceed 12 on any occasion during the same period, and in no instance were they on duty for 14 hours.

- (2.) *Question.*—Is it a fact that it occurs that some of these men are called upon to work these particular trains three days in succession?

Answer.—No. These trains are occasionally worked twice in succession by enginemen, but there are only two instances in the last three months where the firemen have worked on the same trains three times in four consecutive days. Drivers have not been employed more than two consecutive days on these trains. It is usual to run the same guard on these trains for several days in succession, in order to compensate for short trips on other trains, and make up full time within the pay period. It may be added that the regulation hours are 108 per fortnight, equalling 9 per day.

- (3.) *Question.*—Will he lay upon the Table of this House the total hours on duty on each day for each driver, fireman, and guard working these particular trains in the months of August, September, and October of this year?

Answer.—Returns showing the hours of duty are attached.

STATEMENT

STATEMENT showing total hours on duty of Drivers and Firemen who worked Nos. 56 and 91 Goods Trains, between Junee and Harden, for the months of August, September, and October, 1900.

Dates.	Drivers.	Firemen.	Total hours on duty.	Dates.	Drivers.	Firemen.	Total hours on duty.
			h. m.				h. m.
1 August.....	Porch	Chicken	11 40	17 September	Gaudry.....	Gordon.....	13 45
2	Duff	Chicken	12 20	18	Shephard	Pearce	11 45
3	Boyce	Nixon	12 0	19	Duff	Kelly	12 55
4	Gaudry.....	Nixon	11 0	20	Porch	Pegg	13 30
6	Hopwood	Pearce	12 45	21	Cracknell	Penfold	12 40
7	Jamieson	Shephard	11 40	22	Jamieson	Kennedy	12 55
8	Buckley	Pooie	12 0	24	Jamieson	Hamilton.....	12 30
9	Trott.....	Porch	12 0	25	McLean	Kelly	12 40
10	Cracknell.....	Irwin	12 0	26	McLean	Kelly	12 50
11	Buckley	Poole	12 25	28	Cracknell	Kelly	12 20
13	Trott.....	Penfold	12 0	29	Boyce	Kennedy	12 55
14	McLean	Penfold	12 5	1 October	Cracknell	Kelly	13 10
15	Chicken	Pearce	11 55	4	Porch	Hamilton.....	12 30
16	Buckley	Hamilton	11 55	5	Cracknell	Kelly	12 15
17	McLean	Brown	12 45	6	Buckley	Kelly	12 5
18	Buckley	Poole	11 25	8	Gaudry.....	Cummins.....	12 30
20	Boyce	Gordon.....	12 30	9	Shephard	Pearce	12 5
21	Hopwood	Richards	12 20	10	McLean	Pearce	13 10
22	Boyce	Gordon.....	12 5	11	Shephard	Turner.....	11 45
23	Clarkson	Richards	12 25	12	Porch	Clarke	12 5
24	Buckley	Cummins	12 45	13	Shephard	Chicken	11 25
25	Duff	Brown	12 0	15	Wall	Brown	12 35
28	McLean	Hamilton	11 38	16	Wall	Brown	12 0
30	McLean	Kennedy	12 25	18	Chicken	Kennedy	12 35
31	Buckley	Nixon	12 0	20	McLean	Hamilton	11 45
3 September..	Jamieson	Brown	12 30	22	Shephard	Thorburn.....	13 20
4	Cracknell.....	Brown	12 5	23	Jamieson	Clarke	12 50
5	Amy	Ritchie	12 25	24	Porch	Daley	12 15
10	Cracknell.....	Pearce	13 10	25	Young	Clarke	12 35
11	Cracknell.....	Pearce	12 55	27	Shephard	Pearce	12 45
12	Gaudry.....	Turner.....	13 45	29	Shephard	Pearce	12 5
13	Gaudry.....	Turner.....	12 0	30	Young	O'Shannessy	11 40
14	Cracknell.....	Poole	12 20	31	Buckley	Penfold.....	12 0
15	Gaudry.....	Gordon.....	12 25				

The actual time for running these trains is 9 hours 55 minutes. The actual time credited to the driver and fireman for the trip is 11 hours 40 minutes; and when that has been exceeded it is due to late running or some accidental cause.

STATEMENT showing total hours on duty of Guards who worked Nos. 56 and 91 Goods Trains, between Junee and Harden, during the months of August, September, and October, 1900.

Dates.	Names of Guards.	Total hours on duty.	Remarks.	Dates.	Names of Guards.	Total hours on duty.	Remarks.
		h. m.				h. m.	
1 August	Eggleton, G.	10 40		17 Sept..	Dargan, J.	13 0	
2	Eggleton, G.	11 55		18	Dargan, J.	11 30	
3	Eggleton, G.	11 0		19	Dargan, J.	12 45	Ran Nos. 32 and 91.
4	Eggleton, G.	9 55		20	Ferrario, J.	12 45	
6	Morgan, J.	12 0		21	Ferrario, J.	12 0	
7	Morgan, J.	10 55		22	Ferrario, J.	12 10	
8	Morgan, J.	10 55		24	Dargan, J.	12 0	
9	Teasdale, John..	11 5		25	Dargan, J.	11 55	
10	Teasdale, John..	11 0		26	Dargan, J.	10 55	
11	Teasdale, John..	12 0		27	Morgan, J.	11 20	Ran Nos. 32 and 91.
13	Morgan, J.	11 35		28	Teasdale, J.	12 0	
14	Morgan, J.	11 40		29	Reilly, M.	12 10	
15	Teasdale, John..	11 5		1 October	Burns, A.	12 20	
16	Teasdale, John..	10 55		2	Hyland, J.	10 50	
17	Dargan, J.	10 15	Only ran to Harden.	3	Hyland, J.	10 50	
18	Morgan, J.	10 15		4	Hyland, J.	12 0	
20	Morgan, J.	11 55		5	Hyland, J.	11 50	
21	Morgan, J.	11 55		6	Hyland, J.	11 40	
22	Morgan, J.	11 40		8	Reilly, M.	12 0	
23	Ferrario, J.	11 55		9	Reilly, M.	11 25	
24	Ferrario, J.	12 5		10	Reilly, M.	12 20	
25	Morgan, J.	11 5		11	Burns, A.	11 15	
27	Roberts, P.	11 30	Ran Nos. 32 and 91.	12	Morgan, J.	11 35	
28	Roberts, P.	10 50		13	Morgan, J.	10 25	
30	Dargan, J.	9 10	Returned by Special.	15	Hyland, J.	12 0	
31	Hyland.....	11 5		16	Hyland, J.	12 30	
3 September..	Dargan, J.	12 0		17	Dargan, J. ....	.....	Only ran to Harden.
4	Dargan, J.	11 5		18	Ferrario, J.	12 0	
5	Dargan, J.	11 55		20	Ferrario, J.	11 15	
7	Dargan, J.	8 50	Returned as passenger by express.	22	Burns, A.	12 0	
8	Hyland, J.	8 50	To Wallendbeen only; returned by No. 13.	23	Burns, A.	12 0	
10	Dargan, J.	12 25		24	Burns	11 50	
11	Teasdale, J.	12 0		25	Burns, A.	11 50	
12	Roberts, P.	13 0		26	Burns, A.	10 25	
13	Roberts, P.	11 15		27	Burns, A.	12 0	
14	Teasdale, J.	11 55		29	Hyland, J.	11 40	
15	Teasdale, J.	12 0		30	Anglim, J.	11 15	
				31	Anglim, J.	11 20	

STATEMENT showing total hours on duty of Drivers and Firemen who worked Nos. 9A and 16 Goods Trains, between Junee and Narrandera, during the months of August, September, and October, 1900.

Dates.	Drivers.	Firemen.	Total hours on duty.	Dates.	Drivers.	Firemen.	Total hours on duty.
			h. m.				h. m.
1 August.....	Hopwood	Richards	12 0	17 September	Trott	Chicken	11 30
3 "	Hopwood	Poole	11 55	19 "	Wall	Poole.....	12 18
6 "	McLean	Richards	11 20	21 "	Wall	Poole.....	11 25
8 "	Duff	Ritchie	12 15	24 "	Clarkson	Irwin	11 30
10 "	Gaudry	Nixon	11 55	26 "	Porch	Hamilton	12 55
13 "	Duff	Ritchie	12 10	28 "	Wall	Brown	12 0
15 "	Cummins	Walsh	12 0	1 October	Duff	Irwin	11 5
17 "	Boyce	Gordon	11 40	3 "	Wall	Poole.....	11 55
20 "	Duff	Porch	12 0	5 "	Duff	Chicken	12 10
22 "	Buckley	Poole	12 15	8 "	Boyce	Gordon	12 10
24 "	Trott	Kelly	12 0	10 "	Porch	Cummins	11 55
27 "	Clarkson	Gordon	12 0	12 "	Buckley	Irwin	13 15
29 "	Clarkson	Irwin	11 55	15 "	Buckley	Porch	12 45
31 "	Clarkson	Irwin	11 40	17 "	Gaudry	Poole.....	12 20
3 September..	Trott	Porch	12 5	19 "	Gaudry	Poole.....	11 0
5 "	Gaudry	Kennedy	12 0	22 "	Hopwood	Penfold.....	12 30
7 "	Porch	Pegg	12 0	24 "	Flood	Pearce	12 5
10 "	Duff	Nixon	12 10	26 "	Chicken	Pearce	12 0
11 "	Duff	Nixon	11 0	29 "	Boyce	Cummins	12 5
12 "	Wall	Penfold	13 0	31 "	Cracknell	Kennedy	13 0
14 "	Duff	Porch	11 45				

The actual time for running these trains is 9 hours 35 minutes. The actual time credited to the driver and fireman for the trip is 11 hours 20 minutes; and when that has been exceeded it is due to late running or some accidental cause.

STATEMENT showing total hours on duty of Guards who worked Nos. 9A and 16 Goods Trains, between Junee and Narrandera, during the months of August, September, and October, 1900.

Dates.	Names of Guards.	Total hours on duty.	Remarks.	Dates.	Names of Guards.	Total hours on duty.	Remarks.
		h. m.				h. m.	
1 August	Teasdale, John ..	10 55		14 Sept..	Ferrario, J.....	10 45	
3 "	Teasdale, John..	.....	Did not return to Junee; took train Narrandera to Jerilderie.	17 "	Morgan, J.	10 30	
6 "	Robson, John ...	.....	do do	19 "	Morgan, J.	11 27	
8 "	Ferrario, J.	11 30		21 "	Roberts, P.	10 20	
10 "	Ferrario, J.	10 55		24 "	Eggleton, G. ...	10 30	
13 "	Ferrario, J.	11 10		26 "	Eggleton, G. ...	12 0	
15 "	Ferrario, J.	11 17		28 "	Eggleton, G. ...	11 5	
17 "	Eggleton, G.	10 40		1 Oct...	Brown, T.	10 5	
20 "	Teasdale, John..	11 15		3 "	Brown, T.	11 10	
22 "	Teasdale, John..	11 53		5 "	Brown, T.	11 25	
24 "	Teasdale, John..	11 15		8 "	Brown, T.	11 25	
27 "	Teasdale, John..	11 20		10 "	Brown, T.	11 10	
29 "	Morgan, J.	11 10		12 "	Brown, T.	12 0	
31 "	Ferrario, J.	10 40		15 "	Brown, T.	12 0	
3 Sept....	Teasdale, John..	11 30		17 "	Brown, T.	11 20	
5 "	Teasdale, John..	11 15		19 "	Brown, T.	11 9	
7 "	Morgan, J.	11 15		22 "	Brown, T.	11 15	
10 "	Morgan, J.	11 15		26 "	Brown, T.	11 20	
12 "	Morgan, J.	12 0		29 "	Brown, T.	11 20	
				31 "	Brown, T.	12 0	

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

CONSIGNMENT OF STOCK FROM CAMDEN TO SYDNEY.

(RETURN RESPECTING.)

Printed under No. 19 Report from Printing Committee, 4 December, 1900.

The Secretary for Railways to The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 30 November, 1900.

Referring to Question No. 18 in Votes and Proceedings, No. 84, of the 29th instant, and reply thereto by the Honorable the Minister for Railways, I am directed to forward herewith categorical replies to the questions asked by the Honorable Member for Northumberland, Mr. J. Norton :—

(1) *Question* : On the 6th November did Mr. Patrick Carlon, Camden, engage and pay for a full railway truck for the conveyance of a consignment of pigs from that place to Sydney?

Answer : Mr. Patrick Carlon tendered, at Camden, on the 6th instant, forty-four pigs for conveyance to Messrs. Ellis & Co. at Sydney, but he paid no carriage.

(2) *Question* : Did the servants of the Railway Department afterwards put into the same truck a number of pigs, the property of Mr. John Devitt, Camden, who paid for half a truck?

Answer : Mr. John Devitt tendered twenty pigs, also for Messrs. Ellis & Co. in Sydney, at Camden, on the 6th instant, and there being no objection made, and as they bore distinctive marks, they were loaded in the same truck with those forwarded by Mr. Carlon. No freight was paid by Mr. John Devitt.

(3) *Question* : Has Mr. Carlon been refused a rebate by the Department?

Answer : It cannot be ascertained that any application has been made by Mr. Carlon for a rebate. Having paid no money, he is not entitled to any.

(4) *Question* : Does he approve of the action of the Department in charging a consignee for a full truck, and then reletting a portion to another person?

Answer : The Department charges Messrs. Ellis & Co., the consignees for both lots of pigs, for the use of one truck only—namely, 28s. 8d. They have been seen, and admit that this was all the money paid to the Department on the two lots of pigs in question.

(5) *Question* : Have similar cases to the above occurred before?

Answer : We have no knowledge of any such instances of charging twice for the same truck.

(6) *Question* : As a consignee engages a full truck for special reasons, such as avoiding the chance of his stock being infected by other consignments, will he see that in future the hirer of a truck shall get what he contracts for?

Answer : Senders frequently amalgamate their lots of pigs so as to get proportionately cheaper freights, but, if the sender expressly desired his animals to be loaded by themselves, this would be complied with, and charges would be levied accordingly.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,

Secretary.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

GRANVILLE RAILWAY STATION.

(RETURN RESPECTING.)

Printed under No. 14 Report from Printing Committee, 11 October, 1900.

RETURN to an *Order* made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated 6th September, 1900, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“Copies of all letters, petitions, reports, plans, and other documents relating to the overhead passenger crossing at Granville Railway Station, and at the openings to such station, and matters in connection therewith.”

(*Mr. Nobbs.*)

Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.—Motion carried, Thursday the 6th September, 1900.

9. GRANVILLE RAILWAY STATION (*Formal Motion*):—Mr. Nobbs moved, pursuant to Notice, That there be laid upon the Table of this House, all letters, petitions, reports, plans, and other documents relating to the overhead passenger crossing at Granville Railway Station, and to the openings to such station, and matters in connection therewith.
Question put and passed.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Railway Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

Council Chambers, Granville, 13 January, 1891.

I have the honor, by direction of His Worship the Mayor, to respectfully request that you will cause the necessary instructions to be issued in order that the proposed subway at Granville Station may be proceeded with as soon as possible. We notice that the station buildings are now being painted and renovated, but the matter of the subway is of far greater importance to the travelling public, who are now compelled to go outside the railway premises altogether in order to get from one platform to the other, or else by infringing the by-laws by jumping down off one platform and climbing up on the other side, thereby not only breaking the rules, but also endangering their own lives by so doing. We understand that it has been decided to have the subway, but if you are not prepared to do this, then a bridge to connect the two platforms would be a decided improvement on the present very unsatisfactory arrangement.

Your early attention will oblige.

Yours, &c.,
JOHN SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P.

Sir,

4 February, 1891.

With reference to your interview with Mr. Commissioner Oliver regarding the subject of a proposed subway near Granville, I have the honor to inform you that, pending altered arrangements at Granville, it is not considered advisable to do anything in this matter.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

Granville Council Chambers, 19 February, 1891.

With reference to your favour of the 4th instant, addressed to John Nobbs, Esq., M.P., regarding the subject of a proposed subway at Granville Railway Station, and informing that gentleman that, pending altered arrangements at Granville, it was not considered advisable to do anything in this matter, I have the honor, by direction of the Borough Council of Granville, to respectfully request information as to how soon those alterations will be commenced.

Your early attention will oblige.

Yours, &c.,

JOHN SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

29 May, 1891.

With reference to your letter of the 19th February last, on the subject of the proposed subway at Granville, and asking how soon the alterations at this station will be effected, I have the honor to inform you that no date has yet been fixed upon for the remodelling of the station, other works of a more pressing nature requiring first attention.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Letter from Council Clerk, 30th July, asking Commissioners to receive Deputation.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

3 August, 1891.

Your letter of the 30th ultimo, asking the Commissioners to receive a deputation from your Council in reference to the subway at Granville Station, and the Clyde level-crossing gates, has been received; and, in reply, I have to inform you that the Commissioners will be pleased to receive the deputation on Friday, 7th instant, at this office, if convenient.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Sir,

Granville Council Chambers, 5 August, 1891.

I have the honor to inform you that the time fixed by the Railway Commissioners to receive the Aldermen of the Borough of Granville, with reference to a subway at Granville Station, is convenient, and as many of the Aldermen as can get to Sydney on Friday morning will attend.

Yours, &c.,

JOHN SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

Extract from Notes of Interview.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 7 August, 1891.

EXTRACT from Notes of Interview in reference to Accommodation for Crossing the Line at Granville at Clyde Crossing Gates and Woodville Road.

Present :—Mr. Commissioner Febon; Mr. Commissioner Oliver; Mr. Foxlee, Deputy Engineer, Existing Lines; the Mayor of Granville (Alderman Gee); Aldermen Pihner, Bennett, and Leggott; the Council Clerk.

THE deputation represented the inconvenience that was caused by the want of a subway for foot passengers to cross from one side of the line to the other at the station, and also of a direct means of getting from one platform to the other. Complaint was made about the steps from the centre platform being apparently permanently blocked, and great inconvenience had been caused by people getting out of trains on that side by mistake, and being unable to obtain egress.

The Commissioners said they could not at present make any definite promise with regard to a subway at Granville—it meant a large expenditure; but they would have inquiries made and see what could be done to remedy any real inconvenience that might be shown to exist.

The

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to J. Garrard, Esq., M.P.

Sir,

30 June, 1892.

With reference to your call relative to the proposed overbridge at Granville, I have the honor to inform you that it was proposed to alter the arrangements at Granville when the subject of an overbridge would have had consideration, but at present, owing to other more pressing works engaging attention and absorbing amounts voted, the question will have to remain in abeyance.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Railway Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

Granville Council Chambers, 16 June, 1897.

I have the honor, by direction of the Borough Council of Granville, to respectfully request that you will cause a light overhead bridge to be erected at the eastern end of the Granville Railway Station, thus rendering it safe and more convenient for railway travellers, and obviating the danger which now exists. I am directed to draw attention to the fact that the danger is greater at this station than at any other on the suburban line, owing to there being a centre platform.

I have, &c.,
J. SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

Memorandum from The Out-door Superintendent, Railways, to The Chief Traffic Manager, Railways.

Application for Overbridge at Granville.

21 June, 1897.

In reply to your minute of the 18th instant, I beg to inform you that there is already an overbridge at Granville, at the southern end of platform, and I can see no justification whatever for the expenditure which would be incurred in erecting another overbridge at the Sydney end of the station. If the bridge were granted as being required at Granville, the same request could be made at most of the other suburban stations. I do not recommend that the application be complied with.

J.P.,
O.-D. Superintendent.

I concur with Mr. Parry.—D.K., 23/6/97. Secy. Decline.—C.O., W.M.F., 24/6/97.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

25 June, 1897.

With reference to your letter of the 16th instant, in which you ask that a footbridge be erected at the eastern end of the Granville Railway Station, I am directed to inform you that the matter has had consideration, and it is regretted the request cannot be acceded to.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

Granville Council Chambers, 8 July, 1897.

I have the honor, by direction of the Borough Council of Granville, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, 95/2,950-148, L.R.S., and in reply thereto to request that we may be informed when the Commissioners are making the next tour to Granville, in order that the Council may have the pleasure of waiting on them and showing the necessity of the work for which application has been made.

I have, &c.,
J. SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

10 July, 1897.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 8th instant, asking to be advised of the date on which the Commissioners will next visit Granville.

In reply, I have to inform you that no definite date has yet been fixed, but as soon as it has been decided upon you will be duly advised.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to D. O'Reilly, Esq., M.P.

Dear Sir,

Granville Council Chambers, 12 May, 1898.

It having been decided to wait on the Railway Commissioners to request that they will make a subway at Granville Station, I have been instructed to respectfully request that you will kindly arrange date on which they will receive a deputation from the Borough Council and residents of the borough; also, that you will consent to introduce the deputation.

Yours, &c.,
J. SCARBOROUGH.
D. O'Reilly,

D. O'Reilly, Esq., M.P., to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Sir, Parliament, New South Wales, 13 May, 1898.
Will you kindly let me know on what date the Commissioners for Railways will be prepared to receive deputation alluded to in accompanying letter. I am, &c.,
DOWELL O'REILLY.

Fix a date for the deputation, but point out that there is no intention to erect workshops or provide the subway referred to.—C.O., W.M.F., D.K., 19/5/98.

Extract from Notes of Interview.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 26 May, 1898.

EXTRACT from notes of interview *re* Granville.

Present :—D. O'Reilly, Esq., M.P. ; The Mayor of Granville ; Messrs. J. Nobbs, J. B. Price, and others. The deputation, representing a public meeting which had been held, submitted a petition signed by nearly 500 persons, requesting consideration of certain matters therein set forth.

EXTRACT from Petition dated 20 April, 1898.

"That it is necessary for the convenience of the public that a subway be constructed, in order that better facilities of communication between the northern and southern portions of the borough be given to them."

[Signed by 468 persons.]

"Another matter was that of communication between the parts of Granville separated by the railway line, as at present persons going from one part of the borough to another had to go out of their way by the existing roads ; the railway passengers were also put to considerable inconvenience by the existing arrangements. At other stations on the line subways or overhead bridges had been provided, and the people of Granville thought they were now entitled to consideration. They did not ask for a subway or an overbridge for vehicular traffic, but simply for pedestrian traffic, and they desired the Commissioners to consider the question of constructing a subway or an overbridge, and also more convenient access to the railway platforms."

In reply, the Chief Commissioner stated :—"With regard to the subway, that was a matter which had been before them previously. No doubt inconvenience was caused in connection with the entrance to the station, but similar inconveniences existed at many other stations. Subways were expensive to construct, and there were many stations on the suburban line which could be improved very much by a large expenditure in this direction. When this question was before them on a previous occasion the Commissioners could not find any justification for spending such a large sum of money as would be involved in the making of a subway. However, as the matter had been so forcibly urged, the Commissioners would have it looked into again, but he could not say what the result would be."

Minute by The Granville Municipal Council.

Four minute, 9/6/98, Granville. Plan and estimate to be submitted for footbridge over platforms.

ALTERNATIVE plans for overbridge and subway submitted for consideration. When the matter was discussed with Mr. Parry on the ground, it was considered that the removal of the centre platform at this station would be an advantage from a traffic point of view, and this has been included in the proposal for the construction of a bridge or subway.

The cost will be : Footbridge, £550 ; subway, £1,740.

The cost of removing the platform is included in the above estimates, which would, were the platform not removed, stand as under : Footbridge, £515 ; subway, £1,700.

Memorandum from the Out-door Superintendent, Railways, to The Chief Traffic Manager, Railways.

Proposed Overbridge at Granville.

17 August, 1898.

IN accordance with your verbal request, I have looked into the proposed plan for overbridge and subway at Granville Station, submitted by the engineer. So far as the departmental arrangements are concerned, the overbridge would be a great convenience in dealing with the issue and collection of tickets, as it would enable the whole of the tickets to be issued from one central ticket-office on the bridge, instead of from two ticket-offices, one on the "up" platform and one on the "down," now existing. If the bridge were provided, it would be necessary to close the entrances and exits to the overbridge at the Parramatta end of the station, and also the entrances to the "up" platform through the main buildings, otherwise the new arrangement would be of no advantage to the Department. I fear, however, that the residents will strongly oppose the removal of the entrances and exits from the overbridge, as it would necessitate second-class passengers arriving at the "down" platform having to walk back to the new footbridge and up the main parade, back to the overbridge, instead of being able to get on to the overbridge direct from the platform by the steps. I would respectfully suggest, however, that an officer be deputed to confer with the Mayor in regard to the suggestion, because I feel sure that if the work is gone on with without the concurrence of the local Council, agitation will be worked up against the arrangements.

For convenience, the overbridge is undoubtedly superior to the subway.

J.P.

Appd.—C.O., W.M.F., D.K., 18/8/98.

J. Nobbs,

J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P., to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Dear Sir,

19 August, 1898.

Some month or so back a deputation appointed at a public meeting in Granville waited upon the Commissioners with respect to an overhead bridge at Granville Railway Station. The Commissioners promised to consider the matter and let the deputation know. Will you kindly let me know what has been done in the matter, and what the Commissioners propose, and oblige yours, &c.,

JOHN NOBBS.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Out-door Superintendent, Railways.
Proposed Overbridge at Granville.

20 August, 1898.

Will you please see the Mayor, as suggested, and go into the matter with him, and report?

H. McLACHLAN,
(per G.M.M.)
Secretary.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P.

Sir,

22 August, 1898.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 19th instant in regard to the question of the suggested overbridge at Granville Railway Station.

This question is receiving consideration, and an officer was deputed a day or two ago to see the Mayor in regard to some details, to enable the Commissioners to come to a decision in the matter.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P., to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Sir,

Granville, 25 August, 1898.

I shall be glad if the Commissioners will kindly let me have a copy of the tracing of the proposed overbridge at Granville Station for the information of my constituents.

I am, &c.,
JOHN NOBBS.

Memorandum from The Out-door Superintendent, Railways, to The Secretary,
Railway Commissioners.

Proposed Overbridge at Granville Station.

25 August, 1898.

In reply to yours of the 20th instant, I beg to report that I saw the Mayor of Granville, Mr. Windsor, the Council Clerk, and Mr. Nobbs, M.P., this morning, and the whole of these gentlemen fully concurred in the proposed arrangement for the overbridge, except that the general opinion is that the centre platform should not be removed. They are agreeable to the steps being removed at the overbridge from the southern end of the platforms, together with the entrance to the main building on the "up" platform being closed, so that practically they agree to the whole of the arrangements proposed by the Department, with the exception that they consider the centre platform should remain.

In view of this, I recommend that the centre platform be allowed to remain, and steps be provided from the proposed overbridge on to the same.

The Mayor asked if the Commissioners would kindly furnish a sketch showing the proposed arrangements, so that he could bring the matter before the Council meeting next Tuesday night, and was satisfied that the same would meet with their approval.

Mr. Nobbs asked if the Commissioners would kindly forward him the sketch, so that he might submit it to the Council.
J.P.

What would be the saving in cost if the centre platform is left as at present?—C.O., 26/8/98.

Tracing in duplicate herewith, showing centre platform retained, and with access by means of steps to overbridge. The total estimated cost under this arrangement will be £655, instead of £550 under the original proposal.—T. R. FERRIS (per D.H.A.), 29/8/1900.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P.

Sir,

29 August, 1898.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 25th instant, in regard to the proposed overbridge at Granville Railway Station.

In reply, I am directed to say that, as all the negotiations on the subject have been hitherto conducted with the Granville Council direct, a copy of the tracing will be forwarded to the Mayor, as arranged.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P.

Sir,

Referring to my previous letter of this date *re* the proposed overbridge at Granville Station, I have the honor to enclose, for your information, a copy of a letter which has been addressed this afternoon to the Council Clerk.

29 August, 1898.
I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

Referring to the interview which Mr. Parry, O.D. Superintendent, had with the Mayor and others on the 25th instant, in regard to the proposed pedestrian overbridge at Granville Station, I am directed to forward herewith, for your information, a copy of the plan of the proposed works. I am to say that it is an essential part of the arrangement that, if this overbridge is constructed, the steps connecting the platforms with the existing overbridge at the southern end of the station will be removed; also, that the entrance to the main building on the "up" platform will be closed. It is understood that it is desired that the centre platform, which it was intended to remove, should remain, and the Commissioners are willing to accede to that request.

I shall be glad to hear at your earliest convenience that the arrangements will give satisfaction to and be accepted by your Council.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Gentlemen,

With reference to your letter of the 29th instant *re* overhead bridge at Granville Railway Station, I have the honor, by direction of the Borough Council of Granville, to inform you that the arrangement as contemplated and shown on plan has received the unanimous approval of the Council. I am further requested to ask that this necessary work will be carried out at the earliest convenience, and the best thanks of the Council will be accorded to you.

31 August, 1898.
Yours, &c.,
J. SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt, yesterday, of your letter dated the 30th ultimo, in which you intimate that your Council has unanimously approved of the arrangements in connection with the proposed overhead bridge at Granville Railway Station, as shown by my letter of the 29th ultimo, and the tracing attached thereto.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P., to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Sir,

Referring to your last communication to me on the subject of the overbridge at Granville Station, I am sorry that, in the interests of the public, your Commissioners could not see their way clear to let me have a copy of the tracing for the public's inspection. I have been approached by a large number of residents of the town and district, and they have represented to me that they are not in favour of the proposed alterations of facilities in travelling, &c., in connection with same; and this morning I have had handed to me the enclosed petition to your Commissioners against such alterations, with a desire that I would forward it on to them, which I now do. The petition was got up hurriedly, and I am led to believe that in the course of a week 1,000 people would sign it, but it was thought that no time should be lost in sending in the protest.

I am, &c.,
JOHN NOBBS.

Petition.

We, the undersigned residents and railway-travellers of Granville, earnestly and respectfully protest against the proposed alterations at the railway station as per plan submitted to and approved by the Municipal Council.

We would further point out, gentlemen, that the convenience of the public is much better served under present arrangements; therefore it would be a waste of public money to make the alterations as proposed.

[Signed by ninety-seven persons.]

In view of the divided opinion on the subject, the matter may stand over pending an agreement being come to by the parties interested.—C.O., W.M.F., D.K., 17/9/98.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

With reference to the question of providing a footbridge across the lines at Granville Railway Station, I have to inform you that, in view of the petition having been received adverse to the proposal, the Commissioners have decided to allow the matter to stand over until the residents interested have come to an agreement on the subject.

21 September, 1898.
I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to Messrs. D. E. Vivian, H. Frank, and others.

Gentlemen,

21 September, 1898.

With reference to your petition, forwarded by Mr. Nobbs, M.P., against the proposed foot-bridge at Granville Station, I have to inform you that, in view of the divided opinion existing on the subject, the Commissioners have decided to allow the matter to stand over until an agreement has been arrived at by the residents concerned.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Council Clerk, Granville, to The Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

Sir,

Granville Council Chambers, 23 September, 1898.

With reference to your letter of the 21st instant *re* overhead bridge at Granville Station, I am instructed by His Worship the Mayor of Granville to request that the Commissioners will grant them an interview on Tuesday next, and also allow him to see the petition which has been received against the erection of this bridge.

Your early reply will oblige.

Yours, &c.,

J. SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

The Secretary, Railway Commissioners, to The Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

24 September, 1898.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 23rd, and, in reply, am directed to say that the Commissioners will be pleased to see His Worship the Mayor, as desired, on Tuesday next, the 27th instant, at 3 p.m., if that time will meet his convenience.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN
(*per* G.M.M.),
Secretary.

Extract from Notes of Interview.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 27 September, 1898.

NOTES of interview with reference to the proposed overhead bridge at Granville.

Present.—Mr. Commissioner Fehon, Mr. Commissioner Kirkcaldie, the Mayor of Granville (Alderman Windsor), Mr. Scarborough (Council Clerk, Granville).

THE Mayor stated that, in view of the interviews which had taken place between the representatives of the Council and the Commissioners and their officers, and the acceptance by the Council of the Commissioners' proposals, they were very surprised to receive a notification that owing to some objection being taken to the arrangement the Commissioners had decided not to proceed with the matter. His Council knew nothing whatever of this petition beyond a rumour that a certain individual had taken the petition around, and this gentleman was one of the prime movers in regard to the petition presented by the Council. He wished to point out that the Municipal Council was the responsible local body, and the proper body to deal with a question of the character now under consideration. The movement which had led up to the Commissioners' proposals was initiated by a public meeting called by requisition; everything had been done in the most open manner, and he thought it was hardly right that the Council should be set aside by a minority of persons. He would be very glad to know the terms of the petition and the signatories to it.

Mr. Commissioner Fehon pointed out to the Mayor that the Commissioners had agreed to carry out this work at what they understood to be the request of the inhabitants. For railway purposes the work was not necessary. Before being finally decided upon the protest referred to had been received by the Commissioners; in face of that they could not possibly proceed, and they would not be disposed to do so unless the parties agreed as to what should be done.

[Mr. Commissioner Fehon read the petition and the signatures thereto.]

The Mayor stated that a large proportion (he should think three-fourths) of the signatories to that petition had also signed the previous petition, in response to which the Commissioners had proposed to carry out the work. He was obliged to the Commissioners for the interview, the object of which was that he might be in a position to report to the Council at their next meeting the nature of the petition that had been presented.

Papers.

Granville—Proposed Footbridge.

THE attached papers refer to an application made by the Granville Council for the erection of footbridge at the eastern end of the station, as it is thought that there is greater danger at Granville than any other suburban station, owing to the centre platform.

As it was reported that the provision of this bridge would be a great convenience in connection with the working of the traffic, a plan was prepared showing the work proposed to be undertaken, and which provided for the closing of the steps connecting the platforms with the existing overbridge at the southern end of the station, and also the closing of the entrance to the main building on the "up" platform, the estimated cost of this work being £655. A copy of this plan was also forwarded to the local Council for concurrence (Plan B). The Council replied that the arrangements as contemplated and shown on the plan had received their unanimous approval, and asked that the work should be put in hand at once.

A short time after this a petition was presented by Mr. J. Nobbs, M.P., from the residents of Granville, protesting against the erection of the overbridge, and stating that the convenience of the public would be best served under the present arrangements.

In view of the divided opinion on the subject the Commissioners have decided that the matter stand over, pending an agreement being arrived at by the parties interested.—J.V.B., 28/2/99.

Notes on Inspection of Suburban Lines, 25th July, 1899.

GRANVILLE.

THE Mayor and several Aldermen asked :—

That the proposed footbridge at Sydney end of platform might be proceeded with. They said the Council and a very large majority of the residents were quite satisfied with the proposed arrangement, and they hoped that the opposition of a comparatively few persons would not prevent its being carried out.

The Commissioners said they would look into the question again. Write to the Council and ask for formal confirmation of the statement above.—C.O., 29/7/99.

Sir,

31 July, 1899.

With reference to the interview between the members of your Council and the Railway Commissioners at Granville on the 25th instant, when a request was made that the proposed overhead footbridge at the Sydney end of the railway station might be proceeded with, I am directed to say that the delay, as you are aware, has been due to the difference of opinion expressed by considerable numbers of the residents as to the site for the bridge.

The Mayor, however, at the interview referred to, assured the Commissioners that the majority of the residents favoured the site shown on the plan already forwarded to your Council, to which, in fact, the Council has already signified approval.

In view, however, of the objections raised, the Commissioners will be glad if your Council will confirm the statement made by the Mayor at Granville, giving at the same time an assurance that the bridge, if erected in the position proposed, the steps from the existing overbridge, and the entrance to the main building on the "up" platform are also closed, the convenience of the residents generally will be met.

Upon receipt of this communication the matter will have further consideration.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Council Clerk, Granville.

Gentlemen,

Railway Parade, Granville, 31 July, 1899.

I beg respectfully to address you in contradiction of some statements made (according to the local Press reports) by a deputation that waited upon you at the Granville Railway Station, on Tuesday last, the 25th, re the proposed alterations at the station. The Mayor stated that, on a former occasion, when the project was on the point of being carried out, one very interested individual got up a petition against it, and got signatures to it to the number of forty. Well, gentlemen, I am the interested individual referred to. I presume you have the petition. If so, on referring to it, you will find that it was signed by the whole of the business people in the place with the exception of the few shops in South-street, where the new bridge is to be. I am prepared to give the name, address, and occupation, if required, of nearly the whole of the persons who signed it, to the number of 97, most of whom are weekly or season ticket holders or else pretty constant travellers, and I emphatically deny that any of them signed it under a *misapprehension*, as stated by the Mayor. The matter was explained to every person who signed it. It was only open for signature for two days, and after I had given it to Mr. Nobbs for presentation a good many persons called on me to add their signatures to it; and I am positive that a very large majority of the people of Granville are much better satisfied with the arrangements at the station as they are at present than they will be if the new arrangement is carried out.

I have, &c.,

J. PEGLER.

Gentlemen,

Granville Council Chambers, 5 August, 1899.

With reference to your letter of the 31st ultimo, I have the honor, by direction of the Borough Council of Granville, to inform you that the Council has by a unanimous vote of twelve Aldermen decided to confirm the statement made by the Mayor to you at Granville Station on the 25th instant; they are willing to have the steps at the overbridge removed, and the entrance to the main building on the "up" platform closed.

The Council trust that an early decision will be arrived at in this matter.

I have, &c.,

J. SCARBOROUGH,
Council Clerk.

The Railway Commissioners.

Appd., the only entrance to the station to be from the new bridge.—C.O., W.M.F., D.K., 8/8/99.

Sir,

18 August, 1899.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, intimating that the Council had approved by unanimous vote of the position for the proposed new overhead footbridge at the Granville Railway Station, namely, near the Sydney end of the platforms, and with steps of access to each of the three platforms, and also an approach from the northern side.

The steps now leading from the existing bridge at the western or Parramatta end of the station will be removed when the new bridge is erected, and the present entrance to the station on the "up" platform will also be closed. Thus the only entrance to the station will be from the new footbridge when the same is erected.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Council Clerk, Granville.

Sir,

18 August, 1899.

With reference to your communication of the 31st ultimo, respecting the proposed new footbridge at Granville, I enclose herewith, for your information, copy of the letter which has been forwarded to the Granville Council on the subject.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Mr. J. Pegler, Railway Parade, Granville.

Sir,

Granville, 21 August, 1899.

In reply to your letter of the 18th instant, enclosing copy of letter to the Council Clerk re proposed alteration at the Granville Railway Station, for which accept my thanks, I would respectfully point out that notwithstanding the note of the Council on the matter, that a large majority of the public of Granville are opposed to it, and if the Commissioners will allow the matter to stand over for a short time, before making their final decision, we will try to prove it to them by a further petition against it.

I have, &c.,

J. PEGLER.

Secretary, Railway Commissioners.

The matter cannot be further delayed.—C.O., D.K., 23/8/99.

Sir,

Sir, 23 August, 1899.
I have to acknowledge your letter of the 21st instant, relative to the proposed alterations at the Granville Railway Station.

I am directed to inform you that the matter has had further consideration, and it has been definitely decided that the alterations shall be made.

The Commissioners regret they cannot see their way to disturb the decision already arrived at.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Mr. J. Pegler, Railway Parade, Granville.

Overhead Footbridge, Granville.

On the attached papers the Commissioners have approved of the erection of this footbridge, as per plan marked "B," the estimated cost being £655. Those concerned have been advised accordingly. Please note, and forward papers to Engineer to carry out work. 21 August, 1899.

H. McLACHLAN,

Ch. Acct. Works No. 829, £655. Mr. Dean, additions Vote, 24/8. Order No. 4,078.—R. Bourke, 26/8/99.
Engineer-in-Chief Ex. Lines.

Gentlemen,

Good-street, Granville, 5 September, 1899.

I have been requested to enclose this brief explanation why the petition is being presented, after a report appearing in our local paper stating you have decided to proceed with the alteration at Granville Station.

In the first place, this petition was in operation before your ultimatum was published; also, we thought that you could not have been informed of the very strong feeling which exists here in opposition to the said alteration. The Granville residents are not opposed to improvements if the present conveniences are maintained, which, we think, will not be if the entrance now in use is closed, and the approach by an overhead bridge substituted.

The enclosed petition will convey a faint idea of how the matter is viewed here. Among the signatures you will find the names of many gentlemen whose judgment should, at least, meet with respect:—J. H. Goodlet, Esq. (who employs many men who arrive here by train), B. Short, Esq. (Director of the A.M.P. Society), L. Grimwood, Esq., the school-teachers and clergymen of the district, a few of the aldermen, and many others, who have given the subject much consideration.

Trusting, gentlemen, in the interest of the Railway Department, and the convenience of the Granville public, you will reconsider your decision,—

I am, &c.,
T. J. ANDREWS.

Railway Commissioners.

Dear Sir,

I beg to enclose herewith letter from Mr. T. J. Andrews, enclosing petition against proposed alterations to Railway Station, Granville. 6 September, 1899.

The Secretary for Railways.

I am, &c.,
JOHN NOBBS.

PETITION.

NOTWITHSTANDING the repeated vote of the Municipal Council in favour of the proposed alterations of the Railway Station, we, the undersigned residents and railway travellers of Granville, earnestly and respectfully protest against these alterations.

And we would further point out, gentlemen, that the convenience of the public is much better served under present arrangements.

We therefore consider it would be a waste of public money to make the alterations in question.

[Signed by 215 persons.]

Regret, as the work has been approved, no further alteration can be made.—W.M.F., D.K., 9/9/99.

Sir,

9 September, 1899.

I have to acknowledge petition presented by you, with your endorsement, relative to alterations proposed to be carried out at Granville Station.

I am directed to inform you that the matter has had very careful consideration at the hands of the Commissioners, but they cannot see any good reason why the work, which has been approved, should not be at once proceeded with; and they cannot, therefore, alter the decision which has already been given in the matter.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

J. Nobbs, Esq., M.P.

Overhead Footbridge at Granville.

On the attached papers the Commissioners approved of the erection of a footbridge at Granville, at an estimated cost of £655, but I regret to report that the work cannot be carried out for this amount. It has been usual to erect bridges of this character with condemned 80-lb. T rails, and it was anticipated that rails would be available for this particular work. The whole stock, however, has recently been used up for other urgent works, and it will now be necessary to build the bridge at Granville of ordinary angle and T irons. In addition to this, the bridge, as originally estimated for, was 14 ft. wide, but the traffic request that it should be made not less than 16 ft. wide. This, though probably necessary, adds slightly to the total cost, which will, owing to the different material to be adopted, now cost about £850.

I shall be glad if you will obtain the Commissioners' approval for this increased expenditure.

THOS. R. FIRTH.

Secretary.

Appd.—C.O., W.M.F., D.K., 11/10/99. Ch. Acct. Works No. 1,086, £195. Noted, 4,078.—R. Bourke, 14/10/99. Engn. in-Chief, Ex. Lines.

Dear Sir,

Granville, 22 May, 1900.

I have just been informed that it is the intention of your Department to close the main northern entrance on the "up" line of the Granville Station, on the completion of the bridge now in course of erection. If such is the case, I do ask, on behalf of a large number of the travelling public, that your Commissioners reconsider the matter, with a view to leaving this entrance open. I mentioned the matter at the time of the erection of such bridge being under consideration, and I was led to believe that such entrance would be left open, and the information now furnished causes considerable astonishment. I again strongly urge that my request be granted.

I am, &c.,
JOHN NOBBS.

Secretary, N.S.W. Railways.

5 June, 1900

In reply to yours of 26th ultimo, covering letter from Mr. J. Nobbs, M.P., I beg to report that if the application were conceded, viz., to allow the entrance to the "up" platform to remain as at present, the whole object of erecting the footbridge would be defeated.

I understand that the great majority of the residents are in favour of the bridge, but that the minority, under the leadership of Mr. Nobbs, object to the same.

Were the existing entrance to the "up" platform allowed to remain open, it would necessitate a booking clerk being retained to man that office, and porters to attend to the entrance, which would be a very costly arrangement.

J.P.

C. T. Manager.

Forwarded for the information of the Commissioners. I concur with Mr. Parry.—J.H., 7/6/00. Next tour.

Sir,

8 June, 1900.

With reference to your letter of the 22nd ultimo, relative to the entrance to the "up" platform at Granville, near the bridge now in course of erection, I am directed to inform you that the matter has had inquiry, and it is reported that it is undesirable to continue the entrance referred to.

Before, however, deciding the matter as to whether the entrance shall be closed, the Commissioners will look into it personally when next inspecting Granville Station.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,

Secretary.

John Nobbs, Esq., M.P.

Granville, 11 June, 1900.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, wherein you say that you are directed to state that it is undesirable to continue the northern entrance of the Granville Railway Station. I beg to state that the residents of Granville and the railway travellers have been treated most unjustly in this matter, notwithstanding the large petition having been sent to your Commissioners on the subject, and the continual protests before the construction of the bridge over the line was decided on, and I again ask that the matter will receive your Commissioners' earnest consideration, with a view to meeting the wishes of a very large number of railway travellers.

I am, &c.,

JOHN NOBBS.

Secretary, N.S.W. Railways.

New South Wales Government Railways.

EXTRACT from the minutes, Commissioners' Inspection of Lines—Main Suburban, 3rd July, 1900.

GRANVILLE.

Mr. Nobbs, M.P., with several residents—

1. Asked that the present entrance to station on "up" side, which was to be closed on completion of footbridge, be kept open. They said a large majority of the residents were in favour of this, and it would be a convenience to about 2,000 residents living on that side, including many season ticket holders.

The Commissioners pointed out that before the construction of the footbridge had been authorised they had been notified of a unanimous resolution of the twelve members of the Municipal Council agreeing to the closing of the access referred to; and it was only upon this condition that they had undertaken the expense of the footbridge, which amounted to about £1,000. If this opening were continued, it would involve a heavy annual cost for additional staff, which they could not approve. They must therefore hold to the arrangements as agreed upon, and decline the request.

Please note.—H. McLACHLAN (per J.P.), 13/7/00. C. T. Manager. Noted.—JNO. H., 14/7/00. Secretary.
Please note.—H. McLACHLAN (per J.V.B.), 17/7/00. E. E. Lines. Noted.—T. R. FIRTH, 18/7. Secretary.

1900.

—
 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
 NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
 PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLANS

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED

CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION

AND

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES, DEVONSHIRE-STREET.

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

Printed under No. 7 Report from Printing Committee, 2 August, 1900.

SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPELATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1900.

[1s. 9d.]

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

- *The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
 *The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 *The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

- *WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

[*On 14th June, 1900, The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, having accepted the office of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, retired from the position of Chairman, and a Member of the Committee. Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Vice-Chairman, was elected Chairman in the place of Mr. TRICKETT, and The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN was chosen as Vice-Chairman. On 4th July, The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM was elected to the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. TRICKETT.]

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PLANS.

Proposed station between Garden-road and Devonshire-street.
 Existing and proposed tramway connections with the Devonshire-street station site.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES,
DEVONSHIRE-STREET.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of erecting a Central Railway Station and Administrative Offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extending the railway system of the Colony thereto," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient that the proposed buildings should be erected, and the railway system extended thereto; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section IV, of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEME.

1. The official description of the scheme states that the station and approaches would occupy all the area bounded by Devonshire-street on the south, Belmore-road on the north, a line extending from Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road on the east, and Pitt-street on the west. Provision is made for eleven platforms, each 660 feet in length, and varying in width from 22 to 35 feet, with two and three roads between the platforms, and traversers at the ends, and for an assembly platform, 80 feet wide, the whole to be covered by a roof, 640 feet long and 395 feet wide, in two spans. The main station buildings, which would face the approach road off Belmore-road and have all the latest improvements, including Aspinall's patent over-head luggage carrier, would be of three storeys in height with attics, and are planned to accommodate the whole of the Railway Commissioners, and the Traffic Staff. The Traffic Offices would be on the west side in buildings two storeys in height, extending the whole length of the platforms, and on this side also suitable arrangements would be made for the interchange between the railway and electric tramway system.

It is proposed to close Devonshire-street to heavy traffic, and, in lieu of that street, to construct a new one, 75 feet wide, from the intersection of Devonshire-street and Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road. Belmore-road and Gipps-street would be widened, as would also the Pitt-street approach, a subway being made through to the platforms. Subways would be provided from Garden-road and Devonshire-street.

Devonshire-street, though closed to heavy traffic, would be open to light vehicles as well as cabs. The street must be lowered to admit of cabs passing into the station, but not to the extent necessary if it should be left open to all classes of traffic; and it will have to be bridged over the full width of the station, about 384 feet, the bridge covering commencing on the George-street side about 350 feet from the

the present steam tramway line. The main portion of vehicular traffic now using the street would be diverted to Gipps-street, Belmore-road, and the new street it is proposed to form between the intersection of Devonshire-street and Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road. Cabs passing into the station from Devonshire-street would, after setting down or taking up passengers and luggage, leave the station premises by way of Belmore-road.

The rails in the new station would be connected temporarily with those at the present Redfern Station platforms, and on the completion of the new station, the old roads at the present one would be removed and the yard and buildings remodelled.

The scheme also provides for extending six lines further into the city, if that should at any time be considered necessary, without interfering with the station buildings.

The office accommodation is similar to, but more extensive than, that provided for in the St. James' Road proposal. The scheme has been prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief in consultation with the Railway Commissioners and their officers.

ESTIMATED COST.

2. The estimated cost of the scheme is as follows:—

General Works	£138,000
Interlocking	15,000
Station Buildings and Administrative Offices	233,000
Lighting	5,000
Alterations to Redfern Station	30,000
	<hr/>
	£421,000
	<hr/>
Resumptions	£140,600

The somewhat large amount for general works is explained by the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction to be due to a difference of level of 35 feet between the rails in the Redfern yard and the corner of Pitt-street and Belmore-road, and to the consequent necessity for building up, at very great expense, the north-western corner of the site for the new station buildings, and providing a raised road approach. This extra expenditure, however, he points out, may prove a good investment, as underneath the raised roadway arrangements could be made for shops and stores, from which a good return, in the nature of rents, might be obtained.

The amount set down for resumptions, £140,600, is the value of the Benevolent Asylum, Christ Church Parsonage, the Police Barracks and residence, and the Female Refuge of the Good Samaritan. Except in the case of Christ Church Parsonage, no resumption of private land is involved.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

3. In reporting upon the scheme, the Railway Commissioners do not include in the estimated cost the amount for resumptions, but base their estimate of annual expenditure on the estimated cost of the works, £421,000. Interest on this amount, at 3 per cent., is £12,630, and the additional expenditure, representing cost of maintenance, and for traffic, locomotive, and other expenses being given as £1,830, the total annual cost connected with the scheme is £14,460. Including interest on the amount set down for resumptions it would be £18,678. A perfect terminal station, the Commissioners say, could be constructed on the site, and most desirable relief afforded to the existing Redfern Station; but while the scheme would be a convenience, so far as the railway working is concerned, commercially it would be of no advantage, and, in their opinion, it fails to meet the requirements of that portion of the public who desire that the railway should be extended into the city.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

4. As in the inquiry relating to the extension of the railway into the city of Sydney from Redfern to St. James' Road or to King-street, a considerable amount of evidence was taken respecting the Devonshire-street scheme, the only witnesses examined in the inquiry confined to the Devonshire-street proposal were the Engineer-in-Chief

Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, the Outdoor Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways (who, in all the inquiries connected with schemes for remedying the difficulties experienced at Redfern Station, has been the principal witness appearing on behalf of the Railway Commissioners), and the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners. The evidence of these three officers, together with that given in the City Railway Extension Inquiry, deals with the scheme comprehensively.

SUITABLENESS OF THE STATION FOR BOTH RAILWAY AND TRAM TRAFFIC.

5. The chief want at Redfern is more room. It is admitted by the expert witnesses examined that the area on the north side of Devonshire-street, consisting as it does of 22 acres 1 rood 20 perches, is ample for all requirements. The Railway Commissioners say it will provide a perfect terminal station, and will relieve the present Redfern Station of its difficulties. From the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction it will be seen that the accommodation provided is fully equal to both traffic and office requirements, and the outdoor traffic officer, who was a prominent witness in both this and the City Railway Extension Inquiry, says that, as far as the safe working of the traffic is concerned, the station would be almost perfect; passengers would be brought about a quarter of a mile nearer the city, and the tram system could be worked in connection with the station to almost any extent, separate platforms being arranged for the trams running down each street.

The traffic results up to the present from the George-street electric tram have, in the opinion of the Committee, materially changed the situation in regard to the city railway extension question. Very few railway passengers now travel by the Elizabeth-street steam trams. From statistics relating to the railway tram traffic, given in evidence, it appears that the average number of persons arriving at and departing from Redfern by train daily is 23,500, and that of these 13,000 are carried from and to the station by the electric trams, and 1,150 by the steam trams, the balance, 9,350, walking. Recently in the Legislative Assembly a letter from the Railway Commissioners was read, in which it was stated that the public will not travel by the steam trams, presumably because the latter do not go down George-street. The George-street tram alone will not be sufficient to deal with the railway traffic connected with a new station at Devonshire-street; but the suitability of the station site for other electric tram connections can be seen from a plan accompanying this Report.

In the large centres of the world electric traction is becoming increasingly popular as a means of dealing with concentrated traffic, and the system, the Committee consider, can be extended with great public advantage here.

The central position which the station at Devonshire-street would occupy renders it peculiarly suitable for the distribution of passenger traffic to the city and surrounding suburbs. For all parts of the city down to the harbour frontages ample provision in this respect could be made, and every suburb to which trams now run, or to which it is possible to construct them, could be served. As the station would have three frontages, and be approached on two levels, it would offer very special advantages for an extensive tram service, radiating in all directions where the wants of the travelling public require to be met. In this connection, attention should be drawn to the undesirableness of the Government parting with the site of the police station at the corner of Pitt and George streets, which has been advertised for sale. Immediately opposite this site would be an opening into the main approach to the railway station, and the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction emphasises the importance of having the police station site as a clear space through which traffic might pass.

ADVANTAGES IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEVONSHIRE-STREET SCHEME.

6. The views of the Committee with regard to the proposed construction of a terminal station, with administrative offices, on the north side of Devonshire-street are very fully explained in their Report upon the proposed extension of the Railway into the city of Sydney, and that Report should be read in conjunction with this.

The Committee are of opinion that a large terminal station, constructed on the site proposed in the Devonshire-street scheme, will meet all requirements.

Such a station as that proposed would have the following advantages :—

- (1.) It would meet every necessity in regard to the safe and expeditious working of the railway traffic.
- (2.) It would afford ample office accommodation for the Railway Commissioners and their staffs.
- (3.) Being in the centre of an area which comprises the city proper down to the harbour frontages, Pyrmont, Balmain, Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, Surry Hills, Paddington, Woollahra, Kensington, Randwick, Redfern, Waterloo, Alexandria, Chippendale, Camperdown, Darlington, Erskineville, Newtown, Ultimo, Forest Lodge, Glebe, and Glebe Point, it would be convenient to everyone within that area.
- (4.) It is so designed that an electric tram service could be carried on in conjunction with the railway, not only by way of George-street, but by way of Castlereagh-street, Pitt-street, Elizabeth-street, and if necessary, other streets, and also with the trams running to the eastern and western suburbs.
- (5.) It compares favourably with the St. James' Road and King-street schemes in regard to cost upon which no return is apparent from additional traffic or fares.

When submitting to the Legislative Assembly the motion referring the scheme to the Committee, it was described by the Honourable the Minister for Public Works as a basis for a city railway, but principally as a scheme to provide more room at the Redfern Railway Station, by extending it across Devonshire-street to Belmore or Garden Road, appropriating for that purpose the land occupied by the Benevolent Asylum, Christ Church Parsonage, the Female Refuge of the Good Samaritan, the tramway sheds, the Police Barracks, and the Devonshire-street cemeteries.

The Government, he stated, desired to lay before the House the necessity for at once carrying out the wishes of the late Chief Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Eddy. Time after time reports had been received from that expert in railway management, showing the extreme danger of attempting to carry on the business at the Redfern Station within its present narrow dimensions, and a warning was given, on more than one occasion, of the imminence of a very serious catastrophe, owing to the congested state of the traffic.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

7. The following is the Resolution passed by the Committee, as shown in the Minutes of Proceedings of 7th June, 1900 :—

“ Mr. McFarlane moved,—

‘ That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient that the proposed erection of a Central Railway Station and Administrative Offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and the extension of the railway system of the Colony thereto, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.’

“ Mr. Shepherd seconded the motion.

“ The motion was passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 5.

Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Dick,
Mr. Watson,
Mr. Leven,
Mr. McFarlane.

Noes, 2.

Mr. Trickett,
Dr. Garran.”

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 20 July, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES, DEVONSHIRE-STREET.

SATURDAY, 21 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.	

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of erecting a Central Railway Station and Administrative Offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extending the railway system of the Colony thereto.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Are you aware that by a resolution of the Legislative Assembly, dated the 7th December, 1899, it was referred to this Committee to consider and report upon the expediency of erecting a central railway station and administrative offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and of extending the railway system of the Colony thereto? Yes. H. Deane,
21 April, 1900.
2. Have you got a statement to make in reference to the proposal before this Committee? Yes; I have a statement from the Under Secretary for Public Works, which I will read.
3. That statement you are going to hand in on behalf of the Under Secretary, who is unable to be present? Yes. It is as follows:—

CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES ON THE NORTH SIDE OF DEVONSHIRE-STREET, AND EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEM OF THE COLONY THERETO.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly on 7th December, 1899, for the Committee's consideration in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of erecting a central railway station and administrative offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extending the railway system of the Colony thereto."

This scheme may, perhaps, be best presented to the Committee by means of the subjoined quotations from the speech delivered by the Honorable the Minister, Mr. O'Sullivan, when submitting the above motion of reference. On that occasion the Minister made, *inter alia*, the following remarks:—

"I now desire to bring down from the state of uncertainty in which the question has been for the last twenty years the great idea of bringing the railway into the city. It may be supposed, perhaps, by those who disapprove of this proposal, that it is only intended to leave the station where it is now proposed to erect it, and not to extend the railway further into the city. Let me tell honorable gentlemen that this is only the beginning of the work. If this proposal be carried and referred to the Public Works Committee, it will then become my duty in a day or two to submit to the House a proposal which will embody the extension of the city railway as far as King-street, and even beyond it.

"The Government desire to lay before the House the necessity for at once carrying out the wishes of the late Chief Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Eddy, by giving more room at the Redfern Railway Station. Time after time we had reports from that expert in railway management, showing us the extreme danger of attempting to carry on the business at the Redfern Railway Station within the present narrow dimensions, and we were warned on more than one occasion of the imminence of a very serious catastrophe, owing to the congested state of the traffic in the Redfern Railway Station."

"The Government propose now to start, as the basis of the city railway, by enlarging the present railway station at Redfern in such a manner as to take it across Devonshire-street, and as far down as what is known as Belmore or Garden road. It will include the Benevolent Asylum, the Christ Church Rectory, the Good Samaritan Convent, the present tram-sheds, and also the Devonshire-street Cemetery. It will take in the whole of that block facing Pitt-street, and go along Belmore or Garden road up to Elizabeth-street, including also the Police Barracks. All those buildings and grounds will be taken in, so that the site may be converted into a central railway station.

"I know that this proposal is not altogether approved by all Honorable Members; but the Government have thought it necessary to use it as a starting-point for bringing the railway into the city. It must be distinctly understood that this is only the basis of the city railway. When this resolution has been put through, it will be my duty to lay before the House a plan for bringing the railway down as far as King-street, where there will be a city station, and for taking it even further on in a manner which I hope, later on during the debate, to illustrate."

As the resolution moved by Mr. Secretary O'Sullivan to refer the proposal to the Committee was passed unanimously by the Legislative Assembly after lengthened debate, it may fairly be inferred that there exists a general consensus of opinion that a large and commodious central station is absolutely necessary, whether there is any extension of the railway into the city or not.

The proposal referred to in the Minister's above-quoted remarks, namely, to extend the railway into the city has, I understand, already been receiving consideration by the Committee.

H. Deane. The official description of the scheme now before the Committee is as follows:—

21 April, 1900.

THE extension proposed is from Devonshire-street to Belmore-road, and the station and approaches will occupy all the ground bounded by Devonshire-street on the south, Belmore-road on the north, a line extending from Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road on the east, and Pitt-street on the west.

Provision is made for eleven platforms, each 660 feet in length, and varying in width from 22 feet to 35 feet, with two and three roads between the platforms, and traversers at the ends. The assembly platform is 80 feet wide. The whole is covered with a roof 640 feet long and 395 feet wide, in two spans. Provision is made for extending six lines further into the city without interfering with the station buildings.

A cab-road, 25 feet wide, is provided inside the station for the convenience of the country traffic, with entrance from Devonshire-street, and exit by tunnel under station buildings to Belmore-road.

The main station buildings, which will face the approach road off Belmore-road, are proposed to be three storeys in height, with attics. They are planned to accommodate the whole of the Railway Commissioners' and traffic staffs, and, in addition to an entrance hall, the usual provisions for the general public, with all the latest improvements, are made.

Aspinall's patent carrier will be provided for the shifting of luggage.

On the west side are buildings two storeys in height, extending the whole length of the platforms, for traffic offices.

On this side also suitable arrangements will be made for the interchange between the railway and electric tramway system.

It is proposed to close Devonshire-street, except for a subway for foot passengers, and for an approach to cab-road into station. In lieu thereof a new street would be constructed, 75 feet wide, from the intersection of Devonshire-street and Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road; and Belmore-road and Gipps-street would be widened.

The Pitt-street approach will be widened to 70 feet, and a subway made from here to the platform. At end of building subways are also provided for from Garden-road to end platform in station.

The rails in new station will be connected temporarily with the rails at present platforms in Redfern Station, and when the new station is complete, and the traffic brought into it, the old roads in the present station will be shifted, and the old yard and buildings remodelled, so as to be more compact and convenient for working.

(Length, 17 chains.)

Estimated cost—	
General works	£138,000
Interlocking	15,000
Station buildings	233,000
Lighting	5,000
Alterations to Redfern Station	30,000
	<hr/>
	£421,000
Resumptions	£140,600

The following is the statutory report of the Railway Commissioners upon the proposal:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 25 November, 1899.

Proposal to erect a Central Railway Station and Administrative Office on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extend the Railway System of the Colony thereto.

COMPLYING with the request made by letter, dated the 24th instant, at the instance of the Secretary for Public Works, and in accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act of 1888," section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction (exclusive of land and compensation) at

£421,000

Annual cost—

Capital expenditure at 3 per cent.

£12,630

Cost of maintenance, and for traffic, locomotive, and other expenses.....

1,830

Total annual cost

£14,460

A perfect terminal station could be constructed on this site, and relief, which is most desirable, could be afforded to the existing Sydney station, but this scheme labours under the serious disadvantage that it does not provide an extension into the city, and, consequently, no additional convenience would be given to the public for which a charge could be made, thus leaving the interest on the capital cost a charge to be borne for all time by the general taxpayer. Further, if at any future time an extension into Sydney is made, the large expenditure now proposed would be to a very large extent wasted.

The latter contingency is one that must be borne in mind. Travellers by rail have long demanded a better means of transit than now exists from the present locality to the northern or business part of the city, and the scheme now proposed does not meet that demand.

With a large traffic, which must necessarily grow, it is impossible to deal with it satisfactorily by tramways, and in our opinion a new terminus, to fully meet the merits of the case, must be located in a position more convenient to the business portion of the city. This would enable revenue to be earned on the necessary expenditure, while it would avoid the delay and discomfort of changing to and from the trams, and free the city from congestion which must result if the city passengers have still to be brought into the city by the street transit.

The Devonshire-street scheme will be a convenience so far as the railway working is concerned, but, commercially, it would be of no advantage, nor would it meet the convenience of the public. We would, therefore, urge the reconsideration of the matter, with the view to a scheme being suggested which would more likely be financially a success and a greater benefit to the travelling public.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereto affixed, this twenty-fifth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, in the presence of,—

H. McLACHLAN.

CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

4. I suppose you are only prepared to give evidence as to the practical character of this scheme from an engineering point of view;—you do not propose to go into the traffic question? No.

5. Although this proposal has been talked about for a considerable time, is this not the first occasion on which plans and designs have been actually prepared? No; I worked out a plan some years ago for Mr. Eddy for a station on the site of the Benevolent Asylum.

6. About when was that? I think about the year 1893.

7. Was the subject gone into in detail then;—did you draw up a similar plan to that now submitted? No; it was merely a ground plan. There were no drawings prepared showing the elevation of the buildings that I can remember. I think an estimate was made at the time, which I will lay before the Committee. I remember that it was different from the present proposal in this respect: That the Railway Commissioners' offices were not to be provided for, Mr. Eddy being of opinion that the administrative offices should be in the city. It will be noticed that in the proposal now submitted, which is called No. 9 in that series, the Railway Commissioners' administrative offices are provided for. I had instructions to do that, therefore they have been included.

8. With regard to that proposal in 1893, do you remember whether it emanated from Mr. Eddy or whether it is a question of policy, and was suggested by a Minister? It emanated from Mr. Eddy, because he wished to have something ready and some other way of providing for a complete station if the Hyde Park scheme were not sanctioned. H. Deane.
21 April, 1900.
9. From that time up to the end of 1899 nothing further was done apparently in the direction of maturing that idea? No.
10. What apparently was generally kept before the public, and you might go so far as to say was favoured by Mr. Eddy, was the continuation of the railway into the city with a central station there? Yes; Mr. Eddy was always strong on that point.
11. I should like you to tell the Committee from whom you received instructions to prepare the plan now submitted? I was instructed by the Minister to prepare the plan.
12. Can you tell us when? I think it was in October or November last year.
13. You received instructions from whom? From the present Minister for Works.
14. To do what? To prepare a scheme for extending the railway over to the northern side of Devonshire-street, and providing means for carrying some of the lines on at a future date. This scheme differs from the one which I worked out for Mr. Eddy some years ago, inasmuch as the location of the station and offices is different. No. 9 scheme is arranged to carry the city lines on without interfering with the access to the station, and without altering their level in the station, whereas in the other scheme it meant the raising of a pair or two pairs of lines in the station so as to be able to get them right over the end of the approach.
15. Then it would seem that this proposal, No. 9, was somewhat hurried compared with the other schemes? I do not know whether that could be said exactly, because in working out this scheme we had the benefit of what had been worked out before, and a great deal that has been done in connection with this scheme was based on previous work.
16. What I mean is, that this seems a somewhat elaborate design to have been got ready in such a short space of time;—the plans which you got ready in 1893, though somewhat similar, could not have been similar in regard to the administrative portion? No; there was only a ground plan. As I explained, that entailed a good deal of trouble, getting all the public offices, the booking offices, and the station offices in position. Nothing was done in 1893 in the way of getting out elevations or cross-sections.
17. Were you guided in the plan of the buildings by any precedent? No; but the accommodation generally was on a par with what had been worked out for the St. James' Road scheme.
18. Did you consult the Commissioners before preparing that plan? Yes; I was constantly in communication with them and with Mr. Parry.
19. Then, in the first place, the design submitted contains ample accommodation for all administrative and official purposes in connection with the Railway Department, and was prepared after conference with the Railway Commissioners? Yes.
20. As regards the large covered-in space where the trains come in, is that supposed to be up-to-date in its character? Yes, quite.
21. Was that design, both externally and in regard to the railway arrangements, made after conference with the officers of the Department? Yes.
22. You consulted Mr. Parry in regard to the working of the train at the Devonshire-street railway station, and did you consult with the tramway authorities with regard to the tramway extension into the city? Yes. I think Mr. Kneeshaw was consulted; but the tramway connection was looked upon as one that required further working out in detail. The possibility of laying down the lines in convenient fashion was recognised; but the details would have to be further worked out. The way the lines are laid out on the plan shows how the railway trams can be brought in, and many modifications can be made, if thought necessary.
23. In 1893, when your conferences with Mr. Eddy took place, apparently there was only one line of tram communication suggested as a continuation into the city? Yes.
24. Owing to the increased traffic now, several lines are provided? Yes.
25. Is the proposed station at Devonshire-street so designed that the lines which might hereafter be brought into Sydney may be brought in with comparative ease—I mean would the levels be about the same as you would take if you were running it right into Sydney at the present time? Yes.
26. I suppose the end of the building would be so constructed that part of it could be taken out to allow trains to come through? No; it would be constructed as shown on the large plan. The building stops short of those lines which would have to be produced, so that there would be no interference, and the assembly platform is so much higher than Belmore-road that these lines can be carried across on a bridge and viaduct without interfering with the road traffic. In fact, the approach and departure from this station, booking offices, and so on are congregated in the north-west corner, instead of being in the middle of the front. In that respect the arrangement of the station differs very materially from the Hyde Park or King-street plan, but at the same time the accommodation is equal.
27. At the crossing at Devonshire-street slight difficulties are anticipated there with regard to the alterations of the levels, and so on;—will these same circumstances occur if you bring your line into the railway station at Devonshire-street? There will be some difficulty in connection with Devonshire-street; it would have to be lowered to admit of the cabs passing in; but not lowered to the same extent as if you left the street open to all classes of traffic, including teams, drays, &c.
28. Will the circumstances be exactly the same as would occur in the case of a railway coming right through into Sydney? No; the difference is this: In the case of a railway coming right through into Sydney, we only want to carry six lines over Devonshire-street. You only want to lower a portion of Devonshire-street; but if you have a terminal station on the northern side of Devonshire-street, it is most desirable that the whole or nearly the whole of that width should be covered over, or be capable of being covered over. That would necessitate a very serious lowering of Devonshire-street, if it is kept as a street for dray traffic. Therefore, in this proposal it is merely intended to lower it so much as will admit of cabs coming into the station, which, of course, as will be understood, is very much easier to do, and entails a great deal less work than the other method.
29. Could you tell us what width in Devonshire-street would be taken up by viaducts over the street for the purpose of trains crossing? About 384 feet.
30. And, coming close up to the present line of George-street, how far back from that? It would be about 350 feet from the present steam tramway line to the beginning of the bridge.
31. Do you think it would be necessary to have that as one continuous viaduct? I do. It might be made so as to let light through. That could easily be done. But it should not be left open. Prismatic glass could be used to admit light.

- H. Deane. 32. Would you have the same height over Devonshire-street by this proposal as you would by the George-street one? No. The lowering would be lessened by 3 or 4 feet.
- 21 April, 1900. 33. Especially at the George-street end, I suppose? Yes. It would be very much better in this proposal if the eastern end could be closed altogether, but perhaps that is scarcely possible; it would not be necessary to lower the whole width if it is only used as a cab approach.
34. When you get to the eastern end, by the burial ground, you would have to make a diversion by Devonshire-street? No. The main traffic would have to go round by Gipps-street, Belmore-road, and the new street.
35. Then, this present Devonshire-street traffic would be limited? It would be limited to cabs and other light vehicles.
36. Big loads of merchandise could not go that way? No, because there would not be headway enough. Piled up drays would have to go round.
37. Have you gone thoroughly into the detailed cost of this proposal as regards buildings and the construction of lines, and so on? Yes, fairly well. It is an expensive proposal, because there are a lot of building up at the northern end. If the ground were more level, much expense would be saved. At the same time I consider it necessary to push the end of the station as far forward as it is shown. By pushing it so far forward, you can build the new station quite independently of the present station, and make the connection quickly, so that the traffic can be transferred in an exceedingly rapid manner from one station to the other without inconvenience to the public. If you did anything else, the public would be excessively inconvenienced, and there would be very great difficulty in regard to alterations. The present Redfern station would eventually be abandoned, and the buildings and platforms removed.
38. That means, that you will repeat in connection, with this present proposal, your former objection to making extensive alterations to the present Redfern station as implying very serious inconvenience to the public? Yes. Redfern station cannot conveniently be altered. With a new site entirely the inconvenience would be minimised.
39. As regards the present design of the station buildings, could you indicate any modern improvements embodied in the proposal in regard to conveniences for the public? I think the most important introduction will be Aspinall's patent carriers, by means of which parcels and luggage can be carried overhead, and dropped on to the platforms for which they are intended, so that there will be a minimum of carts and trucks in use.
40. You mean passengers' luggage? Yes. It can be dealt with in that way. I cannot say to what extent this system will be used, but it will be largely used. The luggage carriers run on little rails overhead.
41. *Dr. Garran.*] Will they carry the luggage to the platform and drop it at the carriage where it is wanted? Yes.
42. *Chairman.*] Would that involve a different system of dealing with the luggage altogether? I do not think so. I should not like to say very much about it at present, but I know it is a great success; but as to details, I think it still remains to be seen to what extent it would be used. I am quite sure that eventually it will be very largely used, and that it will not only save the public and the railway staff a great deal of labour, but it will give a lot more room by clearing away porters' trucks.
43. Can you explain by the plan what the approaches will be for passengers to the station? Yes.
44. We want to see how the thing is going to be worked;—a man gets into a tram at King or Market street to go to the train, we want to see where he will be deposited? The foreground of the drawing is supposed to represent Pitt-street and Belmore-road. You are looking at the north-west corner of the building. Pitt-street contains two lines of tramways, which it is not proposed to remove. As you go along Pitt-street, up the grade there towards the old police station, you find an opening on to the main approach to the station.
45. That would be about opposite the old police station at the junction of Pitt and George streets? Yes.
46. That is where you turn off to the left? Yes.
47. *Dr. Garran.*] Is it on a level? It is practically on the level, but none of the ground there is actually level, but it would be an easy grade.
48. It is the present Pitt-street level? Yes. It might not be out of place in mentioning this entrance to point out how desirable it would be to have that space clear where the old police station was, and how undesirable it is for the Government to sell it. I believe it is advertised for sale.
49. *Chairman.*] In view of the possibility of this proposal being carried out, it would be very undesirable to sell the old police station at the junction of Pitt and George streets? Yes. There are also other considerations which I might refer to further on. I have referred to that opening in the wall. It is possible that there may not be gates there. Inside the wall is the approach to the station on an easy grade. Passengers will enter there, and proceed to the north-west corner of the station.
50. In an open space, or under cover? In an open space until they get to the station. In the north-western corner of the station, as stated, are situated the booking offices and waiting-rooms. From there passengers get on to the assembly platforms which are on the same level; from there they proceed to the various platforms.
51. With regard to this tramway connection entering the railway premises opposite the present George and Pitt streets' junction, you mentioned a tram coming up Pitt-street, would trams from George-street also enter there? I did not say that trams from Pitt-street would enter there. I mentioned trams from Pitt-street as being left. My object in mentioning that is to show that it does not interfere with the level of Pitt-street. Passengers arriving by cab or on foot would find the booking offices at the north-west corner of the station. Then they would go on to the assembly platform, and get their trains. In the same way passengers arriving by rail would pass on to the assembly platform, and would find an outlet 30 feet wide near the north-west corner by which they could depart on foot or by cab, and they could take a tram if they wish. I will now deal with the road on the north side of the station. The road at the northern end of the station drops down to the Belmore road with a grade of partly 1 in 18, and partly 1 in 20, which is not an objectionable grade for the city of Sydney, and so pass under at the eastern end any future railway extension into the city. I need not, perhaps, go much into details with regard to buildings. The accommodation for the public will be, although somewhat differently arranged, equal to what is provided in the St. James' Road scheme and the King-street scheme. On the upper floors will be situated the Railway Commissioners' administrative offices. I propose now to deal with the tramways.
- Alterations

Alterations in the tramways are shown coloured green on the plan. I have not shown all the connections that it will be possible to make, but after I have described what is shown on the plan, I will further indicate what can be done. I have shown that the lines leaving George-street pass along Gipps-street—the left-hand route passing to the right, and under the road, approach to the station—ascends a grade, and comes out on the western front of the station near pavement level. There it will be seen that a space is marked “tram platform.” The level of this can be that of the pavement, or it can be raised above it as may be considered most suitable. Passengers can take or leave their trams here. Sufficient roads are shown near Devonshire-street where tram-cars can be stationed, so as to be able to provide a number of cars in case of a rush. These lines at the tram platforms can be duplicated if required. There is a sufficient space to provide everything that is wanted. These lines afterwards connect with the left line going towards Circular Quay along George-street. The other line, shown in green on the plan, along Gipp-street and Belmore road, I have continued along the new street to Castlereagh-street. I propose to make the tram line along the new street to serve for the main Botany tram line, if it is considered desirable. The existing tram lines along Elizabeth-street can be diverted at the northern corner of Belmore Park, brought across in a direct line, and carried along the new street. As regards the connection that may be wanted with Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street, I think it is clear that the Castlereagh-street tram can be brought and junctioned with the present line, and so can a line in Pitt-street, and from some point at the corner of Pitt-street and Gipps-street, or Pitt-street and Belmore-road, which is the same thing; they can be brought into the side of the railway station in the same manner as the other lines. There is no reason why other pairs of lines should not connect with the different streets if required. It could also be arranged, as has been suggested, to have a tram station at the lower level under the station—I suppose steps could be provided for access. It will be seen on this same plan that I have shown an exit for foot passengers by means of a ramp to get on the Pitt-street level. The same ramp might be used to give access to a tram platform on a lower level. Of course, what is actually shown on the plan is merely a connection for the railway and Circular Quay trams. Only one line is necessary for that, because the trams are always going in the same direction, proceeding southward, and turning round and coming on the loop. Whatever additional tram-lines were brought into connection with the station the traffic would be run in the same direction; there would be no necessity to reverse it. A connection to the western tramways can, of course, be made as I have shown—by means of a reverse curve, at the southern end, there is thus a double connection made there for trams, and they can go either north or south, as required.

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52. *Dr. Garran.*] Could you bring the ordinary suburban tram lines from Glebe, Forest Lodge, and so forth, into that station and out again? Yes; the connection would be by Gipps-street. There may be various ways of doing it, but the simplest way would be to run round in one direction.

53. It could be done? Yes. I have not described the cab entrance. Devonshire-street would be lowered to such an extent as would admit of cabs entering. I have shown the whole width of Devonshire-street lowered, but I do not think it would be necessary. A narrow width would be sufficient, seeing that the traffic would be so restricted. A cab, after passing along Devonshire-street, under the first bridge and the first two lines, would turn sharp to the left into the station, and would rise on a grade of 1 in 10. They would be empty cabs at that time.

54. The cab road to the station would be of a sufficient length to provide for the convenience of the public? I think about 300 feet. The width would be 25 feet. Then they would drop down and pass underneath in front of the station building, and come out on the level of Belmore-road, as shown on the perspective drawing. They go in at Devonshire-street, rise up to the level of the station, stand in the station, take up passengers and luggage, then come down on a ramp to a point in Belmore-road.

55. *Mr. Dick.*] In designing the system of subsidiary trams, did you consider the question of devoting the proposed Pitt-street tram entirely to railway purposes? It could readily be done if required. I will show how: assuming there are tram lines along Pitt-street, when you get to the end of Pitt-street, where Gipps-street abuts on to it, you continue it right on underneath the front wall of the station up to the tramway platform, and at the end you turn round and come back again, and enter on the old road in Pitt-street, and that would be just as easy to make as any other connection. If you came in from Castlereagh-street all you have to do is to make a similar connection with Castlereagh-street and the thing is done.

56. Taking the busy hours in the morning, when there is a very large number of people coming in who want to get to their destination in as short a time as possible, how would you distribute them, seeing that some would want to go down George-street, some down Elizabeth-street, and some along other streets? They would get into their own particular cars, which would be standing there, and they would be distributed on the various lines. If one line is not sufficient you might have more.

57. Otherwise it would be no improvement on the present system, would it, if you only had one line to make the distribution;—you would have the same delay that takes place now in getting the people away? Yes; in my opinion the best way is to run the railway into the city.

58. But failing that, you think measures could be taken to get the people more speedily away from the railway station to their places of business than is done now? I should say that the best attention would be given to secure that end.

59. In the early part of your evidence to-day you made a statement concerning the comparative ease with which the old station could be remodelled after the new one was built;—why would it be more easy to remodel the old station when the new station is built than it would be to do it now? I do not think I made myself clear. What I say is this: That having built the new station, and got everything complete, the connection could be made with the particular road shown on the plan very quickly. Then the old station would be abandoned, the buildings pulled down, and the platforms removed. The ground would be cleared, so that the lines could be drawn in closer together, and any further connections made that are required. That is a very small matter compared with the alteration of the yard as it exists at present, with all its complications of roads and connections.

60. Would the increased length you would have under that system from the tunnel to the end of the station lead to greater ease in back-shunting the trains from the station? Yes.

61. The element of danger would be eliminated? Yes; it would be eliminated altogether.

62. Then, if that were so, would it not be reasonable, seeing that that element of danger which now exists would be entirely eliminated, to make some small charge on the travelling public, as it is practically a cheap insurance for them? That is a matter for the Railway Commissioners. I scarcely think so.

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63. You said you did not think any charge could be made for the extra convenience? That is the Railway Commissioners' report. I do not think it could myself. On that point I would recommend you to ask the representative of the Railway Commissioners.
64. We had one witness before us a short time ago who took a serious objection to one point in that plan;—you will notice the steps on to the main assembly platform on the northern end? Yes.
65. That would not be very largely used, would it? No.
66. The other means of access would be largely used? Yes. I should like to point out with regard to this station that it is on exactly the same level as the present Redfern station, and it is just as easy to get to this station as it is to get to the Redfern station; in fact, it would be much easier, because you would not, in order to get into this station, have to cross a number of tramways and roads that have to be crossed now.
67. People coming in at the north-eastern corner would have a far higher climb than they have at the present Redfern station, would they not? If they are at Belmore-road now they have a climb to get to the Redfern station just the same.
68. Is it absolutely impossible, or very difficult, with the site as it is at present, to have the main assembly platform on the same level as the ordinary train platform? In this scheme it is on the same level. In No. 10 scheme the station at King-street is arranged so as to have the assembly platform on a higher level.
69. On how many sides of the proposed station can people approach the main assembly platform without using steps? They can approach it from all sides without using steps. Passengers coming in from the southern side are on a level with the station; passengers from the western side are the same as they are now; passengers on the northern side can get to it in the same way, by a ramp; it is the same on the Pitt-street side. I have a subway shown with a ramp. Suppose people had been shopping at Hordern's, and wanted to go by train. At present they have to walk across to the Redfern station, and they have to mount to the same height. The advantage of this station is that they are very much closer.
70. In the station yard they are not compelled to cross the cab-roads or tram-lines? No.
71. I suppose you have never been asked to provide plans for a main station there without the administrative buildings, have you? No. I made an estimate, as I mentioned a little time ago, for the other scheme that I worked out for Mr. Eddy about seven years ago. I worked out an estimate without the administrative offices; but that estimate would have to be revised. That scheme came to about £350,000.
72. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I think the Commissioners' chief objection to this scheme is that no additional revenue will be derived from it? That is one objection, and the other is that it does not serve the public in the same way as No. 10 does.
73. Another objection also is that by the construction of the offices it would take the staff from proximity to the Ministerial head of the Department, is it not? Of course the administrative offices could be left out, if the Committee desired to recommend it. What the Railway Commissioners would certainly like would be to have all the offices and the station staff at the same point, if they can be brought to a convenient point on a site like King-street.
74. Another advantage of this scheme would be that it would relieve the Redfern Station of its present congested condition? Yes; it would get rid of those difficulties and risks. It would provide a station which would be very much more convenient for the public, and would allow of a vast development of traffic in future.
75. Would it not also facilitate the extension of the tram traffic—facilitate its divergence into other streets? The tram connections would be more convenient than they are at the present station, no doubt.
76. I see that the cost of the station buildings is the largest item? Yes.
77. Do you think it would be absolutely necessary to construct these elaborate buildings on the site? You want a large building to accommodate the whole of the railway staff. There is nothing very much in the way of ornament on the plan at present. It has not exactly a cheap front, but at the same time it is not extravagant. The tower might be left out; but I do not think that would come to a very large amount by itself. As to the roof over the station, that is considered to be a necessity in modern stations, and it would be a mean thing not to have one big roof over the station instead of, as has been suggested, having mere covers over the platforms.
78. In the event of these buildings being constructed, so as to accommodate the whole staff, it would relieve a considerable portion of the Public Works Office? Yes; if the Railway Commissioners were induced to move down there; but I am very doubtful whether they would decide to do so. Mr. Eddy, I know, was opposed to it. I do not know whether the present Railway Commissioners have given any opinion on the subject, except in a very general way.
79. In that case, in the event of their objecting to move, could not the estimate for that building be considerably reduced? Yes; very much.
80. So that there would be a saving in regard to that? Yes.
81. There is £140,600 for resumptions;—what resumptions are they? It is the value of the Benevolent Asylum, the Christ Church parsonage, the Police Barracks and a residence, and the Female Refuge of the Good Samaritan.
82. With the exception of the Convent, all that is Government property, is it not? Yes. I have here the book of reference, which I put in. There is a Friends' Meeting House on the site—that is on part of the cemetery. The cemetery and Benevolent Asylum are Crown property. The Christ Church parsonage is in the hands of trustees, and is virtually private property. The cottage and grounds in connection with the Police Barracks are Crown property, and also the Police Barracks. The Convent of the Good Samaritan is in the hands of trustees. The tramway yards and sheds are in the hands of the Railway Commissioners.
83. Another advantage of this scheme would be the providing of a large and perfectly safe station? Yes.
84. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I see that the estimated cost of the railway buildings is £233,000;—does that include platforms? No; the platforms are included in general works. The item for general works is £138,000, and these include platforms, rails, retaining-walls, and road approaches. Buildings would include the buildings shown, and the roof over the station.
85. What is the estimated cost of the terminal station buildings in King-street? I will look that up—I think it is about £200,000.
86. That is a less amount? Yes.

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87. You stated that the cause of the difference was on account of the site? Yes.
88. Is there any other particular difference between the two buildings? No; generally speaking, the conditions are exactly the same. The roof of this building would be more costly, because it would be wider. It would have to be wider, because there are more roads, and the cab approach in addition.
89. Did the Railway Commissioners point out that an additional disadvantage in connection with the new station was that it would not be revenue-producing? Yes.
90. Does not that largely hold good with regard to all these Government buildings, especially when they are the head-quarters of any Department, say, for instance, the Public Works Office—or the General Post Office—the taxpayers have to pay for them;—do you think it would be fair, therefore, to charge this extension with this extra cost? It would seem to be a fair capital charge.
91. A general charge? Yes.
92. It is anticipated that some revenue will be obtained by letting shops underneath the building? Yes, along Belmore-road and Pitt-street.
93. Has any estimate been made as to how much that would produce? No.
94. Would it be any large amount? It would be very difficult for me to say.
95. What area will be available for shops? Mr. Sievers might make an estimate.
96. *Dr. Garran.*] Amid all our distracting variety of plans, there is one thing absolutely certain, I suppose, and that is that the present station must be abandoned? Yes, as a terminus.
97. It cannot be kept on as it is? I do not think there is a doubt about that.
98. Then the alternative is this: We must adopt the Benevolent Asylum scheme, or one or other of the schemes for running into Sydney? Yes.
99. The charm of this scheme is that we really have ground there on which to make a first-class station? There is no doubt about that.
100. A permanent station that will do for all time? Yes. There is no other competing site—without making wholesale purchases that will do instead, unless a portion of Hyde Park be taken.
101. But one disadvantage is that this is not a good radiating site for tram routes going away from the station? I think that difficulty could be got over. The trams could be arranged to radiate to all parts of Sydney.
102. Should we not have to make some new streets? I think that ought to be done.
103. But the St. James' Road site is a better radiating site? Yes.
104. Even Liverpool-street would be? Yes.
105. It is a drawback to this Benevolent Asylum site that it is not central to the present passenger traffic? Yes.
106. Well, even if we go to St. James' Road to meet present requirements, might it not happen years hence that we should still want the Benevolent Asylum area for station purposes? I do not see for what purpose. I think the Benevolent Asylum area would come in very usefully for storage sidings and carriage sheds. I certainly think that the block on which the Benevolent Asylum stands is one that should be reserved for all time by the Government. No portion of it should be cut up for sale.
107. The Government should not let that land pass into private ownership? No.
108. You said that going on to Belmore-road would not give additional revenue? That is what the Railway Commissioners state.
109. Apart from the point raised by Mr. Dick, that the increase of the safety of the travelling public would be worth something, still would you not be getting revenue from the enlarged tram service? Yes. Of course, the tram service, if it could be efficiently arranged, would go on increasing in productiveness.
110. Suppose you had a station there, and four lines of tramway running down four important streets, they would all be paying trams then? Yes.
111. You would get a return then? Yes.
112. You might not get a penny from a railway line, but you would be getting it from a tram line? Yes. Provided the number of passengers travelling were the same, and the charge were the same, you would get the same revenue whether it was a railway or a tramway.
113. And the people would certainly be put down pretty close to their shops and offices? Yes; that is so.
114. The trouble is that they would have to make the change? Yes.
115. That is the real difficulty in the way of a station at the Benevolent Asylum? That is one difficulty. The other difficulty is that the tramways down the streets may not eventually be able to take all the traffic, unless they are relieved of the railway traffic.
116. Do you think that, if we had four lines, there would be any danger of a blockage? George-street, Pitt-street, Castlerough-street, and Elizabeth-street.
117. And Kent-street? I do not think Kent-street would help you much; you would have to branch off from George-street.
118. But it takes the western side of the city? It may be a convenient thing to do, and probably will come in some day; but it will not relieve the southern end of George-street.
119. Looking at it in this way: Granting the inconvenience to the western passengers having to shift, is it not fair for us to set against that the enormous increase in the convenience of putting people down close to where they want to go—I am setting one disadvantage against another? I think I would rather walk a little distance to get to a railway station, if I were living in a suburb, because when you go by train you know exactly the time when the train will start. If I take a tram, which may be very much nearer to me, in order to reach the station from which the train starts, I shall have to take a certain amount of risk. I should have to allow a considerable margin of time, over and above what is actually required in transit.
120. You have to make an allowance? Yes; with a view to the possibility of the tram being a little late.
121. People coming in would not lose much time, because there would be trams waiting for them for every street; but in going back they cannot be quite sure that if they get into the tram they will arrive at the station exactly in time for the train? No; they cannot go on with their work until the last minute.
122. A man in Sussex-street would know to ten seconds how long it would take him to walk to St. James' Road, and that if he leaves his office at a certain time he will catch his train; but if he gets into a tram in George-street he does not know whether he will arrive at Redfern in time? No; there may be a block and consequent delay.

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123. I see all that, but what weighs in my mind is that you and nearly every other witness has said that if you bring the railway into the city you cannot put every man down at his own door; you accommodate a certain section, but I set against that the greater accommodation to the greater number;—is not the accommodation given to the greater number more important than the matter of compelling everybody to shift? Yes.

124. We have two alternatives before us—the question is which is the better? Yes.

125. *Chairman.*] Do I understand that you agree with all that Dr. Garran is saying? No; I only say that I understand it.

126. *Dr. Garran.*] We have these two alternatives;—I want you to say, if you can, which is the greater evil or the greater benefit? It appears to me that there is a good deal to be said one way or the other. As I said, I believe that a great many—nearly everyone—would rather walk to a station in the city and take a train, even if they had an extra distance to walk, than go by tram to Redfern. But there is that other point to be considered which weighs much more to my mind and makes the one alternative—namely, the carrying of the railway into the city—so much stronger, and that is that the street tramways will not in a few years be able to carry the railway traffic in addition to their own.

127. Then we shall have to bring the railway into Sydney? Then, if you do that, after having made a big station on the Benevolent Asylum grounds, you will find a great sum of money has been wasted.

128. You would not make another big station? No. But you have spent a lot of money which will have been thrown away.

129. You would not make another administrative office? No. But you would have to bring all your trains in practically.

130. And might we not at that time make a circular line and have no big station at Sydney at all? If it would answer the purpose; but that is very doubtful, and the expenses at the big station will still have been thrown away.

131. We all understand the people living within one-eighth of a mile of St. James' Road would be best suited by a railway there? One-eighth of a mile—I do not agree with you there. You will remember what Dr. Norton said, and he is not a young man. He told us that he would use the St. James' Road or King-street station in preference to the tram, and his office is at the further end of O'Connell-street, and he said that although he is very much opposed to the appropriation of any portion of Hyde Park for railway purposes. The evidence of a man like Dr. Norton in that respect is very valuable indeed.

132. Say one-quarter of a mile? I think it is more than a quarter of a mile.

133. If the tramways were multiplied to answer the purpose we could save Hyde Park, and get our central station on a magnificent site? Yes; but I am sure that it would not answer the purpose.

134. If this new station costs £561,000, shall we not have to add the cost of two lines of trams? Yes, at the very least, I suppose.

135. Then your estimate is about £80,000 each for them, and that would be another £160,000 to be added to the cost? Yes.

136. And we should be entitled to take the income from the trams towards the interest on the debt? Yes. Still you do not get over the difficulty that I have mentioned—that in a few years time the trams will not be able to carry the traffic. Then you have to lump the whole expenditure that you have made up to the present time—that of the Benevolent Asylum station, these two lines of trams, and the further extension into the city—whereas you can now leave out the Benevolent Asylum station and simply have an extension into the city, and put a good-sized station there.

137. The St. James' Road scheme, if carried out, would not compel us to build a new Benevolent Asylum? No, it would not.

138. Your line into St. James' Road would not bring the parsonage down? No.

139. And it would leave a good deal of the barracks? We should damage the barracks; but we should leave enough land to have them restored.

140. So that it saves a good deal of destruction? It does; and I should like to point out that although the value of these lands and buildings has been put down at a certain amount, that amount does not represent the cost that would be incurred to provide for rebuilding. If the Benevolent Asylum ground is taken a new asylum will have to be built at a great expenditure.

141. I only want to balance the pros. and cons. of each scheme? That should not be forgotten in balancing the pros. and cons.

TUESDAY, 24 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of erecting a Central Railway Station and Administrative Offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extending the railway system of the Colony thereto.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

H. Deane.
24 April, 1900.

142. *Chairman.*] You were to give the Committee the date of the former proposal with regard to a railway station on the Benevolent Asylum site? Yes; I was under the impression that the plans were prepared in 1893, but I find that it was before then. I have the original plan. It was finished in April, 1890, and is the proposal that was submitted to the Royal Commission in 1890, and marked "M." Later on, in 1896, I prepared a reduction to a scale of 80 feet to an inch, with one or two slight alterations, one of which was to allow of a tramway—electric or cable—to come in in a slightly different manner. I find that on this map there is a note made as to the lines of rails entering the station, that "the roads are incorrect; design to be worked out." I was asked particularly by the Railway Commissioners at the time that if anybody became possessed of the plan they should understand that those roads were simply just sketched in. I would refer the Committee to page 104 of the evidence accompanying the Report of

of the Royal Commission on the city and suburban railway, 1890. I mention there the Benevolent Asylum scheme marked "M," and my estimate of the work for that scheme I find was £501,000; the estimate for the scheme before the Committee is £421,000.

H. Deane,
24 April, 1900.

143. *Mr. Watson.*] That is without resumptons? Yes.

144. *Chairman.*] That "M" scheme proposed the erection of large buildings on the Benevolent Asylum site, and also to work a couple of lines towards Hyde Park? The latter provision was not included in the estimate of the cost.

145. But it was included as part of the scheme for the extension of the railway to Devonshire-street? Yes.

146. Still recognising the necessity for bringing the people into the city of Sydney? I also stated that any extension of the kind must carry the mass of the suburban traffic to a large central station at Hyde Park—that would be a necessity. That tallies with the opinion I expressed the other day—that if this scheme were carried out, and a line afterwards carried on into the city, a lot of this large expenditure would be thrown away.

147. Because the large suburban traffic necessitates a large accommodation at the terminal station? Yes; the suburban traffic being the bulk of the traffic.

148. *Dr. Garran.*] According to the official document read to us, this Garden-road scheme for a terminus was put before Parliament before the extension into the city, and as part of the whole scheme? It was so as regards No. 9 and No. 10 schemes.

149. I understand that Mr. O'Sullivan proposed first to make a new station at Belmore-road; then he said, "That is not the whole; I am going further to make a road into Sydney";—suppose we make the Garden-road station first, with all these administrative buildings, should we want to duplicate those buildings when we go to St. James' Road? No.

150. We should only want what would just serve for that station? That is all.

151. Then the Commissioners would have their offices at Garden-road? They would not like it; but it would be so according to that scheme.

152. It was arranged in order to meet their views to have the administrative offices at Hyde Park? I would suggest that the Committee should ask the Commissioners distinctly on that point.

153. Mr. Oliver said that he would rather have the offices in town, but that he would rather go to Redfern than not be with his officials, because otherwise the staff would be far removed from him, and it is inconvenient to have a mile between them;—would that be your view? I should not like to express any opinion after what Mr. Oliver has said, as he understands the matter so much better than I do.

154. In your own opinion, if we make a station for Hyde Park with administrative buildings there, shall we want a large station or administrative buildings at Garden-road for a long term of years? No; if you had administrative offices at Hyde Park you would not want them at Garden-road.

155. The approach by tram-line on this plan of 1890 does not apparently contemplate anything more than the George-street, Pitt-street, and Elizabeth-street trams? No.

156. And if we want to have a fourth street tram we shall have to make additional arrangements? Yes; in connection with that it may be interesting to the Committee to know that it was proposed to carry a railway tram along Pitt-street. In this particular plan that is not shown.

157. This plan belongs to the 1890 system, and, as the scheme is put before us, it is up to date;—are the tram arrangements made out as fully up to date in that plan as in this? No; with regard to the tram-lines, they are simply the George-street line and the existing system, but it was contemplated at that time that there might be a tramway along Pitt-street, and one of the sketches shows a tramway along Pitt-street.

158. Then really and truly in the new plan before us we have not got anything so complete in detail as was put before the Committee in 1891? The offices are an addition.

159. With regard to tram-lines, I mean? Yes; you have quite as much as you had in 1890; but the details of the offices have not been worked out. But as the area required for all these offices, public accommodation, and administration office is perfectly well known, it can be taken for granted that they can be located, provided that the space given is sufficient. The working out of these offices for public convenience and administration is a matter requiring very careful consideration, and one which, therefore, cannot be hurried over, and it is just as well to leave it, because if it were worked out too hurriedly something might be put on the plan which would be misleading.

160. What I want you to understand is that this scheme for the new station at Belmore-road is put before us for acceptance or rejection;—therefore we ought to have the plan in all its fulness put before us? Well, as regards the accommodation provided, I would say that it would be at least equal to that of the King-street scheme, and if the Committee require it I can submit that and state generally what the accommodation consists of.

161. On this plan there are a certain number of offices—on two sides as well as on the front so that two—sides of this station are surrounded with offices? Yes.

162. They are not altogether in a compact form? No. I think that, probably, the newer station is the better one in that respect.

163. Would the new station at Belmore-road get rid of these offices on the two sides? We should only require offices at the end of the building and on one side.

164. *Chairman.*] Looking at the matter in all its bearings, you still are of opinion that the railway should come into Sydney? Yes.

165. *Mr. Watson.*] The station buildings I see under this scheme are estimated to cost £233,000? Yes.

166. The station buildings for the Hyde Park or the St. James' Road scheme are estimated to cost £200,000;—thus there is an increase of £33,000 for this Belmore-road station? Yes.

167. Can you say how the difference arises? It is chiefly due to the foundations of the building, the height of which you have to build up.

168. Had you in the Hyde Park case a lot of excavation? Yes; that is part of the general works.

169. It would add to the cost in the same way? No; the excavation would go into the general works. To correspond you have retaining walls in the present scheme right round the outside.

170. Do you purpose providing only the same accommodation, as far as buildings are concerned, at Devonshire-street as you propose at St. James' Road, or is it increased? It is about the same; just the accommodation that would be necessary for a terminal station.

- H. Deane.
24 April, 1900.
171. I want to know whether there is any difference in your ideas of to-day as compared with your ideas of three years ago? No, these estimates were made at about the same time.
172. Is it anticipated that you will get anything out of what appear to be shops at the St. James' Road station? I have not made any estimate of the revenue that would be obtained, but those shops would be revenue producing.
173. If the inner peculiarities of the site necessitate a further expenditure of £30,000, you would require to get a little revenue from the shops to make this as good a site financially as the St. James' site? Perhaps the shops might pay for it, I think they would.
174. Is that the only large item that you recollect in which there is a difference? Yes, that is about the only one.
175. Did each scheme contemplate alterations at a cost of £30,000 to the existing Redfern station? No; that amount as in the case of the Hyde Park scheme was only £20,000. The reason for the extra amount here being that the alterations would be of a more expensive character.
176. There does not seem to be any apparent reason for that? The reason is this: In the Hyde Park scheme you would simply carry the roads right through and leave them there, and there would be some other expenditure in connection with that for shelter sheds and so on; but in this scheme the old station will be abolished, there will be the cost of doing that and drawing in the lines, which, of course, means extra expense.
177. You retain none of the platforms of the existing station then? No, not in this scheme. For the convenience of working you want to draw the lines in, so as to have the connection as close to the station as possible.
178. In connection with this scheme, I understand, it is proposed to close Devonshire-street? Yes, for all except the cab and foot passenger traffic.
179. But under the Hyde Park scheme it is proposed to leave that street open and to lower it? Yes.
180. Is there any other way of arranging the cab traffic so as to obviate the necessity for that embankment near George and Devonshire streets;—could you so arrange your cab traffic as to obviate the necessity for that retaining-wall, and allow the tram-line to be taken more westerly? The northerly retaining-wall might be straightened up.
181. It seems rather an inconvenient way at present for reaching the western suburbs, the trams going round those two curves? If you straightened that line you would not get the use of the loops.
182. Is it proposed to only have one line of rails to the station for trams? Only one; the trams will come in at one end and go out at the other; but, as I said the other day, if that accommodation is not sufficient it would be the easiest possible thing to add another line or work underneath the station.
183. You would have room on the western side of the station to permit of an additional tram-line being put in, would you not? Yes; there would be no difficulty about doing that. There is no reason why the tram accommodation should not be increased two or three fold if necessary.
184. *Dr. Garran.*] If we make the railway extension to Hyde Park you must in any case cross Devonshire-street and run through the Benevolent Asylum site? Yes.
185. And that would cost a certain sum of money;—would it cost very much more to make your wayside platform there, and so shift from the present Redfern site on to the new site, and make it north instead of south of Devonshire-street;—looking to the future we could add to the new station as we want, but we cannot add to the Redfern Station as we want? You would, of course, interfere with the Benevolent Asylum.
186. Yes? I do not think the cost should be very serious; I could not tell you right off, but I should think it would be covered by about £10,000 or £15,000.
187. Can you give us a rough estimate of what it would cost to make a wayside station north of Devonshire-street instead of south of that street? I will do so.

John Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Parry.
24 April, 1900.
188. *Chairman.*] You have already been examined at great length in connection with the proposal to extend the railway from Redfern into the city of Sydney? Yes.
189. I suppose that you do not desire to in any way alter the evidence which you then gave? No.
190. *Mr. Dick.*] You have had an opportunity of looking into this new plan for a station at Devonshire-street? Yes.
191. Apart from your already-expressed views, are there any objections against this scheme that you would like to offer—general objections, not detailed ones? Treating it as a part of the city railway of the future.
192. That is the view I wish to take—whether you would object to it if it was considered part of a scheme that would involve further extension later on? If it is to be considered a semi-terminal station, with the object of extending the four lines into the city in the future, I have no objection to offer. If it is to be considered as a terminal station, with any intention of extending the suburban lines into the city in the future, then I should like to see modifications.
193. In what way? In the first place, the station buildings only extend along the end of the assembly platform for a part of the width. The plan having been prepared with the object of extending the lines into the city in future. Therefore, the main building to the north, adjoining the assembly platform, has been cut short; but if it were intended to be a terminal station, without further extension, this building should be extended from end to end of the main assembly platform.
194. Why would you urge that, from the point of view of architecture or that of railway convenience? Convenience, chiefly.
195. But if you have sufficient office accommodation in the plan as set forth, what particular convenience would there be in extending the building eastward? It would be much better to have the line of offices along the main assembly platform. Everything would be compact and together. In this plan it is separate, a portion being provided at the end of the assembly platform and a portion on the longitudinal platform.
196. But if you have a large administrative building of that character, a large number of your officers have nothing to do with the handling of the traffic, have they? No; but at the same time for appearance sake and convenience I should prefer to see them all in one building and to make it a compact station.

197. Does not the same objection lie against the Hyde Park scheme, and also the St. James' Road scheme? **No**; in the Hyde Park scheme I think you will find that the end building extends the whole width of the station.

J. Parry.
21 April, 1900.

198. Do you remember the 1890 plan of Devonshire-street station? **Yes**.

199. There are offices on three sides of the station there? **Yes**, but I have never seen the elevation of those buildings, therefore I do not know what was intended.

200. You would not care to offer any opinion about the arrangements? **No**, I know nothing about them. There the building extends along the whole front of the station on the northern side.

201. Is there any other modification which you would like to propose? **No**; taking the plan generally it would be suitable for a terminal station to remain at Garden-road. I should like to see the main buildings exactly the length of the assembly platform. With regard to the arrangement of the roads entering the station, you will see that beyond Devonshire-street it is simply shown to connect the present platform lines at Redfern. That, of course, would have to be all remodelled. When the Redfern station buildings are removed the new platform roads will commence to converge at the platforms. To give the Committee an idea of the little interference there would be occasioned to the general public in altering the Redfern station in connection with the plan, it shows that the whole of the station could be absolutely complete, as far as the lines, platforms, and buildings are concerned. Then they would connect to the existing platform line in Redfern station; then we should conduct the traffic into the new stations, while the present Redfern buildings and platforms were being removed; and after the removals we should construct the shunting yard according to a proper design not shown on this plan.

202. Does the station as outlined on the plan lend itself to the convenient handling of the public during the busy hours of the day, and during all times of the year? **Yes**.

203. It has been stated in evidence that if the people were brought a few hundred feet further than they are now into the city, no charge could be levied upon them for the extra convenience afforded, and it is urged that the present station is dangerous; but if we remove the element of danger the public will have practically a better service than they have at present, will they not? The more convenience you give the better the service. Passengers would be brought about a quarter of a mile nearer the city.

204. And the element of danger existing now would be almost entirely removed? As far as the safe working of the traffic is concerned it would be almost a perfect station.

205. Would that not be a reasonable ground for making a slight increase in the fares? I do not think you could do that. The charges are made on a mileage rate. Under half a mile we charge the lower mileage, where it is over half a mile we charge the next mileage.

206. There is no law compelling you to charge that mileage rate, is there, and you do not universally charge it now? Oh, yes; we adhere strictly to the mileage rate, unless for very special reasons.

207. But a percentage increase all round would still leave the mileage rate uniform? **Yes**; you might increase the suburban rates all round, but the public would not take to that very kindly.

208. Was that scheme of charges which you outlined for the St. James' Road station and the Hyde Park scheme simply on the mileage rate—1d. each journey? **No**; it was a reduction on the mileage rate. It would be a mile from Redfern station to St. James' Road. The intention was to charge only 1d. in each direction. That would be below the ordinary mileage rate.

209. Was there any particular reason for departing from the usual practice in that case? I could not say. I do not know what the Commissioners had in their mind in determining that charge.

210. After building this large station at Devonshire-street, if we extended the railway into the city, would there be any necessity for the duplication of any of the offices at the two stations? Assuming that you built this first as a semi-terminal station for country trains.

211. Say a terminal station for the next ten or fifteen years for all trains; then, if afterwards an extension were made into the city, would that involve a duplication of many of the offices which would be put up on this site? **Yes**, I think so. It will not be satisfactory to provide a semi-terminal station at Garden-road, and then take the traffic down to some part of the city, and make another terminal station there. In that case a great portion of the expenditure to be incurred at Garden-road would be rendered, I should say, almost waste.

212. That is presuming you built another station in the city? **Yes**.

213. Would you be able for many years to deal with all the traffic which you are likely to get at that station? **Yes**.

214. Would there be any difficulty in getting the people away from that station by tram? I do not anticipate that there would be any difficulty at the present time. There would be less convenience, than by railway into the city, and in years to come there will be difficulty.

215. Presuming that at Redfern you are able to get the trams away three times as fast as now, and three times as many in the same time, do you think there would be much inconvenience and loss of time to the public then? In the congested hours of the morning there would be a loss of time in carrying the people away; but if you had to carry a very much increased traffic as compared with what you have to-day, the inconvenience would be seriously felt.

216. The Devonshire-street site lends itself to tram connection; you can go down Pitt-street, Elizabeth-street, and on down a new street on the eastern side, and also down George-street, and possibly there may be an extension down Kent-street;—with all these connections would there be much inconvenience to the people? Not for a long time to come, except loss of time.

217. Would not such a system as that distribute the people nearer their places of business than an extension into St. James' Road or King-street? **No**, I think it is far better to carry the people down to, as far as practicable, the farthest point they want to go to, then distribute them from that point.

218. Does the King-street or the St. James' Road site lend itself to the purpose of distribution as well as this site? **Yes**; a great deal better, in my opinion, and in years to come it will be found a great deal more so.

219. What is there to alter it in years to come;—does it not depend more on physical features than on population? I do not think it does.

220. The consideration as to whether any particular site is a good one for distribution? **No**; I think in future the business people of the city will concentrate themselves more and more down at the northern end; the residential sites will become business sites, and will be occupied with offices. The shopping business will be forced out further south, and as that takes place you will have a big population of
business

J. Parry.
24 April, 1900.

business men and factory hands wanting to come to this northern end of the city. They will want to come down within two or two and a half hours in the morning. Those who have to come at 7 o'clock will all want to come together at 7 o'clock, and the same with regard to those who want to come at 8 o'clock, half-past 8, and 9 o'clock. They will all want to come down quickly together. It is in the morning and in the evening that you get the congestion of the traffic, and that can only be dealt with satisfactorily by taking the traffic down to the furthest distributing point and distributing from that centre. In all probability it would be found convenient to put a station at Liverpool-street; there you could distribute the people direct from the train, but, in my opinion, the only satisfactory way of dealing with the railway traffic of the future will be to have the station at the farthest distributing point of the business centre.

221. In accordance with that opinion, any large expenditure on station buildings such as is now proposed would be a waste of money? If it is intended to extend the railway into the city in the future, in my opinion, any expenditure in the erection of this station would be practically a waste of money, because, as I pointed out before to the Committee, a large amount of accommodation at the terminal station is practically required to deal with suburban trains during the business hours of morning and evening; therefore if we erected a station there, and to-morrow we decided to extend the railway into the city, and to take all suburban trains into the city, we should have to construct a station, wherever it might be down at the city end, almost equal in size to this station which you propose to erect now, whereas the station which you have to erect in the city for the suburban business would with very little addition accommodate the country trains; because the country trains are at larger intervals apart, and run at times when the suburban business is easy; and you can utilise the suburban platforms for through trains. On the other hand, you can use the through platforms for suburban train. My opinion is that if a permanent station is erected on the Benevolent Asylum site, that will be the terminus for the main trunk lines and many suburban trains for all time. It will be useless then to extend the present lines by constructing two lines in the future as has been suggested; even if you made a loop, you could not conduct the suburban traffic on it; therefore, in considering this Benevolent Asylum site as a terminus for to-day, in my opinion it has to be considered as a terminus for all time, or else it may be assumed that the greater portion of this expenditure is going to be thrown away.

222. Does not that plan provide for the carrying of six lines into the city, and could you not accommodate your suburban traffic on those six lines if it was found necessary to extend them into the city? Yes; but you must have your terminal station to accommodate the trains to be brought in on these six lines. I think there is a common impression that if this station were constructed to-day, some time hence we can simply construct two lines down into the city, make a loop at that end, so that all our trains can go away on one line and come back on another to Redfern station, and that no terminus would be required on this line into the city. That is altogether a wrong idea. According to No. 5 scheme, submitted by Mr. Hickson, the idea is that the terminal station should be at Garden-road, then to extend the line into the city, and come back by a circle in the Domain to Redfern.

223. Would that scheme involve six tracks as far as King-street? Yes. Another one is shown in red coming down and touching the outer portion of the Domain and going back to Redfern; but these schemes provide for a wayside station at the High School site.

224. Which you condemn entirely? Entirely; it would never work satisfactorily.

225. If this large building set forth in the plan were erected at the Devonshire-street site for the administrative portion of the staff, would it be necessary, presuming that the King-street or St. James' Road station were afterwards built, to duplicate the administrative offices on that site? I should think not; that is a matter upon which I am not authorised to speak.

226. Would it be a matter of inconvenience to have them away from the terminus? It would be far more satisfactory to have them at the terminus.

227. One thing I should like to ask you about is this: Would the Aspinall carriers involve a change in the habits of the people in respect to their luggage? No.

228. People will not be compelled to hand up their luggage when they get to the station, and to trust to the authorities to place it where it should be? No; but they do that now. They give up large portmanteaux to the porters and show their tickets, the porter checks the ticket, takes possession of the luggage, labels it, and takes it to the brake-van.

229. *Mr. Levien.*] You would not take any more responsibility than you do now if the luggage were lost? It would be just the same.

230. *Mr. Dick.*] Would it do away with the necessity of wheeling trucks of luggage about the platform? To a very large extent.

231. *Mr. Watson.*] Suppose that a man wishes to take a portion of his luggage into the carriage, would he utilise the Aspinall carrier? No.

232. It would only be for the heavier luggage? That is all.

233. *Mr. Shepherd.*] This scheme is quite distinct from No. 10 scheme and the St. James' Road scheme;—would it not offer every facility for an extension of the tram system from Belmore-road into the city? Yes; you could deal with the tram system to almost any extent from this station.

234. It would be a great improvement on the Redfern station as far as facilitating the extension of the tram system is concerned? It could easily be arranged to do that.

235. And it would give you ample space to make every possible provision for goods and passenger traffic? Yes.

236. You are speaking about those two lines marked red on the map;—I understood Mr. Deane to say that those were placed there purposely so that they could be extended, if necessary, without interfering with the platform? No. If those were extended at any time, it would be necessary to put in a subway; it would cut the station in two—that is, when the extension took place.

237. I should like to have your opinion in reference to the capability of the trams to deal with all the traffic, supposing this plan were adopted; there is an extension of trams down the various streets;—do you think that they would be able to carry all the traffic? If a tram were put down in Pitt-street, it would carry the traffic at the present time, but in my opinion it is not a satisfactory way of dealing with it, looking to the future. My opinion is very pronounced on that point. The only satisfactory way of dealing with the suburban traffic is to take it to its farthest distributing centre.

238. Do you think that in every particular the King-street scheme would be a thoroughly satisfactory one? The Hyde Park scheme could be made to provide a satisfactory station.

239. Do you not think it would serve only a very small proportion of the city? I think it would be a distributing centre for a thickly-populated portion of the city. J. Parry.
240. No doubt it would, but at the same time there is a large vacant space on the east, the whole of Hyde Park, and the whole of the Domain—and you might say that it is really outside of the city;—it is on the actual boundary of the city, as far as the population is concerned? Of course you could never get to everybody's door; you must be a little distance from some of the houses. In my opinion, considering the easy accessibleness of the Hyde Park site, you will not get a better one which will give the necessary accommodation at a reasonable cost. 24 April, 1900.
241. I suppose that if this scheme were adopted you would be enabled to arrange a very much larger number of trams to leave the station in a given time than can be done under the present system, could you not? I think so.
242. In fact there could be almost a platform arranged for each street—George-street, Pitt-street, Castle-reagh-street, and Elizabeth-street—and that would greatly facilitate the traffic by the trams? Yes; that could be done.
243. And the trams would be likely to take the passengers under these circumstances without any trouble? Yes; the system would answer for the present, but I do not think it would in the future.
244. They have similar conditions in New York? Their desire is to transport the people from the up-town to the down-town end, and it is astonishing how similar New York is to the general configuration of Sydney. They would give anything to be able to bring their railway to the down-town end. They can accommodate the traffic, but it is done at a snail-crawling pace, which the people object to. What they want is quick transit from one end to the other.
245. *Mr. Watson.*] With regard to the possibility of an extension into the city in the future—supposing the Devonshire-street station were constructed, would it not be possible to have a loop which the trains could run right down, coming back into the station again, assuming, of course, that you went down the eastern side and came back on the western side of the city? I do not think it would be satisfactory.
246. If you had a sufficient number of lines on your loop you could accommodate the trains, could you not? Yes.
247. The people could be taken by that system quickly to their destination, could they not? Yes.
248. Then, when you have completed the round of the loop, you could dispose of your empty cars at Devonshire-street station and at Redfern, could you not? Yes; but the cost of doing that would be great.
249. You could dispose of them, and have plenty of room in the combined Redfern and Garden-road station—enough room for all the shunting of the carriages, and so on? Yes.
250. Would you not have a portion of what is now occupied for shunting purposes and cross roads at the Redfern Station available in the future if you had this Garden-road station? You will have the increased area.
251. Would you not have more room in the Redfern Station after the station has been made at Garden-road? Yes, considerably more.
252. Therefore, you could deal with the empty suburban trains as they came back from the journey on the city loop? You could store your trains.
253. Then your objection to such a system resolves itself, I presume, into running your suburban train some little distance practically empty;—is not that the main objection as to cost? That is the cost of working; when I said cost, I meant the cost of construction.
254. That would be the only objection—the cost of construction and working? Yes, and the difficulty of running at suitable times.
255. The objection would be to running empty cars and engines back to Redfern Station; but you propose to do that with your St. James' Road proposal? Yes.
256. A great amount of storing of cars would still be done at Redfern? It could be.
257. Was it not proposed to be done? It was.
258. Seeing that it is only a difference in degree, is the distinction between the cost of working in the proposed St. James' Road scheme and any proposed loop scheme that may be made afterwards? Yes; apart from the additional cost which would be required for the connection of signalling blocks, &c., but it would be far less satisfactory in dealing with the business.
259. Now as to the capital cost, unless we are prepared to take a large slice of the Park, we shall have to pay an enormous amount for resumptions? Yes.
260. It has been suggested that with the latest developments of electrical traction in other parts of the world it will be possible in a reasonable time to look forward to the working of the suburban traffic by electricity; and if that were practicable to-day it is supposed we should then do without resumptions for the city extension, because with electric traction tunnelling would not be objectionable, and wayside stations might be made; and, as far as safety of working is concerned, would it not be possible to have the extension of four or six lines from the proposed Devonshire-street terminus without the necessity for a terminal station in the city? No; I do not think so, because you must first of all in a loop system, construct a line all round the city, and take the people to the outskirts of the city; and you have to pick them up during the busy hours of the evening at wayside stations. Therefore, you run double your proper distance in going round, and in my opinion you take the people out of their way. Take the scheme put forward by Mr. Hammond, you have a terminal station at Devonshire-street, and you have to extend a loop line from the Benevolent Asylum site, along the western side of the city, to Circular Quay and back, *via* the Domain and Hyde Park, into Redfern. That would be the route. Passengers would be landed at the corner of Druitt-street and Sussex-street. Then, again, at Erskine-street and King-street, and those passengers would be right away from the business portion of the city, unless you took them right round to Circular Quay and brought them back to the Domain station.
261. Would it not be possible in the first instance to limit the diameter of your circle to contract the loop so as to get nearer the centre of the city both going and coming, assuming that you have electric traction and tunnelling? It would be very difficult to speak offhanded on that point. In my opinion, to make it part of the present suburban system, would it be a failure. If you wish to do that you should drop all your passengers at the Benevolent Asylum site and make a city railway independent of the existing lines altogether, as an electric system, then have your circular railway.

- J. Parry. 262. We were informed the other day by Mr. Deane whilst they have their metropolitan underground railway as a separate city system, two of the large suburban lines take suburban traffic for some distance alongside the metropolitan lines, and are practically part of the metropolitan underground system, and use wayside stations instead of a terminal station? It would be a few trains.
263. He seemed to indicate that there were quite a number? I do not think it is so; but not being acquainted with the place I could not say.
264. *Dr. Garran.*] If this scheme were adopted in the first instance, as the Minister seems to think possible, leaving the other extension to be made afterwards, we could only make this a success by multiplying trams? Yes.
265. And this system would lend itself to tramways coming up different streets? Yes.
266. You have two levels here; you could bring some trams on one level and some on the other, and instead of the people all having to go to one place to take trams, there are the George-street, the Pitt-street, the Elizabeth-street places, and perhaps a York or Kent street place, and they could all be worked without running into one-another? That could be arranged.
267. I mean that having three frontages and two levels you would have a very great advantage? Yes.
268. Suppose we make an extension to St. James' Road at once, would it cost very much more to shift the wayside station at Redfern to the north side of Devonshire-street, instead of into the station-yard? If anything is done for removing the Redfern Station to the Benevolent Asylum site the least that could be done would be to move the platforms and the lines at once.
269. Suppose you had a station at St. James' Road, would two platforms be enough for you? No.
270. Not for a wayside station merely? Yes; but I do not see how you are going to make it one.
271. You were going to make Redfern a wayside station, why not a wayside station on the further side; you are going to spend £30,000 at Redfern to make a wayside station, would it not be better to spend the money you have got on the north side? There would be no objection to that. I confess I do not quite grasp the intention of the question.
272. My idea is that you will be making a beginning perhaps with a large and better station on the north side; you have got the ground? No; if you made it convenient for a wayside station by placing a platform on the north side of Devonshire-street your arrangements would have to be such that they would not be suitable as part of a terminal station.
273. I presume there will always be a terminal station at the Hyde Park site, where you are going to build one? Yes.
274. Only as the traffic grows, it occurs to me that the Benevolent Asylum site might give relief twenty years hence to the Park station? Of course you could construct a wayside station to the north of Devonshire-street, but it would not form part of what would be considered a large terminal station for the future.
275. No; but I do not want us to waste more money south of Devonshire-street than we can help;—it is a bad site? It would be an improved arrangement to bring it on to the north site.
276. *Chairman.*] Since you last gave evidence, have you seen anything to indicate that there is likely to be any decrease in the pick-up traffic of the electric trams, or is it not rather on the increase? I think it is on the increase.
277. At busy times of the day, are not those trams crowded to excess? Yes; there are large numbers of complaints now about the overcrowding.
278. Is it not the daily experience, bearing out your contention, that these trams would be required for the suburban traffic and the pick-up traffic? That is so.
279. And it is impossible to run through trams from the railway station into the city of Sydney to accommodate the railway passengers? Yes, unless you set one street aside for the railway traffic.
280. So that, so far as you can see, you have no reason to change your opinion that if possible it is desirable to bring the railway into the city of Sydney? No.
281. And if that is the case, it would be a mistake to build this large station at Devonshire-street? Yes. I am very decided on that point. If a large station is built there, it should be on the understanding that the terminal will remain there.
282. That is, it will end the railway into Sydney? Yes. If anything is done, then, with regard to a city railway, it will be an independent system, apart from the principal system.

WEDNESDAY, 6 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of erecting a Central Railway Station and Administrative Offices on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extending the railway system of the Colony thereto.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

H. McLachlan. 283. *Chairman.*] The Committee desire to ascertain the nature of the arrangements under which the Railway Department occupy their present offices in the Public Works Buildings? We have an arrangement with the Department of Public Works, by which we are tenants of the rooms we occupy, paying for them £1,200 per year.

284. How does that compare with the rent your Department paid in Macquarie-street? It compares favourably, because we have more offices upstairs here than we had in Macquarie-street.

285. Is the total amount now paid about the same as before? Less.

286. Do you know how much? Roughly, I should say about £500 per year.

287. Have you sufficient space where you are now for all purposes? Yes, for the officers we have there.

288.

288. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you roughly state what area will be given up if you should go into the proposed new building? Yes; the rooms occupied by the Railway Department in the Public Works buildings are as follows:—

H.
McLachlan,
6 June, 1900.

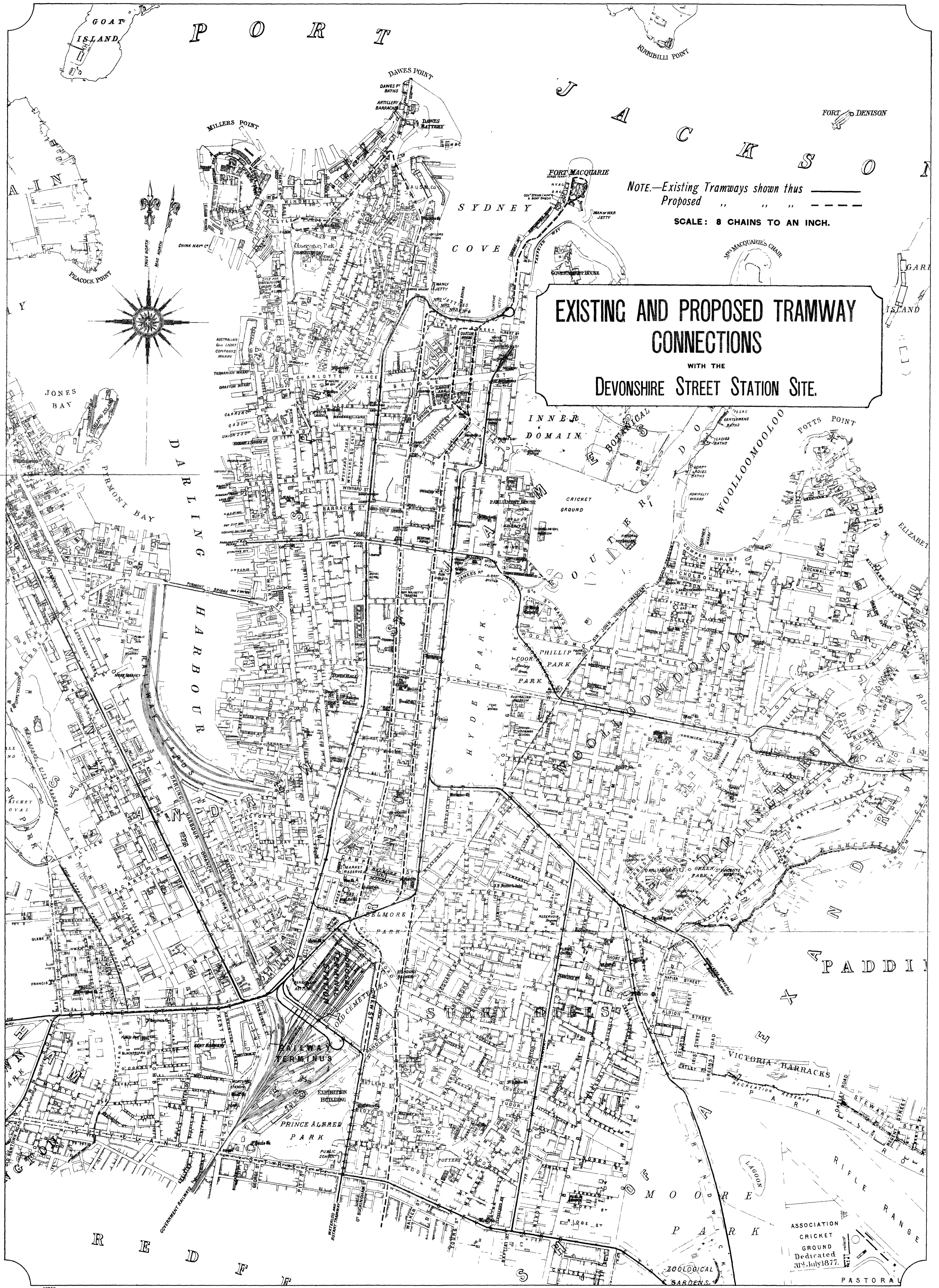
BASEMENT.			
	No.	ft. ft.	sq. ft.
Estates Agent	3 (Store Room)	8 x 17	136
	4	25 x 23	575
	5	24 x 18	432
	6 (Strong Room) ..	14½ x 11	159
	7	43 x 25	1,075
Store Room, Secretary's Office	8 (Plan Room)	8 x 5	40
		30 x 23½	705
Total			3,122 sq. ft.
SECOND FLOOR.			
	No.	ft. ft.	sq. ft.
Board Room	59	26 x 23½	611
Commissioners' Room	60	25 x 22	556
Do.	61	25 x 18½	462
	61A	16½ x 9½	158
	62	26½ x 25½	663
Divided into 2 rooms (Secretary & Staff)	63	54 x 24½	1,329
Traffic Branch	64	44½ x 25½	1,125
Railway Solicitor	69	35½ x 17½	621
	70	18½ x 13½	250
Secretary's Staff	71	18½ x 13½	250
Total			6,025 sq. ft.
THIRD FLOOR.			
	No.	ft. ft.	sq. ft.
Traffic Store Room	73	15 x 13	195
Chief Accountant	74	49 x 17	833
	75	22 x 17	374
Telephone Room	76	9 x 14	126
Chief Accountant's	77	24 x 25	600
Chief Accountant's (Strong Room)	87	15 x 11	165
	89	32 x 17	544
Existing Lines ..	Nos. 78 & 79 ..	54 x 25	1,350
	No. 80 .....	.....	560
	81 .....	.....	560
	82	13 x 25	325
	88	26 x 11	286
	91	14 x 11½	161
	93	23 x 18	414
	Nos. 94 & 95 ..	32 x 18	576
Railway Solicitor	No. 90 ..	.....	184
Mr. Bray ..	92 ..	20 x 16 ..	320
Total			7,573 sq. ft.
FOURTH FLOOR.			
	No.	ft. ft.	sq. ft.
Mr. Finnegan	Nos. 97 & 102 ..	45 x 15	675
Mr. Colquhoun	No. 99 ..	13 x 13	169
Mr. Vogel	100 ..	26 x 14	364
Existing Lines	101 ..	14 x 9	126
Total			1,334 sq. ft.
IN DOME.			
		ft. ft.	sq. ft.
Existing Lines ..	Two Store Rooms	34 x 13	481
	.....	8 x 32	256
Total			737 sq. ft.
Summary.			
		sq. ft.	
Basement		3,122	
Second floor		6,025	
Third floor		7,573	
Fourth floor ..		1,334	
Dome		737	
Total			18,791 sq. ft.

289. *Dr. Garran.*] You would be better off in the new offices than where you are now? Yes; we should be more united.

[Two Plans.]



PROPOSED STATION BETWEEN GARDEN ROAD AND DEVONSHIRE-STREET.



1900.

—
 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
 NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
 PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDIX

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY INTO
 THE CITY OF SYDNEY.

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

Printed under No. 5 Report from Printing Committee, 19 July, 1900.

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—
 1900.

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

- * The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
- * The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
- The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
- * The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

- * WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
- JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
- ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
- JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

[*On 14th June, 1900, The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, having accepted the office of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, retired from the position of Chairman, and a Member of the Committee. Mr WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Vice-Chairman, was elected Chairman in the place of Mr. TRICKETT, and The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, was chosen as Vice-Chairman. On 4th July, The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM was elected to the vacancy on the Committee caused by the resignation of Mr. TRICKETT]

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY INTO THE CITY OF SYDNEY.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of extending the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient that the extension of the railway system of the Colony, from the present terminus at Redfern, into the City, including the erection of a large central station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James' Road, or the deviation suggested in the reference of the 7th December, 1899, be carried out; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (IV), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE PRESENT PROPOSAL.

1. A proposal to make a terminal station in the north-west quarter of Hyde Park, known as the St. James' Road scheme, was submitted to the previous Public Works Committee and approved. This scheme was referred back to the present Committee, and in conjunction with it was a modification, taking a smaller portion of the Park, and described as the King-street or No. 10 scheme. The Committee, therefore, have had both schemes before them and have considered which of the two was the better, or whether either should be recommended.

Objections having been raised to appropriating the portion of Hyde Park required in connection with the St. James' Road proposal, and many persons being of opinion that an extension of the railway into the city was unnecessary, efforts were made to find some other solution of the question.

The services of the Engineer-in-Chief for Victorian Railways were obtained for the purpose of reporting and advising on the various schemes which at different times had been submitted, and his report will be found in the Appendix. The Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction in New South Wales was also instructed to devise certain alternative schemes, in conformity with which instructions he prepared ten, each of them being described in the evidence given by him in the present inquiry.

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE SCHEME.

2. By the King-street (or No. 10) Scheme, six lines of rails would be carried from the present Redfern terminus over Devonshire-street, through part of the Benevolent Asylum ground, and part of the Devonshire-street Cemetery and Police Barracks, and thence on viaduct from Belmore or Garden Road over Belmore Park and Elizabeth-street to a little beyond Goulburn-street, which would have to be slightly diverted. From there they would proceed on a descending grade, not steeper than 1 in 100, to the corner of Liverpool-street and Elizabeth-street, and passing under the former without altering the surface level, would be carried through Hyde Park in open cutting (with foot-bridges for pedestrians) as far as Park-street, a width of 80 feet being taken from the Park for the purpose. Then passing under Park-street, without altering its level, they would enter the main terminal station situated between Park-street and King-street. From the end of the station four lines of way would be continued under King-street, and proceed in tunnel under the Domain to a point between the Art Gallery and Sir John Young's Crescent, where, on an area of 8 acres, stabling accommodation for engines and carriages would be provided. The main station building would face King-street (the width of that street between Castlereagh-street and St. James' Church being increased to 100 feet), its eastern side extending 80 feet into the Park from Elizabeth-street, and the west side abutting on Castlereagh-street, which would be widened to 75 feet. At the main station, nine platforms would be provided, so that all classes of traffic, suburban and long-distance, could be accommodated, and the passenger portion of the building would include all the usual offices for the accommodation of the public and the station staff, as well as offices on the first and upper floors for the Railway Commissioners and their administrative staff. At the Park-street end of the station provision would be made for a parcels office and lines for docks for horse-boxes and carriages.

Under this scheme, St. James' Road, and that portion of Elizabeth-street between Park-street and King-street would be closed, the tram-lines being temporarily carried along its eastern side and taken down Phillip-street until the conversion of the eastern suburban tramway lines to electric traction, when it is the intention to carry them along Castlereagh-street, and so down to the Circular Quay. It is very probable, however, that the temporary rearrangement of the Elizabeth-street tramway would not be necessary, because, before the proposed new railway station could be constructed, it is regarded as more than likely that the overhead electric system will have been extended to all the tramways in the city, and the opportunity afforded for the construction of the permanent Castlereagh-street line at once.

On the completion of the extension into the city Redfern would become a wayside station, the station arrangements there being remodelled.

The scheme does not provide for goods traffic, nor would it meet requirements for an extension to North Shore.

ESTIMATED COST.

3. The estimated cost of carrying out the No. 10 Scheme is £1,564,000, the details of the estimate being as follows:—

Works, with office accommodation as provided in St. James' Road scheme, £731,700 (say)	£732,000	
Additional accommodation asked for by Railway Commissioners	30,000	
		£762,000
<i>Add</i> —Alterations at Redfern	20,000	
Lowering Devonshire-street	18,000	
Redfern to Belmore Road	16,000	
		54,000
		816,000
<i>Resumptions</i> —		
Belmore Road to King-street	741,000	
Damage done to Benevolent Asylum Grounds and Barracks	7,000	
		748,000
		£1,564,000

Or,

Or, with cost of resumptions as estimated by the Government Land Valuer :—

Works, with office accommodation, as provided in St. James' Road scheme, £731,700 (say)	£732,000	
Additional accommodation asked for by Railway Commissioners	30,000	
		£762,000
<i>Add</i> —Alterations at Redfern	20,000	
Lowering Devonshire-street	18,000	
Redfern to Belmore Road	16,000	
		54,000
		816,000
<i>Resumptions</i> —		
Government property, including a strip, 80 feet in depth, of Hyde Park, from Liverpool-street to St. James' Road, also Supreme Court, Registrar-General's Office, Carter's Barracks, and High School (say)	£300,000	
Private lands, business interruptions, &c.	540,000	
		840,000
		£1,656,000
Or, inclusive of the whole of the private land required, but taking a depth of 140 feet of Hyde Park, between Park-street and St. James' Road, to avoid the extension into the Domain—		
Works	£816,000	
Resumptions	860,000	
		£1,676,000

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

4. In reporting upon the proposal the Railway Commissioners deal with an estimated cost of construction amounting to £1,491,000, the difference between that sum and the present estimate of £1,564,000 being due to additions since the date of the Commissioners' report. The annual cost of working the extension and paying interest on the capital expenditure is given as £63,530, and the traffic estimate as £38,000, representing an annual loss of £25,530; or, if the cost be taken at £1,564,000, a loss of £27,720. The Commissioners, in their report, assume that the original Hyde Park scheme is not to be adopted, and on that assumption they have no hesitation in stating that the proposed terminal station fronting King-street would best meet public requirements. A terminal station at King-street, they point out, would entirely dispense with the necessity for any expenditure on a new station upon what is known as the Devonshire-street site.

FORM OF THE INQUIRY.

5. In carrying out their inquiry the Committee first had the proposed scheme and the other schemes prepared by the Railway Construction Department (including that in connection with St. James' Road) explained. They then had the condition of the present station at Redfern described, and following upon this the circumstances or reasons regarded as justifying the extension of the railway into the city. In view of the advantages offered by the electric tram system in George-street they also sought to ascertain whether the existing electric service, or its further extension along new routes, would meet the requirements of travellers to and from the Redfern terminus as it is at present situated. They next had the schemes submitted by witnesses outside the Government Departments explained. In company with a responsible officer of the Department of Railways and the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, they inspected the Redfern Station and the site on the north side of Devonshire-street proposed in connection with another inquiry for an enlarged terminus; and they carefully went over and examined the routes of the two principal unofficial schemes placed before them. They further requested the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction to examine the whole of the private schemes submitted to them, and obtained his opinion thereon.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KING-STREET AND THE ST. JAMES' ROAD SCHEMES.

6. From an engineering point of view, the difference between the King-street scheme and that by which the railway would be carried to St. James' Road is chiefly in connection with the position and arrangements of the terminal stations, while

while the cost of the former greatly exceeds that of the latter owing to the necessity for extensive resumptions. In the St. James' Road proposal the site of the station was the whole of the north-western division of Hyde Park, the approach to it from Liverpool-street being through a semi-open cutting, constructed on what is designated the cut-and-cover principle, through almost the centre of the south-western section of the Park. The portion of the Park appropriated for the station and the approach to it under the King-street scheme, is a strip of 80 feet from Liverpool-street to Park-street, and of 80 feet from Park-street to St. James' Road, along the western edge of the Park, the station occupying this portion of the Park land and the area extending across Elizabeth-street to Castlereagh-street.

The portion of the Park included in the St. James' Road scheme comprised nearly 13 acres; that in the King-street scheme, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres, in addition to which 8 acres are taken from the Domain. To exclude the Domain extension from this scheme it would be necessary to take, from Park-street to St. James' Road, a further strip of 60 feet from the Park, which would increase the total appropriation of Park land under the scheme to 6 acres 15 perches.

At St. James' Road station there were to be eleven platforms, the Railway Commissioners being of opinion that this number would be sufficient to deal with the traffic for practically all time without extending any of the station lines beyond St. James' Road, though it was pointed out that that might be done in the future, if it should be thought necessary. With the King-street scheme the extension of four lines through the station into the Domain is a new feature, it being designed in order to allow of a reduction in the number of platforms, and thus in the width of the station.

Other differences between the two schemes are that under the St. James' Road scheme, St. James' Road and Elizabeth-street would remain open for traffic; whereas under the King-street scheme the former would be wholly closed, as would also that section of Elizabeth-street between King and Park streets.

CONDITION OF REDFERN STATION.

7. Redfern Railway Station has long been insufficient to properly meet traffic requirements, and the daily work connected with the arrival and departure of trains is carried on with great difficulty and with considerable risk to the travelling public.

In 1896, the Railway Commissioners, writing to the Minister for Railways on the subject of city railway extension, stated that "the difficulties of working the station at Redfern have increased, and are still increasing, to such an extent that a considerable improvement in the terminal arrangements is, in the interests of safety, as well as to provide for the comfort of the travelling public, absolutely necessary," and since that time the difficulties have not decreased. The traffic has outgrown the capacity of the station, and the available room for alterations or improvements is too limited to be of any service.

Only two of the station platforms are long enough to accommodate trains of more than eight cars and engine, clear of other roads, though it is frequently necessary to run trains up to nine cars. Other platforms are much too short for ordinary seven-car trains, without fouling other roads. Much difficulty is therefore experienced at holiday and other times by trains standing on one line blocking the entrance to other roads. It has been necessary to cut the northern mail train into two parts in order to discharge the passengers and luggage, the platform not being long enough to accommodate the whole of the train. Frequently, the Committee are informed, both north and west trains are seriously inconvenienced by having to load up at two separate platforms, and the two parts joined together at the last moment.

As many as 628 passenger and goods trains, and light engines, pass through Redfern tunnel, to and from the station, and Darling Harbour, on an ordinary day, and on a holiday, the number, according to figures put before the Committee, has reached 663.

But

But the number of trains and engines shown as arriving and departing does not, it is stated, represent the work done in the passenger yard, as a large proportion of the passenger trains arriving have to be drawn out from the platforms and shunted to liberate the engines which brought them in, or to place the cars at other platforms to form other trains. There is also a great deal of shunting of the engines to keep them out of the way of incoming and outgoing passenger trains, as there are no refuge sidings between the platforms or the main running lines to allow of the engines being readily shunted clear to take water or stand while other trains arrive and depart. Neither are there any sidings between or handy to the platforms where spare coaches can stand, so as to be readily available to strengthen trains, and considerable shunting across the main running lines is occasioned to get to the carriage sidings.

When it is stated that all this shunting takes place within the short distance between the platforms and the tunnel while trains are arriving and departing, the risk of accident, it can be seen, is very great. In consequence of the difficulty of shunting trains, owing to the limited length between the station and tunnel junctions, special inspectors have had to be appointed to give verbal instructions, instead of relying only on the system of fixed signals, thus introducing, it was explained to the Committee, a most undesirable element into the working of such an important yard.

METHODS OF REMEDYING THE DIFFICULTIES AT REDFERN.

8. Two methods of removing, and one of alleviating, the difficulties at Redfern Station are described in the evidence. These are—

- (1.) Extending the railway into the city, and erecting there a large central station.
- (2.) Erecting a large station on the north side of Devonshire-street.
- (3.) Improving as far as possible, by alterations, the present arrangements at Redfern.

EXTENDING THE RAILWAY INTO THE CITY.

9. The Railway Commissioners favour the extension of the railway into the city, and, if the St. James' Road scheme cannot be carried out, approve of the No. 10 or King-street scheme. They recommend a city extension as a means of both overcoming the difficulties at Redfern and affording additional accommodation to railway passengers. In compliance with a persistent demand upon the part of railway travellers residing in the western suburbs, and from passengers travelling between Sydney and Penrith, Campbelltown, and the Hawkesbury, who want to be brought as quickly as possible within easy reach of their business premises or offices in Sydney, and from a conviction that such an extension would pay, the Commissioners for years past have urged that the railway should be extended citywards, and have recommended that a large terminal station should be erected in either the south-west or the north-west division of Hyde Park, those situations being, in their opinion, the most suitable for the purpose. Such a scheme, they state, would not only fully meet the requirements of the public, but would be very advantageous to the Department, for besides providing all the station-yard accommodation required and paying interest on the capital expended, as well as working expenses, it would, in their opinion, return a substantial and increasing profit.

In their report upon the St. James' Road scheme the annual cost of the scheme, including interest, but excluding all payment for the land taken from Hyde Park, is stated as £27,500, while the traffic estimate is £33,365, made up of a saving of £1,365 in rents for offices of the administrative staff, and £32,000 additional railway revenue obtained by adding 1d. for each ordinary passenger journey, 1s. 6d. and 1s. per month for first and second-class season ticket-holders (with a percentage reduction per month for tickets taken out for three, six, and twelve months), and 3d. per week for workmen's tickets.

Additional revenue was also expected under this scheme from an increased suburban traffic and larger rents for refreshment-rooms.

ERECTING

ERECTING A LARGE STATION ON THE NORTH SIDE OF DEVONSHIRE-STREET.

10. A scheme much more desirable, in the opinion of the Committee, than extending the railway from Redfern to St. James' Road or King-street is the erection of a large station on the north side of Devonshire-street. There the station and approaches would occupy all the ground bounded by Devonshire-street on the south, Belmore-road on the north, a line extending from Castlereagh-street on the east, and Pitt-street on the west, an area of 22 acres 1 rood 20 perches, where provision could be made for everything necessary. Eleven platforms of full length and width, with two or three roads between, and traversers at the end, would accommodate all trains; suitable arrangements would be made for interchange between the railway and electric tramway systems; and the general design would permit of six lines being extended at any time further into the city without interfering with the station buildings. Under this scheme Devonshire-street would be closed, except for a subway for foot-passengers, and an approach to the cab road leading into the station, a new street being constructed from the intersection of Devonshire-street and Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road; and Belmore-road and Gipps-street would be widened. The estimated cost in connection with this proposal is given as follows:—

General works	£138,000
Interlocking	15,000
Station buildings and Administrative offices	233,000
Lighting	5,000
Alterations to Redfern Station	30,000
	<hr/>
	£421,000
	<hr/>
Resumptions	£140,600

In this scheme, the land, except in the case of Christ Church Parsonage, is practically the property of the Government already. The sum set down for resumptions is mainly intended for re-erection of the buildings now on the site.

The Railway Commissioners, in their report upon the proposal, say that a perfect terminal station could be constructed on this site, and relief thereby afforded to the existing Redfern Station; but, in their opinion, the scheme is seriously defective in not providing an extension into the city which would meet the convenience of railway travellers, and upon which a charge could be made to pay interest and working expenses. As, however, the erection of administrative offices at Devonshire-street will effect a saving of the rent now paid for the offices occupied in Bridge and Macquarie streets, to that extent the scheme will be an advantage, and the Committee are of opinion that interest and working expenses will be, to a considerable extent, met indirectly by the large increase that will take place in the traffic upon the trams connected with the railway.

The proposal to construct a new terminal station at Devonshire-street was first made, the Committee are informed, by the late Chief Commissioner, Mr. Eddy, about the year 1893, but at that time the scheme did not provide for administrative offices, Mr. Eddy being then of opinion that these offices should be in the part of the city where they are now situated. The opinion of the Commissioners at the present time is that the greatest efficiency will be secured by having the offices at the railway station where the railway staffs are employed.

IMPROVING REDFERN STATION.

11. Redfern Station occupies an extensive area, the station-yard covering $30\frac{1}{4}$ acres and the platforms and approaches $6\frac{1}{2}$ acres; but much of the area is taken up by the arrangements in connection with the traffic to and from Darling Harbour, and the produce trade. It is quite possible, by further resumption to the south, to improve the station, but it would be very costly, and would be difficult to carry through while the traffic was being conducted, and when completed the result would not be satisfactory. In the opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, the only way to improve Redfern station would be to extend it to the northern side of Devonshire-street, and to lay down lines and build platforms and station accommodation there, joining up, when everything was ready, with the existing lines at Redfern, and closing the old station directly the new one came into use.

EAST

EAST OR WEST.

12. One specially noticeable feature in the inquiry has been that the advocates of the City Extension Railway divide themselves into two classes—those who hold that the proper line should traverse East Sydney, and those who hold that a greater service would be rendered by a line that traverses the west. If we study a map of Sydney, it certainly does appear that the part east of George-street is largely taken up with the magnificent reserve of the Government House Domain, the Public Domain, the Botanic Gardens, Hyde, Phillip, and Cook Parks, while the area of West Sydney, which is greatly wanting in reserves, is pretty closely built upon. An eastern line, terminating at King-street or at Circular Quay, would accommodate those who wish to go to Parliament House, to the Hospital, to the chambers of the medical men who abound in Macquarie-street, to the Government offices, to the clubs, to the law courts and lawyers' offices, to the largest hotels, and to the places of business lying east of George-street. That in itself is a pretty considerable traffic. But on behalf of the western route it is maintained that that is pre-eminently the locality for warehouses and wharfs, for all the large produce business, and for numerous factories, and that more people come in and out of Sydney every day who make for some place lying to the west of George-street than for places to the east of it.

Even Mr. Rennick stated that but for its expensiveness the western route should be preferred. Several schemes have been put before the Committee showing possible lines through West Sydney, and Mr. Selfe and Mr. Greenwood have specially assisted the Committee in putting before them lines worked out to a great deal of detail, and showing how stations might be provided at the Town Hall, Wynyard-square, and Circular Quay—three admirable centres for passenger traffic. Mr. Sievers, the Government Land Valuator, has testified that neither of these gentlemen has underestimated the cost of land resumption, nor has there been any evidence to show that they have underestimated the cost of the works. The cost of Mr. Selfe's scheme is, to some extent, complicated by its being combined with proposals for reconstructing parts of Sydney. Both schemes, however, have been objected to on engineering grounds by Mr. Deane, and his objections have not been satisfactorily met. Neither of these schemes, nor that of Mr. Horbury Hunt, which has been less worked out in detail, could be recommended by the Committee for immediate adoption. All the West Sydney schemes have been advocated on the ground that they lend themselves to an extension to North Shore over the proposed North Shore bridge. Mr. Deane, however, holds that it would be a mistake to mix up a passenger service line for West Sydney with the North Shore line, and he has sketched two possible lines, one for each service. The cost of these two lines has not been worked out, and it does not at present seem likely that the Government would go to the expense of two, roughly, parallel lines through West Sydney. As matters stand at present, therefore, there is no West Sydney route submitted which is in a position to be recommended.

THE GOVERNMENT SCHEMES.

13. The private schemes offering no adequate solution of the question, the Committee were thrown back upon the schemes submitted by the Government, and these, as far as regards the question of suitability in meeting railway requirements, without excessive cost, were reduced to two—the St. James' Road and the King-street schemes—each of which would appropriate a portion of Hyde Park, and one a part of the Domain also. A third proposal was favourably viewed by the Engineer-in-Chief—that described in the evidence as No. 4 scheme, by which the terminal station would be situated on a site between King, Elizabeth, Market, and Pitt streets; but the cost would be excessive, and though Hyde Park would not be interfered with to any appreciable extent, a portion of the south-west corner would be affected.

THE ELECTRIC TRAM DEVELOPMENT.

14. Dealing with the St. James' Road and King-street schemes, in the light of the evidence before them, and the general desire to, if possible, avoid taking any portion of Hyde Park, the Committee came to the conclusion that neither scheme recommended itself for adoption so strongly as one which would provide an escape
from

from the dangers now incurred at the Redfern terminus, combined with an enlarged system of electric trams for bringing railway passengers from the terminal station into the city, and distributing them at different points within easy reach of their offices or places of business, and at the Circular Quay.

The results from the construction of the George-street electric tram-line have, in the opinion of the Committee, materially changed the situation in relation to the city railway extension question.

Electric trams, running at intervals of from one to two minutes between the Redfern railway terminus and Circular Quay, and stopping on the way at all street intersections, are now conveying railway passengers into the city so expeditiously that the number of railway travellers patronising the steam trams in Elizabeth-street are very few. George-street divides the city more equally than any other street, no time is lost by passengers waiting for the trams to start from the terminus, and in the return journeys there is no delay. During the busy hours of the morning and afternoon the electric trams are overcrowded, but that is owing to the fact that one line is insufficient to deal with the traffic. The popularity of the electric system, and the recognition by the public of its usefulness as a means of getting into and out of the city, are evident by the extent to which it is used. Additional lines down other streets between the railway terminus and Circular Quay would at once relieve the George-street trams, and be a further advantage to railway travellers.

Statistics relating to the railway tram traffic, collected at the instance of the Committee by the Traffic Superintendent of the Tramway Department, and given by him in evidence, show that the average number of persons arriving at Redfern Station and departing therefrom by train, daily, is 23,500, 13,000 of whom are carried from and to the station by the George-street electric trams and 1,150 by steam trams, the balance, 9,350, walking. Estimated on the basis of the number now carried, the number of passengers travelling to and from Redfern Station annually by the George-street electric trams is given as 8,700,000, and of passengers travelling to and from the station by steam trams, 700,000. The comparison is a striking one, and though it may be admitted that a certain portion of those railway travellers who now walk to and from the station do so because of the difficulty experienced in finding a steam tram at the moment it is wanted, the figures undoubtedly indicate that the great bulk of the railway passengers travel, after leaving the train, by way of George-street, and that their requirements are, so far as route is concerned, met by the George-street electric trams.

In relation to this subject, it is instructive to notice that in the Legislative Assembly, recently, during a debate upon the overcrowding of the George-street electric trams, the Honorable the Premier and Minister for Railways read a letter from the Railway Commissioners in which it was stated that, though to accommodate the traffic an auxiliary service of steam trams had been kept on, between which and the electric cars there was ample accommodation, "the people will not travel by the steam cars, presumably because the electric cars go down George-street, where the steam cars could not possibly go."

AS TO NECESSITY FOR CITY EXTENSION.

15. The primary question to be dealt with is, whether it is immediately necessary to extend the railway into the city.

The majority of the witnesses from the Western Suburbs contended they could not be adequately served unless this were done, though considerable difference of opinion existed amongst them as to the proper terminal site. It must be remembered that none of the proposals put forward were to deal with other than passenger traffic, and it is admitted that the Devonshire-street site is the most central for the distribution of country travellers. The remaining elements are the Western suburban and semi-suburban passengers. A proportion of these now suffer some delay in reaching their places of business daily; but on examination the inconvenience is found to be not so serious as might appear at first sight. The delay involved in changing from train to electric tram at Redfern averages, according to the evidence of the traffic officials, only from one to two minutes, with a maximum delay of three minutes.

minutes. Then the George-street tram takes, say, ten minutes to get to King-street, as against three minutes required for a continuation of the train journey from Redfern to the corner of King and Elizabeth streets. This, apparently, shows a delay of ten minutes in travelling by tram; but against this has to be placed the fact that, as a rule, the trams land passengers within a shorter distance of their business premises than could any practicable city railway. This advantage will be emphasised by the additional tram-lines which are admittedly necessary to relieve the George-street line, as passengers would then have a greater choice of routes on arriving at Redfern or Belmore-road, with a correspondingly greater opportunity of being taken near their eventual destination.

Another point, deserving of attention, is that while the Commissioners' estimate of probable revenue to be derived from the city extension is based on the supposition that the whole of the passengers arriving now at Redfern would go on to King-street or Hyde Park, it is shown in the evidence of the traffic officials that of the total passengers arriving daily at Redfern only 60 per cent. take either the electric or steam tram, the remaining 40 per cent. preferring to walk to business. The presumption is that the objective of these latter passengers is near Redfern, and that a similar proportion would find no use for a city extension.

There is little doubt but that at some future time further city railway extension for passengers will be not only necessary but profitable, and one consideration that weighs with the Committee, in expressing a preference for the Devonshire-street site, is its suitability, as a starting-point, for a circular city line, or an extension towards North Sydney, or the Eastern Suburbs, so soon as probable traffic warrants the heavy expenditure involved.

It must be borne in mind, too, that in the larger centres of the world, electric traction is becoming increasingly popular as a means of dealing with concentrated traffic. This does not alone refer to tramways, but also to what are practically electric railways, running on enclosed tracks, and at a high rate of speed. It is, therefore, probable that within a few years the whole problem of city railway extension will assume a new complexion, and the Committee feel that their present recommendation is in harmony with this anticipated development.

In the meantime, a large and well-designed station at Devonshire-street, in conjunction with additional tram-lines (which would probably be highly remunerative), will, in the opinion of the Committee, be sufficient to deal with the traffic.

THE THREE SCHEMES COMPARED.

16. It has been said that only an extension of the railway into the city will be pecuniarily profitable; but an examination of this phase of the question does not prove the St. James' Road scheme to be the profitable one it has been represented to be, and in a comparison with other schemes it shows nearly as much unprofitable expenditure or dead money as the scheme for erecting a new terminal station at Devonshire-street.

The original cost of the St. James' Road scheme was £650,000, which included a sum of £100,000, the estimated value of land taken between Belmore Park and Liverpool-street. The estimated value of the section of Hyde Park appropriated by this scheme is £165,000, which would make the cost of the scheme, so far, £815,000. To this, however, must be added £30,000 for additional accommodation required by the Railway Commissioners, and £25,000 for an increase in prices, making the total £870,000. The annual charges upon this amount would be, interest at 3 per cent., £26,100, and working expenses and maintenance £8,000, or together £34,100. Against this must be placed the expected traffic, which, in their report upon the St. James' Road scheme the Railway Commissioners estimated at £32,000, but which is now estimated at £38,000. From the evidence before them, the Committee believe it would be about half that sum, the original estimate being based on the belief that the whole of the passengers arriving at Redfern would continue their journey into the city by train; whereas, in view of what the George-street trams are doing, it is probable that the number travelling to St. James' Road, or its vicinity, would not be more than half. The half of the traffic estimate being £19,000, the deficiency would be £15,100, or a sum representing interest at 3 per cent. on £503,300.

The

The estimated cost of the King-street scheme in regard to works alone is £816,000, and with resumptions, Government and private property, £840,000, amounts to £1,656,000, or, taking into account the extra 60 feet of Hyde Park land necessary to avoid appropriating a portion of the Domain, £1,676,000. The annual charges are, on the first amount, interest at 3 per cent. £49,680, and working expenses and maintenance £18,800, or in all £68,480; and on the second amount, interest at 3 per cent. £50,280, and working expenses and maintenance £18,800, or together £69,080. The traffic estimate is £38,000; but reducing this by half, in accordance with what the Committee are of opinion the traffic would be, the result is £19,000, which, deducted from the annual expenses, leaves in the first case £49,480, or interest at 3 per cent. on £1,649,300, and in the second, £50,080, or interest at 3 per cent. on £1,669,300.

Taking the Devonshire-street station scheme, the estimated cost is £561,000, the annual cost £14,460, the traffic increase nil.

But placing the three schemes in comparison, the result is as follows:—

ST. JAMES' ROAD SCHEME.

Cost as originally estimated	£550,000
Estimated value of land taken between Belmore Park and Liverpool-street	100,000
Estimated value of land taken from Hyde Park	165,000
Extra office accommodation asked by Railway Commissioners	30,000
Increase in prices since original estimate was made	25,000
Total	£870,000
<i>Annual cost—</i>	
Interest at 3 per cent.	£26,100
Working expenses and maintenance	8,000
	£34,100
<i>Traffic estimate—</i>	
Estimate of traffic on the basis that, at most, only half the number of passengers travelling to Redfern would travel by the train into the city	£19,000
Deficiency £15,100, representing interest at 3 per cent. on £503,300.	

KING-STREET SCHEME.

Estimated cost of works	£816,000
Resumptions	840,000
	£1,656,000
<i>Annual cost—</i>	
Interest at 3 per cent.	£49,680
Working expenses and maintenance	18,800
	£68,480
<i>Traffic estimate—</i>	
Estimate of traffic on the basis that, at most, only one-half the number of passengers travelling to Redfern would travel by train into the city	£19,000
Deficiency £49,480, representing interest at 3 per cent. on £1,649,300.	

or, if the scheme should not extend into the Domain—

KING-STREET SCHEME.

Estimated cost of works	£816,000
Resumptions	860,000
	£1,676,000
<i>Annual cost—</i>	
Interest, at 3 per cent.	£50,280
Working expenses and maintenance	18,800
	£69,080
<i>Traffic estimate—</i>	
Estimate of traffic on the basis that, at most, only one-half the number of passengers travelling to Redfern would travel by train into the city	£19,000
Deficiency, £50,080, representing interest at 3 per cent. on £1,669,300.	

SPECIAL ADVANTAGES IN THE DEVONSHIRE-STREET SCHEME.

17. In addition to comparing favourably with the two city schemes in regard to expenditure from which no immediate pecuniary return can be expected, the Devonshire-street proposal offers advantages in station accommodation and conveniences for passengers much greater than could be obtained in connection with either

either of the other schemes. The area of land proposed to be resumed is large enough to provide a terminal station for an indefinite time, an advantage which, in consequence of the enormous expense involved in the resumption of city property, could not be obtained in the vicinity of King-street. Every arrangement necessary for the safe and expeditious working of the railway traffic could be brought into operation at Devonshire-street without difficulty. The station building would provide large and commodious offices for the Railway Commissioners and the different staffs of officers; and the station approaches would not only meet the requirements of pedestrian and cab traffic, but also offer special facilities for the running of trams in conjunction with the trains. Electric trams could be run to and from the station, not only by way of George-street, but also along Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street; and there would be no difficulty in connecting the western trams with the station. Further, if in the future it should be considered desirable to carry the railway into the city towards King-street or the Circular Quay, provision is made in the scheme for extending six lines in that direction without interfering with the station buildings.

It should also be noted that the Devonshire-street site is in the very centre of the area which on the north, north-west, and north-east, includes the city proper down to the harbour frontages, Pyrmont, Balmain, Woolloomooloo, and Darlinghurst; on the east, Surry Hills, Paddington, and Woollahra; on the south-east, Kensington and Randwick; on the south, Redfern, Waterloo, and Alexandria; on the south-west, Chippendale, Camperdown, Darlington, Erskineville, and Newtown; and on the west, Ultimo, Forest Lodge, Glebe, and Glebe Point.

CONCLUSION ARRIVED AT.

18. In view of the special advantages attached to the Devonshire-street station scheme, the fact that it compares fairly well with the St. James' Road and King-street schemes in regard to expenditure, the interest upon which cannot be met by increased railway fares, and that it involves no appropriation of Hyde Park land, and of the new aspect imparted to the question of city railway extension by the electric tram development, together with the recent resumption of the eastern shore of Darling Harbour, a portion of which may be utilised for a western city railway extension for goods and passenger traffic, the Committee are of opinion that an extension of the railway to St. James' Road or to King-street is not justified, and that neither of those schemes should be carried out.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

19. The resolution passed is shown in the following extract from the Committee's Minutes of Proceedings, of 7th June, 1900:—

Dr. Garran moved,—“That the Committee having given due consideration to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the 20th December, 1899,—‘That it is expedient that the extension of the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James' Road, as referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, be referred back to the Public Works Committee for further consideration and report, in view of certain proposals to deviate from the route already recommended,’ and having given special consideration to the new proposals submitted, have arrived at the following conclusions:—

- “1. That the accommodation for passenger traffic at the present Redfern terminus is wholly insufficient.
- “2. That it would be better in every respect to construct an entirely new station than to attempt a reconstruction of the present station.
- “3. That the best plan will be to extend the railway into the city and erect a terminal station there, as this will give the suburban passengers what they have so long demanded, viz., a station nearer to the business centre of Sydney.
- “4. That of all the extension schemes submitted to the Committee the simplest, the most economical, and the easiest of construction is the scheme known as the St. James' Road scheme, being that originally proposed by the Railway Commissioners. The Committee, therefore, endorses the recommendation made by the previous Public Works Committee in its report dated the 26th August, 1897.”

Mr. Trickett seconded the motion.

Mr.

Mr. Dick moved,—“That the motion be amended by omitting all the words after the word ‘station’ in paragraph 2, and inserting in lieu thereof the following words:—

“(3.) That the best plan will be to extend the railway to the north of Devonshire-street and there construct a commodious station and administrative offices.

“(4.) That in view of the foregoing it is not expedient that the extension of the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James’ Road, as referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, nor the deviations suggested in the reference of the 7th December, 1899, be carried out.”

The question,—“That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the motion,”—was negatived on the following division:—

Ayes, 2.	Noes, 5.
Mr. Trickett, Dr. Garrao.	Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, Mr. Levien, Mr. McFarlane.

The question,—“That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted,”—was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, Mr. Levien, Mr. McFarlane.	Mr. Trickett, Dr. Garrao.

The question,—“That the resolution, as amended, be now agreed to,”—was passed, on the following division:—

Ayes, 5	Noes, 2.
Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, Mr. Levien, Mr. McFarlane.	Mr. Trickett, Dr. Garrao.

On the question,—“That the following be the resolution of the Committee” :—

“That the Committee, having given due consideration to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the 20th December, 1899, that it is expedient that the extension of the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James’ Road, as referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, be referred back to the Public Works Committee for further consideration and report, in view of certain proposals to deviate from the route already recommended— and having given special consideration to the new proposals submitted, have arrived at the following conclusions:—

- “1. That the accommodation for passenger traffic at the present Redfern terminus is wholly insufficient.
- “2. That it would be better in every respect to construct an entirely new station than to attempt a reconstruction of the present station.
- “3. That the best plan will be to extend the railway to the north of Devonshire-street, and there construct a commodious station and administrative offices.
- “4. That in view of the foregoing, it is not expedient that the extension of the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James’ Road, as referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, nor the deviations suggested in the reference of the 7th December, 1899, be carried out.”

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, Mr. Levien, Mr. McFarlane.	Mr. Trickett, Dr. Garrao.

The resolution was therefore passed.

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 16 July, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY INTO THE CITY OF SYDNEY.

TUESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Robert K. P. Hickson, Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You have had prepared a statement describing the proposals for extending the railway into the city which have been submitted to the Committee;—will you kindly read it? Yes; it is as follows:—

R. R. P.
Hickson.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY INTO THE CITY OF SYDNEY.

6 Feb., 1900.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly, for the Committee's consideration, on the 20th December, 1899, in the following terms:—"That it is expedient that the extension of the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the city, including the erection of a large central station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James' Road, as referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, be referred back to the Public Works Committee for further consideration and report, in view of certain proposals to deviate from the route already recommended."

The question of extending the railway from its present terminus at Redfern into the city has been for many years so prominently before the public, and has been so thoroughly discussed and ventilated in Parliament and the public Press, that it is unnecessary for me at this juncture to enter into any lengthy review or explanation of the various schemes that have been propounded from time to time. The following brief resume of the more important steps that have been taken officially during the past ten years, with the object of arriving at a definite solution of the question will, I trust, be sufficient to enable the Committee to clearly understand the present position of affairs.

The desirability of bringing the railway into the city has been freely admitted for the past forty years. Public opinion has been practically unanimous on this point; the apparently insuperable difficulty lies in the fixing of the route and a site for the terminal station.

After long years of public discussion the Government appointed a Royal Commission in March, 1890, for the purpose of making a diligent and thorough examination and investigation into the several proposals which had been made for extending the railway accommodation into the city of Sydney, and to inquire into the whole subject, for the information of the Government. This Royal Commission was presided over by the late Mr. Sydney Burdekin, and commenced its inquiry on 2nd April, 1890, sitting in the Town Hall. Thirty-five separate schemes were submitted to the Commission, seven of which were, after inquiry and evidence having been taken upon the whole, selected for further consideration, after report by professional officers of the Government. The other proposals had been shown to be either impracticable or too costly.

The result of the further inquiry was that, in March, 1891, the Commission adopted, by a majority of one, the following resolution:—"That the Commission approve of the Hyde Park scheme, as put forward by the Railway Commissioners, and that the same be adopted."

The scheme herein referred to proposed a central station at the top of King-street, and required therefore the north-western division of Hyde Park, as well as the area comprising St. James' Road, and the sites occupied by the Registrar-General's Office, the Supreme Court, and St. James' Church. The estimated cost of the scheme was set down at £780,000.

Influential objections having been raised to the appropriation of any portion of Hyde Park for railway purposes, the Railway Commissioners submitted an alternative scheme, which proposed a central station, for long distance traffic, on the site occupied by the Benevolent Asylum, and a suburban main station at King-street, two lines being continued to a terminus at Circular Quay, and two other lines taken from King-street round to the eastern suburbs.

The Royal Commission, by a majority, favoured this alternative scheme, and reported accordingly. The estimated cost of this amended scheme was given at £835,000, exclusive of land resumption and compensation.

No action appears to have been taken on the report of the Commission, and the question remained in abeyance until April, 1896, when the Railway Commissioners brought it again under notice in a letter to the Premier and Minister for Railways, inviting serious consideration to the question of the terminal accommodation, as one calling for immediate settlement, in the interests of the safety, as well as the comfort of the travelling public; and they suggested, in order to reduce the interference with Hyde Park, the bringing forward of the railway to the south-west section of the Park bounded by Liverpool, Elizabeth, and Park Streets.

This authoritative pronouncement of the Railway Commissioners respecting the urgency of the extension of the railway into the city once more brought the subject into prominence. The Government, in due course, on 22nd December, 1896, appointed a Royal Commission, composed of all the Members of the Public Works Committee, "to make a diligent and full inquiry as to the expediency and best methods of extending the railway system of the Colony into the city of Sydney, or through the city, and to the waters of Port Jackson:—

- "1. For the convenience of passengers; and
- "2. For the conveyance of goods."

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The various schemes put forward by engineers and others were closely inquired into by the Commission, and the whole subject was investigated in all its bearings in the most complete and exhaustive manner. The conclusions arrived at by the Commission, and reported 1st June, 1897, were as follows:—

1. That it is expedient the railway system of the Colony should be extended into the city for the convenience of passengers, and that the best method of doing this is by the route and according to the plan described as the St. James' Road scheme.
 2. That it is not expedient to further extend the railway system of the Colony into the city of Sydney, or through the city, and to the waters of Port Jackson, for the conveyance of goods.
- The estimated cost of the St. James' Road scheme thus recommended by the Commission was £650,000, which amount included £100,000 for land resumption.

The recommendations of the Royal Commission were then referred by Parliament to the Public Works Committee, who were instructed to consider and report upon "the expediency of extending the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the city, including the erection of a large central station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James' Road.

The Committee, after a further exhaustive investigation had been made into a number of other schemes, adhered to the conclusion arrived at by them at the close of their inquiry as a Royal Commission, and reported to Parliament, on 26th August, 1897, the following resolution passed by them:—"That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed extension of the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the city, including the erection of a large central station in the north-western division of the Park fronting St. James' Road, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out."

Although no action was taken by the Government to give effect to the foregoing resolution, owing to its strong objections to the appropriation of the north-western division of Hyde Park, the question of bringing the railway into the city was constantly under the earnest consideration of Ministers.

The services of Mr. Rennick, the Engineer-in-Chief for Victorian Railways, were obtained by the Premier, Mr. Reid, for the purpose of advising and reporting on the various schemes submitted. Mr. Rennick pronounced the St. James' Road scheme, as put forward by the Railway Commissioners, and recommended by the Public Works Committee, as the best; but, with a view to getting over the Park difficulty, suggested an alternative scheme, which would not appropriate any portion of Hyde Park.

Mr. Rennick's description of his scheme was briefly as follows:—"Make Redfern the terminus for long-distance trains, and extend the railway to Government Grounds, near Circular Quay, for city and suburban traffic; providing stations at Liverpool-street, at the High School site, Market-street (between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets), and in the Government House Grounds, Albert-street."

The late Government then took up the subject, and, after giving it the closest consideration, Mr. Deane, Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, was instructed to devise certain alternative schemes whereby the necessity of interfering with Hyde Park would be almost entirely avoided. Nos. 1 to 8 are those ordered by that Government, Nos. 9 and 10 being the production of the present one.

Mr. Deane thereupon furnished a number of schemes, each having its own distinctive features, but nearly all proposing a central or terminal station at or near the High School site. They may be summarised as follows:—

No. 1 Scheme—Redfern to King-street (High School site) and Fort Macquarie.

Terminal station for country trains and through suburban traffic at Benevolent Asylum site.
Through stations at Liverpool-street and King-street.
Terminal station for suburban traffic at Albert-street.
Car and motor sheds at Fort Macquarie. (Cut and cover work through Hyde Park.)
Six lines of way throughout.

Works	£1,154,000
Resumption	602,000
Total	£1,756,000

No. 2 Scheme—Redfern to King-street (High School site) with extension to back of Art Gallery.

Terminal station for country trains and through suburban traffic at Benevolent Asylum site.
Through station at Liverpool-street.
Terminal station for suburban traffic at King-street.
Car and motor sheds back of Art Gallery. (Cut and cover work through Hyde Park.)

Four lines of way throughout	£799,000
Add for two extra lines of way, Redfern to King-street	51,000
Resumption	£850,000
Total	£1,892,000

No. 3 Scheme—Redfern to King-street.

Small terminus for country trains and through suburban traffic at Benevolent Asylum site.
Through station at Liverpool-street.
Large terminus for suburban trains at King-street (between Elizabeth-street and Pitt-street). (Cut and cover through Hyde Park.) Six lines of way throughout.

Works	£523,000
Resumption	1,070,825
Deduct	£1,593,825
Total	£1,338,825

No. 4 Scheme—Redfern to King-street, with country and suburban terminus at King-street.

Through stations at Benevolent Asylum site and Liverpool-street. (Cut and cover through Hyde Park.) Six lines of way throughout.

Works	£630,000
Resumption	899,825
Deduct	£1,529,825
Total	£1,439,825

No. 5 Scheme—Redfern to King-street (six tracks), with single line, loop and sidings in Outer Domain.

Country traffic to terminate at Redfern Station, adapted.
Through station at Liverpool-street.
Terminal station for suburban traffic at King-street (High School site).

General works.....	£596,500
Resumption	£450,000
Total	£1,046,500

No.

No. 6 Scheme—Redfern to Liverpool-street (six tracks), Liverpool-street to King-street (four tracks), with double return loop, *via* Domain and Hyde Park, to Liverpool-street

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Country traffic to terminate at Redfern Station, adapted.

Through station at Liverpool-street.

Terminal station for suburban traffic at King-street (High School site).

General Works	£552,000
Resumption	450,000
Total	£1,002,000

No. 7 Scheme—Redfern to King-street (six tracks).

Through station at Liverpool-street.

Terminal station for suburban traffic at King-street (High School site).

Country traffic to terminate at Redfern Station.

General works	£480,000
Resumption	451,000
Total	£930,000

No. 8 Scheme—Redfern to Hunter-street.

Terminus for country trains at Benevolent Asylum site.

Terminus for suburban trains at Hunter-street, with an intermediate station at Liverpool-street.

Double-line tunnel from Hunter-street to small terminal station at Albert-street. (Through Hyde Park, one-third in open cut, and two-thirds cut and cover.)

Six lines, Redfern to Hunter-street	} £1,331,000
Two lines, Hunter-street to Albert-street	
Part 1—Works	£184,000
Resumption	98,000
	£282,000
Part 2—Works	492,000
Resumption	448,000
	940,000
Part 3—Works	89,000
Compensation	20,000
	109,000
Total	£1,331,000

No. 9 Scheme—Extension from Redfern to Benevolent Asylum site, and the erection thereon of a large terminal station.

Estimated cost :—

Works	£421,000
Resumption	140,000
Total	£561,000

This scheme was referred by the Legislative Assembly to the Public Works Committee on 7th December, 1899.

Finally, under instructions from Mr. Secretary O'Sullivan, Mr. Deane has prepared a further scheme for the extension of the railway from the south side of Belmore Road to King-street, with a terminal station on the High School site. This last scheme is now submitted for the consideration of the Committee, in conjunction with the St. James' Road scheme, as recommended by the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee, in 1897.

The description of this scheme is as follows :—

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF BELMORE-ROAD TO KING-STREET, WITH A TERMINAL STATION ON THE HIGH SCHOOL SITE.

Six (6) lines of rails are carried on viaduct from Garden Road over Belmore Park and Elizabeth-street to a little beyond Goulburn-street, which would have to be slightly diverted. From Goulburn-street these lines are carried on a descending grade, not steeper than 1 in 100, to the corner of Liverpool-street and Elizabeth-street, passing under the former without altering its level. After emerging on the north of Liverpool-street, the lines are carried in open cutting as far as Park-street, a width of 80 feet being taken from the Park for the purpose; they then pass under Park-street without altering its level, and enter the main terminal station situated between Park-street and King-street. The west side of the station abuts on Castlereagh-street; a width of 76 feet is taken from Hyde Park for the station. Four (4) lines of way are continued beyond the end of the station, under King-street, and in tunnel under the Domain, to a point between the Art Gallery and Sir John Young's Crescent, where stabling accommodation for engines and carriages will be provided. At the main station nine (9) platforms will be provided, so that all classes of traffic, suburban and long distance, can be accommodated. The passenger building includes all the usual offices for the accommodation of the public and the station staff, as well as offices on the first and upper floors for the Railway Commissioners and their administrative staff. At the Park-street end of the station provision is made for a parcels office, and lines for docks for horse boxes and carriages.

Under this scheme that portion of Elizabeth-street between Park and King streets is closed, the tram lines being temporarily carried along its eastern side, and taken down Phillip-street until the eastern suburban tramway lines have been converted, as shown on the plan, along Castlereagh-street, and so down to the Circular Quay.

The total estimate for works is £731,730, starting from Belmore-road, or, including the connection with Redfern Station through the Police Barracks, at the back of the Benevolent Asylum, and through the corner of the Cemetery, alterations at Redfern, and lowering Devonshire-street, say £786,000.

The cost of land resumption and compensation is estimated by the land valuer at £741,000.

The foregoing may be summarised thus :—

No. 10 Scheme—Belmore Road to Terminus at King-street—six lines of way with—extension to car and motor sheds at back of Art Gallery—four lines. (Open cut through Hyde Park.)

Works	£731,700
Alterations to Redfern	20,000
Lowering Devonshire-street	18,000
Redfern to Belmore-road	16,000
	£785,700
Resumptions	£741,000
	£1,526,700
Total, say	£1,527,000

The report of the Railway Commissioners on the scheme is as follows :—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 20th December, 1899.

Extension of the Railway System to King-street.

COMPLYING with the request made by letter of this date at the instance of the Secretary for Public Works, and in accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act of 1888," section 13, we beg to report as follows :—

Cost of construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction (inclusive of land and compensation) at	£1,491,000
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<i>Annual cost—</i>	
Capital expenditure at 3 per cent.	£44,730
Estimated cost of maintaining permanent-way, and for traffic, locomotive, and other expenses.....	18,800
Total annual cost	
	£63,530
<i>Traffic estimate—</i>	
By adding 1d. for each ordinary suburban passenger journey, and 1s. 6d. and 1s. per month for 1st and 2nd class season's ticket holders, with a percentage reduction per month for tickets taken out for three, six, and twelve months, and 3d. per week for workmen's tickets, a revenue on existing traffic would be realised of....	£38,000

It is assumed that the original Hyde Park scheme is not to be adopted, and therefore we have no hesitation in stating that the proposed terminal station fronting King-street will best meet public requirements. It must however, be fully realised that a terminal station at King-street will entirely dispense with the necessity for any expenditure in connection with the recently proposed station on what is known as the Devonshire-street site.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed, this twentieth day of December, One thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, in the presence of—

{	CHARLES OLIVER, Chief Commissioner.
	W. M. FEHON, Commissioner.
	DAVID KIRKCALDIE, Commissioner.

H. McLACHLAN.

2. In that statement you quote the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the 20th December last, which refers back to the Committee for consideration what is known as the Hyde Park scheme. Further on, you speak of Scheme No. 9 as a scheme which contemplates "an extension from Redfern to Benevolent Asylum site, and the erection thereon of a large terminal station." Finally, you say, "Under instructions from Mr. Secretary O'Sullivan, Mr. Deane has prepared a further scheme for the extension of the railway from the south side of Belmore-road to King-street, with a terminal station on the High School site." That would leave a gap between the present terminus at Redfern and the Belmore-road unprovided for. We have, therefore, three main schemes submitted for our consideration? Yes. The scheme for extending the railway to the Benevolent Asylum site is really merely a scheme substituting that site for Redfern as a terminal site, and it must be considered in conjunction with the scheme for extending the railway into the city to the High School site.

3. *Dr. Garran.*] Are we to understand that, in the event of the railway being extended into the city, the extension from Redfern is an essential part of the scheme? We have provided for the cost of bridging the gap that has been referred to in the item "Redfern to Belmore-road, £16,000." If the proposal to increase the terminal accommodation at Redfern by removing the station site to the northern side of Devonshire-street were rejected, you would still have a complete scheme for extending the railway to King-street, from the present terminus, at a total cost of £1,527,000.

4. If the Committee approve one or other of the schemes for extending the railway into the city, will it still be incumbent upon us to consider also the removal of the terminus to the northern side of Devonshire-street, for the accommodation of long-distance traffic? I should prefer to leave that question to the Railway Commissioners.

5. The suggestion to remove the terminus to the Benevolent Asylum site has arisen from the idea that any proposed extension into the city may be rejected, and that, in that case, a roomier terminal station will be required; but, in the event of an extension into the city being approved, would there be the same necessity for a new terminal station near Redfern? I think not; but the subject is one upon which the Railway Commissioners must give their opinion.

6. The removal of the terminus to the northern side of Devonshire-street is practically a substitute for all the schemes for extending the railway into the city? I can hardly call it a substitute for those schemes, because it does not give the same advantages; but, in the event of the Committee recommending the extension of the railway into the city to either St. James' Road or the High School site, the removal of the terminus would not, in my opinion, be necessary.

7. That answer only expresses your own opinion;—you do not commit anyone else? That is so.

THURSDAY, 8 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEU, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

H. Deane.
8 Feb., 1900.

8. *Chairman.*] Have you perused the statement which was read to the Committee on Tuesday last by Mr. Hickson, and part of which I presume was prepared from information supplied by you? I have; and with the concurrence of the Committee I propose to speak this afternoon a little more in detail of the schemes therein referred to. Mr. Hickson expected that I would do this, and, therefore, made his statement as short as possible.

9. Will you describe, in order, the plans which have been prepared by your Department, and which are now before us; I understand that the small plans numbered 1 to 7 illustrate various schemes for extending the railway from Redfern into the city, in the direction of the Circular Quay? Yes.

10. Do those schemes embody your own views of what should be done, or the views of other people? The designs shown on the plans you refer to were prepared by me, acting under instructions, which I will refer to later on.

11. We have also before us a large plan showing the route of the proposed extension, which is now submitted to us for consideration? Yes. I have also put before the Committee for comparison a plan showing the proposed extension to St. James' Road.

12.

12. That extension was recommended by a Royal Commission which sat in 1897, and the Commission's recommendation was afterwards endorsed by the Public Works Committee? Yes.

13. The proposal was then submitted to Parliament by Mr. Secretary Young; but after it had been taken to a certain stage nothing further was done in connection with it? That is so. The Committee has also before it plans showing the arrangements of the proposed terminal station at the Benevolent Asylum site and the proposed King-street terminal station, and drawings showing the elevation of the Devonshire-street station and of the King-street station.

14. Will you now describe in detail the proposal which has been referred to the Committee for consideration, commencing from the Redfern end? Yes; I will give the Committee a description of the proposed scheme for extending the railway to King-street, which is dealt with in Mr. Hickson's statement (page 4) as the No. 10 scheme:—

General Description—Redfern to King-street Extension.

Six lines of rails are carried from the present Redfern terminus over Devonshire-street, through part of the Benevolent Asylum ground and part of the Cemetery and Police Barracks, and thence on viaduct from Belmore or Garden road over Belmore Park and Elizabeth-street, to a little beyond Goulburn-street, which would have to be slightly diverted. From Goulburn-street these lines are carried on a descending grade, not steeper than 1 in 100, to the corner of Liverpool-street and Elizabeth-street, passing under the corner without altering the surface level. After emerging on the north of Liverpool-street, the lines are carried in open cutting as far as Park-street, a width of 80 feet being taken from the Park for the purpose. They then pass under Park-street, without altering its level, and enter the main terminal station situated between Park-street and King-street. The main station building will face King-street, which will be widened between Castlereagh-street and St. James' Church to a width of 100 feet. The west side of the station abuts on Castlereagh-street, which will be widened to 75 feet, and a width of 80 feet will be taken from Hyde Park for the station. Four lines of way are continued beyond the end of the station under King-street, and in tunnel under the Domain to a point between the Art Gallery and Sir John Young's Crescent, where stabling accommodation for engines and carriages will be provided. At the main station in King-street nine platforms will be provided, so that all classes of traffic, suburban and long-distance, can be accommodated. The passenger building includes all the usual offices for the accommodation of the public and the station staff, as well as offices on the first and upper floors for the Railway Commissioners and their administrative staff. At the Park-street end of the station provision is made for a parcels office and lines for docks for horse-boxes and carriages.

Under this scheme, that portion of Elizabeth-street between Park-street and King-street is closed, the tram-lines being temporarily carried along its eastern side and taken down Phillip-street until the eastern suburban tramway lines have been converted to electric traction, after which they will be carried, as shown on the plan, along Castlereagh-street, and so down to the Circular Quay. It is very probable, however, that that temporary rearrangement of the Elizabeth-street tramway would not be necessary, because before the proposed new railway station was constructed it is more than likely that the overhead electric system would have been generally extended to all the tramways in the city, and the permanent Castlereagh-street line would be constructed at once.

The total estimate for works is £731,700, starting from Belmore-road, or, including the connection with Redfern station through the Police Barracks, at the back of the Benevolent Asylum, and through the corner of the Cemetery, (say) £785,700.

The cost of land resumption and compensation is estimated by the Land Valuer at £741,000.

The following is a detailed estimate of the cost of the work:—

Works, with office accommodation, as provided in St. James' Road scheme, £731,700, (say)	£732,000	
Additional accommodation asked for by Railway Commissioners	30,000	
	£762,000	
<i>Add—Alterations at Redfern</i>	20,000	
Lowering Devonshire-street.....	18,000	
Redfern to Belmore-road	16,000	
	54,000	
<i>Resumptions--</i>		\$16,000
Belmore-road to King-street	741,000	
Damage done to Benevolent Asylum Grounds and Barracks	7,000	
	748,000	
		£1,564,000

15. *Dr. Garran.*] You do not allow anything for Hyde Park? No; nothing is allowed for Hyde Park. I may explain that my first instructions were to prepare the No. 9 scheme—a scheme providing for the erection of a large terminal station on the north side of Devonshire-street. I was then asked to prepare the scheme which I have just outlined, commencing from the end of the Devonshire-street extension. That is the reason for the apparent gap which appears to have been unprovided for between Redfern and the Belmore-road. My estimate of the cost of bridging that gap is £16,000, which, added to the cost of the rest of the scheme, makes the total which I have given.

16. *Chairman.*] We should like you now to describe in detail the proposed extension from Redfern to King-street? I will do so.

Rearrangement of Redfern Station.

It is proposed that Redfern shall cease to be a terminal station, and become only a wayside station, though, as there will still be a considerable amount of traffic to deal with there, the station accommodation which is left must be ample. In order that the extension into the city may be carried out without interruption to the present Redfern traffic, it is proposed to continue across Devonshire-street, on overhead bridges, the lines which now run past platforms Nos. 8, 5, 6, and 3. These four lines will be for the accommodation of the passenger traffic into the city, two lines on the eastern side being used chiefly for the running of engines. When the line into the city has been completed, the station arrangements at Redfern will have to be remodelled, and no doubt, a great many unnecessary platforms and buildings will be removed; but, at the present time, I cannot tell you exactly what plan of rearrangement will be followed. However, the whole group of lines coloured purple on the plan will have to undergo considerable changes. Additional accommodation will also be provided for carriages, and altogether there has been put down for the Redfern alterations the sum of £20,000.

The Devonshire-street Crossing.

As the level of the rails at Redfern is not sufficiently above the level of Devonshire-street to permit of traffic going along Devonshire-street at its present level, when the railway is continued into the city, the street would have to be lowered to the extent of about 9 feet, but there will be a slight difference in the amount of lowering at the two points under the outer lines of rails. By this lowering of the street surface a headway of 16 feet will be given under the bridge girders. The alteration of the street level also involves some drainage alterations, inasmuch as there is now under the street an old sewer which runs down to Darling Harbour, and which it will probably be necessary to keep in existence for the purpose of carrying away storm-water. The lowering of that sewer is involved in the lowering of the street level. Then extensive retaining walls must be built on each side of the streets; there must also be a reconstruction of the tramway which now runs along the street, and the pavement of the street must be relaid. The cost of those alterations has been estimated at £18,000.

17. I understand that there will be a dip in Devonshire-street between George-street and the Railway Institute? Yes, with a grade of about 1 in 25, coming from the Institute.

18. And from George-street? That grade will be somewhat easier.

19.

H. Deane.
8 Feb., 1900.

- H. Deane.
8 Feb., 1900.
19. *Dr. Garran.*] Is 16 feet enough headway for an omnibus? Yes.
20. *Mr. Watson.*] Is it enough for an electric tram? The feed wire of the electric tram is at an elevation of 19 or 20 feet, but the trolleys can be lowered.
21. *Dr. Garran.*] If the electric tram could not go under the railway in Devonshire-street, you would have to alter the route of the Botany tram? I have not taken that matter much into consideration, because the whole arrangement of the tramway system there requires to be worked out. It remains to be considered whether the Botany tram should go along Devonshire-street as it does now; or whether it should be carried along Regent-street from George-street; or straight along Elizabeth-street, instead of through Belmore Park. Of course, the electric trams could go under the bridges in Devonshire-street if their trolleys were lowered when they came there.
22. *Mr. Levien.*] The trolleys would have to be lowered every time the cars came to the bridges? Yes; but probably the best thing to do would be to fix upon another route for the tram.
23. *Chairman.*] What is your alternative proposal for dealing with Devonshire-street? The alternative proposal is to make a new street across the Benevolent Asylum grounds, and through the Cemetery, from the junction of George and Pitt streets, until it joins Devonshire-street near the Institute. That would be a better street for vehicular traffic than Devonshire-street would be if a dip were made in it to enable traffic to get under the railway bridges.
24. *Dr. Garran.*] Could you give greater headway under the bridges? That might be done, but I do not think it would be desirable to increase the headway.
25. By the deviation you speak of you would get rid of the difficulty of having to alter the sewer under Devonshire-street? Yes. If the deviation were made that sewer need not be touched. After getting over Devonshire-street a little filling up would have to be done for a couple of chains, and then the lines would run through cuttings indicated on the plan by red colouring. When you reach the Police grounds, however, the land dips down rapidly towards Belmore Park, so that we should have to cross Belmore-road by means of a bridge.
26. *Chairman.*] This proposal does not necessarily involve the removal of the Benevolent Asylum, the late residence of the Inspector-General of Police, the Sydney Female Refuge, and the Convent in Pitt-street; it only involved the resumption of a portion of the Devonshire-street Cemetery and a portion of the Police ground? Yes.
27. If your suggested deviation of Devonshire-street were carried out it would involve the resumption of part of the Benevolent Asylum grounds and of part of the Cemetery? Yes. The damage that would be done to property situated between Devonshire-street and the Belmore road by the King-street extension is put down at £7,000, which is a very small amount compared with what would have to be paid if the buildings which you have mentioned had to be resumed.
28. If the Grand Central station were erected on what is known as the Devonshire-street site, that would involve the resumption of the greater part of the Cemetery, of the Benevolent Asylum ground, the Christchurch Parsonage, the late residence of the Inspector-General of Police, the Sydney Female Refuge, and the Convent? Yes. The plan showing the arrangement of the Devonshire-street station accommodation will give you an idea of what would be done. There would be a difference of about 21 feet 6 inches between the rail-level and the road-level at Belmore-road.
29. *Mr. Watson.*] But the understructure of the bridge would considerably reduce that difference? It would reduce it about 3 feet.
30. *Dr. Garran.*] Would that be a sufficient headway to allow of the passage of carts loaded with hay? I think so. A viaduct carrying six lines of rails would be constructed to carry the traffic from the Belmore-road to Elizabeth-street. At Elizabeth-street there would be an overhead bridge, and the viaduct would then be continued, as is shown on the plan, as far as Goulburn-street.
31. *Mr. Watson.*] What headway would be given by the bridge over Elizabeth-street? The difference between the rail-level and the road-level there would be about 33 feet. I might mention that the cross-streets there—Forster-street, Blackburn-street, Campbell-street, and Exeter-place—could all be provided for. Goulburn-street would have to be diverted in order to obtain sufficient headway for traffic passing under the railway, and to allow of a grade of 1 in 100 being obtained for the line between Goulburn-street and the corner of Elizabeth and Liverpool streets.
32. What headway do you propose to give at Goulburn-street? Sixteen feet. From there the line would drop, at a grade of 1 in 100, to the corner of Liverpool and Castlereagh streets, going under Liverpool-street. The level of Liverpool-street would not have to be altered so as to enable that to be done. From that point six lines of rail will be carried along the edge of Hyde Park, between retaining walls, as far as Park-street. Two foot-bridges are shown on the plan for the accommodation of pedestrians passing through the Park; but these bridges could be increased in number if necessary. The line would go under Park-street, and from there the different tracks diverge to run into the various docks and platforms at King-street station. Nine platforms are provided for at the King-street station, there being two pairs of rails between the first and second and third and fourth platforms, from the eastern side of the station, and three lines of rails between the fifth and sixth and seventh and eighth platforms, and a single line alongside the ninth platform. The four lines on the eastern side of the station would continue round under King-street, and through the Domain to the carriage-sheds at Sir John Young's Crescent. Between platforms 5 and 6 and 7 and 8 traverses would be arranged, so that engines bringing in trains could be uncoupled and run out without moving the carriages, or be hooked on to the other end of the trains to draw them out again. Running across past the head of each of the platforms will be a large assembly platform. The main station will be a large building facing King-street, in front of which will be provided a covered way for cabs and an arcade for pedestrians. The frontage to King-street will be about 328 feet. Accommodation will be given for the various offices and rooms necessary for the convenience of the public—ticket offices, waiting-rooms, refreshment-rooms, lavatories, parcels' office, and so on, and there will also be offices for the station inspectors. This accommodation will all be given on the ground floor. On the next floor accommodation will be provided for the Railway Commissioners and their executive staff; and on the other floors further accommodation will be provided for other railway officers. Going through the main building from King-street, passengers will come out upon the large assembly platform to which I have just alluded, the length of which will be about 275 feet, and its width 70 feet. From it passengers will go to the various platforms, and provision is made to prevent the overcrowding of the platforms and the regulation of the traffic. The level of the assembly platform will be almost the same as the street level

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level near the main (King-street) entrance to the station opposite Elizabeth-street; and access will be given from the assembly platform to the train platforms by means of ramps, having a grade of 1 in 8, the difference of level being 13 feet. In the busy hours of the day, however, passengers will be able to pass out on the level, under the assembly platform, into Castlereagh-street.

33. *Dr. Garran.*] Where would cabs draw up? Either in King-street or in Castlereagh-street. No special cabway is provided inside this station, such as was provided at the St. James' Road station.

34. *Chairman.*] The level of the station will be somewhere about the present level of the ground at the intersection of Elizabeth-street and King-street? Yes.

35. Going westward, down King-street to Castlereagh-street, there is a slope of about 13 feet? Yes. The street level at the intersection of Elizabeth-street and King-street is about 190 feet, whereas the level of the assembly platform would be 186 feet, the difference of 4 feet being easily made up by allowing an easy fall outside the station and through the main building.

36. *Mr. Watson.*] And there will be a further fall from the assembly platform to the train platforms? Yes; a fall of 13 feet. The level of the train platforms will be 173 feet. The train platforms will be very nearly at the same level as Castlereagh-street.

37. *Dr. Garran.*] If a man drove up to the Castlereagh-street entrance in a cab his luggage would have to be taken up 13 ft. to get to the assembly platform? A man coming to the station in a cab would come to the King-street entrance, and from there his progress would be downwards towards the train platform. A covered way is provided for cabs, but they could also draw up along the colonnade in front of the building where the roadway is not under cover.

38. Does the colonnade extend the whole length of the front of the building? Yes.

39. *Chairman.*] What would be the length of the train platforms? Six hundred feet.

40. Is that enough for all modern requirements? That is the length arranged for by the traffic officers of the Railway Commissioners. There would be room for at least half a dozen cabs in the covered way in front of the building, the available length of platform there at which they could draw up being about 100 feet.

41. Would cabs be able to take in and to put out luggage along that length of 100 feet without any trouble? Yes.

42. *Mr. Dick.*] All people going away by train would have to go on to the assembly platform? They would have to go there in order to procure their tickets. It must be remembered that the levels in Sydney are very varied and cannot easily be altered. You must have your ticket office at a certain level, and people requiring tickets must go up to or get down to that level. People coming from Castlereagh-street would have to go up-hill to get to the ticket office, while people coming from the top of King-street would have to go down-hill.

43. *Chairman.*] In continuing your four lines of rail into the Domain, how would you cross King-street? It is proposed to go under King-street. The rails will be 3 feet below the level of the train platforms—that is, they will be at a level of 170 feet, whereas King-street is at a level of 190-feet; so that there will be a difference of 20 feet.

44. Will all the rails between the platforms be 20 feet below the level of King-street? Yes; all the rails between the platforms will be at the same level.

45. *Dr. Garran.*] The rails passing between the platforms on the Castlereagh-street side of the station could not go under King-street? No; but it is not intended that they should go under King-street.

46. If it were necessary to take trains from those platforms into the Domain they would have to be shunted back into the yard and then taken over the rails passing between the easterly platforms? Yes.

47. *Chairman.*] Is not 1 in 8 a pretty steep grade for the ramps leading down from the assembly platforms to the train platforms? It would be steep for cab or dray traffic, but not for pedestrian traffic.

48. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the grade of the ramp leading down to the subway at Redfern? I think it is 1 in 7. 1 in 8 is a better grade than we often get elsewhere; but if it had been possible I would have made the grade still less.

49. *Chairman.*] In Mr. Eddy's opinion, it was of great importance that, in building a station, you should obtain a level piece of ground as a site, to avoid these ramps and inclines that you speak of? Yes; but where you cannot get a level site, you must accommodate yourself to the levels that exist at the site which is fixed upon. A level space of ground was provided in front of the St. James' Road station by setting that station well back from the road, and the same thing could be done at King-street; but by doing it you would lose much valuable space.

50. *Dr. Garran.*] If you set the King-street station further back, you would have to go further back with your cross roads and points? Yes. I would also recall to your recollection the fact that the St. James' Road station was a terminal station, where eleven platforms were provided, the Railway Commissioners being of the opinion that that would be a sufficient number of platforms to deal with the traffic for practically all time. It was not intended to extend any of the lines running into the station beyond St. James' Road, though it was pointed out that that might be done in the future, if it was thought necessary. With the King-street scheme, however, the extension of four lines through the station and on into the Domain is a feature of the scheme, the extension being designed in order to allow of a reduction in the number of platforms, and thus in the width of the station; so that at King-street only nine platforms are provided, whereas eleven platforms were provided at St. James' Road. If at King-street the assembly platform were placed at the level of Castlereagh-street, it would prevent any of the lines being taken further. The lines which it is proposed to take into the Domain could not, upon such an arrangement, be carried on without breaking up the assembly platform, and thus spoiling its usefulness.

51. In the scheme which we are considering, St. James' Road would be closed? Yes.

52. Is it because you provide for fewer platforms at King-street than you did at St. James' Road that you take four lines of rail through into the Domain? Yes. Without that arrangement you could not work the traffic at King-street with only nine platforms. Mr. Parry will be able to explain to you the working of this arrangement, because it is really a traffic question. At St. James' Road we had a roomy station site, but at King-street we are limited to the width between Castlereagh-street and 80 feet on the eastern side of Elizabeth-street, and within those limits it is not possible to make the same arrangements as we made at St. James' Road. We had to cut our coat according to our cloth, and to adjust the traffic arrangements to the available space. Although the extra expense of extending these lines of rail

to

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53. What would be the cost of the extension to Sir John Young's Crescent? The total cost of the line from King-street to Sir John Young's Crescent would be £244,000, including the carriage-sheds.

54. *Chairman.*] The scheme under consideration involves the closing of St. James' Road and the resumption of the sites of the Registrar-General's Office and of the Supreme Court? Yes.

55. But it would not interfere with St. James' Church? No.

56. What would be the length of the tunnel from King-street to the Domain? About 1,000 yards.

57. The large curve shown on the plan is made, I suppose, in order to get a proper grade? Well, it is required really more to enable us to get a workable radius.

58. What is the distance from Redfern to King-street and from King-street to the carriage-sheds at Sir John Young's Crescent? The distance from Redfern to the south end of the train platform at King-street is 1 mile 1 chain, and the distance from the northern end of the platforms at King-street to the carriage-sheds is about 75 chains.

59. *Mr. Shepherd.*] There would be some difficulty in connecting the King-street extension with a bridge to North Shore, would there not? There would be no difficulty in turning off at the end of Hyde Park, and getting round to the other side of the city. I have found that that would work out quite easily.

60. *Chairman.*] Will you explain to us the manner in which the carriage-sheds of Sir John Young's Crescent will be used? I would suggest that Mr. Parry should be asked to explain the actual working of the proposed extension into the Domain. I understand that at the easterly platforms, directly incoming trains have discharged their passengers, they will proceed to the carriage-sheds in the Domain. So far as outgoing trains are concerned, they will come from the Domain, and will receive their passengers at King-street, each train, when it is loaded, being replaced by another empty train. This is an admirable arrangement for dealing with heavy traffic in a very short space of time, and enables you to load and discharge more trains than you can deal with in any other way. I believe that at the four easterly platforms the Commissioners will be able to deal with many more trains than could have been dealt with at the six corresponding platforms which would have been provided at St. James' Road.

61. I understand that the ground taken at Sir John Young's Crescent is not to be used for workshops or for anything besides carriage waiting-sheds? That is so.

62. Therefore there will be no noise of manufacturing created in the neighbourhood? No.

63. Is it intended to put up fairly ornamental buildings in the Domain? Yes, that will be done; a suitable design will be adopted.

64. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you considered whether it would cost much more to go down to the Circular Quay, and thus bring the railway into contact with the ferry traffic, and still have it available as part of an eastern suburbs extension? If the line were taken down to Circular Quay, it would not be equally available for an eastern suburbs extension, and it would not give the shunting facilities which are given by the extension into the Domain. To get to the Circular Quay, a long tunnel is required until the Domain is passed through, and the space available at the Quay is not at all as suitable for the purpose intended. If part of Government House grounds were taken, it would destroy the beauty of those grounds; but in taking part of the Domain near Sir John Young's Crescent, very little damage is done, because the land there is very steep, and is not very much used at the present time. If you glance at the map you will see that a line to the Circular Quay would not be of much assistance in the event of an extension to the eastern suburbs, whereas the proposed line to Sir John Young's Crescent goes in the direction of the eastern suburbs, and could not take a much better route to get there. You could not go much nearer the Art Gallery without doing damage.

65. *Mr. Levien.*] What would be the cost of the tunnel through the Domain? £137,000.

66. Providing for four lines of rail? Yes. If we only provided for two lines of rail the cost would be only about half that amount.

67. *Chairman.*] Are the Committee to understand that the scheme before us is one suggested by you, or one suggested to you by persons in authority? It is not my scheme. It is a scheme prepared under instructions from the Secretary for Public Works.

68. With a view to taking as little of Hyde Park as possible? Yes. I was instructed as to the direction in which to carry the line, and as to how much of Hyde Park I might take for the purpose.

69. *Mr. Levien.*] Were you instructed by the present Minister? Yes.

70. *Dr. Garran.*] You compound for not taking so much of Hyde Park by taking some of the Domain? Yes; but what we take is not very valuable ground. The Committee has before it a very workable scheme. While I do not think the King-street scheme as good as the St. James's Road scheme, by a long way, if we are forbidden to take as much of Hyde Park as the St. James' Road scheme would require, the King-street scheme is a very good substitute.

71. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The St. James' Road scheme requires a large portion of Hyde Park? Yes, nearly 13 acres.

72. *Chairman.*] I suppose there are other officials who will be able to give us information in regard to the land resumption required by the Hyde Park scheme? The figures which I have given to the Committee were obtained from Mr. Sievers, the Government Land Valuer. I have included £748,000 for land resumption.

73. Does that amount include the value of the site of the Registrar-General's Office and of the Supreme Court, and provide for the erection of new buildings in place of those that will be destroyed? Yes.

74. Have you a list of the properties which it is proposed to resume? No, but I will procure that information.

75. *Dr. Garran.*] Has Mr. Sievers estimated the value of the Hyde Park land which it is proposed to resume? No. I think that only land for which money has been paid by the Government is included in the valuation.

76. *Mr. Watson.*] New sites would have to be purchased for the Supreme Court and the Registrar-General's Office if the present building were destroyed? Yes; but it would not be necessary to purchase another piece of land to make up for the strip of Hyde Park which it is proposed to take.

77. *Chairman.*] Any extension of the railway into Sydney, and the construction of a large terminal station on the Benevolent Asylum site, involves the alteration of Devonshire-street? Yes.
78. Do you favour any particular scheme of those which have been put before us, or do you prefer to take a neutral position in regard to them all? I prefer to take a neutral position, as I have done in the past. I am prepared to show you the advantages and disadvantages of each scheme submitted; but I do not wish to recommend any particular scheme. I wish to remain perfectly neutral so that I can deal in an impartial manner with any scheme which is put forward.
79. You wish to give evidence rather upon engineering questions connected with the route than upon the question of State policy? Yes.
80. Do you think that a railway into the city should deal with passenger traffic only, or with passenger and goods traffic? It is now the practice all the world over to entirely separate passenger traffic from goods traffic.
81. And in your opinion, if the railway is brought into Sydney it should provide only for passenger accommodation? Yes. If the Committee desire to consider the bringing of goods traffic into the city the question must be dealt with as a separate problem.
82. *Mr. Leven.*] In preparing these plans you had in view only passenger traffic? Yes.
83. *Chairman.*] What area do you propose to take for station premises at King-street? I will procure that information. At St. James' Road I think a length of about 550 feet was to be covered. There the ends of the platforms were left uncovered. Under the King-street scheme the area of Hyde Park to be taken would be about $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

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FRIDAY, 9 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.		ROBERT HENRY LEVEN, Esq.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.		JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

84. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Continuing our examination in regard to the proposed extension from Redfern to King-street, I should like to know what additional area of ground would be required at the terminal station to get rid of the necessity of making the long semi-circular extension through the Domain to the carriage-sheds at Sir John Young's Crescent? I think the question may be partly answered by giving you the proposed acreage of the St. James' Road station and of the King-street station respectively. The area of the St. James' Road station would be 10 acres 1 rood 24 perches, and the area of the King-street station 8 acres 3 roods 27 perches—an actual difference of an acre and a half in favour of the St. James' Road station; but, to give the same width at King-street as we should have at St. James' Road, another 3 acres would be required.
85. What additional width would be gained by taking another 3 acres? An additional width of about 100 feet.
86. Do you not think it would be better to take another 3 acres than to extend the railway into the Domain? Well, if another 3 acres were taken they would have to come out of the Park.
87. Would you require to take an extra strip of Park right back as far as Liverpool-street? No; only as far back as Park-street. At Park-street the station lines converge and join the main lines which lead into the city from Redfern.
88. What saving would there be by taking an extra 3 acres of Park? It is very difficult to say, without going into the matter carefully; but there would probably be a saving of from £120,000 to £150,000.
89. I suppose that, if the King-street station were widened, the trains would be dealt with similarly to the manner in which the trains are dealt with at the Princes' Bridge station in Melbourne? Yes; there would be traversers at the ends of the platforms to enable the engines to be got out and run back to the other end of the trains without moving the carriages. It was proposed to provide two sets of three rails each with traversers at St. James' Road, but probably traversers would also be put in the other docks as well. It must be borne in mind that, although by taking another 3 acres for the King-street station £120,000 or £150,000 might be saved, you would be without that portion of the eastern suburbs extension which would be provided by the line through the Domain.
90. Could not a line to the eastern suburbs branch off from some other point? King-street appears to be the most convenient place for it to commence at. If it came to King-street it would bring the eastern suburbs passengers right into the heart of the city, whereas if it came to Redfern it would not do that.
91. It is not proposed to have a passenger station on the line between King-street and Sir John Young's Crescent? No.
92. Would it not be possible to take a line to the eastern suburbs from Liverpool-street? The levels would not be convenient for such a line. In laying out a suburban line, one of the difficulties with which one has to contend is the need of crossing over or going beneath existing roads at such levels as not to interfere with the traffic upon them; level crossings are most undesirable. If you took an eastern suburbs extension from Liverpool-street, you would either have to make it a surface line, an altogether underground line, or an altogether overhead line; but if you went from King-street to the Domain, you could take advantage of a series of dips and ridges, and you need not inconvenience the existing traffic.
93. But would the distance not be greater if you went round through the Domain? I do not think so. You would not gain anything by going out from Liverpool-street.

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94. I do not want to confine you to Liverpool-street; I only want to know if there is not a more convenient way for starting out to the eastern suburbs than that which you have provided on the plan? I do not think that there is. After going through the Domain, the line would come out into Woolloomooloo, and cross the flat there on a viaduct. It would then tunnel under the ridge, and come out on the other side, near the Public School at the end of Liverpool-street. From there it would follow round in the direction of Hargrave-street, and in that way take advantage of a series of dips and rises all the way out. By locating the line in that way one could get over or under the existing roads without interfering with the traffic. It would be much more easy to deal with the existing roads with a line located as that line would be located, than to deal with them with a line following the surface of the ground along a ridge.
95. Is any extension of the King-street station provided for; or is it supposed that the accommodation you have designed will be sufficient for a very long period? I understand that the Railway Commissioners do not contemplate any extension, because they think that the accommodation which has been designed will be sufficient for a very long period.
96. Would the accommodation be capable of extension in the event of extension being necessary? The station could be widened on the Hyde Park side.
97. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the length of the Park frontage, from Liverpool-street to St. James' Road? About 2,310 feet, including Park-street; but Park-street will, of course, be bridged over.
98. How much of Hyde Park was it proposed to take for the St. James' Road scheme? Twelve acres 3 roods 39 perches, or very nearly 13 acres, including the open portion of the cut and cover work.
99. Do you consider the extension into the Domain a necessary adjunct of the King-street scheme? Yes, though the subject is one upon which the traffic officers of the Railway Commissioners could give you better information than I could.
100. If that extension were not made, could some other arrangement be made? I should prefer to leave that question to the Traffic Department; but if I had instructions to carry out the work without providing for that extension I could do so, and I could design the station accommodation in such a way that the extension could be made later on, if it were found afterwards to be necessary.
101. *Dr. Garran.*] What would be the area of the Devonshire-street station? It was proposed to take 22 acres 1 rood 20 perches there—the whole block.
102. I suppose that, ultimately, you will want the whole block? It would be very desirable to have it.
103. You would not advise the Government to take less, if it were determined to make a great central station there? No, especially as the place is so near Redfern. The land would be most useful for any extension of accommodation for carriages or other storage accommodation.
104. What is the total area of the present station yard at Redfern, including everything? The area of the Redfern station yard is 30 acres 1 rood, and the area occupied by platforms and approaches is 6 acres 2 roods.
105. At Redfern, only a part of the whole station yard is really given up for passenger traffic? That is so.
106. Would the proposed extension into the Domain interfere with any sewers? I have ascertained that it would not.
107. What is the area of the piece of land near Sir John Young's Crescent that you have set aside for carriage-sheds and for shunting purposes? 8 acres 3 roods.
108. Is that the area of all the land taken in the Domain, commencing at the mouth of the tunnel? Yes.
109. Adding to that the 4½ acres taken from Hyde Park, it is seen that altogether about 13½ acres of public reserve would be required for the King-street scheme? Yes.
110. While for the St. James' Road scheme you would require less than 13 acres of public reserve? Yes.
111. But, though you are now proposing to take more of the public reserve than you would take by the St. James' Road scheme, you think that you are taking land which would be very much less missed? Yes.
112. In a scheme which you submitted to a previous Board of Inquiry, you showed an extension running northward, with a station at the Customs House to connect with the ferry traffic;—would the King-street scheme lend itself to such an extension? The extension could be made, but the grade down to the Custom House would be a bad one. The extension to which you refer was submitted to the first Royal Commission.
113. And to the second Royal Commission? No; it was not submitted to the second Royal Commission. Mr. Eddy, finding that strong objections were raised to the utilisation of Hyde Park, submitted the extension you speak of as an alternative; but it is only right to add that he himself said afterwards that he was very sorry that he had suggested it, because, although the extension could be carried out, it did not lend itself to future requirements, not being capable of enlargement.
114. Was it proposed that the main city station should be somewhere near the Customs House? In the scheme to which you are referring, no provision was made for a main central station. There was to be a station of some size, having five or six platforms, at the High School site, and another station near the Custom House; and, while some of the trains were to stop at the High School station, others would be taken on to the Customs House. The scheme, however, is one which should be no longer considered, because I am sure that Mr. Eddy would not have submitted it again. It did not allow of extension in accordance with increased traffic requirements, and it provided for a grade of 1 in 45, which would have limited the length of the trains run upon it.
115. All I wanted to know was whether the King-street scheme would lend itself to the same extension? The extension would be possible; but it is not to be recommended. It was never proposed that there should be an extension from the St. James' Road station to the Custom House.
116. The St. James' Road station would have been practically on a level with Elizabeth-street? Yes; as nearly as possible.
117. At St. James' Road the eastern lines could be run under King-street without altering their level, and without raising the roads; but, in making an extension from Park-street, you could only get under the ground by lowering some of the lines? Yes.
118. At St. James' Road the two eastern sets of rails would not have to be altered to enable you to get under the road? No.
119. In planning transit arrangements for a city, is it not desirable to see that what the Americans call "good connections" are made;—should not one set of traffic arrangements be brought into as close connection as possible with another set? No doubt.

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120. Your scheme does not provide for a connection between the railway transit accommodation and the ferry transit accommodation? No; but the object of the proposed extension is to bring the western suburban traffic into the heart of the city. A corresponding movement in regard to the ferry traffic would, of course, be absurd.

121. Then the ferry passengers who want to use the railway will have to take the electric tram to get from the steamers to the trains? Yes.

122. Both the Hyde Park schemes leave the railway passengers on the edge of the business portion of the city? No; they leave them close to the business centre of the city.

123. On the eastern side of either of the Hyde Park stations the ground is principally occupied by public reserves as far as Woolloomooloo Bay;—there are no business properties on that side? No.

124. Almost the only traffic east of Elizabeth-street is that towards Parliament House and the Government offices at the end of Macquarie-street? It must not be forgotten that a great many places in Castlereagh-street, Elizabeth-street, and Phillip-street are occupied by business people.

125. But the bulk of the business people go down into Pitt-street, George-street, and the streets on the other side of George-street? Yes.

126. Then you are not putting down the majority of your suburban passengers in the business centre of the city? No; but you are putting them down in a place as near to the centre of the city as you can get. You cannot get to the centre of the city.

127. It is only a question of price;—what about Wynyard-square or the Town Hall as possible sites? They would not be large enough. Ultimately, of course, the question resolves itself into one of price.

128. Every man cannot be put down at his own door; but would it not be possible, instead of going to great expense in bringing the railway into the city, to make a terminal station on this side of Devonshire-street, and from there run three or four lines of electric tramway down parallel streets into the city;—would that not distribute the traffic better? It would distribute it better, but I am very doubtful if it would give more convenience to railway passengers. If the railway were brought to King-street they would reach the terminal station from Redfern by train in three or four minutes; whereas if they had to get out at Devonshire-street they would lose as much as that in changing from the train to the tram, and, in addition, there would be the time of the tram journey to the point at which they wished to finally alight.

129. If the western platform or platforms were kept for the suburban traffic, and the electric trams run up close to the platforms, it would take very little time for passengers to transfer from the trains to the trams? One platform would not be enough for dealing with the suburban traffic, because there are often three or four trains coming in at the same time. The four lines of tram which you speak of would cost a great deal of money. The George-street tramway, and its proportion of the expense of the power-house, cost £130,000; so that four such tramways would cost £500,000.

130. But would not the use of the existing power-house somewhat reduce that cost? No. As the various tramways now existing are converted to electric traction, and the service is increased in efficiency, the power-house will not be found to be more than large enough to deal with them.

131. The power-house is only intended to provide power for electric trams on the existing tramways? Yes. For every 2 or 3 miles of electric tram constructed similarly to the George-street tramway you must put down £100,000. When you take into consideration the cost of disturbing the surface of the streets, renewing the wood-blocking, and other expenses of that kind, you find that the cost of constructing these street tramways is very great.

132. The St. James' Road scheme was to cost between £600,000 and £700,000? The works were to cost £550,000, and the resumptions another £100,000, or £650,000 altogether.

133. And Mr. Eddy estimated that a slight increase in the passenger fares would enable him to obtain a fair interest return on that expenditure? Yes; the line would have paid more than interest on the expenditure.

134. It is now proposed to expend £1,500,000, or £350,000 more than would have been expended upon the St. James' Road scheme;—do you think that interest can be obtained on that expenditure by increasing the passenger fares? If the estimate of the Railway Commissioners is right, the increase of traffic would be enough to pay 3 per cent. interest on very nearly £1,000,000; so that with a scheme costing £1,500,000, there would be £500,000 upon which no interest would be paid. I would point out, however, that if a main central station were constructed on the northern side of Devonshire-street that would cost nearly £500,000, and the capital expended would be equally unproductive, while the convenience to the public which would be given by the extension to the city would not be given by that scheme.

135. And, even if no new station is made on the Benevolent Asylum site, it will cost £500,000 to rearrange the Redfern station accommodation to make it suitable for the traffic? Yes.

136. Without any extra return? Yes.

137. So that we should have so much dead expenditure in any case? Yes; unless the St. James' Road scheme were adopted.

138. We have not kept our station arrangements up to date? Attempts have been made at various times during the last thirty years to improve matters, but the right scheme has never been fixed upon.

139. We have never taken the bull by the horns? No; because the public would not allow anything to be done.

140. Do you not think that if we do anything now we should not trifle with the question? Yes. We should carry the railway into the city by some means or another. I am sure, from what I know of the experience of other cities, that the proper thing to do with suburban traffic is to carry it to some convenient spot right in the city. In no large city is a pair or two pairs of surface tramway rails anything like sufficient for the traffic. In the American cities they have overhead lines and are preparing underground lines, as well as street tramways; but still they grumble that the means of communication are inadequate.

141. When you were in America, did you hear any comparison between the cost of bringing railways into cities, and making electric trams through the streets of cities? In America they build their elevated railways very cheaply, and indeed they would be rather flimsy for our trains, so that system is not one which I should recommend. Though, no doubt, the trains are a great convenience, the overhead running does a great deal of damage to property, and when I was in America in 1894 claims arising out of the construction of overhead railways in New York were still being prosecuted.

142. The levelness of the New York streets is favourable to the construction of overhead railways, whereas in Sydney the differences of level would be against their construction, because they would require either very tall supports or pretty steep grades? Yes.

143.

- H. Deane. 143. Is there any tendency in America to make electric street tramways supersede elevated railways or ordinary railways? No; very strong objections are raised in the principal cities of America now against the running of trains on the street level.
- 9 Feb., 1900. 144. That is, ordinary locomotive trains? Yes.
145. But is not the cost of making trains on the English system so great that there is a preference for electric street tramways in the cities? Nearly all of the suburban traffic of American cities is done by electric tramways, except where, as in New York, Brooklyn, and Chicago, they have overhead railways. These overhead railways do not connect with the main railway systems.
146. In the early days, the Americans carried their railways through the streets of the city for the sake of cheapness;—if they had been forced to stay outside with their lines, as the English companies were, would they now be bringing their railways into the city by the English method, or would they be dealing with the traffic by constructing tramways? Railway companies dealing with suburban traffic would bring their lines right into the city. At Buffalo, and some other places, the railway companies are being compelled now to get rid of level street crossings. As a rule the American railway companies do not deal very much with suburban traffic; it is nearly all done by the street tramways.
147. Could we deal with the suburban traffic in that way here, without going to the enormous expense of bringing the railway into the city? To do so, you would have to run your trams out on the suburban railway line; otherwise you would have a break at the railway terminus. Now, although the trams require the same gauge of rail as our trains, their wheel gauge is very different, and the small tram-car wheels would in some cases drop in at the points and crossings, or else cause the cars to jolt very greatly at the crossings.
148. Did your experience in America convince you that we could not do, by means of electric tramways, what must otherwise be done by costly railways? I do not think that electric tramways will altogether meet our requirements. What is needed for the eastern suburbs is an electric railway—neither the steam railway nor an electric road tramway.
149. A railway on which electricity would be used as the motive force? Yes. Such a railway could be constructed more cheaply than an ordinary steam railway, because it would permit of sharper curves and steeper grades being used.
150. If the proposed extension from King-street through the Domain is likely to be used hereafter for an eastern suburban railway, it would be hardly fair to charge its cost to the King-street scheme? I certainly think it should be looked upon as part of an eastern suburbs extension.
151. *Mr. Dick.*] Which was the main determining factor in bringing the authorities to ask for an extension of the railway into the city—the dangerous condition of the Redfern terminus, or a desire to meet the convenience of the travelling public? I think that both factors have been important. The immediate necessity of the extension into the city perhaps results more from the difficulties and dangers now existing at Redfern than from any other consideration; but the desirability of bringing the traffic into the city has always been kept in view from the very earliest history of the movement, before there was any talk about Redfern being overcrowded.
152. Taking a rough view of the present station yard at Redfern, it would appear to a non-professional observer that the large space there occupied at the present time by the produce traffic and carriage-shed accommodation, would be more than sufficient as a site for a terminal station such as you propose to construct at King-street or St. James' Road,—would it be possible to temporarily remove the Redfern goods traffic to Darling Harbour and to build a new and commodious terminal station upon the site which it now occupies, bringing it back to Redfern later on, and dealing with it on the site of the present passenger station there? That would be a very costly thing to do, and I do not think that much would be gained by doing it. The officers of the Railway Commissioners would be able to give you better information as to the result of removing the goods traffic from Redfern than I can give; but I do not think there is room for it in the Darling Harbour yard, and, consequently, its temporary removal from Redfern would be a matter of extreme difficulty.
153. If the changes which I have suggested were carried out, would there still be a serious danger at Redfern in the narrowness of the tunnel which gives approach to the station from Eveleigh? In my opinion there is, in all probability, room for a decent passenger station at Redfern, if everything else could be cleared away; but the situation would not be a very convenient one. The new site which you suggest would be further away from George-street and from the city than the present Redfern Station is, and I do not think it would meet with popular approval.
154. The advantage to be gained is so small, and the cost of obtaining it so great, that you do not consider the idea worthy of consideration? I do not. I should like to add that the rearrangement of the present Redfern Station yard, and the erection of new buildings, would be very costly, and almost impossible.
155. What necessity is there for putting the platforms at the proposed King-street station practically underground? The slope of King-street is very great, so that if you had your platforms on a level with the surface at the north-eastern corner of the station site they would be very much above the level of Castlereagh-street; whereas, if you placed them at the level of Castlereagh-street, they would be very much below the level of the eastern part of King-street. The station has, therefore, been laid out so that the train platforms shall be nearly on the same level as the north-west corner of King-street. The train platforms will be 173 feet above mean sea level, and the surface at the north-west corner of the site is about 175 feet above mean sea level, whereas the surface at the junction of Elizabeth-street and King-street is 15 feet above that.
156. Would it be practicable to have the main assembly platform open all along the front of the building; as the station is designed, all the passenger traffic will have to go through a central archway, and then spread out again inside on the assembly platform? That is considered the proper way of laying out the station. Mr. Parry pointed out to the Committee the other day the difficulties which are caused by the present arrangement of the Redfern platforms. The proper arrangement is one in which the booking-offices, waiting-rooms, and other places for the accommodation of the public are placed in the front part of the station, between the entrance and the assembly platform. There can be no hardship in requiring all passengers to go through the archway you speak of to get to the assembly platform, because all but season ticket-holders will have to go there in order to secure their tickets. From the assembly platform the traffic will distribute itself on to the various train platforms.
157. What will be the width of the main entrance? The details have not been thoroughly worked out yet, but it will probably be about 30 feet.

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158. A railway to the eastern suburbs would practically meet with the difficulty occasioned by deficient tram accommodation? Yes; and in the course of a few years two lines of tramway will not be sufficient to carry the eastern suburbs traffic. The accommodation in Oxford-street is not sufficient now to enable a good service to be given.

159. Would a railway set passengers down as close to their residences—especially a railway running greatly over viaducts and through tunnels—as tramways would do? The lay of the country does not allow of much extension of tramways.

160. Could not cable tramways be made:—a cable tramway will go over the steepest grades? Yes; but there are only two main thoroughfares by which you can get access to the eastern suburbs—that is, the suburbs north of the Centennial Park—the Old South Head Road and the New South Head Road. Trains would carry more passengers than the present trams, and would convey quickly to their destinations people coming from long distances. Passengers by train would be conveyed into the city much more conveniently than passengers by trams which had to stop at nearly every street corner all the way in; and I think suburban residents would sooner take a few minutes' walk, and come in by train, than come in from long distances by tram.

161. The long tunnel through the Domain and the shorter tunnels further on would prevent you from using steam-power on any eastern suburbs railway extension? I think that electricity would be the proper power to use for such a line. I would not put in more tunnels than could be helped.

162. We may roughly divide the passengers which now come to Redfern by train into two classes—the long-distance class, who would be just as well served, and perhaps better served, by being put down at Redfern or Belmore-road as by being put down at King-street, and the suburban class? There are really three classes of train passengers: the suburban passengers; the passengers by what may be called semi-suburban trains—passengers who come into the city daily by trains running from Moss Vale, Katoomba, and Hornsby; and long-distance passengers; but the first two classes comprise nearly the whole of the traffic, because the long-distance trains are not very numerous, and they come in and depart either before the heavy traffic of the day has commenced or after it is over.

163. Would it not suit the long-distance passenger as well to be set down at Redfern as at King-street? I do not think so; but still it does not matter so much to him.

164. So far as the daily passenger traffic is concerned, would not a number of parallel tramways into the city be more convenient than a terminal station at King-street? I do not think so. A loss of time is occasioned by exchanging from trains to trams, which the passengers do not appreciate.

165. Which do you think occasions the greater loss of time—the changing from tram to train, as at present, or the walking from King-street down to Sussex-street? I do not know that a Sussex-street man would take the train to King-street. I do not think that such a man uses the steam trams at the present time. The Commissioners took, no doubt, as a basis for their calculation of traffic the number of passengers carried by the steam trams which run along Elizabeth-street.

166. *Chairman.*] You say that the alteration of the Redfern station arrangements, with a view to providing better accommodation there, is undesirable;—would you, as a working engineer, care to undertake the responsibility of making the alteration while business was being carried on there as usual? No; I would rather be excused.

167. Would not any such alteration be attended with a very great amount of risk to the travelling public? Yes. In my opinion the only way to improve Redfern would be to extend the station to the northern side of Devonshire-street, and to lay down your lines and build your platforms and station accommodation there, joining up, when everything was ready, with the existing lines at Redfern, and closing the old station directly you commenced to use the new one.

168. Is it not a fact that the suburban traffic amounts to three-fourths of the whole railway traffic of the Colony? I do not know; but I know that the proportion is very large.

169. If that is so, the suburban passengers would seem to be the people who are mostly concerned in any railway extension? Yes.

170. Do you think it is reasonable that people coming into the city should, after making a five-minutes' journey in the train, be compelled to change into a tram and then make another ten-minutes' journey, simply to go a distance of a few miles? No.

171. It has been suggested that electric trams might be run out to the suburbs; but you could not deal with the traffic from Burwood or Ashfield satisfactorily in that way;—trams running along a highway cannot travel with the rapidity with which trains can be run along an enclosed railway track? That is so.

172. At the present time, do not tramways run alongside the railways to many of the Melbourne suburbs? Yes; there is a good deal of competition between the trams and the trains there.

173. It takes nearly half an hour to come in from Waverley, a distance of a little over 2 miles;—is that a reasonable rate of speed? Of course a great saving of time would be effected if there were a railway.

174. What is the estimated cost of the office accommodation provided at King-street? I have put down £168,000 as the cost of the buildings there.

175. That does not include the platform covering? No; the roof over the platforms would cost £61,000. A great deal of accommodation is provided. At the present time the Railway Commissioners pay £1,200 a year for the accommodation which they occupy in the Public Works buildings.

176. How many floors do the Commissioners occupy at King-street, independent of the ground-floor? Three. The building covers a width of 275 feet and a depth of about 60 feet.

177. Would it accommodate the whole of the Commissioners' staff? It would accommodate the Commissioners and the administrative staff, which is now housed in the Public Works buildings, as well as a number of offices, like those of the Electric Engineer's Department, the Tramway Traffic Branch, and other outside offices, and the offices which are now located at Redfern.

178. The whole of the administrative and clerical staff of the Department would be under the one roof? Yes.

179. I suppose that would be a very great advantage? Yes.

180. Did you consult the Railway Commissioners in reference to the accommodation that they would require, and then draw your plans accordingly? Yes. The design was submitted to the Commissioners in December, and accommodation was then provided equal to what was required by the Commissioners at St. James' Road. Since then, however, it has been pointed out to me that the Commissioners would like to bring in a number of other officers, and I have therefore increased the estimate by £30,000. For £168,000

H. Deane, £168,000 accommodation would be provided for a parcels-office, which would be situated in the south-west corner of the building, booking offices, waiting-rooms, refreshment-rooms, lavatories, and all the space requisite for the convenience of the public, as well as the office accommodation to which I have referred. 9 Feb., 1900.

181. Do you propose to provide for a station between Redfern and King-street? No; the Railway Commissioners object to an intermediate station between the two points.

182. Will you now describe to us what is known as the Devonshire-street scheme? Yes. The following is a description of what it is proposed to do if the railway is not taken beyond Belmore-road:—

EXTENSION OF REDFERN RAILWAY STATION TO NORTH SIDE OF DEVONSHIRE-STREET.

THE extension proposed is from Devonshire-street to Belmore-road, and the station and approaches will occupy all the ground bounded by Devonshire-street on the south, Belmore-road on the north, a line extending from Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road on the east, and Pitt-street on the west.

Provision is made for eleven platforms, each 650 feet in length, and varying in width from 22 feet to 35 feet, with two and three roads between the platforms, and traversers at the ends. The assembly platform is 80 feet wide. The whole is covered with a roof 640 feet long and 395 feet wide, in two spans. Provision is made for extending six lines further into the city without interfering with the station buildings.

A cab-road, 25 feet wide, is provided inside the station for the convenience of the country traffic, with entrance from Devonshire-street, and exit by tunnel under station buildings to Belmore-road.

The main station buildings, which will face the approach road off Belmore-road, are proposed to be three storeys in height, with attics. They are planned to accommodate the whole of the Railway Commissioners' and Traffic Staffs, and, in addition to an entrance-hall, the usual provisions for the general public, with all the latest improvements, are made.

Aspinall's patent carrier will be provided for the shifting of luggage.

On the west side are buildings two storeys in height, extending the whole length of the platforms for traffic offices.

On this side also suitable arrangements will be made for the interchange between the railway and electric tramway system.

It is proposed to close Devonshire-street, except for a subway for foot-passengers, and for an approach to cab-road into station. In lieu thereof a new street would be constructed, 75 feet wide, from the intersection of Devonshire-street and Castlereagh-street to Belmore-road; and Belmore-road and Gipps-street would be widened.

The Pitt-street approach will be widened to 70 feet, and a subway made from here to the platform. At end of building subways are also provided for from Garden-road to end platform in station.

The rails in new station will be connected temporarily with the rails at present platforms in Redfern Station, and when the new station is complete, and the traffic brought into it, the old roads in the present station will be shifted, and the old yard and buildings remodelled, so as to be more compact and convenient for working.

Length—17 chains.

Estimated cost—General works	£138,000
Interlocking	15,000
Station buildings	233,000
Lighting	5,000
Alterations to Redfern Station	30,000
	<hr/>
	£421,000

Resumptions

£140,600

The following is the report of the Railway Commissioners upon the proposal:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 25 November, 1899.

Proposal to erect a Central Railway Station and Administrative Office on the north side of Devonshire-street, and extend the Railway System of the Colony thereto.

COMPLYING with the request made by letter dated the 24th instant, at the instance of the Secretary for Public Works, and in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act of 1888, section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction (exclusive of land and compensation) at

£421,000

Annual cost—

Capital expenditure at 3 per cent.

£12,630

Cost of maintenance, and for traffic, locomotive, and other expenses

1,830

Total annual cost

£14,460

A perfect terminal station could be constructed on this site, and relief, which is most desirable, could be afforded to the existing Sydney station; but this scheme labours under the serious disadvantage that it does not provide an extension into the city, and, consequently, no additional convenience would be given to the public for which a charge could be made, thus leaving the interest on the capital cost a charge to be borne for all time by the general taxpayer. Further, if at any future time an extension into Sydney is made, the large expenditure now proposed would be to a very large extent wasted.

The latter contingency is one that must be borne in mind. Travelers by rail have long demanded a better means of transit than now exists from the present locality to the northern or business part of the city, and the scheme now proposed does not meet that demand.

With a large traffic, which must necessarily grow, it is impossible to deal with it satisfactorily by tramways, and in our opinion a new terminus, to fully meet the merits of the case, must be located in a position more convenient to the business portion of the city. This would enable revenue to be earned on the necessary expenditure, while it would avoid the delay and discomfort of changing to and from the trams, and free the city from the congestion which must result if the city passengers have still to be brought into the city by the street transit.

The Devonshire-street scheme will be a convenience so far as the railway working is concerned; but commercially it would be of no advantage, nor would it meet the convenience of the public. We would, therefore, urge the reconsideration of the matter, with the view to a scheme being suggested which would more likely be financially a success and a greater benefit to the travelling public.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed, this twenty-fifth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, in the presence of,—

H. McLACHLAN.

{ CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

With regard to the estimate of cost, I should like to add a few words. It will be seen that the general works are provided for at a pretty high figure, considering the shortness of the extension and that the station building will be more expensive than the station building provided for at King-street. A glance at the drawing before the Committee will, however, show the reason of this. There is a difference of level of 35 feet between the rails in the Redfern yard and the corner of Pitt-street and the Belmore-road, and, therefore, the north-western corner of the proposed station buildings would have to be built up at very great expense, and a raised road approach must also be provided for. To a large extent this extra expenditure may prove a good investment, because underneath the raised roadway shops and stores can be arranged for, and they would bring in a good return.

183. With that exception, are the two buildings very nearly identical? The two buildings are not identical; but the accommodation provided is practically the same in each case. At Devonshire-street the approach to the station would be on the west side, whereas at King-street it would be on the north side and at the north-west corner. Then at King-street all the offices are placed in one building, which stands at the head of the train platforms; but at Devonshire-street it has been found convenient to provide for a number of offices in a wing facing Pitt-street. Such an arrangement is not practicable at King-street, because of the want of width. The road approaches have been arranged so that the first six lines on the eastern side of the station can be taken over the Belmore-road on a high-level bridge without interfering with the road traffic. As will be seen by the drawing to which I have referred the road rearrangement is very considerable.

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184. *Dr. Garran.*] The shops to which you have referred will be practically situated in so many archways under the built-up roadway? Yes.

185. *Chairman.*] As regards office accommodation and accommodation for the public, the two buildings are very similar? They are practically identical. The space devoted to each service will practically be the same in each case; but there is a different arrangement of it.

TUESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The HON. PATRICK LINDESEY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

186. *Chairman.*] When we adjourned on Friday you had stated that, as regards office accommodation and accommodation for the public, the two buildings are practically identical—that the space devoted to each service will practically be the same in each case; but there is a different arrangement of it;—will you explain how one differs from the other? The arrangement is different to suit the ground, that is all. I think I began by stating that in the design submitted by the present Government to the Committee the building is in the front. There is no room for any building at the side, but on the Benevolent Asylum site, a very large area being resumed, there is plenty of width, so that it was found convenient to put a lot of offices along the side, and also to make the main entrance to the station on the side. I think that explains the reason for the difference.

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187. That will involve, I suppose, a much more expensive building at Devonshire-street than at King-street? Yes; not on account of its being split up in this way or lengthened, but on account of the foundations. The difference of level, as I pointed out the other day, on the centre line—the centre line as extended towards the city—is 21 feet. Down in the north-west corner it is very much greater; it is over 30 feet.

188. Seeing that you are providing for a number of shops on the north-western corner of the Devonshire-street buildings, I suppose the rent of the shops will largely compensate for the increased expenditure on the building? Yes, that will bring in revenue. I have not submitted any estimate of what it will be.

189. Will you now explain the tramway service approach to the station? Yes. I should like to say, in regard to the tramway, it is at present a mere suggestion—it requires working out. Whether it is the best which can be adopted or not is a matter for later consideration; but it is quite a workable one. I have discussed the matter with the Railway Commissioners, and I was asked by them to state to the Committee that they wished it understood that they should not be bound to adopt this particular method. Gipps-street it is proposed to widen, as I mentioned in my description of the scheme. That will not only provide room for the traffic leaving the station, but will provide for the two lines of trams leaving George-street, and going along Gipps-street and Belmore-road. The left-hand line—that is to say, the line to the station—turns off and passes under the retaining wall at the front of the station, and then rises on a grade.

190. It goes to the east of the present Benevolent Asylum? I think it will actually traverse the ground occupied by the Benevolent Asylum.

191. Would you not say that, after leaving Belmore-road, it will go through the ground occupied by the Police Barracks? Yes; and rising on a grade, it would become parallel to the offices on the western side of the station, and passengers would be able to enter and leave the trams at the footpath outside the station, which would practically become a tram platform.

192. At what level, as regards the level of the trains? At the same level as the platforms inside.

193. Much about the same as it is now? Yes. At the southern end several loops are shown for cars to stand. Then the line takes a turn round and joins on to the George-street line leading down to Circular Quay. A fork is also shown to connect with the lines going west. I have also shown two lines continuing along Belmore Road and turning into the new street which it is proposed to make along the western boundary of the property. It is proposed on this scheme to divert the Botany trams, and to take them across Belmore Park on to the new street.

194. Which would be in line with Castlereagh-street, and to the west of Elizabeth-street? Yes. There

H. Deane. is another way in which the Botany trams could be dealt with, and that also is worth consideration. It was proposed some years ago to take a branch up Regent-street, and join on to Botany-street further along.

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194. There is an agitation going on now with that very object in view? Yes. In that case there would be no necessity to pass under the railway at all.

195. If a person arrived at that station, and it were a terminal station, and he wanted to go out to the eastern suburbs, would he have to come right in to Sydney, and go out to the eastern suburbs by tram, or would he have to come in, as he does now, to Liverpool-street, and then go out to the eastern suburbs? He would have to come *via* Liverpool-street, which would not be very far away. The construction of a direct tram-line from the station to the top of Oxford-street—to Darlinghurst—would be a matter involving much more expense. I do not think anybody can object to going out as far as Liverpool-street, provided that arrangements could be made by resuming property to run trams round there without changing, or by having a proper and suitable changing place. At present anybody coming from the station, and wanting to go out along Oxford-street, has to get down on the southern side of Liverpool-street, and walk right across to the waiting-shed on Hyde Park. I daresay something better could be arranged if it were found desirable to provide specially for that traffic.

196. Would the approach to this station be as convenient as the approach to the station in King-street, as regards levels for cabs and such like? Yes; it would be very convenient, because the whole station is on a level, and the road approaches are laid out so as to bring all the wheel traffic and passengers on to the level of the platforms. You could not arrange a more convenient way. Passengers could get to the lower level from either side by means of subways with ramps. There is a cab-road here which is absent in the other scheme.

197. You might explain now about the cab approach? The way it is proposed to take the cab-road in this scheme is as follows: Devonshire-street will be lowered just so much as to admit of cabs getting in at the southern end of the station. Then there will be an incline or ramp of 1 in 10 for a short distance, and from there the cab-road will be at the level of the station. And towards the northern end of the station there would be another inclined road, by which the traffic would be taken down underneath the assembling platform and the station building and out through the end retaining-wall on to the level of Belmore-road.

198. *Dr. Garran.*] Your cabs will come up a pretty stiff incline to get to the station, and down a pretty stiff one to get away from it? Yes; but they will come up the incline empty.

199. Not when bringing passengers? They would not bring passengers. It is a road, not to bring passengers into the station, but to take them away from the station, so that the cabs would come up empty and go down full.

200. What proportion of the level which you see marked for rails will be level cab-roads—a third? More than a half of it.

201. *Chairman.*] More than you would have in King-street? I should say about 350 feet.

202. Then you have separate platforms for departing passengers? People wishing to depart by train and arriving in cabs or vehicles would enter opposite the old lock-up. To the south of Christ Church there is a wide entrance, so that cabs can enter and deposit passengers at the north-western corner of the station. Cabs would be compelled to enter at one end and go out at the opposite end—that is to say, to pass the front of the station—after they had discharged their passengers, and pass out on to the Belmore-road.

203. *Dr. Garran.*] As to the entrance on the Pitt-street side—where you enter there you break the retaining-wall—do the cabs have to go up a stiff incline to get on to that? No; that is at about the same level as the street.

204. You have a retaining-wall shown on the plan? That wall becomes merely a dwarf-wall when you get to the approach. Opposite the old lock-up the cabs enter, and from there they proceed by an incline of about 1 in 25 to the north-western corner of the station.

205. *Chairman.*] Have you gone into the question with the Commissioners as to the suitability of the locality for offices, as regards public convenience, at that distance from the present busy part of the city? Yes; the whole arrangements of the station have been worked out with their officers. As regards the Commissioners' administrative offices, I have provided room for these offices in this building; but some time ago, when I think this idea was first started, the Commissioners were not quite sure whether it would be desirable that their main offices should be at Redfern. I do not think they have settled that matter. That, of course, is a detail. It is for the Government to decide what is to be done in that matter. If the offices are not wanted there, then there is a certain proportion of the expense cut out.

206. Suppose this large building is erected at Devonshire-street, would it be practicable and fairly economical to bring, say, four lines of railway from there into the proposed terminus at the corner of King and Elizabeth streets, with a comparatively inexpensive station for treating the suburban traffic? No; the Railway Commissioners have always opposed the division of the traffic. If you leave any portion of the traffic behind it means a serious addition to the expense. The greater proportion of the traffic to be served being suburban, it means that the largest accommodation is really required for that traffic; so that the stoppage of the long distance traffic at Devonshire-street would go very little towards diminishing the size of the terminal station. A station like either of these two is intended to accommodate all classes of traffic. When any of the platforms are not used for the long-distance trains then, if there is additional accommodation required for suburban trains, the traffic can, as it were, overflow on to those platforms; but if these platforms are provided at some other place, then they are not available for a sudden rush of traffic. It is to be remarked that the long-distance trains—the mails and the expresses—come in at times when there is no rush of suburban traffic; either they come in very early in the morning or they come in as the Northern mail does, about 11 o'clock in the day, after the rush is over. And as regards going out, the only train which in any way cuts into the busy time is the Northern express, and the others leave at later hours when there is no rush of suburban traffic.

207. Take the space from Devonshire-street, say up to Park-street,—I suppose the expense of the resumption of properties, of viaducts, and of construction, would not be very greatly diminished if the number of lines were reduced from what you now propose to the four lines of the reduced scheme which I have just suggested? No; but with regard to that matter I would like to point out that schemes of that kind have been considered, and it is the opinion of the Railway Commissioners that where you bring all the suburban traffic on into the city, even if you leave the long-distance traffic behind, you still will want your six lines for comfortable working.

208. Even for the suburban traffic? Yes; and the reduction in width will, in any case, make very little difference to the resumptions, because you always have to resume more land than you actually want—you must go to the boundary of an allotment. You cannot take a bit of an allotment only.

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209. So that really, if that idea were carried out, you would have this very expensive station at Devonshire-street, you would still have your expensive resumptions, and the same number of rails as far as Park-street, and from there out you would save certainly the addition of office accommodation and passenger accommodation being so expensive, but you would still have a large station required for passengers? Yes. I should like to point out that the proposed No. 2 scheme is such a scheme as you now suggest. It is a scheme for stopping the long-distance trains at the Benevolent Asylum.

210. That No. 2 scheme, which is referred to in the Under Secretary's statement, is estimated to cost £1,392,000? Yes.

211. That does not provide for a possible extension underneath the Domain towards the eastern suburbs? Yes; it provides the same sort of arrangement as you have in No. 10, but it gives you a narrow station between Elizabeth and Castlereagh streets. It avoids the removal of the Supreme Court and the Registrar-General's office, but it is a station below the level of the streets.

212. *Dr. Garran.*] It will not interfere with Hyde Park? It does not interfere with Hyde Park; but in spite of the savings effected, it comes up very nearly to the cost of the other.

213. *Chairman.*] No. 2 scheme is estimated to cost £1,336,625, and No. 10 scheme, the one which is now referred to, is estimated to cost £1,527,000? Yes. It is not altogether on all-fours with the other, because, as you will see in the description, the offices for the Railway Commissioners are not provided. It bears out what I mentioned just now—that the Railway Commissioners decided that if the main terminus were at Redfern they would not care about their offices being placed there, and in this scheme of limited accommodation for the suburban traffic, with its smaller station—you might say imperfect station at King-street—there would not be room for the offices. If the Committee wish to make comparisons between the different schemes it might be well, perhaps, for me to describe these intermediate schemes.

214. When we have exhausted this Devonshire-street proposal it is intended that you should briefly explain the various schemes;—I asked that question at the request of Mr. Watson, who has been called away on pressing business for a few minutes? You will see that in these various schemes, from No. 1 to No. 8, that idea has been carried out in several different ways.

215. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has it been considered possible to get sufficient accommodation at the present Redfern station without crossing Devonshire-street? No, it is not possible.

216. *Mr. Leven.*] What is your candid opinion with reference to having a central station there, and doing away with all the others, or establishing a central station there as now proposed on that plan? I do not think there can be any doubt that the proper way would be to bring all the traffic together into one station in the city, if it could be arranged.

217. Further into the city than Devonshire-street? Yes, that is not far enough.

218. Considering the age of the city, and all the facilities there are now to get into the city, are we not as well accommodated as the principal places in London—that is, in proportion to the population? Possibly so, in proportion to population; but I think it is right to consider what the future requires. I am perfectly certain myself that the future does require an extension of the railway into the city—that the tramway accommodation as now laid out and proposed will not be anything like sufficient for the traffic within the next ten years. Say, within five or ten years, George-street will not be able to carry all the traffic coming in from the station and the western suburbs; you will not be able to run sufficient trams to take all the people along George-street. At certain times, as the Committee have noticed, the traffic on the electric tram in George-street is already very large, and none of the western suburbs trams have yet been brought into George-street. There is a great deal of traffic to be brought into George-street from each of those lines—not only the traffic which is running now on the steam trams, but the increase of traffic due to the development during the next period, and the increase of the traffic which the Railway Commissioners are now providing for, which is on the streets, but which is now carried by omnibuses very largely.

219. Have the suburbs which the trains communicate with advanced to such a state that they require this accommodation;—are there not thousands of acres in all these suburbs which are not yet taken up, and which are not likely to be taken up for some years? It is the suburban traffic now which you are referring to—yes.

220. Parramatta itself has not increased in population? I do not know about that; I have not made the necessary inquiries.

221. Taking all the suburbs from Parramatta to Sydney, have they increased to such an extent that they will warrant this great expenditure;—do you know that Parramatta has increased? I do not know what the increase has been. I can point however to this, that in 1896 the Railway Commissioners reckoned the traffic to produce an income of £32,000, and that now they reckoned the traffic to produce an income of £38,000—that is an increase of £2,000 a year in the three years.

222. Extending over what area, do you know? That is the suburban traffic which has to be accommodated by the city railway.

223. It is the suburban traffic mostly which we are considering in connection with this proposal? Yes.

224. It is not the traffic from the west? No; as I have explained, that is a trifle.

225. Are you prepared to say that the population of the suburbs has increased to such an enormous extent as to warrant this great outlay? I have pointed out that the revenue which the Commissioners estimate to derive from this line will provide interest on a capital of nearly £1,000,000.

226. I suppose you are not prepared to say whether the population of the suburbs from Parramatta downwards has increased or decreased? No; it has not been part of my duty to ascertain that.

227. You are not prepared to undertake to say that? I am sure that it has increased, but at the same time it is not one of the functions of my office to make inquiries of that kind, or to make reports on it.

228. In carrying the railway further into the city you have more under your immediate consideration the suburban traffic than any other kind of traffic—for instance the commercial traffic? Yes; I only go by what the Railway Commissioners say themselves.

229. As far as the mercantile portion of the traffic goes, do you think there is any necessity to bring it directly into the city? I believe there is a necessity.

230. Now, for commercial reasons, in which way would you direct that traffic—to Darling Harbour, to

- H. Deane. Circular Quay, to Woolloomooloo, or to where? I should take it to the corner of Hyde Park, because you cannot get any nearer to the centre of the city without incurring great expense.
- 13 Feb., 1900. 231. I am talking of the goods traffic? I beg your pardon; I thought you meant the commercial part of the community.
232. When I said "the commercial traffic" I meant the goods traffic? That is a matter which must be treated quite separately from passenger traffic.
233. It is not, then, for the goods traffic that you would extend the line down this way? No.
234. Your consideration, in the whole of these schemes, is directed to the passenger traffic only, and to the increase of the suburban traffic? Chiefly to the increase of the suburban traffic.
235. Putting that matter aside, where would you direct the goods traffic to if it had to come down this way? I would rather deal with that as a different subject altogether. I have not gone into that question.
236. You would not venture an opinion on that? Not at the present moment.
237. You have laid out all these schemes? Yes.
238. Now, as to your own individual scheme, which of them would you adopt? I would take the St. James' Road scheme, if I could get the Park. I would sooner have that, because there is plenty of ground there, and you can work in it as you like. Every other place is more or less cramped. I do not care where you go you will be more or less cramped unless you can go into Hyde Park.
239. It would be the cheaper? Yes; it is decidedly the cheapest of any of them.
240. It involves less resumption? Yes.
241. It is more central, and involves about half the cost? It is about less than half the cost of No. 10, and it is as near central as you can get a clear piece of ground. If you go into expensive resumptions you can get a more central position.
242. If you adopt that site the revenue derived would not be much more, the extension would be less costly, and in every way, as regards borrowing money to build the station, it would be a material benefit to the country, would it not? Yes; always assuming that the objection to the use of Hyde Park is not one which weighs.
243. That is a side issue. I suppose the enormous revenue, as pointed out by you, which will be derived from it, would be a great profit to the country if it were taken this way? Yes.
244. The increased amount which you have been told it has been increased by no doubt would be a great benefit to the country if they adopted that? Yes.
245. *Mr. Dick.*] In the Devonshire-street scheme what provision is made for accommodating standing trains, as you accommodate them in the Domain in the other scheme? They would all be shunted; but in the Devonshire-street scheme there are two extra platforms—there are eleven platforms in that scheme as against nine in the other.
246. There is not the same necessity in that scheme for a large area for stabling? No.
247. Is there any room at the old station yard for that purpose? Yes; when the existing platforms are removed, and the lines brought together, there will be a considerable addition to the standing room in the yard itself.
248. *Dr. Garran.*] You said last Friday that the area of the Benevolent Asylum station would be about 22 acres;—do you include the whole block between Devonshire-street, Elizabeth-street, Belmore-road, and Pitt-street, or do you take off that piece where you have made the new road? It includes up to the eastern boundary of the new road.
249. You cut off a part of the Cemetery? Yes. I do not think it includes that corner.
250. It does include the block between Devonshire-street, Pitt-street, Belmore-road, and your new Castlereagh-street, and that triangular piece of which you have no drawing is a kind of reserve ground for the future, I presume? Yes.
251. Do you think an area of 22 acres is unnecessarily large, looking at the future? No.
252. Seeing that Sydney is the inevitable metropolitan terminus for the whole railway system of the Colony, and that your traffic must increase, 22 acres will not be too much twenty years hence, will it? No.
253. If 22 acres will not be too much twenty years hence at Devonshire-street, will 10 acres be enough at Hyde Park? Well, you would still have that ground at Devonshire-street to go to, you know.
254. Yes; but you have been explaining to us that it will not do to have two terminal stations within a mile of each other. No. You could make use of it for carriage storage, and various purposes connected with the railway system.
255. You have been referring us to Mr. Parry to show that that scheme will not answer of keeping half of your carriages at one place and half of them at another, and doing your shunting partly in town and partly out of town? I do not know that I made any remark about that. It was the division of the train traffic I mentioned.
256. If Mr. Eddy, in his previous examination, said that this scheme at Hyde Park would last twenty years, and suppose twenty years hence we want as much room as you will have at Devonshire-street, will they have either to take half of Hyde Park or to find further accommodation elsewhere? It would be very difficult to say what the development will be in twenty years.
257. I know it is difficult to say; we cannot foresee exactly what will happen, but if we must have 20 acres for a terminal station at Sydney, and that area is not an inch too large, what are we going to do if we have fixed upon the policy of making Hyde Park a great metropolitan centre? I do not think the cases are quite parallel. You see that a portion of the 22 acres at Benevolent Asylum ground is taken up with road approaches.
258. Do you not think the road approaches to the Benevolent Asylum site are very superior to the road approaches at King-street? I have no hesitation in saying that they are.
259. Is not the Benevolent Asylum site in every respect more commodious? Yes.
260. With plenty of room for cabs? Yes.
261. For tramway access? Yes.
262. Much more so than you can ever make out of Elizabeth-street, Castlereagh-street, or King-street? Yes. At the same time I do not think you would want so much room for cabs and trams at King-street, because people would be nearer their offices and many could walk.
263. You are not going to put all the business of Sydney within a stone's throw of St. James' Church for all time, are you? No; I do not mean that all of it should be within a stone's throw.

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264. As an engineer planning a scheme for all time with which your name would be identified, would you not like to have a scheme which would give room enough till we are all forgotten, and long afterwards? I do not like that way of putting it.

265. If another engineer were doing it, do you not think the Engineer-in-Chief would be a wise man who made ample provision? I quite approve of making ample provision, if you ask me that question.

266. Now, looking at the fine wide spaces you have around this Devonshire-street site, not a bit too wide for an immense cab trade, but very ample, does it not strike you that they are enormously superior to any you could possibly make at Castlereagh-street or King-street? Yes; but there is an answer to that. Supposing it is not in the best spot. You do not make your terminal station simply in a clear space. You could find other places some distance off, but which, of course, would be unsuitable.

267. It is a site nearer to the present centre of the city than the terminus which has lasted for fifty years? I think the point is this: That, although you could make splendid station arrangements there—everybody admits that; I am sure I do, and the Commissioners admit that you could make a splendid terminal station there—yet it does not serve the object of bringing the railway suburban traffic into the city.

268. I admit that it does not bring the suburban traffic by railway, without changing their carriages, into the city proper, but just lands them at the edge of the city? Yes.

269. The difference in the cost of the two schemes is the difference between £561,000 and £1,500,000, and the question, of course, to consider is whether that £1,000,000 is well represented in that additional cost, because it will not come back in revenue? You get no revenue from the Benevolent Asylum station, but if you spent £900,000 to bring the line into the city you do get revenue.

270. That is if you get the enhanced price for tickets? Yes.

271. But there is an agitation going on for reducing the rates? If they are reduced, you will still get the difference of the rate. If the rates up to Redfern are reduced I do not think that affects the revenue to be obtained from an extension into the city, for there would still be the same difference.

272. Still you will admit that we can never make anywhere in the city proper, unless we take wholesale Hyde Park, a station so roomy, so large, so convenient, or so suited for all time as we can at the Benevolent Asylum site? You cannot get as large a space.

273. In a previous inquiry there was a scheme submitted—and which, I think, Mr. Eddy himself rather approved of—of coming into the city, the same as you do in your plan now, but not spoiling Elizabeth-street, having two rails in Hyde Park, and taking a narrow strip off and having the other two sets of rails south of Elizabeth-street, but leaving Elizabeth-street untouched;—do you remember that scheme? Yes.

274. It was to take the through traffic on one side and the suburban traffic on the other? Yes.

275. Has that scheme been abandoned altogether by the Department? Yes; I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Eddy did not like it.

276. What was the great objection to it? It is very awkward and costly to manage a station like that. The station would be very inconvenient. There would not be proper means of utilising all the platforms in case of a sudden rush of traffic.

277. There were to be subways under Elizabeth-street all along, so that there would be prompt access for the porters and other station-hands from one set of platforms to the other? It is mentioned in paragraph 14 of the report of the Royal Commission. The cost of working a station like that would be very much greater—I think evidence was given as to that—than the cost of working a station like this, and then of course there would be this disadvantage, that there would be two stations. They would be connected by subways, but still they would be two stations. If a passenger went wrong he might have a good distance to walk from one station to the other. There would be a certain amount of confusion.

278. But still it saved the breaking up of Elizabeth-street, which is a very serious thing? Yes.

279. It is a long street, and you come and cut one section of it clean out;—do you not think that is a great drawback to the city? It would be better if it could be avoided, certainly.

280. There was another scheme which was mentioned, and was also, I think, referred to in Mr. Eddy's evidence, of simply shoving Devonshire-street northward a certain distance towards the Benevolent Asylum, and taking off as much as would be wanted to lengthen the platforms in the present station yards;—has that idea been given up? Yes; so good a station cannot be worked out as under this Devonshire-street proposal.

281. How far back would you have to push Devonshire-street to make a thorough job of it? About 5 chains.

282. Practically, you take about half what the Benevolent Asylum scheme takes? Yes.

283. You have got the ground available, and you would take it all? Yes.

284. If you adopt the Devonshire-street scheme would you have a clear view from the old yard right along into the new one? Yes.

285. Would not the roofs of the present station buildings be in the way? They would have to be removed and the roads would all have to be re-arranged, which is a difficult thing to do.

286. You would have a clear view all the way from the tunnel right into the station-yard? Yes.

287. That would be of very great value? Yes. It would be a very costly and a very difficult thing to alter the station in that way.

288. Suppose we take the whole, we will have a clear view right into the station? Yes.

289. That would be of great value to signalmen and to drivers? Yes.

290. And great diminution of risk? Yes.

291. *Mr. Watson.* In the Devonshire-street scheme has any effort been made to ascertain how much of the £650,000 is to be spent on administrative buildings and how much on the station? Yes; I will supply the information.

292. *Dr. Garran.* You said to me the other day that if we had a system of electric trams from this station running into the city it would cost us about £100,000 to run a tramway down each street—did not you overdraw the bow then? No; it was a rough estimate. I am drawing a comparison between the George-street and Harris-street tramway. The cost of the George and Harris streets tramway, including power, is £130,000. George-street is 2 miles long and Harris-street 1 mile. Two-thirds of it goes to George-street—that is a double line. Of course the frontage to Circular Quay would be saved.

293. It works out at £86,000? I think you would have to take the cost at something like that sum. It seems a very great cost, but there are great expenses to be borne—for instance, the cost of concreting and wood-blocking.

294. You have power enough at Ultimo for the whole of the present tramways? There is not power enough for new tramways.

- H. Deane. 295. For the whole of the present tramways you have? For the present traffic.
- 13 Feb., 1900. 296. You have counted all that into the £130,000? No, only the proportion for George-street. The total expenditure is about £260,000. The power-house provided at Ultimo was intended to supply sufficient power for the existing traffic, but if the Railway Commissioners, as they intend to do, and as they have a perfect right to do—and they are very wise in doing so—increase the traffic accommodation on each line as it is converted to electricity, they will have to have a good deal of power before they have finished. So that there will not only be no surplus for new lines, but there will not be enough for the old ones.
297. If we wanted to run an entirely new tram-line from the Benevolent Asylum site down Hay-street, Sussex-street, Kent-street, and round into George-street it would cost from £80,000 to £90,000? I think it is very likely that it would.
298. With regard to the cab service you speak of here, it is only two sets of platforms you give this cab service to where you have got that one road? Yes.
299. Will that be enough? Quite. You would not have more than two long-distance trains coming in at the same time, and requiring a cab service.
300. You do not provide a cab service for the suburban traffic? No.
301. That would be most supplied by the tram service? Passengers would have to go outside to take cabs.
302. It is comparatively few suburban passengers who come in cabs compared with the through passengers? Yes; it is nothing for them to walk, if they have no luggage. The idea in taking a cab-road right into the station is to take up luggage readily.
303. In most of the great English stations they bring the cabs right into the yard? Yes.
304. It is found to be very inconvenient if they do not? It is the general practice to do it.
305. I suppose they would scarcely be allowed to do otherwise? It is generally looked upon as essential. I do not know that you would find it so in every case, but in most cases it is.
306. You think this road you have made will be a convenient one, and will work well in practice? Yes.
307. You think the 250 feet out of 600 feet will be enough for a stand for the cabs which bring passengers in? I think I said 350 feet.
308. As a rule, how many cabs are delivering passengers now at our stations? You sometimes get three or four drawn up.
309. Not more than half a dozen? No. Whatever room there is would be ample I am quite sure.
310. *Chairman.*] We want you now to explain briefly the different schemes, beginning with No. 1, and omitting No. 10, which you have explained? The Committee will remember that the St. James' Road scheme was recommended by a Royal Commission and by the Public Works Committee in 1897. Towards the end of 1898 the Premier, Mr. Reid, was very anxious to get some settlement of the question. He was very much opposed to the Hyde Park scheme, and he sent for me and discussed the matter. I pointed out to him what had been done, and the various proposals which had been made, and I showed him a number of plans. He did not appear satisfied with the choice which had been made in New South Wales by the Railway Commissioners and by myself, or with the decision of the Public Works Committee, and he decided to ask Mr. Rennick, the Engineer-in-Chief in Melbourne, to see him and report on the matter. After Mr. Rennick had been over for two or three days the Premier sent for me. This was on the 6th December, 1898, I found Mr. Oliver, the Chief Railway Commissioner, with him, and also Mr. Rennick. Mr. John Parry, of the Railway Commissioners' staff, was in attendance, and afterwards came in. The matter was generally discussed. I have here a report on the interview explaining the circumstances to the Minister.
311. Will you read the report? It is as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION.

I HAVE the honor to report that the Premier asked me to see him yesterday morning (6th instant), at 11 o'clock. When I entered I found Mr. Oliver, Chief Railway Commissioner, and Mr. Rennick, Engineer-in-Chief, Victoria, with the Premier. Mr. John Parry, of the Railway Commissioners' staff, was in attendance, and afterwards came in.

The Premier stated that he had requested the Premier of Victoria to let him have Mr. Rennick's services for the purpose of consultation on the question of city railway extension, and that Mr. Rennick had now come for that purpose.

After some discussion of the matter the Premier expressed a desire that Mr. Parry and myself should give Mr. Rennick all information necessary to enable him to make his report. This will of course be done. Mr. Oliver said that in deference to the wishes of the Premier he had no objection to Mr. Deane and Mr. Parry going into the matter as desired, as he had every confidence in their judgment and knowledge.

Mr. Rennick spent yesterday afternoon and part of this morning with Mr. Parry, and at 10:30 called on me, by arrangement, at my office. I have furnished him with an outline of the information he requires, and with some maps and plans to illustrate the matter. I have also directed his attention to the reports of the Royal Commission of 1891, the Royal Commission and the Parliamentary Standing Committee of 1897, and to the evidence given by myself and Mr. Parry, and especially to that of the late Chief Railway Commissioner. I have also informed him that any further information he may require is at his service.

During the interview with the Premier he seemed to consider that I was an uncompromising advocate of the Hyde Park scheme, and would submit no other. I distinctly repudiate this view, and I made to the Premier a statement to the following effect:—

"At the time of the 1891 inquiry I held the opinion that the line ought to be carried down the western side of George-street, as my evidence clearly shows. I explained to that Commission how I thought the requirements could be met. This proposal would bring the suburban traffic proper only into the city. The necessity of bringing the whole of the traffic, including the mountain and Moss Vale trains, as well as the mail and express trains, into the heart of the city had not become so strongly accentuated as it did later. The fact that this is so is proved by the Railway Commissioners submitting to the Commission a modified scheme as an alternative to bring part of the suburban traffic to a terminal station at the Custom-house.

"When, in 1896, the question of city extension was referred to a Royal Commission, I was instructed to give that Commission all information in my power. This I did, and I helped them to analyse all the schemes submitted, including about six schemes emanating from the Department, and others specially worked out at the request of the Commission. I also prepared a plan showing what routes were practicable, including, amongst others, a line along the western side. I carefully abstained, however, as will be seen from my evidence, from recommending any one particular route, as I wished it to be distinctly understood that I was an impartial witness, and had no bias in favour of one route or another. At the close of the inquiry the Royal Commission passed a vote of thanks to me, and sent me a letter conveying the same.

"I have now to say that, given the conditions that the Railway Commissioners laid down—that of bringing all traffic, long distances and short distances, to the one terminus in the city—Hyde Park is the only spot where sufficient space is available for that to be conveniently done.

"As to this fact, both the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee satisfied themselves, as can be seen from their reports.

"If Hyde Park is not available for a terminus new conditions must be formulated, and the details of a scheme to meet them can then be worked out. At present those conditions have not been furnished to me by the only authority who can determine them—viz., the Railway Commissioners. The reports already referred to will show, however, that schemes which will more or less meet other traffic arrangements have been submitted to the Royal Commissions and Public Works Committee, and have been deliberately rejected.

"A

"A decision in this case can only be arrived at from a consideration of traffic requirements. These are absolutely necessary in the first instance, and only afterwards does it become a question of engineering design. H. Deane.

"My duty is not to dictate as to how traffic is to be conducted, but to adjust my designs to what the Railway Commissioners lay down as the requirements of the case." 13 Feb., 1900.

Mr. Young expressed his approval of the position I had taken up. After that I sent a number of plans which Mr. Rennick had asked for, and then his report arrived, being dated the 19th December, 1898. About the 28th March, 1899, I received instructions to prepare plans making a station at the High School site. I might say that this was done in order to work out Mr. Rennick's proposal. I ask the Committee to notice that Mr. Rennick does not in any way take particular credit to himself for making that proposal. He thoroughly agreed with the recommendation of the Public Work Committee, and only looked upon this as an alternative. Also I think it will be acknowledged that this was a proposal which had, more or less, been already worked out, and evidence given on it before the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee. I will now read a description of No. 1 scheme, which is the outcome of Mr. Rennick's recommendation:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION.—No. 1 Scheme.

THIS line includes a central station at the High School site, whence the railway is constructed in tunnel to a terminal station near Albert-street in the Government House grounds. A station of the suburban style is provided at Liverpool-street.

Under this scheme suburban traffic can only be brought into the city, and it becomes necessary to make a new terminus for long-distance traffic on the north side of Devonshire-street, where the Benevolent Asylum, the Christ Church parsonage, and the police quarters and residence now stand.

The stabling for the engines and carriages which have to be laid up during the day is obtained by continuing the lines beyond the Albert-street station, and making a depôt for carriages and engines at Macquarie Point. That is to say, a depôt for carriages would really be at Macquarie Point, but as it is worked out on this plan the depôt for the engines would be at the back of the Albert-street station.

This line being mainly in tunnel on a grade which is worse than the ruling grade of the suburban lines, must be worked by electricity. Sidings must, therefore, be arranged either at Devonshire-street or Liverpool-street, to enable the change of locomotives to be made.

The Railway Commissioners ask for six lines of way throughout, six platforms at the High School site, and eight platforms at Albert-street.

This scheme involves the destruction of a large amount of property on the northern side of Devonshire-street, including the Benevolent Asylum, Christ Church parsonage, and the police buildings and residence, as well as Government House and grounds, thus rendered uninhabitable as a Vice-regal residence. Otherwise it is a workable scheme. Offices for the Railway Commissioners and staff are not provided.

312. How much of Hyde Park would be taken up by that scheme? No portion of Hyde Park is taken except temporarily, because the tunnel is covered in, and the surface is restored. For about three-quarters of a mile the line will be in tunnel. The length of the southern half is 29 chains; there is an intermediate length of about 3 chains, and the length of the northern half is 27 chains. It is also important to note that being so much in tunnel, the desirability of using electric power instead of steam is obvious. This scheme was worked out by me in conjunction with the Railway Commissioners' Office, Mr. Parry especially being told off to assist me. The estimate of the cost of the works in this proposal amounts to £1,154,000, and the resumptions are put down at £602,000, making a total of £1,756,000. In the compensation which Mr. Sievers was engaged in preparing no item is included for tunnelling under buildings between the High School site and the Domain. It is clear that a great many private buildings will have to be tunnelled under, but at a depth where they can be tunnelled under, probably, without doing any damage, so that no compensation is put down. As to the right of the Government to tunnel under these buildings without giving compensation that will have to be provided for in a special Act, and provided that no damage was done to the buildings there would then be nothing to pay. That is just an outline of scheme No. 1. I can show the detail sketches, which were got out for the stations, if the Committee like, but I think it is scarcely necessary.

313. *Dr. Garran.*] In that scheme do you take the whole space between Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street? Yes; but it is only 150 feet, and you have consequently to go under the street on either side, in order to get sufficient width.

314. Would you be on the level of Castlereagh-street on that side? No; you would be below the level.

315. It would be a well station to some extent? It would be a well station. You have to pass on; you have not much width; the width does not enable you to get the benefit of the difference in level. It is just as if at that big station submitted to the Committee you had to pass all the lines under King-street.

316. At Fort Macquarie would you have room to do all the shunting you required? Yes; there is plenty of room in that scheme as it was worked out. There is a large shed with a number of lines converging into it with the necessary switches and crossings.

317. In some of the London stations they have a spare engine on a little siding, which runs on to a new train, and leaves the other engine ready to take out the next train, thereby saving a great deal of space? Yes; it helps. We have it in these schemes.

318. It is not shown on the plan? No, because this is only a skeleton map; it has been provided for in these terminal arrangements.

319. If you wanted to make a circle there, or a pear-shaped curve, would you have to take a disproportionate quantity of the harbour in to make room to turn round at Fort Macquarie? You can scarcely get a curve in.

320. You want a 10-chain curve? You cannot get a 10-chain curve in. You can get about a 9-chain curve in.

321. So that any idea of turning round at that end is impracticable? Yes.

322. Do you think you have not over-estimated the cost of this scheme? Not by any means.

323. I suppose it is the tunnelling which makes it so expensive? Yes, very largely.

324. And the objection to tunnelling, which every witness seems to press, would be as strong against this route as against any other, or stronger? Yes.

325. In fact, the great drawback to this route is the quantity of tunnelling to be done? It is one great drawback. I am sure the objection to tunnels has not been overdrawn. It is very great in the northern temperate countries, but here, where the climate is almost tropical for a large portion of the year, the objection would be very great indeed.

326. Although you save Hyde Park you take quite as much out of the Domain as the St. James' Road scheme would have taken out of Hyde Park? Yes; I do not think it is a scheme to be recommended. It spoils Government

- H. Deane. Government House and grounds, which are most picturesque, and the beautiful view which presents itself as you come up the harbour, would be disfigured by Albert-street station, and that terminal carriage shed at the point.
- 13 Feb., 1900.
327. The Albert-street station would be very convenient for the ferry traffic? It would.
328. None of your other schemes make a connection between the ferry and the railway? No. There is one, which I shall refer to later on, where that has been proposed.

WEDNESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKEIT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.	

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane. 329. *Dr. Garran.*] With regard to No. 1 scheme, in order to avoid interfering with Hyde Park, you carry your line in tunnel all the way through, and you turn sharp to the left to get into the station? Yes.
- 14 Feb., 1900.
330. As a rule, when it can possibly be avoided, it is undesirable to go into your station-yard immediately out of a long tunnel? Yes.
331. And if you do have to go into your station-yard out of a tunnel it is best to have your station-yard straight in front of you? It is far better.
332. This plan has the disadvantage not only of entering that station-yard immediately after a tunnel, but the station-yard is not in sight of the engine-man as he is going through the tunnel, it is away to the left;—that is a disadvantage? It is a disadvantage.
333. And to some extent that is a disadvantage to your plan, No. 10, because the portion which lies between Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street is not in the sight of the engine-driver as he is coming through the Park? I think that is fairly right, because he will see the signals. It is a question of the signal-man seeing the line, and as long as the engine-driver can see his own signal he is all right.
334. He goes by signals? Yes.
335. It is an advantage to him to see as well? Yes.
336. I see you get over the difficulty by not going through the Park in tunnel? Yes; I have an open-cut.
337. So that you take that slice off the southern end of the Park more than the Commissioners' scheme does—that is the St. James' Road scheme? Yes. The Railway Commissioners would prefer to have the whole length open, only no doubt there would be an outcry against it.
338. I can see that it is a compromise; but that scheme has the advantage of having the station-yard pretty well in front of the approaching line? Yes.
339. Which none of these other schemes which turn aside to avoid the Park have? No; you have to do the best you can under the circumstances.
340. I wish to bring out that all the schemes which turn to the left have that disadvantage? I think No. 10 is a very good scheme. I do not think that is open to any serious objection.
341. You think it would be quite workable? It is quite a workable scheme. I do not like No. 1 scheme.
342. It is a scheme which undoubtedly has some advantages, but the expense is very great? Yes.
343. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I see that in no less than seven of the schemes a station has been provided at Liverpool-street; I would like to know the reason why that station has been dropped out of the present scheme? I had instructions to provide a station at Liverpool-street in the other schemes, and I have had no instruction in regard to this scheme. The Railway Commissioners have always objected to a station at Liverpool-street, so that it has been left out of this last one.
344. Do you think it is wise to jump the whole way from Redfern Station to King-street? I would express no opinion about it; I should have thought myself that there would have been some traffic to pick up, but the Railway Commissioners are very much against it. They do not think anything would be gained by it; they think it would be inconvenient to make a station there, that there would be very little traffic to pick up, and that it would not pay.
345. I see that the cost of No. 1 scheme exceeds the cost of any other scheme, and I suppose that is because the line is taken down to Fort Macquarie? Yes.
346. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you not think a lot of traffic will be lost through not having a railway station at Liverpool-street? There are a large number of people coming by the trains who want to go to the eastern suburbs, and the nearest point for them to reach the eastern suburbs would be from Liverpool-street; and there are a large number of people going to business, who either get out at Liverpool-street, Bathurst-street, or Park-street;—if there was no railway station at Liverpool-street, is it not probable that these persons would go on to King-street and walk back;—would they not naturally take the tram from Redfern, where it would land them exactly where they wanted to go? I daresay they would. I do not think I can say anything more. I think, in answer to Mr. Shepherd, I said I should have thought that there would be some traffic.
347. Would it not be probable that there would be a considerable loss of traffic to the railway? I do not know about that. I am not in the habit of going into the traffic question very much, except for my own private consideration. The wish was expressed some years ago that I should not meddle with that question.
348. Would not that strike you, with a knowledge of Sydney? Yes; I certainly should have thought that there would be some traffic to pick up.
349. We see a considerable number of people who come from the railway getting out of the trams at
Liverpool-

Liverpool-street, and also going down to George-street and York-street? It would not be so easy to provide a station there by widening out in this particular scheme as it would in a scheme with a straight running like St. James' Road. Still it could be done, no doubt.

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350. Comparing No. 10 scheme with the Hyde Park scheme, the principal objection to that was on account of the large area of Hyde Park to be taken? Yes.

351. Under this present proposal a considerable area of Hyde Park will also be taken—4½ acres? Yes.

352. That area of 4½ acres, and the area it is proposed to take out of the Domain, would mean more than the original scheme proposed to take out of Hyde Park? Yes, the total is more.

353. Do you not think there would be an objection on the part of the public to have such a large area of the Domain taken away? I do not think that portion of the Domain is of very much use to the public. I do not think they would miss that portion.

354. You do not think the same objection would be made to taking the Domain as was made in the case of Hyde Park? Not to that bit of the Domain.

355. *Chairman.*] I think the Committee are to understand that No. 2 scheme is also in a measure the outcome of Mr. Rennick's proposal? No. 1 scheme is the practical embodiment of Mr. Rennick's recommendation, and No. 2 is the alternative scheme.

356. Will you state how No. 2 scheme comes to light? I was instructed to sketch out an estimate for No. 2 scheme, because it was considered by the Minister for Works, and I believe by the Cabinet, that it would be objectionable to interfere so much with Government House grounds. In that way No. 2 arose as an alternative to No. 1, and knocking out the accommodation for the traffic at Bridge-street and Albert-street, which was looked upon as unimportant.

357. Will you now give a brief outline of No. 2 scheme? My description reads as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION—No. 2 Scheme.

This line differs from No. 1, inasmuch as the station at the High School site is made the terminus for the traffic. Stabling for engines and carriages is provided at the back of the Art Gallery, connection being made by two double-line tunnels.

This scheme avoids the destruction of Government House grounds, but takes up the same amount of property north of Devonshire-street as scheme No. 1 for a long-distance traffic station. The lines are to be worked by electric locomotives.

Offices for the Railway Commissioners are not provided.

Of this scheme it is to be said that, while the long-distance traffic is left behind at Redfern, it does not appear to adequately provide for the short-distance traffic at the High School. Six platforms only can be provided without adding largely to the resumptions. The Railway Commissioners are of opinion that the accommodation is too restricted. The additional accommodation could only be provided after further resumption to the west of Castlereagh-street.

The estimate for that scheme is as follows:—For works, £850,000, and for resumptions, £542,000, making a total of £1,392,000. To that would have to be added, as in the last case, whatever compensation might be necessary for damage done by tunnelling under the buildings north of the High School. The accommodation at King-street—six platforms—is only obtained by undermining Castlereagh-street and Elizabeth-street. There is a length of tunnel, the same as in No. 1 scheme, of about 29 chains, between Liverpool-street and the King-street station. I call it a tunnel, though it is really a covered way.

358. Will it be temporary or permanent? It will only be temporarily opened up; the surface will afterwards be restored.

359. Seeing that under this scheme, and also the last one, which proposed that the country trains and the through suburban traffic should have their terminal station at the Benevolent Asylum site, and that only the strictly suburban traffic shall go into the city, what is the necessity for so much expenditure at the Devonshire-street site? I think I can show you that by the sketch plans worked out for the Devonshire-street station. This is a mere sketch, and it requires a good deal of alteration, but it shows approximately what is required; this is one of the sketches which were prepared for No. 3 scheme. The Devonshire-street station in No. 1 and No. 2 differs slightly from that in No. 3, as there will be more room required in No. 1 and No. 2, so as to admit of changes of steam locomotives to electric. You must have the suburban platforms and the long-distance platforms together, therefore you have to make your station to suit the suburban traffic as well as the long-distance traffic. The old platforms at Redfern Station would not be utilised.

360. *Dr. Garran.*] Where is the necessity for leaving Redfern Station at all, if you are going to take all the suburban traffic in Sydney? You want accommodation for the long-distance traffic.

361. Because we relieve the Redfern Station immensely? We do relieve it of a lot of traffic; but you have not accommodation left for the long-distance traffic. You have not the length of platforms to suit that traffic.

362. How many long-distance trains a day come in, and how many go out? I would recommend that that question should be put to Mr. Parry. There are not many of these trains run; but I expressed simply the determination that was arrived at after consultation with Mr. Parry.

363. You simply made a plan on the understanding that the Working Department would require it? Yes; they stated what they required, and I simply worked out the plan to suit.

364. The reason why they required it, you think, we should ascertain from them? Yes. They stated that they required this accommodation; but the whole of the passenger platform accommodation and offices must be removed to the north side of Devonshire-street, and, therefore, you have to build an entirely new station to accommodate both classes of traffic. I think this plan shows, without much further explanation, what width and length are really necessary. I would point out that this is only a sketch which has not been approved, and is only so far a guide as to show something of the area which will be required, because, as a matter of fact, if a station of that class were to be carried out the lines would not be curved round as shown; but would be run straight through, as has been done in No. 9 scheme. Still, although this plan has that defect, it shows the size of the station and the buildings, and approaches which will have to be made to suit the traffic.

365. *Chairman.*] Can you state roughly what space that station would occupy, so as to give a comparison between that station and what we would have to do if we had anything stopped at Devonshire-street? The property is so cut into that you would have to take more than you really want. You cut into the Benevolent Asylum building, therefore you would have to remove the whole of it. You cut into the Christ Church Parsonage probably, and, therefore you have to remove the whole of it. The late residence of the Inspector-General of Police is interfered with, and, therefore it has to come away. You cut into the Barracks so seriously with this scheme that you might just as well sweep them away. 366.

- H. Deane. 366. And you would break into the burial-ground? Yes. The only part which is left is the Female Refuge and the Convent of the Good Samaritan. That is under No. 3 scheme; but under No. 1 and No. 2 these properties also would probably have to be taken, on account of the lengthening out of the station which would be necessary to provide for the running off and on of electric and steam locomotives.
- 14 Feb., 1900. 367. *Dr. Garran.*] As a general question, in your opinion any scheme which tries to separate the through traffic to be kept at Redfern from the suburban traffic to come into Sydney would necessitate the use of the Devonshire-street site? It would.
368. You are sure of that? I am sure of that.
369. You say that as an engineer? I say that as an engineer, and I am sure it would be backed up, because that point has been discussed over and over again with the Commissioners and their officers.
370. That has been thoroughly worked out? Yes. It is thoroughly understood that if you carry any portion of the traffic on you cannot leave the long-distance traffic on the southern side of Devonshire-street.
371. Or if you tried to do it you must have a Devonshire-street station? Yes.
372. *Chairman*] For bringing the strictly suburban traffic on into the station you would have to use electric engines? Yes; for a tunnel scheme.
373. Would they run the whole length or would there have to be a change of engines at Redfern? There would have to be a change of engines at Redfern at present.
374. There would have to be a change of engines? That is my opinion, and I think it is backed up by those of engineers and railway managers in other parts of the globe.
375. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What delay would that create? The Railway Commissioners think it would be a delay of three minutes at first. It would probably in working be reduced to something less afterwards. It might be considered a serious delay at first. I think probably the delay would be found to be a good deal less than three minutes.
376. One of the chief objections of the advocates for the extension is the delay in changing into the trams, and if that is the case there would be no saving of time effected? There would be a delay, because the changing into the trams takes more than three minutes.
377. *Dr. Garran.*] In the early days of the London and Birmingham Railway did not the locomotive always go off at Camden Town, and was not the train pulled into Euston Square by cable? Yes; I think there was something of that sort. I am not recommending at the present time any scheme involving tunnels, and therefore I have not made it my business to go carefully into the time that will be lost in changing, and I have not discussed the matter very much with the Railway Commissioners' officers. I think possibly that an arrangement might be made so as to reduce the time lost.
378. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose it is quite impossible to form any idea of what the compensation would amount to;—that I suppose depends upon the injury to buildings from concussion, blasting, and so on? There would be no injury from concussion or blasting, because there would be no blasting allowed which would do any damage. I was carrying out not very long ago the connecting link between Darling Harbour station-yard and the new sidings at Darling Island, and I did not allow any explosive to be used. The work was done without blasting. Holes were drilled, and unslaked lime was used, which in slaking swelled and split the rock. It is quite a satisfactory method. It is unsafe to be using explosives in the neighbourhood of buildings.
379. In the sewerage tunnels in the suburbs they are continually blasting, and it cracks a good deal of the ceilings, and I thought that possibly the same thing would occur in this case? No; I should make provision for the work to be done without blasting. I think there would be very little rock to remove in any of these schemes, and that only at the bottom of the excavation, because the clay extends a good way down, as the trial-holes show. If No. 1 scheme were carried out, then, between King-street and Bridge-street, or King-street, where we cross to get out into the Domain, there would probably be a good deal of rock. But in the other scheme there would be very little, I think.
380. That would occur, of course, where there are no buildings, and in the Domain? No, I mean after leaving King-street, where you pass along under the streets and buildings to get out on to the Domain, because in the Domain itself there will be no buildings.
381. *Chairman.*] In No. 2 scheme, what have you put down for the cost of the terminal station at the Benevolent Asylum, the cost of the terminal station at King-street, and the cost of the car and motor sheds at the back of the Art Gallery? The works and buildings on the Benevolent Asylum site amount to £145,000; the works and buildings at the King-street station amount to £194,000; and at the back of the Art Gallery the earth and rock excavation and retaining walls are put down at £58,000, and the sheds at £33,000, making a total of £91,000.
382. *Mr. McFarlane.*] When the railway is continued into King-street do you think it is absolutely necessary to have a new station at Devonshire-street? I do, because it is too difficult and troublesome to alter the present station.
383. It has lasted a good while? Yes, it has; but it requires alteration.
384. With the reduction of traffic which will follow from the extension of the line into the city, could it not be arranged to make the old station suitable for requirements for years to come? The Railway Commissioners do not think so.
385. It would save a considerable expense if done? I do not know that it would save very much. You would want a new station for either one or the other, and it would be very bad for the management to have them separated. You would want a new station for the suburban traffic—the wayside traffic—or you would want a new station for the long-distance traffic.
386. You would have a new station at King-street? I mean at Redfern.
387. You would want the two at Redfern? You want a new station for one or the other, and it is most convenient and cheaper in working to have the two classes of traffic in the same station. It is a much more expensive thing to work two stations than one large station.
388. I quite understand that;—but with the large area of land which is at Redfern, and the great reduction in traffic which is caused by the extension of the railway into the city, one would think that improvements should be carried out to make the old station workable? Very little reduction in the area required results from carrying the suburban traffic only beyond Redfern.
389. You reduce the traffic? Not sufficiently to enable any improvements to be made economically, or to gain any space. You would have to make a radical alteration in any case, whatever you do, but it is easier and more satisfactory to make the radical alteration by crossing Devonshire-street. 390.

390. When the suburban trains will only stop to land or to pick up passengers they will not require nearly the same room at Redfern Station? I will ask you to refer that matter to the Railway Commissioners, because it is really a question of working the traffic.

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391. Your idea is that new stations are necessary? It is necessary to so alter this Redfern Station that it becomes cheaper and safer to make a new station on the other side of Devonshire-street.

392. *Dr. Carran.*] Have you ever gone into the expense of resuming St. Paul's School and making another approach under the road, so as to improve the access to the yard? No; but that has not been looked upon as providing adequate relief.

393. It has never been worked out? No.

394. *Chairman.*] Will you now give a brief outline of No. 3 scheme? No. 3 differs from No. 2 in this respect, that the long tunnel and stabling at the back of the Art Gallery are dispensed with, and in order to provide for the necessary shunting in the terminal station itself, a larger area of ground is taken. My description of No. 3 reads as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION—No. 3 Scheme.

This scheme is a development of No. 2, and has for its object the provision of sufficient accommodation for bringing all suburban and sub-suburban traffic into the city. The long-distance trains would still have to stay behind at Redfern, and the Benevolent Asylum building, the Christ Church parsonage, the police barracks, and the late residence of the Inspector-General of Police be removed to make room for the altered station. A large area must be resumed in the city proper.

On the other hand, there would be a considerable amount of ground not actually required for station purposes, which could be utilised for shops, and thus produce revenue.

No stabling accommodation for locomotives and carriages would be required, as they would be run back to Redfern, as in the Hyde Park scheme. This line would be worked by steam locomotives.

As such a large amount of resumption is involved beyond what is required, it suggested itself that the same might be utilised for a terminal station for all traffic. This is shown in the next scheme, No. 4.

The estimate for No. 3 scheme was as follows:—For works, £523,000; for resumptions, £1,070,825; total, £1,592,825. Then there is a deduction of £255,000 to be made for the unused land, from which revenue would be derived afterwards, leaving a balance of £1,338,825. As regards the greater portion of the estimate, therefore, I should have to refer the Committee to the Land Valuer.

395. What space at the junction of King-street, Elizabeth-street, and on to Pitt-street, would be occupied by the station site? The area which it would be necessary to resume for No. 3 in the city proper would be the property between Castlereagh-street and Elizabeth-street, starting from Bathurst-street, and running past Park-street and Market-street, up to that line of properties facing King-street. The King-street frontages would not be taken. Castlereagh-street would have to be absorbed between Park-street and the end of the station, and the properties would have to be resumed. The Castlereagh-street frontages would have to be resumed on the eastern side to the same length. I described a little while ago what is the Redfern Station with the accommodation necessary for the long-distance traffic, and the plan I now exhibit shows the station which was to be worked out for the suburban traffic into Sydney under No. 3 scheme.

396. Would the accommodation at Redfern be much the same as it would under No. 2 scheme? It would be the same as under No. 2 scheme, except, as I pointed out, the Female Refuge and the Convent of the Good Samaritan could be saved, because the length would be less. The room for the change of locomotives would not be required. There would only be a short distance of tunnel or covered way in this scheme, and I think the necessity for using electric locomotives need not be pressed. In this scheme eight platforms are provided.

397. Being a kind of elongated scheme, will it in any way relieve the trouble of working at Redfern which occurs under No. 2 scheme? It gets rid of the loop round to the Art Gallery, and the shunting itself is carried out at the entrance to the station. There are two more platforms provided here than in No. 1 and No. 2 schemes at King-street station. That is obtained at the expense of going across Castlereagh-street and resuming the properties on the western side.

398. What city streets would that interfere with—Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street? Elizabeth-street would not be permanently interfered with, and Castlereagh-street would be diverted, as shown on the plan.

399. It would be sent more westerly? A little over a chain in the centre line. Bathurst-street would be restored after the works are completed. Of course the traffic would not be stopped; a portion only would be opened out at a time, and the same would be the case at Park-street. That gives a workable scheme for suburban traffic.

400. *Dr. Carran.*] You save £250,000 that you make in your loop by this scheme, but you increase your resumption from £600,000 up to £1,000,000? Yes.

401. So that you save £250,000, and spend an extra £400,000? The total cost is very nearly the same. You save £300,000 in works.

402. *Chairman.*] But you increase your land resumptions? You increase your land resumptions by £500,000; but then you have a set-off in the property which is not required, and from which revenue could be taken, and which has been deducted from the cost of the scheme. That, you see, was worked out as a substitute for the other, to show the additional property which would be necessary in order to avoid that extension.

403. You do not mind stating that you do not favour that scheme? I do not think any scheme which does not bring in all the traffic is satisfactory.

404. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose this scheme has been chiefly proposed with the view to save Elizabeth-street;—it does not block Elizabeth-street? There was no proposal to block Elizabeth-street until No. 10 scheme came forward. The closing of Elizabeth-street was always avoided. I think it was assumed that it would be objected to, and no proposal was made which would involve the blocking of that street. To show that I am right in that view I would refer to a proposal, which was mentioned yesterday, for dividing the traffic—for having the suburban traffic on one side of Elizabeth-street and the long-distance traffic on the other, leaving Elizabeth-street intact. If it had been looked upon at that time as unobjectionable to close Elizabeth-street the scheme would then have resulted in something like the present scheme which is submitted.

405. This would block Market-street and Park-street at Castlereagh-street? It would block Market-street, but it would not block Park-street.

406. I thought it went up nearly to Bathurst-street? The resumption takes place practically as far as Bathurst-street.

- H. Deane. 407. So that it would only block Market-street? It blocks Market-street between Castlereagh and Elizabeth streets. That is also the case in the St James' Road scheme. You cannot get length unless you do.
 14 Feb., 1900. 408. *Chairman.*] In this scheme you provide for a cut and cover through Hyde Park;—would that also be temporary? That would only be temporary. It is not for a long distance, and it was thought that the ventilation would not necessitate this being left open.
 409. Will you now give a brief outline of No. 4 scheme? My description of No. 4 reads as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION—No. 4 Scheme.

This scheme has a general similarity to the St. James' Road proposal. All trains are carried to a terminus situated on the western side of Elizabeth-street, near King-street. There are eleven platforms, and the buildings will be large enough to provide accommodation for the Railway Commissioners and the whole of their Head Office staff.

As all trains are carried through Redfern Station that station requires very little alteration; the Benevolent Asylum building, the Christ Church parsonage, and the late residence of the Inspector-General of Police remain untouched, and the police barracks lands can be adapted so as to afford room for new barracks.

A station is provided at Liverpool-street, as in Nos. 1, 2, and 3.

At the terminus eleven platforms are provided, part of one platform and one road being placed under Elizabeth-street; but in order to get the station within the area proposed, and to avoid resumption on the Pitt-street frontage, the cab-road shown running through the station in the St. James' Road proposal has been cut out. This cab-road is considered by the Railway Commissioners an important adjunct to a terminal station, but not by any means of vital importance. In this way the station and approaches can be placed between Elizabeth-street and the back line of the Pitt-street properties, the only exception in the case of the latter being the Lyceum Theatre, which appears to be rather seriously interfered with.

In order to economise the cost of resumption, the front of the building is placed about 300 feet back from King-street, approach to it being given from King-street by means of a portion of Castlereagh-street, which remains intact; by Market-street and Elizabeth-street for wheel traffic, and by the Imperial Arcade for foot passengers. The setting back of the front in this manner saves the purchase of the "Metropolitan Hotel," the *Daily Telegraph* office, and other valuable properties, although if the additional expense were not to be considered an object to be saved, it would undoubtedly be better to bring the station so as to open into King-street. This would involve, however, nearly £250,000 more for resumptions.

This scheme would be worked with steam locomotives.

The difference in the estimated cost of Nos. 3 and 4 is about £100,000; but there is not the slightest doubt as to which is the preferable scheme under the circumstances. No. 4 is a complete scheme, and is on that account alone preferable. It would also produce more revenue, and be much easier and less costly to work.

The cost of No. 4 scheme is estimated as follows:—For works at the grand central station, £630,000; for resumption and damage to property, £599,825; total, £1,529,825. From this amount has to be deducted the value of the unused portion of the Imperial Arcade and other frontages—say, £90,000—leaving a balance of £1,439,825. It will be seen that in this scheme Castlereagh-street is blocked between Market-street and Park-street. With the exception of the cost, which is about the same as nearly all the other schemes, that seems to be the only disadvantage.

410. Where would you divert the traffic of Castlereagh-street, between Park-street and King-street? It would have to go round Elizabeth-street or round Pitt-street unless further resumptions were made.

411. That scheme once adopted is incapable of expansion except at a tremendous cost for resumptions? Of course, if you sacrifice a portion of Hyde Park you could always get land.

412. Now you come back again to Hyde Park? But that is the case everywhere. Either you must resume property or you must go on to Crown land. I will tell you what might be done in the future—for instance, if the eastern suburban traffic were brought in here. If that one line could be electrically worked, as I think it ought to be, that could be made an underground station right underneath the Park, and the Park would be very little interfered with.

413. This No. 4 scheme could work in with an extension to the eastern suburbs? Yes; I think there is no doubt that among the whole lot of schemes the St. James' Road scheme, this No. 4 scheme, and No. 10 scheme are the best, because they deal with the traffic in the most effective way.

414. The advantage being that the suburban traffic and through traffic are brought to one common centre? Yes.

415. Would this scheme also be capable of extension in the direction of North Shore by way of a bridge? In the same way as the St. James' Road scheme—by curving round.

416. And by tunnelling? Or by tunnelling. There would be special sections in each case. If you have to cross the harbour overhead you have steep grades, and you want additional locomotives to push the trains over those portions; and if you go under the harbour you would also have steep grades, and you would want to use electrical locomotives like they do in Baltimore and other places now to overcome the difficulties.

417. Apparently the works in connection with No. 4 scheme cost, in round numbers, £100,000 more than the works in the St. James' Road scheme;—is that so? The difference between the estimate for the St. James' Road works is £80,000. That I might say is a full estimate. It more than represents the difference. But both St. James' Road scheme and this scheme would have to be added to to the extent of £30,000 for the additional office accommodation which the Commissioners now ask for, which I mentioned in connection with No. 10 scheme.

418. Then, as regards the cost of the works or construction, it appears that No. 4 scheme and the St. James' Road scheme are the two most economical? As regards works, they are the most economical.

419. Would the roads around this scheme afford ample approach to the station, seeing that it is to accommodate the whole of the traffic, and possibly a large intercolonial traffic;—do you think there is sufficient access to the station by these roads which are left, seeing that you are going to close up a considerable portion of Castlereagh-street? I think they would; but if they were considered inadequate, of course there is the Imperial Arcade, which might be opened up as an additional roadway.

420. The station premises, I suppose, would be entirely under cover? It would be a roof similar in character to those of the other large schemes. The level of the platform in the north-west corner would be about the level of the street. There is a great rise in the ground from there to Elizabeth-street. The levels are such that the roads on the eastern side of the station could be arranged to be continued underground without interfering with the street surface, just as in the St. James' Road scheme.

421. In that respect the sloping front towards King-street would be on the same grade as the station proposed by the main scheme now under consideration, only that it would be extended further west? Yes.

422. *Mr. Dick.*] Would there be any approach to the station on the Elizabeth-street side? No; there is no approach on that side, because it is deep down. People arriving from the Elizabeth-street side would probably have to go round to the front of the station.

423. And there would be no approach, I suppose, to the south of Market-street? No; it is not proposed to have any approach there. H. Deane.
424. Practically, at the north-western corner the approach would be made to the station? The north. 14 Feb., 1900.
425. *Dr. Garran.*] In principle this scheme resembles the St. James' Road scheme, except that it is all on private property? Yes.
426. And the cost of that scheme, I believe, is estimated at £680,000? Yes.
427. The only difference between the two is that you go to the west, and on to private land? Yes; that is practically the difference.
428. The cost of the St. James' Road scheme, which I call the Commissioners' scheme, is £680,000, and the cost of this scheme is £1,429,000, which, I daresay, would be £1,500,000 by the time it was finished. The difference between the two, then, we must regard as the price which the public will pay for saving Hyde Park? Yes.
429. Between £700,000 and £800,000 is what we will have to pay for keeping our hands off Hyde Park? Yes.
430. Did I understand you to say that on this scheme there would need to be some expense at Devonshire-street? No; the lines would simply be carried through. The present Redfern Station would be used as a wayside station.
431. Precisely as proposed in the Commissioners' scheme? Yes.
432. There would be no expense at all on the north side of Devonshire-street, except for the running of six lines through? No.
433. There would be no station expense? No.
434. This scheme would have the disadvantage over the St. James' Road scheme of not having a station on the level of the road front;—St. James' Road is all on a level? No;—it is on a steep slope.
435. Is the eastern platform below the level of the ground? Yes.
436. So much so that you can tunnel under? Yes.
437. They are both alike in that respect? Yes.
438. *Mr. Watson.*] It is similar to King-street in that respect too? Yes. Take a cross-section running from the centre line of Hyde Park down towards George-street. There is a very rapid fall from the Queen's Statue or from the line of the central avenue down towards Pitt-street.
439. *Dr. Garran.*] St. James' Road is very nearly a level road? No.
440. It has not anything like the slope of King-street? You are mistaken. There is a difference of 20 feet between these two points in St. James' Road.
441. *Mr. Watson.*] Would it be any more of a level station than No. 10 scheme, which is the King-street scheme? You must make the station level, and you adopt the level of one part of the street or another; but if the ground is all irregular, or has a steep slope, you cannot make both sides of the station to correspond to the level of the street.
442. Taking the front portion of the station in each case, would not the slope be much the same at King-street as at St. James' Road? I think they are very much the same. The level of the central avenue line in Hyde Park, that is opposite the Queen's Statue, is 102 feet, and the level at the lower end of St. James' Road where it comes on to Elizabeth-street is 79 feet.
443. I understand that the fall on the King-street frontage of the proposed station on No. 10 is 20 feet from the highest point to the lowest point? Yes; it is about 20 feet.
444. It is 20 feet on No. 10 scheme as compared with 23 feet on the Hyde Park scheme? It is approximately the same in each case. The levels I have given are a little bit outside the station on each side. I think the difference of level on the station frontage in each case would be about 18 feet.
445. Would the length of frontage in each case be the same, or would it be greater in Hyde Park? A little greater in Hyde Park than it is in No. 4 scheme, because the cab-road has been cut out in the latter. I do not think there would be any difficulty about arranging the levels.
446. *Chairman.*] In No. 4 scheme you provide for a cut and cover through Hyde Park;—will that also be temporary as in schemes Nos. 1, 2, and 3? Yes.
447. After the works are completed it will be covered over, and the Park will not be interfered with? Yes; the surface will be restored.
448. *Mr. Watson.*] In the estimates for resumptions under No. 4 scheme (nearly £900,000) has any allowance been made for disturbance of business, or anything like that? I think so; but I could not say without referring to Mr. Sievers.
449. Under No. 4 scheme you practically propose to have as much accommodation as was proposed under the Hyde Park scheme? Yes; the same platform accommodation, only there would be the absence of the cab-road. Luggage would have to be brought out on to the western side of the station.
450. You would have a lane or road there? Yes; all that part which is marked brown on this map.
451. Of course you do provide accommodation for cabs, although not in the same manner as proposed in the Hyde Park scheme? Yes; but the cab does not enter the station.
452. If the estimate as to the cost of resumptions is to be relied on, the cost of No. 4 scheme would be a little less, if anything, than the amount set down for the King-street scheme? Yes. I am not responsible in any way for the estimate of the cost of land resumptions. It may be a good deal more, or it may even be less.
453. Assuming that to be fairly accurate in each instance, the cost of No. 4 scheme would be a little less than that of No. 10 scheme? Yes.
454. And it would save the taking of any part of the Domain or Hyde Park? Yes.
455. *Chairman.*] No. 5 scheme apparently branches off into three? Nos. 5, 6, and 7 have only just been sketched out. My report on the same is as follows:—"In accordance with the Minister's instructions, I have prepared a map showing two other schemes for extending the railway into the city, which I have numbered 5 and 6, and I have included a third numbered 7."
456. Will you read your description of No. 5 scheme? It reads as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION—No. 5 Scheme.

Six lines of way are carried from Redfern to a station at the High School site, as in the schemes already submitted. A station is provided at Liverpool-street. At the High School station three double platforms are provided about 18 feet below the level of Castlereagh-street, to which access is given by staircases; the necessary station offices are provided on the ground-level with steps down to the platforms. In order to give the greatest facilities for shunting and getting rid of the

H. Deane. the trains as they come in in the morning, and bringing up fresh trains as they go out in the afternoon—the busiest parts of the day—a loop is provided (as shown in red) at the outer part of which the trains could be stored, so that it is probable that, if not the whole, a very considerable part of the suburban traffic could be accommodated. The loop which runs under the Domain, and comes back to the same point in King-street, would be in tunnel except at the outer portion.

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The estimated cost of the schemes, not including the alterations for long-distance traffic at Redfern, is £596,600, to which is to be added, according to the land valuer's valuation, £150,000 for resumptions.

457. When the addition of the station at the Benevolent Asylum ground is made it probably will not differ very much from No. 2 in cost? It is practically the same in its object as No. 10. In No. 10 we have four lines running round to carriage-sheds. In No. 5 we have two lines of rails running round to a series of sidings at the back of the Art Gallery, and then they converge into two lines carried in tunnel, and come back and enter the station again at King-street.

458. Will you now describe No. 6 scheme? My description reads as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION—No. 6 Scheme.

THIS scheme differs from the foregoing in one particular only, namely, that instead of a loop which would be utilised for running off these surplus trains, these would be taken back to Redfern as shown by the dotted blue line. This line from the point where it leaves the central station to its return to Liverpool-street is in tunnel the whole way.

I cannot recommend that scheme. There is a great deal of tunnel. I think it would have to be worked by electric locomotives. Further, there would be considerable difficulties at the Hyde Park station, because either the trains would have to stand there till they are wanted to go out again to take passengers proceeding out to the suburbs round the loop, or else they would have to be shunted at the station. The estimated cost of the works is £552,000, and in that again the cost of the alterations at Redfern has not been included.

459. Will you now describe No. 7 scheme? I was asked to give an estimate of the proposal for a dead-end central station facing King-street. I give an estimate; but it is altogether inadequate, and not to be recommended. My description reads as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION—No. 7 Scheme.

THIS is a proposal for a dead-end and central station facing King-street. The accommodation is the utmost that can be provided in the limited space available. There are three double platforms and two additional roads, besides those contiguous to the platforms. As one line and part of a platform are situated under Castlereagh-street, the platform-level has to be placed 18 feet below that of the street, so that flights of steps are necessary to give access to the platforms, as in schemes Nos. 5 and 6.

I do not think that No. 7 scheme need be considered very much by the Committee, because it is altogether inadequate to the requirements.

460. Do schemes Nos. 5, 6, and 7 in any way interfere with Hyde Park? It is proposed to tunnel under the ground—to cut and cover, and restore the surface.

461. That would be from Nithsdale-street? Yes. The ventilation would be very bad unless electric locomotives are used.

462. No permanent interference with Hyde Park is proposed? No.

463. I understand from you that you do not favour either of these schemes? No; I simply worked these out for the purpose of giving an estimate. I might add that all these three schemes were informally discussed before the Royal Commission in 1897.

464. *Dr. Garran.*] Where you get the circular loop have you got several parallel sidings for trains to stand? Yes; that was the idea.

465. And in the pear-shaped loop you have no such sidings? No; there is no provision made.

466. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I have noticed that in all these schemes, although a station at Liverpool-street has been mentioned, no sum has been put down for it? That is included in the cost of the work.

467. What saving would be affected by leaving out that station? I think the saving would be about £30,000—the additional cost of the station and the works entailed by carrying the six lines through. It is not the matter of expense so much that has been objected to. I do not know that the Commissioners have objected to the expense at all, but they object to the delay involved in the trains stopping at a station at that street.

468. *Chairman.*] Will you now describe No. 8 scheme? I had instructions, in July last, to work out No. 8 scheme.

469. That scheme was suggested to you? Yes. I think it was Mr. Reid's idea to carry it through in that way, and the problem put before me was that the first part was to be an extension of the railway across Devonshire-street and a central station there; the second part was to be an extension into the city as far as Hunter-street, with a central station of eight lines and platforms for suburban traffic; and the third part is a further extension which can be made, if required, into Government House grounds.

The new station consists of two terminal docks, with four platforms for the long-distance trains, and six lines and four platforms for suburban trains, which are carried further on into the city. All the necessary offices are provided for the accommodation of the public and the traffic offices, and there is a cab-road for access to two of the long-distance platforms. Considerable expenditure will be required for the road approaches, on account of the drop in the ground towards Belmore Park, and the necessity of a wider approach from George-street immediately to the south of Christ Church.

A new arrangement of the tram lines is designed, and a parcels office is provided.

This scheme involves the lowering of Devonshire-street. The estimated cost for works is £134,000, to which should be added the land valuer's estimate of the value of the Benevolent Asylum, Christ Church rectory, police barracks and residence, or £98,000, making a total of £232,000.

That plan shows the proposed station at the north of Devonshire-street. On the eastern side of the station the suburban traffic will be accommodated. On the western side there are two docks, with three lines each for the long-distance traffic. The cab-road is shown as passing between the two long-distance terminal docks in the same way as is shown on scheme No. 9, and that plan has some features in common. Then Part 2 is described as follows:—

Part 2. Six lines are extended overhead to Goulburn-street. Between Goulburn-street and Liverpool-street a station of a suburban character is provided. From Liverpool-street to St. James' Road the same six lines are extended underground, about half the length being thrown open to the air, with low embankments on each side, and trees and shrubs planted for the sake of appearance, the other half being covered in, and the surface of the park replaced. The line passes under St. James' Road, which must be slightly deviated, and thence through the space now occupied by the Registrar-General's Office and Supreme Court, which will have to be pulled down, and the space thrown open to air and light; thence under King-street, which it is proposed to widen between Phillip-street and Elizabeth-street, to a station between that street and Hunter-street. The station has been designed to give the utmost accommodation possible under the

the limited condition of space. For the purpose of increasing that accommodation, two of the lines, with the adjoining platforms, are placed under the street on each side. In all there will be eight lines, with corresponding platforms, and Phillip-street and Elizabeth-street are widened to give a minimum of 75 feet, as compared with their present width, which is 60 and 66 feet respectively. Access will be given to the platform from both King-street and Hunter-street ends, but the station offices will be chiefly collected at the Hunter-street end. The whole will be covered with an iron and glass roof. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in the design, so as to make it as convenient as possible for the public. The depth of the platform at the Hunter-street end of Elizabeth-street will be at least 17 feet; but at other parts, and on the Phillip-street side, it will vary from 20 to 28 feet.

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The estimated cost of the works on this section is	£492,000
To which has to be added the land valuer's estimate of resumption, viz., resumption between Belmore-road and Liverpool-street	80,000
Supreme Court	23,000
Registrar-General's Office	10,000
Block between King and Hunter streets	335,000
Total	£940,000

Part 3 contemplates the extension, at some future time, of two lines to Albert-street. My description reads as follows.—

Part 3. As the Hunter-street station will be so near Circular Quay, it is probable that further extension will be unnecessary; but in case this should be required, the station between King-street and Hunter-street has been arranged so that two lines of way can be carried on to a small station in Government House grounds, near Albert-street. As the traffic will be very small, it is difficult to say what accommodation will be necessary. I have put an amount of £89,000 for this section, but it will be costly to work, and a most undesirable extension to make if it can be avoided. There will possibly be damage to property amounting to about £20,000, making a total of £109,000.

That drawing shows the plan of the Hunter-street station. A good deal of scheming had to be done in order to get the accommodation which is there. The accommodation is very largely under the streets. The streets are widened so as to increase the facilities for access, and consequently there is all the more of the station platforms and lines underneath the streets. This plan shows a cross-section. I am sorry that the end of the roof has been coloured, because it rather takes off from the appearance. In order to get an extra width of street, I put the foot-passengers inside the station, and carry them on cantilevers. I put the footpath inside the station on each side. There are two roads and platforms provided, one on each side of the station, underground. The best use has been made of the site.

470. What depth would the station be below Phillip-street on one side, and Elizabeth-street on the other? It is variable. The depth of the platform at the corner of Hunter-street and Elizabeth-street will be about 17 feet; but at other parts, and on Phillip-street, it will vary from 26 to 28 feet.

471. This scheme only provides for the suburban trains coming to Hunter-street? Yes.

472. The country trains being put still at the Benevolent Asylum site? Yes.

473. Could you do the necessary shunting for the suburban traffic at a station like this, or would it have to come back? The surplus trains coming in in the morning would have to go back to Redfern; but otherwise the shunting, I suppose, would be done there.

474. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is your opinion about having a terminus at Hunter-street;—would it be as central as one at King-street, in regard to the suburban traffic? I think it would be a very good position. I have arranged for access to the station being provided at King-street and at Hunter-street, so that people making use of King-street could get on to the station in the same way as people making use of Hunter-street.

475. How far will the station be from King-street? The end of the platform, access to which is provided, is about 100 feet back from the corner of King-street, or light overhead bridges could be run direct from King-street. Probably this would answer equally well.

476. *Chairman.*] This scheme would be entitled to be credited with the Government property occupied by the High School? That would be saved.

477. Would the Registrar-General's Office and part of the Supreme Court have to come down? They would have to come down. You see with all these converging lines it would be impossible to get underneath the buildings without disturbing them. You could put no support over the whole of that area.

478. Would there be any way of making a shunting loop at this end, instead of having to go back to Redfern? I think it would be very awkward. You might run down to the end of the Government House grounds; you might make a dead-end down there. I do not think a loop would come in very well.

479. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you not think, in any of these schemes it would be preferable to have a traversing platform than these long loops? That would not answer the same purpose. A traversing platform would only take a single carriage, or an engine and tender; it would not take the whole train. Traversers are nearly always provided where you have dead-ends; but that would not help you out of the difficulty of disposing of the surplus trains which come in in the morning and go out in the afternoon.

480. Would the form of these traversing platforms require more space? No; they are provided here in No. 10 scheme; they are shown on the plan.

481. There seems to be very little delay occasioned with these traversing platforms? They are very quick in action, but that does not do away with the whole of the shunting. You could not have traversing platforms on through lines. Where you have to continue your lines on for any purpose, you could not have traversing platforms there, and you could not shift the whole train with them. You could only shift an engine from one end of the train to the other.

482. Could you not have a traverser at each platform? If there was any advantage in doing that, but I do not think there would be any advantage in this particular case. What is done in this particular scheme is to have some dead-ends for engines at each side, so that when a train comes in, and is ready to go out, an engine is backed on to it from a dead-end, and runs away with it, and the engine which brought it in goes into a dead-end siding, and waits for the next train to come in.

483. *Dr. Garran.*] This is one of the schemes which separate the through traffic from the suburban traffic? Yes.

484. Therefore, according to your previous evidence, it necessitates a station north of Devonshire-street? Yes.

485. But it seems to me your sketch here of what you will have at Devonshire-street for this plan is lighter and cheaper than what you have given for other plans where you would have to do the same thing at Devonshire-street—it is not so expensive or so elaborate? I do not know that there is any difference. This plan is on a smaller scale than the others; it is on just half the scale of the others. Why it is made on that scale I could not exactly say.

486.

- H. Deane. 486. Does it give the same accommodation? It is practically the same accommodation as I showed you in regard to No. 3 scheme.
 14 Feb., 1900. 487. And the same expense? Yes.
 488. *Chairman.* Have the Railway Commissioners made a report on No. 3 scheme? Yes, a general report and a special report on the line in sections.
 489. Will you kindly read the reports? The reports read as follows:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 28 August, 1899.

Proposal to construct a line of railway from Redfern to Devonshire-street, and thence to Hunter-street, in accordance with reports, plans, and estimates prepared by the Public Works Department.

COMPLYING with the request made by letter, dated the 22nd instant, at the instance of the Secretary for Public Works, and in accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act of 1888," section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction, inclusive of land and compensation, at..... £1,222,000

Annual Cost—

Capital expenditure, at 3 per cent. £36,660
 Estimated cost of maintaining permanent-way, and for traffic, locomotive, and other expenses 21,020

Total annual cost..... £57,680

Traffic Estimate—

By adding 1d. for each ordinary suburban passenger journey, and 1s. 6d. and 1s. per month for 1st and 2nd class season ticket holders, with a percentage reduction per month for tickets taken out for three, six, and twelve months, and 3d. per week for workmen's tickets, a revenue on existing traffic would be realised of..... £38,000

This proposal appears to be based on the assumption that it will be proper to continue to deal with all trains, other than suburban, at Redfern, and bring on only the purely suburban trains to the city terminus, consequently the whole of the travellers from beyond the suburban area, and even all other regular passengers within the suburban area who travel by the non-suburban trains will still be required to stop short of the recognised city terminus.

The holiday excursion traffic to such places as Como, the National Park, Sans Souci, the Hawkesbury, &c., would also have to be dealt with at Redfern.

We desire to record our opinion that in the arrangement of the platforms and roads the Engineer-in-Chief for Construction has made the best possible use of the available space in the position of the proposed station, and yet the accommodation falls very short of what is necessary to work a large suburban traffic, and there is no possibility of extending it, except at enormous cost, to meet such a development of the traffic as should be provided for.

In the proposed station there are no roads to enable the engines to run round their trains, nor can they be provided within the allotted space without reducing the already limited platform accommodation. Neither is there any provision for storing trains at the busy times of the day when every platform will be fully occupied even with the present traffic, and during those times many of the empty trains would require to be moved from the terminus to Redfern, and brought back from Redfern to the terminus at considerable cost.

The platforms, too, are largely curtailed by the stairways at each end, and two of them are entirely underneath the streets.

Practically, the whole station would be underground, being 17 feet below the street level at one end, and 27 at the other.

Such an arrangement is most undesirable even at a wayside station, where it can possibly be avoided, and particularly so at the future terminus for the city of Sydney.

It is, of course, well known that underground stations are not uncommon in other parts of the world; but they are adopted from necessity—never from choice.

The ingress and egress would be inconvenient, and discomfort and uncleanness would always be experienced from the smoke emitted by the engines, to say nothing of the objections on hygienic grounds.

Looking at the station arrangements from a safe working point, they cannot be regarded as at all satisfactory. The train entrance to the station is covered by St. James' Road overbridge, 70 feet wide; King-street overbridge, 90 feet wide; and the overhead booking-office at the King-street entrance, &c. These bridges divide the shunting space in such a manner as to seriously interfere with the view of signalmen working the points and signals, and of the officer directing the train working. Moreover, the junctions between the various lines at the entrance of the yard are entirely in tunnel, so that the view of signals by the drivers will also be much obstructed.

There are other defects in the arrangements, all of which arise from the want of space; but they, with those already mentioned, may be characterised by the broad statement that the proposed station, as a whole, will not prove more convenient for working the suburban traffic than the present Redfern terminus, whilst it will entirely fail to improve the existing facilities for dealing with a considerable portion of it.

It is necessary, also, to point out that the office accommodation is limited to the requirements of the traffic staff immediately connected with the station. A properly arranged terminus should provide for the whole of the Commissioners' staff and that of their principal officers at headquarters, as much inconvenience is now, and has been for years, experienced in consequence of its being distributed in various places.

As regards the station at Liverpool-street, it is open to considerable argument as to whether this is required.

The proposed station on the Benevolent Asylum grounds would be wholly unnecessary if adequate terminal accommodation were provided, and consequently the expenditure could be avoided.

The proposal to deal with the suburban traffic at the terminus, and the other traffic at Redfern, would necessitate a considerable increase of the staff beyond what would be required if the whole were dealt with at one station, and this has been provided for in the estimate of working expenses.

A liberal estimate has been made of the value of the probable additional traffic, yet it falls short of the annual expenditure on account of interest and cost of working by £19,680 per annum, and this could only be averted by increasing the fares on the suburban lines.

It should be mentioned that in the estimated cost of the line is included a sum of £98,000, being the value of the Benevolent Asylum site, Christ Church Rectory, and the Police Barracks and residence as given by the Public Works Department; but if this was wholly left out of consideration the annual charge for interest would only be reduced by £2,940.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this twenty-eighth day of August one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, in the presence of,—

	CHARLES OLIVER,
	Chief Commissioner.
	W. M. FERRON,
	Commissioner.
H. McLACHLAN.	DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
	Commissioner.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 31 August, 1899.

The Hon. The Minister for Public Works.

With reference to the desire of the Minister for Works to be furnished with a report on the proposed extension of the Railway to Hunter-street, in sections, viz., Redfern to Devonshire-street, and thence to Hunter-street, we beg to point out that the scheme as a whole is fully dealt with by our report, under seal, dated the 29th instant, and therefore all that remains to be done is to endeavour to separate the cost of working each section. This, however, can only be given in the most approximate manner.

The new station at Devonshire-street is designed on the assumption that the Hunter-street section is to be constructed with a terminus for suburban trains only at Hunter-street. If

If the Hunter-street section were not to be constructed, then the design of the station at Devonshire-street would have to be entirely remodelled to meet the requirements of both country and suburban trains, which would very considerably modify the staff required. H. Deane.
14 Feb., 1900.

As regards working expenses, the staff at Redfern shunting yard and the staff at the Devonshire-street station, as proposed, would be to a large extent common to both the new Devonshire-street station and the Hunter-street terminus, inasmuch as the trains for both would have to stable and be marshalled at Redfern, as to-day.

Approximately the cost of working the Devonshire-street station would be £1,400 per annum less than the cost of working the present Redfern terminus.

The extension from Devonshire-street to Hunter-street would involve an annual expenditure of £22,420, the net increase in working expenses in connection with the whole scheme being as stated in our report, £21,020.

The interest on capital expenditure has not been taken into consideration in these figures.

CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

490. That completes your explanation of the various plans now before the Committee? Yes.

491. I understand that you wish to add a few general remarks? Yes, the position in which the railway question stands is in my mind represented by the following propositions:—

1. The railway should be extended into the city. No extension of tramways will thoroughly meet the case.
2. The Hyde Park terminus scheme is the most economical, and, therefore, the best, as reported upon by the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee in 1897.
3. Failing approval to use Hyde Park some other scheme should be adopted, even at the expenditure of £1,500,000.
4. Of alternative schemes to Hyde Park, Nos. 4 and 10 appear to meet the requirements best, and are satisfactory ones.
5. The Railway Commissioners' report of July, 1897, on the St. James' Road proposal gives the estimated working expenses (not including interest) at £8,000, and traffic receipts at £32,000, and the difference, £24,000, is left to pay interest on capital. This, at three per cent., means interest on £800,000.
6. Reference to the Railway Commissioners' report of December, 1899, shows that their estimate of traffic receipts has exceeded their previous one by £3,000, which means interest on a further sum of £200,000, or a total of £1,000,000 if the working expenses are assumed to be the same in both cases.
7. It follows from this that out of an expenditure of, say, £1,500,000, £1,000,000 is interest bearing, and the balance, £500,000 only unproductive.
8. The railway terminus at Redfern must be altered.
9. The required alteration cannot be conveniently or even safely made on the area now occupied.
10. If no extension into the city is made the only practicable proposal is that embodied in No. 9, or some modification of it.
11. No. 9 scheme involves an expenditure of £560,000, which is unproductive. To this should be added part cost of extending the tramways along additional streets in the city, and also in my opinion the cost of making proper radial thoroughfares from the Benevolent Asylum terminus towards the Eastern Suburbs.
12. This scheme does not fit in with any Eastern Suburban railway scheme, which is becoming an absolute necessity.
13. It is, therefore, commercially speaking a far inferior scheme to either No. 4 or No. 10, not to speak of the St. James' Road proposal.

492. That is a summary of your views? Yes.

THURSDAY, 15 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Robert R. P. Hickson, Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

493. *Chairman.*] On the 6th February you produced a report of the Railway Commissioners dated the 20th December, 1899, on the proposed extension of the railway system to King-street? I did. R. R. P. Hickson.

494. *Dr. Garran.*] In their report the Commissioners say that the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction estimates the cost for construction, inclusive of land and compensation at £1,491,000;—does that sum of £1,491,000 include the cost of the proportion of Hyde Park which is proposed to be taken? No. 15 Feb., 1900.

495. *Mr. Watson.*] Are they independent estimates? No; I think the explanation is, that since the estimate was made on which the Commissioners reported, some additional accommodation was required by them.

496. In the summary supplied by Mr. Deane, there are three items mentioned as additions to the original estimate of the cost of the works, and those three items come to £54,000;—if they are added to this item of £1,491,000 it still does not bring the sum equal to that which was mentioned? No. I think Mr. Deane will tell you that something else has been added since then.

497. It brings it rather above the total of your estimate? Of the first estimate.

John

John Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined :—

J. Parry.
15 Feb., 1900.

498. *Chairman.*] Have you prepared a statement with regard to the proposal before the Committee? I have.

499. Will you be good enough to read your statement? It reads as follows :—

I WAS examined before the Royal Commission on City Railway Extension in February, 1897, and furnished various returns shewing the number of trains and engines dealt with at Redfern Station, and passing through Redfern Tunnel on certain dates. I also described fully the accommodation at Redfern Station, and the difficulties experienced in dealing with the traffic at that time.

I have now prepared similar information for your Committee, brought up to date, as follows :—

1. Return shewing the number of trains and engines arriving and departing through Redfern Tunnel on up and down lines during each hour on a holiday, viz., Boxing Day, 26th December, 1899.
2. Return showing the number of trains and engines arriving and departing through Redfern Tunnel on up and down lines during each hour on an ordinary day, viz., Friday, 2nd February, 1900.
3. Return showing the number of through passenger trains and number of suburban passenger trains arriving at and departing from Sydney in each hour on an ordinary day.
4. The approximate number of passengers arriving at and departing from Redfern Station during the busy hours of morning and evening on an ordinary day; also the total number of passengers arriving and departing from Redfern Station on an ordinary day.

It will be seen from return No. 1 that the total number of passenger and goods trains, and light engines, which passed through Redfern Tunnel to and from the station and Darling Harbour on Boxing Day, 26th December, 1899 was 663; and return No. 2 shows the total number on an ordinary day, viz., Friday, 2nd February, 1900, was 628. Return No. 3 shows the total number of through and suburban passenger trains in and out of Redfern on an ordinary day is 329.

The number of trains and engines shown as arriving and departing, however, does not represent the work done in the passenger yard, as a large proportion of the passenger trains arriving have to be drawn out from the platforms and shunted to liberate the engines which brought them in, or to place the cars at other platforms to form other trains. There is also a great deal of shunting of the engines to keep them out of the way of incoming and outgoing passenger trains, as there are no refuge sidings between the platforms or the main running lines to allow of the engines being readily shunted clear to take water or stand while other trains arrive and depart. Nor are there any sidings between or handy to the platforms where spare coaches can stand, so as to be readily available to strengthen trains, and considerable shunting across the main running lines is occasioned to get to the carriage sidings.

The distance between the ends of the passenger platforms and the junction of the goods yard and the Darling Harbour branch with the main passenger lines is much too short, and frequently causes delay to shunting operations, both in the passenger yard, the goods yard, and to the goods trains on the branch. The arrangements of the points and crossings is also unsuitable to conduct the traffic satisfactorily in consequence of the limited length, and being hemmed in by the Darling Harbour branch, the yard having been added to, piecemeal, from time to time. And in consequence of the difficulty of shunting trains owing to the limited length between the station and tunnel junctions, special instructions had to be issued to the staff for the purpose of superseding the safe working instructions in connection with fixed signals, and introduce a most undesirable element into the working of such an important yard.

The sidings between Darling Harbour branch and Mortuary for storing carriages necessitate trains of cars to be shunted through the tunnel in the face of the incoming passenger trains when drawing the empty trains out of the sidings to set back into the passenger platforms, besides blocking goods traffic on the branch while the shunting is being done.

Platforms.

There are thirteen platform roads, but of these, two, viz., Nos. 4 and 7, are useless for trains to arrive at or depart from, they being only 173 feet and 233 feet long in the clear respectively. Nos. 9 and 10 platforms are also much too short to accommodate ordinary seven-car trains without fouling other roads, they being only 313 feet and 248 feet long in the clear; whereas the length of a seven-car train with engine is 410 feet and 424 feet long, according to the class of engine, and it is frequently necessary to run trains up to nine cars, the length of which is about 530 feet, and on holidays it would be an advantage to run even more cars at times.

The lengths in the clear of the eight platforms, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and A and B, are as follows, viz.: Nos. 1 and 2, 469 feet each; Nos. 5 and 6, 624 feet each; No. 8, 405 feet; A, 486 feet; B, 482 feet; so that it will be seen that only Nos. 5 and 6 platform roads will hold trains of more than eight cars and engine clear of other roads. Much difficulty is, therefore, experienced at holiday times by trains standing on one line blocking the entrance to other roads. This difficulty militated very seriously against the proper conduct of the business during the last Christmas holidays; the Northern mail arriving had to be cut into two parts in order to discharge the passengers and luggage, the platform not being long enough to accommodate the same. Frequently North and West trains are seriously inconvenienced through having to load up at two separate platforms and the two parts joined together at the last moment, and during the time the portions are being placed together the approaches to platforms Nos. 8, 9, 10, and 11 are completely blocked.

None of the platforms are provided with roofing or awning sufficient to admit of passengers' luggage and parcels of long country trains being discharged under cover, and in wet weather this gives rise to complaints.

Main Entrance Platform.

The end platform at the front of the station is most inconvenient and too narrow. There are no means of keeping it clear of persons who are not travellers but who congregate and stand about blocking the way and inconveniencing passengers. Passengers arriving and departing meet each other on this narrow platform, which at busy times becomes so congested that the porters and officers are unable without much difficulty to pass along from one platform to another, and it is only with the greatest difficulty and risk to passengers that parcels and luggage barrows can be got through. In fact, we have had a number of accidents during the last few months of passengers being injured by the parcels and luggage trollies through trying to force their way through a congested crowd.

Cloak-room.

This room is too small, most inconveniently situated, and gives rise to much irritation to passengers at busy times. On one of the recent busy days no less than about 2,000 different parcels were dealt with by passengers depositing and calling for same, and although the maximum number of men who could work in the space were employed, still delay to passengers could not be avoided.

Parcels Office.

The Parcels Office is small, and the cart approach to same is too contracted in space to admit of a sufficient number of carts to draw up to the platform to deliver and receive parcels during busy times, and delay to carts takes place in consequence. The difficulty of conveying the parcels on barrows to and from the trains through crowds of people on the end platform is very great.

Refreshment-room.

The present room is much too small and inconvenient, both from a public and departmental point of view.

Passenger trains having to be run into goods yard.

On holidays a number of passenger trains arriving in Sydney have to be run into the goods-yard, and passengers discharged at the goods platform. As the goods-yard points are not interlocked and signals are not provided for the various roads inside the yard, it is most undesirable that this mode of working should be allowed to continue longer than is absolutely necessary, as it is impossible to avoid risk under existing conditions of running passenger trains into the goods-yard without any signalling or interlocking of points.

Office

Office Accommodation.

J. Parry.

The general business is seriously hampered in consequence of the inconvenient situation of the offices; the staff being located at so many different places considerable distances apart inevitably results in much waste of time of officers going to and fro between the same.

15 Feb., 1900.

Siding Accommodation.

The siding accommodation in Redfern for storing passenger coaches is too limited, even for the present business, and distributed in such inconvenient positions that much trouble is occasioned in shunting away and marshalling trains.

500. Will you now give the Committee a summary of the returns which you have compiled in regard to the traffic (*vide Appendix A*)? The first return shows the number of trains and engines running between Sydney and Eveleigh on Boxing Day, 26th December, 1899. I have divided the traffic into each hour of the day of twenty-four hours, so that in analysing the statement the Committee will be able to see that the traffic congests itself in certain hours. This return shows that on last Boxing Day no less than 663 trains passed through Redfern tunnel—that is, including both goods, passengers, and light engines, as well as the Darling Harbour trains. The second statement I have prepared shows the number of trains and engines running between Sydney and Eveleigh on an ordinary day. It shows that on the 2nd February, 1900, 623 trains passed through the tunnel—that is, including both goods, passengers, and light engines. The third return I have prepared shows the number of passenger trains, including goods and light engines, in and out of Sydney on a Friday in November, during twenty-four hours, as per regular time-table. It shows that 329 passenger trains arrived and departed during the day. The number arriving during any particular hour is shown. The maximum number of thirty-nine trains arrived between 5 and 6 o'clock in the evening. The fourth statement I have prepared shows the approximate number of passengers arriving at and departing from Redfern Station during the busy hours of the morning and evening. I wish the Committee to understand that the figures I give in this return are approximate; they were obtained by putting special officers on to count the passengers arriving by each train, and totalling the number. The return shows that on Monday, the 22nd January, 1900, between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m., and between 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. there were about 17,609 passengers arriving in Sydney, and 16,769 passengers departing from Sydney. It might be said that these figures should balance; but you see we have not taken all the trains, and of course the counting is necessarily approximate. It is about as good an arrangement as we could devise for counting them. The return shows that between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m., and 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., about 34,378 passengers came into and out of Sydney. The total number of passengers arriving at Redfern on that day was estimated at 23,823, and the total number of passengers departing from Redfern at about 21,187. I have given three returns showing the traffic for three days. You will see that the figures vary a little.

501. *Mr. Watson.*] These are ordinary days, not holidays? Yes; ordinary days, namely, Monday, 22nd January, Tuesday, 23rd January, and Wednesday, 24th January. The total number of passengers arriving at and departing from Redfern on these three days was as follows:—22nd January, 45,010; 23rd January, 43,228; and 24th January, 45,640.

502. *Chairman.*] There is no other tram service direct from the railway, except into Sydney? There are the Botany trams, and on holidays the trams, *via* Cleveland-street, to the Cricket Ground.

503. On ordinary days, except the branch off from Redfern, the trams come into Sydney? All the trams come into Sydney from the railway station, except on special occasions.

504. Have you any means of telling us the proportion of passengers who, on ordinary days, alight from the trains and get into the trams coming into Sydney;—is there any check on that traffic? I think it will be possible to get the approximate number. The Tramway Superintendent would be best able to give that information to you. But from observation and particulars which I have obtained it seems to me that between 7 a.m. and about 9.30 a.m. there would be between 4,000 and 5,000 passengers who join the trams at Redfern to come into Sydney.

505. I suppose the majority of those ride by train? The approximate number arriving by train between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. would be between 10,800 to 12,500.

506. And out of this number how many would come into Sydney by tram? Approximately, I should say between 4,000 and 5,000.

507. *Dr. Garran.*] Can you say whether a good many walk into town? A good number do walk into town.

508. Can you guess how many do walk? No; it is impossible to guess.

509. Some of them would take the Redfern trams? I would like it to be understood that my statement that between 4,000 and 5,000 passengers join the trams refers to the passengers who depart from the station by the electric trams. Then, of course, there are the Botany trams. A large number of people would go down Elizabeth-street, and, also, some would walk over to join the trams from western suburbs if there were no Redfern tram, rather than go down George-street. For instance, many of the civil servants would not go down George-street, because it would take them out of the way. They would walk to George-street to catch the steam trams at the entrance gates to the station.

510. Cannot they pick up trams at the mouth of the subway? Some of them; but the Botany trams are not running very frequently.

511. So many steam trams can be picked up outside? Yes.

512. *Mr. Shepherd.*] When the estimate was taken of the number of passengers who arrived by the trams at King-street there were means taken to ascertain the greatest number arriving at any given point, I believe, and King-street was supposed to be the principal focus for passengers;—that estimate was taken, I believe, before the George-street tram was started;—do you think the George-street tram would materially affect the number who usually reached King-street by steam tram? I do not think so. They would be distributed now. A number of passengers who used to go down by the steam trams still go by the steam trams to King-street, but a large portion of them go down George-street to King-street or Market-street.

513. I mean passengers who go to King-street at the site of the proposed station;—at the time this estimate was taken, it was taken as an estimate of the passengers who arrived at King-street and Elizabeth-street? I have not any estimate which has been taken of the passengers using the steam trams and electric trams.

514. But do you not think that it would very materially affect the number arriving at that point now—that a large number who used to go down Elizabeth-street, now go down George-street? Yes; I estimate

J. Parry. that there would be about 4,500 passengers between 7 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. or 10 a.m. who originally went down George-street by 'bus or by steam tram to King-street, but the majority of them now go down in the electric trams to King-street.

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515. Do you think it is wise to go right through with the trains from Redfern to King-street without any intermediate station? I do.

516. The extension to the city would be almost exclusively in the interests of the suburban passengers? Yes; when I spoke of suburban passengers, I meant all trains coming in, not from Parramatta, but from Penrith, Campbelltown, and the Hawkesbury. Take Monday morning, for instance, when the tourist trains come in from the mountains and Moss Vale. These are what we would call practically suburban passengers, although they are outside the suburban area, because they are simply passengers who run out for a day or so to get fresh air, and who want to go straight to their offices from the train in the morning, instead of going home.

517. Is it the intention to run the through trains down to King-street? It would not be confined to suburban passengers; it would include all trains.

518. The point at which they would arrive here would certainly not be very convenient for the larger part of the city? Those who wish to go to Goulburn-street, Liverpool-street, Bathurst-street, and Park-street would hardly care to come on to the station at King-street, and then go back to any of those streets? No; those passengers for south of Liverpool-street would get out at Redfern, as they do now.

519. We might take Market-street as the boundary on the south, Pitt-street as the boundary on the west, and Hunter-street as the boundary on the north;—do you think it would convenience persons going to places of business beyond those boundaries? I think if you landed them at King-street the great proportion would take it as a comfortable walk to their offices and warehouses. Each person cannot be landed at his office door. Therefore, when you have brought him to a central position, say King-street, you have brought him to a position from which he can take a comfortable walk to his business.

520. It is usual for persons to want to get to their offices as rapidly as possible from their homes, so that they would like to reach the nearest point to their offices that they can;—do you not think that is reasonable? Of course, it is a reasonable proposition.

521. For instance, take the persons in the large Government offices down here, would they not be more conveniently served by the George-street tram going round to Circular Quay than by being dropped at King-street and coming on down here? I do not think they would. I think they would save considerable time by going on to King-street in the train.

522. Would they not be nearer to their offices if they were dropped at Circular Quay? Yes; but the tram is not by any means the most desirable method of travelling such a large distance as that from Redfern—that is, to discharge the great bulk of your passengers at Redfern and make them go down George-street by tram right away to the Circular Quay, would not be anything like as convenient as running through to King-street by train and then allowing them either to walk or to take tram from that point.

523. If they took a tram at King-street the delay in changing from train to tram would be equal to that in changing at Redfern? About the same.

524. So that they really would not gain any time so far as that was concerned? You gain time in the difference between the speed of the train from Redfern and the speed of the tram, which I should estimate would be at least seven minutes.

525. Under No. 10 scheme the trains will reach the station at King-street, and then take a long turn of about 1,000 yards in tunnel under the Domain to the back of the Art Gallery;—would you not think that that was rather an inconvenient mode of dealing with the trains? It is the only method in which you can arrange to deal with them under the scheme. The space is limited for the width of the station, and, in consequence of that limited width, a large number of trains which arrive there, after they have discharged their passengers, run straight away to the sidings at the back of the Art Gallery. The engine there is shunted round its train, or another engine is attached, and the train is brought back empty, and picks up its passengers, similar to suburban through stations. By this method an increased number of trains can be dealt with at the through platforms than could be done if each train had to be pulled out after arriving and shunting. Therefore, if the station is limited to the width which is shown on the plan, you must have the through lines so as to enable trains to get quickly away, after discharging and to avoid having to shunt them. In other words, if you do not have the through lines, you must have more platforms. For instance, you will see that this scheme has five bay platform roads and four through platform roads, viz., two up and two down or nine platform roads, whereas I think the Park-street scheme had twelve platform roads. So that unless there are through lines, so as to get away with empty trains, you must have additional platforms, and that means increased width in space.

526. Have you noticed that two of these platforms are intended to be traversing platforms—that is, to traverse the engine in the same way as is done at the Princes' Bridge Station in Melbourne? Yes.

527. Could not that be applied to all these platforms? If you had a sufficient number and sufficient width. If we had a greater width—that is, if you choose to give us that much more of the Park—then we can provide for sufficient platforms, and dispense with the necessity of going to the back of the Art Gallery.

528. That pencil line which you see on the map is drawn to show the extra width which would be required;—do you not think it would be preferable to take in that extra 100 feet than to run the trains in that semi-circular tunnel round to the back of the Art Gallery? I do.

529. That line takes 8 acres out of the Domain, and costs from £120,000 to £150,000;—that expenditure will be saved by taking a few extra acres out of Hyde Park? I think it would be far and away a superior arrangement. I think it would be far preferable to take in the additional width in Hyde Park, and deal with the trains by traversing platforms at each end of the bay roads.

530. *Dr. Garran.*] If it were allowable to take enough of Hyde Park to put in two more platforms, you could save the expenditure of £250,000, which you would have to incur by going round to the back of the Art Gallery? There would be no necessity for the extension beyond King-street, and it would be a superior arrangement too.

531. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I think it is estimated to take in about 3 acres more of Hyde Park;—it would mean a saving of time? Yes. The busy traffic commences about 5 o'clock in the evening. The suburban trains which go out at that hour run to Ashfield, Homebush, or other station, then they run back to Sydney, and go out from Sydney again. Under arrangement in scheme No. 10 every train which returns here from Homebush or Hurstville, as the case might be so, would have to run away round to the back of the

the

the Art Gallery, a distance of a mile, and then come back to King-street station the same distance. If we had in Hyde Park additional width to give sufficient platforms to accommodate the traffic terminating at King-street, it would mean that instead of the suburban trains, after discharging their passengers, requiring to run round from King-street to the back of the Art Gallery, and there shunting and coming back empty to King-street before taking up passengers, they would terminate at King-street, a second engine would be standing by or the same engine would run round its train to take it out again. In that way all that additional mileage would be avoided.

532. Can you form any idea of the time it would save? It would save at least ten or twelve minutes in some cases.

533. *Dr. Garran.*] How long does it take to do the shunting now? Some of the trains during the busy time will arrive in Redfern Station, another engine then hooks on to the other end of a train, and can be got away in three minutes with another load of passengers.

534. How long will it take you to do the other? At least twelve minutes.

535. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Will you kindly explain why you think it is desirable not to have any intermediate station between Redfern and King-street? I should say the great bulk of the passengers come down to King-street—to this end of the city. I do not think there is a very large number of passengers who want to go to Bathurst-street, or Liverpool-street, or Goulburn-street, and these would simply walk down from Redfern, or get into a penny tram, and be delivered at their doors. What is required in coming down to King-street is to save the time of passengers to outlying suburbs. If you have a train loaded with passengers joining at King-street, you do not want to stop that train at Liverpool-street. If you did, it would mean a delay of from two to two and a half minutes. The trainload of passengers do not want to be stopped there—they want to be whirled away to Strathfield or Burwood. You, Sir, know very well what suburban travelling is. It is annoying to you if you join a train at Redfern, and it stops at Eveleigh. You see that the train is full, and you say, "Why do we want to stop at Eveleigh? Let us go right away to the far-distant station." If you can save the time, people will go out further from the city. If you can run out to Strathfield in twelve or fourteen minutes, people will go out to live there, and they will delight in living out there; but if you extend the time to twenty or thirty minutes by stopping at more stations, you will not get people to live out there. It is by fast service that people are induced to go farther out from the city. I do not think that can be exemplified more than in the case of Strathfield. The population of Strathfield has increased to an enormous extent, and it is solely owing to there being fast through trains to that station.

536. Do you not think it is treating hardly the persons engaged in business in the immediate vicinity of Liverpool-street; for instance, by not giving them an opportunity to come straight in instead of changing at Redfern? If their shops are between Liverpool-street and the Haymarket it would be just as easy for them to get out at Redfern and take the tram and alight at their shop. They would in all probability take a tram if they come to Liverpool-street.

537. The same argument would apply pretty well everywhere? I recognise that, but I think it would be the greatest convenience to the greatest number to run through to King-street.

538. The great objection, so far as I can understand from a great many persons I have spoken to, is the delay in changing at Redfern;—people residing between Liverpool-street and Market-street fancy that they are as much entitled to the privilege of coming right in without this delay in changing as are people residing about King-street? Of course, the electric trams, as time goes on, will be really the distributors of the street traffic. The railway then becomes the proper means for dealing with through business. In other words, the railway will be the wholesale shop and the electric trams will be the retail. The trains will bring the people to a central position, and the trams will distribute them.

539. From a financial point of view, do you think it is desirable to come right on to King-street without any intermediate stoppage? If a satisfactory scheme can be adopted, in my opinion, it would.

540. You think a larger number would actually travel by coming direct to King-street than by having intermediate stoppages? I think so.

541. It was estimated some time ago that £38,000 a year would represent the additional fares collected between Redfern and King-street when the railway was extended to that point;—do you not think that the estimate would be largely affected since the George-street trams have been running? I would rather not answer that question, because I am not sure as to the basis on which that estimate of £38,000 was made. I believe it was made on the then number of tickets issued and the season tickets. If it did not include any prospective traffic, I should say that the estimate would be under the mark, because we would very considerably increase the traffic if we came down to King-street.

542. Taking the general bearing of this scheme, it interferes considerably with Hyde Park, it blocks Elizabeth-street from Market-street to King-street, and it would considerably cut up the Domain;—taking all these matters into consideration, do you think it is more desirable to bring the trains on to King-street than to enlarge the accommodation at Redfern—to take in the Benevolent Asylum ground and the burial-ground, and make a very large and convenient station there? From a traffic-working point of view, of course the terminus at Belmore-road would be suitable, but from a financial point of view there is no doubt that there is more to be gained by coming down to King-street.

543. *Mr. McFarlane.*] From your experience in the position which you occupy, it is your opinion that there is not sufficient accommodation for the passenger traffic at Redfern? That is my opinion.

544. You consider that the present arrangements at Redfern are insufficient for the passenger traffic? I do.

545. With regard to bringing the passengers into the city, do you consider the proposal to make the extension to King-street—that is No. 10 scheme—the best scheme for doing that? No. I should only adopt that in the absence of not being able to get a better one.

546. Which scheme would you recommend? The only scheme which I should consider satisfactory is the St. James' Road scheme, and I am speaking now from a railway-working point of view.

547. What advantages does it possess over the present proposal? In the King-street scheme passengers have to ascend and descend, I think, 20 feet from the main entrance to the station to the various platforms, and the luggage has to be brought into the King-street entrance, and lowered down 20 feet to the level of the platforms. And then, to get their luggage to and from the through platforms, the passengers have to go under, through subways or to go overhead. The great inconvenience of this site is the distance between the level of King-street at which passengers enter and the platforms.

548. The cost of the Hyde Park scheme, also, is much less? It is much less.

549. And it would save any necessity for that extension to the back of the Art Gallery? Yes.

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J. Parry. 550. With regard to the passenger traffic, do you think King-street is the most central place to have a central station? I would not say that. It seems to me that if there could be a suitable site found on the western side of George-street it might, perhaps, be more convenient than King-street for the majority of the passengers, but for all practical purposes of working the railway I think the King-street site is a suitable one.

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551. That is from the Departmental point of view? Yes.

552. With regard to the passengers' point of view, which would suit best the majority of the travelling public who go from the city;—would it not be more central to some of the places you suggested? Supposing you put the station on the western side of George-street, then you would find that the great number of business people, merchants, and others would take what must inevitably come in the future, electric trams to get to their various offices or warehouses, because none of them are landed close to their doors, though a few would be. From King-street a number may take the trams down to, say, the western side of George-street, to the warehouses in York-street. If there was a suitable site which could be found, then I should say that west of George-street may be, perhaps, a little more convenient to the greater number.

553. In view of a future extension to North Shore, would not North Shore be more easily connected by rail from George-street than from King-street? I would like to answer that question in another way. I think there is a plan in the room which shows the scheme for that arrangement. It is in the Report of the Royal Commission on City Railway in 1897. My opinion is that the traffic from North Shore will be chiefly Sydney passengers, that is passengers coming into Sydney to business and going out of Sydney from business, and therefore do not require to come into the great central station. The traffic from the western suburbs to North Shore and from North Shore to the western suburbs will not be very large.

554. There will be no direct passenger traffic between the western suburbs and North Shore? There will be some; but I think we might almost term it infinitesimal compared with the traffic into Sydney. Therefore, North Shore will be served at any time, should it ever be decided to make a railway there, by putting an independent terminus on the western side of George-street, and then it could be connected by trains running to this central station at King-street round by the Haymarket.

555. You are of opinion that it is not necessary, in the event of any connection with North Shore being made, to connect with the proposed central station at King-street, but to connect the North Shore line with some part of the proposed extension from Redfern to King-street? Yes.

556. You are aware that a lot of passengers who travel by the suburban trains go to Manly, North Shore, and different places down the harbour? Yes.

557. Would it not be a somewhat considerable distance for them to have to walk from the King-street station to Circular Quay? I suppose it would be nearly half a mile.

558. Would not these people, coming from the suburbs, prefer to get out of the train at Redfern and take the electric tram, rather than walk that distance, seeing that they could be landed on Circular Quay? I do not think so, because of the extra distance by the tram and therefore extra time. But apart from that, in my opinion the trams will have more than they can do satisfactorily to deal with the western suburbs traffic, apart from the railway traffic, when the steam trams are all converted into electric trams.

559. You mean the people who travel by the trams now? Yes.

560. You think the existing trams will be kept pretty well going to convey them without the railway trams? Yes.

561. Would it not be possible to make more lines in different streets, say in Pitt-street and Clarence-street? I think it will be necessary, even without the railway traffic.

562. Would it not require a very great increase for that to be necessary at the present time;—you anticipate that it will not take place for some years to come? When the trams are converted to electricity there will have to be a largely increased number of trams to deal with the present traffic. Instead of running three, and sometimes four vehicles, the number of trams will be increased under the electric system; the fares will be remodelled, and there will be a great additional traffic brought on to the tram-lines from the western suburbs when the electric system is opened and the new fares come into operation.

563. Dealing more particularly with the present time, and assuming that the railway is extended to King-street, a large number of those who come in by the suburban trains have their places of business in York-street, George-street, and Sussex-street;—do you not think it would be more convenient for them to take the trams at Redfern than to land at King-street? No; because they would be able to take a tram at King-street.

564. But that will be at an additional cost? It will be at an infinitesimal cost, compared with the time saved.

565. Another penny? Yes; but the great bulk of the people will not take the ordinary fare. The Commissioners propose to put only 1d. each journey on the ordinary fare, 1s. per month on the second-class season ticket, and 3d. on workmens' weekly tickets.

566. I do not understand what you refer to? The whole of the people you are speaking of as coming to their places of business, say in York-street, travel by season ticket on the railway.

567. If they went in a tram they would have to pay the fare on the tram—one penny? Yes; but they will be brought down by the train to King-street, and it will not cost them a penny to come down to that point.

568. The Commissioners, in reckoning the income from the proposed extension, estimate to get a penny for each journey from passengers taking ordinary tickets; on the season tickets they reckon to get 1s. 6d. for first-class per month, and 1s. for second-class? With twenty-six journeys second-class, that is only about a half-penny per journey.

569. What I mean is this: That passengers will have a choice between taking at Redfern, at a cost of one penny, a tram which will land them exactly where they wish to go, and riding in the train as far as King-street, at some additional cost, and then taking a tram at a cost of a penny to do the remainder of their journey? You would still find that the great bulk would come to King-street.

570. You still think that the great bulk of those who intend to come to Circular Quay would come to King-street? I do.

571. On holidays a lot of people go down the harbour for pleasure by the different steamers;—do you think these persons will get out of the train at King-street, and walk to Circular Quay, when a tram from Redfern Station will bring them to exactly where they want to go? I think they would ride to King-street by train, and then take a tram from that point—that is, those who would not walk.

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572. Would it not be better for them to get out and take a tram at Redfern, and save the additional cost of taking a ticket from Redfern to King-street? I do not think they would get out at Redfern.
573. Would they not save by doing so? They may save a little in money, but they would lose in time, convenience, and comfort. I think it takes nine or ten minutes for a tram to go from Redfern Station to King-street, whereas a train would do it in three minutes.
574. If they had to walk from King-street to Circular Quay it would take them more than the additional time;—seeing that the electric trams are paying so well, and are so well patronised, is it not likely that they will be extended to a number of streets in the city? I should imagine that there will be a large extension of electric trams in the city before many years.
575. You stated, in reply to Mr. Shepherd, that a very large number of passengers that arrive by train do not come by the trams to Sydney? There are a considerable number that do not.
576. Would that not interfere with the estimated income of one penny for suburban passengers using the extension? I do not think so, but I do know how the estimate was made up.
577. But if the extension of the railway would take passengers to King-street, it would be taking so much traffic away from the existing electric trams? That I should consider an advantage.
578. In what way? At the present time the electric trams do not deal with the railway traffic satisfactorily. Yesterday morning when we had that heavy rain, people were standing about waiting for trams. On Redfern Station in about three minutes we may land between 1,200 and 1,300 persons, and the electric trams cannot deal with that number satisfactorily at once. The people must of necessity wait for a number of trams to pass, and as they pass so they fill. You will always have overcrowding with electric trams, because you land such a large number of people into the station at once. A four-wheel electric car only seats about twenty passengers. Therefore, you see the number of trams you require to deal with the number of passengers you land in Sydney by about three trains.
579. But would not the revenue derived from the electric trams now be to a large extent reduced when the passengers were taken in another way by the railway? It would be diverted from the tramway to the railway.
580. To the detriment of the tramway? Yes; but that would be an advantage. If you have more business than you can well cope with, it is better to dispose of some of that business and do what you have satisfactorily.
581. Do you think that you cannot get a sufficient number of trams to carry the passengers who land at Redfern? Not satisfactorily—not with the passengers having to wait for trams.
582. In the case of passengers wishing to go to Liverpool-street, or Bathurst-street, or Park-street, would they go on to King-street by train, and then walk back that distance, or would they take another tram to bring them where they wanted to go? According to the distance from either place. If it were nearer to Redfern they would get out there.
583. I am speaking of people wanting to go to places in the locality from Goulburn-street down to Market-street? Goulburn-street people, I take it, would get out at Redfern and take the tram; and the Market-street people, of course, would go through to King-street.
584. Considering the distance between Market-street and Goulburn-street, would it not be highly probable that those who wished to go there would take a tram at Redfern instead of coming on by train? Probably they would up to Liverpool-street, but not so far as Market-street.
585. Not as far as Market-street? You would find that the majority of those would come on to King-street and walk back.
586. It would greatly depend upon the state of the weather, I think? Possibly so.
587. *Mr. Watson.*] You say that the necessity for having that shunting-yard and carriage-shed in the Domain arose from the decreased width which is available in the King-street scheme as compared with the St. James' Road scheme? Yes.
588. Was the Hyde Park scheme thought by yourself to be sufficient for many years to come? Yes.
589. Do you think that the amount of convenience given by the extension into the Domain from King-street is only equal to the two extra platforms which were provided in the Hyde Park scheme;—what I mean is, do you think that that tunnel and carriage-shed only make good the deficiency of giving the extra platforms, or does it really give a great deal more accommodation than was given by the eleven platforms in the Hyde Park scheme? For purely suburban trains the four lines of railway through very materially increase the accommodation of the station; but when you come to deal with through trains—that is, country trains—the through lines are not so useful. You are unable to allow the train to stand at the platform to discharge the luggage and parcels, milk, and such things as come in by these trains, because you would be monopolising a through platform too long. Therefore, you are suffering by not having sufficient bay platforms to deal with the through traffic, whereas with the Hyde Park scheme you could use any platform for any train, either suburban or country.
590. But in the King-street scheme you would still have five platforms available for the country or through traffic you speak of? Yes.
591. Would not that be sufficient to deal with the traffic other than suburban? In our very busy time we should not have very much to spare.
592. The way it presented itself to me was that this King-street scheme, with the extension into the Domain, was actually providing accommodation for more trains than was proposed at Hyde Park, having in view the fact that you could utilise the four platforms for which through communication was provided to a much greater extent than any bay platforms could be used? During the busy evening traffic, for instance between 6 and half-past 6, then it is that the return trains—that is, trains which have taken one trip out to suburban stations—comes in, and the moment it arrives an engine is attached to the other end and out it goes again. In the case of these trains you might save a considerable amount of time with the Hyde Park scheme, because the train does not have to go through the tunnel. Of the four platforms for which through communication is proposed, the westerly ones would be for arrivals and the easterly ones for departures only.
593. Whereas with bay platforms you could use them either for arrivals or for departures? Yes.
594. Another point presents itself here, namely, that with the construction of a station at King-street, there would be a decreased pressure at Redfern so far as the volume of traffic was concerned? Yes.
595. You would have more of the Redfern space made available for other than mere platform arrangements? Yes.

- J. Parry. 596. Is the distance from Redfern to the King-street station about the same as the distance from the King-street station to the carriage-shed in the Domain? Yes.
- 15 Feb., 1900. 597. Would it not be possible to save the £250,000 proposed to be spent in extending the line into the Domain, and shunting back to Redfern for your carriages? Yes, assuming the Hyde Park scheme were adopted, it would.
598. Under the Hyde Park scheme, did you propose to shunt back to Redfern? Yes; that is, certain trains which are finished with and require to stable. Many trains coming in would not require to go back empty to Redfern, they fill at once and go back to the suburbs.
599. During a certain period of the day you have a lot of carriages on hand? Those we would send back to Redfern.
600. Could you not still utilise Redfern for that purpose with the King-street scheme;—you still have six lines of way, two of which, I presume, could be used for shunting purposes? For through trains we would do that.
601. Even if you had an extension into the Domain you would do that? Yes; we would still take some trains back through Redfern to Macdonaldtown for cleaning purposes.
602. Would it not be possible, with nine platforms at King-street, to do that with all the trains which required to be shunted and rearranged, and marshalled at Redfern? No, we could not do it with nine platforms.
603. Why could you not do it? The time occupied in shunting will be about the same, seeing that the distance is about the same, and you have six lines of road between Redfern and King-street, of which only four, I understand, will be used, generally speaking, for passenger purposes, and the other two will be available for shunting and departmental work? The platforms would be insufficient to accommodate through and suburban trains, the six lines would be used for passenger trains at times.
604. On emergencies, but not usually? They would all be used as passenger lines, to avoid crossing and recrossing further up the line.
605. I understood from Mr. Deane that the present arrangement in providing six lines of railway was that four of them would be usually occupied with passenger traffic, and that the other two would be used for shunting, and such purposes? Of course, the four lines would be chiefly used for passenger traffic; but at the same time we would use the extra two lines for passenger trains also. For instance, we use the sixth line between Redfern and Illawarra Junction for a number of passenger trains in the evening during our busy time.
606. Assuming the same arrangements to exist or to be entered upon in respect of the six lines between Redfern and King-street during the busy time you would not require to be marshalling trains backwards and forwards? No, except through trains.
607. It is only during the comparatively slack time of the day, when four lines for passenger traffic would probably be sufficient, that you would require to be shunting your carriages or marshalling out at Redfern? Generally speaking, that would be so; but take (say) holiday times.
608. Exempting holidays? It is the maximum of business we have to deal with. If we break down on a holiday, we break down absolutely. For instance, last Christmas the Northern mail arrived considerably late on a Saturday—I think between 12:30 and 1 p.m. In consequence of our not having a long platform to turn that train to, we had to turn it into a shorter platform, to cut it into two, so as to discharge the luggage and part of the passengers at one platform, and discharge the remainder of the passengers at another. That blocked the whole of one side of the yard, and upset about half a dozen trains—that is to say, they could not get into their platforms, and they had to run late. It disorganised the suburban working.
609. On a holiday? No, it was on a Saturday.
610. You contend that the six lines into King-street station will not be sufficient to allow of your using any of them on holidays for marshalling trains out at Redfern? Yes, it would; if we had suitable termini to deal with the trains.
611. I am speaking of nine platforms as proposed at King-street? Not with the arrangements proposed at King-street under No. 10 scheme.
612. One of the complaints made in respect to the Redfern Station yard, I understand, is that it is too much of a bottle shape, and that consequently there is not space enough from the end of the platform to where the points must be to allow crossing on to the different lines;—do you get over that difficulty to any extent in the yard as proposed at King-street;—have you a greater length available for crossings, and so on? There the great bulk of your suburban trains go right through; you dispose with the shunting of those trains altogether.
613. Assuming that you were given at King-street a sufficient width of land for another two platforms, bringing it up to the number of platforms provided in the Hyde Park scheme, and that I understand would necessitate shunting your suburban trains;—in that case would you still have a roomy enough approach to your platform to allow of shunting? In that case we should run them away to Redfern at once over the six lines. We should not attempt to shunt them here.
614. It seems to me that the length of approach in this King-street scheme, between where the lines begin to widen out and the actual beginning of the platform was not much better than at Redfern? You see at Redfern there is the goods-yard and the Darling Harbour branch, all the engines coming down from Eveleigh which have to cross at these points, and those engines crossing from the goods line—over to the George-street side of the station,—all clash with the in-coming trains and out-going trains; and in order to draw the passenger-trains out to shunt them away to the carriage sidings you have to foul these junctions. You would not have to contend with this at King-street. We should provide sidings between the platform lines for engines to refuge in, so that they will be able to go direct into and refuge in them and thus be out of the way. The carriage trains from suburban lines would either run straight away through to the back of the Art Gallery, or else they would run straight away back to Redfern, so that the minimum amount of shunting would take place at King-street.
615. What additional width of station would you require to put in two more platforms;—I heard 100 feet mentioned; but that seems rather wider than would be necessary? Roughly speaking, I think 80 or 90 feet. I should like to see it plotted before I spoke definitely.
616. If you did not have the third or refuge line between the two platforms, you would not require so great an additional space? About 80 feet.

617. With an additional width of about 80 feet, would that be making provision for a refuge line of rails between the platforms? No; to make a job of it you want about 90 feet.
618. If you do that, which I presume would be done to allow a third or refuge line to be put down? Yes.
619. In that case, you take more than was proposed to be taken in the Hyde Park scheme, because, in that you only provided for two sets of platforms with a refuge line between—that is, out of eleven platforms there were only two with a refuge line between? It would be an advantage to have the three.
620. You have those already provided for in the King-street station, similar to what was provided in the Hyde Park station? Yes.
621. The two additional platforms, which would give you as much convenience as you proposed at Hyde Park, could be put in if an additional width of 80 feet were taken? I think about 80 or 90 feet.
622. You will see that the actual platform space at the King-street station ends in about a line with the Hyde Park side of St. James' Road, taking the fuller part of the frontage? Yes.
623. It would not be necessary to extend the frontage of the main building because of the extension of the yard space? I should prefer you to put that question to the engineers. I should like to see it plotted before I expressed a definite opinion.
624. But this scheme is supposed to provide a sufficiency of office accommodation to work all the yard—the administration and the extension into the Domain? Yes.
625. Would the concentration of business at King-street, by taking the additional width for the station, necessitate any more office accommodation? No. What you require to consider is the dealing with passengers in a more convenient way. I think if you purpose doing that the station could be modified by being set a little further back from King-street, and then taking an increased width.
626. The main thing I wish to get from you is whether, in the event of increased width being given in Hyde Park, it will be necessary to touch St. James' Church or the grounds adjoining that Church? I think it could be arranged without doing that; but I am not sure.
627. But you have had a good deal of experience? I think that could be done.

J. Parry.
16 Feb., 1900.

FRIDAY, 16 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the city, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

628. *Mr. Watson.*] In order to allow two more platforms to be constructed at King-street station it will require another strip of at least 80 feet to be taken out of Hyde Park? I have thought over that matter and I think that by taking another strip of from 70 to 75 feet you could get another platform in. What we could do would be to push the eastern platform further east, and in its place to put a platform 20 feet wide, with three roads between, also increase the width of the eastern platform from 25 to 30 feet.
629. That would mean two new platform roads? It would give two additional platform roads.
630. With the addition as you now suggest, you would be able to do without the extension into the Domain for the present? Yes.
631. With the additional platform space, and the triple roadway between the two new platforms, you would then have three triple roadways instead of two, as proposed in the Hyde Park scheme? Yes.
632. Do you think it would be necessary, because every additional roadway between the platforms means taking an additional strip off Hyde Park? The convenience of working with triple roads is so great that it would be desirable, looking to future requirements.
633. To that extent it would be an additional accommodation as compared with Hyde Park? A slight addition.
634. Do you think it would be possible, if the additional space suggested were taken, and new platforms were put in, and an extension made towards St. James' Road of the assembly platform, to have a passenger outlet and inlet at St. James' Road? I should think there would be no difficulty.
635. The level of the assembly platform, which is some 13 feet, I understand, above that of the ordinary line platforms, would not be a great deal below St. James' Road? You would be able to easily ramp from the assembly platform down to St. James' Road.
636. It is higher there? I do not think I had better give an opinion as I am not conversant with the levels.
637. You think there would be no difficulty in making a connection? I can see no difficulty myself.
638. At what point in Hyde Park would that additional strip begin? North of Park-street.
639. Immediately north of Park-street? You could narrow in a little even to the north of Park-street, say for about 5 or 6 chains, perhaps, and then you could have a smaller width, but in my opinion it would be more desirable to take the full strip from Park-street to St. James' Road.
640. A strip of about 75 or 80 feet wide? From about 70 to 80 feet wide.
641. You are not aware what additional area that will represent? No; I do not know the length.
642. As to the station which it is proposed to erect between Devonshire-street and Belmore-road, at that site, you can get, practically speaking, almost an unlimited area? I think so.
643. Quite as much as it is probable that you will ever require? Yes.
644. Do you think it is necessary to bring suburban passengers directly into the city without changing cars? I think so; that has been the experience of all great railways, to take their passengers to the terminus, which should be the centre at which the majority want to alight. In all great cities the effort has been to extend the trunk system into the heart of the city with the busy traffic.

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645. Contrasting two proposed sites for terminal stations—Belmore-road with King-street—would there be a very much greater proportion of people requiring to take trams or other methods for getting to their offices from Devonshire-street than from King-street? Yes.
646. Of course immediately round King-street there are only a comparatively few persons who would be engaged either in offices or in other business avocations? Yes; but take the whole of the offices and warehouses round Circular Quay. With the extension of the wharfage accommodation at Woolloomooloo settlement will take out in that direction, and business settlement too will follow the shipping. I take it that all the clerks and warehousemen and people visiting the harbour would not take a tram from King-street to Circular Quay, but would walk during the greater portion of the year. They might take the tram during the very hot weather, but during the cool winter months I think they would prefer a little walk from King-street within the Circular Quay area.
647. A great portion of those who arrive in the city are employed away up towards York-street and further down towards the shores of Darling Harbour? I think they would walk from King-street.
648. If they were brought in to a terminal station at Belmore-road they would get nearer, if anything, by the George-street tram to their destination than Elizabeth-street would be to the western part of the city, would they not? To the extent of the distance between Elizabeth-street and King-street, but it is down hill. When you look at the distance the little walk is not much to consider.
649. It seems to me that to justify the extra expenditure we want to be able to show considerably greater convenience to the people and not merely a slight difference. I want to ascertain whether, in your opinion, that great difference of inconvenience would exist as between Devonshire-street and King-street;—you see, there is an expenditure of about £1,000,000 extra involved in the construction of the station at King-street as against the station at Belmore-road;—of course the suburban people who come into business in the morning and depart in the evening are those whom you would consider in the question of inconvenience? Yes. As regards the country people it would be almost as convenient either way if they had to take a cab; but as regards the suburban people, in my opinion, this end of the city will always remain the great business centre—the warehouses, the shipping, and the offices. Therefore I think, at the present time, a vast number of people would be greatly inconvenienced by coming down to King-street. Looking into the distant future, and judging from the experience of other large cities, I do not think the tramways will be sufficient to cope with the traffic from Redfern to this end of the city in a satisfactory manner.
650. Would it not be possible to arrange some system of electric communication, not exactly in the nature of electric tram traction, but more in the way of an electric railway, to provide, perhaps, only one or two lines of tram from Devonshire-street towards Circular Quay, and then run towards the eastern suburbs and back to Devonshire-street, making a separate system? That could be done. Of course, the difference then is the time of exchanging from the terminal to an electric service, and the slower service which the electric tram would give.
651. I was not thinking so much of an electric tram as a railway operated with electric locomotives, and within an enclosed track, so as to give them a chance of getting up speed? Then the cost of your electric railway would, I think, in the end be almost as expensive as the present railway.
652. In that case you would only require one or two lines of track as against six lines in this instance, where you attempt to bring the whole terminus into the city? Yes; but additional requirements in the way of station accommodation and getting round again. You would require to form that in a sort of loop, and I think, in the end, it would come to pretty well the same cost.
653. But you would not require any elaborate resumptions in the city for your station buildings, for instance; you would only want, practically, the width of your track, and sufficient for platforms, with very small station accommodation at various points along the road? Of course it would not require great width, but then you are restricted to the eastern side of Elizabeth-street, unless you tunnel under or take private property.
654. Would tunnelling be so objectionable with an electric system for such a railway? No. I do not think there would be great objection to the tunnelling with an electric system. During portions of the year with us there is no doubt it would be very stuffy at times, but the electric system has worked satisfactorily in London, and I do not see why it should not be worked so here, apart from the fact that we get a longer period of hot weather.
655. The weather conditions in London are very trying for a portion of the year? For about three months. If you ask me for my opinion I should say it would be far preferable to take your trunk line straight away to the heart of the city at once, and then to have a distributing service of electric trams on a street level, with the system of cross trams which you see mostly in America. In San Francisco there is scarcely a cross street which has not its subsidiary tram to the main street. We could land the people for the southern portion of the city at Redfern, and distribute them by trams from Redfern to the southern portion; and then the passengers who come to the northern end of the city you could carry in through trains, say, about three minutes from Redfern to the new terminal, and distribute them from that point to various places by street trams. That is my idea of future developments.
656. Do you think our present population and traffic prospects warrant that, from the financial standpoint? I do not think the full extension of cross street trams as indicated would be justified at the present time; but of course, in dealing with a large city terminal, we should be looking a great many years ahead.
657. *Mr. Dick.*] You spoke of the difficulty and inconvenience of working your system of trains at the present terminus;—will you indicate which service suffers most, and at what time from the disadvantages which you have at present at Redfern? In the morning between 8 and 9, and in the evening between 5 and 7.
658. Those are suburban trains wholly? No; we have the through trains mixed with the others. It is the mixture of through trains with the suburban trains, which, of course, necessitates the additional room. Take, for instance, the Northern mail, which starts at 6.15 p.m. The Northern mail must be up to the platform, at any rate, twenty minutes before it is due to start, so that passengers arriving with luggage may take their seats. You cannot keep through passengers who are going, perhaps, to Brisbane, hanging about the platform, and then rush them into the train at the last moment when it comes to the platform. Therefore to deal with the through business suitably, the trains should be at the platform at least from fifteen to twenty minutes before the train is due to start.
659. Wherever you have your terminus, that would be the case? Yes. Again, take the 5.30 train to Kiama

Kiama. That train requires to be at the platform, at any rate, from ten minutes to fifteen minutes before it is due to start, so that passengers can take their seats. Or you can take the Moss Vale train, or the Mount Victoria train. In the summer you have a 4.50 Bathurst train on Friday night, and a 5.25 daily train. These are all through trains, which it would be most inconvenient to the passengers to bring to the platform two or three minutes before starting time; it would not be dealing with business satisfactorily. Therefore these through trains occupy a platform longer than suburban trains do, and hence the necessity for the additional platforms.

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760. May we gather from that that the most objectionable feature in the present terminus is want of sufficient platforms? A want of sufficient and convenient platforms.

761. Another objection which is levelled against the present terminus is that the entrance to the station yard is of a narrow character, and difficult to work, and in their opinion that, practically, the whole of the goods traffic—hay and corn on one side, and the Darling Harbour trade on the other—and the various engine workings are all combined on one ground;—taking these various elements of inconvenience or difficulty, could you say which, in your opinion, is the most important of them, and then place them in their order of importance? The contracted space of the yard and the inconvenient way in which the yard is laid out. As I explained to the Committee, I think, on the ground, we have no spare siding between the main running lines where the engines can refuge and be out of the way, or where you can hold a few additional carriages for strengthening purposes. As these engines have no refuge sidings between the various platforms to stand in, it necessitates them being moved about from main line to main line out of the way of incoming and outgoing trains, purely for the purpose of clearing the road.

762. That is the main difficulty? Yes. Then I would instance the short length of the platforms and the inconvenience of their position. For instance, No. 11 is right away in George-street, and you can only use that one properly for a train arriving now and again. Then I would instance the inconvenience of the main station buildings with the lavatories. The station buildings are arranged simply between Nos. 3, 5, 6, and 8 platforms, and everyone has to go on to the main platform to get to the lavatories and waiting-rooms. Then the main entrance platform becomes so congested at holiday times, and crowded at other times, that it is impossible to get the parcels from the parcels' office to the trains, and from the trains to the parcels' office, or to get the luggage through this crowd of people satisfactorily.

763. That will all come under the head of inconvenience of platform and station accommodation;—what is the next element in importance to that—the fact that you have all the business, the farm produce and the rest, concentrated at the one yard? Yes, the fact of all being bunched together—of the main passenger station being so close to the junction of the goods line, where all the marshalling of the goods business has to be done, to the Darling Harbour branch line—where the whole of the trains passing to and from Darling Harbour have to cross the main lines.

764. That practically seems to be the main objection to the present yard? Yes.

765. Do you think it possible with the space at your disposal at Redfern to temporarily remove the farm-produce department (say) to Darling Harbour, build more commodious and convenient platforms and station accommodation on that part of the yard, and then bring back the farm-produce department to the place now occupied by the present station;—do you think that could be done without any very great inconvenience or very great expense? I think it would be both very costly and most inconvenient; in fact, I think it would be a most serious matter to attempt to remodel Redfern Station as it exists to make it anything like suitable for a proper terminal and keep the traffic going. It would necessitate temporary arrangement after temporary arrangement being made. It would, to my mind, involve a considerable risk, as well as be most inconvenient to the working for a very long time.

766. Have you considered, in connection with the King-street proposal, the possibility or the necessity of a future eastern suburbs extension? Yes.

767. In what way do you think that could be accomplished with a station at King-street? By simply taking the lines to the back of the Art Gallery and branching off from the Domain into the eastern suburbs.

768. Presuming that that plan of No. 10 scheme was altered in the direction indicated by Mr. Watson—that is, by taking a little more of the Park, and cutting off the long tunnel tail and the carriage-sheds;—in what way, then, could you make an extension from that station to the eastern suburbs;—would it be necessary even then to carry the lines right round the Domain, and from that point to the suburbs? I think that would be about as convenient as any.

769. Presuming that we extended the stations indicated by Mr. Watson a few moments ago, would it then be a convenient method of connecting with the eastern suburbs to go by tunnel direct from the main station under Hyde Park and to work the service by electric traction? I should not think there would be any difficulty.

770. In your evidence yesterday you referred to the number of trains which could be filled up immediately after their arrival at the platforms;—have you calculated what proportion of the suburban traffic could be treated in that way? (*Vide Appendix A1.*)

771. We have been furnished with several estimates of revenue and expenditure in connection with these various schemes, which evidently were made up before we had had any experience of the working of electric trams;—do you think any considerable modification of these estimates would be necessary now that we have had some experience of the working of electric trams; take, for instance, the estimate of the revenue expected to be derived from the original Hyde Park scheme;—do you think that estimate would have to be modified now that you have the George-street railway tram? I did not prepare that estimate; it was prepared in the office of the Railway Commissioners, and I am not conversant with the basis on which it was made.

772. As a matter of ordinary railway experience, do you think an estimate made up under 1897 conditions, without taking into consideration the construction of that tram, would be much modified by its construction? Not if it did not forecast increased traffic. If the estimate was only based on the then traffic, I should say there would be no occasion to modify it now, because the natural increase of traffic which will accrue by bringing the station down into King-street will be very considerable. Therefore it will depend upon whether the estimate was based on the then traffic or whether there was anything added to it for prospective traffic. Take the number of ordinary tickets—that is, passenger journeys—during the last ten years, for the whole of the lines. According to the annual reports in 1889, the number was 10,284,980, and in 1899 it had increased to 14,072,685, being an increase of 3,787,705 passengers, or

- J. Parry. 36 per cent. That gives you the increase in the passengers travelling on the whole of the lines—of course, irrespective of season tickets. During the same period the number of season tickets issued—monthly, quarterly, and yearly season tickets—increased from 28,231, in 1889, to 42,805, in 1899, being an increase of 51 per cent. Then take the weekly tickets, or workmen's tickets, which permit of two journeys a day, one in and one out; the weekly tickets increased from 149,710, in 1889, to 406,087, in 1899, or an increase of 256,377 in number, or 171 per cent. So that, judging from this increase in the ordinary traffic—my view is that if we extend the railway to King-street a large number of passengers who now live at the eastern suburbs will then go out into the western suburbs, and settle along the railway. The reason why they go out to the eastern suburbs now is that they can get into a tram and go home without any changing. If they go to places along the railway they have first to take a tram to Redfern and then change, which, of course, means time and inconvenience.
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773. I suppose you have been consulted as to the allotment of space and the design of the main station building, both at Devonshire-street and at Hyde Park;—you have indicated what you required in order to deal properly with the general public? Generally I have.
774. Do you think a maintenance and a main exit 30 feet wide will be sufficient for your purpose to either station? Yes. With the outlet on to Castlereagh-street.
775. You think ample provision is made for allowing people to get on the main assembly platform and to get away from it? Yes.
776. *Dr. Garran.*] You have given the Committee a very clear idea of the difficulties you have to contend with in the Redfern Station as it is now laid down;—have you seen the suggestions made by Mr. Norman Selve for alterations in that yard? I have seen a plan showing resumption of a large strip of land between Eveleigh and Redfern.
777. Have you not seen a plan for reconstructing the platform accommodation? No.
778. I suppose during the time you have been in charge you have often taxed your brain to consider how you could improve that yard? As a matter of fact I have designed many of the improvements, because I was engineer for a considerable time in connection with the Redfern arrangements.
779. Have you served your time as an engineer? Yes.
780. You are by profession an engineer? Yes.
781. Suppose the Government were to say, "It is impossible to devise any scheme to suit everybody, we must do the best we can with the station yard," and to call upon you for a report as to the very best use that could now be made of the property you have, practically a triangle it is;—for all practical purposes what changes would you recommend in order to make the very best use of that station yard? I should reluctantly set to work to design something; but I should not like to say that I was going to make a satisfactory arrangement of it.
782. You must distinguish between the difficulty of making changes in a yard which is being used every five minutes in the day, and constructing an entirely new scheme over the whole area;—I mean what could you do under existing conditions for the best? To justify the expenditure which an effective alteration would make, in my opinion it would necessitate the removal of the whole of the existing arrangements.
783. Could you not plan something additional to go on with before you touched anything which is existing? I have no doubt that could be done, but would be unsatisfactory.
784. You know it has been suggested frequently that we should resume St. Paul's School, make another bridge to the tunnel on that eastern side, and have four lines of railway laid down there, two for the produce station, and two for some new platforms;—could not that be added on to the existing rails without materially disturbing the traffic? The rails could be laid down without materially disturbing the present traffic through the resumptions; but the whole of the goods yard would have to be taken up to connect with these lines and be remodelled.
785. You would have to take up the part now occupied by the sheds for carriages? Yes.
786. If you look at the plan on the wall you will see that between the eastern extremity of your eastern platform at present and the goods shed there is a space quite as broad as the whole of the platform property at present? No, it would not be a satisfactory arrangement. The plan is wrong, because there are four more sidings in that space.
787. On the whole, after the thought you have given to it, have you come to the conclusion that a first-class permanent central station can never be satisfactorily made in the present yard? That is my opinion.
788. After years of local experience in the yard itself? Yes.
789. Then there are only two things in your view to be done, either to go north of Devonshire-street and make an entirely new station, or to go into the city? Yes.
790. Those are the only two alternatives? Those are the only two alternatives I would suggest.
791. If you go north of Devonshire-street, I presume you are satisfied that we should make a really first-class station there? Yes.
792. And that we should have room enough there practically to have a permanent station there for all time? The only fault alleged by others, and I think by yourself, against that idea is that it is not in the right place, that it is not central enough? In dealing with the trains that would give every satisfaction, but the questions now to consider are the convenience to the large number of the general public, and the revenue to be derived from the extension.
793. That is to you as dealing with the station-yard, it would give entire satisfaction? Yes.
794. But it may not give the travelling public the same satisfaction? Exactly; nor does it bring in additional revenue.
795. You could get north of Devonshire-street everything you ask for? Yes.
796. And it would last for you and your successors? Yes.
797. And so far as you can see, it would last for all time? Yes.
798. I suppose that in thirty or forty years that will practically be very central to Sydney as a whole? I daresay it will; but although it is central to Sydney as a whole, as the city grows, so will the business part of the city concentrate itself down at the northern end.
799. You told us the other day that you sometimes on a wet day have a wonderful accumulation of passengers coming in on your assembly platform? Yes.
800. And that the get-away by the electric tram is not enough? No; I do not think I intended to convey that exactly.

801. I understood you to say that you got from 1,200 to 1,500 people landed on the platform from three trains, and that as each tram-car can only sent about twenty persons, you cannot get 1,500 persons away in time? I did not put that forward as congestion of the end platform, but as an inconvenience to passengers having to wait. J. Parry.
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802. When the steam trams ran into your yard, did they take away the people more rapidly than the electric tram is doing now? I think the steam-trams would accommodate more quickly, but I think the electric trams would get them away. I do not think the delays to passengers on the whole are as great with the electric system as they were with the steam system.
803. Because they do not have to wait so long? No.
804. Suppose, instead of only one electric road, which is what you have at present, you had three electric roads, one in George-street as at present, one which the Commissioners are going to lay down in either Elizabeth-street or Castlereagh-street, and one in Kent or Sussex streets, to take the Shore traffic, do you think they would take away your passengers fast enough? With the present business it would. But strange to say a gentleman was only complaining to me last night that the electric trams do not run through, that they are too slow. He wants them to run through like the steam trams do now between Redfern and Liverpool-street, but there are too many trams on the road to do that.
805. One tram cannot overtake another on the road with any advantage? No. They are also complaining of the slowness of the journey.
806. The reason why I ask these questions about the trams is because in many cases, supposing we had this station at King-street, a person would have to combine a train service with a tram service to get to his business. You were telling Mr. Dick that if we have the terminus in King-street we shall still to some extent have that in cases of people who live a little distance from King-street;—for instance, a man at Sussex-street would probably take the King-street tram down to Darling Harbour? Some would, perhaps.
807. There would be a combination of train service and tram service, only that it would be at this end instead of at the other end? Yes; but, of course, considerably minimised.
808. Shorter for trams? Yes; I estimate that the great proportion would walk, except on special occasions.
809. They would save no time by doing that? No.
810. You think for the present the traffic could be distributed pretty quickly, if there were three electric trams instead of one? I should think so.
811. You have formed no estimate, I suppose, and perhaps you have not heard any estimate formed of what it would cost to lick the Redfern Station into shape? I do not think any plan of that has ever been prepared.
812. You have never gone seriously enough into figures? No, but they would save the tram fare.
813. It could not be done under a quarter of a million, I suppose, to make it thoroughly up to date? No; not to make a great central station.
814. Suppose you could even accommodate the traffic, you could not put up a first-class station there for less than a quarter of a million? I should not think so.
815. Suppose that it would cost us that amount to build there, and suppose it would cost us £500,000, or a little more, to go over to Devonshire-street, which do you think would be the better investment of public money? If it were my property, I would not spend the money on remodelling Redfern Station.
816. You would rather spend twice the amount in making a good station on the other side of the road? I should say I was spending an enormous amount of money in remodelling what will then be only sufficient for to-day. I am trotting Redfern as it is. If you resume a large amount of property towards Eveleigh, it may alter the conditions.
817. I may say you think this, supposing the time to have arrived when it is proper or necessary for us to have a really first-class central station, Devonshire-street will be a far better site for a station yard, even if it costs twice the amount? In every way.
818. But you think, instead of building a great central station there, it would be better to go on into Sydney, and have a station in Hyde Park, sufficient for all present purposes? Yes.
819. That is best for present purposes? Yes; from the financial point of view.
820. Even although, as Mr. Eddy says, they may not be adequate for more than twenty years? Yes.
821. Taking the map of Sydney, and what you have said to Mr. Dick about the people crossing George-street to come up the hill, would in not be a fairer thing to say that this Hyde Park scheme or its substitute is a good station for East Sydney rather than to say it is a good station for Sydney altogether? No, I should say Sydney as a whole.
822. Would the Sussex-street man get into the electric tram in George-street and go up to the station, or would he cross that tram-line, and climb up King-street to get to that terminus? I think he would climb up to the terminal, excepting, perhaps, in very extreme hot weather, because he could get comfortably into his train and read his paper, and he would have the nuisance of changing.
823. You do not think the electric tram in George-street would captivate him, and carry him off to Redfern? No.
824. Do you think the electric tram in George-street now is taking traffic away from the steam line in Elizabeth-street? Yes, considerable.
825. The traffic on that street now is not all new traffic? No.
826. It is partly robbing the old line? Yes.
827. The old line is becoming less profitable? I should think so. Mr. Kneeshaw will be able to furnish full particulars on that point.
828. Is it your opinion that it is most impracticable to separate the through traffic from the suburban traffic? Economically, and to suit the convenience of the public, I think so.
829. You think it would give you more trouble than it would be worth? A great deal more trouble.
830. And that with the accommodation you have here you can deal with both satisfactorily? Yes.
831. Do you concur in the suggestion which has been made that you can deal with four times the traffic on this Hyde Park plan than you can at Redfern now? That statement requires a little explanation. We could deal with four times the number of passengers; but not four times the number of trains as they run.
832. We have had it given generally as four times the traffic? That means four times the number of passengers. If the trains came suitably we could deal with four times the trains; but unfortunately the business

- J. Parry. business compresses itself into four hours of the day. Therefore, if you commence to multiply your business in these very busy hours of the day by four, you get a very different thing to carrying the traffic throughout the day. Take King-street station as it is sketched on the plan. the connections between the various lines, the points and crossings would, of course, be modified in the detailed working out.
- 16 Feb., 1900. 833. On the map there it looks simpler than it will be in reality as to the connections? Yes.
834. There will be more points and crossings, and interlocking arrangements, than are shown there? Yes. So far as the connections are concerned, that plan only represents a general idea, and it would mean an enormous amount of labour to work out the details thoroughly.
835. Will you not have to do a good deal of your shunting and interlocking on the south side of Park-street? Yes.
836. That is not shown at all on the plan—it looks like a straight run;—have you width enough for all that? Yes.
837. You want more than six lines? No.
838. Have you got room for a signal-box at the station there? That would take up a very small place.
839. As broad as a railway? I anticipate that we would work it by the electric pneumatic system by which the signal-boxes are reduced to an almost infinitesimal size.
840. About the cab and the dray service, does that come under your management at Redfern? The parcels do.
841. How many cabs have you connected with Redfern Station? I could not tell you.
842. How many drays and carts? Last Christmas I took particulars of the numbers of carts and drays which came for the parcels business during the busy hours of the afternoon, between 4.50 and 6.30. As many as 22 carts arrived at the parcels' office alone, and, I suppose, in addition to that number, ten or twelve carts arrived for luggage.
843. You have not too much room there? No; the whole thing was perfectly congested. Between seventy and eighty carts were dealt with in half an hour.
844. Where do you put all your cabs under the new arrangement? A number, I suppose from twenty to thirty, stand inside Devonshire-street, and the remainder stand alongside Devonshire-street, right away to George-street.
845. Looking to the narrowness of Devonshire-street, and to the fact that the Government monopolises the middle of the street with tram-lines, do you think it is reasonable to occupy both sides of that street with cab-stands? No.
846. Has the rest of the traffic a fair chance? I do not think so.
847. As a matter of fact, you are short of cab room at Redfern Station now? Yes.
848. That is one of your troubles? I would not like to say that it is a trouble to us.
849. It is still a trouble to the general public;—do not a good many cabs stand in George-street along the kerb in front of the Benevolent Asylum? Yes. There really is not room for the cab service properly.
850. The public are inconvenienced very much? Yes. There ought to be more street room, or else more room inside the gates.
851. That being the case, will you say whether there will be more or less room for cabs and carts in King-street than you have at present at Devonshire-street? The carts will be transferred from the main passenger station to the parcels' room which is separated. The whole of the carts which come and deliver parcels will be transferred to this space. [Referring to plan.]
852. *Mr. Watson.*] Would the parcels' office be in lieu of the office at Martin-place? In lieu of Redfern.
853. What will you do with the other office? It will be transferred almost directly to the General Post Office. I am inclined to think we shall retain that office for the convenience of customers.
854. *Dr. Garran.*] On that plan the parcels' room abuts right on to the street? No; it is twice as long as the present office.
855. Looking at the fact that trams are running in the street, and that cabs will arrive off the rank there, will there be room for your twenty or thirty carts at a time? Yes; because the street will be widened from 66 feet to 75 feet, and the parcels' office will be set back 10 or 12 feet from the widened street.
856. In addition to the carts which are going to bring you parcels, there are always half a dozen parcel delivery carts waiting for the arrival of trains to take parcels away? Yes.
857. Will there be room for them to stand there too? They will stand either along Castlereagh-street or along Elizabeth-street.
858. You would ask the street to provide accommodation for them? Yes.
859. Do you think there will be room for 100 cabs round that station? In the streets adjoining. For instance, the trams would be removed to Elizabeth-street and Phillip-street, I take it.
860. Elizabeth-street will be removed? I mean north of King-street and Phillip-street which is very rarely used.
861. You think they will have to overflow into those streets;—it is rather a clumsy arrangement, but still I suppose they will have to go? Of course it would be a more satisfactory arrangement if we could have space away from the street. I do not see why they should not be dealt with in the streets.
862. If you are going to bring all your through and local traffic into this station, you will want as many cabs in Hyde Park as you have at Devonshire-street? I do not think so. I think as the electric system extends, as, in my opinion, it is almost bound to do, the number of cabs will decrease.
863. The parcel delivery carts will, perhaps, increase, because the people all bring too much luggage in their trams to carry it in the electric trams? I think we shall deal with that all right.
864. Have you any idea how many cabs are used on the arrival of the northern, the western, or the southern trains? In the case of the southern express, I daresay on a busy morning we may deal with thirty cabs, or more.
865. Would you not want as many if the express pulled up at King-street? I hardly think so. Take, for instance, the "Australia Hotel." When the trains arrive at King-street the "Australia Hotel" people would simply meet the passengers with their luggage, and the passengers would simply walk to the hotel.
866. Do they not meet them now? They do take some of the luggage, but in a large number of cases the passengers take a cab with their luggage, and drive down to the hotel.
867. You think they will not do so when the station is at King-street? I think a large number will not.
868. On the whole you think the cab service will be diminished? Yes.
869. But that the parcels' service will be as great as it is now? Yes.

870. You do not anticipate any trouble from a congestion of cabs around the station? No, not by utilising Phillip-street and Elizabeth-street; from these streets they are easily called up.

871. I suppose the Transit Commissioners, or whoever are going to succeed them, will have a voice in the locating of these cabs? Yes.

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872. The Corporation have expressed no opinion at all about that matter? I have not heard any opinion expressed.

873. With regard to the St. James' Road scheme and the new scheme, practically they are both much alike as to working arrangements; they are very similar in general construction, because there are a number of parallel platforms and an assembly platform at right angles at the end? Yes; and the difference is that at the King-street station the assembly platform is about 17 or 18 feet above the platform.

874. Do you think that design allowing these ramps will be an inconvenience? It will be a certain amount of inconvenience, especially to elderly people. It will be more inconvenient than the Hyde Park station, where the people enter on the platform level.

875. The Hyde Park one is absolutely level so far as the outside ground is concerned? I understood that it was only a question of a very easy grade. I have always understood, without seeing the levels, that the St. James' Road scheme was practically on the Elizabeth-street level. I am not conversant with the levels.

876. Can you say whether we shall have to have a dug-out arrangement, and to make a level road in front of the building, where the cabs will have to go in and turn round in that level road? My idea is that in the cab approach the street level will be maintained, that is on the incline, and that the cabs will be able to drive up to any portion of the frontage to the station, and the passengers will then alight on the steps. They may have to rise one, two, or three steps to get into the colonnade.

877. The cab road will be just the same level inside as outside;—there will be no dug-out for the cab road? That is my impression.

878. You told us that one of the troubles of the station at Redfern is the very awkward mixing of the ins and outs, which we are so conscious of when we happen to go up there at a crowded time;—how are you going to get rid of that at either of these two model stations? The assembly platform at King-street station is very wide, and for all ordinary purposes there will be ample room.

879. You are going to trust to the greater width of the platform to accommodate the general public? Yes; but parcels and luggage will be dealt with by Aspinall's overhead carriers. Instead of having wheelbarrows passing to and fro along the assembly platform, parcels and luggage will be dealt with by overhead carriers.

880. You mean to say that as the luggage will be taken out of the cab it will be taken up? It will be sent into the luggage-room in front of the station, and it will be dealt with by lifts to the platform level, and then picked up by these carriers and distributed to any platform.

881. That arrangement has never been explained before;—you cannot keep your eye on your own luggage in that case? It will be taken into the luggage-room.

882. At Redfern Station is there any single platform which is exclusively an arrival platform, or any single platform which is exclusively a departure platform, or are they all used indiscriminately? Indiscriminately.

883. Would it be a great convenience if you had some platforms only for arrivals and some for departures? It would be practically a waste of space; it would be very costly. There is no station in modern times—that is, a dead-end station like this—constructed in that way.

884. You trust to prevent this intermixture of passengers partly to breadth of platform and partly to various exits which you are going to give the people? Yes; and if that should not do, by closing the gates at any moment you can exclude passengers from the platform.

885. You think there will not be so much trouble from the jostling of people together under this plan? No.

886. But it will not be perfect; there will be some ins and outs meeting together? I think it will be satisfactory.

887. *Chairman.*] There seems to be an impression growing that the electric trams will be a reasonable substitute for a railway into the city;—with your large experience do you think they can possibly cope satisfactorily with the traffic? Not in the future. At the present time, take the railway tram by itself, the electric tram would compete with it; but when you get the western suburbs converted to electricity, you will require to have trams down other streets than George-street to anything like cope with the traffic. I think it would be a great advantage to take the railway traffic off the street as much as possible.

888. Is it not based on experience that the more facilities for railway communication you give to bring the people to their destination the greater the passengers increase? That is so.

889. In Melbourne they have about 1,200 miles of suburban railways, whereas our mileage does not amount to half that;—is not their suburban traffic double what ours is? I should think it would be. I could not quote their figures. They branch out in all directions with the suburban traffic. Ours is concentrated into one main trunk line for about 2 miles out; then you branch off the Illawarra line, and then the whole is concentrated right away to Strathfield, where you branch off to the North Coast line. In Melbourne they have their south suburban lines and north suburban lines, coming into different stations and in different directions; the traffic is not converging on to one point.

890. Do you not think if the railway were brought into Sydney, and it being, I think, pretty well admitted all round that the railway into Sydney is chiefly for the suburban passengers, not long-distance passengers, it would be a profitable concern for the passengers that use it, in the busy part of the day, particularly, and that the trams would still be used largely for local and short-distance passengers;—do you not think that that would be the result? Yes; and in my opinion, the railway traffic would very largely increase.

891. Is that an opinion based upon an experience of other large cities? That is the experience of other large cities.

892. For short-distance passengers from the suburbs would not the saving of a quarter of an hour each way a day be a considerable advantage to them that would be affected by the train? It means the difference between their going on the suburban line to live and not going out. For instance, if we had extended the running time to Strathfield to half an hour Strathfield would never have developed and increased in anything like the proportion in which it has done.

893.

J. Parry. 893. I think it takes fifteen or twenty minutes to come into Sydney from Redfern;—have you taken into account the time taken to get out of the train and get into the tram? Mr. Knecshaw will be able to state the time it takes. From the starting of the tram to its arrival at King-street I think it is about ten minutes, and in the busy times from three to six minutes to change and wait for trams.

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894. There is the interval between? We would allow that to be the same in both cases, except the waiting for trams.

895. Would it not be a great saving of time and labour in the way of administration by your aiming to take season ticket-holders into Sydney instead of having to collect fares in the trams? For instance, a man would take his ticket for Sydney, and there would be no occasion for him to buy tram-tickets, or for the Government to collect tram-tickets from Redfern to Sydney;—is not that an advantage? That advantage would accrue to passengers who walked to their offices or workshops from the terminal at King-street. These passengers, of course, would simply show their season tickets. Those persons who walked from the terminus to their places of business would get the advantage of not having to bother with tram-tickets at all.

896. If a man rides straight to Sydney in a train, he will be saved the inconvenience of having to bother about tram-tickets, and the Department will be saved the expense of collecting them? Yes; but my point is that every passenger who came to the terminus, and from that point walked to his office, would get the advantage you speak of; he would not be bothered with tram-tickets at all. Of course, there are some who might take a tram after coming to the King-street terminus. Now, coming to the workmen's side of the question. In the morning and the evening there is a large traffic to and from the wharfs. To working men and to working girls a penny is a very great deal. If you bring them down to King-street—which leaves a reasonable distance for them to walk to their places of business—on a workman's ticket the additional cost is 3d. a week. Therefore, a working man or working girl would be able to get from Redfern to King-street by train for 3d. a week, whereas, if they go by tram, it would cost 1d. in each direction, or 1s. per week. That is a very great consideration to a large number of smaller paid working people. They would not think of taking a tram from King-street. Working men have to be at their work at from 6 to 7 o'clock in the morning. If they can go by train at a fast speed to King-street it simply means that they will not have to leave their homes so early, and that they will get back so much earlier in the evening.

897. Since the line to Parramatta has been quadrupled and coming under the Redfern bridge, do you find that that quadrupling has increased your troubles or reduced them? It has reduced them.

898. Although you had more lines and more couplings it has reduced the inconvenience,—how does that happen? We could not possibly conduct the business on two lines. For instance, you could not deal with [the fast traffic, viz., the through trains and the slow trains on the same line, because the fast trains would be overtaking the slow trains.

899. That is where the trouble chiefly arises at the Redfern bridge? No. The chief trouble there is between the goods lines from Darling Harbour and the goods lines of Redfern crossing on the station side of the tunnel, and the inconvenience of the existing arrangements of the four lines inside the yard there being no refuge sidings between them.

900. On the western side of the Darling Harbour line there is a resting place for carriages—a number of carriages are collected there? Yes.

901. And you often have to take these carriages right out through the tunnel in the face of incoming trains? Every night.

902. Is it not very dangerous, or rather, very undesirable in a tunnel like that? I would not say it is dangerous, because they are worked under the block system, but it is very undesirable.

903. Again, with regard to the long platforms, your shunting operations come too close up to the tunnel, and hence the necessity of getting a lot of this work done more to the north? Yes, and this trouble is increasing very materially. During last year we shipped a very large quantity of coal at Darling Harbour, with the result that coal trains were passing to and from Darling Harbour branch to the far side,—that is the Regent-street side of the main line. Every one of these coal trains had to cross the whole of the main lines to get to the Illawarra line. That trade we expect to increase, so that the difficulties will increase rather than remain stationary at those points, even from the goods traffic and coal traffic.

904. *Mr. Watson.*] Even if you got the King-street terminus, you would still require to stop at that point? Yes; but we should hope to get rid of some of the shunting.

905. *Chairman.*] In the plan of the main station, whether it is at Devonshire-street or at King-street, I understand that you have three pairs of rails between each platform? Two sets of three.

906. Will you explain how the system works? Say between 5 and 6 o'clock the trains commence their work at Redfern. Before a train is due to start away, the carriages are shunted down to the platform, and the engine is at the outgoing end. In doing that you do not want a third line; but after the trains are all put into service, then as a train comes in another engine still picks the train up at the outgoing end, and goes away with it loaded up. But during a certain portion of the day the passenger traffic is not so brisk, and therefore you have time as the train arrives at the platform for the engine to move over to the centre road, run round its train, and come back on to the other end, and take the train out again. That saves engines; instead of having two engines to a train, the engine which brings it in will take it out again.

907. That, I suppose, is in accordance with modern practice in stations of this importance? Yes.

908. You have nothing of that kind now, and consequently you have to do all your shunting right out in front of your platform? Yes. Say the northern mail arrives with two engines on, these engines cannot be liberated to get away to their shed till all the luggage and the mails have been discharged on the platform. The northern engines stand at that platform sometimes for fifteen and twenty minutes, and sometimes half an hour. At the King-street station, however, when the northern mail arrived, the first engine would simply go on to the traverser, move to the centre road, and go away to Eveleigh, and the men put off duty, and after the train was properly discharged a shunting-engine would simply come along, pick up the train, and run away with it to the siding, so that you would save those two engine-men half an hour or twenty minutes each remaining on duty.

909. This state of things, I understand, has occurred by the great expansion of the traffic into Redfern Station? That is really what has caused it. The station has been added to piecemeal, and each time you have added to the station you have sought to do it as economically as possible.

910. You think you have used every means you can to cope with the traffic, and you can see such a trouble ahead of you that something ought to be done at once? That is my opinion. I can assure the Committee that last Christmas season, commencing on the Thursday before Christmas, the difficulty of the staff in coping with the business in Redfern yard was too much for any men. The strain in dealing with the business with the existing accommodation was too much for any set of men. J. Parry.
16 Feb., 1900.

TUESDAY, 20 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Knoeshaw, Traffic Superintendent, Tramway Department, sworn, and examined:—

911. *Chairman.*] How long have you held the position of Traffic Superintendent of Tramways? Between four and five years. J. Knoeshaw.
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912. During that time have you paid particular attention to the traffic between Redfern station and the city? Continued attention.

913. Perhaps you would prefer to make a statement? In the first place I have ascertained that there is an average number of 23,500 persons arriving daily at Redfern station, and a corresponding number departing by train. From careful counts made, I estimate that we carry in either direction an average of over 13,000 persons daily by electric trams from Redfern station, or 55·8 of the total number of passengers arriving at the station. Over and above that we carry about 1,150 passengers by steam trams. That equals 4·8 of the total number arriving, leaving a balance of about 9,200 people, or 39·2 of the total number, who walk from the station.

914. *Mr. Shepherd.*] They leave by some other means? They do not travel by the trams. I wish it to be clearly understood that that return of 23,500 persons is the traffic in one direction only. All the figures I am giving refer to the traffic in one direction only, so that if you want to ascertain the traffic to and from the station you must double the figures.

915. *Chairman.*] So far as you know, the figures each way are about the same? They are about equal. I have further ascertained, by careful checks, that of that 13,000 odd who travel by the electric trams, 90 per cent. are in the trams when they reach Market-street, and 80 per cent. in the trams when they reach King-street; but very large numbers leave at King-street and the General Post Office, and also at Hunter-street.

916. *Dr. Garran.*] Can you tell us how many there are in the trams after they leave King-street? I have not got these particulars; but the greater number of the passengers leave the trams at King-street and the Post Office.

917. Would 80 per cent. go on as far as Hunter-street? Between 20 and 30 per cent.

918. When you get to the so-called terminus in Bent-street, what have you left? It would not be Bent-street in this case; it would be Circular Quay.

919. You are talking of the electric trams? Yes; it would be very difficult to judge how many persons who, actually leaving the station, are in the trams when they reach Circular Quay. On account of the vast pick-up you have, you cannot separate your passengers.

920. Have you had special officers to watch to make up these figures? Yes.

921. You are quoting from quite a recent return? The figures were taken within the last week or two.

922. *Chairman.*] Can you indicate the nature of the traffic on the electric trams? The number of passengers travelling to and from Redfern station by electric trams annually is estimated at 8,700,000; it may be divided by half to get the traffic in either direction. And by the steam trams at the present time we carry about 700,000 passengers to and from Redfern station, or a total of 9,400,000. I will now give you the information in regard to the steam trams before the George-street electric line was opened.

923. *Mr. Watson.*] Was the count of the traffic taken immediately before that line was opened, or some considerable time afterwards? The count I am going to give now was taken in 1897, but it would not vary appreciably. The number carried by the steam trams to and from Redfern railway station was 2,700,000.

924. *Chairman.*] Mr. McLachlan, the Secretary, gave the number as 3,000,000,—I suppose it was round figures that he used? It would be about the same thing. The 'buses have practically ceased running to the railway station now.

925. *Dr. Garran.*] They do not run now from your gates? Only two or three 'buses, which run to the eastern suburbs.

926. The old 2d. 'buses are off? Yes.

927. *Mr. Watson.*] This estimate of 9,400,000 would include only those who go right through, not the mere pick-ups? No.

928. It is an estimate of those who go on the trams to and from the railway? Yes; and it includes train passengers only. That sum could be made much larger were I to count the Redfern passengers who walk down and join the electric trams outside the station.

929. *Chairman.*] You have stated, in regard to the electric system, that the chief point of exit is between Market-street and the Post Office? King-street and the Post Office.

930. In regard to the old steam service, which was the chief point of exit for people arriving by train? Market-street and King-street.

931. And those points, I suppose, would be the chief points of entry on the return journey? Yes; King-street was always the principal point of entry, and Market-street next. Of course, in the evening we get fairly large crowds from Park-street coming from the theatres.

932.

J. Kneeshaw. 932. As regards the daily direct regular railway passengers, you may say, I suppose, that the traffic extended chiefly from Market-street to King-street? Market-street and King-street were the two principal points.

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933. *Mr. Watson.*] In that allowance of 3,000,000 for the traffic on the steam trams in 1897, did you take into account those who travelled on other than railway trams to the railway station—for instance, on all the western trams, as well as the Botany trams which stop at Redfern station to drop or pick up passengers? We tried to make allowance for the whole of them. We could get a fairly reliable estimate then by the number of passengers who actually travelled from the railway station. There were very few who walked down to the trams.

934. Of course a great number of those who used the railway trams proper to go from that station to the city would use the suburban trams to get from the city to the railway station, just as it happened to suit their convenience? Yes.

935. *Chairman.*] Have you any more figures that will assist the Committee? Not as far as the number of passengers carried is concerned.

936. Can you give the revenue from the railway traffic? I have not worked out the figures.

937. Will you prepare a return showing the revenue derived under the strictly steam service, and the revenue derived under the electric service, and under the steam service, separately, and the totals? Yes.

938. It appears that since the electric tram service has been started the passenger traffic to and from the railway station has risen from 2,700,000 a year to 8,700,000 by the electric-system trams, and 700,000 by the steam trams, making a total of 9,400,000 passengers, or an increase of nearly 7,000,000;—will you give us what reason you think there is for that large increase? It has been principally brought about by the opening of the tramway in George-street tapping a portion of the city which was not previously dealt with by any railway or tramway.

939. I think you might follow that up by saying, that although the great mass of the people left the trams between Market-street and King-street, the bulk of them were not deposited at their offices, but went westerly towards the great business centre of the city? Certainly; they were not deposited at their offices by the old steam trams; but neither are they deposited at their offices now, because they have to walk into Pitt-street, and even into Castlereagh-street. There is another reason for this large increase in the number of passengers, and that is the reduction of 1½d. to 1d. It is possible that had the fare been 1d. before the number of passengers travelling by the steam-trams would have been much greater; that is, if we had been in a position to carry them, which we could not have done, because the shunting facilities at Bridge-street would not have enabled us to run more trams.

940. But the result is the same;—the extra accommodation has increased the number of the travelling public by the trams? The extra facilities provided, in addition to the reduced fares, have increased the traffic as stated.

941. Would not another reason be that you run your electric trams much more quickly in succession than you did your steam trams? I do not think that would have much bearing on the traffic actually coming from the railway station, because there were always trams waiting there under the old arrangements, by which people could get in, and we did not miss many of them on that account. The reduced fare and, no doubt, the more frequent service have had a great deal to do with the increase of the traffic.

942. Do not you think that really would have an effect on the increase of the traffic? It would have an effect.

943. Will you state how you think the electric tram serves as a means of filling up the gap in bringing people into Sydney;—is it an effective means, and one that meets with modern and present requirements? I think not. Unfortunately we are not able to deal as satisfactorily with the traffic as we should do. I would like now to give some reasons why we are not. It was originally suggested that the rolling-stock sufficient to run the electric tramway was forty cars. When we actually started that line we had eighty-nine cars already built, and we put the bulk of them into service; but even with that large number there is, at times, greater crowding than should be the case, and we are not in a position to lift the crowds of people during the very busy hours, avoiding that inconvenience as we should do. There is another difficulty,—we have contemplated diverting the western suburban tramway traffic into George-street, in order to relieve the great congestion which exists in Elizabeth-street; but, owing to the abnormal railway traffic we have to deal with, George-street will not be able to carry the western suburban traffic in addition to the present railway traffic. This is so patent that I have already had to represent the matter to the Railway Commissioners, and to point out that it will be absolutely necessary to afford some relief, at an early date, before we complete the conversion of the western suburban tramway system. There is also another difficulty, and that is that this immense number of railway trams have to cross the western suburban lines running into Redfern station, and the traffic is so great that risk is involved. That I have also had to report to the Railway Commissioners. Of course, if the whole of the western traffic could be diverted into George-street we would avoid that crossing; but knowing that we cannot get the whole of the western suburban traffic and the railway traffic into George-street, we will still cross at the George-street junction signal-box, that risk will continue. For these reasons I am of opinion that the electric tramway is not effectually serving the purposes of the railway. If the George-street tramways were relieved of the large railway traffic they would have a very good opportunity of earning good revenue by pick-up traffic alone, in addition to the immense number of passengers carried to and from the ferries at Circular Quay. The pick-up traffic and the Circular Quay ferry traffic is very nearly equal to the whole of the railway tram traffic. In other words, we are carrying at over the rate of 17,000,000 passengers per annum in George-street, 8,700,000 being passengers from the railway, and the rest the pick-up traffic. This large pick-up traffic would be greatly increased if the trams were not so crowded during certain hours of the day. It would be larger, and we would earn sufficient to make George-street pay without the railway passengers at all.

944. *Mr. Levien.*] You seem to be carrying more people on the tramway than we have in the suburbs? During the month of January, the actual number of tickets issued on the George-street trams, including the tickets to Pyrmont, was 1,570,000.

945. That is the number of people jumping on and off? No; the number of tickets issued.

946. *Dr. Garran.*] On a hot day they will take a tram to go two streets? Yes.

947. *Mr. Levien.*] According to your records there are more people travelling in half the year than we will have in population in the next ten years;—will you state the greatest number you have carried in one day? 83,229.

948. *Chairman.*] In answer to opinions which we now hear pretty freely expressed by some persons, that the George-street tramway has largely done away with the necessity for a railway into Sydney, do you think, taking the busy times of the day, when trainloads of people are deposited at Redfern station, the tramway service will be effectual at all times for doing what a train has done, in bringing the people conveniently up to the city? I do not think so. J. Kneeshaw.
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949. How many people are deposited by one of your busy morning trains at Redfern station? They get up to about 460 persons in one train.

950. How many persons will your two trams carry? Two trams will carry fairly comfortably 140.

951. And how many will two cars carry? Two cars will hold 70 persons.

952. And a train brings 460 persons? That is hardly a fair criterion. They can bring two trains into Redfern station at once. For instance, at 7.25 a.m. two trains arrive at the station, one bringing 428 passengers, and the other 358 passengers, so that 786 passengers will arrive at once.

953. For 460 passengers you would want six trams, or twelve cars, to take them away? Yes.

954. And for nearly twice the number of passengers you would want twice the number of trams and cars? Yes. Our belief is that all these people do not want to use the trams. If they did we could not grapple with the position satisfactorily.

955. As regards those who do want to go on to the chief point of exit between Market-street and King-street, do you, as a man who has control of the traffic, think it is convenient for 600 or 700 persons, or for half that number, to have to get out of the train, and get into trams, to do the remainder of their journey;—is that a convenient way to finish-up a short run? It is not, for more than one reason. One very particular reason is, that if the train continued its journey, these passengers could arrive at their destination (say) King-street, in three or four minutes. The people must lose at least one or two minutes in transshipping from train to tram, and the time of the tram journey from Redfern station to King-street is about ten minutes.

956. That would involve delay to travellers; but in answer to that, advocates of the extension of the railway to the city say, "We can run through trams";—can you run through trains when, on the same line, you are running trams which have to stop at cross streets? It would not be possible to run through trams. It might be possible with certain heavily-laden trams to miss one or two stopping-places; but during the busy time of the day, by the time you missed one or two stopping-places you would be on top of the tram in front of you. That difficulty will be intensified as any portion of the western suburban traffic is placed in George-street, and the trams are increased. The increased traffic in George-street will have a tendency to lengthen the time of the journey.

957. At what intervals do you run your trams to the railway station at slack times and at busy times? During slack times we endeavour to maintain a two-minute service—that is, two minutes between the trams; and during the busy portions of the morning and the evening we endeavour to maintain a one-minute service. In despatching trams from Redfern station we would not adhere to that, and we might despatch three trains within a minute—that is, at intervals of twenty seconds as quickly as we could get headway and load the passengers. But it not infrequently happens when passengers are crowded out some see that is useless to go on the first tram, and they go to the second tram and the third tram, as the case may be; and we have three trams loaded simultaneously, and starting all at the same time.

958. What are your stopping-places for the railway trams between Redfern station and Circular Quay? We have the same stopping-places for the railway trams as for the others, because we cannot get through with them.

959. Under present arrangements, are the railway trams taxed very heavily? They are taxed beyond their proper capacity during the busy hour of the morning and the busy hour of the evening, particularly, say, from a few minutes after 5 o'clock until a few minutes after 6 o'clock going towards the railway station; they are taxed beyond their proper comfort.

960. I noticed that the electric tram service always consists of two cars;—is there any special reason for that, or could you attach more cars? We could not attach more cars. The general practice in the United States is to run a motor-car only. We are now adopting a step beyond the general electric practice in running a larger carrying unit.

961. Will you explain why you do? The motors that are adopted would not be capable of hauling more than one trail-car; they would not have a sufficient adhesive power.

962. There is a motor in the body of the car which works in with the overhead wire? It receives its power through the trolley-pole from the overhead wire.

963. It is taxed to its utmost in dragging its own car and the one behind it? I would not like to say that it is taxed to its utmost. It is fairly well loaded in hauling one trail car; but there is another question to be considered, and that is the adhesive or attractive force. If you put more than one trailer beyond the motor-car, the wheels of the motor-car would not have sufficient attraction or pressure on the rails, and they would revolve without the tram advancing.

964. You must have a certain amount of grip in the system? Yes.

965. *Mr. Leven.*] You are estimating the total annual traffic on the George-street—Harris-street electric line on an average of so many persons per day? Yes; the total number of passengers on the line would be over 17,000,000 a year.

966. Was not the traffic on that line in January of an extraordinary nature? No; on the contrary, during the first fourteen days in February we earned £9 more than we did during the first fourteen days in January, notwithstanding that we had the holiday traffic in January. For the first fourteen days we earned £3,029 in January and £3,037 in February.

967. That is the pick-up traffic and all the rest? Yes. I wish to show you that January was not an abnormal month.

968. How many tickets would you collect, say, from Pyrmont to Circular Quay? I can give you the total number of tickets in the month from between Harris-street and Circular Quay. They may not have gone right through, but they are passengers who have paid 2d. each. They must have come from or gone to some portion of the Harris-street line; they have gone beyond the railway. For the month of January 55,000 passengers went to and from Harris-street.

969. That would not assist the railway at all? No; the traffic has not been included in the figures I have given the Committee.

970. How many 2d. tickets from Harris-street to Circular Quay were issued? 55,000 in January—say, 27,500 each way.

- J. Kneeshaw. 971. Suppose they turn just into George-street, the moment they get into George-street that means a penny ticket? Yes.
- 20 Feb., 1900. 972. They must have absolutely gone from Harris-street to make that total of 55,000? Yes, and in addition to that there is a certain percentage of children who would receive another class of ticket. I cannot give you the exact number. Between the terminus of John-street at Pyrmont and the junction of Harris-street with George-street we issued, in January, 72,000 odd penny tickets. They never got into George-street at all.
973. *Dr. Garran.*] That is purely Pyrmont traffic? Yes; that belongs to the Harris-street line, and has nothing to do with the George-street line.
974. *Mr. Levien.*] 72,000 to and fro were carried on that line in Harris-street during January? Yes.
975. *Dr. Garran.*] The Harris-street line is a profitable line in itself? I have not worked that out, but I think it would, when to the 72,000 pennies you added the proportion of the 55,000 twopences.
976. *Mr. Levien.*] These 72,000 penny tickets had nothing to do with the 55,000 twopenny tickets? Nothing.
977. As regards these 72,000 penny tickets, I suppose you do not know whether they are used by children or adults? The bulk of them would be adults, but a proportion of them would be children.
978. Now, taking the railway traffic, do you know how many passengers travel between Sydney and each suburb on the railway line as far as Parramatta;—how many tickets are issued daily? I do not know.
979. You are merely talking of the number of passengers who travel from the railway station itself? Yes.
980. What is the number of suburban passengers direct from the railway station who travel generally? I could not tell you; I merely know the total.
981. How many railway passengers leave Redfern station absolutely? 23,500 a day.
982. How many persons get out of the trains and go into the trams? 13,000 a day by the electric trams, and 1,150 by the steam trams.
983. How many passengers from the railway suburbs are carried daily by the two tram services? Fourteen thousand one hundred and fifty.
984. That includes passengers both going and coming? Fourteen thousand one hundred and fifty passengers come from the railway station into the city, and I estimate that we carry an equal number back to the railway station to go away again.
985. Does the same number come back that way? I am rather inclined to think that more people come back in the evening; we have not counted them.
986. From Redfern station, what is the tram fare to and fro? By the electric tram and by the steam tram it is 1d. each way.
987. You do not say that all these people getting into these trams are suburban passengers? I will not say that they are suburban passengers; they arrive by train; but I cannot say where they arrive from.
988. You stated, in reply to the Chairman, that 13,000 railway passengers a day leave Redfern station by the electric tram;—have you ever ascertained whether there are 13,000 suburban tickets issued daily by the Railway Department? No.
989. Have you ever compared the actual issue of tickets at the suburban railway offices on any day with the actual issue of tickets on these trams;—are there 13,000 railway tickets issued a day? I have not compared the traffic on the trams with the number of railway tickets issued. I have compared that traffic with the actual count taken by the railway authorities of passengers leaving the trains, which averages 23,500 daily.
990. That is, actually counted at Redfern Station? Yes; on several mornings.
991. As they come out of the station, do your tickets account for that number, or is there a haphazard chance of your officers counting them correctly? The tickets would be an unreliable check, because there are so many weekly tickets and season tickets, the whole of which might or might not be used on a particular day.
992. It is a pretty hard task to count a few thousand sheep;—and how do you count the number of people who come out of the trains? I cannot tell you how they were counted. The information was given to me by Mr. Parry.
993. You do not know how they were counted? No; it would not be a very difficult task to send a man through the suburban trains to count the passengers.
994. I would like to see a return of the population in each of these suburbs, because it seems a pretty large number to come out of these places daily? I have no doubt but that the number of season tickets and workmen's issued annually could be ascertained.
995. The tickets which are issued on the trams are no criterion as to the number of people who come in by the trains? The total number of tickets issued on the trams would not be a criterion as to the number of people travelling by train.
996. Because the trams may pick up and let down people as they go along the road, whereas these figures, 23,000, are taken from what others tell you, and not from your own count? The 13,000 taken to be travelling by tram were taken by two men, directed by me, and that count I know to be accurate.
997. If you carry 13,000 people the number of the tickets ought to be in accord with the number of the people you carry? The same ticket which is used for a passenger coming from Redfern station is also available for the pick-up traffic in George-street. The actual number of tickets issued would be thousands more than the actual number of people that leave Redfern station.
998. I suppose you do not know the population of each western suburb as far as Parramatta? No.
999. Considering that you have the steam trams and the electric trams, is not that sufficient to carry the suburban traffic? It is not sufficient, and not as convenient as it should be.
1000. You said it was reckoned that forty-nine cars would be sufficient for the George-street electric line? I said forty cars was the original estimate of the rolling stock sufficient to meet George-street requirements; but, although we opened with eighty-nine cars, we still found that we could not satisfactorily deal with the people at certain hours of the day.
1001. Who is the gentleman who recommended forty cars when they wanted eighty-nine cars? I could not tell you.
1002. I suppose you gave certain information to the Department, as well as other officers, and the enormous traffic required more than twice the increase of cars recommended? I did not give any information to the

the Commissioners when forty cars were stated as the number required. I am not aware whether any information was obtained from the Commissioners. I used my efforts to have the number increased, as I knew that forty would not cope with the traffic satisfactorily. J. Kneeshow.
20 Feb., 1900.

1003. Whoever gave the information must have been very much out in their calculations? There has been an abnormal increase in the traffic since that time.

1004. How long ago? That estimate was given probably in the middle of 1895.

1005. You must have read some report to have found out that? I know that the number of forty cars and the cost were stated in the evidence which was given in connection with the George-street electric tram.

1006. No report has been made within the last five years as to the increase of population and the number you required? No.

1007. How many cars do you think they really will want to deal with the traffic satisfactorily? Not to keep the public waiting, to keep on going, we should not be able to get the total number of cars required into George-street. George-street would not deal with the traffic.

1008. How many do you think are wanted to keep the public going along George-street itself? I could not answer your question in that way.

1009. Can you give us an idea—you are pretty good on statistics, you know—as to how many cars you would require? It is not a question of the number we would require to deal with the traffic, because you could not deal satisfactorily with it with the number you have. If we had another twenty trams we could deal satisfactorily with the traffic which is now offering, but then there are other circumstances which would arise; you could not deal with these trams, you could not get them away expeditiously.

1010. How many could you deal with now and get away expeditiously? We get away from Redfern station, in the busy hour of the morning, as many trams as can be properly dealt with there now.

1011. And how many is that number? One tram a minute.

1012. How many do you say they ought to have on the line? It is not a question of getting more trams. As I say, if you had twenty more trams you could not satisfactorily deal with them. We shall have in George-street presently the western suburban traffic which, if George-street would hold it all, would increase the number of trams in that street possibly by three times. That would assist the pick-up traffic very largely, but still it would not enable you to deal with the whole of the passengers arriving by train at any busy time.

1013. Do you think that to deal with the absolutely suburban traffic which comes by rail these eighty-nine electric cars and the steam trams are sufficient? Not to deal with it satisfactorily in the busy times of the day.

1014. What do you call the busy times of the day? Between 8 and 9.30 in the morning, and between 4.30 and 6.15 in the afternoon on an ordinary day, and between 11.45 and 1.15 on a Saturday.

1015. I understand that there are only about 110,000 persons living in the railway suburbs between Sydney and Parramatta? I think it might be pointed out that some portion of the 23,500 persons who use the trains are counted twice. For instance, some men who come in the morning to their work go home to their lunch, and others come back to town in the evening. So that a very fair portion of this number might be counted twice. We could not say how many individuals there are in this total of 23,500 who might be counted twice.

1016. We have only three theatres and they will not hold above 3,000? I cannot tell you how many people are doubled in that number.

1017. You favour the extension of the railway into the city right away? Yes.

1018. Would that relieve the tram traffic? It would relieve the tram traffic very much indeed, and enable us to deal with the pick-up traffic satisfactorily. It would increase the pick-up traffic, because there is no doubt that it frequently occurs now that people desiring to travel a short distance, do not take the trams at the busy times because they are full.

1019. At what number do you estimate these persons who get out at Redfern station and walk into town—the gentlemen who think a lot of their health? There are 9,200 a day, or 39 per cent. of the total number of passengers arriving by train, who leave the station by some other means than a tram. Some of them may go up Devonshire-street; others may go down Parramatta-street West, and others walk down George-street.

1020. *Chairman.*] Or go by 'bus? Very few go by 'bus now. Only a few by the two or three 'buses travelling to the eastern suburbs direct.

1021. *Mr. Levien.*] You think that those 9,200 persons would pay an extra fare into town to ride by rail? I think the great proportion of that number would, because every morning you can see large numbers of people going through the sub-way down into Pitt-street and into George-street. I have given very great study to this question. For several weeks I have been there from 7 o'clock in the morning, and watched the traffic. I have noticed this large crowd of people going towards the Haymarket and Goulburn-street, who, I think, would pay another fare, particularly if there happened to be another station in the vicinity of Liverpool-street. I think if there was a sub-station there, a great number of these 9,200 passengers would pay an extra fare to go on in the trains.

1022. If these 9,200 passengers did so, it would not relieve the tram traffic one bit? No; they do not travel by tram now, except on a wet morning.

1023. If they go down by that way now, they would still go down by that way, so that the tram traffic would still be the same? Yes.

1024. If the population of the suburbs were to increase, and the same people or the same families were to ride in the trams, that would still go on;—you would want the same tram services? As the population of the suburbs increases, so will your tramway difficulties in carrying the people increase, and we shall not be able to deal with them as well as we do now within two or three years to come. The crowding would be all the worse, and complaints would arise.

1025. Do you ever hear any complaints from those persons who have to walk? No; they do not complain, because they have no desire to use the trams unless the weather is bad, and then they crowd in. I have no doubt that if these trams were not as crowded as they are a number of those who now walk would take the trams.

1026. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you take more people in bad weather than in good weather? Yes; when the business people are going into town or going home; but during the middle of the day our traffic falls off, because the ladies do not come out to shop. As a rule we hardly take as much revenue on a wet day in the aggregate as we take on a fine day; but in the busy time of the morning and evening we have much heavier loading.

- J. Kneeshaw. 1027. *Mr. Levien.*] Have you ever calculated the average number coming to and from the suburbs between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.? About 900 an hour.
- 20 Feb., 1900. 1028. That is from as far as Parramatta? I cannot say where they come from.
1029. What number do you think you carry by the trams during those hours? We would not carry more than about 700 an hour. We carry a greater proportion of the passengers arriving after 10 o'clock and during the rest of the day than we carry between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. There is a greater percentage of passengers who walk or go by other means than trams between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. than there is at any other time in the day, and that might be partially ascribed to the fact that we are not in a position to satisfactorily deal with them. It has been remarked to me several times, "Oh! I prefer to walk away to a steam tram, which is nearly empty, so as to have a quiet seat."
1030. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think it would not be possible to cope with all this passenger traffic if additional lines for traffic were laid down, for instance, in Castlereagh-street? It would be absolutely necessary to have additional lines of trams made in Castlereagh-street, and Pitt-street also, to deal with the western suburban traffic. And as far as Pitt-street is concerned, there is a very good pick-up traffic to be dealt with there. I feel that the tramways will have a fair legitimate work to deal with in those three streets apart from carrying passengers to the railway station.
1031. Suppose the railway were extended to King-street, do you think the people would walk from King-street, even as far as George-street, in preference to going down George-street in the electric trams? I feel sure that they will, because we must bear in mind that they have not to change their seats. They are saved that inconvenience, and they are taken to their destination in, say, four minutes, as against ten minutes by tram, and two minutes loss of time in transferring, so that they gain eight minutes on the road. That will enable many people to leave their homes and travel by a later train than they now do.
1032. You seem to think that a saving of time would be a great consideration in the King-street plan? I feel sure that it would.
1033. Supposing they have to walk half a mile after they get out of the train at King-street, there will not be a saving of time? Not if they have to walk half a mile. But is not that rather a long distance to suggest, because very few persons would have to walk as far as that from the tram or Elizabeth-street?
1034. If they have to go to the east of George-street, it will be very little less than half a mile? We have a cable tram to take them down that way.
1035. I take it that the principal portion of the city to be served by the extension is that bounded by Market-street, Pitt-street, and Hunter-street? Yes.
1036. Do you think there will be any saving beyond those boundaries if they were carried straight to King-street, and then have to walk outside those boundaries? There will be a saving in George-street, too. The traffic we get in George-street now is not wholly and solely George-street traffic. People walk to the electric trams from as far as Castlereagh-street, and even from Elizabeth-street, and on the other side from York-street and Sussex-street.
1037. Have you estimated the time it will take to go from Strathfield to King-street by train? No; I cannot give you a reliable estimate; but I think eighteen to nineteen minutes is a fair estimate.
1038. Before the electric trams were started from the platform at Redfern station—that is, when they only ran down George-street—I have left my home at Strathfield and reached my office to the south of Pitt-street, beyond Market-street, in twenty-three minutes;—do you think I could do that, supposing I went straight to the station at King-street, and from there walked back to my office? I think you could.
1039. You do not suppose the people would go into King-street station and then walk back to Bathurst-street? No; they might not do that. It might still suit a number of people to leave the train at the present site.
1040. You are aware, I suppose, that it is not proposed to have any intermediate station between Redfern station and King-street? I was not aware of that.
1041. That is the proposal, so that the whole part of the city between Market-street and Goulburn-street would hardly be served by the extension to King-street? But then there would be such a number coming forward to King-street that the balance could be very satisfactorily dealt with by trams, because the trams will be running in George-street for the pick-up traffic. There is no reason why they should not run to the railway as they do now, with, perhaps, different shunting arrangements—and they would satisfactorily deal with the balance of the passengers who did not wish to go right through to King-street. But from the figures I have shown you here the greatest percentage of the people come through as far as Market-street and King-street by the electric trams.
1042. Of course, the increase since the opening of the electric tram has been something tremendous? Abnormal.
1043. That shows that the electric tram is very popular? It is popular because it is a frequent service, and because we have introduced the popular fare.
1044. Have you ever considered what other streets could be used for electric trams in the event of a very extensive central station being made on the block between Devonshire-street and Belmore-road? The objection, from a tramway point of view, to that scheme is that you would bring all your immense volume of George-street traffic right across your western suburban traffic—your present steam lines, which will be eventually electric lines—at the busiest part of your thoroughfare. My difficulty now is that where we have to run the trams across into the railway station there is risk. This plan does not show the shunting arrangements; there is no comparison between the shunting arrangements here and the shunting arrangement which exist on the cable tram in King-street, because the cable trams are few.
1045. Do you not think a good deal of the inconvenience experienced at present arises from the fact that there are not enough of these trams? We cannot satisfactorily deal with a much greater number; in fact, it has been a question of mature consideration as to whether we have not a greater number of trams crossing and shunting in the immediate vicinity of the George-street junction tramway signal-box than we ought to have at present. There are ample cars to run at a regular interval of a minute, but if we get blocked by a horse or a vehicle on the road we may have four, five, or six trams bunched in a few minutes.
1046. I suppose you have all the tram-cars engaged on the George-street line? Except such as we have to keep out of traffic for overhaul or emergencies.
1047. Have any more been ordered, or is it proposed to get any more? There are a number of cars ordered—not necessarily for George-street, but for tramways generally. The Commissioners will be perfectly safe in ordering cars for the conversion.
- 1048.

1048. For the convenience of the public generally, do you not think it would be wise to have an intermediate station between King-street and Belmore Park? That is a question I have not given very much consideration to. I understood that there was some talk of having an intermediate station at about Liverpool-street. J. Kneeshaw.
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1049. Of ten plans which have been explained to us here, seven show an intermediate station at Liverpool-street, but the three we are supposed to consider do not show a station there;—do you not think an intermediate station would be an advantage? It would certainly meet the convenience of a number of people, but I should like to know how far it is going to interfere with the working of the traffic. It might result in delays to trains which would more than compensate for the benefit derived. In other words, it might inconvenience the majority of the passengers in order to give facilities to the minority; but I could not say that without going into the question. I have not studied railway matters so much during the last two or three years, when we have been so busy with tramway questions.

1050. If I remember aright, the chief objection to that station was on account of the delay it would entail? The chief point, I think, was that it might seriously interfere with the comfort and delay the transit of a majority of the passengers simply to suit the minority, and it might be a small minority.

1051. You say that 9,200 persons leave the station by other means than the steam and electric trams;—I think a great many of them walk into the city for the sake of the exercise? A number of them do; but the bulk of them go away from the station between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., and a great proportion of them are young boys and girls—probably apprentices—and those receiving a small rate of pay, who go in on workmen's tickets. If there were only a small fee added to the price of the workmen's tickets by the Railway Department these persons would probably travel on to King-street. A fee added to the workmen's tickets would not amount to anything like 2d. a day, as the tram charges do.

1052. *Mr. Dick.*] It is proposed by the Commissioners to add 3d. a week to a workmen's ticket? I think the workmen would pay 3d. per week. They cannot afford to pay 1s. a week tram fare. I think a large number of these 9,200 persons would go forward in the trains.

1053. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What other streets could be made available for running electric trams down? Castlereagh-street certainly would be a very good street, and I trust the Government will see their way to put a tram down there before very long. From a tramway point of view, I should be very pleased to see a tram down Pitt-street. I should be very glad to have to work both streets to-morrow if we could.

1054. A tram in Castlereagh-street would serve people to the west of Pitt-street quite as well almost as a train to King-street? Except for the inconvenience of transshipping, and the fact that fetching such a large number of people out at one time we cannot successfully deal with them in the small units that we have, whereas, on the other hand, to put on large units, such as ran under the old steam arrangements, four cars, would be very unsightly, expensive, and troublesome.

1055. Do you not think it is a great deal more convenient for people to be dropped close to their places of business, as they would be by tram, than to have a considerable distance to walk;—for instance, in wet weather it will be very inconvenient to have a considerable distance to go from the station, whereas, with some trams, they would be dropped, if other lines were opened close to their places of business? It would be a great convenience to people to be able to drop near their places of business. That only applies, as you say, in wet weather. Take, for example, fine days, and on the majority of days it is fine. It will be more convenient for a passenger to continue his journey in the vehicle he is seated in, perhaps calmly reading his newspaper, or, if he is a smoker, smoking his pipe. In the train he is comfortable until he is landed at his destination, and there is no transshipping to another vehicle, and a vehicle, too, in which he may have to stand.

1056. You have arrived at the conclusion that the only way to effectually deal with the traffic which is likely to arise in a few years is by the proposed extension to King-street? I have arrived at that conclusion after careful consideration. I know that it is an expensive scheme, but I feel that it is the only way to relieve the streets of Sydney, and to enable the pick-up traffic to be satisfactorily dealt with.

1057. You think that that would really meet the convenience of the people better than an extension of the trams? Yes.

1058. We must have an extension of trams whether the city railway comes or not; still you think that the trams cannot meet the requirements of the traffic? I am satisfied that they cannot deal with the traffic satisfactorily.

TUESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Kneeshaw, Traffic Superintendent, Tramway Department, sworn, and further examined:—

1059. *Dr. Garran.*] Before the electric tramway was at work, and when all the railway passengers were accommodated by the steam trams, did that tramway fully accommodate the public? No. J. Kneeshaw.
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1060. In what respect was there a short-coming? Undue crowding at certain times of the day, and we were not in a position to put on more trams for the railway, because we could not deal with them at Bridge-street.

1061. You had not a shunting yard big enough? That was one of the weak points.

1062. Did you ever hear complaints from the passengers that they were not accommodated? I cannot remember any specific complaints, but I know there was grumbling at times. The passengers could not get seats.

1063. Do you consider that the steam tram was a more effective method of carrying a large number of persons in a given time than the electric tram is now? No; because you can run the electric trams much more frequently.

1064. But you cannot put on three cars? That is the case.

1065.

- J. Knecshaw. 1065. Which is the more effective method of carrying a crowd of passengers? We have not had any great experience in lifting large crowds with the electric tram. I refer to lifting a large crowd from a racecourse, for instance. We have loaded up 6,000 or 7,000 people in twenty minutes with the steam trams. It would, however, be possible to do the same thing, I think, with the electric trams.
- 27 Feb., 1900. 1066. Have you not had a public holiday since the electric tram has been running? Yes.
1067. Were you blocked then? No. On Christmas Eve we carried 83,000 people in George-street. There was overcrowding in that case, but we got them away.
1068. For railway traffic purposes, is there any advantage in steam over electric, or electric over steam trams? I think the electric would be the better.
1069. Do you think that the electric tram has come to stay, and that it will supersede the other? Yes. There are 20,000 miles of electric trams in the United States, and they are building more every year.
1070. Are not the Americans a very practical people? Yes.
1071. Do you think that we have seen the last of the steam trams? Yes, we shall have seen the last of them in two or three years.
1072. Will you build any more of them? I do not think so.
1073. Have you taken off most of the railway steam trams now? Yes; there are only a few in the morning, and none in the evening. We put a railway destination sign on some of the Botany trams; but that is all.
1074. Do you keep a tram waiting for the suburban trams? Yes, in Devonshire-street, and we start it on a time-table. We do not interfere with the Botany trams.
1075. Do you think that the mere alteration from the yard to the street discourages the people from taking the steam trams? I do not think so, because they can get to the trams just as readily as before by means of a subway.
1076. And people who prefer Elizabeth-street can go that way? Yes, that is the case early in the morning; but perhaps later in the day they take the western trams.
1077. Do you remember when Elizabeth-street was first used for trams? No.
1078. Elizabeth-street was then chosen because we wanted to get from the Railway Station to the Domain? Yes; and it was horse traction at first. I believe that the first tramway ran down Pitt-street; but it was pulled up and the tram laid in Elizabeth-street on account of the Exhibition.
1079. The Elizabeth-street tram was originally built purely for the Exhibition? Yes, as far as I can see from the records.
1080. Would you, or anybody else, suggest Elizabeth-street in order to serve the whole of the city? No.
1081. Elizabeth-street suits people who want to go to Parliament House, and also the civil servants? Yes, but only some of the civil servants; it does not suit people going to the Lands Office, and other places lower down.
1082. Does not Elizabeth-street suit some of the large hotels, and the people engaged at the law courts? Yes; but after all those are only a small percentage of the people who want a tramway. Business people are in the majority.
1083. Although the people I have referred to would prefer Elizabeth-street, the great mass of the people want to go west? Yes; about Pitt or George Streets.
1084. Would it not be fairer to say that King-street, or St. James' Road, would be a good East Sydney station, rather than a good Sydney central station? As a railway station, I think it would be fairly central. One could not expect a railway station to be as close to one's door as a tramway, particularly as people would be brought to their destination in a train without transhipment.
1085. Still you cannot say that St. James' Road is really central for the business part of Sydney? I think it is fairly central. A number of people who come in want to travel to the eastern suburbs, and it is a good place to tranship, and then towards Woolloomooloo business is increasing very rapidly.
1086. Do you notice that a great many of the people who come by trams take the cable line and go east? A fair sprinkling do.
1087. Is that more for domestic purposes than for business? Yes, except at certain times of the day, when those engaged in the shops go to places of business in William-street.
1088. Has a large portion of the Elizabeth-street traffic been captured by the George-street tram? Yes, a very large proportion.
1089. Would those people like to be sent back to Elizabeth-street? Not to a tram in Elizabeth-street.
1090. Would they not complain if they were taken back to Elizabeth-street? Yes.
1091. Does not that show that George-street is more convenient for them than Elizabeth-street? Yes; to a tramway.
1092. It is not because it is more speedy or cheaper? No; the fare is the same now.
1093. Then it must be the convenience of taking them up and putting them down? Yes.
1094. Would they like to be sent back to the top of King-street, even by railway? I think they would be quite satisfied to be dropped there by railway if it came right through, taking only three or four minutes.
1095. Now that the people have become used to George-street, do you think that if a railway were opened three months hence the people who now travel by George-street would go back by the railway to Elizabeth-street? Yes; apart from the additional comfort, it would be more economical transit.
1096. That would only be the case with season-ticket holders? Yes.
1097. Then you think they would not grumble at being sent up the hill again? No.
1098. Supposing it is decided to make a station at Liverpool-street, would not that cause a delay of four minutes, and, therefore, do away with the economy in time? Yes; that might cause complaint.
1099. Would that tempt people to go by the George-street tram? No; the delay would not be serious. It would be only a minute or two.
1100. We have statistics which were made up in Mr. Eddy's time showing the profit that would be made by bringing people to King-street;—do you think that the numbers then given would be reduced owing to the running of the George-street tram? There may be some reduction on account of the tramway; but there has been such a great increase in the number of the travelling public from Redfern since that estimate was made, that I think it would still hold its own.
1101. Do you think we need not make any discount on those figures? No. On the contrary, assuming that the Committee decide in favour of the city railway, it cannot be constructed before eighteen months, and there would be such a large increase of traffic in that time that the estimate would be under rather than over.

1102. No matter how many passengers go by George-street, you think that the full number that Mr. Eddy calculated would still come in by train? Yes. As an illustration I may refer to the annual report for 1897. During the financial year 1897, the number of passenger fares collected on the tramways was estimated at 72,000,000. In 1899, only two years later, the number was 82,000,000. That is an illustration of the natural increase in the traffic. J. Kneeshaw.
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1103. Of course, a great deal of that increase is due to the cheapening of fares? Yes.
1104. That affects a great many people who receive only small remuneration? Yes, and encourages people to live in the suburbs, where rents are very low.
1105. Have you noticed any increase in the suburban traffic? Yes, I think there is a tendency for people to go to the outside suburbs; but I have no actual figures on the subject.
1106. Is the steam tram a little quicker at present than the electric tram? It may do the journey in a minute or two minutes less.
1107. What would be the difference between the time taken in travelling by the tram and by the proposed railway, if there be no stoppage at Liverpool-street? There would be a difference of about five or six minutes in favour of the train, that is, apart from the time occupied in transshipment from the train to the tram, which may be taken as one or two minutes. The front passengers in the train now get away in the electric tram in one minute, those in the rear portion of the train get away in two minutes.
1108. Is there not a great deal of business done along the wharfs to Sussex-street? Yes.
1109. Except the King-street tram you give no accommodation whatever to that traffic? Not directly. People have to walk to and from George-street.
1110. Do you think that persons coming from the wharfs, or business men engaged about there, would go to the King-street railway station, or would they go by the George-street tram to Redfern? I think they would walk to King-street.
1111. Do you think that a woman with a baby would do so? Yes, there would be every facility for getting to the railway station. There would be the cable-tram right up to the station, and that will be an electric tram before long.
1112. Could we accommodate the waterside traffic by carrying a line down Sussex-street to Dawes' Point and Miller's Point into George-street? There will be an extension to Miller's Point from George-street at an early date. Arrangements have been made so that a junction can be made with the loop at Miller's Point, so as to run a line down Kent-street. There would be no difficulty in running a line down Kent-street; but there would be in the case of Sussex-street owing to the congestion of traffic.
1113. But is it not undesirable to lay down more lines than are necessary in the streets? There would only be a single line.
1114. But is that not only half a convenience? There would be no great difficulty between Clarence and York Streets. People would not mind walking a few yards there.
1115. But is not the tramway a great disturbance to ordinary vehicles in the street? Yes, in the case of a double line in a narrow street.
1116. Is it desirable to disturb more streets than are really necessary for the traffic? No; but on the other hand public convenience would probably ask for a great extension of the trams before long.
1117. Is it contemplated to run a tramway down Kent-street? I cannot go so far as to say that, but in preparing the plans for the extension to Miller's Point we have taken the precaution in making the loop to allow for a junction there at some future time.
1118. Would it not be of value to run the line down Kent-street into George-street, and to run the trams in a circle? That would be the best course in order to avoid shunting. If the line were carried down to the Haymarket it would be more suitable to go in a circle.
1119. If we had this multiplication of trams in Kent, George, Elizabeth, and Castlereagh streets, do you think that all those trams running together could take away the people fast enough? I do not think it would be satisfactory.
1120. But you have only two at work now, and yet you practically get all the people away? If a tram were run along Kent-street there would be so much traffic engendered that the railway traffic would again become a nuisance.
1121. Is it not a nuisance now, and is not the legitimate tram traffic blocked? Yes.
1122. As a tramway manager, do you consider that the legitimate object of tramways is to serve the pick-up traffic? Yes; or to deal with suburban traffic which does not warrant a railway, or which would not be profitable for a railway.
1123. But when you have a huge congestion of traffic morning and evening, does it overtask your apparatus? Yes; and when you get into inter-suburban traffic there should be railway connection.
1124. You say that you now have more than three-fourths of the traffic concentrated on one electric line;—if you had three lines giving equal accommodation, would that distribute the traffic? I do not see how you could distribute it from your starting-point, because you would have such a congestion of traffic at the junction, wherever it might be. Assuming that the railway were to come on only to Devonshire-street, and we constructed tramways along Pitt and Castlereagh streets, which would also carry the western suburban trams, a number of the trams would still be bound to cross each other, and wherever they cross in that manner we run a great risk.
1125. You want more room than you have now? Yes.
1126. You could not do it with one line? No; and to work it without risk, it would be necessary to have the tram lines at different levels, that is, one would have to run over the top of the other.
1127. I want your opinion clearly on this point, because it has occupied the attention of a great many people;—will the new facilities afforded by the electric trams be sufficient to dispense with the necessity for a city railway? I am strongly of opinion that no provision that could be made in the existing streets for electric trams will overcome the necessity for a city railway.
1128. You feel quite sure of that? Yes.
1129. Do you think that the morning and evening traffic cannot be dealt with otherwise than by a continuation of the railway line? Yes; it might be possible for a year or two to deal with the traffic, if there were extra outlets to the electric trams, but I am satisfied that the natural increase in the traffic would be so great that in a few years it would be absolutely impossible to deal with it.
1130. You have talked about the extreme inconvenience at present, owing to the electric trams having to cross the steam tram lines, but would not that be the case when you alter your trams to electric trams as long

J. Kneeshaw. long as we have the railway station at Redfern? Yes; the conversion will not make any difference. Of course there will be a slight alteration, because a certain amount of the western suburban traffic may be taken into George-street. That will ease a certain amount of crossing. But we expect that there will be so many additional trams rendered necessary that possibly as much crossing will be required as ever.

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1131. If you had a railway tram line up Pitt-street, and going straight into the station without entering George-street, would not that get rid of all the crossing? You would avoid the crossing, if you ran the railway trams into Pitt-street, but you cannot avoid the crossing altogether.

1132. Would there not be some objection now to taking the railway traffic up Pitt-street? Yes; it would require consideration. There is a great deal of traffic in Pitt-street, and it is narrow. However the same objection applied to George-street, and there is no difficulty now.

1133. If railway extension is made to Hyde Park, or close to it, you will not want to have a direct tram into the railway station? We should have to terminate our trams somewhere in the vicinity of Redfern. The pick-up traffic would exist between the Cyclorama and Circular Quay or Dawes' Point.

1134. Will not a great many George-street people always take the tram to Redfern in spite of railway extension into the city? We may always expect to have a large amount of that traffic.

1135. So you must provide for some of the trams going into the station? Yes.

1136. Then you will still have to cross the western traffic? Yes; but if you reduce the number of trams you will diminish the risk very much. We can avoid sending the bulk of the pick-up trams by terminating them at the Cyclorama.

1137. You will diminish the danger, but not get rid of it, unless you make the railway people get out at the gates? That would be objectionable, and it would be more risky for the people to cross the lines than for our trams to do so.

1138. If we had a new station at Belmore-road, or an extension across Devonshire-street, you would still have all the difficulty of the trams crossing? There would be exactly the same difficulty.

1139. That will be the case unless they come up three different streets and do not cross? If you could work the whole of the railway traffic in Pitt-street, and prevent any of the western traffic going into Elizabeth-street, you would avoid crossing; but that would not be a good way of dealing with the business. Naturally some of the western suburban people will want to go into Elizabeth-street. Similarly the railway passengers will not be satisfied if they are all taken into Pitt-street.

1140. Supposing the original scheme submitted by the Railway Commissioners is carried out, will you still keep the trams in Elizabeth-street? I think so.

1141. But if the new scheme is adopted, which will block Elizabeth-street, will you then have to take the trams into Castlereagh-street? Yes.

1142. You would not take them back to Elizabeth-street? No; they would probably be taken right down to Circular Quay.

1143. You have a loop at Circular Quay at present; would it not be more convenient to carry that on to the Fort and turn round there? It would be convenient to take it to the Fort, and that is under consideration. It does not follow that the whole of the trams would be taken on to the Fort. The additional running time would probably be four minutes. That would mean that so many more trams would be necessary, and there would be great expense, while there is not sufficient traffic to render it necessary. Therefore, a great many trams would continue to shunt at the present loop for a number of years. Such an extension would be a very great convenience to the public, because it would be the only satisfactory means of taking people from the western suburbs to the harbour and the gardens.

1144. When Mr. Jackson was examined with reference to the Woolloomooloo wharf, he suggested that in order to get rid of the isolation of Woolloomooloo from Circular Quay a tunnel should be run underneath the gardens into Woolloomooloo Bay through which the trams should be extended, and they could turn round there;—would that be convenient? That would be a very expensive matter from a tramway point of view; it would render more rolling stock necessary, and it would make the running time longer; there would be no intermediate traffic, and the working would be a dead loss. It would only be a convenience to people going to Woolloomooloo, and I do not think the people would travel such a long way round. With the introduction of electric trams I imagine we could devise a much better scheme than such a tunnel.

1145. Would you suggest a branch from the William-street line? Yes; I think that would be better.

1146. At certain times of the day is your present electric tram worked up to its full power? We work it with the maximum amount of rolling stock available.

1147. Then you are able to find accommodation for people from the Glebe, Annandale, Leichhardt, and other districts about there? As I have already stated, I am satisfied we will not be able to take the whole of the western suburban traffic into George-street, and I have already made representations on the subject to the Commissioners.

1148. Are you looking for another relief street? Yes.

1149. You think that is absolutely necessary? Yes.

1150. Would the railway extension into the city help you in that? It would in this way. If we had not to run such an immense number of trams to the railway, the space taken by the railway trams would be occupied by the western suburban trams.

1151. Still your trams bring into the city a large number of Newtown people, who, if forced to do so, could take the railway, but they prefer to be brought up into the streets rather than be dropped at Redfern? Yes; and those people are quite content to be dropped at Elizabeth-street at present.

1152. Although it is not close to where they want to go? Yes; but they are quite content, and they prefer to take the tram from Newtown and be landed in Elizabeth-street in preference to taking a train to Redfern.

1153. If we get the railway extended to Hyde Park, do you think that part of the Newtown traffic will go to the railway? We may lose a certain amount, but I do not fear that loss.

1154. You do not think it will materially diminish your tram traffic? No. With the conversion to electric trams, the possibility is that a large number of people who now travel by 'buses will travel by tram, and we may naturally expect during next year an immense increase in the number of tramway passengers on the western suburban tram lines.

1155. Then it is a very urgent case, because you would not be justified in converting the trams until you have

have permission to take them through other streets? We may overcome the difficulty by running a certain number into Elizabeth-street. There may be some relief in Elizabeth-street by taking in some of the electric trams. J. Kneeshaw.
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1156. But would people who want to go to George-street approve of that? They are content to be landed in Elizabeth-street at present.

1157. That was before you had the trams in George-street, but now they will not like it? A large number of people will not care about it, but a great percentage of the passengers will be contented. It will not be as satisfactory to take them into Elizabeth-street; but we shall be compelled to do that unless there are some other outlets found.

1158. Can you make the conversion into electric trams in sections? Yes. We shall convert the Dulwich Hill line first; there will be a partial conversion possibly next month, and perhaps a complete conversion within a couple of months afterwards. The steam trams will continue to run together with the electric trams over that portion of the line between Newtown Junction and the railway station. Subsequently another section will be converted; it may be the Glebe or Leichhardt, to be followed by Balmain.

1159. Will you be able to see your way with regard to the congestion of traffic? Yes, we shall be able to see that clearly.

1160. *Vice-Chairman*] When you were examined before, you stated that one train brought 460 persons into Redfern Station, and that two trains brought 786, both arriving at the same time? Yes.

1161. You stated that by running electric trams at intervals of twenty seconds each those trams would be able to accommodate that number of people;—that involves a delay in order to get the last of the passengers accommodated, on the electric tram, of only two minutes from the time that the first person enters the first tram until the last person enters the last tram? That is so; but we only carry 460 passengers; that is not the total number that arrived by the trains.

1162. Assuming that that is the number you take, at the busiest time you are able to get away with the trams in two minutes? I dare say we could, but it would be very quick loading; it would be difficult to keep it up as a regular thing.

1163. As a regular thing you would not have so many passengers deposited? We have nothing like that in the existing work.

1164. If, instead of having only one electric tram down one street, you had two or more going down other streets, would you not be able to accommodate the whole number of 786 if they wished to take the tram during the busy portion of the day? You would require to go to considerable expense to make suitable loading and unloading arrangements for the trams. It might be possible to lift the whole of the railway traffic by trams, but you would have to sacrifice the pick-up and western suburban traffic, which is legitimate tram traffic.

1165. But they will not suffer until you have the whole system converted into an electric system? No; but we will have the western suburban trams converted next year, if we can find a way of dealing with the traffic.

1166. Then you think there would be difficulty and inconvenience by such an arrangement? Yes; it is not legitimate tram traffic.

1167. Does the King-street site possess any advantage of position apart from the eastern suburbs to people from the western suburbs, who have to come in a long distance by the railway? It does not of necessity offer any advantage. The people from the western suburbs could alight at the present Redfern Railway Station; but for the eastern suburbs the proposed city site is infinitely the best.

1168. From the point of view of business people, is the proposed site in any way central, seeing that, practically, to the east of it there is only park land, or portions not thickly inhabited, which do not provide much railway traffic? The proposed site may be a little away from the thickly-populated parts of the city, at the same time it does suit the convenience of the public to be landed there now by tram, and if they were landed there by train it might be much more convenient.

1169. Presuming the railway were extended to the city, what convenience of rapid transit would be afforded to those people to the west of George-street;—would not they still continue to use the George-street tram? I think not. If the station were established, say, at King-street, people would be quite content to walk that small distance in consideration of the much more rapid way in which they would be brought to town. There would also be the cable tram there to suit them.

1170. Take the district lying west of George-street and north of George-street, do you think the people who use the trams at present to go to business would go by train into King-street? I am satisfied they would. They had to walk down there before, or travel by the steam tram, and having the railway at King-street would be much more advantageous to them. Then the season ticket-holders and those who pay workmen's fares would enjoy a very great saving.

1171. Do you think that the King-street site is practically within easy reach of the most thickly populated part of the city, as far as business is concerned? Yes.

1172. A large number of people at present do not use the electric trams? Yes; about 9,200 per day who arrive at the Redfern Station do not use the tram.

1173. Have you any scheme for trying to capture that portion of the traffic? Not from a tramway point of view. If the railway were extended into the city I am satisfied a great many of these people would remain in the trams and pay the extra fare.

1174. Did you not state that it was the daily tram fare which prevented those people from using the tram? Yes; I believe a large percentage of the people who walk from the station in the busiest parts of the day are probably young women and apprentices who are not in a position to pay 1s. per week for tram fares; but they could pay 3d. per week.

1175. Can you state in general terms what use or improvement the construction of the George-street tramway brought about with regard to your tram traffic? It released about five motors and seventeen cars, and enabled us to use those on other tram lines, so as to give better facilities. We could not have put on additional trams without that relief, because we could not have managed the shunting in Bridge-street.

1176. *Mr. Shepherd*.] Has there not been an enormous addition in the number of passengers since the electric tram started? Certainly there has been an immense increase. We carried on the steam trams about 2,700,000 passengers per annum to and from the railway station; but we now carry from the railway station on the electric tram 8,700,000 per annum.

- J. Kneeshaw. 1177. The electric tram is run at much shorter intervals than the steam tram? Yes.
- 27 Feb., 1900. 1178. Did you ever know the steam trams to be crowded to the same extent as the electric trams are? Not as a general rule. There might have been very great crowding on a wet morning or night from the railway, but not as a rule.
1179. Can you give the number of steam trams which left the railway, compared with the number of the electric trams? I have not got that information with me. The number of electric trams leaving the railway daily will average about 490.
1180. Were there half that number of steam trams leaving? Nothing like half.
1181. So that the electric tram has really induced a very much larger number to travel? Yes; it may have induced some to travel that way; but you must understand that an electric tram will only hold about one-third of what the old steam tram could hold, so that we must necessarily run more of them.
1182. I think you said you run as many as six trams in two minutes? Yes; we could do that.
1183. It was estimated that it took two minutes to reach the tram from the train;—are the two statements consistent? I think so. It might be that the first tram was not started until fully a minute after the arrival of the train. The last tram in that case would go three minutes after the arrival of the train. Under the old arrangement we had to allow a margin of three minutes from the arrival of the train to the departure of the tram. We rarely found that we could get it away before then. With the electric tram it is different. The first-class passengers arriving at the end of the platforms A and B, and 1, 2, and 3 were right at the tram. The second-class passengers, who get out at the rear, may take one and a half or two minutes to get to the tram.
1184. I see you have several designs for the electric-tram carriages—one with cross seats in the front, and also in the rear, with an apartment between them, which would carry nearly double the number of an ordinary carriage? Yes; that carriage is known as the St. Louis car. We have a number of them, but they are not suitable for pick-up traffic in George-street, as too much time is occupied in loading and unloading. They are intended for suburban traffic.
1185. *Mr. Levien.*] Where would you recommend the central railway station to be placed? In the absence of any better site, I think that the King-street one is the best.
1186. That is the proposal now made? Yes; it does not matter where you have a station, somebody will have to walk.
1187. Is not most of the traffic centred about Market and King streets, and not very much beyond Hunter-street, so far as business places are concerned? Yes; that is our experience with regard to the George-street traffic.
1188. Then that would be the most central place, and also with regard to Sussex and Kent streets? Yes, so far as the available sites are concerned. I think that the wants of Kent and Sussex streets will be well served by a tram. I think the Ministry have that question under consideration. People living in those streets could take advantage of the cable tram, or if they alighted at the present railway station they could be taken by the electric tram *via* Sussex-street if they preferred it.
1189. Is it the experience that most of the passengers get off George-street and Elizabeth-street trams at King-street? Yes; that is where the bulk of the traffic goes. About 80 per cent. of the electric tram passengers leave at King-street and the Post Office. When the steam trams arrive from the western and eastern suburbs, the majority of the people leave them at Market and King streets, with a sprinkling at Hunter-street.
1190. Have you watched the direction which passengers take? Yes; I have done so for the last four or five years.

John Upward, Chairman, City Railway Extension Alliance, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Upward. 1191. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you wish to make a statement to the Committee? Yes. The Alliance was the outcome of a municipal movement in 1896, which took place mostly on the western and southern suburban lines. The people there thought that their convenience had been ignored for so long, and so many steps had been attempted without any success to have the railway extended into the city, that they organised a joint municipal movement and formed this Alliance. We did not recommend any particular scheme, we merely wanted to have the railway carried into the city. We merely tried to impress upon the authorities that our convenience was very badly served, and that we wanted something better. After all the evidence had been taken by the last Royal Commission, and endorsed by the Public Works Committee, the Alliance did everything in their power, and are still doing so, to further the recommendation then made, in spite of the alternative routes which have since been proposed. They feel that the old route is the best one, seeing that it will cost something like £550,000, exclusive of the value of the park land, and compares favourably with the other routes, which will cost anything from £1,000,000 to £1,500,000. They cannot conscientiously work for a scheme which would cost so much more, while it gives so little extra accommodation. The new scheme brings the railway station to the same eastern point, but certainly a couple of hundred feet nearer to the centre of the city, and that will cost an extra £1,000,000. In consequence of that, the Alliance do all they can to forward the scheme recommended by the last Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee. The great objection, I take it, to the St. James' Road scheme is that it trenches on Hyde Park. There has been an outcry about taking away the people's park. Personally, I would point out that that is only maudlin sentiment, because we should take into consideration the immense amount of park land in that part of the city. Hyde Park is only a continuation of the Doman, which is bounded by the harbour, so that there are plenty of lungs to the city without the portion of Hyde Park which it is proposed to take away. I may be permitted to refer to a remark which was made by the present Premier when a deputation waited on him on the subject four or five months ago. The deputation was organised by the Alliance. We strongly advocated that the matter should be brought before Parliament to be dealt with. Mr. Lyne objected, and his principal objection was, "You now say you only want to take up half of the northern section of Hyde Park, but my experience of railways in other parts of the world leads me to believe that if the Railway Commissioners get their present demand they will eventually take up the whole of the Park." It will be remembered that Mr. Eddy, who was one of the greatest railway authorities we ever had, told us that in twenty years time the Park would not be sufficient, and that other provision would have to be made. In the scheme now under consideration—No. 10—we have a way shown to us out of that difficulty.

difficulty. If the proposed tunnel is applicable to No. 10 scheme, it could also be made to apply to the St. James' Road scheme. I would urge the business point of view in this matter. I think it was pointed out at the last Public Works Committee inquiry that an increase of 1d. in the fare would yield about 5 per cent. on the cost of the construction of the railway extension to St. James' Road. That cost was to be £550,000, exclusive of the Park. I believe the present scheme is estimated to cost three times as much; so that a penny increase in the fare would only yield about $1\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. on the cost of construction instead of 5 per cent. It would, therefore, require an increase in the fare to 3d. to give anything like the same return. An increase of 1d. in the fare would be borne without a murmur by the public, but I imagine that that would not be the case if the fare were increased to 3d. Then there is the question of convenience in the neighbourhood of the station. In the St. James' Road scheme you would have Elizabeth-street widened about half a chain from Park-street to King-street. No. 10 scheme proposes to close up Elizabeth-street altogether. As a layman, it seems to me that the shutting up of Elizabeth-street will entail a vast amount of inconvenience to the public. Then there will be a very nasty double curve in the tram-line which will not be desirable. I would like to refer to the expressions of opinion given by the people along the various railway routes. In 1897, when I gave evidence, I was authorised by the mayors of about fifteen or eighteen principal municipalities, going from Petersham to beyond Parramatta on the western side, and as far as Hurstville on the Illawarra line, and also the mayors of other municipalities not directly interested, but which hoped to be, such as North Sydney, Woollahra, Waverley, and Randwick,—they authorised me to support strongly the St. James' Road scheme. I think the Alliance sent circulars to every municipality in the Colony, asking them if they were in favour of the St. James' Road scheme, and asking them to pass resolutions to that effect. The result was that within a radius of 30 miles of Sydney the Councils, representing 230,000 people, were strongly in favour of the St. James' Road scheme; so that if public opinion goes for anything, the St. James' Road scheme is well backed up.

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1192. What other evidence have you that there is a general desire for this extension, apart from the resolutions passed by the Councils? I can speak from my own experience as a railway traveller for the last twenty years on the Western line. There is very grave dissatisfaction, and it is becoming more marked every year. They feel that their convenience is ignored, and they are greatly dissatisfied owing to the danger they know they run every day that they come into the Redfern station. That has been pointed out on three different occasions by the Railway Commissioners.

1193. Apart from the danger, what is the particular inconvenience which leads people to desire an extension of the railway into the city? There is a great loss of time to people coming to Redfern station, they have to wait from one to three minutes before they can get on their way again. Then there is the annoyance of having to change; and there is the extra time lost in travelling from Redfern to King-street. The statistics of the Tramway Department show that that is the chief point of debarkation. It makes a difference of about ten minutes. People going to and from the station every day must lose nearly half-an-hour.

1194. How do you make up that time? Travelling on the tram takes up seven or eight minutes each way, and it takes perhaps about three or four minutes to tranship; that makes up twenty-four minutes. The train would go much faster.

1195. Have you noticed any improvement in the rapidity of transit since the opening of the George-street tram? I believe the steam tram travels a little faster; but the steam tram had to serve nearly the whole train, whereas the people who now first leave the train get away at once.

1196. Are you aware that it was the custom before to allow a margin of three minutes for every steam tram to wait after the arrival of a train? I think it would take quite that time.

1197. At present Mr. Kneeshaw says he can take away 480 people—the largest number he is asked to cater for in six electric trams in a total period of three minutes? Yes, that is what I mean. The passengers who get out of the train first get away before those in the rear. Those in the rear of the train are in much the same position as they were before. There is a slight improvement.

1198. If we are also assured that the electric tram is faster than the steam tram, there is another gain in that direction? I do not think that is the case; the railway steam tram has fewer stoppages than the George-street tram.

1199. Have you any figures to show what time it takes by the tram? It takes me sixteen or seventeen minutes to get from the railway station to Circular Quay by the George-street tram.

1200. Do you find that a large number of people travel by the George-street tram down to the Circular Quay in the busy portion of the day? Not a very large number. After you pass the Post Office, they thin out considerably.

1201. If the railway were extended into the city, how would your position be improved in the matter of time? There would probably be some scheme of tramway extension from King-street to Miller's or Dawes' Points; it brings me nearer my business, and I might not take the tram at all. That would apply to the vast majority of business people. King-street is fairly central, although the site might be a little too much to the east.

1202. Would there not be a loss of time, if you had to walk from King-street to Circular Quay? It would be much about the same.

1203. Would that be nearly so convenient in hot or dirty weather as the present electric tram? I do not think my case is a good one to take as an example. My office is at Dawes' Point, but the destination of the bulk of the passengers are between Park and Hunter streets.

1204. Take the case of business men in Sussex-street from one end to the other;—would they be benefited by the city railway? Yes; very much. If it is a matter of walking, it would be only one-third of the distance. On the other hand, I presume the cable tram would still run, and that would take business people right down to Sussex-street.

1205. What would give the maximum amount of convenience—an extension of the railway into the city with the present tram arrangements, or the construction of a main station at Belmore-road and the Benevolent Asylum, with a system of parallel tram-lines in George, Pitt, and Sussex streets? There would be the same time lost in transshipping, if you had to go by tram from the station.

1206. Would not that be made up for by the greater convenience in landing people at their places of business? It might give people in Clarence and other streets more convenience, but I understand that the proposed station at Devonshire-street would cost £500,000, while it would not give one penny return. Commercially that would be a very bad speculation for the Railway Department.

1207.

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1207. You will notice by the map that the proposed station at King-street is practically on the east of a block which embraces the main portion of the business part of Sydney;—do you think that a station in such a position could possibly be convenient for the greater number of people who have their places of business in that block? Certainly not, if the question of cost did not come in. If it were not for the question of cost a circular railway all round the city would be the best.
1208. Have you considered the question of an extension of trams through the city as against the extension of the railway? No; not with so many proposed parallel lines.
1209. Would you care to offer an opinion on that question? I would not like to do so off-hand.
1210. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you any idea whether more suburban people have their places of business on the east of George-street or the west? I think George-street would make a very good dividing line.
1211. Are the professional people mostly on the eastern side? Yes.
1212. Are the majority of the business people on the western side? There are a large number of people in business in Sussex, Kent, and Clarence streets.
1213. Do the suburban people find that the George-street tram puts them down much nearer their places of business than the Elizabeth-street trams? Yes.
1214. Would they like to go back to Elizabeth-street? No.
1215. Would they like to have the continuation of the railway so carried out as to put them down in Elizabeth-street? As against the saving of time, and the saving of danger which they now have to undergo, they would be only too pleased to go there. The people living along the railway for a considerable time have been agitating for this extension, and they do not care much where it goes so long as they get it. They will back up the proposal which is most likely to be carried out.
1216. The greater convenience offered by the electric tram has not diminished their desire, and is not likely to? No.
1217. Is it not true that the suburban residents have, for some time, been pressing the Commissioners to reduce the fares? Two or three deputations have waited on the Commissioners within the last five years for that purpose, for the reason that it was pretty well known that the western suburbs were paying very considerably for other lines which do not pay.
1218. The proposal of the Government is to increase the fares if the railway is made into the city;—will there be objection to that on the part of the people? No, because so many would be saved the expense of the tram.
1219. Do you think it would do away with the demand for a reduction of the general fares? Yes; they could not very well ask for increased accommodation, and at the same time for a reduction of fares. The people understood that it was proposed to increase the fares by about one penny if the railway were extended. I have been working up this question for three years, and I have not heard a dissentient voice against that proposal. After all it does not mean any increase, as it would save tram fares, and be a great saving in point of time.
1220. The scheme now before us will cost, in round numbers, about £1,500,000;—in order to pay interest on that amount, instead of having to pay an extra fare of one penny, you would have to pay three-pence in order to get the same return;—do you think the suburban people would be content to pay that? I am sure they would not.
1221. Do you notice that the scheme now before us does not altogether save the Park? I believe about 80 feet of the Park is to be taken.
1222. It takes a strip at Elizabeth-street, in the first part, and an equal strip, in the second part, and it takes part of Elizabeth-street right out of the roads of the city;—is that a strong objection? Yes, there is a strong objection to closing up any street.
1223. It is only a partial saving of the Park, and if Hyde Park is to be sacred every inch of it should be sacred? Yes; there should be the same objection to taking a small strip of the Park.
1224. Then it is proposed to take a very large area of the Domain for a carriage shed and shunting, so that so far as public reserves are concerned, this proposal takes as much public park away from Sydney as the other scheme, only it does so in two places instead of one? Yes.
1225. Has the increased expense been considered by the suburban people? I cannot say that it has; because this plan has only been made public recently, and there have been no meetings during the last few months. Still that must occur to them.
1226. I suppose the feeling with regard to the Park is not so strong in the suburbs as it is in the city? No.
1227. Would you be quite prepared to give up part of Ashfield Park for railway purposes? Yes; if it would be more convenient for the greater number of people.
1228. Do all the people in the western suburbs hold that opinion? Yes. We would assume that if part of the Ashfield Park were taken there would be a certain amount of benefit to the Ashfield people themselves.
1229. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you in business in Sydney? Yes; at Circular Quay.
1230. In the event of the railway being extended to King-street, would you go to the King-street railway station in preference to the George-street tram? Yes; it would not make much difference in time; but my case is not the same as others, as I am at the extreme point of the city.
1231. What portion of the city would benefit by the extension to King-street? I think most people disembark between Hunter-street and Park-street, and thence westward.
1232. Do you think it is likely that persons whose business is situated in Park-street, would come all the way to King-street and walk back to Park-street, in preference to using the George-street tram? It is very hard to say; probably they would find it to their advantage to do so, as it would save time. The crowds who get out at King-street show that that is the most convenient place to get to business. The trams show that every day.
1233. Do you think that persons whose business premises are in George-street would prefer to go to King-street and walk down to George-street, rather than go by the George-street tram, and be dropped almost at their own door? Yes; except in wet weather. People have a great objection to breaking their journey in the train.
1234. Have you ever calculated the exact time which it takes to reach King-street from Strathfield when the train comes straight in? A through train from Strathfield to King-street would do the journey in seventeen or eighteen minutes.
1235. Have you ever taken the actual time which is occupied in reaching your place of business when you use the George-street tram? A through train from Summer Hill will take eight minutes, and the electric tram would take me down to the Quay in about a quarter of an hour.

1236. Would not the only portion of the city that would be benefited by the railway extension be the block between Park-street, Pitt-street, and Hunter-street? That would be the block that would be most benefited, but you cannot possibly have a station which will benefit every part of the city equally. J. Upward.
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1237. There is no intermediate station proposed between Redfern and King-street, and, therefore, only those in the neighbourhood of King-street would be benefited? I am only dealing with the St. James' Road scheme, in which I believe an intermediate station is provided for.
1238. The plans now submitted to the Committee contain no intermediate station, so that it would be simply that part of the city within easy reach of King-street which would be benefited by the extension; it is estimated to cost £1,500,000; it would take up a large portion of the Park; it would block Elizabeth-street;—supposing it does suit a portion of the city, do you think it is desirable to destroy the Park to a certain extent, and to block Elizabeth-street in order to give a portion of the city a little more convenience in reaching their place of business? No; I do not advocate the Government scheme at all. What I advocate is the St. James' Road scheme, which does not block Elizabeth-street.
1239. But that would take up a large portion of the Park? As I have said before that is merely maudlin sentiment, considering the large area of Park land which we have there.

THURSDAY, 1 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Upward, Chairman, City Railway Extension Alliance, sworn, and further examined:—

1240. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You stated previously that you considered at least half an hour would be gained by the extension of the railway to King-street;—will you explain how that is made up? There is first the time wasted in transhipping at Redfern; it is now two or three minutes; it used to be longer by the steam tram. It takes from eight to ten minutes to travel from the station. Now that we have the electric tram it would be, perhaps, more correct to say that the saving would be from twenty to twenty-five minutes. J. Upward.
1 Mar., 1900.
1241. Have you not also to allow for the time occupied by going from King-street to your place of business in the case of the railway extension as well as from the tram? Yes.
1242. In the case of the steam tram, passengers can be dropped close to their places of business between Pitt or George street? Yes.
1243. They stop at every street, whereas the railway extension to King-street would drop the whole of the passengers at King-street;—those living at a considerable distance would therefore have to give up as much time as it would take to change at the railway and reach that spot by tram? Do you mean people whose business is south of King-street?
1244. I am speaking of the whole thing, because passengers who do not get out at Redfern would have to be brought to King-street;—do you think there would be any saving of time in the case of people who have to go to York-street, Sussex-street, or below Bridge or Hunter streets? I do not think there would be any saving. The tram will take them much nearer to their destination than the train.
1245. Would the extra advantage of the extension of the railway to King-street be confined to the vicinity of that station? That is the busiest centre.
1246. *Dr. Garran.*] Contrasting the use of the tramway with the railway, do you think that people coming from Sussex-street would take the electric tram to the station, or would they go up to Hyde Park to take the railway? Coming from Sussex-street, when they reach George-street they have walked two-thirds of the way, and I should think the greater portion of the people would walk the remaining third, so saving time and expense.
1247. Would they not think that they had walked enough on a hot day when they reached George-street? I daresay they would.
1248. *Mr. Levien.*] As a question of public convenience, do you think it would be wise to have an intermediate station between King-street and Belmore Park? I think that is more a question for railway authorities. They know what distances stations should be apart. I do not know whether it is possible to work stations so close together. Supposing that the intermediate station would be at Liverpool-street, I should say it would not be desirable to have a station there, judging from the small number of people who leave the trams at that point.
1249. Have you seen all the plans? Yes.
1250. Which scheme would you recommend? The old one, known as the St. James' Road scheme, which was recommended by the last Public Works Committee. I support that on the ground of economy and utility, and it does not close up any streets.
1251. If that recommendation were carried out, would not people still require cab accommodation? Yes; no matter where the station is.
1252. Would it bring the whole of the passenger traffic into that station if there were a break in the journey between Redfern and St. James' Road? I think if any intermediate station were erected it would be used by a very small percentage of travellers.
1253. Is there a great deal of difference in summer and winter in the number of people who travel by tram from Redfern? A great many people in winter walk for the sake of exercise. If the railway be extended into the city, those who wish to do so can still walk from Redfern. Once in the train they would be likely to remain in it until they reached the terminus.
1254. Would they be willing to pay a small extra charge for coming right into the city? Yes; and the charge would be less than we have to pay at present. I believe the Commissioners recommended about one penny per day, whereas we now pay twopence per day by tram.
1255. Would it save time or money? Both. 1256.

- J. Upward.
1 Mar., 1900.
1256. Is not the change advocated more to save money than time? Time has its value.
1257. Would people still take family tickets if the railway were run into the city? Experience teaches that the more facilities you give for travelling the more they are availed of.
1258. Is there not a great outcry against taking any part of Hyde Park? Yes; from various quarters.
1259. I suppose the suburban people do not complain of that? I have not heard any such objection raised. I think the objections come a great deal from interested quarters—that is, from people who, for their own reasons, wish the railway to go to the western part of the city. Others wish the station to remain where it is.
1260. Apart from that, in your opinion, the Hyde Park scheme would be the best? Yes, undoubtedly.
1261. Have you had many years experience in the city? Twenty-two or twenty-three years.
1262. Would it be an inconvenience to the public to use the Park for the station? Only to a very small extent. The only portion which would be closed to the public would be a small portion between Park-street and King-street. The portion between Park and Liverpool Streets would be just as open to them as it is at present.
1263. Have you ever heard complaints from the eastern suburbs, or the western suburbs, against the proposal to take the railway through Hyde Park? Certainly not from the western suburbs. Some time ago there was a public meeting held in Paddington, at which there seemed to be very strong objections to the proposal.
1264. Do you think they would be inconvenienced in any way? No. The objection comes from people living in Paddington, Surry Hills, or Woolloomooloo who walk across the Park into town every day. They would have to make a slight detour between Park and King Streets. For instance, if they wanted to go down Market-street, that avenue would be closed to them.
1265. But they could still get into King-street? Yes.
1266. You have heard of complaints, well grounded or otherwise, from the eastern suburbs? Only from Paddington; the other three suburbs, Waverley, Woollahra, and Randwick, were strongly in favour of the St. James' Road scheme.
1267. Are the western suburbs absolutely in favour of the scheme? Yes.
1268. Do they think it would be sufficiently central and cheaper? Yes.
1269. Do you think that the area which would be served by the extension would be between Liverpool and Hunter Streets? Yes; but not so far back as Liverpool-street. I should say as far as Park-street.
1270. *Vice-Chairman.*] Does your Alliance pin its faith to the St. James' Road scheme, as recommended by the Royal Commission and the last Public Works Committee? Yes.
1271. Do you remember that the late Mr. Eddy stated that that scheme would only make provision for the railway requirements of the next twenty years? Yes.
1272. Would there not then be an almost irresistible temptation to take more of the Park to meet the demands? I do not think so, for this reason—it may be fairly assumed that long before that time the people of the eastern suburbs will clamour so strongly for a railway in their direction that it is almost bound to be made. It would greatly relieve the terminus if that railway were made in a circle to the western suburbs, rejoining the railway system between Eveleigh and Newtown.
1273. Have you considered the details of that scheme as to what effect it would have upon the Domain instead of the Park? No; I think that is more a question for the experts in the Railway Department.
1274. I presume Mr. Eddy must have been conversant with the details when he said that in twenty years the St. James' Road station would not be large enough? I have already stated that No. 10 plan shows a way out of the difficulty. It shows a tunnel extension into the Domain, behind the Art Gallery, and that would be just as feasible in the case of the St. James' Road scheme as in the present plan.
1275. Would not that be taking from the people a larger area of their recreation ground at the expense of the Domain instead of the Park? I think it has been pointed out by some of the railway experts that a line going to the eastern suburbs would considerably relieve the proposed terminal station.
1276. Do you think it is a serious matter to take away such a large portion of the Domain as is now proposed, seeing that that reserve is close to the thickly-populated parts of Woolloomooloo? You would certainly rob that part which was intended as a place of recreation, and not for business purposes; but sentiment must give way to business requirements.
1277. Will this plan not only take away a certain area, but also make access to the remaining part of the Domain difficult? Yes.
1278. Do you think that the necessity for a city railway extension outweighs any idea as to the convenience afforded by the Park? Yes, to a certain extent. Very few people would advocate taking a public park if that course could be avoided.
1279. *Mr. Levis.*] I suppose you will admit that the citizens of Sydney should have a great deal of park lands? Yes; but I think they are far better off for parks and recreation grounds than are the people in the suburbs.
1280. But you have a larger area in the suburbs? Yes, but with less conveniences.

Joseph Henry Maiden, Director of the Botanic Gardens, sworn, and examined:—

1281. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you wish to submit a statement to the Committee? Yes; it is as follows:—

J. H. Maiden.
1 Mar., 1900.

On the 8th June, 1829, a descriptive list of reserves in the town of Sydney was gazetted, and in that list the Government Domain is described as starting from the position of the mouth of the Tank Stream, thence by Macquarie-place and Bent-street, along that street to King-street east; thence to Elizabeth-street; thence by that street to Liverpool-street, to the commencement of Oxford-street; and thence by a line in a north-easterly direction to the waters of Woolloomooloo Bay, leaving John Palmer's grant of Woolloomooloo, lying outside it to the east, but excluding out of the said reserve two allotments which had been granted to J. Buckley and J. M. O'Connell, which are the present sites of the Domain and Richmond Terraces. This reserve, Mr. J. G. Hay holds (he investigated the facts when an officer of the Lands Department, and gave evidence before a former Commission on Railway Extension) is practically the same as the Government Domain of Governor Phillip in 1792.

The Domain as here defined, of course, includes what is known as Hyde Park.

In addition the Domain included Garden Island, which by order of Governor Macquarie, dated 7th September, 1811, "should be comprised in and considered in future as forming a part of the Government Domain."

Garden Island has been taken away, and perusal of maps dated about 1830, will show to what a large extent the Domain has, in the course of time, been further encroached upon. Other officers of the Government can give you precise figures to what extent this appropriation of the Domain has proceeded, and I humbly ask that the Committee may not countenance any further encroachment upon this unique people's park.

Although

Although the Domain has only been under my care for nearly four years, for eleven years (1882 to 1893) I was in J. H. Maiden's charge of the old Technological Museum in the Domain, and my knowledge of this park is of a very detailed character.

The objects of the Domain are rest and recreation of the people, to promote their mental and physical health and enjoyment, and no steps should be taken which will limit the realization of these objects. 1 Mar., 1900.

It is a truism that no structures should be erected in a public park which are not necessary to carry out the objects of the park. Thus administrative offices and workshops are necessary, so are buildings for the public refreshment, lavatories, &c., band-stands, shelter-pavilions, fountains, and so on. All these buildings should be designed so as to be neat and ornamental in appearance, and in harmony with their surroundings. Thus the park is treated as one harmonious whole, and it should be the object of the Director to continually add to its attractiveness and convenience. He has in charge the people's park, and they entrust him with certain funds to maintain and improve it. The first essential of a park is inviolability. If a man sets himself to improve a certain area from a landscape point of view his plans may be destroyed, and the public money expended on the park largely thrown away if an area be excised or the park cut into two. New conditions thus arise, and he has to prepare new plans with the view of mooting the changed conditions. And while he is progressing in this matter there is no guarantee that a fresh interference with the people's park may not again destroy what has been done. Again trees which are planted for shade and sylvan effect, or simply to hide unsightly views or objects are of slow growth. Suppose a farmer to cultivate a 20-acre paddock, if 2 acres of this be resumed, in most cases the result is that his operations continue on the smaller area just as they did on the larger, the only difference being that his work and crop are alike reduced 10 per cent. But the matter is usually totally different in treating a landscape. The resumed area may become an eyesore to the main portion, distinctly injuring it from an æsthetic point of view.

In the present case it is proposed to introduce into the Domain a railway, partly in tunnel and partly in open cutting, with an extensive flask-shaped area of 9 or 10 acres, to be used as an engine-yard. This is a very large proportion of the Domain, which now stands at 90 acres; but in addition it will sever portions of it, and existing paths will have to be carried over the railway by bridges. The area in question is a restful and beautiful portion of the Domain, and is immediately adjacent to the densely-populated Woolloomooloo Valley. In place of the repose that at present obtains, we would have, besides losing 10 per cent of the park, the noise and dirt of trains and the hideous appearance of station yards, which would very seriously diminish the value of the remainder. The park belongs to all, well and strong alike; but in this trying climate of ours, where people too readily become jaded and reduced in tone, it seems cruel that weary and physically-impaired people should be driven away to a distant portion of their own park. How can a citizen quietly rest or read in the vicinity of shrieking engines? Why should those who are careful of their personal appearance be driven away by the smoke and smut that are inseparable from railway traffic? The vegetation must also suffer; that is so self-evident that I need not dilate upon it.

And lastly, but certainly not least, how can a man view with equanimity the presence of a large engine-shed, grimy and hideous, for it is not possible to make such a structure blend into a harmonious picture of sylvan scenery.

"You will find that sentiment is not dead yet," a distinguished citizen wrote to me a few days ago; and it would be a sure sign of national decadence in New South Wales if feelings of sentiment in regard to the beautifying of our beloved city were to be blunted. It is only the smug and untravelled provincialist who says that Sydney has open spaces enough and to spare. In this respect we should take a lesson from our friendly rival, Melbourne, who has made better provision for the future in this respect than we have.

I am aware that the scheme in regard to which I am addressing you is but one out of a large number dealing with the bringing of the railway into the city; but I respectfully and earnestly ask you in the best and truest interests of the people of New South Wales to give your preference to one which does not involve the further disfigurement and whitening away of the people's Domain.

1282. *Dr. Garran.*] Naturally, your feeling is this, whatever the people have got in the way of reserves keep them? Yes; that weighs largely with me.

1283. Supposing you had been called upon fifty or a hundred years ago to lay out park lands for Sydney, embracing the area it now occupies, would you have concentrated so large a portion of park in one place and left so little in other parts? I think that largely depends on the individual requirements of the city. In a military country you would have to take care that you had large areas for exercising grounds. There might be other special conditions which might render it necessary for large areas to be set apart.

1284. But you could not have these very large areas in the middle of a busy city? No; but if you did not reserve them it would be difficult afterwards to obtain them. I remember the enormous expenditure which the citizens of London have incurred to buy back little bits of ground.

1285. If you look at the matter not exclusively from the point of view of the custodian of public parks, but as we have to look at it in the interests of Sydney as a whole, would you not be obliged to say that some parts of the city have been very scantily supplied with open-air spaces? I must answer that in the affirmative.

1286. If you look at the maps, is there not a very large area of park land beginning at Rushcutters' Bay, going as far as the south end of Hyde Park, and north to Mrs. Macquarie's Chair? Yes.

1287. Is not that, roughly, equal to the whole populated area of East Sydney—say, everything east of George-street? Yes.

1288. Is not that a very large allowance for a populated area? Yes.

1289. Apart from the Observatory and Wynyard-square, what open-air spaces are there in West Sydney? I think West Sydney is very poorly supplied.

1290. Are not the people in West Sydney practically out of the reach of any park near enough for families to take advantage of them daily? Yes; they are a very good distance away compared with the people in Woolloomooloo.

1291. Take the case of a woman with children who cannot afford to keep a servant, should there not be some little open space to which she could send her children so as to be within call? That would be most desirable.

1292. If you were planning the city, would you not like to put a little open space within 100 yards of every house in the city? Yes.

1293. In West Sydney we have only two lucky reserves, and in Pyrmont we have absolutely nothing;—are we obliged to sit down and say that that is irremediable? I hope not.

1294. You have spoken of the great expenditure in London in order to get back small pieces of land for parks;—could we not avoid that great expense by exchanging a corner of Hyde Park for small spaces which could be bought in the western and southern parts of the city? I have not come prepared with any evidence regarding Hyde Park, which is governed by a trust, and I should prefer the Trustees to answer any questions on that subject. But with regard to the Outer Domain, I may be allowed to say that if we could get an absolute grant of a reserve in West Sydney, or in some other densely-populated part of the city, in exchange for the portion which it is proposed to excise from the Domain, my objection would largely fall to the ground.

1295. I do not wish to rob the people, but to distribute the blessing we have got more uniformly; therefore, would it be a bad thing, apart from the railway question, for the Government to say West Sydney has been neglected, we shall take a portion of the surplus belonging to East Sydney, estimate its value, and spend that amount in buying up little open spaces wherever we can get them in West Sydney? I think that would be a very wise policy.

- J. H. Maiden. 1296. Two gentlemen, accustomed to land-valuing, have valued the piece of ground which Mr. Eddy wanted to take from Hyde Park, at £180,000;—let us put down £200,000 to cover the whole thing;—could not that be charged against the railway capital and be spent by the Government in buying up little open spaces in West Sydney, where they are most needed? I think that would be the only equitable way of dealing with the matter. If you take Hyde Park or the Domain, it is only fair to provide open spaces in congested districts. That would do away with a great deal of the opposition to these schemes.
- 1 Mar., 1800. 1297. Mr. Eddy offered £100,000 for the land to be taken, but he made no stipulation as to what should be done with the money. My suggestion is that the Railway Commissioners should pay the full value of the land, and that amount should be spent in parking the neglected part of the city? I think that would be good policy. The railways are a commercial undertaking, and the Commissioners have no right to take land from Hyde Park, or the land which I have charge of, for nothing.
1298. If they wanted a portion of your Domain, do you think they should do the same thing? Yes.
1299. Do you agree that that scheme would not be whittling away the people's Domain? Yes; in fact it would be a transference of some of the sites.
1300. Taking it from those who have plenty, and giving to those who have none? Yes; that is my personal view.
1301. Would there still remain the objection of the æsthetic spoiling of Hyde Park by a railway? Yes; I have given some attention to that scheme, and I do not want to take any step which might appear to transfer my anxiety with regard to the Domain to the Trustees of Hyde Park, but I do sympathise with the trust as to any interference with the Park. My predecessor is a member of the Hyde Park Trust, but I am not.
1302. Are you simply called in to deal with the ornamentation of the Park? No; not even that.
1303. Supposing it were proved to the satisfaction of the Committee and Parliament that the scheme before us is really the best, and we are called upon to give up a portion of the Domain for a carriage-shed, would you still say that if the value of the land were given for other parts of the city, it would not be a wrong thing? It would be quite proper if an absolutely equitable exchange were made. I should want to be paid for the area taken away, the damage for severance, and all the expense in that way.
1304. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is the portion of the Domain which is proposed to be taken away thickly supplied with trees? I have been over the ground, and I can give some exact figures. The proposed scheme to bring the railway into the Domain will involve the immediate destruction of 224 trees, as enumerated below. Doubtless other trees will also be destroyed during the contractor's operations, for he must have what we may term elbow-room.—57 fig-trees of sorts, 35 Norfolk pines, 30 other pines of sorts, 25 poplars, Lombardy and others, 22 oaks, 20 gum-trees (an old original clump), 17 *Tristania conferta*, 7 *Robinia* (false acacia), 3 carobs (male and female), 2 plane trees, 2 pencil cedars (*Dysoxylon*), 1 coral tree (*Erythrina*), 1 turpentine, 1 elm tree, and 1 old honeysuckle; total, 224.
1305. Not more than one-tenth of these are indigenous trees? Yes. Most of them are from fifty years old downwards.
1306. Are they in a healthy state? 95 per cent. are healthy, and 85 are first-class trees. Within the last few years I have been taking out all the rubbish.
1307. Does that include the whole area? Yes. The tunnel goes under the fig-tree avenue for 11 chains, and I am informed by one of the railway officers that the crown of the tunnel at one place is 7 feet under the ground, and for a great portion of the distance it goes underneath the ground from 7 to 14 feet. I am anxious about the fate of that avenue on account of the immense amount of drainage which will take place. The roots of the fig-trees search for moisture, and the sulphurous fumes from the tunnel may have a very bad effect upon the trees. I look upon that fig-tree avenue as a noble one. People walk up and down there all day.
1308. I presume the tunnel would be thoroughly cemented so that it is unlikely that the fumes from the engines would reach the roots? I do not know anything about that; but if the fig-trees are in a kind of flower-pot it will do away with a portion of my objection.
1309. Would the open cutting interfere with any of your paths or roads? Yes; that is shown on the plan which I produce. There is quite a network of roads and paths which would have to be taken over the line by bridges, and a portion of the Domain would be cut off entirely.
1310. Would it set off nearly the whole of Sir John Young's Crescent? Yes. There is another matter which I do not think has yet been dealt with. I produce a sketch of the Art Gallery as it will be when completed. In conjunction with the Government Architect I have arranged for the construction of a drive on the western side to go from the Domain, and make a promenade around the completed building. It will be absurd to have only one entrance to the Gallery when completed; there should be a terrace around it. But I could not recommend this expensive work if the land were taken away as proposed.
1311. Would the railway enclosure encroach upon that? The nearest point goes 120 feet from the buildings. To complete the Art Gallery's scheme means that the railway would go a great deal nearer, and I am afraid the pictures would be speedily converted into old masters, and you would have to use the Art Gallery for something else. Then towards the Palmer-street entrance, most of the trees will have to give way, and the road will have to be extended. The trees will be largely destroyed, and the path will have to be deviated and supported on walls or an embankment.
1312. Do you regard the whole thing as a disfigurement of the Domain? Yes; I have no hesitation in saying so. It is a scheme which has caused me a great deal of anxiety.
1313. Would the area actually taken up by these works be 8 acres? Mr. Deane told me they would take up 8 or 10 acres; I am referring to scheme No. 10.
1314. Have you heard the matter discussed by visitors to the Domain? A number of people have come to me; but it was only a week or two ago that I understood the details. I do not think that people, as a rule, know the details of the scheme.
1315. What do you think is the general impression? I have not heard any persons speak in favour of the scheme, and some people have spoken very strongly against it.
1316. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you object to any part of the Domain being taken away, and do you think the area sufficiently limited now? Yes, unless you adopt Dr. Garran's idea of exchanging what is taken away for land of equal value to be used as parks in densely-populated districts, where the people have no playgrounds at all.
1317. Do you object to this proposal, No. 10, altogether? Yes.
1318. Have you a good knowledge of the suburbs and city? Yes; I lived between Ashfield and Homebush for thirteen years.
- 1319.

1319. What scheme would you propose? I do not propose any scheme. I always felt when I lived in the western suburbs, that there should be some means of getting into the city. J. H. Maiden.
1320. Have you seen any of the schemes before the Committee? I have only casually examined them. 1 Mar., 1900.
1321. Are the people in the western suburbs always complaining of the want of quick communication with the city. That was the general topic in the trains.
1322. Did you ever suffer any inconvenience yourself? Yes; I wanted to get quickly to my office.
1323. Where would you suggest that the central station should be? I have always thought that it should be somewhere near King-street, judging from the number of people who get out of the trams there.
1324. What do you think of proposal No. 3, which suggests taking the land from Park-street two-thirds of the way from Elizabeth to Pitt streets? If I were still a traveller on the railway, I should be quite satisfied to be put down anywhere about King-street.
1325. If you had an office in Bridge-street, would you still be of the same opinion? No; I might then make another recommendation.
1326. If you had an office in Sussex-street, would that suit you? No; I would have other means of getting to town—the electric tram, for instance.
1327. Any scheme would suit you so long as you would get near your own work? Yes; and I realise that everybody cannot have the railway station close to them—somebody must give way.
1328. Considering the limited area of business places, where would you suggest that the central station should be placed? I would be satisfied with a station anywhere between George-street and Hyde Park, and it must be near the northern end of Hyde Park.
1329. You would not touch the Park at all? Not if I could help it.
1330. Do you think it would injure the Park much by taking a small part of it? It is only a question of area. I think the great fear is that the railway authorities would not stop at what was first taken. I would not allow the Park or the Domain to be touched if it could possibly be avoided.
1331. Are you speaking in your professional character, or as a citizen, for the benefit of all? I am a man of the world, and have travelled a good deal, and I am trying to give you my honest opinion—which is that you should preserve the open spaces as much as possible. With regard to the suburban traffic, you should bring it into the city if possible, but it is ridiculous to suppose that a station could be placed in the city which would suit everybody's perfect convenience.
1332. But you would not allow any portion of the Park or the Domain to be interfered with? I have always stood firm on that ground. When I was a citizen living in the western suburbs, I was always sorry that Hyde Park should be touched.
1333. Have you ever heard of any complaint from people living in the eastern suburbs about interfering with Hyde Park for the railway? Some people have come to me and have objected, but it is generally known that I have more to do with the Domain, and they would not come to me to make their complaints about Hyde Park.
1334. Do you not think it is the general impression that Hyde Park is more used by the loafing community than by people seeking health? I think that is largely a matter of police. If the matter were suitably taken up, the condition of Hyde Park might be a great deal better than it is. I know a good deal about my lodgers in the Domain, and if I were given magisterial powers for twelve months I would make a great improvement there. Hyde Park is under a trust.
1335. Do you think it is the want of supervision which makes the Park objectionable? Yes.
1336. Who are the Trustees? Dr. Norton is one, and I think half the aldermen of the city are on the trust. I think it is altogether a question of policing Hyde Park. More police are required. If it is still in such a condition that you cannot walk across Hyde Park after dark with your handbag, it is an evidence of weakness on the part of a civilised community. I would have the Park lighted with electricity, and I would have bands and light refreshment-rooms. It should be lighted all night with electricity. Then you would find that respectable people would go there, and would drive out the loafers. That is also my idea with regard to the Domain.
1337. You admit that the police do their duty thoroughly as far as the number engaged there are concerned? Yes, certainly. I see the police nearly every night. I am in close contact with them, and I never say a word against them. With regard to the construction of railway works in the Domain, I have taken no cognisance of the permanent embankments and other works which would be erected after their construction. I have simply referred to the effect during their construction. The trees if removed or injured cannot be made to grow again, except during the period of the lifetime of a man.
1338. *Vice-Chairman.*] What was the last encroachment on the Domain? The last important one was the Art Gallery.
1339. You do not regard that as serious from an æsthetic point of view? The land was obtained for nothing, and as Director of the Domain I hold very strong ideas about placing a building like the Art Gallery in the landscape. I think it is a terrible blot. Of course from the point of view of the Art Trustees it is a desirable site; but you shut out the people from an exquisite site, and you raise a heap of stone in its place.
1340. Was that erected since the Technological barn was erected? Yes, in 1884.
1341. Assuming that you had both Hyde Park and Domain under your control, from your point of view, which would be the better scheme, one which would take part of Hyde Park at present, and later on absorb probably the whole northern end of it, or this scheme now before the Committee which, although not professing to do so, does take a portion of the Park, and injures the rest of it, and also takes a portion of the Domain? I cannot answer that question without seeing exactly what area would be taken. I would distinctly disclaim any idea of desiring to shunt the burden on to Hyde Park. I do not want to save the Domain at the expense of Hyde Park. Unless I could see the different schemes in plan, I could not say which I would prefer.
1342. Presuming that Dr. Garran's suggestion were carried out, and the railway authorities paid for the value of any land taken by them, would the amount of money credited to you be sufficient to give anything like adequate park accommodation for West Sydney? I cannot express an opinion; but I think it would go a considerable way towards doing so, because if I had a free hand, I would buy cheap property and neglected land for the purpose.
1343. Would not such an exchange mean this, that you would only be paid the value of unoccupied land, while you would have to buy land which was built upon? Yes.

J. H. Maiden. 1344. Do you think you would have sufficient money, under those circumstances, to obtain parks for West Sydney? No; but you would go as far as you could, and you would be going in the right direction. Perhaps West Sydney would not want such a large park area as East Sydney, because it is largely taken up with factories and stores, whereas in East Sydney the parks are the natural outlet for Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, and Surry Hills.

1345. You very strongly objected to the construction of wharfs in Woolloomooloo Bay;—what would be the combined effect of the construction of wharfs, and the carrying out proposal No. 10? It would be very deleterious to the Domain as a park; it would prevent necessary alterations and improvements to it as a park.

John Stinson, member of the City Railway Extension Alliance, sworn, and examined:—

J. Stinson. 1346. *Vice-Chairman.*] Were you at one time Mayor of Burwood? Yes. I now reside on Liverpool Road, on the Enfield side.

1347. Would you give the Committee a statement of your views on this question? I would like to speak as a resident for ten years in the western suburbs, and as one who travels on the railway almost daily, sometimes twice a day. During that time I have seen the constant necessity for the extension of the railway into the city. That I think is generally admitted, and it is simply a question of method. I have also had an opportunity of hearing the opinions of other residents expressed privately and at public meetings. I can speak of the general desire of such an extension into the city. A very large number of municipal councillors were approached during the early stages of the Extension Alliance, and I do not think in any case there was opposition to the scheme. Some of them did not co-operate, but I do not know if any objection was offered. One of the great objections is the change from train to tram at Redfern, and the loss of time and the inconvenience occasioned. It was hoped at one time by a great number of travellers that when the electric tram was constructed along George-street it would obviate a great deal of the inconvenience and loss of time, but I have noted very carefully the result of that change. Personally, I feel that it is worse than before, so far as the railway travellers are concerned. The cars are excellent, but they do not give anything like adequate accommodation for so large a suburban traffic as there is in the busy hours. There is a constant rush for trams, and it is almost impossible to get accommodation without a great deal of unpleasantness. Consequently there is a greater loss of time than when the steam trams were running. I have watched carefully as a member of the Alliance the various schemes which have been put forward, and, in my opinion, nothing has been put forward so far which can equal what is known as the St. James' Road scheme, which was before the last Public Works Committee.

1348. You know that that involved the resumption of a considerable portion of Hyde Park, and to meet that difficulty to some extent, scheme No. 10 has been referred to the Committee;—can you give any opinion on that scheme? From the point of view of accommodation and convenience of the public I think that would probably meet the case. The only difficulty is the additional expense which would probably make it prohibitive. Then there is the inconvenience which would be caused by closing a portion of Elizabeth-street. The resumption of land will probably cause an additional expenditure of £1,000,000.

1349. Would railway travellers be prepared to pay for such an increase of outlay so as to meet the interest on nearly £1,000,000 additional? They might pay it, but they would not pay it willingly.

1350. Would they be prepared to pay the amount necessary to meet the interest charged on the St. James' Road scheme? Yes; I feel sure all *bona fide* travellers would pay an increased price to be brought into town—say, up to King-street. That would be paying what they are now practically called upon to pay for tram fares.

1351. Where is your office? In Castlereagh-street, opposite Moore-street.

1352. Taking the site of the station now proposed, or in St. James' Road, do you think that the great majority of the travellers would be inconvenienced by those schemes? As far as my observation goes, the great majority of travellers by the trams leave at Market-street or King-street.

1353. Do they go east or west? They go both ways, and some north.

1354. In what direction do the majority go? I think the great majority go down King-street, to the west.

1355. Is not the station proposed on the eastern border of that part of the city which contains the business people? Yes.

1356. Do you think that that would not involve any great inconvenience? It would not involve any great inconvenience; and there is the additional advantage that people would be landed alongside the cable tram.

1357. Would not that continue the existing difficulties as to moving from train to tram? No; because there would be a saving of several minutes by coming in the train to King-street.

1358. What time would that save as compared with the present method? It would depend upon the distance that a man had to travel by the cable tram. Speaking of my own case, where I would walk to my office from the terminus at King-street, it would save about ten minutes. That is, assuming that I can now get the tram at once at Redfern; but a great many people do not get the tram at once. They do not care to scramble for a seat, and consequently they are delayed.

1359. You say that you think the present state of things is worse than the old state:—is that due to the want of a sufficient number of cars or electric trams? I do not think that a single line of cars is sufficient to accommodate the travelling public during the busy hours. Previously two trams used to be waiting, and each tram would carry off a larger number of people than the small electric trams can do.

1360. Mr. Kneeshaw told us that the electric trams can take away the maximum number asking to be carried on any day in practically three minutes—that is to say, half the people get away in one and a half minutes, whereas under the old system a tram had to wait three minutes after the arrival of the train; suppose we had two or three electric tram lines going down Pitt and Castlereagh streets or Sussex-street, do you think the electric system would be able to take the whole of the people to their business? Yes; but it would not get over the transhipping.

1361. Would it be a material improvement? I think so.

1362. Supposing a station were built on the Benevolent Asylum site, obviating the present danger, and supposing there were a system of parallel trams, would that to some extent meet the present objection as to delay? It would get over the element of danger in the first place. That would be some advantage; but it would not wholly meet the case, because the present change from train to tram would still have to be met.

1363. Do you think that is an element worthy of serious consideration? I think it is a very important matter. J. Stinson.
1364. Against that, with a system of parallel tram lines, would you not be able to distribute the people better, and would not a majority be able to get to business more speedily than if they were taken to a station in King-street? I should not regard it in that light. As far as I can see, the great majority leave the tram at Market or King streets. A slight percentage would get out on the road. 1 Mar., 1900.
1365. Are you referring to the electric trams? To either the steam or the electric trams. It is to be noted that some of the railway passengers still take the steam train in Devonshire-street; but it is not at all a convenient method of getting to business.
1366. What prompts these people to take the steam tram in preference to the electric? I presume it suits their convenience to be put down in Elizabeth-street instead of George-street. I do not think they have any objection to the electric tram.
1367. Supposing a station were erected at the proposed site in King-street, would a man who has his place of business, say, in George-street, go right into King-street, or would he leave the tram at Redfern, and take the George-street tram? It would depend upon where his place of business was.
1368. What portion of George-street would a station at King-street accommodate? That is a question I would scarcely like to answer.
1369. Would there be a percentage of people who would still patronise the tram from Redfern into the city after the railway was extended? Yes; a great many take the electric tram, and go to Sussex-street, and a good number get out at the Victoria Markets.
1370. With the multiplication of electric lines, would there not be an increase in the number who patronise them, as against travelling in the railway to King-street? I think the electric trams create a traffic for themselves in addition to the railway traffic.
1371. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you agree generally with the view that we should not needlessly spoil our public reserves? I do not think we should. I should not be disposed to take any portion of the open spaces if there was any other reasonable way out of the difficulty.
1372. Did you hear me ask Mr. Maiden some questions as to transferring the open spaces from East to West Sydney? Yes; and I thought it would be a very reasonable and desirable exchange.
1373. If you lived in East Sydney, would you object to that? So far as I am able to judge of the effect of taking a portion of Hyde Park, I cannot see any reasonable objection to it. As far as my observation goes, the portion of the Park which would be taken is not utilised for health-giving purposes or recreation, it is utilised by a lot of people, amongst whom one would not care to go.
1374. Do you ever go there? Yes, occasionally; but not at night.
1375. Personally, you would not object to have a railway station there? No. It is urged over and over again that it is the people's park. But a great many more people would use the park if a railway station were there than they do at present.
1376. As a citizen, would you object to some of the open spaces being transferred from one portion of the city to another? No; I think it is a capital idea. The objection that we ought not to do away with the breathing space, has not much in it when we consider how much breathing space the harbour gives us in addition to our park reserves.
1377. Can you say that the park lands are well distributed at present? No; they could be much better distributed by an exchange.
1378. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you consider that the electric trams are not so convenient as the old steam trams? Yes; for railway travellers, because the electric trams have created a traffic of their own, which pretty well monopolises them.
1379. Have you found that there is greater delay with the electric trams than with the steam trams? Yes, in this way only: I sometimes go down to George-street to get an electric tram, and I find I have to wait for three or four trams to come along before I can get standing room—people are standing all over the platforms.
1380. Would not the multiplication of trams do away with that? Yes; to a large extent.
1381. If they were started every half minute, would not the objection be done away with? The more frequently the trams are run the less objection there will be; but that would not get over the difficulty of having to change from the train to the tram.
1382. Does not the fact of trams being overloaded show that they are used more than formerly? It shows that they are catering for a class of travellers who probably used to take other conveyances. They take up a large number of people who only travel for a short distance.
1383. Do you agree with the principle that the convenience of the greatest number should be the principal consideration in extending the railway? Yes.
1384. Do you not think that a more central position, say in George-street, would be a greater convenience than a station at the top of King-street? I would not object to that if it could be brought about. In favouring the Hyde Park scheme I take into consideration the probability of its being carried out as compared with any other scheme.
1385. Would you favour any other scheme which would meet the convenience of the whole population instead of a small portion? The convenience of the greater number must be taken into account in fixing a site.
1386. If you look at No. 3 plan, and the plan of the city, can you say that landing at King-street will convenience the largest number of business people in Sydney? I think it would convenience the public of Sydney as well as any other scheme I know of.
1387. There has been a scheme proposed, but not placed before us, to form a station under the Victoria Markets, and another at Wynyard-square, continuing the line to Dawes' Point;—do you not think that a scheme of that kind would be of more convenience to the public than the one before us? I do not think so. It would not give the accommodation which the other schemes afford. You could not get the space there, and I suppose the expenditure would be prohibitive.
1388. Your view is that the great advantage would be the saving of time? Yes. Personally I would pay an additional fare to get in earlier. Twenty minutes every day is a considerable item.
1389. It would be a convenience within a certain area of the station, but outside of that area would it be any saving of time? Yes. Supposing you had a terminal station at King-street, that would not prevent a large number of people from getting out at Redfern if it suited them, and taking their own mode of conveyance.

- J. Stinson.
1 Mar., 1900.
1390. There are a large number of business places between Park and Hunter Streets and up to George-street, and also back to Sussex-street;—do you not think it would be more convenient and quicker to come down by electric tram to get to these places than to come by train to King-street? I do not know that there would be much difference in the time.
1391. Supposing you had an office in Hunter-street, on the corner of George-street, would you prefer to come by rail to King-street? Yes. I would save time by having a straight run through from Redfern to King-street by rail. There would be a saving of time by not having to change to the tram at Redfern, and then there is the whole journey by electric tram from Redfern.
1392. Do you bear in mind that the trams stop at every street, and that, according to this plan, the railway will come straight to King-street without any intermediate station? I think an intermediate station will be necessary, if not now, within a short time.
1393. Would not that take up considerable time? Every train would not stop there.
1394. Do you know most of the schemes submitted? Yes.
1395. Which scheme do you prefer,—the St. James' Road scheme, which would take a large portion of the Park up to Macquarie-street, or the King-street scheme, which would block Elizabeth-street and take up some portion of the Park as well as 8 acres of the Domain? As a traveller, I would not mind much which plan was taken; but viewing it in a business light, it is improbable that the expense of resumption in what is known as the King-street scheme, will be undertaken, and, therefore, it is not likely that that scheme will be accomplished. The continuation, by means of a tunnel to the Domain, would get over the difficulty which has been long in the minds of those opposed to the St. James' Road scheme, because it has been generally thought that a larger area will have to be taken ultimately than is set forth in the scheme at present. However, the continuation of the line from King-street to the Domain could be just as well applied to the St. James' Road scheme, and it would obviate the necessity of taking any more of Hyde Park.
1396. The King-street scheme could be designed so as to take in 100 feet more, and it would obviate the necessity of taking the semi-circular course to the Domain;—do you think that would be preferable to continuing the line? That would still involve the closing of a portion of Elizabeth-street. I think that in order to preserve Elizabeth-street it would be much better to take the St. James' Road scheme, and, if necessary, continue it so as to take a portion of the Domain. I am in favour of the St. James' Road scheme.

FRIDAY, 2 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Hon. James Norton, LL.D., M.L.C., Chairman of the Trustees of Hyde Park, sworn, and examined:—

- Hon.
J. Norton,
LL.D.,
M.L.C.
2 Mar., 1900.
1397. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you acquainted with the different plans before the Committee for the extension of the railway to the city? I know something of them, but not all the details.
1398. Have you studied the plan now before the Committee, which proposes to block off Elizabeth-street? Yes.
1399. Do you think that is a desirable plan? I hardly think so. I do not like the destruction of Elizabeth-street, and the destruction of two valuable blocks on the west side of that street, where the Synagogue and the High School stand. As far as Hyde Park is concerned, the scheme No. 10 will do the least possible damage to the Park, looking at that question solely.
1400. Still it blocks Elizabeth-street? Yes; that is a very serious objection.
1401. Have you made much use of the railway? Yes.
1402. Do you think it is desirable, under the circumstances, to bring the railway into King-street without any intermediate station? I think there ought to be an intermediate station. The railway is supposed to be brought into Sydney for the purpose of giving the people better access to the railway, but if you take them from Redfern to King-street without a stopping-place many people will be taken a long way from their homes or places of business.
1403. The opinion of the railway authorities is that King-street is a focus for passengers, and that there ought to be no intermediate station, because it would cause delay;—their object is to deposit the whole of the passengers, who do not get out at Redfern, at King-street? There is a very good reason in that.
1404. How much of the city would that serve? It would only serve the immediate neighbourhood completely. As far as the rest of the city is concerned, it would not serve it very much more than the present Redfern railway terminus. It will save very little time, unless people have their places of business just at the terminus; but you cannot bring the railway to every man's door. The great bulk of the people will not be served, no matter where you put the station.
1405. No doubt those people between Market-street, Pitt-street, and Hunter-street would be largely benefited? Yes.
1406. But all the people beyond those limits would not save much time, and people living near George-street would take the George-street tram in preference to the railway? Yes.
1407. Is it desirable to go to the large expense of £1,500,000 to injure the Park, and block Elizabeth-street, for the purpose of serving a small portion of the city? I do not think it is. The best thing would be to make the terminus at the Benevolent Asylum, where there is plenty of space. That would bring the people a little nearer to the city, and it would do away with the objection that there is not sufficient space in the railway premises to work the business of the railway.
1408. There is a proposal to take the asylum grounds, the old burial-ground, and the police barracks, and to form a large station fronting Garden Road, and from that station various electric tram lines could be carried down Pitt, Castlereagh, and Elizabeth Streets;—do you think such trams would be able to take the

the whole of the passengers by the railway? The trams take all the traffic at present. Of course, the electric trams are an immense convenience, and they have taken away a great deal of the difficulty of having the terminus at Redfern.

1409. If these additional trams were constructed, do you think that they could conveniently take the passengers by the railway? I think so.

1410. On the whole, are you not in favour of extending the railway? No; mainly, I may say, on account of the enormous expense, and, of course, the damage done to Elizabeth-street and the Park.

1411. There was a scheme proposed to run the line of railway down George-street, forming a large station at Victoria Markets, another at Wynyard Square, and continuing the line to Dawes' Battery, with the view of ultimately crossing the harbour; do you think that would be better than the present proposal? Before offering an opinion I would have to give the question a great deal of consideration.

1412. That line would be underground? Underground railways are not nice, and we ought to avoid them if we can. In London they are driven to have underground railways, and perhaps we shall be, but they are not desirable.

1413. If the scheme before the Committee were carried out it would cause the destruction of a lot of valuable trees within the Domain, many of them fifty years old;—do you think that would be a very serious thing? That is something to be considered. That is one of the damages which the proposed station would bring about.

1414. Would you be inclined to favour a scheme coming as far as Belmore Park only? I suggested the Benevolent Asylum, but Belmore Park would be still better. I think that ought to be amply sufficient, and considering the expense it is the best plan that has been proposed to my knowledge.

1415. Do you think that the saving of time in running straight from Redfern to King-street, instead of changing into a tram, ought not to be taken very much into consideration? There is not very much time saved or lost in that way; there would be a little, but I do not think it is worth while going to such enormous expense to save the amount of time involved.

1416. Do you find it very inconvenient to have to change into a tram? I would rather not do so; it is inconvenient, but it is not a serious inconvenience.

1417. Would King-street be more convenient to you personally? Yes; it would be more convenient. My office is in O'Connell-street, near Bent-street.

1418. Would you prefer to come to King-street by railway and walk to your office, instead of using the George-street tram? Yes.

1419. Did you and your trust strongly object to the original St. James' Road scheme? Yes.

1420. Did you entertain a fear that the scheme as proposed would eventually require extension, and that more of the Park would be taken? Yes.

1421. This scheme before the Committee has been proposed as a means of doing away with that objection; the station is removed further west and a smaller amount of the Park is taken with a large amount of the Domain; it has been stated in evidence that this arrangement will do for a much longer period than that originally proposed under the St. James' Road scheme;—does a proposal of this kind commend itself to you more than the original proposal? The objection is a good deal lessened as far as the Park is concerned, because by this scheme you will take less of the Park and do less damage to it than would have been done by the scheme on which I was examined before.

1422. We are also assured that taking a line into the Domain will probably do away with the necessity for taking any more of the Park? If it does not do that it is not worth while making it.

1423. The scheme also includes the closing of Elizabeth-street from Park to King street? As a trustee of the Park I do not take that much into account, but as a citizen I think it is very objectionable.

1424. From the point of view of a trustee of the Park, will not the people under this scheme be practically shut out from the western side of the Park from Park-street to King-street; and do you regard that as a serious blemish in the proposal? Yes; we cannot afford to block any of our leading thoroughfares. The city and the traffic are growing, and if you stop any of the thoroughfares you will put the people to great inconvenience.

1425. Do you anticipate much damage to the trees and plants in the Park from the proximity of the engine and railway works? The whole of the trees along the west side of the Park would be destroyed absolutely. I do not think much damage would accrue to the others.

1426. Practically we may divide the travelling public who come to the main terminus into two classes—suburban people who come day by day to their places of business in the city, and the long-distance passengers? The long-distance passengers would not be inconvenienced in any way by a change of terminus from Redfern to King-street, as Redfern is practically more central than King-street for the major portion of the city.

1427. Of the suburban travellers, do you think that a very large proportion would be inconvenienced by this extension of the railway to King-street? I think a great many would be inconvenienced; to these people it is most desirable that they should cut off any loss of time that is avoidable. They want to get from their homes to Sydney in the shortest possible time. If they can save five or ten minutes' time in the journey, they will regard it as a great benefit.

1428. Have you travelled sufficiently often to say whether the construction of the George-street electric tram has enabled the people who now use it to get more speedily to their places of business than before when they had to go to King-street? Certainly. I have travelled on the electric trams often, and I find they are a very great convenience; they give very great advantages to the suburban people.

1429. If we had more electric trams, one running down Pitt-street, another running down Kent or Sussex Streets, do you think the advantage would be increased in proportion to the number of lines laid down? Yes; but I do not think it would be increased in proportion to the expense of laying down the trams. George-street, of course, is a very useful street, and so are Castlereagh and Pitt streets, but I do not know that when you go further west, the advantage would be very great.

1430. Is not the west of George-street thickly populated? Yes; but there is a different class of people there. Of course they would be benefited to some extent by the new tramways; but the question with me is: is it worth the expense of laying down the trams in these streets.

1431. Do you view that question solely on its own basis, or in relation to the expense of bringing the railway into the city? The expense of laying down trams would be much less than bringing the railway into the city.

Hon.
J. Norton,
LL.D.,
M.L.C.
2 Mar., 1900.

- Hon. J. Norton, LL.D., M.L.C.
2 Mar., 1900.
1432. Do you think the convenience would be nearly as great? I think it would be a great convenience to some people. Almost everybody is benefited by the George-street tram.
1433. I suppose the Hyde Park Trust are practically unanimous on the question of saving Hyde Park from invasion as far as possible? Quite unanimous.
1434. Have they had an opportunity of seeing the new proposal? I do not think they have seen it; but they know what the proposal is. They are absolutely opposed to taking any part of the Park. I am not authorised to approve of any resumption of any portion of the Park.
1435. If it came to a matter of deciding upon this plan now before us as against the St. James' Road scheme, to which of the two would the Trust offer least objection? The trustees approve of the scheme now before the Committee rather than the old one. If the railway is to be taken through the Park at all, scheme No. 10 will do much less damage than the original proposal; that we are agreed upon.
1436. *Dr. Garran.*] You have expressed a preference for a station on the Benevolent Asylum site? Yes.
1437. I admit that there is a great deal to be said in favour of that; but two experts in the railway service, Mr. Parry and Mr. Kneeshaw, say that three or even four tramways into the city would not give the same accommodation as carrying the railway itself into King-street;—of course, they speak from the traffic management point of view;—can you speak from the passengers point of view, and say whether you think three or four trams would accommodate the public? The railway as now proposed to King-street would really accommodate more than the trams; but not to a very large extent.
1438. The site at King-street is a very good site for all people whose business is east of Castlereagh-street? Yes.
1439. Is it as good for those whose business is west of Castlereagh-street and George-street? No; the further west you go the less advantage it is.
1440. If a lady were coming from the suburbs to go to David Jones' shop, would she rather get out at King-street and walk, or take the electric tram at Redfern and be put down at the door? The electric tram would suit her much better.
1441. Would the electric tram suit the wholesale people better, who have warehouses in York-street? Yes.
1442. Can we call the proposed railway station central for the whole of Sydney? No; it is not very central.
1443. If, as Mr. Eddy seemed to foresee, we should in twenty years want further railway facilities, would there not be a cry then, if not now, to carry the railway to the western part of Sydney, so as to accommodate people on the western side of George-street? I think that would be asking too much.
1444. Will people with business at the Town Hall be largely accommodated by the King-street scheme? No; they must rely on the electric tram.
1445. Will the produce people in Sussex-street be greatly benefited by the railway extension to King-street? No.
1446. Take the case of passengers by steamer at Darling Harbour;—will they be greatly accommodated? No.
1447. Would not a West Sydney railway line suit them much better? Undoubtedly.
1448. Mr. Eddy seemed to think that there never would be any danger of taking the other corner of Hyde Park, because the traffic of Sydney would require more than one station, and that some other arrangement would have to be made to meet the pressure;—do you not think the pressure would come from West Sydney, which is neglected in this matter? Of course, they would try to get accommodation for themselves.
1449. Have you been a cultivator, all your life, of trees and flowers? Yes.
1450. Do you know the value to a city population of green grass and trees and open spaces? Certainly.
1451. Do you think that the open spaces in Sydney are at present well distributed through the whole of the population? They might be better distributed; but they are fairly well distributed.
1452. In West Sydney, what have we beyond the Observatory and Wynyard Square? There is nothing.
1453. Looking at the quantity we have in East-Sydney, is it not very large? The Observatory gives the people in West Sydney an open space. As for Wynyard Square, you do not see it much frequented, except by loafers.
1454. I asked Mr. Maiden yesterday whether it would not be an advantage to the citizens as a whole if we exchanged one quarter of Hyde Park for a number of small open spaces to be bought up in West Sydney;—do you not think the people as a whole would gain by that? I do not like that plan; you must not have the reserves too small.
1455. Large reserves have a very great value, but have not small reserves also a value? Certainly; they are all beneficial.
1456. Of what use is a large reserve to a poor mother if it is half a mile away; she cannot send her little children there? I do not regard half a mile as a great distance for that purpose.
1457. Would it not be a great advantage to have little reserves scattered about the residential parts of the city? Yes.
1458. Would it not be a fair exchange to take a quarter of Hyde Park for some public purpose and make it up to the citizens by establishing a number of small reserves? I cannot say; I do not know.
1459. Have you thought out that subject? No.
1460. You say that a good deal of Wynyard-square is occupied by loafers;—do you think the public get the full benefit of Hyde Park which they ought to? No; the loafers destroy the value of the park to a very large extent.
1461. Have the police power to prevent them from lying at full length on the seats and grass? I believe they have; but they do not exercise it. The trustees are powerless.
1462. The trustees have no power, and can only speak to the police? Yes.
1463. Is there any regulation preventing the people from lying full length on the grass? No; but if there was such a regulation, I do not think we could enforce it. Whenever we proceed against people the Police Magistrates go against us; they seem to look upon us as nuisances, and that we are persecuting these men.
1464. Are you in favour of lighting the Park by electricity, and keeping it lighted all night? Yes; by electricity or gas. It is now lighted with gas, but not with incandescent burners. They would be equal to any electric light we are likely to get, and the expense would be much less.

1465. Is that main walk, which is called the Lover's Walk, through the Park, accessible to women and children up till 11 o'clock at night? It is quite accessible, but it is not advisable for women and children to go there at that hour. The place is filled with loafers, and we cannot help that.

1466. Are not many of them accustomed to knock people down? Such cases have happened over and over again.

1467. Are there always some police patrolling the Park in the evening? Yes.

1468. But not enough to keep down the nuisance? Yes.

1469. *Mr. Lavien.*] Is the supervision of the Park left principally to the police? Yes. We are trustees more for property than for personal matters. Our business is to look after the beautifying of the Park, and keeping it in good order. Some of our people are sworn in as special policemen, and they have some power.

1470. Do you ever hear any complaints as to the management of the Park? Very few complaints; practically none, except as to loafers lying about there. We do not get many complaints even about that, but we know it is a matter of great offence.

1471. You could not stop that whatever you did? No.

1472. As one of the trustees, have you any objection to a small portion of the Park being taken in the interests of the travelling public? The trustees have unanimously decided that they object to any part of the Park being taken. I agree with them that no part should be taken except in a case of absolute necessity. It would do very much damage in various ways, so that I would rather see it avoided if possible.

1473. What is the real objection to taking a portion of the Park in the interests of thousands who travel on the railway? One objection is that if one portion be taken now, further portions may possibly be taken hereafter; another objection is that you take a large strip of the Park and destroy the whole of the trees there, which are certainly an ornament to Sydney and an advantage to the citizens. There is a path under those trees, and everyone who has occasion to go along the street walks in their shade instead of on a dusty road. Then there is the closing of Elizabeth-street; that has not much to do with the Park, but is one of my objections. The plan closes in a road which is really wanted.

1474. Do you think we ought not to encroach upon the Park in any way whatever? If it be possible in any way whatever that ought to be avoided.

1475. Are you in favour of a railway into the city? As an abstract principle, yes.

1476. Where would you propose that it should terminate? As I have already said, if the terminus were brought to Belmore Park it would be a very great advantage. The expense would be so much less than that for the present plan that I would be quite satisfied. That would do for a good many years to come.

1477. Are you opposed to No. 10 scheme? Yes.

Edward Johnstone Sievers, Government Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1478. *Dr. Garran.*] Before a previous Committee, did you, in conjunction with Mr. Perdriau, make an estimate of the north-western corner of Hyde Park, which the St. James' Road scheme would take out? I had forgotten that I had done so, but I see by the evidence that that is the case.

1479. Would that be a fair present value—that is, £200,000 for a quarter of the Park? Yes.

1480. That does not include the strip taken out of the south-west portion of the Park? That was not taken in. That would be approximately the same area as the other.

1481. If you were valuing for a private person, would you not value for severance and disturbance? No; we would say the balance was benefited so much that it would reduce any such compensation.

1482. Could you apply that to a public park? No; but I take it that the value for recreative purposes is not increased by virtue of an improvement of that sort; it rather diminishes, on account of the noise and smoke.

1483. Would the proposed railway under the scheme now before us do any damage to Belmore Park? Judging from the plan shown to me by Mr. Deane, I do not think there would be any damage done to Belmore Park.

1484. Do you know a great deal about the city? Yes.

1485. Do you think there still remain in West Sydney any blocks not built upon, either from bad titles or for other reasons, or blocks with wretched slums which might be pulled down, and where small reserves might be created now between Darling Harbour and George-street? No; I am not asked for an opinion as to whether it is desirable, but I think we have sufficient lungs for the city now.

1486. Are not the lungs all in one place? We have the Observatory and Wynyard Square in West Sydney.

1487. What else? We have the whole of the harbour. We have no other reserves in West Sydney until we come to Wentworth Park.

1488. Are there any in Pymont? Wentworth Park borders on Pymont, but there are no parks in Pymont.

1489. Did not Blackwattle Creek originally form the boundary of the city? Yes. I think the city boundary now runs through Wentworth Park.

1490. I have been trying to get information as to whether we could not improve West Sydney by purchasing small areas of ground there? There is no land with bad titles there which could be purchased for that purpose. There is no land there of any size which could be bought for less than the value of the surrounding land.

1491. Still, if you could get £250,000 for a quarter of Hyde Park, would that not go some distance towards buying some open space? Yes; it will buy a number of open spaces.

1492. Would it not be an improvement to West Sydney? Yes; but I would like to point out that the residential population is going out of that part of the city, and it is being utilised for storage purposes.

1493. Are there not a large number of people living near the wharfs and in the neighbourhood of Sussex-street? Sussex and Kent streets are certainly not supplied with recreative grounds.

1494. Take a poor woman at the foot of Druitt-street, where could she send her children? Certainly the Park is practically useless to her.

1495. Would it not greatly mitigate the objection to taking some of Hyde Park if we gave it back in small pieces in other places? I think the objection to taking a portion of Hyde Park is chiefly sentimental, and that your proposal would remove the objection.

1496.

Hon.
J. Norton,
LL.D.,
M.L.C.
2 Mar., 1900.

E. J. Sievers.
2 Mar., 1900.

E. J. Sievers. 1496. What would be the value of the private property lying between Elizabeth-street and Liverpool-street, when you emerge from Belmore Park? About £107,000. The value of the buildings and the land is about equal.

2 Mar., 1900.

1497. When you come to Liverpool-street, is there not some valuable property there which would be disturbed? It would mean the demolishing of the corner of Liverpool and Elizabeth Streets—I think three houses would go there. Then there is the Oddfellows' Hall, which would have to come down, and also several terraces. The strip of the Park between Liverpool-street and Park-street I value at about £60,000, or about £36,000 an acre. Roughly, there is about $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres. The private property which will have to be resumed between Park-street and Market-street will cost £262,000; that is, nearly £60,000 an acre. Then there is a piece of land north of the Government property which I value at about £102,000. There would have to be an allowance made of 10 per cent. for forced sale, and an allowance of about the same amount for damage to business.

1498. Have you allowed for the cost of replacing the High School with another one? The improvements on that property are practically worth nothing. The charge which is made the Commissioners for that property, of £80,000, could be utilised in building another High School, and a much better one. Then there is a piece of land occupied by the Supreme Court and Registrar-General's Office; I think that is worth £30,000. Mr. Vernon estimates the buildings in his books at another £30,000; that would make £60,000.

1499. Do you think that St. James' Church will be damaged? I am informed by the engineers that it will not be.

1500. What do you make out to be the total, including the percentage for forced sale and disturbance of business? The whole of the items aggregate about £800,000. The total for private properties, as opposed to the public properties, would be £550,000, including forced sale. All the private property, in my opinion, could be resumed for that amount.

1501. Attached to the report of the Royal Commission, which consisted of the Public Works Committee, there is a route marked through the western side of the city; but I do not see in the evidence any estimate of the cost of land resumption on that route;—have you had anything to do with that? No, except some vague question which was asked as to what it would cost to resume a strip 100 feet wide on the western side of the city.

1502. Was there an estimate that the land in the west would cost so much a foot? Yes; but that would be useless.

1503. Have you been asked to inquire as to the effect on the rates received by the city if all this property were taken out of private hands? No.

1504. It has not been looked into? No; but I am inclined to think that the reduction would not be anything like the total amount now received from that source, on account of the betterment of a large portion of the property in the neighbourhood.

Norman Selfe, M.I.C.E., sworn, and examined:—

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.

2 Mar., 1900.

1505. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you a statement prepared in connection with a scheme of your own for bringing the railway into the city? Yes; I have prepared the following memorandum *re* city railway, Sydney, New South Wales:—

In submitting to this Committee the scheme for the extension for the railway lines into Sydney, with which my name has been so long identified, I may premise that, although a great variety of changes may characterise other schemes that have been proposed, mine has hardly varied a hand's breadth since it was first made public thirteen years ago.

My general views on this subject were very fully set out before the first Royal Commission in 1890, and as printed they occupy pages 26 to 30 of its report. They were at the same date published in the Sydney daily papers, and have since then from time to time received a great deal of official and public attention. No satisfactory estimates, however, have ever yet been submitted as to their probable cost. I desire to say now that I practically stand by everything I said to the Royal Commission ten years ago, that as I then looked well ahead the altered conditions of the Colony at the end of another decade do not affect the leading principles then laid down, and suggest small modifications in details only. Under these circumstances, I have thought that the Committee would not desire me to repeat at length what is already on record, and that it might be better to open the way to a consideration of my proposals if I were to submit first what I have taken as axiomatic truths in preparing plans for improving the urban and suburban railway services to the metropolis of New South Wales.

Even should it not be admitted that the whole of such propositions are axioms, they will, when set forth, show that the scheme is founded upon a well-defined basis, and they may facilitate the consideration of the whole question before the Committee.

The propositions which follow are submitted as having the force of facts. The statements in parentheses which accompany them may be matters of opinion:—

1. No scheme of railway extension should be based upon the requirements of to-day or to-morrow, but should have in view the possible conditions of the Colony twenty or twenty-five years hence. (A central railway terminus at Hyde Park or King-street would certainly not satisfy the requirements of suburban railway travellers if it was opened at once.)
2. The railways exist for the people, and not the people for the railways. (Therefore, the requirements of the people as represented by the passengers who travel by the trains should be the first consideration in the adoption of any scheme of railway extension.)
3. The evidence of the leading railway authorities, as well as common observation, shows that by far the greater part of the railway traffic is made up of regular travellers who journey daily between the suburbs and their places of business in the city. (If they could continue their journey by train they would prefer it to changing into a tram-car.)
4. The evidence of expert officials supports the contention that no system of tramways can do away with the necessity for an extension of the railway lines northward from Redfern. (Such being the case, the lines should run as near to the passengers' destinations as possible; and it may be mentioned that there are said to be between 2,000 and 3,000 places of business west of George-street, north of Goulburn-street.)
5. No single station or terminus outside the business quarters of Sydney can possibly be of such service to regular daily travellers as a series of stations distributed through those districts of the city where the business premises are situated. (Therefore, a series of stations should be distributed through the city in any scheme to be adopted. See Mr. Rennick's opinion that the western side of George-street is the proper route.)
6. The fact that economy in the cost of management might be effected by bringing the whole volume of the present railway passengers to one central station does not guarantee a continuance of such economy when other suburbs are connected up by railway in the future. (The eastern and northern suburbs are ripe for connection even now, and can both be put on circular lines.)
7. No proposal whatever for the extension of the railway from Redfern to the centre of the city should receive serious consideration unless it shows clearly the routes proposed and approximate cost of further lines in the city necessary for the eastern, northern, Balmain, and Leichhardt suburbs. (These questions have been treated in a very vague and airy way before previous Boards of inquiries, in order, apparently, that the Hyde Park scheme might not be prejudiced thereby.)

8. Improvements in the physiography of the city and its surroundings are matters which pertain at present to the mayor and alderman, and in the future, perhaps, will come under a Greater Sydney Council. (That should not justify railway lines being laid out in a way to cut up and depreciate the value of public or semi-public districts of the city now awaiting improvement, if equal or greater advantages to the community would attend the adoption of another route.)
9. The present terminus at Redfern is situated in a neighbourhood where the two principal streets of the city—George and Pitt streets—converge upon Devonshire-street; and Devonshire-street is the only main thoroughfare which crosses the city from west to east, between Cleveland-street to the south and Liverpool-street to the north. A great congestion of both tram and ordinary traffic characterises this locality. (Therefore nothing should be done to close one of these streets or to make its grade steeper, but rather more open space at the terminus and wider thoroughfares for the traffic should be provided.)
10. The evidence of the principal railway authorities is to the effect that, owing to the proximity of the Redfern tunnel, and to the roads of approach being limited in number, the present terminus is worked under great difficulties and at a great risk of accidents. (Therefore, any grand new terminus buildings that might be erected in front of and to the north of it would probably be looked upon by the Railway Commissioners as "whited sepulchres," unless it was at the same time provided that there should be ample room behind to meet the present and prospective requirements for the shunting and marshalling of trains.)
11. A terminus should, if possible, be approached on the level. This axiom was emphasised by the late Mr. Eddy. (If, therefore, a terminus be sunk 25 feet in the ground as at King-street, or be raised 35 feet in the air as at Garden-road, it would not compare for an instant with the present terminus, extended to level ground on the Benevolent Asylum site.)
12. The experience of other great cities of the world has demonstrated the advantages of circular railways for suburban and interurban traffic, and shows that in most cases the connections from the main to the local lines turn off from the rear, and do not run through the front of the terminus. (No such proper architectural effects could be got at Redfern with the city extension running out of the front door of the terminus, and making it a wayside station, as would be possible if the city lines diverged at Eveleigh.)
13. The railways are supposed to be worked on business principles; they were placed under Commissioners for that particular purpose. (Therefore no proper comparison can be made between the cost of different schemes for railway extensions, if the value of the land required to be resumed for the purpose is omitted from some of the estimates, and included in others.)
14. Brickfield Hill, within comparatively recent years, and the author's memory, was practically a suburb, where water troughs for the bullock teams were set in front of every hostelry. The city has since extended to the south, and is ever extending that way. Devonshire-street is much closer to that part of Sydney centred around the General Post Office than the termini of railways in other countries are to the centres of their greatest cities. (Therefore Devonshire-street, or its neighbourhood, is quite far enough north for a grant central terminus, if we look ever so little ahead to forecast the future expansion of Sydney).

N. Selie,
M.I.C.E.
Mar., 1900.

CITY RAILWAY INQUIRY (Section 1).
Line on West Side of the City.

NOTEWORTHY features of official evidence that has been given with regard to the valuations of land required for a railway extension on the west side of George-street, Sydney, with remarks on the same.

(a) In the Report of the first Royal Commission of 1891 (page 99), Mr. Foxlee sets down the resumptions necessary for—

Mr. Selie's scheme—Redfern to Argyle-street, at	£1,747,770
And the excavation of "Rocks" site.....	120,000
Making total cost of resumptions	£1,867,770

Observe that this included many acres, which it was suggested by the author of the scheme should be utilised for new streets; but, being a private proposal, no allowance was made by Mr. Foxlee for the resale of the street frontages, and the large part of the area not required for railway purposes (*see Q. 1469*). Such a resale would, however, have been possible if it had been an official scheme. (*See Mr. Eddy, Q. 1, 3/7/91*).

Observe here the inconsistency of estimating for the resumption of 30 acres, and then charging the western railway scheme with it, if only 10 acres are required for a terminus and carriage sheds.

(b) In the report of the second Royal Commission of 1897 (Q. 1781), Mr. Stephen Perdriau, of the Department of Lands, stated that, in his opinion, the value of the resumptions for a line passing through the city from Redfern to Circular Quay, *where the land is privately owned*, would not be less than £1,750,000.

In subsequent questions (1797 and 1798) the Chairman took the amount of this witness' valuation based upon land in Castlereagh and Elizabeth streets—*i.e.*, £90,000 per acre—and applied it to a running road down to the Quay on the Darling (harbour side, making the cost of resumption alone (without taking severance into consideration) amount to

£1,800,000	
Observe here, first, this estimate does not include the "Rocks" site, which was included in Mr. Foxlee's estimate of 1891.	
And if to this is added Mr. Perdriau's estimate for the "Rocks," as per Q. 2280, on a twenty years' purchase	622,340

The total cost of necessary resumptions would appear as £2,422,340

Secondly, this estimate for the running road is apparently based upon a length of 130 chains by 100 feet wide, equal to 20 acres at £90,000 per acre (*see Appendix J, and Q. 1797*). Thirdly, this would make the average estimated cost of the resumption required for a line by the western route come to £210 per lineal foot.

(c) As an illustration of the extraordinary fallacies which underlie the above valuations when applied to Mr. Selie's proposals (and omitting for the present further reference to the fact, that under such a scheme there are at least 40 chains out of the whole 130 on his route which do not affect private property at all), it may be here mentioned that no consideration appears to have been given to the important point, that such a length of resumption would carry the rails to Argyle-street, nearly twice as far from Redfern as to St. James' Road. Now it is understood that the City Council will lease the basements of the Victoria Markets for £2,000 per annum; this amount capitalised would be, say, £50,000, and that sum divided by the length of the building (500 feet) gives £83 6s. 8d. per foot, as the capital price to be paid for both the land and the building, instead of the much greater sum of £210 per foot for the land alone. *Verb. sup.*

(d) As neither of the Royal Commissions went over the ground, or had the route of Mr. Selie's proposed western scheme surveyed before it was officially reported upon, the valuations actually submitted were rather for theoretic or imaginary routes, and not for exactly that one contemplated by the author. Although his scheme has now been before the country for over ten years, no proper steps have yet been taken to obtain an official and satisfactory valuation of the route approved by him, and he would most respectfully ask the Committee to allow him to show them over the ground during the course of this inquiry.

The author has pointed out this route to Mr. G. H. Reid and to Mr. Rennick; but Mr. Perdriau says in his evidence, 19th August, 1897.—"I have compiled two plans which show Mr. Selie's and Mr. Greenwood's schemes as nearly as I could ascertain them," and immediately afterwards he puts down £33,000 for the resumptions of churches and schools assumed to be taken, when only £4,000 out of that amount is actually required. Mr. Selie has, therefore, had to obtain valuations at his own expense, and to that end has ascertained the rentals of several hundreds of properties in the city. No reflection attaches to Mr. Perdriau in this matter, as he had no instructions to confer with Mr. Selie, and it will be admitted that his general valuation of the "Rocks" sites at £600,000, on the basis of £30 per foot frontage, is probably a very fair one. It has been confirmed by subsequent detail valuations ascertained by Mr. Selie, and will be again referred to.

N. Selve,
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(c) From the most careful valuation available it is believed that the total resumption of every piece of property affected by the extension of four lines of rails from the railway bridge, George-street, to Druitt-street, including an acre for shunting at and about Goodlet and Smith's timber yard, would not exceed	£220,000
The capitalised value of the market basement.	50,000
The gross value of the buildings under which the tunnel would run from Market-street to King-street is not more than £550,000, and as their street frontages would not be affected (only their basements or cellars being disturbed) it is certain that, including the resumption of some blocks for ventilation, the whole compensation involved in the extension from Market-street to King-street should not exceed	£200,000
Compensation between King-street and Wynyard Square is estimated at	30,000
Total cost of resumptions for route, Redfern to Wynyard Square station.....	
Seven and a half acres of the "Rocks," bounded by Essex, Cumberland, Argyle, and Harrington Streets, for stabling or car sheds.....	£220,000
Approach from Wynyard Square.....	114,000
Excavation of smaller area	66,000
	£400,000
Making a grand total cost for the resumptions, Redfern to Argyle-street, with land for shunting yards and three stations	
(Or less than one-half the official estimates).	£900,000
(f) If the proposal for improving the northern part of the city, in conjunction with the railway extension, and for resuming 30 acres at the "Rocks"—instead of only 7½ acres—is looked into, then—	
The resumption on Mr. Perdriau's basis would cost	£812,500
The excavation on Mr. Foxlee's estimate	120,000
Total cost of levelled site	£932,500
This total area of 30 acres, however, will provide for a new street, 80 feet wide, extending in a straight line with George-street, about 2,000 feet northerly from Essex-street, the area of which would be about	3½ acres.
Allotments on about 3,000 feet of frontage with a depth up to 80 feet would approximate to	5 "
A strip on the western side of the block along Princes-street would afford a route for 2,000 feet of the North Shore connecting line amounting to (say)	1½ "
Leaving for shunting yards and railway terminus.....about	20 "
Out of the total	30 acres.
As this new George-street would be straight, level, and wide, instead of crooked, uneven, and narrow, like the present Lower George-street; and would be moreover in the centre of the mail steamer and shipping quarter; then £150 a foot would be a modest price for its frontages, and 3,000 feet at £150 would come to	£450,000
Allow for the route of the North Shore extension (not £210 per foot run, as official estimate, but only £50 per foot); then 2,000 feet would equal	£100,000
Which would reduce the actual cost of the 20 acres to be utilised for railway purposes, with 1,000 feet of the street frontage, to	£382,500
Out of the total amount of costs of "Rocks" site, as above	£932,500
Taking the above estimate for resumptions and compensations—	
Redfern to Wynyard-square, as before	£500,000
Twenty acres of "Rocks" site, as before (after resales)	382,500
Approach to "Rocks" from Wynyard-square, as before	114,000
Makes the total resumptions from Redfern, with 20 acres on "Rocks" and new street	£996,500
(g) In all previous inquiries no official credit seems to have been given to the fact that any western extension to the "Rocks" site, through the business centres of the city, would be a longer line of railway than one to St. James' Road; or to the possibility that it would serve many more passengers than those who desire to be carried to the top of King-street. Further than this, it is a fact that in all the estimates presenting the Hyde Park scheme many principal debits for resumptions have been omitted, while with the western schemes (as already shown) the credits have been left out in considering their probable cost.	
The following is probably a fair estimate of what the cost would be for four lines of railway to Wynyard Square, with the Victoria Station between Market-street and Druitt-street, a station at Christ Church, and a terminal station, with 3 miles of standing sidings, on the "Rocks" site:—	
George-street to Market-street resumptions.....	£220,000
Market basement (capitalised).....	50,000
Additional to and conversion of same	21,500
Works, George-street to Market-street.....	122,500
Christ Church Station	10,000
	£424,000
Market-street to Wynyard Square, compensations and resumptions for ventilation	£200,000
Double tunnel	72,600
Permanent way	3,630
Wynyard-square Station	23,770
	£300,000
Wynyard-square to Grosvenor-street	£26,500
Twenty acres on the "Rocks," levelled with frontage to New George street	382,500
About 4 miles of roads and sidings and carriage sheds	100,000
	£509,000
Total cost of city extension, 1¼ mile from George-street bridge to Argyle-street	£1,233,000

Say one million and a quarter, for a line running westward of George-street, right through the city in its densest part; and having still further to the west of it—and north of Goulburn-street—over 2,000 places of business. A line which has the further advantage that it will connect directly with future lines to the Circular Quay and to the North Shore; and will become an integral part of a circular line that will unite the eastern suburbs with Redfern, via Kensington and Eveleigh.

NOTES ON CITY RAILWAY INQUIRY (Section 2).

Improvements at Redfern in connection with city extension:—

- If all the suburban railway passengers are to be taken north from Redfern into the city, then it is certain very little alterations will be required for some time to come, to enable the present station to accommodate the smaller traffic represented by the purely country and intercolonial passengers that will be left for it.
- No more patchwork than possible should take place at Redfern until something is decided upon; anything done there from this time forward should be part and parcel of a completely matured scheme, based upon the accommodation likely to be required up to from twenty-five to fifty years hence.
- As at present the difficulties at Redfern arise largely from the contiguity of the tunnel, and the constriction of the traffic thereby into six lines of roads only—as clearly shown by Mr. Eddy and Mr. Parry—no devolution of a new and grand terminus should be attempted without first providing abundant and easy access to it. Any short-sighted policy which would defer this important matter until after a new terminus was built and brought into use would be calculated to lead to enormous additional cost and inconvenience. (d)

- (d) As any improvements between Eveleigh and Devonshire-street would immensely improve the access to the platforms at the terminus, and would also lower and improve upon the present steep grade on the Darling Harbour branch, it is manifest that the cost of such improved roads should be distributed among these works, and not be all charged to a city railway extension.

N. Selke,
M.I.O.E.
2 Mar., 1900.

The proposals of the author in this connection are shortly:—

- (1) That the whole of the property between the present railway lines and Eveleigh-street should be resumed, and that property in Regent-street and Cleveland-street also should be resumed; and that Regent-street should be diverted slightly,—the object of the resumptions being the provision of ground for twelve or fourteen lines, in place of the six at present laid from Eveleigh through the tunnel. (Value of these resumptions, 24/8/97, £92,900—Q. 3027).
- (2) That the present tunnel should be done away with, and its chief materials be utilised to make three spans of an ordinary bridge over twelve lines of rails—four lines to a span.
- (3) That the city railway extension lines, both fast and slow, should not pass through the terminus at all, but turn off from the main "fast" and "slow" lines at Eveleigh, and then proceed (by a grade of about 1 in 75) down to George-street, without crossing any of the lines, to the main yard at Redfern, or without in any way interfering with the integrity of the terminus proper, after the system adopted in the great termini of European cities.
- (4) That the Darling Harbour branch should share in the improved grade made possible by carrying the points back to Eveleigh.
- (5) That the railway tracks running towards the terminus from the junction at Eveleigh should be regraded for a sufficient distance to enable the city extension lines to turn out from the main lines without crossing them in any way "on the level."
- (6) That the George-street bridge should be widened to take six lines of rails, or four in addition to the present branch to Darling Harbour. As these works are necessary for the complete connection of the author's scheme for city railway extension, quite apart from the improvement of the approach to the terminus, and the grade of the Darling Harbour branch, the estimated cost of them is kept separate from that of proposed works at the terminus itself, and will be referred to again in due course.

CITY RAILWAY INQUIRY (Section 3).

Improvements at Redfern in connection with new and enlarged terminus—

- (a) It is obvious that any works required for improving and enlarging the Redfern terminus to the North, can be carried out nearly to completion, without in any way disturbing the working of the present yard and station, if the new terminus buildings are first erected on the north side of Devonshire-street, and then either the present, or a modified arrangement of platforms is afterwards extended over the street to the new ground.
- (b) If a new connection of Devonshire-street is first made from the Railway Institute to the junction of George-street and Pitt-street, at Christ Church, then the ordinary road traffic can be diverted clear of the terminus, and afterwards the whole of the intervening space—including the present street—will be free for the undisturbed use of the railways.
- (c) If the platforms are to be lengthened until they are from 600 to 800 feet long, and an "assembly" platform of, say, 80 feet wide, is extended across the ends of them, it will bring the front building on to the high ground at the rear of the Benevolent Asylum, to which access by trams and cabs can be made from the surrounding streets without any steep or special ramps.
- (d) If the entrance to the station for departing railway travellers is made through the booking offices in the front of the main building, and the exit for arrivals by train is to be by stairways from the platforms to a subway which will carry both foot and tramway traffic, then the streams of incoming and outgoing passengers will be kept quite clear of one another, and the delivery and pick-up of the railway trams will be separated and simplified.
- (e) If a large parcel depot is made under the terminus, with a roadway from west to east for the parcel-delivery vans, and also lifts are provided to send up the goods to the various platforms opposite the brake-vans of departing trains, then the present method of wheeling trucks of parcels among the passengers can be superseded if the suggestion commends itself to the Railways Commissioners.
- (f) If it is considered unnecessary for some years to come to erect a costly and appropriate architectural structure at the head of the new terminus, or to roof in the whole of the lines and platforms until the long-distance traffic has developed to a much greater magnitude than it attains at present, then it will be possible to leave the greater part of the terminus open, with simple and comparatively inexpensive booking offices and roofs over the platforms.
- (g) The resumptions, permanent way and platforms, street approaches and sub-ways, would be the same in either case; but the first cost would be much reduced if the erection of the expensive buildings is deferred.

The following is an approximate estimate of the cost of the cheaper arrangement:—

Resumptions, Devonshire and Pitt streets	£90,000
Removal of remains and monuments from cemeteries to Rookwood	10,000
Grading, concreting, and wood-blocking the deviation of Devonshire-street	7,750
Grading and blocking open space around terminus, apart from street	5,000
Additions to platforms	7,200
New permanent-way and interlocking	20,000
Three subways, 30 feet wide, with asphalt floors, &c., with six parcel lifts	17,000
Extension of buildings and roofs	10,000

(Total for minor scheme, say £170,000.) £166,950

If it is considered that any alteration and improvements to be made at Redfern in the near future should include the large structure for railway offices, with clock tower (the building being about 350 feet by 60 feet) and also that the whole of the platforms and tracks of the terminus should be enclosed and roofed over in an appropriate manner, somewhat as is shown by the large perspective drawing No. 15,—then the estimate of expenditure will have to be increased by not less than £140,000.

The estimate for complete new terminus in extension and utilisation of a great part of the present works would thus be under the greater and more complete scheme—

Resumptions, roads, and railway works (as above)	£170,000
Permanent buildings (in addition)	140,000
Total	£310,000

If the resumption of the whole of the grounds contemplated in the proposal for a terminus to face on Garden-road is still adhered to, then the total cost of land so taken would be £140,000, instead of £90,000, and the cost of removing additional tombs from the Cemetery might be another £10,000, making a total increase of £60,000; but with the possession of this ground it would be possible to increase the area of the open plaza in front of the terminus to about 5 acres, to make wide avenues of approach from all quarters on good inclines, and to have between 4,000 and 5,000 feet of frontage to new streets available for disposal in the new city centre thus created.

If only 3,000 feet of that were sold, and at the very moderate price of £100 per foot, then the whole transaction would result, not only in the utilisation of a now comparatively waste area, but it would go very far to pay for the new terminus itself. Thus:—

The total estimate for the terminus was (as above)	£310,000
Extra resumptions to Garden-road, and expenses with cemeteries, &c. (say) ..	60,000
(New streets to be made by Municipal Council in anticipation of rates receivable not charged to Railways)	
Total expenditure	£370,000
Anticipated receipts from sale of frontages after the terminus is erected	£300,000
Net cost of new terminus on the greater scale	£70,000

The

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.
2 Mar., 1900.

The following maps, plans, and illustrations are exhibited:—

1. Map of the country from Botany to Hornsby, showing the present railways and a series of extensions to the surrounding suburbs of which the proposals advocated by the author would constitute integral parts.
2. Map showing a line of city railway extension on the west side of George-street, from Redfern to Argyle-street, with a connection to the North Shore line at Bay-road, possible extension to Balmain, and to the eastern suburbs, *via* the Circular Quay; also, indicating the site of large resumptions suitable for railway purposes and the improvements of the city—on the "Rocks," at the north end of the city. Further, showing a diversion of Devonshire-street with an improved Redfern terminus, and a scheme for laying out new streets in the neighbourhood.
3. Similar map to No. 2, but showing only the city extension proper, with $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres for railway purposes—such as shunting grounds and carriage sheds—at Argyle-street.
4. Map 18ft. long, showing in detail the route proposed for a city line, from the George-street bridge at Redfern to the Queen Victoria Markets; also, the Hyde Park scheme, and Mr. Rennick's suggestion. (Scale, 40 feet to the inch.)
5. Section of the line west of George-street, from Railway Bridge to Queen Victoria Markets; shown by plan 4.
6. Map extending from Eveleigh to George-street and Devonshire-street, showing the resumptions proposed at Chippendale for the connection of the City Railway lines at Eveleigh to George-street Bridge, and for widening the ground for new tracks to the terminus and Darling Harbour. (40 feet to the inch.)
7. Smaller plan showing the proposed enlargement of the terminus, the diversion of Devonshire-street, and the remodelling of the locality. (Scale, 80 feet to the inch.)
8. Section giving grades of the lines from Eveleigh to Devonshire-street for the terminus, and also from Eveleigh to George-street bridge, for the city extension, with provision to allow the fast and slow lines to the city to turn off the main lines without crossing any other lines on the level. (Scale, 80 feet to the inch.)
9. Plan of route with four lines of railway from Queen Victoria Markets to Wynyard Square station. (40 feet to the inch.)
10. Section of the lines from Queen Victoria Markets to the junction of George and Cumberland Streets.
11. Plan of route and continuation of lines shown on plan 9, from Wynyard Square to Dawes' Point, including the "Rocks." (Scale, 40 feet to inch.)
12. Section of a railway line from Wynyard Square across the harbour to a junction with the Milson's Point line, near Bay-road station. (Grade 1 in 50.)
13. A bird's-eye-view of the neighbourhood of the present Redfern terminus, with the Asylum grounds, cemeteries, Belmore Gardens, &c., &c.
14. A perspective of the same site; but showing Devonshire-street widened to 150 feet on the north side, and regraded, an enlarged railway terminus for country trains, the cemetery grounds laid out with the streets and buildings, and a branch with four lines passing under George-street for city extension.
15. A perspective of the same site, but with Devonshire-street diverted altogether, instead of being widened, and made to run from the Railway Institute, north of its present position, to the junction of George and Pitt Streets. Also showing new streets laid out with public and private buildings, and imposing terminus buildings.
16. A bird's-eye of the "Rocks" district—extending from Charlotte-place to Dawes' Point, and from Circular Quay to Fort-street—as it is at present with its maze of lanes and alleys set forth in detail.
17. A perspective of the same site as it would appear if it were remodelled, with an extension of George-street over the site of Harrington-street, with railway yards and terminal station, and with an extension of the railway lines to a North Shore bridge.
18. A diagram showing by comparison the relative sizes of the present Redfern terminus, a Redfern terminus enlarged without crossing Devonshire-street, and the proposed Hyde Park terminus.
19. A duplicate plan of part of plan No. 6, showing an alternative arrangement of the lines branching off for the City and Darling Harbour.
20. Plans and sections of the Mansion House station when it was the terminus of the Metropolitan Railway, London, and the basement of the Queen Victoria Markets, Sydney, arranged as a railway station. This plan shows that the Sydney station, if constructed, would be twice as large as the very important one in the heart of London City.
21. A perspective view of a North Shore Railway and Road Bridge on the "Double Cantilever Principle," as suggested by the author in 1891, to the City Railway Royal Commission.
22. A new design for a bridge with steel arches, embodying the latest ideas in bridge building, now officially submitted for the first time; as being suitable for connecting the city with the North Shore.
23. The ground-plan of the Queen Victoria Markets, modified to make it suitable for a railway station, with four lines of rails and wide platforms. (Large working plan lent by courtesy of the Mayor.)
24. A cross section of the Queen Victoria Markets, with additions under George-street, and showing four lines of trains passing through the immense station in the basement. (Companion to No. 23.)
25. A plan showing all the resumptions required for four lines from Redfern to Bathurst-street, with the possible valuations of the several blocks.
26. A plan showing how the through station at Wynyard Square, as per plan No. 9, can be made a terminus 740 feet by 320 feet, if required in future years, by resumptions in York-street and Margaret-street.

TUESDAY, 6 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Norman Selfe, M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.
6 Mar., 1900.

1506. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Would you give the Committee a detailed description of your proposal as we inspected it on Saturday? I left off on Friday without reading the list of plans which are exhibited. I will now refer to these plans in detail. I start putting my opinions on record with the Plan No. 1, which is a map of the whole district around Sydney as far north as Hornsby. On this plan you will notice Milson's Point and the North Shore line running up to the Hornsby Junction. At present the Government own two lines of railway from the city up to Pennant Hills, where they are close to the district known as Castle Hill. The plan shows the whole of the country from Milson's Point right round, *via* Strathfield to Sydney, and shows, further, that by a connection over a bridge through the western side of the city the route would make a complete circle, from which circle a future line could diverge to the Castle Hill and Dural districts. Then there is the Balmain district and Leichhardt, which at present has a population of about 30,000 people. The survey already exists for a line down the north-west side of Balmain to Long Nose Point, and a very short connection across the harbour to that line from my route would make another complete circle. That would give the people in this district communication in one-fourth the distance they have to travel at present to Sydney. This western scheme dovetails with all those schemes. The eastern suburbs scheme would be no different under my proposition to what it is under the Engineer-in-Chief's proposition, except that instead of turning into Hyde Park from the north,

so that there would have to be a great deal of shunting in order to get to Circular Quay from Randwick or Waverley, it turns off from Circular Quay itself, where there is to be a station, and completes the circle by a junction with the present lines at Erskineville, so that anyone living in that district could travel in two directions to the city on either the inside or outside of the circle. It is well-known that if this circular line were completed now it would be a paying line. It was thought that it would pay ten years ago, and the population has increased wonderfully since then.

1507. Where would it strike the main line at the southern end? At Eveleigh Station, or really at Erskineville Station. There is really no difference of opinion about the eastern suburbs line; it has been surveyed and approved of by the Railway Commissioners and the Engineer-in-Chief for years past. Plan No. 2 shows a map of the city of Sydney with the whole of the land coloured red that would be required to be resumed in order to carry out my complete scheme, including improvements at Devonshire-street, the resumption of "The Rocks" and new streets laid out in both localities for the remodelling of the city. As that may not come within the exact scope of the Committee's inquiry, I have made Plan No. 3, which is the same as No. 2, except that it omits everything but what directly concerns the working of the railway, allowing $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres at "The Rocks" for carriage-sheds and shunting. It refers only to an extension from Redfern to the carriage-sheds on "The Rocks," with no improvements to the city, or any modification of the Redfern terminus. No. 4 is a large map, 18 feet long. It shows every piece of property to be resumed on the route, which the Committee went over on Saturday. The line starts at the railway-bridge crossing George-street, thence it goes to the sale-yards for poultry; it crosses Quay-street, running parallel to Thomas-street, which falls about 15 feet; then across Engine-street by a bridge. Underneath the plan I exhibit the section of the line No. 5. Between the bridge and Engine-street there is an embankment, with the station on the top of the bank, very similar to the present Burwood station. Engine-street is crossed by a girder bridge. The railway running from Engine-street is on a viaduct running from 30 to 35 feet above the level of the street, crossing Hay-street on one span; then through vacant ground and wood and coal yards to Little Hay Street; then through very poor property to Factory-street. The corner of Goulburn and Dixon streets is crossed on an angle. The line passes at the back of the Trades Hall, and through Messrs. Foley's factory to Sussex-street. Then it crosses Sussex and Liverpool streets diagonally through the Mission Church, passing at the back of Tillock's store in Kent-street. By this time the ground is rising, so that it may be desirable to lower the end of Kent-street slightly. Crossing Kent-street it strikes into the lower end of Goodlet and Smith's yard, which rises at such an angle that when it is excavated to the level the upper end will be deep enough to allow the line to pass under the branch Bank of New South Wales through a short tunnel under George-street to the basement of the Queen Victoria Markets. The Committee will see that, while the streets run down to a low level from Redfern to the Haymarket, the railway line keeps practically level, there being a 1 in 80 rise to get up to the station at George-street bridge; 1 in 90 from Goulburn to Sussex streets; and 1 in 80 in Goodlet and Smith's yard. The rest is practically level, being 1 in 138. From this it will be seen that I have no difficulty in getting the line in by that route. The estimate of the total resumptions between George-street and the Markets, marked in detail on Plan 25, is about £220,000. I do not put in my valuations of land as an expert, I base them on a rental of twenty-two years' purchase—that is, 5 per cent, with 10 per cent. added. I have gone to the expense of having this large plan (No. 25) prepared, in order to assist the official valuator in seeing what particular pieces of land will be affected or require resumption. The £220,000 refers to nothing else but the resumptions from the west side of George-street, at the railway-bridge, to the Queen Victoria Markets. Plan 6 is a map from Eveleigh to George-street and Devonshire-street, bringing the line from Eveleigh Station to where No. 4 Plan commences, and showing the whole of the railway lines and adjacent properties from Eveleigh Station to Devonshire-street. Exhibit No. 7 is a smaller scale plan of the proposed new terminus on the Benevolent Asylum site, with the diversion of Devonshire-street and new streets of approach, and No. 8 is a section which shows the present and proposed grades, with the present and proposed terminus. Under this plan and section it is proposed to resume sufficient ground from Eveleigh Station to enable twelve, or even fourteen lines, to be run where there are now only six, it being intended that four of these should be for purely local traffic in the city extension. With the ground available it is possible to make the lines which would run down to George-street (where they would be about 30 feet lower than at the present terminus), in such a way that they will not cross the lines to the main station on the level. From Eveleigh there is a gradual descent of 1 in 73 to George-street bridge. The line to the terminus runs up at 1 in 70 until it is able to pass over the top of the city extension, and then it runs on practically level to the terminus.

1508. How do you deal with the Darling Harbour line? The Darling Harbour lines and the city lines will practically run together. There will be six lines instead of four, only two of them will be the present lines modified. The present Darling Harbour lines come to the surface—that is, they join the main line—at a point just at the northern entrance to the tunnel. The line is extremely steep. By carrying these lines back to Eveleigh they will work on the same grade as the city lines.

1509. Is your proposed line on the same level as the Darling Harbour line? Yes. From Eveleigh to the George-street bridge it would be practically making six lines where there are now two.

1510. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you improve the grade of the Government line as well as for your own? Yes. I understand it is a great disability to the present Darling Harbour line to have such a heavy grade; but the alteration could not be undertaken as a work by itself except at great expense, whereas if it is undertaken in conjunction with the city line, the extra expense would be very little. Plan No. 7 shows that by extending the lines and platforms of the present terminus across Devonshire-street on to the high ground of the Benevolent Asylum site, you could build a terminus to which access would be possible from all sides without steep or artificial ramps. The drawings show a double tram-line, bringing passengers to the station, running in front of the main building, and passing round by an easy curve it returns by a subway (on or about the site of the present Devonshire-street) under the terminus building. In that way all passengers arriving by train would pass down from the platform by stairways to the trams which would convey them to the city, and they would in no way come in contact with the passengers arriving at the terminus for the outgoing trains, which is the cause of so much trouble at the present terminus. If the terminus is carried on still further to Garden Road, it makes a difference of about 35 feet between the street level and the platforms, and it presents a great many difficulties which do not belong to the scheme for having the terminus on the Benevolent Asylum site. Another feature of my scheme is the proposal to utilise what will

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will be a large open space under the station (now Devonshire-street) by converting it into a huge parcel depôt, from which all passengers' baggage and parcels would be sent up to the different platforms by little platform lifts, and thus do away with the necessity for wheeling trucks with parcels and goods among the passengers on the crowded platforms. Plan No. 9 is a large one, drawn to a scale of 40 feet to the inch. It shows the proposed situation of the line from the Queen Victoria Markets to Wynyard-square, and thence onward to the terminal ground, on the site known as "The Rocks," with a continuation to North Shore by a bridge, and an extension across Circular Quay to the eastern suburbs. Dealing for the present with the extension to Wynyard-square only, the line turns out from the Queen Victoria Markets and passes under what are now known as Kidman's Buildings, which, I think, should be resumed for ventilation. Then by a curve in double tunnel under Lassetter's and adjoining buildings into York-street. York-street, as shown by a section in the report of the First Royal Commission, of 1891, is amply wide enough for four lines of railway without encroaching on private property on either side, at any rate from King-street to Barrack-street. From Barrack-street the line curves into Wynyard-square, of which it is only proposed to take sufficient to give two double lines and platforms, making it really a wayside station. As the question may arise, would it be possible, if the railway were brought to Wynyard-square and the traffic developed very much to make a much larger station there, I have prepared a rough plan this morning, No. 25, to show that if, in ten years, Wynyard-square were unable to cope with the traffic, it would be possible, by resuming the buildings between York-street and Clarence-street, from Margaret-street, back to Barrack-street, and making Clarence-street 100 feet wide, to erect a station 740 feet by 320 feet, which, I think, is larger than the station proposed alongside St. James' Church. It would be very little hindrance to the city traffic to shut this short length of York-street, because by making a short diagonal from the corner of Barrack-street across to the corner of Clarence and Erskine streets, that would be a more direct route for people going to the Balmain ferries than it is now. That I look upon as merely providing for future possible contingencies. I would like to point out that by this proposed railway across Circular Quay, with a station at John Bridge's wool stores, that such station would be immediately opposite the Water Police Office, and closely adjacent to all the harbour-river steamers. I take it that there is as much reason for considering the people who live in the water suburbs as in some of the land suburbs, because there is a tremendous traffic every day from the eastern and the western suburbs to the steam-boats, and any system which left a wide gap, such as that between Hyde Park and the steamers, would be defective. Under this scheme the western line would have a small terminus on "The Rocks." This is where, when the first proposal was made ten years ago, it was proposed to put three lines of traversers. It was held by some members of the last Public Works Committee that that site would not be big enough for the traffic; but as I pointed out, I never attempted to give any opinion as to managing the traffic. If six lines are not enough there is room there for twenty. I leave it to the proper authorities to say how many platform lines should be there. That station, as shown, would run from the Fire Station on Circular Quay to Argyle Cut, and would be a sufficient distance back from George-street on the site of Harrington-street, the map also showing the proposed new George-street, running through Ives' Bond, and coming out at Lower Fort-street. It would be at the level of Argyle Cut, where it crosses there, and it would be 8 or 10 feet above the present George-street. The present George-street descends from Bridge-street down to Queen's-place, whereas the new George-street would be level from Argyle-street. A certain amount of land on the western side of the railway, and the whole on the eastern side, would be available for other purposes, and instead of being worth only about the value of the resumed properties, I think, as a citizen of nearly fifty years' experience, that for the shipping offices and business places of that kind it would be a most valuable property.

1511. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you propose to go underground all the way from the Victoria Markets to Argyle-street? No; only underground to Wynyard-square. It will be seen by No. 10, which is a section of the route, that starting from Market-street there is an open space at Kidman's. There is an open space for ventilation about half way between Market-street and King-street, and another open space between King-street and Barrack-street. The whole of Wynyard-square is open. The whole of the ground between Margaret-street and Margaret-lane is open. Then there is a bridge over Margaret-lane. There is a bridge over Jamieson-street, and Jamieson-street opens out into a pear-shaped end. Then there is an open space through old St. Phillip's triangle of ground. There is a short tunnel to bring it out on to "The Rocks" site proper, which is at the back of St. Patrick's Church. It runs into a short tunnel until it gets clear of St. Patrick's Church. When it gets through it is practically open the rest of the way, only running over Essex-street by a bridge. Altogether, from Redfern to the terminus, there is not as much tunnel as there would be in getting from King-street to Circular Quay under the Hyde Park scheme. Plan 11 shows the route from Wynyard-square to Dawes' Point, and to the station at the Water Police Court; but as its principal features have been described when referring to No. 9, it is not necessary to repeat them, and I would only point out that the branch to North Shore would run parallel to Princes-street on a grade of 1 in 50. No. 12 is a section from Wynyard-square to the Bay-road station on the North Shore, and shows that by a grade of 1 in 50, which is the ruling grade on the North Shore line, this line could join the Milson's Point railway at or about Bay Road station without any additional resumption, so far as the Sydney side goes if the whole of "The Rocks" site in the large scheme is taken. In the plan No. 11, two lines are shown running along the east side of Princes-street. They would be underground where they pass Charlotte-place, but they would rise above the ground when they pass Essex-street, and then they would be on the surface of a cutting for a short distance. At Argyle-street they would be practically on the same level as Princes-street. From there they would continue to rise until they were 130 feet above the water at Dawes' Point at the water's edge. That would give 160 feet to the third arch of the bridge (exhibit No. 22), which is in perspective. Of course, there is a great difference of opinion as to what height the bridge should be. I have had many conversations with ship-masters, having had a large experience with shipping in my position as scientific engineer in Mort's Dock Company for so many years, and I am of opinion that to erect a bridge 180 feet high would cost more per day for interest and extra haulage than it would cost per year to lower the masts of ships which might go under a 160-foot bridge. That is a very important point for the Committee to consider in discussing the railway, because it has been made out that it would cost a great deal to lower ships' masts. The cost of lowering a ship's mast might be £5 or £10. If there were 100 ships per day incurring that expense it might be important; but there might be only two or three in a year. I find that the "Olan Buchanan," at Dawes' Point, which is now flying light, is 162 feet above the water at the highest point. The plan
before

before the Committee has been prepared with the idea that it would be better to spend a few pounds in lowering ships' masts than to spend an additional £200,000 in building a bridge high enough to allow of the passage of any possible ship. Exhibit No. 13 has reference to the present site at Redfern. It is a bird's-eye view of the burial ground and Benevolent Asylum, and all intervening sites between Devonshire-street and Garden Road. Exhibit No. 14 was prepared some years ago for illustrating the proposal for a new terminus without the deviation at Devonshire-street. Exhibit No. 15 is a bird's-eye view, which I now submit to the Committee as being an improvement on the one submitted ten years ago, inasmuch as it gives a much greater open space in front of the terminus. There would be in front 500 feet plaza, and very large ways of access. It shows pictorially the features which I have referred to, with the trams coming up to the front of the building and then turning underneath; also the provision for parcels, and plenty of room for cab-stands.

1512. Where is that supposed to be? That is at the junction of George and Devonshire streets. The picture also shows the city line turning off just there. I do not speak dogmatically about the situation of the station at Thomas-street, because the Commissioners might prefer to have the station on the eastern side of the railway bridge in the position, so that the porters could change from the main station. The next plan, No. 16, is one which has been exhibited before; it shows every house on "The Rocks," with all the lanes—some of them only 7 or 10 feet wide. The peculiarity about the locality is that by buying 15 acres you would get about 11 acres of streets thrown in. No. 17 is the companion bird's-eye view showing entire "Rocks" site laid out afresh, with a new George-street railway terminus and branch line to the North Shore bridge. The next plan, No. 18, is a diagram comparing the Redfern and Hyde Park terminus. A great deal was said about the Commissioners carrying on the traffic for twenty years with the land which it was proposed to take from Hyde Park, and about there not being sufficient ground at Redfern. This diagram goes to show that by a very little addition at Redfern you could take in more ground than the whole that it was proposed to take from Hyde Park. The next plan, No. 19, is an alternative arrangement of the lines between Eveleigh and Devonshire-street, requiring a little more ground than under plan 6, but less costly works. No. 20, has been prepared in case exception was taken to the Queen Victoria Markets being sufficient to accommodate four lines of railway. This diagram shows the Mansion House Station as designed by Sir John Fowler and many other eminent engineers, which has worked for many years as a terminus, and since as a chief metropolitan station in London. It shows that the markets are longer than the Mansion House Station. At the latter station there are trains running in every three minutes. The same plan could be carried out at the Queen Victoria Markets, and there is a great deal more room to do it. In my scheme I have had in view the use of coal for the engines; but I believe that by the time the eastern suburbs railway can be built, even supposing it is decided now to do so, we would be ripe to run the trains by electricity. The next two plans, Nos. 21 and 22, are two designs for bridges. The cantilever one was designed some years ago when such designs were in vogue. It was not then known exactly what the difficulty would be in getting across the water at that particular site. The Government have since had the bottom of the harbour surveyed, and it is now found that the foundations would have to go 160 feet below the water-level. It therefore becomes desirable to do away with piers altogether, or to have as few as possible. The three-arched bridge shown on plan No. 22, is after the style of two bridges just erected over the Niagara Falls, and two over the River Rhine. It is designed to take advantage of the very latest system of bridge building, both American and Continental. Sentiment is sure to be a governing factor in such a question as a bridge; and speaking as one guided by sentiment, apart from my engineering ideas, I say that a one-span bridge across that space would be a very great mistake, because it would destroy the poetry of the whole scene. When you realise that you could pass St. James' Church under these arches, and that each of these towers is as high as the Post Office tower, you can get an idea as to what it would be if the bridge went over the top of the piers, because if a suspension bridge is put there to meet the conditions in the designs the Government are now calling for, the towers would probably have to be over 300 feet high. A design is called for with 180 feet clear headway. The next two plans, Nos. 23 and 24, have been furnished to me by the courtesy of Sir Matthew Harris, the Mayor. They are the contract plans for the City Markets, so I know that they are correct. They show what very small alterations would be necessary to make the basement into a railway station. The City Council in its wisdom made the basement very deep, which was a wise thing to do, even though full use is not made of it at present. That facilitates the conversion of the basement into a railway station. The section No. 24 shows four full-sized railway carriages, and members of the Committee will see how small they seem in proportion to the immense area available, the platforms being about 30 feet wide. The easterly line is under George-street, excavated, and the estimates include the sum of money necessary to add to the basement. By putting only three lines through the building instead of four, none of the main supports are interfered with. No. 25 is the plan of resumption, with their values marked, I have before referred to. No. 26 is the plan of Wynyard-square which I have already referred to. The exhibit No. 7 is really a plan by Mr. Deane, which the Secretary of the Committee has kindly obtained for me. I have put on it the new terminus at Redfern, showing, by a tinted mark, where my terminus would come, and where Mr. Deane's terminus would come to. The part tinted brown would be the part which would be available for resale, if the whole of the block up to Garden-road were resumed. I have taken the whole of the resumptions at the official valuations, as printed, for the terminus at Garden-road, but I have put down about £20,000 for removing the remains from the burial ground in addition. I do not notice in the estimates connected with the different schemes propounded officially anything for that purpose; but I have taken here the resumptions given by the Government Valuator, presuming that they are correct, and then I have credited this scheme with the resale of certain frontages at the price put down in my evidence as printed and now before the Committee. I am quite prepared to be shown that I am a little out in my valuations for resumptions, as I do not speak as an expert in such matters.

1513. How long is it since your valuations were made? From six to twelve months ago.

1514. *Dr. Carran.*] You have gone a great deal into detail, let me ask you, now, to take a general comprehensive glance at your scheme, as a whole; comparing the West Sydney route with the East Sydney route, I understand you first propose to begin at Eveleigh, resuming land at the side of the present line? Yes.

1515. Then you multiply the number of lines, and you make six lines to go under George-street as well? Yes, altogether.

1516. Do you propose to leave the hay and corn shed as it is? Yes.

1517.

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- N. Selfe,
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1517. Then you make a new station by extending the present station to some distance across Devonshire-street? Yes.
1518. You mean that, I presume, for the long-distance traffic? Yes.
1519. Therefore your scheme proposes a separation between the long-distance, short-distance, and intermediate-distance traffic? Yes; that is the first point of my scheme.
1520. Then you abandon the idea of making the present yard good enough without crossing Devonshire-street? Only in deference to the view of looking to the future. The present yard could be made to do for the next ten years if you divert the suburban traffic; but I say that these improvements at Redfern can be carried out as the Commissioners find that they are required, after they have removed the great bulk of the present traffic, which is the suburban traffic.
1521. Could you for the next twenty years meet all the requirements if your West Sydney line were made without crossing Devonshire-street? Certainly.
1522. And without removing the produce shed? Yes.
1523. If you do not remove that shed, can you get sufficient length for passenger trains 600 feet long without crossing Devonshire-street? Yes; when the tunnel is done away with, because there would be fourteen lines under the substitute for the tunnel.
1524. You have no plan showing a revised station-yard without crossing Devonshire-street? No; there is no necessity for that, because it is very evident that if the constriction which now exists within 600 feet of the platforms were shifted back another 1,000 feet, then what they call the "bottle-neck" would be so many hundred feet further back also.
1525. You would shift all the interlocking at the points to the south side of the tunnel? I would shift very little, because the long-distance traffic only consists of a few trains night and morning.
1526. Practically, you would only want a few platforms at Redfern? You would not want half the present platforms for a long time, except for holidays.
1527. The other scheme—according to Mr. Eddy—will do for twenty years;—will your scheme do for twenty years without enlarging the present station-yard across Devonshire-street if you make resummptions at Eveleigh Station? It could be made to do it, but I do not think it would be wise. As a progressive people, we should contemplate an important terminal station. Although it is not necessary to make a grand building at once, the cost of extending the platforms over Devonshire-street, and making longer platforms, would be relatively small, and I do not see why that should not be done at once, or at any rate within the next five years.
1528. Considering the fact that the ground on the north side of Devonshire-street is not private land, would there be any more difficulty in resuming it twenty years hence than at present? I had not merely the railway improvements in view in the alteration of Devonshire-street. There is the question of ordinary traffic in Devonshire-street, which is very great. There are the steam and electric trams, as well as the ordinary vehicular traffic, and there is continual risk. Every man who now crosses George-street takes his life in his hands, and it is almost as bad in Devonshire-street. The deviation which I have shown would be a great advantage to ordinary traffic. It would pay for itself, and it would go a large way towards paying for the terminus—that is, if my figures are borne out as to what the land will be worth.
1529. Would not land be worth as much in twenty years as it is now? It will be worth more.
1530. I wish to get from you that, as far as the mere difficulties of the railway are concerned, you could do without crossing Devonshire-street? Yes; for some years to come. I am only assuming that we may have good times again in Sydney, such as we had fifteen years ago, and it would then be a very small matter for the Colony to put this work in hand. At present I do not think that the country would be justified in spending a great deal of money at Redfern for works, if provision is made for the traffic by securing ground.
1531. Looking to the future, you are of opinion that Redfern Station must some day cross Devonshire-street? I would not say that it must, but I think that it would be desirable.
1532. If that be so, the question would be merely, shall we do it now, or wait until we are obliged to do so? There is one governing factor—the Commissioners I understand are very desirous of being housed in a building of their own. The large building shown in plans Nos. 7 and 15 is intended to afford accommodation for the railway staff. That might influence the matter.
1533. I think they are not so desirous of going to Redfern as of having a building of their own at St. James' Road;—it is more important to them to be close to the business people than to their own officials? Then perhaps they had better take the whole of the Victoria Markets, and so ease the citizens. There is plenty of room there, and they would make splendid offices.
1534. Taking your plan as it is, have you any estimate of the alterations as far as Devonshire-street, supposing you do not cross it, and another estimate in your plan of crossing Devonshire-street for some distance? Yes. The total estimate to complete new works and the extension and utilisation of a great part of the present works would be under the lesser scheme. That is only to carry the platforms across—to carry them over with temporary roofs, the same as the present head station at Redfern, instead of putting this main roof and big building as shown on the picture. That would be for resumption, roads, and railway works, £170,000; permanent buildings, £140,000. That is only for taking the land required for the terminus, £90,000. If you take the whole of the land shown on these plans and erect a building for £70,000, with a tower, and put a roof over, you will increase the expenditure to £370,000.
1535. That would be quite irrespective of the city line at all? Yes.
1536. One witness told us that it is a mistake to roof in a terminal station, as it keeps in the steam and corrodes the iron? I do not think it is necessary in our climate.
1537. Would it be quite sufficient to roof it in as we do the wayside stations? Yes; that would save £30,000 or £40,000. If extra money is paid to acquire land at the terminus, I estimate that you could sell 3,000 feet frontage at £100 per foot. That would give a larger terminus roofed in for £70,000, instead of a small one which would cost £170,000.
1538. I see you have a great idea of recouping the cost by the resale of land;—is that why you have gone so short a distance, so that you may have a larger amount of land to resell? No; it is in order to get a better access to the station. By going to Garden-road the railway platform will be 40 feet above the level of Anthony Hordern's front door.
1539. Are you aware that the Department have prepared two plans—one to go half way to Garden-road, and the other to Garden-road? No.

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1540. The plan for taking the line over Devonshire-street half way to Garden-road carries the line further than you do, and therefore it would leave less land for sale? That might be only a modification of detail. The only Government scheme I have seen propounded is one going to Garden-road. My scheme, which has been out for years, was only for going sufficiently far to get on the high ground, so that trams and cabs could go up as nearly as possible to the level of the platforms.

1541. Practically, would the grade be the same as we have now from George-street up to the Benevolent Asylum? Yes: it is 1 in 24, I think.

1542. Does £310,000 represent merely the cost of new Redfern Station and its approaches? Yes.

1543. You have not included the four additional lines under George-street, or dealing with the Darling Harbour branch? No, because they belong to the city extension. I have always commenced at the railway bridge, seeing that from the railway bridge to Eveleigh is on the Commissioners' own ground, and the improvements going out to Eveleigh Station should be charged as much to the terminus almost as to the other. It improves the approach to both. It is a question open to consideration as to how much should be charged to the city railway. In the same way some of the cost should be charged to the Darling Harbour line. I will prepare estimates as to the cost of the different sections.

1544. Comparing the eastern and western routes, could your line as far as the markets be fairly compared with the scheme of the Commissioners stopping at Park-street? I think my scheme would really go as far at the Markets as the St. James' Road scheme would go. Under the latter, the passengers would really be carried no further than Market-street. They would be practically the same as far as north and south goes.

1545. Then, as far as cost is concerned, you might contrast the two lines up to that point? Yes.

1546. Then it would be simply a question as to which would cost the most, and which would accommodate the most? Yes; only that I make no pretence that the Victoria Markets would be a terminus; it would be merely a wayside station.

1547. Supposing you stopped at the Markets, as the Commissioners stop at St. James' Road, could you, even with traversers, with your limited amount of room, accommodate the traffic? I do not think you could accommodate more than twenty trains an hour. According to Mr. Eddy's evidence you could accommodate forty, but I will say half that.

1548. Supposing you wanted more room, could you get it in George-street without interfering with the sewerage? Yes; I propose to go into George-street about 20 feet.

1549. Before you get into the Markets, will you explain why you are bound to go into George-street in front of the Town Hall, instead of getting in at the back of the Town Hall? The principal object in keeping in front of the Town Hall is to avoid paying for ground between Bathurst-street and Druiitt-street. Secondly, you avoid sharp curves. To get to the back of the Town Hall you would come on to the property at an angle, and you would have to resume a block which, according to the evidence given before the last Public Works Committee, would be very costly. At that time the Markets were only just begun. I stated that as I knew nothing about the plans of the Markets I could not say whether my old idea of seven years previously could be carried out—that was, to utilise the site when it was only a police court. I put a red line on the map showing a possible alternative route at the back of the Markets. That was taken as my scheme, and a great deal of the report of the Committee dealt with that alternative route, which I never surveyed, and never set out in detail.

1550. If you went to the back of the Town Hall, could you get under the Markets without a sharp curve? It is absolutely impossible, unless you went under the Town Hall.

1551. Paying a rental of £2,000 a year for the basement would be cheaper than buying the land on the other side of York-street and making a station there? The cost of that is in the report of the last Public Works Committee. There is not much difficulty in turning off from Liverpool-street and getting at the rear of the Town Hall, but it crosses Liverpool and Kent streets at an angle. That would necessitate resuming an immense amount of property there at the back of the Town Hall. You must go either under the streets or over them. Owing to the steep fall of Druiitt-street and Market-street, you must have a station that would be below the street on one side and much above the street on the other. Then you would have to close either Kent or Clarence streets to get a station of any width. It does not work out at all well. At the same time, if the Government engineers can find a better route than mine, I shall be only too glad to admit it.

1552. As far as you see at present, both as a matter of cost and engineering facility, it is better to go to the front of the Town Hall than to the back? Yes.

1553. How are you going to get rid of the steam and smoke in the basement of the Markets? The distance is so short from Goodlet and Smith's yard, where it would leave the open, that the tunnel would present no inconvenience to passengers. But for the smoke that would naturally arise from engines standing in the markets, there are great facilities in the construction of the building itself to get rid of it. Over the chimneys of the engines there would be large funnels, as in round-houses. It is very common in buildings in which engines stand for them to be run in so that their chimneys stand under a funnel leading up to a ventilator, so that all the smoke passes away.

1554. Would you require any artificial draught? I do not think so. There would be great natural draught with the prevailing winds, and a proper ventilating shaft at Kidman's buildings which would exhaust all the foul air and smoke.

1555. Would there be sufficient length in the basement of the markets? There is 600 feet in the building, and the platforms could be run into the tunnel as much longer as might be required.

1556. What about light? The basement is well lighted, even on a dull day. I would reckon on several of the shops being utilised for ticket arrangements, and at the back they could be utilised for ventilating shafts up to the top of the building.

1557. Would the existing lifts in the basement be available? They would have to stop at the ground-floor. It would be very easy to put in other lifts to take the passengers from the basement, but they would be of different construction.

1558. Would you have room for them? I think so.

1559. Do you think that the trains underneath—the noise, vibration, heat, and smoke—would destroy the lettable value of the shops, or would the railway traffic make the shops more valuable? That is a question on which there might be a great difference of opinion. I have heard people say that the shops would be worth double their present rental value if there was a railway-station there. I do not think the noise would amount to anything; I do not think it would depreciate the value of the shops.

WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large central station.

Norman Selfe, M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

N. Selfe, M.I.C.E. 1560. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you prepared figures as to the entire cost of your scheme from Eveleigh to the Markets? Yes; I have prepared the following figures:—

7 Mar., 1900. THE Committee having asked for estimates commencing at Eveleigh Station, I give in more detail the probable cost of the different sections, and the complete scheme.

The resumptions necessary to make fourteen roads between Wells-street and Cleveland-street would, according to my original estimate, cost £86,000, and according to Mr. Perdriau's, £92,900.

If we allow a little extra for contingencies, and take the figures as £98,000 for fourteen lines, it will amount to £7,000 per line. To this must be added the removal of tunnel at Cleveland-street and construction of bridge with its materials; regrading and relaying of four present fast and slow lines, with formation and permanent-way for two additional lines to terminus; construction and permanent-way for four city lines to George-street; regrading and relaying two lines to Darling Harbour; new bridge for four additional lines under George-street; making good roadways, &c.

Estimate on page 75, £164,500 say £166,000

To be apportioned somewhat as follows:—

To the city lines £81,000
To the terminus for passengers and goods 66,000
To Darling Harbour branch 19,000

£166,000

Adding the first and second of these sums to the amount of estimates on pages 74 and 75, we have the following totals—for the city railway line, from Eveleigh to Argyle-street, about 2½ miles long:—

Eveleigh to George-street £31,000
George-street to Market-street 424,000
Market-street to Wynyard-square 300,000
Wynyard-square to Argyle-street, with 20 acres for yards and carriage sheds 509,000

£1,314,000

For a new terminus at Devonshire-street, on the lesser scale, with buildings of a light character:—

From Eveleigh (as above) £66,000
Resumptions, Devonshire-street and works (as on page 75, £166,950) say 170,000

£236,000

For a new terminus at Devonshire-street, on the larger scale, with buildings of an imposing character, somewhat as proposed for the Hyde Park scheme:—

From Eveleigh £66,000
Resumptions and works, less resale of frontages (from bottom of page 75) 70,000

Net cost £136,000

Adding this latter sum to the previous estimates for the City Railway will give for complete scheme, starting with fourteen lines from Eveleigh, a terminus at the Benevolent Asylum site, as projected for Hyde Park, and 1½ mile of railway with four tracks to the Circular Quay, and an immense area for railway purposes at the north end of the city . . . £1,314,000
Net cost of new terminus as above 136,000

(Say, 1½ million.) Grand total £1,450,000

1561. Could you go right on to "The Rocks" with your scheme for £1,500,000, which is the estimated cost of this semi-Hyde Park scheme now before us? Yes; and included in that amount would be a terminus somewhat similar to that now proposed at Hyde Park, but on the Benevolent Asylum site.

1562. In this £1,500,000 do you include the improvement of the present station yard, by prolonging it over Devonshire-street, and the improvement of the Government grade down to Darling Harbour as it is now? Yes.

1563. And right on to "The Rocks," only you have taken as a set-off for your scheme the amount of money obtained by selling the surplus cemetery land, Carter's Barracks, and at "The Rocks"? Yes.

1564. Does the surplus land at "The Rocks" include the triangular piece north of Argyle Cut? That, I assume, is not required for railway purposes. I included that in the area with 2,000 feet frontage, which I proposed to resell in George-street.

1565. If you were to resell that, would it stand in the way of the future North Shore line? No; the North Shore line would be still reserved on the western side.

1566. We left off dealing with your line at our last examination, at the Markets;—from the Markets do you go under very valuable city property? Yes; until we get into York-street.

1567. Is that the most valuable city property you touch? Yes.

1568. Do you take the whole of Kidman's property? Yes; I have estimated for it.

1569. In going under Lassetter's and other large wholesale stores, will you interfere with their basements? Yes.

1570. Would you have to pay compensation? Yes; I have allowed one-fourth of the estimated value of the buildings for the privilege, and I think that will be excessive.

1571. Will your railway shake those buildings? No.

1572. Are they sufficiently solid to stand the vibration? The backbone of the city, the sandstone ridge, comes up nearly to the surface at York-street. I would go under Lassetter's in two brick tunnels until I came to York-street; it will then be a cut and cover like the Redfern tunnel. The street would be dug out, and the roof would be put on.

1573. Are there any sewers or pipes in York-street which you would disturb? Yes, there is a very large gas-main; but others have since been laid in Kent and other streets, so that there would be no inconvenience. There is no large sewer there that I am aware of.

1574. When you have got to York-street, as far as Wynyard-square, do you turn a little to the east to get to Wynyard-square? Yes.

1575.

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1575. Why do you not go on without touching the reserve? We propose to make that an open station.
1576. But you take four-fifths of that reserve? Yes.
1577. West Sydney is very badly off for reserves, and you are going to take four-fifths of one of them? I do not think West Sydney is very badly off for reserves; there are four or five, and a magnificent one at Dawes' Battery, on which there has been some unaccountable encroachment.
1578. But does not Dawes' Battery belong to East Sydney? It does municipally, but not physically. The reserve is contiguous to West Sydney, and there are no East Sydney residences there. Many years ago Dawes' Battery used to be a promenade for all the people in that district. Then there is a reserve under the Flagstaff, at the end of Kent-street, and there is a small garden and reserve in Argyle Place.*
1579. Is it not very small? Yes; but it does not seem to be appreciated. Then there is Flagstaff Hill itself. Then, of course, there is Wynyard-square, which, from many points of view, is the most important; but it does not seem to be used by those for whom it is intended. It seems to be used by those who lie full length on the grass, the same as Hyde Park.
1580. If the railway scheme is charged with the current value of the land taken from Hyde Park, ought not your scheme to be charged with what is taken from Wynyard-square? Yes.
1581. Have you put down anything for that? No; because in the estimate for the other scheme there has always been a straight line for the value of the whole of the property from Devonshire-street until you get to Liverpool-street. Then there was about £92,000 for the resumption of private property. When you get to Hyde Park there is a blank again from Liverpool-street.
1582. Still, if your scheme comes to be fairly estimated, we shall have to add to the £1,500,000 the cost of the land taken from Wynyard-square? If the semi-public properties are added to the cost of the other schemes, I am quite willing that it should be done in my case.
1583. Do you go through the triangular reserves on the site of the old St. Phillip's Church? Yes.
1584. Do you do that in the open? Yes.
1585. You cut out a piece of that? Yes.
1586. Do you go under Essex-street? Yes.
1587. When you come to Argyle-street you cross on the level? The line has to descend slightly from Wynyard-square;—that is, the city line—while the North Shore extension rises from Wynyard-square.
1588. If you throw the triangular piece of land, north of Argyle-street, into the railway yard, will you not have to cross Argyle-street on the level to get into that? It is not proposed to use that for the city railway at all, except the strip running parallel with Princes-street when the time comes for making the North Shore line.
1589. What is the length between Essex-street and Argyle-street? About 1,000 feet.
1590. What is the breadth of the space resumed for the new street? The mean breadth is about 400 feet.
1591. How many platforms do you propose to build there? There is room for six tracks and about twenty standing sidings. That includes room for the platforms. The large plan has an area coloured red, which corresponds with the small No. 2 plan. The piece north of Argyle-street was only included in that plan because you would have to take away the frontage to Princes-street on one side, and with the continuation of George-street on the other side, you would leave nothing but land of no practical value between.
1592. Then throwing out for the present the North Shore extension, and the route down by Circular Quay, you would have with that terminus a complete West Sydney line? Yes.
1593. Would you have room at your terminus for all the carriages which would have to stand there in the middle of the day? Yes.
1594. Would you have more room than there is at Hyde Park? Yes.
1595. Would you have more room than there would be in the St. James' Road scheme? I measured the standing room provided in the King-street scheme at the back of the Art Gallery, and I found that it amounted to $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres. I have $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres in the smaller scheme, which only extends from Cumberland-street to Harrington-street.
1596. You must remember that in the scheme before us now there is not only the standing room in the Domain, but there is 8 acres in Hyde Park, and between Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street, whereas you have only one block? That is so; but they have to run half a mile or three-quarters of a mile from their terminus.
1597. But I am talking of the area to accommodate the trains? The area provided in the whole of my scheme is much greater. In the large scheme there are 20 acres for railway purposes.
1598. Have they more room in the scheme before us in two separate blocks than you have in your one block? I think it is somewhere about the same.
1599. Do you think you would be able to give all the accommodation required? If they can get all the accommodation for twenty-two sidings at the Art Gallery, they can do the same in my proposal; but it must also be remembered that my scheme contemplates an extension across Circular Quay, which would divert a lot of the traffic.
1600. But I am leaving that out for the present, and I assume that this will be a city terminus;—do you think you will have abundant room for all the suburban traffic, without sending back any of the trains to Eveleigh? Yes; for they can take the whole block as shown up to Argyle-street, and right up to the North Shore line at Princes-street.
1601. In your estimate of the suburban traffic do you include the Penrith and North Shore line as far as the Hornsby Junction? Yes.
1602. Do you include the Illawarra line as far as George's River? I have not gone into that question, but there is no reason why those trains should not come down.
1603. Then it is only the great trunk line traffic that you deal with? Yes.
1604. What acreage have you? It is over 20 acres.
1605. If you stopped there, you would have no circular railway of any kind; it would be simply a line backwards and forwards? That would only be until the eastern line was made.†
1606. That is to say, you would stop there as they stop at Hyde Park? Yes; but nearly twice as far on.
1607. The only difference is that you go by the west side, and they take the east? I take my line right through business Sydney, while the other schemes stop on the fringe of Sydney—outside the business quarter.

1608.

* NOTE (on revision):—There is also a large site reserved for ferry and public landing-place on the west side of Kent-street, north of the gas-works, but the public have not the use of it.

† NOTE (on revision):—The railway management would, no doubt, arrange that some trains reversed at the Markets and some at Wynyard-square, as well as at Argyle-street, if one station became unable to cope with the increasing traffic before the circular line was completed.

- N. Selve,
M.I.C.E.
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1608. Do you consider there are more people coming in from the suburbs who have business in West Sydney than those who have business in East Sydney? It is a matter about which there can be absolutely no doubt. The evidence before previous inquiries showed that more than nine-tenths of the traffic goes to West Sydney.
1609. Then how is it that the self interests of the people using suburban lines does not induce them to advocate the western route instead of being apparently in favour of the Hyde Park route? I do not think they are in favour of the Hyde Park route. The mayors of municipalities who gave evidence in the matter were under the impression that the inquiry had dragged so long, that unless they accepted the Hyde Park scheme they would get nothing. Then Mr. Eddy's powerful personality had a great deal of influence with many people.
1610. Do you think that if they were called upon to give a vote a majority would be in favour of the western line? Judging from the conversations I have had with many people who are interested, there would be a majority of six to one in favour of the western line. That has been a large factor in inducing me to go to so much expense; otherwise I should not have backed up my opinion at great expense as I have done.
1611. If the eastern line is carried it is admitted that the people whose business is to the west of George-street will take the George-street tram, or a tram which may be made down Kent-street;—if your scheme is carried, will the people in East Sydney have to trust to the tram-lines also? If the St. James' Road or Hyde Park scheme is carried, all the people in West Sydney will use the George-street tram. To-day I asked a well-known business man who is close to the Post Office, whether he would use a railway station at Hyde Park. He said, "Certainly not; I will take the George-street tram, as I do now."
1612. If your scheme is carried, will not the people in Macquarie, Phillip, and Elizabeth streets have to take the tram to their places of business? Yes. I think it is very probable that many people east of Castlereagh-street would prefer to use the trams if they are continued in Elizabeth-street.
1613. Whatever route is adopted the people will have to use the tram to one side of the city? No. Wynyard-square is about half-way between the eastern and western boundary of the business part of the city. The Markets are about half way between Hyde Park and Sussex-street. Hyde Park is entirely to the east of a circle of a quarter of a mile drawn round Queen Victoria Markets. That circle would take in more than double the business places which would be included in a circle drawn from Hyde Park.
1614. If your scheme is carried, the people whose business lies near Castlereagh-street and east of it will have to use the existing trams? Yes, if they prefer it.
1615. So that one railway would not serve equally well the whole city? Yes.
1616. Do you contend that the western line would serve the majority? What I contend is that the western line runs right through the centre of the business quarters of the city, and the business people and the visitors from the suburbs, who come to town to visit the business places constitute nine-tenths of the railway traffic. The amount of the traffic that goes to the east of Elizabeth-street is a bagatelle.
1617. Do you think that your line would relieve the George-street tram, or would it increase the traffic on that line? I think it would relieve the George-street tram of the great bulk of the regular railway passengers. From my conversation with many railway travellers, I have formed the opinion that a man would sooner walk 300 or 400 yards after he got out of his train than change from a train into a tram, and then have to walk 50 yards. He would be prepared to walk down to Sussex-street from the train, or eastward as far as Castlereagh-street, rather than go down George-street in the tram, and then have to walk.
1618. Take the George-street tram as it is now, and imagine the St. James' Road scheme at work;—would people cross the George-street tram and climb up King-street in preference to taking the George-street tram? No. As traveller to the suburbs for many years, I think that very few people in George-street, or west of George-street, would cross the tram in that street to go up to the top of King-street.
1619. You know that a certain estimate was made of the number of passengers who would be brought in by this railway to Hyde Park; it was made years ago by Mr. Eddy, before the George-street tram was in existence; that tram now takes nearly the whole of the railway traffic from Redfern Station;—do you think the traffic on the proposed railway would be the same as if the George-street tram had not been built? I think that since Mr. Eddy made that estimate the business has increased so much that it nullifies the effect of those figures.
1620. Then you think the profit would be as great as Mr. Eddy anticipated? Yes.
1621. For your Wynyard-square station, could you have a subway in George-street? Yes; that is shown on the plan. There is a subway from the neighbourhood of Hurst's jewellers' shop which would go under Carrington-street; it would be nearly level from George-street.
1622. On the other side, would you require a much longer subway? Yes; it would be an advantage there, although it is not shown on the plan. The subway should come out in either Clarence or Kent streets, and it would be a great advantage to people who used the Balmain ferries.
1623. Would it also accommodate the people engaged in Clarence and Sussex streets? Yes. I do not think the average distance for those people to walk would be more than one-fourth what it would be to the Hyde Park terminus.
1624. In your scheme you would carry the line across Circular Quay, in front of the Custom House, on a viaduct? Yes.
1625. Would that not be very unsightly? I think it might be safely left to architects, so that it would be an ornament instead of a disfigurement. Nothing is ugly which serves its purpose and is consistent. A thing is ugly when it violates certain canons of taste, and is inconsistent in its proportions. Many people think the Forth Bridge is one of the ugliest structures in the world, but to those who look upon it as embodying certain scientific principles applied to a special purpose, there is nothing ugly about it.
1626. You mean that to the eye of an engineer it is beautiful, while to the eye of an artist it is ugly? It depends upon the sort of artist. An artist may consider nothing but external effect, without the slightest regard to symmetry. There are viaducts in different parts of the world which are not unsightly. There is the Holborn Viaduct across Farringdon-street; that is a beautiful structure, as well as a useful one. There is no reason why a viaduct on steel girders should not be light, airy, and graceful, while at the same time it would fulfil its functions perfectly.
1627. There is a viaduct across Ludgate Hill which spoils the view of St. Paul's; it is regarded by many people as an atrocious structure, and you propose to have a viaduct in front of the Custom-house? It would not necessarily be such a solid structure, and Ludgate Hill is comparatively narrow. In the city of Rotterdam there is a railway carried on a steel viaduct, and it runs right through the centre of the city;

city; it is not considered to be ugly. I am aware that a proposition has been made to run the railway under Circular Quay, but that would be below water-level, and you would have a difficulty in keeping out the water, and there would be steep inclines.

1628. Could you avoid the difficulty by crossing to the south of the Custom House between it and Bridge-street, and starting at once from Wynyard-square? The resumption would be very serious, and there would then be no Circular Quay station. Under my scheme it is proposed to have a station near the Water Police Court, and the eastern line would come out at Woolloomooloo. That line would run out exactly where the sidings are proposed under the official scheme at the rear of the Art Gallery, but it will be merely a running line, instead of having coaling yards and standing yards for getting up steam. There would be difficulties in many ways in carrying out what is proposed. By keeping down to the edge of the Quay we go to a point where the streets are low; we are able to cross George and Pitt streets at a good height, so as to keep the railway 25 feet above the traffic on the Quay.

1629. You could not descend sufficiently to get under Pitt and George streets? It would be absolutely impossible.

1630. Would it be impossible to go near to Bridge-street? The cost would be enormously increased.

1631. You recommend the Circular Quay route because it makes a good connection with the eastern suburbs and so makes a circular line, but we do not want all those suburban trains to go careering round the eastern suburbs to get back to Eveleigh; the traffic there is very much lighter than from the western suburbs? Anybody living in an eastern suburb such as Randwick who required to go to the south end of the city would take the route which would bring them round by Alexandria. People who required to come to the north end of the city would probably come by Paddington and Woolloomooloo.

1632. Would you propose that the trains should run both ways all day long? Yes; an inside and outside line.

1633. If you had separate circular trains, would not people have to get out at Redfern and change into another train? They would have to change at Eveleigh only for the main line.

1634. Then we would have the same changing from trains that is so much deprecated at present? That would only occur where people coming from one line wished to get on to another. Any person living in the eastern suburbs would be able to get into the city in two ways. If a person leaving the Western line wants to get on to the Southern line, he has to change now, and if he wants to get to the eastern suburbs, when the circular line is built, he will only have to do the same thing.

1635. In a scheme which you proposed some years ago, you had a circular line only within the city;—have you abandoned that? I have, for the present; but I consider that the line shown in that old scheme, joining the present proposal somewhere near Woolloomooloo Bay, or near the back of St. Mary's Cathedral, will be built, perhaps, within twenty or twenty-five years as a return line. If the goods traffic developed at the Woolloomooloo wharfs, and there is a necessity for taking goods directly out of the city, it would enable them to be taken up to the main lines through the city without interfering with the passenger traffic at all.

1636. Some day you think we shall have an inner-circle line? Yes, purely for relieving the other line; but hardly for passengers.

1637. As a passenger line you have given it up for the present? Yes; it would be 30 or 40 feet underground in places.

1638. The expense would be against it? The expense would be principally for tunnelling, and not for resumptions. I think it ought to be considered as an alternative to having standing-room on "The Rocks." Tunnelling is much cheaper than it was a few years ago, and it becomes a question whether it would not be better to go on at once with that scheme so as to let the trains run down the western side of the city and return by that line to stand at Redfern.

1639. If you made this Circular Quay line, and this inner-circle line, would you want the station at "The Rocks" at all? No; all that you would want would be a little ground on which to shunt your engines from Wynyard-square, and that would not be so much wanted if you had traversers. The whole thing depends upon the amount of traffic which the Commissioners propose to bring down. I have had in view sufficient ground to meet every possible contingency. If they propose to bring down all the traffic, there is sufficient ground at "The Rocks" to do the shunting. They propose to bring all the traffic to Hyde Park, without any ground in front of them to shunt. I say, here is twice as much ground as you propose to take at Hyde Park.

1640. Instead of going to Woolloomooloo, do you see any objection to returning by way of Hyde Park? I do not see any objection to adopt any route for the return line, which is simple and cheap.

1641. If you could return by way of Hyde Park, would you accommodate both East and West Sydney? If you could return that way from Circular Quay, curving in under Hyde Park, and putting a station on a portion of Hyde Park, then going up underground, you would get a perfect circle within the city.

1642. Then the problem between East and West would be solved? Yes; and that return line would cost very little for resumption.

1643. You would have a station at Bridge's warehouse, and the line would run very largely through or under public land? Yes; the return line.

1644. Have you made any estimate for such a scheme? No. Having abandoned that scheme so long ago, I have not returned to it. Ten years ago there was so much agitation in Parliament and among the people in the eastern suburbs, that it was thought the eastern suburbs line was within measurable distance. That seems to have died out a great deal since an improvement has been made in the tram service.

1645. Do you think the substitution of electric trams for steam will still further accommodate the eastern suburbs? I think the substitution of trams for railway purposes is an absolute mistake. Since George-street has been converted into a railway track it is absolutely dangerous, and people are sacrificing their lives for the sake of convenience.

1646. Will the substitution of electric trams for steam to the eastern suburbs diminish the desire for a railway? I do not see that it will make any difference; there is plenty of legitimate scope for trams.

1647. *Vice-Chairman.*] You said that the Hyde Park scheme would not do for more than about twenty years;—does the same objection apply to the scheme now before the Committee? I do not think the scheme now before the Committee—that is, the King-street scheme—is as good as the St. James' Road scheme; it is not such a convenient station. I think the Hyde Park scheme for a central terminus is admirable as far as it goes, especially if the Supreme Court, and the Registrar-General's Office are removed, but it does not meet the requirements of the travelling population. It meets the requirements of the Railway Commissioners in the management of a large property, because they will receive £34,000

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a year for bringing the people a little further on, but it will not be a penny better to nine-tenths of the people who come into town. When they get to the top of King-street, or St. James' Road, nine out of ten will have to walk a quarter or half a mile to get to their places of business. They can get much nearer to their places of business now by the George-street tram.

1648. Simply as a means for serving the people for a number of years, you indicated that the Hyde Park scheme would not do for more than forty years? The scheme now referred to the Committee gives greater facilities for receiving and marshalling trains than the Hyde Park scheme will.

1649. Do you think, from that point of view, the new scheme referred to us is better than the old Hyde Park scheme? From the point of view of providing standing room for more trains, and meeting emergencies, it is better; but from the point of view of meeting the general requirements of railway passengers I do not think it is so good. It introduces another element by having these marshalling yards, and stables, as they are called, in the neighbourhood of the Art Gallery, and the principal cathedral in the city, which makes it very objectionable to me as a citizen.

1650. What led you to prefer a route more to the west—was it with a view of serving the greater number of people, or avoiding expensive resumption? No; it was simply to take the people where they wanted to be delivered. Nine men out of ten do not want to be delivered at the top of King-street; they want to be delivered somewhere near George-street. Nothing has better demonstrated what I have contended during ten years than the marvellous success which has attended the George-street tramway. That has put the seal on what I have been contending for all that time.

1651. You say that your scheme lends itself to certain connections with North Shore, Balmain, the eastern suburbs, and Circular Quay, do you object to the official proposal as not lending itself to those connections? I object to the Government scheme because, up to the present, no estimate has been made public, if it has ever been made officially, as to what the cost would be of connecting Hyde Park with Dawes Point. I respectfully submit that that estimate should be before this Committee before they can properly compare the two routes. Under my proposal, you have the whole route in West Sydney and down to the site of the bridge embodied in the scheme. According to the evidence printed with the last report of the Public Works Committee, to get from Hyde Park to Dawes Point you have to return by a semi-circle shown in black on the little plan I have had printed; and in order to build a road from Hyde Park to Dawes Point and Circular Quay, it would be as long and as costly as my whole scheme from Redfern to Circular Quay.

1652. Are there any engineering difficulties in the way of making a connection from Hyde Park, or the King-street station, to North Shore, Balmain, or the eastern suburbs? The difficulty is, that you have to go back to Liverpool-street and make another line which is as long as my whole line—that is to say, when you have got to King-street, according to the plan printed with the official report, you have then to make a line which makes it as long and as costly to get from Hyde Park to Dawes Point as it is to make my line from Redfern to Dawes Point.

1653. Do you look upon that site which you have selected on "The Rocks" as the natural centre from which those connections should radiate? No, Wynyard-square. The Engineer-in-Chief in his evidence ten years ago stated that Wynyard-square is the best site in the city for connecting with Circular Quay, the eastern suburbs, and the North Shore. I agree with him.

1654. In reply to a question by Mr. Shepherd, the Engineer-in-Chief said that there would be no difficulty in turning off at the end of Hyde Park and getting round to the other side of the city, for the purpose of making a North Shore extension? There is no difficulty if you are prepared to spend £1,000,000. He was not asked what would be the cost of carrying out that work. The plan printed with the Report of the Royal Commission shows a line connecting with North Shore on the western side of the city, which is practically the same as I advocated many years ago. I believe no estimate has been made for those connections, and I would respectfully ask the Committee to have such estimates before them.

1655. I notice that in your eleventh axiom you say that a terminus should, if possible, be approached on the level; this axiom is emphasised by the late Mr. Eddy; if, therefore, a terminus be sunk 25 feet in the ground, as at King-street, or elevated 35 feet in the air as at Garden-road, it would not compare favourably with the present terminus extended to the Benevolent Asylum site;—does the objection to a sunken or raised terminus apply with equal force to such a station as you propose at the Markets? I do not think it does, because you find that at the average wayside station you have either to go up steps or down them. The objection is not so great at a wayside station as at a terminus, where people come with luggage.

1656. But in this case the majority of the suburban passengers would disembark at the Markets? No doubt thousands would.

1657. So that to that extent it would be a terminus? Yes, to a great number of passengers.

1658. Do you think that you could provide all the usual conveniences for dealing with so large a number of passengers in the basement of the Markets? I think so, for the class of passengers who would come in would do so without any impedimenta.

1659. Could you make more places of ingress or egress to prevent people from interfering with each other? I think the ingress and egress should be kept entirely separate.

1660. Do you think you have room under the Markets to deal with such a large daily traffic? It is only a question of expense. The Markets could be made practically an open station, by taking up a great deal of the floor, and by letting the enclosure be open to the sky. At present that large arcade is simply a resort for a lot of people who seem to have no business there. It is a question I have not gone into very deeply for this inquiry, because you could not tell where it would lead you to. If anyone goes to the Markets he could see that you could remodel them, and make them into a very fine station. It is only a question of paying more rent.

1661. Would your station at the Benevolent Asylum site be available for the large holiday traffic? That would probably enable you to deal with twice the traffic that is dealt with now at Redfern.

1662. Presuming it was thought desirable not to go to "The Rocks"—stopping, say, at the Markets for the present—would you be able to make such arrangements there as would successfully deal with the urban and suburban traffic and enable the trains to get back? You would deal there with at least twelve trains an hour each way. I think you could deal with twenty; but that is a question I would prefer not to go into, and it could be dealt with better by gentlemen like Mr. Parry.*

1663.

NOTE (on revision):—If an additional bay line be made under George street, we have the authority of Mr. Eddy twice repeated (Questions 1 and 22—3/7/91) that forty trains an hour each way, or a total of eighty trains an hour, could be worked from a station such as the one proposed at the Markets.—(Addendum to the Report of Royal Commission on City Railway.)

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1663. Would you prefer, in any event, to see your scheme extended as far as "The Rocks"? No; at first only as far as Wynyard-square. Then you could double the number of trains, because one train could shunt its engine at the Markets and the next train could go on to Wynyard-square and shunt. At the same time, if the railway were only carried to the Markets at first, an immense traffic could be done even there.
1664. One of the strongest points urged upon us as to the necessity for this extension is the loss of time involved in changing from the train to the tram, and that in extending it even to Hyde Park the time consumed by a suburban resident in getting from home to his business would be considerably shortened. In your scheme to Wynyard-square there would practically be three stations—at Christ Church, the Markets, and Wynyard-square. Owing to the stoppages thereby involved, would the time taken by a suburban passenger in going from his home to his business be much shorter than is taken up under present circumstances? I do not think it would be much shorter than travelling by the tram if the passenger gets his tram at once; but it will have the advantage that he need not get out of his train until he arrives at his destination. As Redfern would be missed there would be only two more stations.
1665. But does he not only object to that only on account of the loss of time? I do not think the objection arises from that only. You have to alight from the train, and you have to start on another journey. The station opposite Christ Church is only shown as a possibility. I do not say that it is required, because there does not seem to be very much traffic on that site; but that station is admirably suited for persons who have business in the great district about Pyrmont, and students for the Technical College.
1666. Do you think that by placing passengers nearer to their places of business, the result to the passengers would be an improvement under your scheme, as compared with the present state of affairs? Yes; infinitely. That seems to be the opinion of nine out of ten people with whom I have discussed the question.
1667. Is not Oxford-street a fairly busy and populous thoroughfare? Yes.
1668. A great number of the work-people in that district live in the other suburbs, what provision would be made for them under your scheme? They would probably continue to use the trams until the eastern suburban line is made.
1669. Would you have any room at your "Rocks" site to compensate for the small park sites, which you would have to take? There is the triangular block between the extension of the North Shore line from Argyle-street to Dawes' Point. That would afford room for a small park. Allowing the George-street block to be 80 feet deep, it would give a piece of ground about an acre and a quarter in area. That would be very close to Dawes' Battery. There is a little reserve in Argyle-place, so that there might not be any necessity for that, but that land could be used as a little recreation ground, and it would be accessible from Argyle Cut.
1670. What special advantage would there be derived from the two circles, one going round Hornsby way, and the other by Balmain;—would you have the same system of traffic there as you would have on the eastern suburbs extension? The advantage of the Balmain route would be that the great population of Balmain and Leichhardt would be able to get into the city by the right or left hand route, according to whichever way suited their business, and trains could be run to much greater advantage when running on a circle, so that no shunting would be required. The Commissioners do not like trains to go in such a way that they have to reverse them. By going on a circle they would always be going the same way.
1671. *Mr. Leuven.*] Is it your real object to bring the passengers right into what you term the heart of the city? Yes.
1672. Do you regard the Victoria Markets as the absolute centre of the city? Yes.
1673. Have you taken in all the resumptions, and put what you consider a fair valuation on them? I think when the official valuers get to work they will find that I am over rather than under the mark. I think it will be more to my credit if it is shown that I have over-estimated the cost of resumption.
1674. Have you had considerable experience in the valuation of property? I have had some.
1675. Is your scheme really intended to connect with North Sydney? It is part and parcel of that scheme.
1676. Is it your opinion that that must come about? It is a requirement of the immediate future.
1677. When Mr. Rennick came from Melbourne do you know whether he had your scheme under consideration? He was under my charge for the first day. Mr. Reid sent for me, and as soon as Mr. Rennick came into town I was with him for the whole of the first day. For the rest of the week he was in charge of the railway authorities; but he was so impressed with my scheme that you will see from his report that in his opinion it is absolutely the best scheme. He had no statistics as to cost, except what he could derive from the reports by the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee. From these Mr. Rennick naturally deduced that my proposals were extremely costly. He, therefore, says, "If cost does not govern the question the western scheme is the best, and it must come some day." He told me personally, "I think Sydney must have two schemes—one through the centre of the city and one down the west, and I have recommended going down Hyde Park, because it appears that costs nothing for resumptions." He was led to understand that the Hyde Park scheme would not be debited with any public or quasi-public property. Therefore, as he simply made estimates on the data put before him, the Hyde Park scheme seemed much the cheaper, and he recommended it.
1678. Had he any knowledge of his own with regard to the cost of the western line? No. The reports were handed to him, and although Mr. Sievers was sent by Mr. Reid to accompany Mr. Rennick and myself, we had no advice from Mr. Sievers. Mr. Sievers did observe, "My goodness, how did you find such a lot of cheap property for your line?"
1679. At all events, Mr. Sievers did admit that he did not know, until you had shown him over the line, that there was so much cheap property? Mr. Sievers never valued the resumptions for my scheme; I think he said as much before the Committee only two or three days ago.
1680. Did Mr. Rennick go with you over your line from end to end? Yes; we spent the whole day, from 10 in the morning until 6 at night.
1681. Did you tell him what you thought would be the cost of resumption? No.
1682. Had he any data to go upon as to what you estimated the resumption would be? No.
1683. Then he came to a conclusion without knowing what the amount of your resumptions was? Yes.
1684. So that he had no information as to what the actual cost of resumption would be? Yes, except that he was with the Railway Department for nearly a week, and could there obtain information.
1685. He had no communication from you as to the value? No; Mr. Rennick was shown over the ground by me. Mr. Sievers was introduced to him, but, so far as I know, gave him no values.

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1686. Had he from Mr. Sievers anything as to the value he put on the resumptions to your line? I know that Mr. Sievers had never valued my resumptions, and he could not have valued them for Mr. Rennick.

1687. Where do you live? I lived for many years at Balmain, and also at Ashfield, I now live at Hornsby, and I come in either by Strathfield or the North Shore line. I travel 40 miles a day on the railway, and I have a good deal of knowledge of it.

1688. From your conversation with passengers, what is the general tenor of their opinions? It is that, if we cannot get anything but the Hyde Park scheme, we had better take Hyde Park than nothing; but if we get what we want it is a line through the centre of the city. They look upon Hyde Park as outside the city with regard to business. The bulk of the travellers want to come where they will be delivered near the business centre of the city.

1689. Has not all the bus traffic for years past, from the eastern suburbs and all round, gone to Barrack-street, or Circular Quay by George and Pitt streets? Yes; right down to Miller's Point, even in spite of the electric tram, it runs still.

1690. Are you fortified in your opinion as to the necessity for a railway down George-street by the great traffic now carried on by the electric tram? Yes.

1691. That is supported by the evidence given by the tramway authorities? Yes.

1692. What is the length of the viaducts on your line? The viaduct is from Engine-street to the corner of Liverpool and Kent streets; it is about 1,920 feet.

1693. Would it interfere with the traffic in the city? Not in the slightest, because the streets are covered in one span. Liverpool, Kent, and Goulburn streets are spanned by iron or steel, and the small streets are spanned by brick arches. Ten years ago I proposed to carry the whole of them on iron girders, after the style of the elevated railway in New York, but bricks have become much cheaper, and I propose now to do it with brick. Mr. Foxlee, who was then the advising engineer for the Commissioners, objected to the viaduct as proposed, and there was a good deal of force in what he said. He said that utilising the additional ground under the iron viaducts would not compensate for its extra cost. The viaduct going across Circular Quay is of a totally different character; it will be of an ornamental character.

1694. It would not be offensive to the eye? It would simply stand on steel columns, and it could be made an ornament to the city, just as the proposed bridge across the harbour could be made an ornament or a disfigurement.

1695. How many lines does it carry? Four.

1696. In the proposed line to Hyde Park, will there be viaducts? Yes; the line will be carried across Belmore Park on a viaduct.

1697. Would the station at Victoria Markets be large enough for many years? I reason by analogy. If you can carry on the traffic in a place half the size of the Victoria Markets surely it can be carried on where I propose to do so.

1698. Are you satisfied that it will be sufficient for a long time? Yes, for a through station. There are many through stations on the underground railway in London which take the local traffic, and which are not as large as this station.

1699. No matter where the terminus is placed, will there not always be a necessity for cab traffic? Yes; and in York-street, on the west side of the Victoria Markets, there is plenty of space for cabs.

1700. Would the proposed station at Christ Church be merely a passing station? Yes; it would be practically a duplicate of the Burwood station.

1701. Would that accommodate all the people who would require to get out between Eveleigh and Liverpool-street? Yes.

1702. Did you ever see Mr. Rennick after the first day, and did he ever ask you for further information? Not on business; but I have sent him some information. It will be seen by his report that Mr. Rennick is one of the strongest supporters I have ever had for my scheme. He had no idea of its cost, however.

1703. Do you think that if Mr. Rennick had come here quite disinterested, apart from any Government control, and if he had positive evidence as to the cost of your resumptions, he would have absolutely favoured your scheme? I could not say that he was not disinterested; but I would say that if he came here with a clean sheet, without the influence of the Blue Books, which he told me he had carefully read, and had to make an examination for himself, without any extraneous influence, he would have recommended this western line.

1704. You do not impute anything to the Department? Certainly not. Only what is called *esprit de corps* might influence him unconsciously.

1705. Have you ever had any conversation with Mr. Sievers as to the cost of your resumptions? Never, since the day he went round with Mr. Rennick, when he said they had never valued the resumptions for my scheme, and that it was utterly wrong to apply the estimate for resumptions in other parts of the city to my scheme.

1706. They are different in every way? Yes.

1707. By your scheme you wish to avoid taking away Hyde Park, or any portion of it, besides giving the public the most central accommodation? Yes, the second consideration having most force with me. I would not object so much to taking part of Hyde Park if it was part and parcel of a complete scheme of which we knew the cost, that is connecting the whole of the suburbs as well as North Shore. North Shore ought to be connected within the next five years.

1708. Is there a good deal of agitation to connect Balmain with the railway? There is a desire to have it connected. Balmain is on high land, and the people have to walk down to the water, and they have a tiresome time up to the Post Office when they get here. A high-level railway would bring them into the heart of the city in a very short distance. At present they have to go a great deal more than 4 miles by tram, and it takes three-quarters of an hour.

1709. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What area would you consider would be efficiently served by the King-street scheme? From Pitt and George streets to the west, and from, perhaps, Hunter-street and Bathurst-street north and south.

1710. Do you think that passengers would rather come to King-street station and walk down to George-street than change at Redfern, and go by the George-street tram? They would not. I would take George-street as the medium line which would separate passengers to the tram and train. That would only be for a short length of George-street. If they were going north of Hunter-street they would go by tram, or if they were going south of Park-street they would go by tram. So that King-street would only serve efficiently the two blocks from Park-street to King-street, and from King-street to Hunter-street.

1711. Would people be likely to go as far back as Park-street in preference to using the tram? Some might; but very few. No one would be mad enough to go into George-street and go back to Park-street.
1712. What is the actual area of the Markets? About 600 feet long by 100 feet wide, and the portion I propose to take under the street would make it 30 feet wider.
1713. Would your four lines be in the street, or would they occupy any portion of the Markets? Three lines would be under the roof of the building, and one line would be under George-street.
1714. Would you have ample room for shunting? There would be no shunting at all—that would be done either before we got to the Markets, in Goodlet and Smith's yard—or it would be done in the tunnels between York-street and the Markets.
1715. Would not that be likely to cause confusion? No; it could be arranged without any difficulty.
1716. How long would it take a train to come in and change the engine from Goodlet's yard to the Markets? It would take no longer than at Redfern at present. It is entirely a railway question, and cannot be affected by locality. Speaking as an outsider, I should say they could work twenty trains an hour in the Markets. I have put down twelve to be certain. Mr. Eddy said forty, both ways, with a bay line.
1717. Would there be sufficient room there to adopt the traverser platform system? There is sufficient room to work a platform by making a large vacant space under Market-street, but I should not advise that. The traverser platform was first proposed by me, in 1890, for the station on "The Rocks," but that is a dead end. It might be adopted at the Markets as long as they were a dead end, but it could be removed when the line was continued to Wynyard-square.
1718. Would you approve of two lines being constructed into the city? With our present population it would be superfluous. Looking to the development of the city, which must go to the south, I cannot see that with a main central terminus at Redfern admitting of development, and a circular railway line connecting with the eastern suburbs and Balmain, we need make any further provision for 50 or 100 years; other termini would be right out south.
1719. Do you agree with Mr. Deane that a branch line could be easily run from Hyde Park to connect with the North Shore line? I believe it could be easily done if money did not matter, but it would be a long and costly line.
1720. Mr. Deane stated that there would be no difficulty in turning off at the end of Hyde Park and getting round to the other side of the city;—I find that that would work out quite easily, but do you think it would be expensive? It is easy. He says in another place that it would be a semi-circular line. It is on the strength of Mr. Deane's evidence that I drew the different lines on my pamphlet plan for making a comparison.
1721. *Vice-Chairman.*] You maintain that your extension would give greater convenience to the majority of people than would be given by the Hyde Park scheme; the Commissioners propose to make an extra charge to passengers on the Hyde Park route;—if your scheme were adopted, do you think that a higher charge would be readily paid by passengers for the greater convenience which would be afforded? I am sure that the great bulk of the season ticket-holders would willingly pay more if my scheme were adopted than is proposed by the Commissioners. I am sure the holders of workmen's tickets would gladly pay a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per day more if my scheme were adopted.
1722. Had you taken out your valuation for resumptions on the basis of twenty-two years' purchase before you had a conversation with Mr. Rennick, or have you made that valuation since? It was made since then.
1723. You had no opportunity of giving in your figures? No. Until I came before this Committee I always abstained from going fully into such matters. Until now I have always thought it was due to me that the resumptions required for my scheme should be sent on for valuation to experts. I have made a valuation now, but my valuation will carry no weight compared with that of an independent expert.

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THURSDAY, 8 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Archibald Forsyth, rope manufacturer, sworn, and examined:—

1724. *Vice-Chairman.*] What are you? Rope manufacturer, merchant and importer, Kent-street and Waterloo. A. Forsyth.

1725. Are you an ex-Member of the Legislative Assembly? Yes; I do not appear before you as an expert, but I have been a great traveller in the principal parts of the world, and while there was not unobservant. I paid particular attention to the various stations and means of distributing railway passengers. I may give the history of this city railway from my point of view. Twenty years ago the residents of the western suburbs got up an agitation to have the railway extended into the city, but there was no talk of a large central station. Subsequently the Railway Commissioners rightly complained that they had not sufficient room, and that they required a new station. The suburban residents in the western district fastened on to that as a means of forcing what they required—that is, a railway extension into

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8 Mar., 1900. into the city. I have no hesitation in saying that any of the proposed schemes will only benefit a limited number of people who reside sufficiently near the proposed station to be able to walk to their places of business. I admit clearly that increased accommodation is required at the railway station. I have been of opinion for years that the piece of land between Devonshire-street and Belmore-road, occupied partly by the cemetery is peculiarly fitted for enlarging the station up to any capacity which will be required for the next 100 years. I think the Committee can have no hesitation in carrying out that part of the scheme. I have observed, in the large majority of the cities that I am acquainted with, that the distribution of passengers is mainly carried on by the employment of light lines of railways, elevated and otherwise, and tramways. The first place of importance is London. There the Great Eastern railway terminus comes right into the heart of the city, and they are in the best possible position—that is the Liverpool-street station. They have only brought the passenger traffic to Liverpool-street. There is another railway of a similar character, but it does not extend to any distance in the country, it simply goes down to Dover, that is, the Holborn Viaduct Station.

1726. Is that the Old London and Dover or the London and Chatham? It is for both. It was first the station of the Greenwich line; it goes fairly into the business centre. When I have mentioned those two, I have stated all that occupy that position.

1727. The South-western railway station comes to Charing Cross which is a very good central position? That is true; but except to a particular part that necessitates a change. There are only two trains a day by which you can go without changing. There is the Victoria station. That comes very well into the centre of the population; but it is very far from the centre of business, it is at least 3 miles. Those are all that I can speak about in that line. I now come to the great lines which go through the great breadth of England. The first one that comes to my mind is the Great Western station, at Paddington, that is fully $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the boundary of the city of London, it is close on 4 miles from the centre of business. Some of their passengers are distributed by the underground railways, and some by tramways, the great bulk by the underground railways, and, of course, a great number who come some distance use cabs, which are absolutely necessary where people have much baggage. Now there is the North-Western, which I suppose, is the largest railway in England. Euston Square, its terminus, is fully 3 miles away from the business part of London, at all events it is not less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1728. Do you mean from the Bank of England? Yes, anywhere about there. The Exchange is what I have in my mind's eye as the business centre. No doubt Euston Square is not so very far out of position as a population centre; but it is very far from the business centre. They have a branch of the Metropolitan railway which joins in a few miles outside the station. That was intended to distribute the passengers throughout London; but owing to the great time which it takes passengers do not go by that line at all, they prefer to come to the principal station, and take the underground railways or the buses which play a very important part in the distribution of railway passengers in London. Then we come to the Midland railway, which is in a similar position. It is slightly nearer to the centre of business, it is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the centre. The Great Northern is in exactly the same position. The exchange of passengers is very inconvenient at both the Great Northern and Midland, inasmuch as they have to walk through tunnels below the streets, a distance of very nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile; but still they go there to reach the underground railway. You will say, perhaps, that these are not Government railways, and that they are not called upon as companies to go in for the benefit of the public.

1729. But there is intense competition with each other? That is the spur, and not patriotic action, such as you are endeavouring to take here.

1730. Are they not bound to study their customers more than our Railway Commissioners are, seeing that the latter have a monopoly? What they rely upon is that there will be proper means of distributing the passengers. Although the metropolitan railway taps these railways a few miles out from the station, they are in the same position as the Midland. Scarcely any one goes by it, because it is very circuitous. Anyone going to the central part of Holborn can walk down from King's Cross, and reach it in less time than by the outer system of metropolitan railways. When you take that into consideration, the idea suggests itself: can the same means of distribution not be used here. Is it not almost open now to the people from the Redfern Station? There is a good tram running along George-street, and it distributes the people, not only to Liverpool or King streets, but within one block of where any one wants to go. It is said that the electric tram is insufficient to carry the present traffic safely. That may be the case; but if a tram were made along Pitt and Kent streets it would be ample for more passengers than will ever pass during the next fifty years. Many people say, "Yes; but they change into a railway in London when they change out of a large station." There is practically not a particle of difference between the underground railways and the tramways, the only difference is that the railway goes a little faster. Now, I would direct attention to New York. The great bulk of the American lines come into New York, and have their termini at Jersey City. Of course, that is separated by a river about 2 miles wide from New York. On the northern part of New York there is a station, built about fifteen years ago, called the Grand Central Station. The New York Central and the other New England railways came in, and get accommodation there. They had the same means of carrying it down town further as they had to carry it as far as that; but they considered that that was a convenient place, and that the proper mode of distributing passengers was by means of overground railways or trams, which are very numerous about New York. When I was there last there was a discussion going on as the propriety of putting a bridge across the North River at Yonkers. I was under the impression that the bridge was going on; but I found on inquiry that they had elected not to go on with the bridge. They have built one about 20 miles up the river, and they cross into the same line, and they are going to use the present Central Station at New York. It is 4 miles from the actual centre of business, and I will admit that the business part of New York comes up to "Fifth Avenue Hotel" on Broadway. After years of experience they have taken no means of bringing the station nearer, simply because they find that the means of distribution is ample. I hold that the same condition of affairs exists here.

1731. Do not so many people live in the suburbs on the other side of the rivers that they land in the ferry steamers, and do not use the tramways at all? That is on the Brooklyn side.

1732. But on the New Jersey side also? Yes; but I am now speaking about the railways. There are not so many ferries on the North River as there are on the East River. I think the ferries are confined to four between New York and Jersey city, whereas between New York and Brooklyn there are at least a dozen, besides the bridge.

1733.

1733. Still these ferries are crowded with business gentlemen in the morning? Yes. New York is very wealthy, and more able to put a bridge over the North River, than we are to put one across our harbour, which is less than one-fourth the distance; but still they have never done so. In conversations which I had with gentlemen in New York it was pointed out that to create a great station in that part of New York would cost so much that it could not be faced. It is on valuable land, and would involve an enormous amount of compensation. The passengers, of course, have to cross over in a ferry. Then, to reach their places of business, a great number have to take trams or omnibuses. That shows that the New York people are not labouring under the idea that it is their duty to bring railway stations into all parts of the town, or even into the centre of the town, because it is too expensive. It would be a great benefit to those living in the immediate neighbourhood, but it is no benefit to others. Now San Francisco is situated similarly. The main part of the railway is across the bay at Oakland. They have a railway coming in on the southern side which goes down to San Jose and likewise embraces the South Pacific Railway. That comes in on the southern side of San Francisco, but it does not come into the town at all, it stops on the margin, the same as if our station stopped at Eveleigh. There has been no attempt to bring it into the city, because they have ample means of distribution by tram, omnibuses, and cabs. Calcutta is a very large place, and stands in exactly the same position. The main railway stations are over on the Houra side, opposite the city. Its approach is on a pontoon bridge, and the bridge is broken once every second day to allow vessels to pass. That portion of the line at Houra is not a government railway, but upon the eastern side of Calcutta there is a government line, and it stops at the margin of the city—it is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the main part of the town. Passengers have to be distributed in exactly the same way, although it is nearly all done by omnibuses. Cairo is in a position to have the railway brought into the heart of the city if it is thought proper, but the railway on the eastern side stops outside the city. The railway which goes up the Nile is on the opposite side of the Nile, and you have to cross a long bridge to reach it. Then there is Naples, a very important city of 800,000 inhabitants. A great number of transformations were made there lately, and if they had thought necessary they could have brought the railway near the centre of the city, but they have not touched the railway since I was there, fifteen years ago. Rome is exactly the same, and also Milan. Vienna is a very large and important place, and the whole of the railways there are on the margin of the city. There are only two sets of stations there—the one serves the western and the north, the other serves the southern and the south-eastern. None of them come into the city at all. Paris, of course, is very mixed. One of the Parisian railways comes right into the very centre. The northern is at a moderate distance rather out of the centre of population; but, on the whole, somewhat in the same position as our railway station with regard to population and business. The other railways from the south-west are situated at a considerable distance from the centre of the city, at least 3 miles. Now, there is Melbourne. The Engineer-in-Chief for Railways in that city came here to report on the city railway extension. He submitted a valuable report, on the whole, but he must have come here under the impression that he was not called upon to decide whether the railway should be brought into the city, but that it must be brought in, and that the only question was, which was the best place. Any one reading the report carefully will see that that is the case. Although the stations in Melbourne are very near the centre of business, they are altogether on one side, and they are altogether away from the centre of population. There is no station within miles of the centre of population in Melbourne, they are situated at the extreme south corner. One would have thought that if the Engineer-in-Chief had been impressed with the necessity of extending the railway into this city he would have endeavoured to carry out such an extension in Melbourne; it certainly requires it much more than Sydney. I believe that the Redfern Station wants enlarging, and that there is ample means of doing so by extending it to the block between Devonshire-street and Belmore Park. The height of it is such as to bring it to the level of the present railway. Whether Devonshire-street is diverted or not the height is sufficient to enable them to pass over it as if it did not exist. From that point any system of railways to the North Shore and other suburbs can be carried out better than from King-street. I hold that a railway along the western side of the city is by far the most suitable, but I do not think such a railway is required at the present time. Whenever it is determined to connect the North Shore with Sydney the railway must be carried along the western ridge and not on the eastern side. In my opinion, it is the duty of the Committee to recommend the construction of a station at the old cemetery, that would be an enlargement of the present Redfern Station, and that would be adequate for all the traffic. With regard to the scheme which takes a piece of Hyde Park, closes up Elizabeth-street, and occupies two squares of buildings, and likewise the site of the Supreme Court, I look upon that as a perfect scheme of madness. People have been driven into it through a number of circumstances joined together. If any person had proposed it a few years ago, before all these schemes were discussed, it would be said that he was mad, and it would be perfectly correct. Take the proposal to have a station at King-street; if a person wants to go down to Brickfield Hill it would be easier for him to do so by leaving the train at the present station than by going to King-street. If you wanted to go as far as Hunter-street, or farther, it would not be easier to reach it from the present station than the proposed one. The attention of the Committee may not have been directed to the formation of Kent-street. Kent-street runs from Liverpool-street right down to Miller's Point in a straight line. There is no doubt that a tramway along that street would offer very great facilities to the citizens of Sydney. The present station, with increased means of distribution, is far preferable to the proposal to make a station at King-street, and the cost would not be one-fourth.

1734. I gather that you are of opinion that the distribution of passengers can be better effected by a multiplicity of tramways than by any one railway which we can run into Sydney? Yes.

1735. Has your opinion on that point been at all influenced by the great success of the George-street tram? Yes.

1736. It is a very natural suggestion which has occurred to a great many people that we might use tramways instead of going to the expense of a great station, but we have had before us two of the most experienced officers in the railway service specially identified with the transit of the suburban passengers, and they both say that if we had three or even four tramways into the city it would not give the same accommodation to the suburban passengers as the Hyde Park station would? I do not like to advance opinions contrary to those of experts, but I hold the opinion that four tramways would carry more people than the railway could convey.

1737. You know that the great suburban traffic consists of people coming in during the morning and going out during the evening? Yes.

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1738. Will not that increase, seeing that Sydney is rapidly becoming a city of warehouses and offices and people are living outside of it? Yes.
1739. So that the number of people going to and from the city every day will increase as years roll by? Yes.
1740. Mr. Kneeshaw, who is in charge of the tramways, tells us that in the morning the George-street tramway now carries as much traffic as George-street can carry, and that he cannot put anything more on? I believe that is so.
1741. At present in George-street the natural street traffic is about half the business, and twice a day an equal amount of traffic is congested into one or two hours;—do you not see the difficulty? Yes; but the same difficulty will occur here with the King-street trams that is now stated to occur in George-street.
1742. We were also told by people who represent the western suburbs that they estimate that they lose twenty minutes a day by having to move from the railway to the tram;—do you think that is a fair estimate? Yes.
1743. Whereas they say if they were brought into King-street they would save a good deal of that? Yes; but what about the other people who do not carry on business near King-street?
1744. They airily think that the other people will be equally inconvenienced;—is your business in the west of Sydney? Yes.
1745. The distance from Elizabeth-street to George-street is not very great; but it turns out that the George-street tram has captured nearly the whole of the traffic to the railway from the city, so that they have taken off the railway trams altogether;—does not that prove that the George-street tram puts the people down closer to their places of business than the other trams do? Most decidedly. Far more people come in and out to the western part of the city than to the eastern.
1746. But still is it not curious that all the people in the western suburbs, through their spokesmen, advocate a station at Hyde Park? Yes; I cannot attempt to account for that.
1747. Do you think that if a railway were made down the western side of the city, as Mr. Selfe proposes, it would accommodate more people than a railway to Hyde Park? With the various stations which he proposes it would; but if it was confined to one station, the same as the Hyde Park proposal, I do not suppose the difference would be much in favour of the western side.
1748. If he had only one station at the Markets, would it be much more convenient than one station at St. James' Road? I do not think so.
1749. But if he had three stations as he proposes, would he distribute the people much more successfully? Yes; he would distribute a larger number who could reach their places of business without changing into a vehicle, but it would be most expensive to do so. I say the proposal is not within reason. What is to recompense the other classes of people who do not get any benefit from the railway for the tremendous expense of bringing some people closer to their places of business.
1750. Mr. Eddy calculated that 1d. added to the fare would make the line to St. James' Road a self-supporting line? I am prepared to accept that.
1751. That would not put any extra burden of taxation on the public? I think that was on the supposition that the cost of the line would not exceed about £450,000, because he then proposed to get a portion of the park free of charge.
1752. It is not proposed that they should pay for the value of the land taken from the Park, and that would add about £200,000 to the cost of the line? They will never pay for the value of the Park, for they will never get an inch of it. I rely upon the good sense of the Legislature to prevent such a spoliation.
1753. You will admit that the streets of Sydney are very narrow, and are not very well adapted for tramways? Yes.
1754. We cannot make a tramway in Sussex-street on account of the traffic, and because it is so narrow? Yes.
1755. But we could make a tramway down Kent-street? Yes.
1756. Would not that take up a great deal of space? Yes; and as far as I am concerned, I would sooner be without it.
1757. Do you think that most of the business people would rather do without it? Yes. At the same time, it is one of the streets which distinctly invites the construction of a tramway.
1758. Does it lend itself to going on to Miller's Point, and joining the George-street tramway, so as to make a circular tramway? Yes.
1759. It is rather tempting to an engineer; but do you think the public would rather not have it? Yes; I mean the business people in the street, not the public generally.
1760. Do you think the business people in George-street would rather not have the tramway? Before it was constructed they were against it, but now they are in favour of it.
1761. You remember the old tramway down Pitt-street;—did the shopkeepers like that? No.
1762. Do you think they would like an electric tram running down there now? I am sure that if you took a vote of the people in Pitt-street now, more than two-thirds of them would be in favour of such a tramway.
1763. Do you think the merchants and office people would like it? I cannot say.
1764. Would not it block the traffic? Yes.
1765. Is not that all an argument in favour of making a city railway if you could make it pay? Yes, the argument tends in that direction most decidedly.
1766. You will admit that a railway can dispose of passenger traffic much more quickly and effectively than any tramway? Yes, than any one tramway; but if they liked to run sufficient tram-cars in George-street they will convey quite as many passengers as any one line of railway. Of course, the other traffic would not admit of that. But four lines of tramways could carry more passengers than the railway could take, and they could carry on the ordinary traffic of the city as well.
1767. The officers of the Department say that that is not the case, and that if you take the railway into the city it would carry all the suburban trains to the city terminus without stopping? One thing which makes me oppose the King-street station is the narrow outlet for it. There is no space in King-street to take away the traffic, and there will be a block.
1768. They propose to widen Elizabeth-street and St. James' Road? I understand they are going to take the whole of Elizabeth-street, between King and Park streets.

1769. Do you think that is objectionable? Yes, very objectionable. There is another objection which I have not stated, and it will not be realized until later on—that is, the immense amount of smoke and the smell from burnt grease—which will create a great nuisance in the city. I had the misfortune to live in Melbourne, right opposite the Flinders-street Station, and I positively went away from there on that account. It is the same now at Redfern Station.

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1770. But they tell us that steam will be superseded by electric motors before very long? That would take away the objection. I might be reconciled, even to taking a portion of Hyde Park, under certain conditions. When the agitation started it was merely asked that the railway should be taken further into the city. It was only years afterwards that a large new station was advocated. They might, without much detriment to the Park, have a station there if they covered it in, and had the station only on that part at the back of the Registrar-General's office. Now, however, they talk of taking the railway into the city, and having a great railway station there.

1771. The principal difficulty under the scheme which you propose, of distributing the railway passengers by means of electric trams, is that, when all the tramways are converted into electric trams, there will be such a concentration of traffic in Elizabeth and George streets that the railway traffic will be too much, and we must make separate provision for it? If you have four tramways there will be much less concentration than with two.

1772. Then you would have to spoil four streets? I consider it would benefit the streets, because the traffic would be better distributed.

1773. *Vice-Chairman.*] You practically make a distinction in your remarks on the railway extension between centres of business and centres of population? Yes.

1774. You said that the result of your observation of other large cities beyond the colonies is that railway termini are really brought to the centre of population, and not to the centre of business? They are brought more to the centre of population than to the centre of business; but they are not even brought far into the centre of the city, so as to be near the centre of population.

1775. Do you think that our present railway-station, or a new one on the Benevolent Asylum site would be close to the centre of population? I think it would be as near as possible.

1776. Do you think that nothing further should be done in the way of railway extension, and that the convenience of the people could be met by further tram extension? Yes.

1777. In making these comparisons between Sydney and other cities, have you considered whether there are any peculiarities in Sydney which would render peculiar methods necessary? There are some difficulties, but they could be easily surmounted at slight expense. For instance, the tramway that comes up Elizabeth-street need not go into Pitt-street at all from the new station; it might go straight through Belmore Park to Elizabeth-street. The Pitt-street tram need not go into Pitt-street until it passes Belmore-road, so that there would be only two trams going into the station. It would be a great improvement if the tramway went round Miller's Point by Kent-street, so as to form a circular route.

1778. Is there anything in the irregular conformation of Sydney and its narrow streets which would make the method of distribution which you advocate more difficult than it is in some of those cities which have wide streets, and a regular conformation? It would be more difficult in Sydney than in many of the cities I have referred to. For instance, in Melbourne they have to do the whole of the distribution through their streets, but they are so wide that they offer ample accommodation.

1779. Have you fully considered that point in arriving at a conclusion as to the relative merits of railway and tramway accommodation in Sydney? Yes.

1780. You do not think the irregular conformation of Sydney is an insuperable difficulty? The conformation of Sydney is not very suitable for the extension of railways or for increasing the tramways.

1781. Do you think that the amount of convenience which will be afforded to suburban and other travellers in carrying out the scheme before the Committee will be commensurate with the cost of £1,500,000? I certainly do not. I say that the passengers can be distributed better and easier from a station at Devonshire-street than they can at King-street.

1782. Do you express a preference for a railway into the city by a western route rather than the one now before the Committee? I do; only I qualify it by saying that I do not think the extension into the western part of the city is required, unless you are going to connect it with North Sydney.

1783. Would you wait until the connection is made with North Sydney first? No; you must determine that question beforehand. If you construct the railway to King-street, and then determine to go to North Sydney, it will cost an immense sum of money.

1784. Leaving out the North Sydney connection, what route do you think would give most convenience? The western route. A far greater number of passengers go to the west than to the east of the city. The eastern passengers are mainly lawyers and professional men of other classes, whereas the great bulk of the people—storekeepers, shopkeepers, and manufacturers—are engaged in the west of the city.

1785. The great advantage of distribution by trams is that you have many stoppages, and thus place the maximum number of people as close as possible to their places of business? Yes; it distributes them better for all classes.

1786. Your main objection to the railway extension is the impossibility of having frequent stoppages, and putting down people close to their places of business? Yes; and I wish to emphasise the fact that I am only advocating the system which is carried out in large cities in every part of the world.

1787. Do you advocate it because it will give the greatest convenience to the greatest number of people? Yes.

1788. *Mr. Shepherd.*] One of the principal arguments in favour of the extension into the city is that it will save time;—would the saving of time only affect those living in the immediate neighbourhood of the King-street terminus? Yes.

1789. Would there be any saving of time for those who had to go half a mile? There would be a loss of time; many of them would have to go back towards the old station for a long distance.

1790. Within what area would there be any saving of time if people were landed at King-street? You might fairly take Hunter-street to Pitt-street, and up to Park-street; that would embrace one-fourth of the passengers.

1791. Do you think that a person coming by the railway would gain time by going to King-street in preference to taking a George-street tram, when he would be dropped close to his place of business? No, he would not gain time. Only those immediately alongside the railway station would gain any advantage.

If

- A. Forsyth. If I wanted to go near Park-street, I would not be nearer to it if I went to King-street, than if I got out at Redfern and went by the tram.
- 8 Mar., 1900. 1792. Do you think that anyone living outside the boundaries of Market-street, Pitt-street, and Hunter-street, would take the George-street tram, instead of going to the King-street Railway station? Yes.
1793. There is another scheme proposed by Mr. Selfe; are you acquainted with that proposal? I do not know the details; but I understand generally what he proposes.
1794. Which do you think would give convenience to the largest number of people—going by railway to King-street, or by railway to the Victoria Markets? If the railway were carried out as far as Mr. Selfe proposes, I would hardly choose between the two; but if Mr. Selfe's proposal stopped at Wynyard-square I should say that his proposal was by far the best. That would simply make it a passenger station for the suburbs alone. The connection with North Shore might be made afterwards.
1795. Have you come to the conclusion that there is no necessity to bring the railway into the heart of the city? There is no necessity whatever. If you make up your mind to go on with the connection at North Shore, Mr. Selfe's line is the best. But if that is not decided upon, neither the Western line nor the King-street line is required at present.
1796. *Mr. Levien.*] Would you recommend the erection of a new station at Belmore Park and doing away with the Redfern station at the present time? I would not do away with the Redfern station, I only propose its enlargement.
1797. Would you recommend the erection of a new station at Belmore Park? Yes, as quickly as it could be done.
1798. Then would you follow that up with a regular system of tram service throughout the whole city? Yes.
1799. Would you make a circle around Miller's Point, so as to connect the whole of the other systems? Yes? I would circularise the whole of the trams.
1800. Do you think that the service which you propose would be sufficient to meet all requirements for many years to come? Yes; for the next thirty or forty years. Practically, we have not got tramways in Sydney; we have simply railways in the streets.
1801. Supposing the present system were changed into electric tramways, do you think there would be sufficient facilities for the passenger traffic? Yes; you would give more facilities than by having a railway station at King-street.
1802. With regard to Mr. Selfe's proposal, do you think that the viaducts there proposed would be offensive to the eye? I do not think they need necessarily be offensive. They have two kinds of elevated railways in New York, and they are not offensive; one is carried on pillars, and the other on brackets.
1803. Mr. Selfe has a number of viaducts in his proposal;—do you think that they would in any way militate against his scheme? No; in Berlin, in the circular railway, a great portion of it is carried on brick arches. There are miles and miles of them.
1804. Do you think that a station at Victoria Markets would be the most central we could have? It may be justifiable to use the Markets for that purpose, as they are of no other use, but I am not in favour of that proposal.
1805. Where would you have the central station? I would have it somewhere in that locality; but I think it is very much cramped.
1806. He says that it is larger than the Mansion House Station in London? Yes; but that is only a sort of passing station for the underground railway; it is not a railway station in the proper sense of the word. At the same time, I think the Markets would be large enough for all that he proposes.
1807. He proposes it as a central station? No; he carries his line on to "The Rocks."
1808. Does his proposal to connect with North Sydney meet with your approval? Yes; I think it is inevitable that there should be railway communication with North Shore within the next ten years. There is bound to be a bridge and a railway there.
1809. Would you advocate his proposal as going in that way? Yes; but until you make up your mind to connect North Sydney with the City I do not think Mr. Selfe's railway is required. I think if Mr. Selfe's railway stopped at Wynyard-square, it would be preferable to the King-street scheme.
1810. What is your impression as to the opinion of travellers by the train with regard to this proposal? The people from the western suburbs want to come to Hyde Park, but if you take the general public, I think opinion is about equally divided as to whether the railway should be taken to the east side or to the west side. I think very few now advocate any line which would go through Hyde Park. The Ashfield people do not now dare to advocate going through the park, with perhaps the exception of half a dozen who are very brazen, audacious men.
1811. Are you opposed to a railway going through the park at all? Yes.
1812. *Vice-Chairman.*] Why do you advocate the extension of the railway down the western side of the city in connection with the North Shore extension? Because it is the only way you can take it, otherwise it would require a tunnel.
1813. You do not advocate that to bring in the suburban passengers, but simply to connect the city with North Sydney? I do so in order to bring in the country people from Newcastle and elsewhere who are coming to the city.
1814. You do not advocate it to bring the suburban people into the city? No; but to accommodate the country beyond, so as to bring them into the city, and then distribute them.

John Shewan, laboratory attendant, Medical School, University of Sydney, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Shewan. 1815. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you an engineer? No, but I have taken a very great interest in engineering all my life. I intended to follow that profession, but I was unable to do so. Perhaps I owe an apology for sending in this scheme, but at the time the late Premier sent to Melbourne for an engineer I had my holidays, and as I have a good deal of knowledge of engineering, I thought it would be a piece of amusement to go over the ground, and scheme out a city railway on my own account, on a line which had often occurred to

to me to be a good route. I was so struck with the suitability of the route that I made plans, and I had them in my possession when the advertisement was put in the paper inviting those who had any plans to bring them before the Committee. I thought it was only my duty to send in the scheme, which I wish to submit. J. Shewan. 8 Mar., 1900.

1816. Have you a description of the scheme? Yes, it is as follows:—

I HAVE the honor to submit, for the inspection of the Public Works Committee a set of drawings which embody a suggestion for a City Railway for Sydney. During the last fourteen years I have taken a great interest in the City Railway question, but do not remember having seen a plan such as I have sketched. This plan would only serve for suburban passenger traffic; it is generally admitted that Redfern is quite central for long distance trains, and only requires extending. A tunnel in a climate like Sydney is no doubt very objectionable; but if we must take one, it should be the most comfortable that can be built, and as free from curves as possible. The tunnel shown in my drawings may have some novel points; large and airy, it is lighted in daytime by glass-frames, let into the kerb at intervals of about 50 feet (see plans B and D), and, if required, at night by electric glow lamps. The tunnel being placed under the street, no land need be resumed, except where station accommodation is required.

Trains from Homebush, Belmore, Hurstville, &c., leaving Redfern Station would cross Devonshire-street, Belmore Park, and Markets, 20 feet or so above street level, where they would stop at Haymarket Station (see plan A). The property to be resumed here cannot be said to be very valuable. Leaving this station, by a gentle curve, trains would enter the tunnel under Castlereagh-street at Goulburn street, the street level now being above the railway. The next stop would be at King-street Station (see plan B). Although the platforms are partly under the street, this is practically an open station, the street being carried over the station as a bridge. There are no buildings on the part of the east side of the street to be resumed, but several would have to come down on the west side. The tunnel extends to Bent-street. The trains would emerge at the south of the present Education Office, which would be resumed, as shown in the map and plan C, and would cross Bridge-street 20 feet or so above street level, entering the Circular Quay station. The land to be resumed here has no very valuable buildings on it, if we except the Macquarie-place frontage. This station would be a considerable height above the level of the Quay, and, if built on arches, the space thus obtained would, no doubt, be valuable enough as shops, cold or other storage, to pay interest on the station building.

The principal point I claim for this scheme is that I have not seen a suggestion giving three stations, reaching to the waters of the harbour, and resuming less land, or land of less value.

I cannot afford to send scale drawings; this would require a special survey; nor can I risk making a statement of the probable cost, but hope that what I have sent may be sufficiently interesting to merit inspection.

FRIDAY, 9 MARCH, 1899.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | The Hon. ANDREW CARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Shewan, laboratory attendant, Medical School, University of Sydney, sworn, and further examined:—

1817. *Vice-Chairman.*] You promised, yesterday, that you would go through the plans and give a detailed description of what you proposed? There are a number of people in the suburbs who require a railway, and who have an idea that unless it is an inexpensive line they will not get it for a long time. I share that opinion myself. The scheme which I submit is worked out in order to give the very cheapest line of railway that I think is possible. A small station at Goulburn-street would be a great convenience. It is a great distance from Redfern Station to King-street, and a station south of Liverpool-street or Goulburn-street would be a very great convenience. The line I propose goes across the top of the Belmore Markets. The green space to the west of Castlereagh-street, fronting on to it, is land to be resumed for a station. There are no valuable buildings on that block of land. The ground rises at Goulburn-street. The south end of the platform will be very much above the level of Campbell-street—about 20 feet. The north end will be below the level of Goulburn-street so that it will be convenient for the line to take a gentle curve to get under Castlereagh-street. The line is continued right under Castlereagh-street for the whole length of that street. In my drawings I have shown the section of the tunnel, not the scale, but quite sufficient to give an idea of the treatment of the whole subject. Here are the walls of buildings on each side of the street, and the footpaths and roadway are shown. The whole of the street is simply scooped out. There will be brick retaining walls built on each side. A section of the Cleveland-street tunnel will give a very good idea of what is intended. I have shown a set of iron gratings set into the kerbstone with pieces of glass in them, similar to the arrangement in the Victoria Markets for lighting the basement. That is not an absolute necessity, because now that electricity is cheap, the trains could be fitted with electric lamps, and could be automatically lighted up every time they entered. That would reduce the expense of the tunnel. I propose to have a station approaching King-street on either side of Castlereagh-street. Land would have to be resumed for the station between King-street and Market-street. A number of people would object to a fine, straight, level street like Castlereagh-street being broken up, and a section of it taken away altogether. Taking that into consideration I have shown the street carried over the station as on a bridge. If there was no objection to the street being removed altogether, the whole of the Castlereagh-street frontage from Market-street to King-street might be resumed, and the result would be an open and perfect station. It would, of course, be below the level of King-street and Market-street and Castlereagh-street. The tunnel would continue under Castlereagh-street and would make a slight bend under Blich-street. It would come out under Bent-street near where the Education Office is. It would cross Bridge-street and would then be above the level of that street. Bridge-street would have to be lowered a little and Bent-street would have to be raised a little. The trains would cross Bridge-street by a bridge. The work of raising and lowering would not be very great. There is a block of land having a frontage to Pitt-street which is bounded by Circular Quay on the north, and there is the land which is on the eastern side to Macquarie-place, that would form the terminal station. J. Shewan. 9 Mar., 1900.

1818.

- J. Shewun.
9 Mar., 1900.
1818. *Dr. Garran.*] What is the length of that? It is about 750 feet from Circular Quay to Bridge-street.
1819. What is the breadth of it? I reckon it would easily accommodate four platforms. Possibly, if the waiting rooms and booking offices were kept below on the level of Bridge-street, there would be ample room for six platforms, about 300 feet in width, from one side to the other.
1820. Have you provided for the shunting of return trains? I allow that to be done along the platforms. An engine could shunt on the middle line.
1821. Would that be for suburban, and not long-distance trains? Yes, the scheme is for suburban trains.
1822. *Vice-Chairman.*] Would you have to interfere with any sewers or gas mains? I have not made inquiry on that subject.
1823. How long is the tunnel under Castlereagh-street? Three-quarters of a mile.
1824. What provision have you made for ventilation? From the side of each section of the tunnel there would be a passage, which would go horizontally to a convenient place, and it would then be formed into an upright chimney.
1825. Would you rely upon mechanical appliances for drawing out the hot air? I would suggest an electric motor, of four or five horse-power, so arranged that the station-master by turning a switch could clear the tunnel of foul air.
1826. What important buildings are on the west side of the station in Castlereagh-street? The principal ones are the Arcade and Tivoli Theatre, the others are small shops.
1827. What depth do you take on the west side for the station? That would have to be determined by circumstances.
1828. Would you interfere with the buildings on the Pitt-street frontage? No; I think the line would have to be drawn between the Pitt and Castlereagh streets frontages. Up to that point the land would have to be resumed.
1829. How much below the level of King-street would the proposed station be? The same depth as the tunnel—probably 20 feet.
1830. What means would you adopt for raising the passengers up to the top of the street? By means of stairs.
1831. What part of Bent-street do you propose to raise? Since I made these drawings, Dalgety and Co.'s offices have been built on the corner of Bent and O'Connell streets. I have altered my plans so as to avoid that.
1832. Do you propose to raise the street in front of Dalgety's new offices? Yes; but the work would not be worth speaking about. It would only have to be raised about 5 feet.
1833. Would that increase the declivity from Dalgety & Co.'s office to the Lands Office? Yes.
1834. At your terminal station, would the trains have to come in diagonally? Yes.
1835. Do you practically take the western side for platforms? I intended that the platforms should be on the diagonal.
1836. If your total length from Bridge-street to the north-western corner of George and Pitt streets is only 750 feet, how could you get a platform at your terminal station 600 feet long if it is diagonal? There would only be four platforms, and coming in diagonally would limit the amount of depth which could be got for the platforms.
1837. Would it not also diminish the length? No; it would add to the length.
1838. Would it not be very difficult to get four platforms 600 feet long in that station? There would be some difficulty. The approach leading to the station would have to be used to some extent for shunting purposes. The platforms would extend up over Macquarie-place.
1839. What objection would there be to making the line straighter, coming between Young and Loftus streets? I think the Custom-house building is there. There are no valuable buildings where I propose to resume land in Pitt-street and Bon Accord-lane. There is no valuable land such as there would be on the block occupied by Mort's buildings.
1840. What is your estimate for the cost of the whole line? I have already said that I could not risk giving an estimate, as it is out of my line. I am simply one of the public who would like to see the railway made. If it is an expensive proposal it will not be carried out for some time, and I simply give this as a contribution towards the solution of the difficulty. I do not believe that anything cheaper can be devised, and I firmly believe that it would answer the purpose.
1841. *Vice-Chairman.*] Why do you want those large resumptions on each side of Castlereagh-street to the King-street station? For waiting-rooms and commodious stairs leading down to the platforms. If you resume the land from King to Market streets, there will be very wide stairs going down from King-street on both sides, and also from Market-street.
1842. Does not that seem to be a large quantity of land to resume in a valuable part of the city merely for approaches to a station? Yes. In the smaller scheme the resumption is not long enough for platforms, and they are shown as continued under the tunnel. The ends of the platforms would be under cover.
1843. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you taken into consideration any other street besides Castlereagh-street? Yes; and I think I am safe in saying that it is not possible to get the same arrangements in any of the other streets east or west of the line I suggest.
1844. Have you considered all the streets on the west side of George-street? Yes. There is only one point I wish to claim anything for, and it is this—that neither at the Haymarket, nor at Circular Quay, nor at the King-street station, are there any valuable buildings to be taken down, as would be the case in any other part of the city.

William Greenwood, A. M.I.C.E., sworn, and examined:—

1845. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you an engineer? Yes.

1846. Are you practising in Sydney? No; for some time I have been contracting.

1847. Do you wish to submit a scheme for a city railway to the Committee? Yes; it is as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY—1900.

The design for the line I am about to describe was prepared by me some thirteen or fourteen years ago, and notwithstanding the changes due to the growth of the city, I am of opinion that the view I then took was the correct one, viz., that Redfern should remain the terminus for all long-distance traffic, and that the suburban traffic, after passing through Redfern station, should be taken along the western side of George-street, by way of Wynyard-square to the Circular Quay.

Description of route.

Starting from Redfern Station, the line would pass through the Benevolent Asylum grounds: thence on viaduct across Belmore-road, Belmore Park, Hay-street, Belmore Markets, and Campbell-street; thence in embankment and cutting would run between Pitt and Castlereagh streets, passing under Goulburn and Liverpool streets, and curving in a north-westerly direction passes under Pitt-street, skirting the offices of the Water and Sewerage Board; thence in cutting crosses under George-street at its intersection with Bathurst-street, passing in front of the Town Hall; thence in tunnel under York-street, and in open cutting through Wynyard-square, and with a north-easterly curve would pass under Margaret and Jamieson streets, Church Hill reserve and Grosvenor-street, crossing under George-street at its intersection with Essex-street; thence under Pitt-street and Alfred-street, and across the Circular Quay, where the line would enter into tunnel at Phillip-street, passing under Albert and Macquarie streets into Government Domain.

This may be said to complete the city portion of the line; but as I hold very strong opinions on the question of terminal stations in the heart of a large city, I intend that the city railway shall form a part only of a circular line, which will continue from the Circular Quay, through Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, Rushcutter Bay, Paddington, Woollahra, and Waverley, round the Centennial Park and Randwick (with branches to Randwick and Kensington Racecourses), skirting North Botany and Waterloo, and joining the Illawarra railway near Erskineville, thus completing a circular railway back to Redfern. From Redfern to Wynyard-square there would be four lines of way, and thence to Circular Quay and on the suburban line two lines of way.

In connection with this scheme I propose to construct a loop-line from near Stanmore to a 70-acre shunting ground near Shea's Creek, on which I propose to build self-acting gravitation sorting sidings—thereby virtually increasing the size (or working capacity) of Darling Harbour Goods Yard to three times its present capacity—and relieving the main line near Eveleigh of all goods traffic passing from South Coast district to South, West, or Northern lines.

The railway passes through the business centre of the city, does not interfere with any valuable buildings—public or private—and, having stations at the Cathedral, Wynyard-square, and Circular Quay, affords accommodation to all passengers resident in the railway suburbs; and the proposed stations at Wynyard-square and the Circular Quay, being adjacent to the wharfs at which the ferry traffic centres, will serve the ever-increasing population resident on the shores of the harbour.

The location of the line is such that it admits of easy and direct extension to North Shore, either by high-level bridge, train-ferry, or subaqueous tunnel.

I suggest that the electric tramway should be taken on the eastern side of the Custom House, to connect with the proposed electric tram system at Bent-street, thereby leaving the Bridge-street terminus available for Government buildings.

The line is designed primarily as a passenger line, but goods depôts would be provided at Paddington, Woollahra, Waverley, Randwick, North Botany, Alexandria, &c., and in the future, should it be deemed necessary, the levels are so adjusted as to admit of sidings being laid to the various Government wharfs at Circular Quay and Woolloomooloo.

The essential feature of the scheme is that, being a circular railway, all delay and danger consequent on shunting at a terminal station is thereby avoided.

I propose (when increase of traffic warrants it) to build a new central station on the Benevolent Asylum grounds, which would be used as a terminal station for all main-line (or long-distance) trains; but would only be used as a through or bye-station for all suburban traffic.

I estimate the cost of a combined line of railway, including resumptions, as follows:—

Redfern to Phillip-street, Circular Quay	£719,548
Circular Quay—through eastern suburbs to Erskineville	£850,000

£1,569,548

This sum will provide 12 miles of remunerative railway, whereas the St. James' road and King-street schemes, costing the same amount, will only build about 1 mile of unproductive line. I estimate the city and suburban circular railway will pay 10 per cent. on the outlay, whereas any Hyde Park or King-street lines must result in an absolute loss, as they cannot even pay working expenses.

1848. Do you agree that a city railway extension is primarily necessary in order to bring suburban passengers closer to their places of business? Yes; the suburban traffic is 91 per cent. of the whole, and if you include the mountain and tourist trains it is 95 per cent.

1849. Is that the main consideration which prompted you to draw up a scheme of this kind? Yes.

1850. Do you think it is possible to deal with that traffic by having a railway station on the Benevolent Asylum site and distributing passengers by electric trams? I said three years ago that when the George-street tram would be built it would not affect the railway question. The George-street electric tram has more work than it can do without carrying the railway passengers at all. It will be much worse when the Forest Lodge and other trams are diverted into George-street.

1851. Is it not a fact that the main part of the traffic during busy hours consists of railway passengers so far as the George-street tram is concerned? No; Mr. Kneeshaw says that out of 50,000 passengers only 26,000 are railway passengers, and 24,000 are ordinary passengers, and he said that the 26,000 railway passengers ought not to come by the tramway, because it would block the other passengers.

1852. He does not want the railway traffic on his trams at all? No; and he wants to drive them up to Hyde Park, which he will not do.

1853. Do you admit that it is a primary necessity which does not admit of doubt that we should carry the suburban passengers further into the city? Yes.

1854. Apart from the question of expense, what objection have you to a site either at King-street under the No. 10 scheme or under the St. James' Road scheme? In the first case you would simply repeat the trouble experienced at Redfern. You simply move Redfern up to St. James' Road, and have a dead end there.

1855. But the scheme before us has not a dead-end station at King-street? It circles round to the carriage sheds in the Domain.

1856. Does not that avoid the objection you mention about a dead-end? Yes, at an expense of £200,000 which will not be productive.

1857. Have you any other objection apart from the duplication of the difficulties at Redfern with regard to the proposed site for the station? It is useless for long distance and suburban passengers.

1858. In what way for suburban passengers? Mr. Kneeshaw says that only 1,150 passengers travel by the steam trams from the railway now that the electric tramway is working.

1859. *Dr. Garran.*] But they have taken off the steam trams? They run the steam trams whenever the traffic warrants them in doing so, and that is in the morning.

W.
Greenwood,
A.M.I.C.E.
9 Mar., 1900.

1860. Does not that mean that they have diminished the convenience for travelling by the steam trams? No; in the morning they start the steam trams from Devonshire-street.
1861. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is the proposed King-street station a good place to distribute passengers to their places of business? No; judging by the small number which now travel by the steam trams.
1862. Do you think that is conclusive evidence that a station further west is necessary to distribute the people to their places of business? Yes.
1863. Has that induced you to put your extension further west? We always put a railway where there is traffic, not where there is no traffic as at King-street.
1864. What are your reasons for proposing to close Devonshire-street? Simply for the convenience of the railway.
1865. Could you not extend your passenger lines across the street and still leave it open for traffic? Yes. There are a lot of sidings in the present Redfern yard, and eventually you will require to prolong those sidings into the site of the cemetery.
1866. Are they practically on a level with Devonshire-street now? Yes; therefore I propose to close Devonshire-street to admit of their being taken over to the cemetery side.
1867. As compensation to the people engaged in traffic there, do you give them a new street on the eastern side of the cemetery? Yes, with a better grade.
1868. *Dr. Garran.*] Would that give you an equally convenient access to the produce yard? Yes; it would leave the produce yards at the site of the Institute, as they are now. Two sidings on which the produce stands cannot be brought forward on account of the Institute, but the others can be taken across the street.
1869. Does the continuation of Castlereagh-street to the cemetery form the central part of your plan? Yes.
1870. Would you continue Castlereagh-street through Belmore Park? No; I would stop there.
1871. Would it not be very convenient to carry Castlereagh-street through Belmore Park if you carry an electric tram up that street? That would not be necessary, as far as the railway is concerned, although it might be necessary for the electric tram. As you have taken possession of Elizabeth-street for the trams, I think you should keep it.
1872. Could we not get to the station more easily by Castlereagh street than by Elizabeth street? No; I think Elizabeth-street trams should stay there. To build a tramway in a street does not do the property any good.
1873. We find there is very great difficulty in the railway traffic, owing to the electric trams crossing the other trams in George-street; might we not get rid of that by not allowing the railway traffic to go up George-street, and by carrying it along Elizabeth-street or Castlereagh-street? The tramway arrangements will have to be dealt with when you decide the question as to the railway route. My view would be not to allow the electric trams to go into the railway station at all. The trams could not run through the station in the way they do now if the sidings were continued.
1874. They could, if the plan now before us were carried out? That assumes that the new Benevolent Asylum station is built. I do not propose to erect that station for the next ten years.
1875. Whenever we do cross Devonshire-street, shall we not have to rearrange the tram service? Yes.
1876. Could we now or hereafter bring the tram service up to the railway direct instead of going round into George-street? I daresay you could do that.
1877. Would there be any difficulty in rearranging it? No.
1878. Supposing your scheme were carried out, and we did not at present cross Devonshire-street, do you see any difficulty in dealing with the long-distance traffic at Redfern without danger, and also the intermediate traffic? There would not be the slightest danger.
1879. What would be the cost of your scheme from the present station-yard to the Town Hall? According to the cost per mile it would be £350,000—that is, for everything, works and land.
1880. Is the tunnel more costly per mile than your overhead work up George-street? The tunnel is the most expensive part for works.
1881. From Druitt-street to Wynyard-square, would it be all in tunnel? Yes; there is no tunnel beyond Barrack-street.
1882. As you are on the ridge of George-street at the Town Hall, there would be no big sewer there? No; only some small pipe sewers. I do not think there are any sewers in York-street.
1883. Have you charged yourself with paying for the land you take out of Wynyard-square? No; but I have charged one thing. If I go 25 feet under property with a tunnel, I charge the scheme with it as if the land were bought; but, as a matter of fact, you will not have to buy it, you will only have to pay a certain charge as an easement.
1884. Your purchase of property is at the beginning of the line; and from Wynyard-square to Albert-street, you have estimated the value of the land there as well as the works in the sum of £720,000? Yes.
1885. Do you give a separate estimate for the land and works in that? The land on the combined scheme is £325,000—that is, 8½ acres at £100,000 per acre.
1886. How far is that? The whole distance, from Redfern right on to Phillip-street at Circular Quay; that is for the absolute resumption.
1887. What is the estimate for the works for the same distance? £202,000, stations £147,000, making a total of £349,000. To that I add contingencies £30,000, engineering £15,000, making a total of £394,548.
1888. Does that include the whole thing to Phillip-street at Circular Quay? Yes.
1889. Would you not want a little more than that to do the shunting? I do not think so, but we might. The remaining portion I have charged to the other line.
1890. If we stopped there for the present would you have to go under the Domain? No; I have 15 chains available.
1891. How far do you interfere with the roadway at Circular Quay for omnibuses and drays? I propose to interfere very little. At the most what I propose to do is to divert Alfred-street, which is a narrow lane. I propose to divert that road slightly south or to close it.
1892. Would your cutting come into that? Yes.
1893. How much of the space between the Custom-house and the other side of Circular Quay would you take up? Practically none.
- 1894.

1894. Would you not be in an open cutting there? The railway would only be 28 feet in width for a double line of rail. I would couple Loftus-street and Young-street together in front of the Custom-house, and pass them over the roadway on one bridge.

1895. It is the other way that I am thinking of. You have first the space for your railway, then there are two lines of tramway, and standing room for omnibuses and the ordinary traffic? There is plenty of room for that. The distance from the Paragon Hotel to the water would be about 120 feet.

W.
Greenwood,
A.M.I.C.E.

13 Mar., 1900.

TUESDAY, 13 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEWIS, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

William Greenwood, A.M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

1896. *Dr. Garran.*] You know that there has been a great difference of opinion as to whether a city railway extension should be by what is called the eastern route, or by what is called the western route? Yes.

1897. I presume that you call yours a line by the western route? Certainly.

1898. And that notwithstanding the fact that your Bathurst-street station and your Circular Quay station—two out of your three stations—are actually east of George-street? Yes; but still it is what I term a western line.

1899. That is to say it will give accommodation to the people whose places of business are west of George-street? Yes.

1900. I presume from the fact of your selecting the western route that you are of opinion that the proposed line to Hyde Park would not accommodate the western side of the city? It would not accommodate even the centre of the city.

1901. It would accommodate all the people who wanted to go into Macquarie-street? Yes.

1902. And a number of people who would want to go to the Clubs? Yes.

1903. And some of the principal hotels? In connection with the suburban traffic the people do not go to hotels, and so far as long-distance passengers are concerned they have luggage, and, having luggage, they must have a cab.

1904. It is said that if they could come right into the city by railway the luggage would go into the vans sent by the hotels to the station? That goes on now. The "Grosvenor" and the "Hotel Australia" both send vans to the station for luggage.

1905. The Hyde Park line would accommodate the law people? Yes.

1906. Would it also accommodate all those who have business in Castlereagh-street and Elizabeth-street? Yes; but a building of a given size on ground in Phillip-street or Elizabeth-street does not contain one-tenth of the day population that a building of the same size in York-street contains.

1907. That line would also accommodate most of the Civil Servants on their way to Government offices? No. Civil Servants employed in the Lands Office, the Mines Office, the Custom-house, the Income and Land Tax Department, and the Treasury, would be far nearer to a station at Circular Quay than to one at King-street.

1908. That is to say, they would be far better served by your line than by the 'St. James' Road route? Far better.

1909. Although the people to whom I have referred would be fairly well accommodated by the Hyde Park scheme, the opening of the electric line along George-street has thrown a great deal of light upon the movements of the suburban population? Yes.

1910. And we find from Mr. Kneeshaw's figures that his present traffic on the electric line is at the rate of 8,700,000 per annum? Yes.

1911. And the steam trams running from the railway into the city now carrying at the rate of 700,000 per annum;—does not that seem to show that the old steam trams used to take the people not so near to where they wanted to go as the electric tram does? I am not sure that those figures are correct; but it shows that since the electric tram was constructed it has taken traffic from the steam trams.

1912. Is not the main reason of that because the electric tram puts them nearer to where they want to go? Precisely.

1913. You are aware, I suppose, that the first line laid down along Elizabeth-street was constructed simply in view of the International Exhibition, which we had in the Government Domain? I am.

1914. And it was put down for no other purpose than to carry the crowds of people from the railway station to that exhibition? That is so.

1915. And it proved to be an exceedingly profitable line, because of the congestion of the traffic on that route, and then there began a great multiplication of trams to the suburbs? Yes.

1916. And then there was an extension from Hunter-street to the back of the Treasury, and the Elizabeth-street line in that way became the trunk line of trams into Sydney? At that time the whole of the shunting was done in Elizabeth-street, in front of Dean's.

1917. At first, but afterwards they made an extension to the back of the Treasury? Yes.

1918. But Elizabeth-street would not be chosen now by an engineer as the best route for a trunk line into Sydney? No; it was purely an accident.

1919. If the steam tram down along Elizabeth-street cannot now stand the competition of the electric tram along George-street, does that not show that a railway to Hyde Park would not bring the people to where they want to go? I think I will prove that later on by Mr. Kneeshaw's figures.

1920. Now we will begin at the station-yard;—you admit, I suppose, that the present station-yard is not a very convenient one for the present traffic? No, it is not.

W.
Greenwood,
A.M.I.C.E.

13 Mar., 1900.

W.
Greenwood,
A.M.I.C.E.
13 Mar., 1900.

1921. And that most of the platforms are too short? They are too short for long-distance trains.
1922. Looking at the fact that the land on the north side of Devonshire-street is land on which the Government can lay its hand, do you think it would ever be worth while to try to make the present station-yard a central station-yard for all time? Looking to the future, no, certainly not.
1923. But with certain modifications and extensions it might be made to answer for a time? It is not a modern, up-to-date station, and cannot be made so unless you lengthen it.
1924. Mr. Selve put before us proposals for going back as far as Eveleigh, and making wider lines and giving better access to the yard in that way? The trouble is the shortness of the length between your tunnel and the end of your platforms.
1925. But he increased the length by beginning the widening of the lines at Eveleigh? Yes. But if you extend your station across Devonshire-street you will do the same thing.
1926. There are two methods of doing this thing—either by going back south and beginning at Eveleigh, or by pushing northward and lengthening the platforms by crossing Devonshire-street—of the two plans which is the better? By going further north.
1927. If we were to cross Devonshire-street with our line to go into the city, as all the plans do, we might as well cross Devonshire-street to extend the platforms that are at present too short, might we not? Yes. You would put your suburban train platforms in the Benevolent Asylum grounds.
1928. I mean that we must either partly or wholly take possession of Devonshire-street to go into the city, either by your route or by the Government route? Yes.
1929. If we are going to keep Devonshire-street open we must lower it by 9 feet, or if we are going to close it we must leave it open only for railway purposes? That is so.
1930. What I mean is this: If we are going to carry two lines of rails northward for your city extension you might as well while about it carry your other platforms northward in order to lengthen them—the long distance ones? I do not think there is any need to take the long distance ones northward for some years to come. If you can now accommodate both the long-distance and the suburban trains in the present station, and if you were to take 90 per cent. of that traffic through you must have sufficient platforms left there for the long-distance trains.
1931. But although you talk of taking it away you run it all through the station? Yes; but a train that would have to stop at a platform now perhaps for five minutes would stop there only for half a minute.
1932. That is true; but supposing we were to reserve for the suburban traffic the two original lines? No; I would reserve those for long-distance trains—at the present stage certainly.
1933. Then you would take the suburban on two sides or on one side? I would take them on No. 3, and east from No. 3.
1934. Towards the produce sheds? Yes, and I would keep Nos. 5 and 6 and west of them for long-distance traffic—for the present, mind you.
1935. You would throw the suburban traffic altogether to the east of the original main lines? Yes.
1936. And keep the rest for the longer distance traffic? Yes.
1937. In that case, you would not want to lengthen the original lines? Not until such time as I built a new station.
1938. It is only to the west of that you would want to lengthen them? I think that one platform, No. 8, is long enough for them. The Northern train is started from No. 8 or No. 9, I am not sure which.
1939. We have had it in evidence that proper platforms ought to be 600 feet long at the least;—do you agree with that? No; I do not.
1940. Not for suburban traffic? Not for suburban traffic. Certainly not; and I doubt it very much for long-distance traffic. If you go to the station on Monday night, you will find that they put two engines on the Northern train, and those two engines and the cars as well do not measure 500 feet; but if I were building a new station in the Benevolent Asylum grounds, I would certainly make the platforms 600 feet long.
1941. We are going to make an improved station, and are certainly going to spoil Devonshire-street for general traffic, and there will be no difficulty in lengthening those platforms on the western side by running them across Devonshire-street on an archway, as well as the suburban lines? You can do it, but if you run them back as far as Devonshire-street, you might as well go right through and make your new station in the Benevolent Asylum grounds.
1942. I mean that, if you simply want to lengthen those Western platforms, we can do it by simply crossing Devonshire-street with them? As a matter of construction there is no doubt you could do that; but, supposing you were to lengthen No. 6 platform, it is clear that people who wanted to go to No. 5 could not cross, as they now do, at the end of the platform.
1943. Of course the moment you cross with suburban trains you spoil the crossing at the dead end? Yes. But I do not prevent your getting to No. 5 platform the same as you can now. If you do not lengthen Nos. 5 and 6, but merely No. 3 and east of it, it does not prevent your getting to No. 5, as you can now.
1944. But your two suburban lines would spoil the crossing from east to west? Yes. But if you were approaching the station from George-street you could get to No. 5 the same as you do now; but the moment you lengthen No. 6 across Devonshire-street you cannot do that.
1945. You could do it underneath Devonshire-street by means of steps? Yes. I think it will be possible for a considerable time to work your long-distance trains in your present station without lengthening your platforms.
1946. And if it be proved that we cannot do that, we shall have simply to cross Devonshire-street and lengthen the platforms? At the present time you sometimes use Nos. 5 and 6 platforms for suburban trains, but I propose that they shall be used exclusively for long-distance trains, and there are not two long-distance trains that start at the same time. Those two platforms, if kept for nothing but long-distance trains, should be sufficient with occasionally, perhaps, No. 9 platform.
1947. Your scheme separates the long-distance from the suburban? Yes.
1948. And you see no difficulty in working the station by doing that? No.
1949. It has been put before us that many people at Strathfield get into the long-distance trains simply because they run to Sydney without a stop, and therefore those trains become *pro tanto* suburban trains; do you think that that is a sufficient reason why we should bring those long-distance trains into Sydney? If I, as a stranger, go to-night to the Redfern Railway Station to catch the 6.15 train to Brisbane, and have

have a ticket to Strathfield only, they will not allow me to travel to Strathfield. That train stops at Strathfield merely to pick up passengers, but a number of the people who are well-known to the railway employees are allowed to alight there.

1950. What I mean is, that if I get into a train that I know to be a long-distance train at Strathfield, can I complain if I am put down where the long-distance trains always stop—that is at Redfern? No.

1951. I have no right to say that it is a hardship that that train is not carried into the City of Sydney; but apart from that, what reason is there for carrying the long-distance trains into the city? I say nothing. Fully 90 per cent. of the long distance travellers are better served at Redfern than they would be at King-street. People residing to the east of Victoria-street, Darlinghurst, and from there right round to Darling Point, Rose Bay, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra, Paddington, Moore Park, Alexandria, Botany, The Glebe, Forest Lodge, and Pyrmont are served better from Redfern than they would be from King-street. It is only one-tenth of those in the town who would be better served from King-street than from Redfern.

1952. Supposing that the long-distance trains were to go on to the city terminus, do you think that they would have unloaded more than 50 per cent. of their passengers at Redfern before they went into the city? They would have unloaded 90 per cent. I think.

1953. And we should take all that string of carriages in for the sake of a very few people? Yes.

1954. It would be a waste of power? There would not be 3d. in cab fares saved even to those who did go into the city.

1955. Simply an extra expense to the Railway Department? Yes.

1956. You are clearly of opinion that the two traffics ought to be separated? Yes.

1957. Looking to the future and also to the fact that some day we must have very much more accommodation at our central station, do you see any better place for a permanent main central station for Sydney than the ground lying between Devonshire-street and Belmore-road? It is most suitable in every way.

1958. You do not think that we could wish for a better site? No; I think it is a very suitable site.

1959. And you do not see any objection in the fact that Belmore-road is 35 feet below the level of our platform rails at present? It is only 26 feet where I cross.

1960. And supposing we continue Castlereagh-street, as we propose, from an angle at the corner of Devonshire-street, in a line with the other Castlereagh-street to the north, you think that the space between Belmore-road and Pitt-street and Devonshire-street will be ample for a great station? Yes.

1961. And that looking to the future we shall have to take that ground for a station? I think so.

1962. But that there is no necessity at present to go to the expense of building a big station there? I do not think so. It will produce no revenue.

1963. So in your opinion we can make a city extension with a very moderate additional expense to the present station-yard? Yes.

1964. There will have to be something done to adapt that to the change? Yes; I think that Mr. Deane in one of the schemes puts down £20,000 for alterations at Redfern.

1965. You think that £20,000 will be enough to do all that is really essential at present? Yes.

1966. Is there anything more in regard to that station you would like to say beyond what I have asked you? Mr. Goodchap, who, I think, was an excellent authority, and had a good local knowledge of Sydney—he had been here a good many years, and knew the requirements of Sydney—invariably advocated Redfern as being the terminal station for long-distance traffic. My meaning is this: Mr. Goodchap had spent practically a lifetime here and knew Sydney thoroughly well, but Mr. Eddy, the late Chief Commissioner, had been here only a few years when he was examined on the point, and he could not have had as good a local knowledge of Sydney as Mr. Goodchap had.

1967. You adduce that, I suppose, as an additional authority in favour of the present Redfern yard and the area north of it being the terminal station for Sydney? Yes.

1968. And you would not attempt to take out of the city proper an area large enough for a second terminal station? Certainly not.

1969. Sydney is not a city that will bear having taken very much out of it for a purpose like that of a terminal railway station—it is rather cramped at present? It is rather cramped. Sydney is situated really on one long spur.

1970. It is jambed in between Darling Harbour on the western side, and the Park lands and Domain on the east, and cannot push out either way—it can only go south? Yes.

1971. Looking at the increasing value of city property for warehouses and other business premises, must it not necessarily be very expensive to get an area large enough for a really good terminal station in the city? You could not get a terminal station in the city unless you went to great expense.

1972. Unless we took part of Hyde Park? Well, that land at a fair valuation is worth something.

1973. The portion proposed to be taken is valued at £200,000;—you could not get the same size area elsewhere in the city for that sum? Not even if it were bare.

1974. Now take the section between Belmore-road and your first station, at Bathurst-street—you are in the open all that distance? To Bathurst-street, yes.

1975. Your station will reach to the corner of Bathurst-street and George-street? Yes.

1976. Will any part of the station be under George-street? Possibly there may be 50 feet of platforms beneath it.

1977. Not more than that? The Secretary to your Committee has asked me to mark on a large scale plan the exact route of the line, and I will mark, approximately, the positions of the platforms and stations.

1978. That station will be an open station? Yes. It will resemble Newtown Station more than anything else.

1979. You will have four lines of rails there? Yes.

1980. You do not run four lines all the way? Yes, from Redfern I run four lines to Bathurst-street, and I run those four on the same level. From Bathurst-street the lines rise to the North Shore and fall to the Circular Quay.

1981. How many lines do the Government propose to make through to there—four or six? Some years ago there were, I think, about twenty-five various schemes submitted to the Government—some were Government and some were private schemes. Mr. Deane and Mr. Foxlee examined and reported on the whole of those schemes, and the whole of those twenty-five schemes, including one or two by Mr. Deane, provided

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provided for two lines of rails only, which shows that every one was of opinion that two lines of railway would be ample for the traffic.

1982. You are providing four lines of rails only for your city extension and for the line to North Shore, whereas Mr. Deane provides not less than six simply to go to a dead-end station at King-street? Granted.

1983. If he wants six for that, can you make four do for what is a double railway? Yes. Mr. Deane's own opinion was that only two lines were necessary, and he designed his scheme for two lines, and everyone else who sent in a scheme designed only for two lines. The Commissioners have gone in for six lines now, but their scheme in 1891 was for only four lines. The 1896 scheme provides for six. Those six lines consist of up and down fast, up and down slow, and two service lines. Those two service lines simply go into the Redfern yard and no further.

1984. But you see that the original idea of two lines was when they had not reduplicated the line from Sydney to Homebush? That is so.

1985. Having reduplicated that line, they found that two lines would no longer carry the traffic? Two lines would carry double the present traffic on the lines if the whole of it were slow; but they want to run a fast train alongside a slow one, and they could not do that on two pairs of rails, and that is the reason why they have constructed four lines of rails. I propose to let the four lines remain there, and they will still run fast trains from Strathfield to Redfern; but at Redfern they must stop.

1986. You cannot run fast trains through the city? No; you must run them slow.

1987. I suppose that $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile is a fair distance for city stations to be apart from one another? Yes. You have four lines from Homebush to Strathfield; but notwithstanding the fact that you have a double line joining at Strathfield, you do not put on an additional line to convey that traffic to Sydney; and although you have two lines from Illawarra joining near Eveleigh, you do not put on two more lines to carry that traffic.

1988. I suppose that the four lines we have now will carry a great deal more traffic? Yes.

1989. With your line you cross the Belmore Markets? Yes; I cross by a continuous viaduct. From the south side of Belmore-road to the north side of Campbell-street there is one continuous viaduct.

1990. You go over the old part of the markets? Yes; old Paddy's Market.

1991. You would have to make provision for piers there? Yes.

1992. You put those inside the market buildings? Yes.

1993. You simply spoil two or three of the stalls there? Yes.

1994. Nothing worse than that? No.

1995. Is there a good foundation there? Provision is made for that. In the worst part of Belmore Park you may have to go down 12 feet or 15 feet for your foundations; but I have reckoned for that in my estimate.

1996. Now go from Bathurst-street to Wynyard-square, the next station;—the moment you emerge from Bathurst-street station I understand the levels of your North Shore line begin to differ from the levels of your city line proper—one goes up and the other goes down? Yes.

1997. You must go down from Bathurst-street to get to the level you want to be at at Circular Quay? Not necessarily; but I must go down to get beneath the line that goes on to North Shore.

1998. You would have to go down somewhat? Yes; but I need not do that until I got to Wynyard-square.

1999. But must you begin to rise at Bathurst-street? Yes, so as to cross the North Shore line over the Circular Quay line.

2000. You cannot possibly get the elevation by starting from Wynyard-square? I should be 17 feet lower than at the present time, and that would mean so much greater rise to the bridge.

2001. Are you estimating for a 150-foot bridge or 180 feet? 160 feet. The reason for that is that the Royal Commission that reported on that question decided on 160 feet.

2002. What is the worse gradient on the present North Shore line? I believe 1 in 40.

2003. Well, if that is the gradient there, what is the objection to having a 1 in 40 rise to the bridge? None, so far as I know.

2004. We can afford to go as steep with our train to the bridge as trains have to go on the present North Shore line? Yes.

2005. Though you accept 1 in 40, could you not begin your rise at Wynyard-square? No, because it would be 1-in-40 grade now from the higher level in Wynyard-square, and if I were to go down lower it would make it a steeper grade.

2006. Then you are already going to accept a 1-in-40 grade from Wynyard-square? Yes; from Wynyard-square it would be a 1-in-40 grade to the North Shore.

2007. Will you explain to the Committee how these two lines are going one to cross or overlap the other? Simply by the fact that, starting from Bathurst-street, the one line rises and the other falls with a 1-in-60 grade until such time as the difference of level between the two rails is 17 or 18 feet—sufficient to carry one line over the other.

2008. Until one goes over the other they are abreast? Until they start to rise they are abreast.

2009. But they must be abreast, must they not, until one is tall enough to go over the other? No; when they cross one another they are vertical to one another, and they gradually converge. They cross one another before they get into York-street.

2010. Between Bathurst-street and Druitt-street they have got high enough to cross? That is so.

2011. But in passing between the Town Hall and the Markets, you must have for some part of the journey room for four lines abreast? No.

2012. The moment you cross Druitt-street you can put one above the other? Yes.

2013. So in York-street you really only want sufficient breadth for two lines? I want more than sufficient breadth for two lines, for there the two lines are not vertical—one beneath the other. One may be on one side of the street and the other on the other side.

2014. Would it not be an engineering advantage—for the strength of foundations—to have them one over the other? No. When I leave York-street to get to Wynyard-square, if I were on the east side of the street, I would have a very sharp bend to get to Wynyard-square; but if on the western side, it gives a better curve for the Circular Quay line.

2015. The lower arch will be strong enough to stand whatever is put on it? It will have to be made strong enough.

2016. What is the exact length of the tunnel;—you are to be in tunnel from Bathurst-street to Wynyard-square? No; I do not consider that at all a tunnel. Where you cross Newtown-road Bridge it is a bridge, not a tunnel.

2017. What is the length of it—bridge, or tunnel, or whatever name you like to give it? It is, approximately, 9 chains—that is, from Bathurst-street to Druitt-street.

2018. That would not be a longer tunnel than one from Hyde Park to Circular Quay underground? Then you have the tunnel from Druitt-street to Wynyard-street.

2019. But one of the schemes before us—the Hyde Park scheme—involves an extension from Hyde Park to Circular Quay? Yes.

2020. That would be quite as long a tunnel as yours? Longer, I think.

2021. Is there anything more between these two stations you want to speak about? No; excepting that there are no sewers in the way.

2022. Nothing but the ordinary house sewers and the gas and water pipes? Yes.

2023. Do you propose to have side ventilation? I do not propose to have it. I think that natural ventilation will be quite sufficient for that tunnel.

2024. It has been stated by many witnesses that in this hot climate tunnels are more objectionable than they are in England? I say emphatically, no. Half the year in England you have dull, damp, foggy weather, and at no time of the year there have you a clear atmosphere such as you have in Sydney.

2025. What tunnels have we on our railways more than 39 chains in length? You have a tunnel at Lapstone, which is 38 or 40 chains long. It has a curve at both ends. Half the tunnel at least is on curve, and it has a 1 in 33 grade. Since that tunnel has been built, I do not think that fewer passengers have gone over the mountains than used to go previously. It has not affected the passenger traffic in the slightest.

2026. You have to shut up all the windows in going through? Yes; but still you travel.

2027. Would it be necessary to shut up all the windows in going through this tunnel? No; I do not think so.

2028. This tunnel of yours I do not suppose would be more lofty than the Lapstone tunnel? No; I think the Lapstone tunnel is in a spur where you cannot possibly get ventilation. My tunnel will be of the same height as that.

2029. Then it will be quite as choky? Yes.

2030. If you were to get some ventilation shafts at the side, would that not relieve the chokiness of the tunnel? Yes; I think you can get some in the street.

2031. Up through the gratings? Not the gratings, but a daylight space.

2032. Without blocking the street? Yes; there is a large space near the Markets. The east side of York-street is not parallel to the Markets.

2033. But if you have a ventilator immediately in front of the Town Hall, you will not want one when you get to the Markets? I shall want one at Market-street, and I can get plenty of room there for a ventilator.

2034. In the street itself? Yes.

2035. You do not anticipate any difficulty from closeless of atmosphere? I do not.

2036. How long will people be running at a city rate of speed between Bathurst-street and Wynyard-square? Something less than one minute.

2037. Not more than that? No; it cannot be. The difference in time between the trains leaving Burwood and the trains leaving Croydon is, according to the time table, about two minutes.

2038. Is that the same distance? No, that is about a mile, and that time includes stoppage at station; therefore, the time occupied in travelling cannot possibly be a minute in this case.

2039. With regard to Wynyard-square, will you give us a little sketch plan of square showing, for the information of the valuer, the amount you are going to take out? I will mark that on the plan.

2040. Then, going out from Wynyard-square you are in open cutting pretty nearly all the way to the Circular Quay? Yes.

2041. And when you get on to the Quay, are you still in open cutting? Yes. I do not propose to roof it in.

2042. A question has arisen with us whether in these stations it is wise to cover over the whole of the roof, or not? I should not do so at Circular Quay. I should treat that as a passing station, and cover the platforms, but not the rails.

2043. Will you explain why you cannot make a curve so as to get behind the Custom-house instead of going in front of it? Because there would be some most expensive property to resume.

2044. The reason is economy? Yes.

2045. Any other reason? There is another reason, and that is this: you want to get as near to the North Shore Ferry as you can possibly get, and by putting the station where I have fixed mine at the Quay, you are within 100 feet of the ferries. I take it that the North Shore, the Neutral Bay, and the Mosman's Bay ferries carries fully 80 per cent. of the ferry traffic from the Circular Quay. The Watson's Bay traffic is very light.

2046. And judging from the trade with the present line on the Circular Quay, a good many of those people would want to take either a train or a tram to some point in the city? If you notice the trams in the morning, you will see that those from the Circular Quay are fairly well filled up to King-street.

2047. They would still take that tram, I suppose, if your railway were built? Into the town they would, but not passengers who wanted to go into the suburbs.

2048. But for purely city traffic you would not cut out the George-street tram business? The public will have the option of taking which they choose.

2049. For all those reasons you prefer going right on to the Circular Quay? Yes.

2050. You do not see any objection to taking a good strip out of the road in front of the Custom House? No. You would take about 28 feet out of the road.

2051. You do not think that that would cramp the ordinary traffic too much? No; I think it is more likely to regulate the traffic.

2052. It sometimes happens that when traffic is forced into defined lines it goes along better than when it has a very wide *place* round about? Yes. The cable trams in Melbourne confine the traffic to the two sides of the street, instead of its being allowed to spread all over the street as formerly.

2053.

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2053. This station of yours at Circular Quay will practically extend from Pitt-street to Phillip-street? No; from Pitt-street to Loftus-street.
2054. What length will that be? I provide for 400-feet platforms.
2055. You have marked on this plan a possible branch-off for a tunnel to the North Shore? Well, if in the future it should be decided to make a tunnel to the North Shore, the junction would be at that station, and run down either for train-ferry, or for a tunnel.
2056. Would you have descent enough between Circular Quay and Fort Macquarie to get under the water for a tunnel? That depends on whether you are going to put the tunnel through the rock in the bed of the Harbour or put it in tubes and form a foundation on which to lay your tubes.
2057. We are told that the tube plan is the only possible plan? Then you would want to be only about 60 feet below Fort Macquarie.
2058. I presume, from your making this provision, that you are not one of those engineers who think a tunnel impracticable? It is very seldom that an engineer says that a thing is not practicable. If you find the money it can be done.
2059. Do you think it would be as expensive as a bridge? More expensive.
2060. Then, of the two plans, the bridge has only the disadvantage of blocking the navigation? Without having the soundings I am not sure whether you could put a tunnel across at that point. It might be preferable to put it from Lady Macquarie's Chair; it might be preferable to make a long tunnel touching at Fort Denison and going to Kirribilli Point and rising thence to the Milson's Point station; but that is a question we could not settle without having soundings and borings.
2061. But would a tunnel have any advantages but that of economy over a bridge? None.
2062. You give your preference to a bridge? Yes.
2063. You think Dawes' Point is a good site for a bridge? Yes. Another reason for preferring a bridge is that you might possibly have to make a road-bridge to North Shore, and when you are doing that the additional cost of a railway bridge will not be very great.
2064. Mr. Eddy was of opinion that for railway purposes there was no immediate justification for a railway bridge—that the traffic would not give enough to pay for it? He said the same in regard to a tunnel. He said the population of North Shore did not warrant connection with Sydney. That was his view I think to the last.
2065. You go to some extra expense in order to make provision for this possible extension to the North Shore line? Yes.
2066. Could you eliminate that extra expense from the cost of your city line, supposing the Government only took your city line and left the North Shore to take its chance hereafter,—for it is hardly fair to charge that extra cost to the mere city line;—if the eastern line makes no provision for the North Shore it is hardly fair to charge the western line with provision for extension to North Shore? The length from Druitt-street to Barrack-street would be 800 yards, which, at £50 per yard, would make £40,000 in connection with the North Shore tunnel.
2067. That is to say, you are charging your city extension line with £40,000 worth of work which will really be money spent towards the North Shore line? Yes; but my reason for that is this: at a later stage, in taking the estimate of traffic, I treat it as though the station were at Wynyard-square, and the toll from Wynyard-square to North Shore would be chargeable to the North Shore line; whilst the toll from Wynyard-square to the railway station, Redfern, would be chargeable to the city railway.
2068. On whichever line the passengers ran—the upper or the lower? Yes; or, to put it in another way: supposing the railway to North Shore were made, it would bring a certain amount of traffic on to the city railway between Wynyard-square and Redfern.
2069. If your Western line were made, do you think that the existing Elizabeth-street tram—without being altered to electric—would fairly well accommodate passengers from Redfern to the east side of Sydney? They would be no better served than they are now by the steam tram.
2070. I am speaking merely of passengers who come in at Redfern, and want to get out somewhere in the neighbourhood of King-street;—you think that a tram along Elizabeth-street will be enough to accommodate that traffic? Yes.
2071. So they will be sufficiently well served by trams? Yes.
2072. You have connected with your scheme, as part of it, an eastern suburbs extension? Yes.
2073. No eastern suburbs extension has been remitted to us, and if the Government intend merely to make a city railway for the present and no more, I have to ask you how you can make your scheme fit in with such a determination as that;—to stop somewhere about Albert-street or some adjoining place, and find shunting room and standage for carriages, and so forth? The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into an eastern suburbs railway recommended that that line should be made. That was in 1891, and subsequently both a Commission and the Public Works Committee have said that no line through the city would serve sufficiently unless it were connected with the eastern suburbs, and therefore I have made that as part and parcel of the complete circuit, and I think that it is an essential part of the line.
2074. But still the Government have not said so to us; they have asked us to consider schemes for coming into the city;—therefore, we want to know whether you can make this serve as a city scheme without an eastern suburbs extension, at present, at any rate? Yes; but to do that you must go back to the Government House grounds, or as far as the Government House stables, in an open cutting—construct, really, the eastern suburban railway as far as the fence of Botanical Gardens.
2075. Then the difference between your scheme and the one before us now is that you take a carriage standage out of the Government Domain, only you take it out of the Governor's private Domain, and the Government scheme takes it out of the public part of the Domain? No, it is not so. They provide stables, as it were, for their carriages for the whole day long, and I do not. I merely propose to shunt the train, and run it back to the Redfern yard, whither it goes now.
2076. That would involve some unproductive running? Yes.
2077. Would that be less costly than taking all this ground out of that land? Far less.
2078. There would not be very much traffic to Redfern in the early morning or late in the evening, would there? I think there are eight trains now every day which come into Redfern and run back straight to Homebush.
2079. The traffic is all one way, then? Yes.

2080. That is necessarily the case in all great cities? Yes. At a busy time like that they have not sufficient rolling-stock, and they gallop their trains back to Homebush and Ashfield to bring in fresh passengers; and the same thing takes place at night in the reverse direction.

2081. So all you want to do is to shove your trains from one line to the other? Yes.

2082. If you could do that the Government could do that with the six lines they have here? Yes.

2083. We are told that if we were to widen the scheme before us so as to make it as wide as the original one was, they could do without this long route? No; they could do nothing of the kind. The additional standing room on the St. James' Road plan is only two more platforms. The standing room would hold only two more trains.

2084. You are going to accept the necessity of running the trains back to Redfern? Yes.

2085. Therefore, you want no standing room at all? No. That is merely as a temporary measure.

2086. Then in that case you would not want to make an open cutting into the Governor's Domain? Yes; I want to get length. When a train arrives at a platform, if the next train is following in two minutes you must pull that ahead and draw it through, and if by chance two or three trains come in together, you must have sufficient room to pull your train further down to cross over to the next road. Another advantage of the western line is this: There is a probability of a line being made to the north-western suburbs, and whenever a line is made to those suburbs if the railway is already on the western side of the city you will save the expense of crossing to the eastern side of the city from the western side.

2087. So far as respects the cost of working, it does not matter whether we go into the city on the eastern or on the western side? The cost per mile ought to be the same.

2088. We have had put before us estimates of the cost of working the St. James' Road scheme, and Mr. Eddy's estimate was that 1d. put on to the fare would more than pay 3 per cent. on the cost of working that line;—do you think that is a fair estimate? The Commissioners estimate the traffic at £32,000 per annum, which is really 10,240,000 passengers at $\frac{3}{4}$ d. Although they put 1d. for each passenger, a workman's ticket is only $\frac{1}{4}$ d., and a season-ticket holder pays only about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. So taking it all round it comes to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. at that number of passengers. Then the Commissioners say that the working cost is £8,000. Since then they have given the working cost at £18,800. That is for No. 10 scheme. As a matter of fact, the working expenses of No. 10 scheme will be no more than the working expenses of the St. James' Road scheme. Roughly speaking, from King-street to the carriage stabling sheds would be three-quarters of a mile of dead running. In the St. James' Road scheme the dead running would be $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to Redfern station. Therefore, the dead running on the St. James' scheme must be more than the dead running on that scheme. The train running must be the same in both cases, therefore how does the difference come out in the working expenses? I think that the £8,000 put down as the working expenses is put down low purposely to prove that the scheme is a paying one. The cost per train at £8,000 works out about 1s. 4d. per train mile. The Railway Commissioners state in their yearly report that the working expenses per train mile are 46d. Of course, the Railway Commissioners do not state the sectional expenses of the different sections; but give the working expenses of all their lines at 46d. per train mile, and at the date of that report the number of trains arriving at Redfern multiplied by train mileage gives only 1s. 4d. per train mile, if you divide it into £8,000. During the inquiry made by the Public Works Committee in 1897, Mr. Parry gave evidence and furnished returns showing the number of trains arriving at and departing from Redfern, namely, 324 trains per day. Now 324 trains running 1 mile multiplied by 365 days gives 118,260 train miles, and if you divide that into £8,000 it gives the train mileage cost as 1s. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per train mile.

2089. But would not the traffic be much concentrated on this line—a great deal more going over it? If the Commissioners can work that line for 1s. 4d. per train mile I want to take my expenses at the same rate.

2090. But for years we have estimated the cost roughly at 4s. per train mile? Yes; but if the Commissioners in their scheme on which the Public Works Committee reported, and on that based their finding that the line would pay, take credit to themselves that they can work that line for £8,000, I think that I can take credit for working my line for £8,000 for the same mileage.

2091. You must not take their estimate, but make your own? But as they are traffic managers and I am not is it not fair for me take their figures.

2092. Now, as to the cost of construction, what do you put the cost at from Redfern to your terminus in the Governor's Domain—that is, complete from end to end? I think you have that down already at £720,000 to Phillip-street. I have made it £850,000 for the suburban portion. I want to put £10,000 on to the city section, and deduct it from the suburban section, because I make the line so much further on the suburban section.

2093. Well I am asking you how much it will cost you to make this line to the city with the necessary shunting arrangements at the city end? £730,000.

2094. Supposing the Government say, "Make a city line and nothing more," you can do it for £730,000, and put it in workable order for that? Yes.

2095. Do you anticipate that your traffic will be equal to or more than that estimated by the Commissioners for their traffic to Hyde Park? Their traffic estimate to Hyde Park is altogether wrong, because you have made an electric tramway since, which has taken traffic away.

2096. Their estimate was made before the George-street line was designed? In that case it was—in 1897.

2097. Now that the people have taken to the George-street tram, and shown the extent to which that accommodates them, do you think that there will not be as heavy traffic on the Hyde Park line as there would have been if the George-street line had not been built? I am quite clear about it. Mr. Kneeshaw says that the total number of passengers now travelling on the Elizabeth-street line from the railway is 1,150 a day—that is, in each direction.

2098. But a Government witness has stated that an increase of the trade will make up for all that is taken away by the George-street line;—do you think it will? Not on the Elizabeth-street trams.

2099. I mean supposing they make a railway to Hyde Park, do you think that the general increase of the traffic on the railways will make up their figures to what they estimated them at, notwithstanding the George-street traffic? No; there cannot be more travel by railway than by tram.

2100. They say that people would not get out to make a change, but would rather go straight on to their destination, and therefore that there would be more passengers by a railway to Hyde Park? I say not one more.

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2101. You think that their traffic is over-estimated by them? Certainly, a long way.
2102. And that the profit will not be so good as they say? No.
2103. And therefore they will not make $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.? I will show you that they cannot make it pay working expenses.
2104. Do you think that they have under-estimated the cost of making the railway to Hyde Park? I will not say anything about that, because I do not know.
2105. Will you tell us what you think your traffic will be on your western line? I am going to use the Government figures for this. Mr. Kneeshaw stated that the number of passengers arriving at Redfern was as follows (I am speaking of one direction all the time):—He said the electric tram carried 13,000 daily. He further said that if there were no railway traffic at all—and he did not want it—his cars in George-street would still be filled. I contend that those 13,000 people will go down by the train on the western line, and I contend it for several reasons. In the first place, there would be no changes; in the second place, the trains would take six minutes to go to the Quay, whereas the time-table for the electric tram is sixteen minutes. Then the fare by the electric tram is 1d. The railway fare for a workman would be only $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a journey if he had a workman's ticket; and a person who now pays 1d. will pay $\frac{1}{4}$ d. if he gets the chance. A railway season-ticket would be $\frac{3}{4}$ d. instead of 1d., and that is another reason. So I contend that the whole of those people will travel by the train instead of by the tram.
2106. I suppose that the Government would charge them the same fare if they went only as far as Bathurst-street as if they went on to Circular Quay? I have estimated for one rate of fare right through. I do not know what the Government might do in that case. Possibly they might rearrange their fares. I am speaking of railway passengers. Mr. Kneeshaw also said that there were 9,000 persons who walked from the Redfern Station into the city, and that the bulk of these were between 7 and half-past 8 o'clock in the morning, and that they were mostly people who were paid low wages, and that if there were a train so that they could take out workmen's tickets, they would travel by train. I contend that he is right to this extent: That fully two-thirds—that is, 6,000 out of the 9,000—would travel by train if it were on the western side of the city. That is practically what Mr. Kneeshaw says. The eastern suburbs contain a larger population than the western suburbs do. We have 19,000 a day who go by the railway from the western suburbs, and if the eastern suburban line were constructed I claim that 15,000 would come in over that line. Supposing that a passenger were to start, say, from Rankwick, the toll from Rankwick as far as Circular Quay would be chargeable against the eastern suburban line; but whatever toll was collected between Circular Quay and Redfern would be chargeable to this line.
2107. But what would the traffic be if you were simply to make a short city line down to the Domain? Supposing there were two distinct companies, the toll for travelling over this line would have to go to the company that owned the city line, and the toll from the city to, say, Paddington, would go towards paying the interest on that line.
2108. I am supposing that one company had made a line to Circular Quay, and that the other company had not come into existence? I do not think that is quite a fair way to put it.
2109. Taking the city line by itself, can you give us an estimate of your working expenses, and an estimate of receipts from your traffic? I think I am fair in estimating that from Circular Quay I could get 3,000 passengers a day, and that I could also get 2,000 from local pick-up traffic. I have already 13,000 electric tram passengers who arrive by tram, and 6,000 out of the 9,000 who now walk, which, together with the 3,000 from the Circular Quay and the 2,000 for local pick-up traffic, make a total of 24,000 a day. That number has to be multiplied by two, because that traffic is only in one direction. That makes 48,000 fares per day at $\frac{3}{4}$ d., which amounts to £150 a day. That gives £54,750 a year. From that I take the £8,000 which the Commissioners say is the working cost; but I put that down at £10,000. The Commissioners put down £8,000, taking in the long-distance as well as the suburban, and giving them credit for 10 per cent. as being long-distance, would reduce the working cost of the suburban to £7,200. Then I allow for the difference in length, which brings mine up to £10,000 in round numbers, and that leaves a net profit of £44,750 per annum. I stated the other day 10 per cent. Of course, the reason for the 10 per cent. is that I include the traffic, which I claim I have a right to assume will come from the North Shore and the eastern suburbs. Taking the lowest, I have shown a profit of 6 per cent. on the capital—that is, with the present population and the present number of trains. Now the growth of traffic is that it doubles in twenty-five years.
2110. The difference between 1s. 4d. a train mile and 46d. per train mile is very great? Yes; but if it were increased to 46d. per train mile, instead of £8,000 the Commissioners would show no profit, whereas the Public Works Committee were induced, on the strength of those figures, to recommend the construction of the line.
2111. Supposing you had to pay 46d. per train mile, what would your profit then be? The working expenses, in that case, would be £36,728.
2112. That leaves you a profit of £18,000? Yes. But the Commissioners give that as the cost of working per train mile for the whole of their system. To justify their estimate of £8,000 they may possibly say that the working cost of the suburban line is very much less than the working cost of a country line; they may, indeed, give a variety of reasons. So you have no right to assume an estimate of 46d. unless you assume that 46d. is to be the cost to be charged against both the King-street and the St. James' Road schemes. Mr. Deane gave evidence the other day in reference to the various schemes, and used the £8,000 as an argument in favour of those schemes, and you will find what he said, I think, on page 17.
2113. *Vice-Chairman.*] I suppose you will admit that the larger portion of the traffic you hope to get on your completed scheme would go through Redfern down to Circular Quay? Since the Commissioners have introduced penny fares on the electric tram, I take it that it would be impossible for them to charge mileage rates on the railway to Circular Quay. If a person can ride $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile on the tramway for 1d. you cannot charge mileage rates on your railway if it is to compete with the tramway. I am assuming that the fare will be $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for every journey made over the railway. In five years from the time the railway is made to the eastern suburbs I think you will have a greater amount of traffic coming in through Woollloomooloo than from the other direction.
2114. But will not the main line coming through Redfern drain a much larger area than an eastern extension could? I mean that a line 7 miles from the Circular Quay in a general easterly direction will serve a greater population than will 7 miles of line along the western suburbs railway. The western suburbs do not grow at all—the railway traffic from those suburbs is not growing. The tramway traffic
- is

is not growing; it is stationery, and has been for some years. You can see that from the Commissioners' returns.

2115. Do you hope to gain for your extension the whole of the traffic from the eastern suburbs? Not the whole of it.

2116. In your opinion, the eastern extension of your proposed scheme would, in time to come, serve a far larger number of people than would be served by the extension into the city? In time to come; there is room for growth. At the present time people within a certain distance of the western suburban line have built pretty well as thickly as they will do, but on the eastern suburban railway route there is plenty of room for population yet.

2117. But is it not a fact that all the best building sites in the eastern suburbs are pretty well occupied now? There is a lot of ground in Waverley and Woollahra not built upon. You may put it in another way: That every mile of railway to the eastern suburbs will carry as much traffic as a line of railway through the western suburbs.

2118. Judging from the map, I think you have more possibilities of extension in the western suburbs than in the eastern? No. Persons do not now choose the western suburbs as places for residence, because they cannot get land within a reasonable distance, but they go to the northern suburbs because they can get land there, and the moment that they are certain that there will be a bridge across the Harbour a great deal of additional population will go there. The traffic on the western line will not grow for many years to come, but it will grow wherever new lines are built.

W.
Greenwood,
A.M.I.C.E.
13 Mar., 1900.

WEDNESDAY, 14 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

William Greenwood, A.M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

2119. *Vice-Chairman.*] One of the other schemes we have before us branches off from Eveleigh, and does not go through the main Redfern Station at all; yours, of course, starts from the Redfern Railway Station; the other scheme will render necessary the duplication of certain offices and the construction, practically, of a new station which will add to the working expenses, and so on;—do you think, as compared with your scheme, that is a serious matter? I would rather not say anything at all about that scheme. I have not considered it.

2120. Is it a serious matter, the construction of practically a new station somewhere near Christ Church to do work which could be done at the Redfern Railway Station? I think it is a great mistake not to go through the Redfern Railway Station.

2121. For what reason? Because Redfern Station must be one of your stopping stations. My scheme is not for long-distance traffic. Under Mr. Selge's scheme the whole of the traffic, I suppose, both long-distance and suburban, would go through the new station you are speaking of.

2122. Not necessarily? Oh, only the suburban. That is not a scheme I would adopt; I would go through the main line station.

2123. I would like you to separate the cost of resumption from the cost of works in that part of your scheme which reaches as far as the Circular Quay? I have already done so. I think it is £325,000. On page 2 of the report of the Public Works Committee in 1897, the Railway Commissioners give an estimate of traffic of £32,000. I take that to be for 10,240,000 passengers at $\frac{3}{4}$ d.—that is, they carry their passengers from Redfern to King-street for $\frac{3}{4}$ d. each for each journey. In my scheme, on the western side, the passengers that travelled as far as Wynyard-square would have gone rather a longer distance than those that would travel to King-street, and possibly 25 per cent. of my passengers would go to the Circular Quay, but I have taken credit for only $\frac{3}{4}$ d. each for them, no matter whether they went to the Quay or not. I want to show you that I have taken an under-estimate rather than an over-estimate. It is possible that for season tickets the fare to the Quay might be greater than to Wynyard-square. But for the same price I would carry the passengers a longer distance than the Commissioners would do. With regard to the estimate of the traffic from Redfern to either the King-street or the St. James' Road station, I may say that at the time the Commissioners prepared this estimate of traffic they assumed that the whole of the passengers that came to Redfern would travel to King-street. Since that time the electric tramways have been constructed, and Mr. Kneeshaw states that previously to the electric trams construction, 2,700,000 passengers per annum travelled by steam tram from and to King-street, or beyond, in going to or coming from the Redfern Railway Station, and that since the electric trams commenced to run on the western side of the town, that number has been reduced to about 700,000; in other words, Mr. Kneeshaw says that 1,150 passengers per day travel from the Redfern Railway Station by the steam trams to King-street. Assuming that a railway to King-street or to St. James' Road would carry the whole of the passengers which Mr. Kneeshaw says now travel by the steam trams—I do not think it would, but we will give credit for that—then 1,150 multiplied by two journeys, multiplied by 365 days, at $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per journey, gives a total gross revenue of £2,623 8s. 9d. per annum.

2124. Do you think that that is all the traffic that would be captured by that extension? I am sure of it, because I have given credit for all the passengers that Mr. Kneeshaw says. I might even go below Mr. Kneeshaw's figures if you were to take my opinion.

2125. A great number of people have their places of business situated between George-street and Elizabeth-street;—presuming that the proposed extension to Hyde Park were carried out, would not the majority of those persons prefer to go by the railway on account of the speedier transit than to go along George-street by means of the tram? Not more than do now.

2126.

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2126. The conditions are not the same now as they would be if an extension of the railway were carried out; they would then have a speedier method of getting into the city on the west, which would bring them probably more rapidly to their places of business than the electric tram does now; you must make some allowance for a large number of those? No; I do not think so. More than that, I think I should have a right to deduct this—the tram will be running alongside the railway, if the railway is constructed to St. James' Road—a steam or electric tram will run in Elizabeth-street competing against the railway; now a person coming to this building, or going to the Custom-house, or to the Treasury, would not ride to the railway station at King-street and then walk down as far as this, but would come by the tram to this point. Therefore, some of those people would still prefer the tram to the railway, which would quite compensate for those who might not.

2127. Do you know what difference in time an extension to King-street will make as against either the steam tram at present, or an electric tram, for that class of passengers you have just mentioned;—I mean people employed in this building, or the Custom-house, or other places about here—would it not be at least ten minutes quicker for them? That is between an electric tram running along Elizabeth-street and a railway running to St. James' Road. An electric tram running along Elizabeth-street would take less time than would be occupied by going round by George-street to Circular Quay. It is less distance—the line would be a direct one. I think that if I were in a train, and were carried to St. James' Road or King-street, and then had to walk to this building, I could be brought here just as soon by the electric tram along Elizabeth-street as I should be by the train, plus the walk.

2128. Would it have the effect of allowing suburban passengers to wait for a later train than they do now, and still get to their places of business at the same time as they do now? The total difference could not be more than two or three minutes. You see you would have to walk from King-street to this point, plus your train journey.

2129. Which would be ten minutes faster, we are told, than the tram journey? That cannot be.

2130. You will have to put your walk from King-street to the place of business against the gain of ten minutes? Your total tram journey according to the time-table is now sixteen minutes; as a matter of fact, it does take less. The electric tram along Elizabeth-street would have a much shorter distance to travel than one going round by George-street, and would travel in less time. So if you put that at ten minutes instead of sixteen, and if you put your train journey to King-street at four minutes, that leaves you eight minutes to walk from King-street to this point, which practically means there is no saving. Assuming it in that way, that gives only a total gross revenue of £2,623 8s. 9d. Now the lowest working expenses which the Commissioners put down is £8,000. That leaves a dead loss of £5,377 per annum. There is just the same number of trains to run whether those trains contain 10 per cent. or 90 per cent. of the passengers. The whole of those trains have to be brought to King-street, you cannot drop any of them at Redfern; therefore, the working expenses must be just the same, that is £8,000. Now assuming, as Dr. Garran suggested yesterday, 46d. per train mile for the running cost, the working expenses would then be £36,728. If you assume that in this case the working expenses would be £36,728, that would leave a total loss of £31,000 a year. To that gross loss you have to add this: Supposing the line costs £1,000,000 to construct—that is £700,000 plus the value of the Hyde Park land—3 per cent. interest upon that is £30,000 per annum, and that £30,000 has to be added to the loss I have already stated.

2131. The scheme before us will cost £1,500,000? Well, I am taking the cheapest one. Of course, the Railway Commissioners may be able to give an explanation of that £8,000; but it will suit me whichever way they give it. Now as to the capital cost of those schemes. Dr. Garran said yesterday that, for the purpose of comparison, we should go to the same points. I may mention that the ferry traffic now is very great, and within the next ten years we may expect that the whole of the shores from Manly to Mosman will be thickly populated, and those people will always be carried by ferry, and must go to the Circular Quay. The St. James' Road scheme is estimated to cost £650,000; but to extend the St. James' Road or the King-street scheme to the Circular Quay, in order to serve the ferry traffic, will cost no less than £500,000 for land resumption and works. Mr. Deane says that you can get to North Shore from the St. James' Road or the King-street station, and there is a plan somewhere here showing which way he proposes to get there. Mr. Deane states that either from the St. James' Road or the King-street station he could get to a bridge to North Shore by going back to Liverpool-street and forming a junction, and then going in the direction of Darling Harbour and Sussex-street, and so getting back to the proposed bridge at Dawes Point. The distance from Liverpool-street to Wynyard-square is as great as the distance would be from Redfern to Wynyard-square, and that line could not be constructed for less than £1,000,000 for land and works. There would be a junction, which is, of course, a most inconvenient thing to do, at Liverpool-street, and the whole of the traffic that came in from Redfern would have to be first carried to the St. James' Road or the King-street station; then change carriages into another train, and run back to Liverpool-street and round to Wynyard-square. So that you have first of all the cost of the line, £650,000; you have £500,000 to get to the Circular Quay, and you have £1,000,000 to get to that common point at Wynyard-square. That gives a total of £2,150,000 to bring either of their schemes to the same point as my scheme does at a total cost of £730,000. To that you have to add the cost of the land to be resumed at Hyde Park, which I think has been stated at £250,000, so that you have a capital outlay, roughly speaking, of £2,500,000, as against my £730,000. Those schemes would also involve a tunnel from Hyde Park or St. James' Road to the Circular Quay. That tunnel would be just as long or longer than the York-street tunnel. I want to show that the same distance of tunnel will occur in any of their schemes as will occur in mine. If they want to get to the Circular Quay by any of those schemes, they will have a tunnel quite as long as the York-street tunnel, and on a grade of 1 in 45. If you take No. 10 scheme, which I believe you are considering, if they utilise a portion of the line marked and dotted round to the carriage-sheds, as a means of making a railway to the eastern suburbs, then there will be a tunnel of 1,000 yards in length for the eastern suburbs traffic, besides which there will be practically a junction formed at the station in the St. James' Road scheme. The King-street or the St. James' Road station will be no better than the Redfern Station is for working. There will be the same inconvenience of shunting at either of those stations as at Redfern, because they are terminal stations.

2132. It has been suggested, in reply to a question, that by taking 80 feet from Hyde Park on the east we might dispense with a long tunnel under the Domain, and with large stabling yards at Sir John Young's Crescent, thus making the station practically a dead-end one;—what objections can be urged against such a scheme? The first is one that has not been mentioned so far, namely, the blocking up of the streets.

2133.

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2133. We are now on the question of working the station? Assuming that from Liverpool-street to Park-street the line will be in cut and cover, practically the whole of the shunting will be done in tunnel.*
2134. What objections have you to urge against that? At Redfern they say the trouble now is shunting in the tunnel, and that tunnel is possibly only 150 feet in length. It is really only a big skew bridge, and they say there is difficulty in shunting in that tunnel; and this will be a long continuous tunnel* to shunt in.
2135. Every train must have access to every platform? Yes.
2136. And for that purpose a large number of points would be necessary? Yes.
2137. Over what distance would the points necessary to produce that result extend? Possibly 800 or 1,000 feet south from Park-street.
2138. Practically, three-quarters of the tunnel*? Yes. Practically the whole length of the tunnel* would be occupied by shunting operations.
2139. That is on the presumption that we dispense with the long tunnel and the stabling sheds in the Domain, and resume some land in Hyde Park? Yes.
2140. Are there any other points you would like to urge against the scheme as it stands? Yes. The late Chief Commissioner, Mr. Eddy, stated that no terminal station should be built below the level of the roadway. It does not matter for a passing station, but for a terminal station, where the whole of the luggage has to be taken down to the platforms and lifted from the platforms. Roughly speaking, I believe that in this case the assembly platform is 13 feet above the other platforms, and there is provision for ramps in every one of these cases. Therefore, the whole of the luggage has to go down 13 feet, or be raised 13 feet.
2141. On that subject Mr. Parry said this: "Instead of having wheelbarrows passing to and fro along the assembly platform, parcels and luggage will be dealt with by Aspinall's overhead carriers"? That is all very well, but, as a matter of fact, the whole of the luggage that comes there in cabs will have to be taken down to the train. Mr. Deane also has said that a terminal station ought to be on the level.
2142. You regard as a serious objection to the King-street station the fact that the general assembly platform is not on the same level as the platforms of arrival and departure? Most assuredly. But this objection does not apply to the St. James' Road station, because there is a cab road on the level of the platforms. Where the cab road crosses the two western lines it must be 17 feet above the rails. If you assume a grade of 1 in 15 it will take 255 feet before the cab road can get down to the level of the rails. The cabs cannot get down to the level of the rails until they get about one-quarter of the distance along the platform when they come in from Park-street.
2143. But for the remaining three-quarters or more of the cab road, access can be gained to the level of the rails from Elizabeth-street all the way? Yes. My comparison, so far, has been based on the cost of the St. James' Road scheme, whilst all the other schemes, including No. 10, would cost on an average about £1,500,000. Mr. Deane stated that, under Mr. Rennick's scheme, a tunnel from Hyde Park to the Circular Quay could not be worked except by electric traction—that the grades would be so steep between St. James' Road and the Circular Quay that they must be worked by electric traction—and he has said generally that he would not advocate a tunnel scheme, unless it were worked by electric traction. The late Chief Commissioner, Mr. Eddy, objected to electric traction, and Mr. Thow, the mechanical engineer, strongly objected to electric traction, stating that it was not practicable. I also say that it is not practicable. It is practicable in London for one circular railway, but it would not be practicable here because you would have to work the trains from Redfern to Homebush, and from Redfern to Hurstville, with electric traction if you worked any portion of the railway with it.
2144. But we have had a statement that the changing of engines at Redfern from steam to electricity would not be a serious inconvenience, and could be done very rapidly? I think it would.
2145. Have you seen such a system in operation? No. With regard to tunnels, Dr. Garran asked yesterday did I think there would be an objection to a tunnel in this climate. I forgot to state then that in Brisbane they have two tunnels in the heart of the town. There is one tunnel between Roma-street station and the central station and another tunnel between the central station and Brunswick-street station. I think the longest is about half a mile—an ordinary double-line tunnel. I believe that that tunnel is now lighted with electricity, but there is only natural ventilation.
2146. Have you any idea what is the maximum number of trains going through one of those tunnels during the busiest hour of the day in Brisbane? I cannot tell you that.
2147. Do you know that as many as forty suburban trains would require to go through your tunnel, or any other tunnel connected with a city railway extension scheme here, in one hour in two of the busiest portions of the day? Yes; twenty in each direction probably.
2148. Do you think it is possible that any natural system of ventilation could keep the air pure in a tunnel under such circumstances? Yes.
2149. No artificial means would be required? I do not think so. The central station in Brisbane is practically between two tunnels. There is little or no open space before you are in a tunnel—almost the moment you leave the station you are in a tunnel in whichever direction you go in Brisbane.
2150. In summer we frequently have hot, close, muggy days, with little or no wind;—would your tunnels be ventilated under those circumstances? I think so.
2151. You consider your eastern extension as an essential part of your scheme? The general idea is that the line should be a complete circular railway.
2152. That being so, will you kindly state why you have selected the particular route you have indicated on the map, which you have placed before the Committee, to bring the loop back to the main line? I think that line indicates the most suitable piece of ground, both from an engineering point of view and from a traffic point of view.
2153. *Dr. Garran.*] I suppose you have had a good deal of difficulty in avoiding level crossings in going round there? I never make level crossings.
2154. All your approaches on the eastern suburban line either go over or tunnel under? For the eastern suburban line I have prepared no sections, but, as a matter of fact, you would not put in level crossings. Level crossings are more expensive than bridges. If you have a level crossing, you must have a gate-keeper, and a gatekeeper's wages come to more than the interest on the bridge would. It is cheaper to have a bridge.
2155. In tracing that line, you have been guided partly by engineering considerations and partly by traffic considerations? Just so.

2156.

* NOTE (on revision):—I find the plan shows No. 10 Scheme to be in open cut through the Park.

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2156. *Vice-Chairman.*] Your total cost for a complete scheme is practically £1,500,000? Yes.
2157. You say that that includes a distance of 12 miles, or practically £130,000 per mile? Yes.
2158. You state that the whole length of the line is likely to be profitable? Yes.
2159. Do you expect to get, on the average, as much profit per mile on the 10 miles of the eastern suburban line as you expect to get from the 2 miles down to the Quay? No, not per mile—certainly not; but I say that 7 miles of the eastern suburban line would serve as great a population as 7 miles on the western suburban line would serve, and consequently there would be the same amount of traffic coming into Sydney daily from that side as there would be from the western side.
2160. To support that, would you kindly give us—what I think you have prepared—a statement of the traffic that you expect from this railway, and also the working expenses—that is, of course, for the complete scheme? Yes. Yesterday I put down a total of 24,000 passengers in one direction for the city line. Now I assume 15,000 will come in from the eastern suburbs, and 1,000 from the North Shore bridge. That makes a total of 40,000, which, multiplied by two, multiplied by 365 days, gives a gross yearly total of 29,200,000 passengers, at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per journey, which gives a gross revenue of £91,250. The working expenses would be the same for the city portion. For the outer circles, or the suburban line, I assume that you will run sixty trains a day each way, which, multiplied by two makes 120 trains a day. The Railway Commissioners give the net profit per train at 3s. 4d. per train mile. Therefore, that is £20 net profit per day, multiplied by 365 days, which makes £7,300 per mile per annum on an outlay of £85,000 per mile, or practically 9 per cent. That is exclusive of goods traffic on that line, and I see no reason why the goods traffic on that 7 miles of line should not be as good as the goods traffic on the 7 miles of the western suburban line, which is roughly £30,000 per annum.
2161. For the purpose of comparison, if you can institute one between these, I may say that according to the Railway Commissioners' report we have 66 miles of tram which, on the average, cost only £22,400 a mile—that is, taking the electrical, the steam, and the cable altogether—going through all the main streets, tapping all the main centres of population, and on that outlay we get a net profit of 3.75 per annum; you, on the other hand, have 12 miles of railway at an average cost of £130,000 per mile, which you anticipate will yield 9 per cent. per annum? Yes.
2162. Do you think that you will earn more than the whole of the tram system—that is, taking everything into consideration? I do not think you can compare railways and tramways; it is a very difficult thing to do. According to a statement given on page 8 of the Railway Commissioners' report, the results of the working of the railways in 1899 show that the working expenses were 54 per cent. of the revenue. On the next page there is a statement that the working expenses of the tramways were 83 per cent.
2163. What sort of station do you propose to have at Circular Quay? No more than an ordinary passing station.
2164. Will that be an "island" station? I do not think so; but that is a thing you can decide upon only when you work out your details. Under many circumstances an "island" platform is preferable, but not always. I may state that there are no "island" platforms on the Metropolitan Railway, London, and there are many cases in which "island" platforms are not advisable. The Wynyard-square station will be rather a complicated one as regards that, there being two different levels; but it is only a matter of detail whether you put in an "island" platform or two side platforms. On two lines of rails I can work all the traffic that will come into Redfern during the next twenty-five years. Mr. Parry, in the report for 1897, states the number of passengers arriving at Redfern daily at 20,000. Mr. Kneeshaw says that at the present time it is 23,500. That is a growth of about 17 per cent. in three years. Roughly, it will be a matter of twenty or twenty-five years before the number of passengers doubles. In 1897 the number of trains arriving and departing in a day is stated at 324. At the present time they number 329. Practically, the number of trains arriving at Redfern is stationary; there has been no increase in the last three years. In an Appendix to the 1897 Report, Mr. Parry gives them at 324, and now he gives them at 329. Although the passenger traffic has increased 17 per cent., there are no more trains; and it is possible to double the traffic without increasing the number of trains.
2165. In what way? I have stated that, according to Mr. Parry's figures, there are just about the same number of trains arriving at and departing from Redfern now as there were three years ago, but the number of passengers has increased 17 per cent. During the busiest time of the day, at the present time—from 8 o'clock until 9 o'clock in the morning—there are twenty-two trains arriving at Redfern. They carry, on an average, 253 passengers each. These are the Government figures. A train of eight cars has seating accommodation for 480 passengers, so that you can carry double the number of passengers that you now carry, with the same trains.
2166. But the increase in the passenger traffic would not be spread equally over the whole of the day, would it? No.
2167. And, therefore, could not be applied equally to every train? But I am taking the busiest time of the day—from 8 o'clock until 9 o'clock. The Government figures show that there are 5,565 passengers carried between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning. That is in twenty-two trains, which gives an average of 253 passengers per train. I say that a train of eight cars will seat 480 or 500 passengers; therefore, if you were to have double the number of passengers you would not need to increase the number of trains, because the trains are only half full, according to the Government's own figures. It is shown that in the busiest part of the day there are only twenty-two trains arriving at Redfern. If you deduct four of those as being long-distance and semi-long-distance trains, that will leave only eighteen trains per hour to be taken along the western line. Mr. Rennick, Engineer-in-Chief of Victoria, says that twenty-four trains an hour can be worked on one pair of rails. Mr. Eddy's evidence practically endorses that. I contend that you can work thirty trains in an hour through—that is, a two-minute service. At the present time you have only eighteen, and if you were working a two-minute service, that would be thirty trains an hour, and if each train were filled, which it is supposed to be during the busy time of the day, it would carry 500 passengers; that is, 15,000 an hour could be carried over one pair of rails. At the present time you have only 5,000 arriving during the busiest hour of the day. I mention this to show that the carrying capacity of my western line is very much greater than the traffic you have now, or will have for the next twenty or twenty-five years. I want to show that the amount of traffic coming into Redfern is not an extraordinary amount at all. At St. Enoch's Station, Glasgow, there are, every working day, nineteen trains arriving in a space of forty-three minutes. That is on one pair of rails. That is at the rate of twenty-eight trains an hour arriving on one pair of rails at a terminal station in Glasgow. This information

is copied from the *Railway Magazine*, for November, 1898. At the present time twenty-two trains arrive at Redfern on four lines of rails; but, as a matter of fact, in Glasgow there are twenty-eight trains arriving in an hour on one pair of rails every morning in the year.

2168. Is it a dead-end station? I believe so. Therefore, when I say that I can work thirty trains in an hour in a through station that is no very great thing, when they receive twenty-eight in an hour at Glasgow on a single pair of rails in a dead-end station. Even if that is a through station, the amount of traffic is practically only the same amount as I say I can deal with. I mention this, because I may be told it is absolutely necessary to have four lines of rails. I think I have shown that I can deal with double the number of passengers there in twenty or twenty-five years' time, carried over only a single pair of rails; but, as a matter of fact, there are to be two pairs of rails as far as the Wynyard-square station. If the North Shore line be not built, the four lines of rails will be available only as far as Bathurst-street, and then the trains would have to run on a double line as far as the Quay.

2169. Would not the increased amount of convenience in having six lines be commensurate with the increased expense which they would occasion? Two lines are said to be required for fast traffic, and two lines for slow traffic, and the other two lines for service lines. I have no fast traffic; it is all slow traffic. It is all going at the same speed, and I do not require the service lines.

2170. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Yesterday you said the King-street scheme would serve only 10 per cent. of the people; in other words, you said that the Redfern Station would serve 90 per cent. of the people better than the King-street scheme would? That is for long-distance traffic.

2171. I did not notice that you were speaking merely of the long-distance traffic? Well, 90 per cent. of the total traffic that arrives at Redfern is suburban traffic. Then, of the long-distance traffic that remains, I said that 90 per cent. of the people would be nearer their homes with their luggage at Redfern than they would be at King-street.

2172. What area would you mark out as being conveniently served by the King-street scheme? Bounded by Macquarie-street on the east, by Bent-street or Bridge-street on the north, by Market-street on the south, and by Castlereagh-street on the west.

2173. About what proportion of the city do you suppose that would represent? I do not think it would represent 5 per cent. of the day population of Sydney. The night population of the city is very small, but the day population is very great.

2174. So that really that extension to King-street, as proposed, would be of very little value? I think so.

2175. Now, with regard to your own scheme, what portion of the city do you suppose your Bathurst-street station would serve? Down to the water side on the west side, and to Castlereagh-street on the eastern side.

2176. And then north and south? Very few people would go south; north, midway to Wynyard-square.

2177. From Wynyard-square to what boundaries do you suppose people would be inconvenienced? The whole of Pitt-street on the eastern side, Darling Harbour or Sussex-street on the western, Margaret-street on the northern, and possibly King-street on the southern.

2178. I suppose that all outside those boundaries would be better served by a tram? Well, a tram runs through a portion of those boundaries.

2179. But I say outside those boundaries? Yes.

2180. You would imagine that people would prefer the tram in coming either to Bathurst-street or to Wynyard-square? Excepting with this difference, that if they come in the train they do not have to change, they go more quickly, and the season ticket rates and the workmen's ticket rates would be less; therefore, people would save both in time and in money.

2181. Of course, within a certain area? Yes, within a certain area. Mr. Kneeshaw stated that if the railway tram traffic were not in George-street—and he said he would be glad to get rid of it—there is plenty of local pick-up traffic. So the railway would not rob the trams, because they have already as much traffic as they can carry.

2182. It is very evident that the electric tram is a very popular conveyance? It is. It ought to have been made some years ago.

2183. Because Mr. Kneeshaw said that prior to the electric tram running, the average number of railway passengers per annum by tram was 2,700,000, and at the time he gave evidence the other day, the average number was 8,700,000 per annum—nearly four times as many? That is so.

2184. I do not think you have given any opinion about the third proposal which has been laid before us, and which is called the Asylum scheme? I think I have in this sense: I say I would not propose to make a new station there for the next ten years, because I say that whatever money you spend there will be unproductive—that you could not get increased fares from the passengers.

2185. But do you not think that if that station were constructed, it would entirely relieve Redfern Station from the pressure under which it has been suffering for some time; the Commissioners really consider that about the most urgent thing is to relieve the Redfern Station from that pressure, because they say it is positively dangerous;—and there is no doubt that that scheme, if adopted, would entirely relieve the Redfern Station from pressure? It would do so, but you would get no revenue from it.

2186. Leaving the question of revenue aside, would not that be a very convenient station from which to run tram-lines, say, through Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street? No; I do not think so. I myself think that the function of the tramway is to serve purely local pick-up traffic, and there should not even be a connection with a railway station. Mr. Kneeshaw practically adopts that view himself by saying that he would run the trams to the Cyclorama, and not go to the railway station at all, and my opinion also is that the trams would have sufficient traffic for themselves. You mentioned the danger at Redfern. You have had one or two railway accidents at Redfern. These are caused solely by drivers going against signals, and if you build a new station, and a driver goes against signals, you must have an accident; so it is not really the fault of the station.

2187. Still, if they had more room, and had not to shift the trains so frequently, I suppose accidents would be less likely? Yes, they would be less likely; but so long as a driver obeys his signals, the interlocking gear prevents an accident.

2188. With regard to your proposal to cross the Circular Quay, you propose to have an underground line there 15 feet deep? A daylight station.

2189. Would not a viaduct be serviceable? Most objectionable. My name will never be put to a viaduct there.

2190. A viaduct could be built in such a way that vehicular and other traffic could readily pass through? Yes;

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Yes; but if you were to have a viaduct it would be a matter of 25 or 30 feet in height above the roadway, and people would have to rise that much to get up to the station, and the damage to the front of the Custom-house would be very great.

2191. In what way would it damage the Custom-house? The viaduct being in front of the Custom-house would spoil the architectural effect of the Custom-house.

2192. It has been given in evidence that a viaduct could be made an ornament to the place? Not in front of the Custom-house.

2193. The great argument of travellers—suburban people particularly—is the saving of time that would be effected by going by railway to King-street or by any other railway extension into the city; but, of course, that saving of time would only be for persons going to places within easy reach of the station? But every one going to places west of my proposed line must be taken nearer to their places of business by that railway than they could possibly be taken either by the electric tram or by a train to the King-street station.

2194. But still it is a fact that there would be no saving of time, except in the particular instance you have named? Yes; the whole of the population west of George-street would be taken nearer to their places of business by my railway than they would be by the tram.

2195. You think, then, that the tram traffic would not be facilitated by the carrying out of this proposed extension to Belmore Gardens;—of course, it would be dead money so far, because nothing more could be charged for fares; but still I should imagine that the carrying out of that proposal would facilitate the running of trams in directions other than George-street? No; my opinion as regards trams is that the local pick-up traffic will always pay for itself—that there should be sufficient traffic in George-street or, say, in Pitt-street to make it pay. But Pitt-street is not wide enough for a tramway. Kent-street might be.

THURSDAY, 15 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

William Greenwood, A.M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

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2196. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I want to ask you a little more about crossing Circular Quay—your scheme would be an open cutting, would it not? Yes.

2197. Would that not interfere more with the traffic on the Quay than a viaduct would? No. I do not close any street. I put one bridge in the centre of the Custom-house, diverging to the two sides of the Custom-house.

2198. Still, you would alter the course of the street? Yes. The railway being through the centre really divides the traffic.

2199. With a viaduct there would be no occasion whatever to alter the direction of the street? Yes. The viaduct piers would take just the same width from the street for traffic that is going east and west.

2200. But the viaduct would have openings all the way;—you would simply put piers here and there, and the traffic would be just as free as it is now? Yes. But if the traffic were going from east to west the piers would take up the same width north and south as the railway would take.

2201. But still it would be of advantage the other way—it would leave a freer access north and south, would it not;—you see that an open cutting there would block the traffic north and south altogether? No. There would be a bridge in front of the Custom-house. The whole of the traffic going to Young-street and Loftus-street would pass over that bridge.

2202. But there would be only a bridge, I suppose? Yes.

2203. At all events the crossings could be more frequent with a viaduct than they could be with an open cutting? Yes.

2204. You have admitted that the electric tram is very largely patronised now? Yes.

2205. In fact, you stated yesterday that the present railway station at Redfern would accommodate about 90 per cent. of the people as compared with the King-street station? That is as regards long-distance passengers.

2206. I think you afterwards included the others also? Yes, for convenience.

2207. If the tram system were considerably increased, do you not think that it could be made sufficient for any extension into the city? Utterly impossible. Increased facilities cause increased traffic, and if you were to put down another tramway, say in Castlereagh-street or in Kent-street, it would create its own traffic on that line of tramway.

2208. That would be a division of the traffic, would it not? Yes.

2209. A tram certainly is more convenient for business people, in dropping them near to their places of business than a train could possibly be; for instance, in your scheme, you propose to go for your first section the whole way to Bathurst-street? Yes.

2210. And then from Bathurst-street to Wynyard-square? Yes.

2211. Well that leaves a tremendous gap, whereas the tram drops passengers at every street? Yes, that is so.

2212. If there were convenience in the different streets for trams, do you not think that people would prefer to use the tram to being brought somewhat out of their way by the train? The tram will never take the place of a railway. There will always be sufficient railway traffic to make the railway pay, and in a few years' time there will be sufficient traffic on those streets to make the tramway pay.

2213. You think that there is ample room for both railway and tramways? Yes. Sydney is a very peculiarly-shaped town. Kent-street is really the only street where you could properly put a tramway, and even there I would not like to put a double tramway. In Castlereagh-street you might put one, but I would prefer to keep to Elizabeth-street for a tramway, even for an electric one. 2214.

2214. How deep do you propose the cutting shall be at the Circular Quay? The rails will be about 13 feet below the wood blocks.

2215. Would that leave ample room for a bridge? Yes. I think I pointed that out to the Committee. You would have to raise your road about 3 feet in front of the Custom-house.

2216. The Railway Commissioners seem to think 17 feet at least should be the depth of the cutting? Yes; that is so—from 16 to 17 feet. Therefore, you would raise your road 3 feet or 4 feet in front of the Custom-house.

2217. That would be just arching it? Yes.

2218. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you mean raising the road only for the bridge, or the whole of the road? No. One bridge would be built in the centre of the Custom-house, say 66 feet long, and diverge to Loftus-street and to Young-street.

2219. But do you mean the whole of the road would be raised near the Custom-house? No; merely for the bridge. The front line of the Custom-house building would be practically about the same level as the raised road when raised 3 or 4 feet.

2220. Would you raise the pavement in front of the Custom-house? You would have to make two wing roads. At the present time the road in front of the Custom-house is higher than it is at the Quay—it falls to the gutter.

2221. Will you tell me what the depth of your lower station at Wynyard-square would be? The platforms would be about 30 feet below York-street.

2222. Do you propose to have a lift or only stairs for the people? No lift—certainly not. The ground from York-street to Carrington-street, going towards George-street, falls very fast, so that the outlet from the station, coming out at the corner of Carrington-street, will be a very slight rise from the platform.

2223. You would not go to George-street? No.

2224. Would you go to the corner of Carrington-street? Yes. In arranging a station of that kind, you would probably have different means of access and outlets from your station; the two traffics should not meet one another.

2225. Can you tell the length of the tunnel under the Domain, so as to compare it with the length of your tunnel under York-street;—in going round to the eastern suburbs you will have a tunnel under the Domain to go out at Woolloomooloo Bay? I could not tell you unless I were to plot a section; but it would be very short.

2226. Would it be more than 30 chains? No, less.

2227. What would be the length of your tunnel under Darlinghurst? About 24 chains.

2228. Will those be the only three tunnels on the whole of your scheme? I cannot say that, because in going through the suburbs before you got to Randwick it might be necessary to put in some short spurs of tunnels.

2229. At any rate, so far as you can see now, the tunnel under York-street would be the longest tunnel in your scheme? Yes; the tunnel under Darlinghurst would be common to all the schemes.

2230. *Mr. Levis.*] Throughout your line, from start to finish, I suppose you frequently cross the gas-pipes? There will be no difficulty with those at all. You can always deal with a gas-main. I do not think that I interfere with the principal main anywhere.

2231. Are you sure of that? Not absolutely sure.

2232. But if you were to interfere with the principal main it would cause a good deal of difficulty, would it not? No; what we do in England is this —

2233. No matter about what you do in England;—what are you going to do here? In lieu of a circular main we put in a flat one. We give the same area of space in the pipe, but flatten it. The crown of the arch would be about 18 inches, or 1 foot 9 inches, thick; and we should flatten the pipe and give it a greater width and less depth, and so give the same area to the pipe.

2234. So that there would be no difficulty whatever with the gas-mains? No, nor with water-mains.

2235. Have you considered whether, in the whole of your scheme, you cross the water mains, and where you do cross them? There is no trouble with the water main. I may tell you that the large water main in Sydney crosses Cleveland-street to go to Crown-street. Both the mains that come from Pott's Hill reservoir cross the railway at the Cleveland-street bridge.

2236. So you would not cross it more than once? I never cross a main coming from Prospect. I cross only ordinary service pipes.

2237. Then you do not cross the water-main itself at any point? No.

2238. Where does the service pipe start from? I think that, at the present time, the whole of the town of Sydney is supplied from the Centennial Park reservoir. Some of the low levels may be supplied from Crown-street, but I think not.

2239. You are positive that you would not cross any of the mains? Yes; not the larger mains.

2240. There is only one main, after all is said and done? The water and sewerage people call only the pipe that supplies a building a service pipe. The other pipes are called smaller mains, and principal mains.

2241. Will your scheme cross any of the principal mains? No.

2242. You will not interfere with the water supply in any way? No.

2243. What about the sewerage? The main sewer to Bondi passes at the junction of Harrington-street with Grosvenor-street.

2244. Would you interfere with it in any way? No; I go over the top of it.

2245. How many feet above it? I cannot tell you that, now, from memory. It is four years since I made the survey there.

2246. There has been no alteration? Not in the levels.

2247. Have you any idea at all? A few feet; sufficient to clear it.

2248. Without interfering with it in any way whatever? Yes.

2249. From start to finish, how many cuttings are there in your scheme? Practically only two cuttings.

2250. What is the length of each of those cuttings? About 25 chains and 35 chains.

2251. Where does the first cutting—the 25-chain one—commence? Near to Goulburn-street.

2252. How far would that continue? Until it got to the junction of Bathurst-street and George-street.

2253. It would be beyond Goulburn-street? Yes; south of it.

2254. Would you have to bridge Goulburn-street? I go beneath Goulburn-street with a bridge. I do not disturb the permanent level of the street.

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2255. What about Bathurst-street? I do not disturb that. I go beneath George-street.
2256. So that all vehicular traffic will pass over? Yes; just as it does now.
2257. What would be the width of the bridges passing over those streets? About 46 feet or 47 feet between the abutments, for four lines of rails. You would not see them at all if you were on the road.
2258. At the bridge above it, where it passes over, what width would it be? There is no bridge that passes over a road, except the viaduct at Belmore Park.
2259. But you go along Bathurst-street? I am beneath Bathurst-street.
2260. So there is a cutting at Bathurst-street? That is so.
2261. Then there must be a crossing over that from Bathurst-street into George-street. Yes.
2262. What is the width of that? You do not see it on the surface, but the abutments themselves would be 46 feet apart.
2263. What would the street itself be from path to path? Just the same as it is now. The width of it is not interfered with at all.
2264. Have you calculated the area of private land that you require to have resumed from start to finish? Yes.
2265. What is the area? $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres.
2266. That is from start to finish? Yes.
2267. What do you value that at? At an average price of £100,000 per acre, making altogether £325,000 for land.
2268. That is absolute expenditure the Government will require to make under your scheme for land resumed? Yes. I should explain: I put the land and the buildings upon it at £70,000 an acre.
2269. When you say £100,000 an acre, what do you mean? I was going to explain. I put the land at £70,000 an acre—that is for the land and the buildings upon it; I allow 10 per cent. for compulsory sale, 10 per cent. for lessees' compensation, and 20 per cent. for severance—that is, 40 per cent. on top of £70,000, which makes £98,000 an acre. By lessees' compensation I mean this: If a piece of property at the present time is under lease to a man, say, for seven years, and you were to take that from him, the owner of the property would have to compensate the lessee for the time his lease is unexpired, and I put 10 per cent. for that. That occurs in very few cases in Sydney, where the bulk of the property is let on a yearly rental, but I put down 10 per cent. in case of any compensation.
2270. Have you considered how many places are upon leasehold or upon freehold in those $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres? Yes; very little leasehold.
2271. Have you made personal inquiries? I know Sydney thoroughly well.
2272. Have you the slightest idea how much of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres is under leasehold;—have you made any inquiries from persons who are tenants there as to the nature of their tenure? No, I have not.
2273. Then how do you make that calculation? If the property were put up to auction to-morrow —
2274. How do you make that calculation? Simply from experience.
2275. Can you tell me how many leaseholds there are on the first acre? No.
2276. On the second acre? No.
2277. On the third acre? No.
2278. On the fourth acre? No; and I cannot tell you the owner of a single piece of property; I purposely avoided getting to know.
2279. But did you not think that it was a most important element in the consideration of this question, how many acres were under leasehold, or how much was freehold, so as to come to a valuation? No, I did not.
2280. Then how do you come to your valuation;—leasehold land you would value at a certain price, and freehold at so much? Yes.
2281. And tenancy from year to year at so much? Yes.
2282. Have you considered that at all? Yes, I have. Some one must own the freehold of the property, even if it is leasehold.
2283. But do you not know that if I had a leasehold, the freeholder would expect something to come to him ultimately by way of enhancing the value of it? I have put the freehold at £70,000 an acre.
2284. On the $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres, £70,000 an acre is absolutely for the freehold? Yes.
2285. What is the leasehold worth? As regard compensation to the leaseholder, I say that taking his lease from him is worth 10 per cent.
2286. How many leaseholders do you think there are? I cannot tell you how many there may be.
2287. Then how can you come to any conclusion as to the value of the land unless you have made the necessary inquiries as to how many leaseholders there are? The basis of that is the municipal assessment.
2288. Have you seen those? I got it from the Town Hall authorities.
2289. Did they show you leaseholders or freeholders? They did not show me either of them.
2290. So you can give us no information at all as to the number of leaseholders, can you? No.
2291. You do not know whether they hold the land under leasehold for a year, or for ten, or fifteen, or ninety years? I know there is very little held on lease.
2292. Do you know of your own knowledge? No.
2293. So your valuation, taken as you have admitted, is a very rough estimate? No; indeed it is not.
2294. Will you tell me why it is not? For this reason: whether property is let on a yearly lease or on a seven years' lease does not increase its value very much; property is of the same value whether let on a one year's lease or seven years' lease.
2295. Do you know whether a foot of it is let on lease? No; but that does not affect the question of value. Frequently a lease injuriously affects it. A property is for sale to-morrow, and you can give possession in a year's time. If it is let on a lease that has been running twenty or thirty years, the rent now received is much lower than the rent you would now receive if the lease had expired; therefore that makes the property of less instead of more value.
2296. But you cannot tell us whether the lease of this property has two, five, or ten years to run, and you could not arrive at the actual value of the leasehold unless you knew that? Yes; I think so for the purpose I want this for—the purpose of an estimate.
2297. Tell me then how you come to your conclusion? I take the city assessment, the rental.
2298. But you have said that you do not know whether they are leaseholds for terms of years or for a year, or whether there are any leaseholds? No, that is so.

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2299. How can you, unless you have that information, come to a conclusion? I simply make an estimate of what I think is the value of the land.

2300. But, in the consideration of the question of the cost of the construction of this line, would it not materially alter the whole aspect of the case if your valuation—which you say is £70,000 an acre—ought to be £100,000 an acre? There is not a piece of land on the whole of the place worth £100,000 an acre.

2301. But supposing it is so; you are taking a basis with nothing to support it? I think not.

2302. Well, what is the land absolutely worth, taking it on its freehold basis? £70,000 an acre.

2303. That is, the absolute freehold of the $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres is not worth more than £70,000 an acre, including the buildings upon it? That is so.

2304. Are you seriously considering the answer that you are giving? Yes. The Government Valuator has practically endorsed that already.

2305. Coming to the conclusion, then, that £70,000 an acre is the value of the land, including the buildings, at what do you value the whole of the $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres? £230,000, roughly.

2306. That is all it would cost the Government to resume this land? No. I have already told you £325,000, after allowing a percentage for compensation for forced sale, and so on.

2307. That is all it is worth? Yes.

2308. If it were your property to-morrow, you would be willing to take £325,000 for all that property? I do not think that if I were to go into court I could get as much as that if I had to fight the matter.

2309. Mr. Norman Selge belongs to the same institute as you do? Yes.

2310. You will admit, I suppose, that he is an experienced man in his profession? Yes.

2311. You have seen his proposal? Yes.

2312. What do you think of his proposal? Well, as an engineer who has propounded a scheme myself, it is not likely that I am going to say that his is as good as mine.

2313. You do not think much of his scheme compared with yours? Most assuredly not.

2314. And as to all these Government schemes, I may take your answer is the same answer? There is not one I would put my name to, saying that I, as an engineer, designed that scheme as a scheme for a city railway for a city like Sydney. I would be ashamed to put my name to it as a means of producing revenue on the capital you would have to spend. I say it cannot possibly produce such revenue.

2315. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you anything to add? In reference to the question generally of building a terminal station, either at King-street or at St. James' Road, I would point out that if you build a station at either of those places, it will necessitate two terminal staffs, for this reason: You may take a horse to the water, but you cannot make it drink; and you may build a station at King-street or at St. James' Road, but the public will not go there. The greatest portion of the public will leave the train at Redfern, and consequently you will have to keep two terminal staffs—one at Redfern, and one at King-street, if you have a station there. All the long-distance trains will call at Redfern, and, having called there, the bulk of the passengers will leave the train at Redfern, but inasmuch as you bring your long-distance trains into the King-street or the St. James' Road station, you must keep a staff there as for a terminal station; therefore you will have the expense of two terminal stations, if you make a terminal station at King-street or at St. James' Road. If you make a station at King-street, you cannot dispense with Redfern as a terminal station.

2316. You state that we will require a staff at Redfern station for long-distance traffic, and also another staff at the King-street or the St. James' Road terminal station for the suburban traffic and such of the long-distance traffic as goes there? I was referring to the long-distance traffic.

2317. Well, that is only about 10 per cent. of the whole of the traffic of the railways? Yes.

2318. Then the staff at Redfern required to cope with that 10 per cent. will not be a duplication of the staff that would be wanted at King-street to cope with the 90 per cent.? Not quite, but you must have a cloak-room, a refreshment-room, and porters, and trucks for luggage. Suburban passengers are supposed to shift for themselves, but at a terminal station you have to provide suitable accommodation for a terminal station—that is what I mean. So I think that, even though you build a new station at King-street, you will not convert Redfern into a wayside station, and you will have the expense of two terminal stations. I should like to say that in reference to the Royal Commission of 1891 the result was even voting on the question of the Hyde Park scheme as against the western side scheme. As a matter of fact, there were five votes given for it, and five against it. Mr. Kethel was not present, and he telegraphed that he was in favour of the western side scheme. Then the Chairman's vote went against his, and that made level voting at that time on the question of the Hyde Park scheme as against the western route. As may be seen from page 61 of their Report, the Royal Commission came to the conclusion that a bridge connection with North Shore was impossible from Hyde Park. On page 63, the Royal Commission recommended that a bridge should be constructed with a height of 160 feet headway. Now, if the Royal Commission recommended that a bridge should be constructed, and if they said that you cannot get a connection from Hyde Park to the bridge, it follows that you must go on the western side to get to the bridge, according to their recommendation. Acting upon that statement, the Railway Commissioners submitted the Benevolent Asylum scheme, because an extension could be made from there along the west side of the city to the bridge. You will find that on page 7 of their Report. The same Royal Commission recommended, at page 15, the construction of an eastern suburban line, and on the same page, they also recommended that that line should be a circular line, with loops to the Randwick and Kensington race-courses. They likewise recommended that a north-western suburban line should be made. The Royal Commission in 1897, on page 20 of their Report, under heading of "Future railway extensions," said:—

In dealing with the extension into the city there are four questions which, though not of such pressing importance as the matter specially under consideration—

That is the city railway—

must not be lost sight of. (1.) An extension to the Circular Quay.

By the method they would get to the Quay, the extension would be in tunnel. Then they say:

(2) An extension to the eastern suburbs.

That also, according to their scheme, would be in tunnel. Thirdly, they recommended an extension to North Shore. That, as I have shown from the Report of the first Royal Commission, is impossible from Hyde Park by means of a bridge. Then they recommended a circular railway under the city. If I do not provide for

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for and carry out the whole of their suggestions, it is very strange to me. My scheme, which was prepared years before then, fulfils the whole of those requirements. On page 10 of the Report of the Public Works Committee in 1897, on proposed railway extension from Redfern to St. James' Road, there is the following paragraph:—

Though these extensions involve considerable tunnelling their mention must not be regarded as an approval of the tunnel system; they are merely an admission that underground construction is inevitably connected with railway extension in the directions indicated.

That is to say, they admit that no railway could be made to the Circular Quay or to the eastern suburbs without tunnels. I think that in my scheme I have met all the objections and recommendations of either of the Royal Commissions or Public Works Committees that ever sat on this matter.

Alexander Wilson, stock and station agent, sworn, and examined:—

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2319. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand you come here prepared to give the Committee details of a scheme which you have elaborated for railway extension into the city? No. I have come only to lend what I think is a little weight in support of what I consider to be the competent authorities on this question, and, if possible, to help to remove some of the difficulties that the public appear to find in connection therewith. For that purpose I have brought the map which I submitted to the last Committee. I also submitted it to Mr. Reid some years ago, and since then to the present Government. It is chiefly recognising the sentimental objections against taking any portion of Hyde Park. I do not attach very great weight to that; but still recognising that it is a force, I have suggested that an equivalent area of land should be given in other parts of the city in connection with the St. James' Road scheme, showing how a corresponding area could be given elsewhere, and enormously improve and beautify the city, so that the whole of the last mile of the approach by railway into the city should be through parks; in fact an unbroken park would extend from St. Paul's Redfern—that is at the present tunnel—to Lady Macquarie's Chair. That would sweep away—what I daresay you have had enough evidence of, either personally or here from witnesses—one of the worst slums in Sydney, namely, Wexford-street. In giving evidence in 1897, before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in relation to the proposed railway extension from Redfern to St. James' Road, I said:—

I propose that the Government should resume the whole of the blocks enclosed by Liverpool-street, Elizabeth-street as far as Gipps-street, Macquarie-street South, and a line which is a parish boundary, and is almost conterminous with the main part of Foster-street. I also suggest the resumption of the little block upon the ridge between Randall and Devonshire streets. I believe that the Royal Commission recommended the extension of the Elizabeth-street tram to Devonshire-street; but I am not sure by what route. I propose that the tram-lines should be taken straight along Elizabeth-street to Prince Alfred Park, though the hill at the end of Elizabeth-street would have to be cut down, and, in order not to disturb the levels of some of the other streets there, resumptions would have to be made. I suggest the resumption of the whole corner. One feature which has not been noticed, I think, in this connection is the congestion of traffic in Oxford-street, especially upon race-days. I find, however, that from Hyde Park corner—that is, the Liverpool-street corner—to Randwick by the present tram route is only 20 chains shorter than by the route going straight up Elizabeth-street. The Elizabeth-street route would have the advantage that there would be no grades to speak of. Thus you would save the Oxford-street hill, and you would not mix the Randwick traffic up with any other tram traffic, except the Botany traffic. I feel sure that the trams could run the extra 20 chains in the same time as, if not in five minutes less than, they take to make the journey to Randwick now. This is a matter which I think must force itself upon the attention of the authorities every day. My proposal would also relieve the tram traffic in the upper end of Pitt-street, and would avoid a certain amount of the danger which occurs in shunting trams from one line to another near the Redfern terminus. Even if it took two or three minutes longer than it takes at present to reach Randwick by the route I propose, there would be a gain in the lessening of traffic in Oxford-street.

I also gave the following evidence:—

2028. I notice that you propose the resumption of properties above Wexford-street? That is included in the resumptions necessary for the line. There are several churches and a public school on that block, but I do not see any reason for removing them. I do not set up as an expert upon the subject of land values, but I have consulted, though merely in a friendly way, a gentleman who is one of the recognised authorities upon this subject in the city. As to the value of the buildings, neither of us could go into that. The block which I propose to resume will practically be gutted by the present proposal, and I contend that to have an approach to and an exit from the city through park land for the first $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile, instead of through slums, with views of back yards, is worth paying something for. My scheme would also provide park land where it is more valuable to the resident population than is that part of Hyde Park which it is proposed to take for the railway station. There is a dense population immediately to the east and south-east of these areas, and a great number of people walk through that part of the city every day.

2029. Your scheme would very much disturb the properties near Wexford-street;—that might not be a very serious evil? Yes. The people whose residences would be destroyed might probably be able to find more desirable residences out towards Waterloo, or in other suburbs where they could get more fresh air.

2030. You provide for a continuous line of park from Prince Alfred Park right down to Mrs. Macquarie's Chair? Yes; something like what they have in Adelaide.

2031. Such a park would scarcely be surpassed in any part of the world? I think not, and the resumptions could be made without disturbing any business premises. All that would be taken would be an occasional butcher's or baker's shop.

2032. The properties that you propose to resume are not very high-class, so that the cost should not be very much? I think that the cost should not be large. The country should not feel the expenditure of £100,000 upon a matter like this.

2033. You contend that if this scheme were adopted it would meet with the objections of many good-meaning people to the resumption of any part of Hyde Park? I think so. I wish to defer to their objections to the taking of park land, though it must be remembered that park land is public land, and is to be used, if need be, for any public purpose. A man may have an acre of land surrounding his house, all of it in gardens, but he may later on feel it necessary to keep a horse and trap, and thereupon take some part of the garden to provide for the building of a stable. He says to himself, "We shall have less ground at home, but we shall have an opportunity to go a little further abroad for fresh air." I think that is an analogous case. At the same time, however, I recognise the weightiness of the sentiment against the taking of any park land.

Towards the end of that inquiry, one of the Government officials gave evidence as to the value of the properties referred to. At page 167 Mr. Perdriau says:—

In his evidence before the Public Works Committee, Mr. Alexander Wilson suggested for resumption, for conversion into a park, in lieu of the portion of Hyde Park resumed, those blocks of the city extending from Liverpool-street to Gipps-street, bounded on the west by Elizabeth-street, and the east by Macquarie-street South and Foster-street. For convenience in considering Mr. Wilson's suggestions, I have divided the area proposed by him to be resumed into three blocks, in such a way that if the Committee approve of the suggestion, either in part or the whole, they would probably recommend its purchase. No. 1 is bounded by Liverpool, Elizabeth, Goulburn, and Macquarie streets. The mean length is 535 feet, and the mean width 490 feet; area, 6 acres. The total of the municipal assessments for the block is £9,840; capitalising £9,840, at twenty years' purchase = £196,800; add for the Lutheran Church (approximate estimate), £2,000; add for the Unitarian Church, £13,000; public school, £9,000 (this building would probably be allowed to remain); total, £24,000. No. 2 is bounded by Goulburn, Elizabeth, Foster, and Macquarie streets. The mean length is 550 feet, and the mean width

width 415; area, nearly 5 acres. The total of the municipal assessments for this block is £5,459. Capitalising £5,459 at twenty years' purchase, £109,180; add for the Chinese Church, which is not rated, £1,000. No. 3 is bounded by Campbell, Foster, and Elizabeth streets. The mean length is 240 feet, and the mean width 200 feet; area, 1 acre. The total of the municipal assessments for this block is £2,445. Capitalising £2,445 at twenty years' purchase, £48,900. The total estimated cost of resumption as above would, therefore, be £354,880; to which, if the buildings not rated be added, £26,000; total, £380,880.

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My position to-day is exactly the same in regard to that as it was then. In view of the changed aspect of the city traffic from the point of view of the present electric tramway and prospective openings of other electric tramways, I should like to make a few suggestions as to the access to the city. I have seen all these plans, and I leave it to people whose business it is to find out which is the best engineering route. But it appears to me that the only feasible scheme, outside the St. James' Road scheme, is No. 4 scheme, and to take a further slice out of Hyde Park to bring the accommodation up to something like what the original St. James' Road scheme proposed. I have looked at No. 10 scheme, and whatever little feeling I may have about park land, would be more against taking land in the Domain and having an engine stable there, than it would be against taking a piece of Hyde Park. That would be my choice in the matter. Allowing for the convenience in the one case, and the disturbance in the other, I prefer the taking of the extra land at Elizabeth-street to having an engine stable in the Domain. Judging from the reports that have appeared of the evidence given so far, and the questions asked, it seems to me that there is a good deal of an idea that the electric tram should more or less do away with the necessity for any railway extension past Belmore. I had the distinct opinion that the Belmore extension was intended to kill the city railway extension. I hold that opinion still. That was the intention of it, and to make the trams do the work. I have taken an active interest in this matter for a great many years, and have been a member of the executive committee of the City Railway Extension Alliance for some years, and that is one reason why I appear to speak with some definiteness. On the question of the trams, I would say that anyone who has travelled in other large cities will have discovered by this time that practically tram traffic cannot take the place of railway traffic in handling large numbers of people. It has become more and more recognised that tram traffic is only for moving people short distances in and around where there is a dense population, and the more I see of it the more I am convinced. George-street affords the most distinct illustration we could wish for as to that. When people want to get home, you can often see four, five, or six trams go by, as low down as Hunter-street, before you can get on, unless you choose to do so at the risk of life or limb. It is quite evident in the case of the George-street tram, and I believe that if there were three or four other tram-lines into the city, in a year or two they would find lots of work to do without taking a single passenger to the railway-station—that is, as the railway-station is at present. Of course a great deal depends on the disturbance of your journey, and the gross length of time occupied between your departure and your arrival at your destination. I will suppose that a person wants to go from Redfern to the corner of Erskine and Kent streets. That is pretty well to the west—that is, at the back of Wynyard-square, it is the first block down towards Darling Harbour. If he were to go by tram, the time would be as follows:—Tram, twelve minutes; walk from the tram, four minutes; total, sixteen minutes. Then, supposing he went by railway from Redfern Station to King-street by train, the time would be as follows:—train, three minutes; walk from King-street, ten minutes; total, thirteen minutes. That would be the time occupied by him in going to the corner of Kent and Erskine streets by train to King-street and walking thence, as compared with getting out of the train at Redfern, and then taking the tram. I have made a calculation as to distance in chains, and have allowed the rate of walking to be 3 miles an hour. Redfern to King-street, three minutes by train; Redfern to King-street, ten minutes by tram. I have made another calculation, for the journey to the Merchants' Exchange:—Tram journey, fifteen minutes; walk, three minutes; total, eighteen minutes. Train journey to King-street, three minutes; walk, nine minutes; total, twelve minutes. For the tram journey, I am taking the present George-street tram. Those are two very fair illustrations—one nearly to the Quay, and the other to what is practically the central place for all traffic supposed to be west. Now as to the traffic supposed to be west, we know that a greater portion of the business part of the city is to the west of George-street than to the east of it; but that does not prove that there is a great deal more traffic. I think that any one who goes as far as York-street will see how the streets thereabouts are unoccupied compared with Pitt-street, George-street, and King-street, and streets thereabouts. People who go to Kent and Sussex street go there mostly to stop for the day. They come in and go out once in a day, and the traffic is limited to people who have business there. But there are, perhaps, 500 people a day who go to one spot in Pitt-street or George-street, and those are the people who want to be accommodated. Whilst business men come into town from 8 to 10 o'clock in the morning, women and children are coming in all day long, and they seldom or never go west of George-street. I think that there ought to be a very clear distinction drawn between the number of business premises, and the amount of travelling done, and where the people want to travel to and from. You take the blocks between Market-street and Hunter-street, from George-street to Castlereagh-street, and I will guarantee that if a census could be taken it would show that more traffic, either tram or train, comes out of those blocks than out of all the rest of the city put together—I do not care whether casual or long-distance traffic. That area includes nearly all the big shops, the large hotels, and banks, where people have to come and go frequently.

2320. Admitting that, would you not also admit that the two periods of concentrated traffic, for which either a tram extension or a train extension would have to cater, is when large numbers of people are going straight to their business in the morning, and when they are going straight away to their homes in the afternoon? The great rushes are then—more in the afternoon.

2321. Why more in the afternoon? Because a great many people come in late in the morning, but go home at the same time as do people who come in early.

2322. But the going of women and children to shops is spread over practically the rest of the day? To some extent it is. But the thing is to bring the people to where they want to go to.

2323. *Dr. Garran.*] The evidence before us is that these very business people have deserted the steam tram for the George-street tram? Quite so; and for a very good reason too—because the steam tram is an anachronism for one thing, and you cannot step off the platform at Redfern Station now in order to get into it. The arrangements are quite changed, and you have to go into the roadway to get into the steam tram at Redfern.

A. Wilson. 2324. *Vice-Chairman*.—But that alteration did not take place until a change in the direction of the traffic took place;—they kept the steam trams on until they found there was a necessity for a change? I see every day the local traffic that has been created by the penny fare; the cheap and comfortable service has created an enormous traffic. For instance, people who get off the Manly boat in the morning, and want to go only a little way up George-street, now go by tram. I know two Bank managers, and the farthest that either of them goes is to the Bank of New South Wales, and they step on to the tram because it is in front of them when they come off the wharf, whereas they always walked previously, unless the day were a wet one. Now they pay their penny, and are put down at the Bank door. If the people want to go to the Victoria Markets or to the Town Hall now they get into a tram. There is another feature of this traffic: If you want to go, say, from Hunter-street or Bridge-street to catch a train, you cannot depend on the tram. You may have to wait until five or six trams pass before you can get a seat. I say that unhesitatingly, because it is my own experience. If I want to catch a train I get quite uncomfortable, and have to allow five, six, or seven minutes' latitude for fear that I may be humbugged in trying to catch my train. I would rather walk further to a railway station, because I would not have to run the risk of delay or breakdown. I would very much rather go to a railway terminus with a little more trouble than go by tram. I suppose that three or four trains might practically arrive simultaneously at King-street, and I presume that there would be 500 or 600 in each train. Therefore, 2,000 people might arrive at the terminal station almost at the same instant. No tram system could deal with that—at least it does not seem that we have an opportunity. I should like to make a suggestion in connection with the King-street scheme, and also for the convenience of people going to the west. I understand that we are to have a tramway down Castlereagh-street, going towards the Quay, instead of down Elizabeth-street as now. If a tram were to start from Castlereagh-street, abreast of the proposed King-street station, and go along Market-street, Kent-street, Argyle-street, or up Windmill-street and along Dawes' Point, to George-street and back, so as to connect with the Castlereagh-street extension to Circular Quay, you would have a circular tramway which would go back to the railway station. Pymont Bridge seems to me to be one of the outlets of the business part of the city, and I think that a tram should also go across Pymont Bridge to Pymont, the Glebe, and on to Balmain. I notice that in connection with some of the proposals a good deal has been said about tunnelling and the possibility of steep grades to or from the Quay station, or something of that kind. I am not prepared to discuss engineering matters, and I do not presume to do so, but it does occur to me that there must be some one in the Public Service who knows something of the details of the working of Lime-street station, Liverpool, where this question was a matter of great concern for many years. There there is a steep grade down the last mile and a half into the station, and the traffic used to be worked by a stationary engine. An enormous amount of money has been spent by the London and North-western Railway Company to obviate the difficulties that formerly existed there. It seems to me that it would be worth the Committee's while to get some evidence on that point. The tunnel there is a long one, and goes down steep grades to the station. The company have spent an enormous sum of money to make the station safe and to get expedition in going in and out. As to the time occupied by the two routes in this city, I may say that from Redfern to the Town Hall the time occupied in travelling by tram is eight minutes, whereas in going by railway from Redfern the time would be as follows:—Train, 3 minutes; walk, 9 minutes; total 12 minutes. Then take the case of a person wishing to go to Pymont Bridge: Tram, 9 minutes; walk, $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes; total, $12\frac{1}{2}$ minutes; train to King-street, 3 minutes; walk, $8\frac{1}{2}$ minutes; total, $11\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. So a passenger could go to King-street by train and get to the end of Pymont Bridge a minute earlier than he could by going to King-street by tram along George-street and walking the rest of the distance. That makes rather a startling illustration of the supposed capacity or usefulness of the George-street tram to serve all the people west of George-street as against the railway. If my suggestion were carried out, I feel sure that a tram run through that part of the city would pay well, simply to take business people from one part of the city to the other during the day, independently of the morning and evening traffic to and from King-street. I do not myself care particularly whether the railway goes to the St. James' Road station site or to No. 4 site. As to the question of getting to North Sydney, I think it is quite feasible to have a connection from Hyde Park to the North Shore.

2325. You suggest, in connection with this scheme, a further scheme of tram extension—one north and one west;—is not that an admission, to some extent, that you would not bring people to where they wanted to go by bringing them by railway to King-street? You cannot bring all the people to where they want to go. I said that my so-called circular tramway would be a good investment for purely business purposes, even if it did not pay people to go by it from King-street as well, but it would undoubtedly take passengers to and from King-street.

2326. You stated that you thought that people who come into town right through the day would place a larger burden on the extension of the railway or of the tramways than those who come direct to their offices or places of business in the morning, and go straight away to their homes in the afternoon? If you mean that I meant that more people would come in at that time than at the other, I certainly did not mean that. What I was speaking of was the majority of those people who want to go and do business in the shopping-blocks from Market-street to Hunter-street, and between George-street and Castlereagh-street. I did not intend to convey that they are a majority of the whole of the travellers during the day.

2327. Mr. Parry supplied the Committee with a set of statistics giving the number of passengers to and from the railway at Redfern Station on three typical days—not holidays;—the first of them gives a total of 45,010 passengers, out of which 34,378, or 75 per cent., came into the city during the busiest hours in the morning, and went back during the busiest hours in the afternoon;—is it not reasonable to conclude that those are the people who go to their places of business in the morning and go away in the afternoon? Quite so.

2328. And is it not a fact that the majority of those are situated, not around the proposed King-street station site, but to the west of that? Undoubtedly. The whole of the business part of the city is to the west of Elizabeth-street.

2329. Do you also know that the railway authorities, in their evidence before us, look upon that traffic as being the most difficult to deal with, and the one in whose interest they desire this extension? Undoubtedly.

2330. Are you prepared to offer any opinion as to the respective merits of the eastern extension of the railway as against the western? I have an opinion, and think I have some good reasons for it. I am speaking more particularly of Mr. Norman Selve's scheme, or any scheme somewhat similar to his; and

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one reason is that it must be largely in tunnel. That is admitted. Every scheme of that kind which has been submitted lately proposes to go under the new markets. I am not an engineer, but if I were I do not think I would undertake to make a railway under the basement of those markets and make a satisfactory job of it. Of course, they are all large heavy buildings along that portion of the route, and I do not know what the risk is, or what the cost is, or what the rights of the owners are—how far into the earth the landowners' privileges go. The buildings along the whole line of that traffic, until you get to Wynyard-square, are mostly very heavy ones—they are all large warehouses, and I have no doubt the foundations go down a long way. Lassetter's building, just finished, would be one of the first places that would come in. They are all large buildings—in some cases four, five, or even six storeys high. That fact must lead to great difficulty. Now you get to Wynyard-square. The matter of open spaces seems to be a great stumbling-block in the way of the settlement of this question, and Wynyard-square is now the only open space on that side of the city, with the exception of a little triangular piece in front of St. Phillip's Church. It is actually proposed to appropriate Wynyard-square in order to make a third-rate station there. That station must be largely underground, because the Square is wedge-shaped. For the line to be put in tunnel I do not know how deep it would have to be, but it would have to be a long way down. There would be some advantage to the city, especially in view of recent occurrences, if there were a compulsory "Baron Haussmann" clearance about Clarence and Sussex streets, but I do not think that that is under consideration now.

2331. Presuming that Hyde Park had been a part of the city as thickly built upon as places to the west are, do you think that it would have been selected as a site for a terminal railway station? If the question of cost were on an even balance, I should say that the block situated about where the Joint Stock Bank is would be the best place to go to for a main central station—that is, if you had to consider both schemes on the basis of cost, and of convenience.

2332. You think, then, that the present proposal has been largely determined by the fact that it was previously proposed to build the station on park land? If you use the term "park land," I should like it to be understood that that does not apply altogether to Hyde Park. You get to Hay-street in the Hyde Park scheme without touching any private land at all. In connection with any of the western schemes you get into difficulties of land resumption, overhead and tunnel arrangements, the moment you begin to leave Redfern: whereas in the other case you get to Hay-street without touching a foot of alienated land, and, as I have explained, you go through one of the least valuable parts of the city, where there are scarcely any business premises of any value. But the moment you leave Redfern to go on the western side, that being one of the old business settlements, and it being such an irregularly-shaped place, it would take a surveyor and a land valuer a long time to arrive at what the trouble would be, or what the cost would be, either above or below ground.

2333. I think you have made the statement that no scheme, except the official scheme, got into the city without going through private land? "No scheme" is such a very big phrase. I suppose that the schemes now number about forty.

2334. Well, none of the schemes before the Committee;—have you seen the scheme for a circular railway that has been put before the Committee by Mr. Greenwood? I do not know his scheme very well; but, looking at the map, it looks to me more difficult from an engineering and a land-resumption point of view even than Mr. Norman Selife's.

2335. He gets over the Belmore Markets before he starts to touch private land? In that respect he follows the idea of getting to Hay-street as I have said. That is the main difference between his scheme and the other.

2336. *Dr. Carran.*] I understand that you propose to make a substitution of park land from one place to another? Yes.

2337. To surrender the north-west corner of Hyde Park, and to make another park at Wexford-street? Yes; of fully the same area.

2338. Do you think that the values would be about equal? Oh, no.

2339. Which would be the more expensive? The Hyde Park land would be more valuable than the Wexford-street land.

2340. In the evidence placed before the last Committee, Mr. Sievers and Mr. Perdriau valued the north-west corner of Hyde Park at rather less than £200,000;—that is without including a strip that will be taken out of the south-west corner, and Mr. Perdriau values what you want at £380,880; so there will be £180,000 to be added to the cost of the railway in order to carry out your scheme? But you must remember that that includes all the improvements.

2341. Never mind that;—we would have to pay the money? Quite so; but there is no reason why you might not sell frontages in Elizabeth-street back to the railway line, and have park land only on one side, and the sites there would realise very good prices.

2342. That is not the scheme you put before the Committee just now;—you did not say that you were going in for land speculation, to improve other property by knocking down the slums and building afresh? I would propose that the Government should resume the whole of the property, whatever happens.

2343. And sell what they did not what? If they were to think the cost for additional park purposes too great, they could sell a considerable portion of it.

2344. But the piece you are going to take is supposed to be worth only £200,000, and the piece you would get the Government to buy and substitute would cost £380,880? Yes. But Mr. Perdriau himself pointed out that there is no reason why the churches and the schools might not be left standing enclosed in their present area. None of those buildings would be interfered with by the railway line.

2345. If we are going to substitute other park land for the portion of Hyde Park that we take, would it not be more reasonable to put that substituted land in parts of the city where there is no park land at present? South of Oxford-street to Goulburn-street is one of the most populous districts, and is almost without an open space in it.

2346. But you would have continuous park land from Redfern Railway Station right to Lady Macquarie's Chair? Yes; from Redfern-street.

2347. Now, look at West Sydney and Pyrmont, and show me what there is green there? There is Wentworth Park.

2348. But that is out of the city? Yes. You suggest why not clear out some of the rookeries about "The Rocks." I think that nature is doing that in any case. It is recognised by the authorities that population

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population in that part of the city is steadily decreasing. If you keep on making improvements and bringing business more into that part, every year some of those blocks of wretched dwellings will be swept away and large warehouses will be built in their place, and the people now living there will have to go either by tram, or train, or boat to somewhere else to live, instead of remaining in the little back slums there. That process will go on, and in a few years you will not have many people there.

2349. You must have a certain residential population there in any case;—there is an immense shipping business there, and there will always be lumpers and labourers? No doubt; but a great many of them now live in Balmain and Pyrmont. They can take the pony ferry and then have only a few blocks to walk. A great number of that class live in those suburbs.

2350. Would you not put the substituted land where people have no park land? But I believe that a great many of the properties to which I referred will be cut in half; they will still have to be paid for as if the whole of them were taken, and it would be better to make a thorough job of it. Immediately to the south and east is one of the most densely populated parts of the city, and yet there is practically no park land for them until you get to Redfern Park on the south and Moore Park on the east. A great many of those people walk into the city every day, and would it not be better for them to cross park land instead of having to go through slums. My scheme would give a park to the people about Forcaux-street and right up to Surry Hills.

2351. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I think your scheme is based chiefly on considerations of economy? I have no scheme.

2352. Well, it is approaching one? I support the scheme put forward by the Railway Commissioners, and which has been practically accepted by two Royal Commissions.

2353. Your reason for that is chiefly based on the grounds of economy? Partly that; but I do not go as far as was proposed. I do not see why that extension should not be loaded with the operation I have explained. I think it ought to be.

2354. Do you think that that scheme would serve the largest number of railway travellers—suburban and others—would that scheme take the largest number to their places of business? It would take as many of the gross number of travellers close to their destination as any other scheme I know of, and more so.

2355. Will you say that that scheme would take as many to the proximity of their places of business as, for instance, a station at the George-street Markets? Certainly far more.

2356. You think so? I feel satisfied of it. There is even in the eastern part of the city a large number of people coming in and going out every day—going to Elizabeth-street, Phillip-street, Macquarie-street and to counting-houses further down the town, to whom the King-street delivery would be preferable to the George-street by a long way.

2357. Will you name the boundaries that you consider that scheme would serve? I tried to convey an idea of that somewhat by showing how long it would take to get to different places—to any other likely spots covering most of the business parts of the city.

2358. Will you define the boundaries? I have done that practically already in saying how long it would take to get from King-street to those various points.

2359. What streets would be within reach of that station? Bathurst-street on the south —

2360. Will you give an opinion as to the area which the King-street station would serve conveniently? I contend that it would conveniently serve the whole of the city north of Bathurst-street, and it would serve the whole of the west down to the water.

2361. And on the north? Right down to the water.

2362. I ask you to define the boundaries that that station would serve conveniently? If you ask me is it the best place in the whole city to serve the greatest number of people in the whole city, I say no. I have already said that probably the block where the Joint Stock Bank stands would be the best site for the station; but that has not been proposed, because nobody has had enough courage to enter into the cost of it. No one station would serve everybody, and put him down at his own door; but I say, generally speaking, that the King-street station would serve the whole of the city north of Bathurst-street; but, of course, it would not compare with a station on the block west of George-street, including the Joint Stock Bank, because that would be about the centre of the city.

2363. Of course we have the George-street tram running, and to conveniently serve the people by railway you want to get the certain points where that tram would not be more convenient than the railway;—you talk about the King-street station serving all the people north of King-street? Yes.

2364. Do you think that a person would be likely to go to King-street and get out there and walk to Miller's Point, in preference to going as far as he could by the electric tram? No, certainly not.

2365. That is what I wanted to ask you? I indicated what I thought would be a natural sequel to the railway station being at King-street. I indicated a tram to serve the whole of that area.

2366. If you had an office at the corner of Hunter-street and George-street, would you prefer to go by railway to King-street, and walk from there to your office, rather than to go by the George-street tram? I would prefer to walk to King-street from my office to get into my train, and go straight away, instead of being humbugged.

2367. Supposing you are coming into town, and your place of business is at the corner of Hunter-street and George-street, do you mean to say that you would go to King-street and walk to that point, rather than come in by the electric tram, and be set down at your office door? I would, allowing for the discomforts of the tram travelling as we know them, and the uncertainty of getting there.

2368. Do you think that the majority of people would not rather use the George-street tram if their places of business were situated outside this boundary—that is, Market-street on the south, Pitt-street on the west, and Hunter-street on the north;—do you not think that they would be better served by coming down by the George street tram than they would be by coming down by railway to King-street? Certainly not.

2369. You swear that is your honest opinion? I say so distinctly. Not very long ago I waited for seven minutes at the corner of George-street and Hunter-street for a tram at a quarter past 6 in the evening, and in an ordinary case that would cause me to miss my train.

2370. The great object with suburban people at all events is the saving of time? Exactly.

2371. If they have to walk half a mile after getting out of the train at King-street, where is the saving of time as compared with going down George-street in the tram and being set down near their places of business? I do not know whether you are aware that half a mile from King-street station would take you

you past the German wharf, on the Circular Quay, towards the old A.S.N. Company's wharf, or to the Balmain ferry landing-stage, and even beyond that. A distance of 40 chains—not in a straight line, but going up and down our irregular streets—would take you from the King-street station to the B. and A. Company's wharf, on the west side of Circular Quay, and that is practically outside what you may call the business part of the city; and 26 chains would take you from the King-street station to the approach to the Pyrmont Bridge, on the city side.

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2372. Can you conscientiously say that it is your opinion that the proposed King-street terminus would be more central than the George-street markets? Certainly; I was asked, I think, during the last inquiry where I thought the centre of the city was, and I said it was at the corner of King and Pitt streets, and my opinion is still the same. I say that that is the centre of the city for business purposes.

2373. You have only to look at the map and you will see where the centre of the city is;—there is all Hyde Park and the Domain to the east, and the densely-populated part of the city is to the west? The dense mass of buildings is, undoubtedly, to the west, but as near as possible, geographically, the Joint Stock Bank is the centre of the city, and the distance from that to the centre of the proposed King-street station is exactly 16 chains.

FRIDAY, 16 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Thomas Alderson, sworn, and examined:—

2374. *Chairman.*] I suppose you have studied the question of railway extension into the city? I have, T. Alderson, for many years.

2375. Have you watched the various schemes that have been suggested from time to time? Yes, in the press reports. 16 Mar., 1900.

2376. You yourself now suggest a scheme as the result of observation in regard to the requirements and necessities of the city and country generally? Yes.

2377. When did your scheme first suggest itself to you? I have had the suggestion for some considerable time; but when I saw by the action in Parliament that the matter was likely to arise, I put my brains together, in order to place the suggestion before the public in this manner. I said to myself, "They have not struck the exact scheme needed to meet the requirements of the fast-increasing demand of the public, both as regards passenger traffic and goods."

2378. What are the main features embraced in your scheme? The main features are economy, very little property resumption, comparatively, and the carrying of a largely-increasing suburban traffic and long-distance traffic, and also goods. That is up to a certain point. I do not make any suggestion about a bridge crossing the harbour to North Sydney.

2379. Does your proposal contemplate bringing both suburban traffic and through up-country traffic into the city? Yes.

2380. And terminating where? At Princes-street. An advantage which I claim for that route is very slight interference with the present Redfern station. I submit that that station will meet all requirements for the southern and the western traffic.

2381. Have you a written statement explaining your scheme? Yes, I have; it is as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION SCHEME.

HAVING given the Premier (The Hon. W. J. Lyne,) my ideas and suggestions in writing, accompanied with a large city suburban map (showing the routes, high and low levels) last September, I give your Committee, now sitting, my present views, on account of some Government changes, *re* the Pyrmont Bridge, having been a strong supporter of a railway into the city, but a bitter opponent of any encroachment on Hyde Park. I now hope your Committee will give my plain explanation of its advantages over all others I have seen a fair consideration. My principal object is meeting the fast increasing traffic (*re* goods and passengers), cheapness in the construction, and comparatively small resumptions. It will not interfere with any one of our congested city streets, and very little inconvenience to vehicle traffic; the route will give a large central city station with offices, &c., with three other stations on the west, east, and north of the city. The present Redfern Station can remain as it is, but with slight alterations will supply all the south and west portions of the city for many years to come. By giving the city stations and our new electric tram service this, large outlay can be saved by distributing the goods and passengers. The Hospital, Barrack, and Devonshire-street site can be dispensed with for the present. Four lines of rails will be ample to carry all goods and passengers with very little risk. Goods can be brought from all over the colonies when a bridge makes the connection over the harbour. This item, I propose a high-level bridge to Milson's Point from Princes-street and Argyle Cut. The low-level scheme is from Dawes' Point to Milson's Point, by a heavy modern hydraulic swing-bridge. This, no doubt, may meet with strong objection, *re* the shipping interests. This I submit should be made subservient to the railway by having the swing opened at certain times, *re* "London Docks and other places." Ships have to wait their turn at a great cost, so why not a little inconvenience in Sydney by adopting this scheme. The bridge elevation could be so as to allow small craft or river steamers to pass under; the lines could meet on the present levels, or according to the formation of the ground near first tunnel at Milson's Point. There are many advantages in my scheme over all others, which you will observe in the route description, by widening the present railway bridge at Redfern for a four-line railway to Pyrmont (which was my first suggestion), but on account of the new Pyrmont bridge now being started, I would advise resuming all the foreshores from the head of Darling Harbour to Drmitt-street on the east side to allow the railway to enter Market-street by a tunnel at the corner of Kent-street, by reclaiming the head of Darling Harbour to the north of Drmitt-street. This would give a large area of ground, about 22 acres, for goods, stores, &c. A high-level bridge across the line from Pyrmont-street to Liverpool-street or Drmitt-street would be a great city improvement, and an easy outlet to our eastern suburbs for all vehicles and foot traffic from this increasing industrial centre of Pyrmont.

T. Alderson.

THE PROPOSED ROUTE (CITY RAILWAY).

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REDFERN Station to remain for south and west traffic, with suitable alterations of lines back to Eveleigh, for the widening of George-street Bridge to Darling Island, or the east side of Darling Harbour to Drnitt-street by a viaduct. Fill in head of Darling Harbour to north of Drnitt-street if necessary; over-head bridges across the railways from Pymont to Liverpool-street; the western railway station at foot of Drnitt-street or thereabouts; tunnel under Market-street, at the corner of Kent-street, to the High School site of Market, Castlereagh, and Elizabeth streets. This will be the large city central station, with all offices for English mails, goods, clerical offices, passengers (city, suburban, and long distances). There will be underground platforms, which can be extended a long distance under St. James' Road, for holiday traffic, &c., &c., by continuing this tunnel to the south of Hyde Park Barracks, or Chancery-square, through the drill-ground; along the same to behind the carefaker's cottage at St. Mary's gate; thence by open cutting or tunnel to the lower part of the Domain, which is not much used by the public—opposite Sir John Young's Crescent. This site can be made a most central dock or reserve depôt for trains, &c., goods shed, or shunting grounds; by taking the line on to Cowper's wharf, or station at the edge of the Domain, near ladies' baths, will be the first section of the eastern suburbs; by resuming the old properties facing the wharf a large space will be required for the fast-increasing and largest cargo boats coming to our port. By tunnelling under the highlands in Victoria-street to Rushcutters' Bay Reserve you can place a station thence across, or under, Bayswater-road, through the Chinamen's gardens, to a small Government reserve near Gleimore-road; thence up to the heights of Paddington, Woollahra, Waverley, and Randwick, &c., &c.; from Cowper's wharf (Domain) continue on behind the baths by a tunnel, and open cuttings, and over-head bridges through that portion of the public Gardens that is not much used. A neat covered station and ways could be placed to meet all traffic on holidays, &c., from all over the colonies. By continuing on behind the Government House stables to Albert-street a strong steel elevated railway would make its start from this point, a little further back to allow an easy grade up to Princes-street to Argyle Cut levels. This railway would run in front of Goldsbrongh, Mort, & Co., Customs, and "Packer's Hotel," to the angular piece of ground adjoining McMahon's office, and the hotel at the corner of Pitt-street, where passengers' station could be built. This will not interfere with any of the increasing boat passengers' traffic, electric trams, or vehicles. A shunting line could be run round the Quay for goods from the mail boats by a tunnel near McMahon's spirit stores, on to the lower Domain levels (goods can be sent all over the colonies); thence from the corner of Pitt-street and the Circular Quay over to the old Commissariat Stores. I would resume some of the old places on "The Rocks," *via* Globe-street, on the line up to Princes-street. Those resumptions would not be much, and this portion of the city wants improving. This finishes up the high-level route, *via* Dawes' Point, proposed bridge.

The lower-level scheme referred to before makes it start from the old Commissariat Stores, along the Queen's Wharf, to Dawes' Point. This section will be at an elevation to be decided upon *re* swing bridges and Milson's Point. You will kindly note that I have gone through mostly all Government properties up to George-street and Queen's wharf. This, I claim, is of great importance *re* a financial return; the construction will be easy work, being all freestone for tunnels and open cuttings. The elevated rails and bridges can all be made in the colony, giving our own industries a show; all the excavations, &c., &c., can be trucked into the head of Darling Harbour for filling up to a sea-wall. The value of the reclaimed land will be a large set-off against the cost of constructing. The grades from the foot of Market-street to Elizabeth-street are easy. The grade from Albert and Macquarie-streets to Princes and Argyle streets is 1 in 60; this can be made 80 by going back in the Governor's Domain. The distance from foot of Market-street or Pymont Bridge for the high-level scheme is about 247 chains.

The low-level scheme is about 265 chains. In carrying the lines from the head of Darling Harbour to Drnitt-street, this will be extra to the above figures. I have only taken rough measures, not including the Pymont or high and low-level bridges into the above, but simply dealing with the city only.

Not being in a position to produce plans or specifications (but a tracing on a map) of cost, I leave that to the Government officials. I would prefer private competition for the costs, &c., of this important work. The rough estimates of costs submitted I have given outside value from my own travels and experience in commercial business all my life in the Colony. I have no doubt in my own mind this scheme can be constructed at considerably less cost to the country than any other I have seen submitted; the public convenience will be better supplied for goods and passengers. The valuable city properties will not be interfered with. Little compensation will be made. Our city Hyde Park will remain to the public. Our present trams need not be disturbed, nor our old and valuable Supreme Court site taken, but left for the future. You will note when North Sydney is connected by bridge my scheme makes a continuous route there, avoiding risks of accidents, &c. If in the future, and when suitable, a shunting line around Circular Quay can be carried around the western and eastern wharfs by tunnels to the point of entering near McMahon's stores, *via* Woolloomooloo and Cowper's wharfs.

P.S.—In noting Mr. Maiden's (Director of Botanical Gardens), objections to the proposed resumption of the lower part of the Domain and the trees, I have obviated this by transferring the reserve train-sheds, docks, &c., to the resumed land at Darling Harbour. The only ground required will be a strip for four lines of rails and passenger station, near the steps coming from Macquarie-street to Cowper's wharf. To this I feel sure the public will not make the slightest objection, when such a long felt public convenience for railway purposes is required.

One most important fact in connection with the reclamation of the head of Darling Harbour, is that it will be doing away with one of the most dangerous localities for rats in spreading the now most serious Bubonic Plague in our city. This very spot, up to Drnitt-street, was the slaughtering yards for our meat supply many years ago.

ROUGH ESTIMATED COST OF CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION.

From Redfern Station, *via* Darling Harbour, along to Drnitt-street, to Market-street, *via* Kent-street, to High School site, to Lower Domain, *via* Botanical Gardens to Albert-street, across Circular Quay to Globe-street, up to Princes and Cumberland streets to approach of high level bridge about opposite Observatory Hill (four lines of rails to bridge approaches *re* North Shore), *viz.*:—

<i>Resumptions.</i>	
Water frontages east side of Darling Harbour to Drnitt-street, north side (say 1,022 feet)	£128,550
Properties Drnitt, Sussex, Kent streets, and Market street corner	24,850
Properties Albert and Macquarie-streets (land, bridges, and hotel)	29,500
Pitt-street and Circular Quay (hotel, offices, shops, &c.)	14,000
(J. McMahon's office, shop, and weighbridge, Government.)	
<i>Re</i> street about 127 feet—George and Globe streets (two hotels, two shops, and old houses) ...	15,000
" 130 " —Globe and Harrington streets (old properties)	1,800
" 122 " —Lane 10 feet, Gloucester-street, east and west side (old properties) ...	3,660
" 122 " " 10 " Cumberland-street, east side (old properties)	1,586
" 500 " — <i>Re</i> Cumberland-street, west side } to Argyle Cut	14,000
" 500 " —Station, Princes-street, east side }	
	£232,946
<i>Less</i> —Reclaimed land head of Darling Harbour, Baker-street to Drnitt-street, about 22 acres, at £2,000 per acre	66,000
	£166,946

CONSTRUCTION

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CONSTRUCTION OF LINES.		Chains.	Estimates.
Grade, Ultimo Bridge, 18... Alterations from Redfern Railway Station and the George-street Bridge (Grade 31).....	} 54	£15,000
Present Goods Line, to Darling Harbour, 2 chains wide, to William Henry street			
Grade 16	} 26 viaduct	.....	13,000
William Henry street, across Goods Sheds, to Druitt-street, Darling Harbour			
„ 50	} 18	„	9,000
Druitt-street, via Sussex-street, to corner of Kent and Market streets			
Castlereagh-street, 68	} 26	} 49 tunnel	78,400
Market-street and Kent-street to Elizabeth-street			
Elizabeth-street to St. Mary's Gate, rear of Caretaker's Cottage.....	} 23	} 49 tunnel	78,400
Excavations, 68 feet x 18 feet, £1,600 per chain; brickwork for above, £900 per chain			
St. Mary's Gate, rear of cottage, to lower part of Domain (Lincoln-crescent, Grade 5), north end of Steps and Ladies' Baths, excavations average £250 per chain	} 28 open cutting	.....	7,000
Brickwork for (say) £300 per chain			
Domain Steps, via Botanical Gardens to large pine-trees (Grade 40), from the pines to Government House Stables (Grade 30), excavation to Government House Stables, at £1,600 per chain	} 26 tunnel	.....	42,000
Brickwork, at £900 per chain			
Government House Stables, via Albert-street, Circular Quay, Pitt-street, George and Globe streets, west corner	} 34 elevated	.....	60,000
George and Globe streets, via Harrington, Gloucester, Cumberland, and Princes streets, opposite Observatory			
.....	} 12	„	10,000
.....			
Total	247		£320,300
Stone sea-wall, north side of Druitt-street, to Pymont, 36 feet x 3 feet x 990 feet ..	} 15	.....	22,000
(This will take all excavations).			
New roads and streets, Barker-street, and from George-street, Globe to Princes streets.			15,000
STATIONS, BUILDINGS, &c.			£357,300
High School Site, Castlereagh, Elizabeth, and Market streets—Head Central Station, with all Offices and Passenger Accommodation, &c.			£225,000
Station, Druitt-street and Darling Harbour			25,000
Shunting Sheds, Depot, Docks, &c.			25,000
Station, Lower Domain (Cowper Wharf)			20,000
Do. Botanical Gardens (Fancy Glass Roof, &c.)			20,000
Do. Circular Quay and Pitt-street, Elevated (shop under to be let, &c.)			20,000
Do. Princes and Cumberland streets, re Bridge			15,000
			£350,000
Rails, construction—four lines (say 3 miles, £5,800)			17,400
Signals and Interlocking			15,000
Electric Lights, &c.			7,000
Extras unforeseen			5,000
			£394,400

No. 1, £166,946; No. 2, £357,300; No. 3, £394,400—Total, £918,646.

2382. Whose valuations are those? My own. I have been a resident in this city for fifty-eight years. I saw the first sod cut for the railway at Redfern, and I have travelled the world over, and think I am in a position to express a reliable opinion on the requirements of our fast-increasing population. The tramway, of course, must continue to exist. Our streets are getting congested every year more and more, like the city of London, and the time has come, I think, when we should have a railway extension partly under the surface, and partly elevated. I think that my scheme shows advantages over many of the other schemes. For instance, it does not interfere with the general traffic of the business portion of the city. As regards expressions of opinion about the Domain, I may say that for thirty years I have been opposed to interfering with the Park; but we cannot get an eastern suburban railway extension unless we go through some portion of it. In 1876 I suggested to the then Minister for Public Works (Mr. Lackey), Mr. Goodchap, and Mr. Hay, the construction of an eastern suburban line, for which a survey was made afterwards. I said to Mr. Lackey, "If you will make a branch line of railway from Eveleigh, past the Albert Ground, to Randwick Racecourse, and then round to Randwick, you will have the best paying railway in the Colony." Sir Daniel Cooper would have given the land required for nothing.

2383. You propose to leave the Redfern Station as it is? Yes; barring the necessary alterations to make the fast trains come into the city by a separate service.

2384. You will retain Redfern as a station? Yes; and all the sheds at the back could be utilised for goods. Under my scheme the Government would have 22 more acres at Darling Harbour.

2385. The decline which you propose to utilise, and which now leads down to the Darling Harbour goods sheds, has a steep grade? No, not from the levels of the Redfern Station, but from the Redfern Station itself it has.

2386. I mean where you would branch off? Yes. But I have put down £15,000 for alterations to the bridge. I could go down towards the Mortuary and use the grade there.

2387. You would have to go right back beyond the Redfern tunnel, I think? That is a matter for the engineers. You might have to go back to Eveleigh for all I know, but that would not be very considerable.

2388. Have you put down a sum for filling in that portion of Darling Harbour at Druitt-street? There is no necessity to put it down, for the contractors would have to get rid of the debris, and would save expense by using that as the tip. The contractors would take the contract more cheaply with such a good tip to which they could run a temporary tram.

2389. Have you calculated as to whether what you took out of the tunnel would be sufficient to fill that up? No, I have not.

2390. Do you propose to have a station at the foot of Druitt-street? Yes. That is to serve the West Sydney traffic. Passengers, instead of getting out at Redfern, could go to Druitt-street, and thence walk along Sussex-street, Kent-street, and Clarence-street.

2391. Those persons who would land at Druitt-street station would be pretty nearly all people going to the west of York-street? Yes. A very dense population goes to that part of the city in the morning.
York-street,

- T. Alderson. York-street, Kent-street, and Sussex-street on to Miller's Point, constitute, perhaps, the principal business centre.
- 16 Mar., 1900. 2392. The evidence that we have from the tramway authorities is to the effect that 90 per cent. of the people who come in by tram go as far as Market-street or the General Post Office? That may be the case. Well, I would drop them at the High School site.
2393. Would your Druitt-street station be an open station or underground? It would be open, but a little elevated; but if the Government would resume the ground up to Sussex-street and Bathurst-street the station-yard would be pretty nearly level, and vehicular traffic could easily go into it.
2394. Then you go to Market-street and Elizabeth-street by tunnel? Yes.
2395. What is the length of that? The viaduct from Druitt-street to Market-street would be 18 chains, and I think that the distance from Market-street to the High School site is about 26 chains. From Elizabeth-street to St. Mary's gates is 23 chains, and from St. Mary's Gate to Cowper wharf is 28 chains, and that is open cutting.
2396. From Druitt-street to Elizabeth-street, I suppose, would be about a quarter of a mile? A little more.
2397. How would you ventilate that? I do not think it would require ventilation; but if these short tunnels were ventilated at all, I would suggest that they should be ventilated by means of a shaft carried up the sides of the houses, for they would be on the building line. My two tunnels would cause ventilation.
2398. Another thing to be considered from Druitt-street to Elizabeth-street is that you pass under the streets and private property? Up to the corner of Market and Kent streets there will be a viaduct. The opening of the tunnel will be at the corner of the western side of Kent-street.
2399. And from Kent-street to Elizabeth streets you go by tunnel? Yes.
2400. Have you thought about interfering with our sewerage, telephone, gas, and water pipes, and that kind of things? Yes; I have inquired into that, and there is not the slightest danger. Mr. Smail and a gentleman connected with the Water and Sewerage Board told me that the sewers are on the average only from 8 to 9 feet deep. There will be a very great depth between that and the top of the tunnel.
2401. You will be a long way underneath those? Yes. The present telephone tunnels could be utilised for the conveyance of mails from the main station, which would be at the High School site, to the General Post Office, by placing the mails on small trucks, which could be worked by electric power, and run right into the Post Office. That could be provided for at very little extra cost.
2402. You propose to have your central station near to King-street? Yes, as nearly as possible in a line with St. James' Road. I do not propose a resumption up to King-street; but simply take the Government property as it is.
2403. That station, I suppose, would be an underground station? Yes, you cannot avoid that.
2404. Do you know what depth you will be below the present level? Judging from the slight grade up to Kent-street, I think it could be done at about 18 feet—perhaps 16 feet; but I would not like to express a definite opinion, it is a matter for surveyors.
2405. I suppose you are aware that the modern idea is that to have a large passenger station for suburban traffic is not desirable, if you can avoid it? Yes. But I obviate that by dividing the suburban traffic, and having four stations so as to avoid congestion.
2406. After you leave the station at Elizabeth-street, you go by tunnel all the way to St. Mary's gates? Yes.
2407. Where would you come out? At the rear of the caretaker's cottage. The ground falls away there, so there would be an open cutting there.
2408. And then you take up a large corner of the Domain? No, I take up a narrow strip—a chain wide for the rails, &c.
2409. But then you would not be able to have much in the way of docks there:—you propose not only a station, but also a dock? I did; but I have varied that proposal in order to meet Mr. Maiden's objection, and have transferred the docks, &c., to the resumed area at Darling Harbour. I do not think I would destroy twenty-five or twenty-six trees, and Mr. Maiden said that over 200 trees would be destroyed. You could have a very wide approach to the railway station at Cowper wharf by utilising the street near Sir John Young's Crescent.
2410. From Cowper wharf, to get to Albert-street and Circular Quay, do you go in tunnel all the way? Right through the Gardens would be in tunnel until you got near to the Government House stables.
2411. I suppose there would be a great objection to any part of the Gardens being used for a railway? By taking the line where I suggest I think it would be in tunnel all the way at that portion, until the station was reached, and that would be covered in.
2412. I think you said that you had had some assistance in preparing the scheme from Mr. Parrott? No; he promised to render me assistance, but left for South Africa without doing so.
2413. Did you ask him about the grade between Cowper wharf and Albert-street;—I do not see how you could manage very well there without interfering with the Gardens, considering the levels; the Botanical Gardens are very little above high-water mark—3 or 4 feet? But you are taking the lower portion of the Gardens. I go through the higher portion. It is all high ground until you come to the Government House stables. I do not go through the lower portion of the Gardens at all.
2414. You do not have another station until you get near to the corner of Pitt-street, Circular Quay? Yes.
2415. What land are you going to utilise for a station there—the corner hotel? I resume that, and also the wedge-shaped piece of land where McMahon, the carrier, is, and the weigh-bridge.
2416. That will be a very small station? Well, there is a narrow street there that could be utilised for making a square. But you do not want a big station there.
2417. Do you know the length of one of our long suburban trains on a holiday? No.
2418. It is 500 or 600 feet on some occasions, and that would be a very congested place on holidays? That could be done on the elevated principle right up to "Packer's Hotel." It is immaterial to me whether the station is to be on the east side or on the west side; but I thought that the Government land would be the most suitable. You could put the station on the Domain side, or on resumed ground at Macquarie-street.
2419. From there you go on by a partial elevation? Yes; up to Globe-street and George-street—that is, the north side of Globe-street.
2420. Do you go up Argyle-street? No. I have a gradual ascent up to Cumberland-place—cross over Harrington, Gloucester, and Cumberland streets, into Princes-street. That is on the route for the high-level bridge. The eastern side of Princes-street and the western side of Cumberland-street are supposed to be the line of the railway to the high-level bridge.
- 2421.

2421. You said yourself that you had not gone into details as to grades, and so on? No; but I got those grades from the City Surveyor and the Water and Sewerage Department T. Alderson.
2422. Looking at it as one has it in his mind's eye, it would seem as if you could not get up there? Well, I got the information from the best authority, the City Surveyor. 16 Mar., 1900.
2423. Did he say what the grade was? One in 60 from Macquarie-street.
2424. That would make it a pretty high level where the route crosses the Quay? About 25 feet. It would cover the present electric tram uprights.
2425. Of course all these grades and other figures are subject to professional revision? Yes; but I have got them from professional men.
2426. I understand that you are not a professional man, and have not the means of going into all these figures yourself? No; but I got them from professional men, and they kindly gave them to me from the maps.
2427. You put your scheme forward as a route? Yes. Dividing the traffic is a great thing.
2428. You also keep in view in your scheme a connection by a bridge with North Shore and an extension to the eastern suburbs? Yes.
2429. Those are the two leading ideas? Yes. I think that a bridge to North Sydney must be made sooner or later; North Sydney is getting such an enormous place. The case is something like that of Brooklyn and New York.
2430. When you were reading your statement about the Circular Quay you spoke of high level and of low level—does that mean a kind of alternative scheme? No. I suggested a low-level scheme to the Premier, and Mr. Parrott said "No one else has struck that idea," and he added that it was worth watching. In my low-level scheme I go by the Queen's Wharf to Dawes' Point, and propose to have a low-level swing bridge (hydraulic) to join with the Milson's Point line of railway. I see no difficulty in that.
2431. Your other proposal fits in with a high-level bridge to North Sydney? Yes.
2432. *Mr. Dick.*] What advantage, either to the general public or to the railway system, have you mainly in your mind in selecting this route for your scheme? The convenience of passengers on the west, in the centre, and on the east.
2433. Both the convenience of the passengers and the relief of the congestion at Redfern? Yes.
2434. Have you made any calculation as to the time it would take a passenger to go from Redfern to your station at Druiitt-street, where a stop would be made, and thence to King-street? No, I have not; but I think it would be only a very few minutes.
2435. It is, practically, very nearly twice the distance from Redfern to King-street by your scheme as by tram, is it not? Yes. But the outcry of the people of Redfern is against getting out of the trains into the trams. They want to avoid that.
2436. They want to avoid it because it means loss of time? Not only that; it is loss of time and inconvenience.
2437. Do you think that under your scheme there would be a gain of time to those passengers? I think so.
2438. Judging from your plan, you have made no provision whatever for shunting your trains when they have come into the city; how do you propose to deal with the shunting of trains in order to get them back after you have taken them to any part of your scheme? You could have a shunting line at the top of Church Hill, or at the Domain, or at Darling Harbour.
2439. You have made no provision, so far, for that? No; but there is ample room. It is a chain wide all through. There will be ample room for the present, until a bridge were erected over the harbour, and then the trains would go on.
2440. Then, until a bridge were erected, your scheme, to that extent, would be incomplete? No; shunting could be done as it is done now at Redfern.
2441. One of the most serious matters in connection with the congestion at Redfern, is the fact that the shunting there is in the way of the trains? That is a different thing entirely.
2442. Will you indicate how you would overcome the difficulty? Yes; when you come to Cowper wharf you could shunt there and go back, or you could have shunting points at other places to turn the train on to another line. I do not profess to be an engineer.
2443. During two portions of the day, we should have at least twenty trains per hour running into the King-street station? Yes.
2444. How are you going to deal with those twenty trains—to get them out of the way, or get them back again to Redfern? All trains will go on to Princes-street or the Domain.
2445. How would you get them back from there? They would have to be shunted there until a bridge is constructed.
2446. Have you made any provision at Princes-street for a shunting reserve? There is ample room there. Between Princes-street and Cumberland-street I think there is about 2 chains or more.
2447. Have you allowed for that in your estimate of cost of resumption? I have allowed for 2 chains, but no more; but I put down £15,000 for signals and interlocking gear at various stations, and also £5,000 extra for unforeseen expenses, making altogether £20,000.
2448. The scheme before us, known as No. 10, has a large reserve in the Domain of about 8 acres for shunting purposes, and for stabling purposes? Yes.
2449. It is so serious a matter that the railway authorities consider that is just about sufficient to carry out the shunting operations properly;—can you get anything like it at Church Hill in your scheme? No, not 8 acres. That is a matter of resumption. You can get plenty of ground on the top of Church Hill. People would be glad to get rid of old properties there. But I have not taken that into consideration.
2450. If that is a necessary element in the scheme, that would have to be added to the cost? Yes. I was leaving that point until a bridge was really constructed, there being more space and land being cheaper at North Sydney.
2451. We must regard your scheme then to some extent as incomplete in that direction, until a bridge were constructed? Yes, a little, unless temporary provision were made.
2452. Do you think that an extension by the route you propose would compare favourably with the George-street electric tram? Yes. But no matter what railway may be constructed, a very large percentage of the people will always travel, a short distance, by the tram.
2453. Will you give us the distance from Redfern to the King-street station, and also the distance from Redfern to the Circular Quay station on your route? The distance is 54 chains to William Henry street;

- T. Alderson. 26 chains from William Henry street across the Darling Harbour sheds; 18 chains from Darling Harbour to Druiitt-street, *via* Kent-street and Market-street; 26 chains from Market and Kent streets to Elizabeth-street; 23 chains from Elizabeth-street to St. Mary's gate; 28 chains from St. Mary's gate to the Domain station; 26 chains from the Domain station through the Gardens to the Government House stables; and 34 chains from the Government House stables to George-street; making altogether 235 chains.
- 16 Mar., 1900. 2454. Just a trifle under 3 miles? Yes. The total distance to Princes-street is 247 chains.
2455. Do you think that you would get any quicker, with your two intermediate stops, from Redfern to Circular Quay, than you could by the electric tram? No. But I think that if a person could get to Circular Quay without the inconvenience of changing from train to tram he would prefer to go by railway, even if it were not quicker.
2456. You do not go through the main Redfern station with your scheme, do you? That is a matter I would leave to the engineers. It is a matter of levels to get down to the Darling Harbour level. I think the line could be constructed from the present Redfern station. I do not know what the fall is from the Redfern lines to the lines at Darling Harbour.
2457. In the scheme you have placed before us, you have not made any provision for stopping at the main Redfern station? I start from the main Redfern station.
2458. But you have not made any provision for allowing people to get out at that station? No, I have not.
2459. That would be another element of expense, if that were necessary? Naturally it would. But I have put down £15,000 for altering the bridge near the Redfern station in George-street, and £10,000 for extra work at Darling Harbour line, making altogether £25,000.
2460. You have left for future revision the question of making provision to allow passengers to get out at the main Redfern Railway Station? Well, I took it into consideration, but I thought that £15,000 or £20,000 would make any necessary alteration. The station itself need not be moved, but additional accommodation could be provided without much extra cost.
2461. With regard to the resumption at the head of Darling Harbour, the foreshores are practically in the possession of the Government now? Yes; on the western side.
2462. They have built an expensive iron wharf, have they not? At the head of Darling Harbour they did; but I do not know if there is an iron wharf on the western side.
2463. There is a considerable amount of Government wharfage accommodation at the head of Darling Harbour, is there not? Yes; but it is not greatly used.
2464. But I suppose you know that it has been paid for out of loan money? I suppose so.
2465. Have you made any allowance for the destruction of that property by filling in the head of Darling Harbour? No; but that wharf could be largely reused; it could be taken up and used elsewhere.
2466. If you were to do that, you would only get the value of the old materials from it? Yes.
2467. Do you make any allowance for the value of this in your estimate? No, I do not; but even supposing that the head of Darling Harbour were filled with *debris*. I do not think there would be much loss, because you would get a far better wharf at the sea-wall.
2468. Still those wharfs cost a great deal of money, and stand there now as an asset of the Government? Yes.
2469. Do you know also that there is a marked disinclination on the part of people connected with these matters to attempt any further filling in of the harbour, excepting where it is absolutely necessary? No, I do not. I am a strong advocate for the filling of all the shallow bays right up to Parramatta, and there are many thousands of people like me.
2470. You do not call the head of Darling Harbour a shallow bay? Yes, I do. I think it is a nuisance to the whole neighbourhood, and a dangerous spot.
2471. At the previous inquiry it was made pretty evident to us that the foreshores now available for wharfage accommodation are of very small extent, and that any attempt to further constrict them would not be in the public interest? Yes; but other places are getting more in the centre of the harbour. No large ships now go into Darling Harbour, except beyond the bridge on the north side of Druiitt-street.
2472. But do you know that the fact of those large vessels using the wharfs to the north of the bridge has rendered it necessary to provide some sort of overflow wharf for the intercolonial vessels? I have seen small colliers at Russell's wharf. There is plenty of wharf accommodation for ships.
2473. With respect to the Druiitt-street station, what district do you propose to serve by having a station there? All the western portion of the city up to that point—right along to the old A.S.N. Co.'s wharf.
2474. How far east do you think it would serve the people? To York-street.
2475. Do you mean that it would serve all the people west of York-street? Yes.
2476. It would give them a good deal of distance to walk to their places of business in most cases, would it not? You have to walk some distance in all cases.
2477. Would they not be taken much closer to Sussex-street by the electric tram? No.
2478. To York-street? Yes; but then they do not like changing from train to tram. If a man did not care to walk up the hill, he could go to the High School site, and walk from the Castlereagh-street station to York-street.
2479. Your scheme, as placed before the Committee, would practically prevent all those people who come in by that extension from using the electric tram, will it not? A certain percentage it would.
2480. Where would the people be able to get to the electric tram from your extension, say at Redfern? They would get out of the train at Redfern if they wanted to go by the tram.
2481. But you have not made any provision at Redfern to enable them to get out of the train there? They could get out at Redfern the same as they do now.
2482. But you turn off at the Redfern tunnel before reaching the station? I take a gentle curve on to the Darling Harbour route.
2483. You widen the tunnel to the west? Yes.
2484. Is not that getting further away from the Redfern Station? Yes; but the Redfern station will remain as a passenger station.
2485. But how do you propose to land the passengers there by your extension if you start west of the tunnel;—is it part of your scheme to have a selection, making some of the trains run into the Redfern station, and some into the city? No; it would be a continuous train right through; but it would drop passengers at Redfern station, near the George-street bridge.
- 2486.

2486. But Redfern station would be to the east of where you turn off? But an alteration of the station would be made, so that the train would pass through it on the west, and passengers could get to the trams near the bridge.

T. Alderson.
16 Mar., 1900.

2487. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Can you give me the distances from one station to the other;—which station do you propose for the first stopping-place after leaving Redfern? Druitt-street.

2488. How far is that from Redfern station? About 98 chains.

2489. What is the next station? At the High School site, Elizabeth and Castlereagh streets, and, I think, the distance from Druitt-street is 26 chains.

2490. Which is the next station? Cowper wharf, and the distance is 77 chains.

2491. Which is the next station? Circular Quay, and the distance is 60 chains.

2492. I think that your principal argument in favour of your scheme is based on the ground of economy? Economy and the avoiding of the congestion of traffic at Redfern station.

2493. Do you not think that a more direct line would meet the convenience of passengers more; this is certainly a round-about course? All circular lines are round-about, and this is a sort of half-circular line.

2494. You go through a good deal of what I may call barren country in crossing the Domain—nearly half the line is in the Domain, where there is no population? I want to avoid going through the populated part of the city.

2495. On the ground of economy? Yes.

2496. Do you think that that is a ground that should prevail, even if the line is not so convenient to the public? Yes, I do.

2497. The great argument of the suburban people in favour of city railway extension is the saving of time;—they complain of the delay at Redfern station from changing into the trams? Yes, they complain of the discomforts of changing as well as loss of time. I think that they could get into the city in less time by my route than they do now by changing at Redfern, and getting into the trams.

2498. We have been told that something like 90 per cent. of the people get out of the trams between Market-street and the General Post Office;—would your scheme be more convenient to those people than going down on the George-street tram? I think it would be equally convenient by dropping them at the High School site, where the central station would be.

2499. Do you think that that would be as convenient for persons who have offices or other places of business to the west of George-street as the George-street tram is? It would be equally as convenient, I think, towards York-street and Clarence-street, because people could get out at Druitt-street. Passengers could get out either at Druitt-street or Castlereagh-street.

2500. Do you not think that people like to be dropped as near to their place of business as possible? Some people would like to be put into their chairs.

2501. If they could get to their places of business more conveniently by the tram than they could by railway, do you not think that they would use the tram? Yes, no doubt.

2502. You consider this scheme of yours less expensive than any other scheme that has been proposed? Yes.

2503. And you consider it is equally convenient for the majority of the business people in Sydney? I do.

TUESDAY, 20 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Norman Selfe, M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

2504. *Chairman.*] I understand that you desire to add something to your former evidence? Yes. I desire to add to the exhibits connected with my evidence another plan, marked 27. This is a Government map of Sydney to the scale of 8 chains to the inch. On this map a number of concentric circles are drawn from three different centres, as follows:—A yellow disc half a mile in diameter, and yellow circles at intervals of one-quarter of a mile, drawn from the centre of the proposed railway station on Hyde Park, facing St. James' Road. Blue discs, half a mile in diameter, and blue circles at intervals of one-quarter of a mile, drawn from the centre of the Queen Victoria Markets, and the centre of Wynyard-square respectively. The following results are shown by the diagram:—(1.) Within a radius of one quarter mile from the proposed Hyde Park station there are about 3.6 miles of frontage to business streets. (2.) Within a radius of one-quarter mile from the Queen Victoria Markets there are about 7.6 miles of frontage to business streets, or much more than double that around Hyde Park. An inspection of the plan shows that the business frontages are very similar around Wynyard-square, being about 7.4 miles. I may explain that in this I have not taken small lanes or portions that are partly residential. (3.) Although a circle with a half-mile radius has four times the area of a circle with a quarter-mile radius, yet the business area in the city, within a quarter-mile radius of the Markets and Wynyard-square, is much larger than that within a half-mile radius of Hyde Park. For instance, the half-mile circle from Hyde Park does not reach the Lands Office, but that building is well within a quarter-mile radius from Wynyard-square. The gas-works in Kent-street are within one-quarter mile of Wynyard-square, but three-quarters of a mile from Hyde Park. Argyle-street, in the centre of the great shipping wharfs, is crossed by the half-mile circle from Wynyard-square and the one-mile circle from Hyde Park. As it may be advanced that Hyde Park is much nearer to other business localities, such as Oxford-street, and that the circles should have been completed, it is only necessary to point out that if such were done it would show that the business streets of Pyrmont and Ultimo, and, in fact, the greater part of Pyrmont, from the Technical College

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.
20 Mar., 1900.

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M.I.C.E.
20 Mar., 1900.

College to Darling Island, are within a circle whose extreme distance is about as near to the Markets as Darlinghurst Court-house is to St. James' Road. Half a mile from the Markets reaches the Darling Harbour goods station. Half a mile from Hyde Park does not get near it. With regard to a connection with North Shore, according to the official plans appended to the report of the inquiry in 1897, passengers starting from St. James' Road would have to travel at least $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles longer distance than those starting from Wynyard-square. In other matters the plan tells its own tale, and gives a graphic answer to many questions which are asked as to the relative convenience for passengers of the principal sites that have been proposed for railway stations. The deep-red groundwork on the plan is supposed to represent the purely business part of the city. Where there is no colour, as on "The Rocks" I do not reckon that as a business part. Around the wharfs I reckon as only partially business portions; there are, of course, offices on the wharfs. I may say that I have included Phillip-street, where there are principally lawyers' offices, as being just as much a business part as George-street. I may mention that those lengths I have given are both sides of the street. In York-street I have not counted the side of Wynyard-square where the park is. In places where there is only one side of the street business and the other residential—for instance, in Kent-street—I have taken only half. In case it may be objected that I have taken the circles from the centres of these blocks, I may add that some passengers might be in the front end of a train on the eastern side, and other passengers in the rear end of a train on the western side, of the station, and I have therefore taken the circle from the actual centre of the station itself—not from where the people would alight.

Albert Christopher Brownen, licensed victualler, sworn, and examined:—

A. C.
Brownen.
20 Mar., 1900.

2505. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? In Erskine-street, City.
2506. At a former inquiry of the same character as this one, you gave evidence before the then Committee? Yes. •
2507. You then advocated the construction of a permanent terminal railway station upon the site of the Benevolent Asylum, and the bringing into Sydney of the suburban traffic by a system of trams? Yes.
2508. You contended that a railway station at Redfern would answer all the purposes for the up-country traffic? Yes; for long-distance traffic.
2509. Is your object in coming here to-day to confirm the views then expressed by you? Yes.
2510. Your views now on this great subject are the same as they were when you gave evidence before the Committee on the 28th July, 1897? Yes.
2511. In all probability you have looked at your evidence given on that date? Yes: I have run it over.
2512. And you generally agree with its terms? Yes; just the same as I did at that time.
2513. And you have no objection to its being embodied in your evidence in connection with the present inquiry? Not the slightest objection.
2514. I understand that you wish to make some explanations or modifications? Yes.
2515. Having ascertained that you agree in general with your former evidence, will you please explain to the Committee anything you wish to add? Yes. In the first place, it has been said that the George-street traffic on the new line that has recently been opened is already congested—that the accommodation is not sufficient. As a citizen, I have taken particular notice of the traffic on that line during the busy time in the evening, and I must say that the number of cars appears to be plenty, but the passengers seem to do as they like. The traffic managers do not seem to control the people; I mean, in this way: During the busy time, say from half-past 4 to half-past 5, the trams run one close after another to the railway. There may be a train leaving for the western suburbs, say at 5 o'clock or a quarter to 5, and that train may carry 500 or 600 passengers. Naturally the people waiting in George-street rush the trams as they come up. You see a tram come up about only three-quarters full, but some of the passengers stand on the foot-boards, and thus prevent other people from getting into the tram. That tram goes on, and it is supposed to be crammed, although there is really plenty of room in it to seat nearly all the people waiting if they would only take their seats, and if the conductors insisted upon people using the trams properly, and not standing on the foot-boards. Two or three yards away you see another tram waiting to take the place of a previous one, which, owing to the people standing on the foot-boards, is detained perhaps a minute, or one and a half minutes longer than it otherwise would be, and thus delays the other tram in coming up to take its place. People cram into the first tram that comes along, and do not see another tram two or three yards away, which will get to Redfern at practically the same time. The second tram comes up, and then goes away about only half-full. I was standing at the corner of Market-street the other day from half-past 4 to half-past 5, and I do not think that more than three or four trams during that time were what I would call crowded. The majority of the trams that went by were not more than three-quarters full, and some not more than half-full, but the foot-boards were all crowded. I contend that if people were educated to take their seats, and not allowed to stand on the platforms, they would wait for the next tram, which is only two or three yards away, and they would get to Redfern all the same, and catch their trains; there would be no congestion whatever, and no bother if the traffic managers would educate the people to use the trams as they are intended to be used. I consider that there are enough cars on the George-street line to take half as many people more if they were properly managed; but they are terribly managed. I have never seen anything of the kind in any other place where I have been. One afternoon when I was looking at the trams I saw a man standing on the foot-board with a baby about twelve months old in his arms, and if the tram had knocked against anything he and the child must have been thrown off, and he, by standing there, prevented other people from getting in. Last Sunday evening I saw a young girl with five or six larrikins around her standing on the foot-board, though there was plenty of room inside the car. I may also say that I have found from experience that the trams do not take so long in getting to the railway station as has been said they do. It is also foolish to say that the trams cannot take the traffic in George-street. As regards running the trams into a railway station, supposing that a new station were built on the Benevolent Asylum site, the trams could be run into that station, and up to the side of the platforms by a new principle such as I suggested when I gave my evidence previously. Mr. Keeshaw has said that it could not be done, because of the western tram traffic—that is, from Botany, Leichhardt, Newtown, and other places having to cross the railway tram-lines. But in connection with my circular system, my intention is to divide the western traffic at the railway station, one-half going down Castlereagh-street and the other half down George-street and turning into Kent-street. There is plenty of width there to enable this to be done. It has been

been said, I think, that all the western traffic could not go down George-street, as there is too much traffic there already. I do not say that, if you were to dump all the western traffic into George-street, all that traffic could go along that street. But if my proposal were carried out, the conditions would be different, owing to the diversion of the traffic in that way. In the same way, as regards the railway-station trams from Devonshire-street, you could have so many for the western side of the city, and so many for the eastern side of it, and so many for George-street, and the people would go into whichever tram would take them nearest to where they wanted to go. It has been said that you could not take any of the extra western traffic down George-street, even as far as Liverpool-street, but I do not see why not. I do not say that you could take all the western traffic right through George-street, past the General Post Office, and on to Circular Quay; but if people were coming in, say, from Leichhardt or Newtown, and they wanted to go to the Post Office in George-street, they could change from a western side tram or an eastern side tram, and get into a George-street tram at Liverpool-street, or at the railway station. As I have explained, my idea is to commence the circular tramway at Liverpool-street, and, as regards the eastern traffic, my proposal is to bring all the eastern trams down Oxford-street to Liverpool-street, and there divide the traffic as I have already mentioned, half going down one side of the city and the other half going down the other side of it. The reason why the George-street trams are rushed to such a large extent is in consequence of the flow of people from Castlereagh-street and Kent-street, and other streets in those directions, to George-street, because at present George-street is the best route to the station. But if trams were running to the station from Kent-street, as well as along George-street, there would be plenty of room for everybody, and people would not be crushed. If my system were adopted it would do away entirely with the Elizabeth-street to Belmore Park trams, and it would also do away with the shunting-yard in Bridge-street. If you wanted a shunting-yard you could make one at Redfern, where there is plenty of room for that purpose. I presume that Circular Quay would be the terminus for all the tram traffic. There is no doubt that the traffic at the Redfern Station wants regulating. A tunnel might be made from the bottom of Brickfield Hill to the new railway station, which would be on high land, or there might be an open cutting with a bridge over it. But I do not think that any such arrangement would be necessary, inasmuch as the traffic would be divided before it reached that point, and there would be only about half the traffic going to Belmore Park.

2516. *Dr. Garran.*] Your place of business is in Erskine-street, I understand? Yes.

2517. Supposing that the Railway Commissioners' scheme, with a station in Hyde Park, were carried out, and that the electric trams in George-street were still running, would people in Erskine-street, who were going to the railway at Redfern, pick up a George-street tram when they crossed George-street, or would they walk right to the top of the hill and go to the Hyde Park railway station? I think they would take the tram to Redfern.

2518. And not walk up the hill to the railway? No; I do not think they would walk up there.

2519. Being an Erskine-street man yourself, what would you do? I would take the George-street tram. I would not walk to the railway station at King-street.

2520. You really think that the traffic coming from the west of Sussex-street and that part would not go across George-street? No; it would not.

2521. You think that that traffic would be intercepted at George-street and carried by tram to Redfern? Yes; I think that nine people out of ten would do that.

2522. Have you noticed whether a great many people coming from the railway along the George-street tram-line go to the west when they get out of the tram? I cannot say that I have noticed that; but I presume they do, especially the working classes, because all the factories and similar things are on the western side of the city.

2523. Supposing that a tram-line were laid down in Kent-street, do you think that that would take a lot of traffic to Redfern? I think so. It must relieve the George-street traffic to the railway a great deal.

2524. You mean that people coming from the wharfs would get into the Kent-street tram? Yes; I know of a number of people who live at Leichhardt, Annandale, and Balmain who would do so. I should like to say that I think the tramways will meet the requirements of city traffic for the present; but that as time goes on there is no doubt that the railway will have to be extended into the city. I produce a plan on which I have indicated a line of railway into the city which I think would meet future requirements. Starting from the present Redfern Station, I should continue the railway line to the proposed site for a station at Devonshire-street—the Benevolent Asylum grounds—and go on to Liverpool-street. My ideas are, I think, similar to those of Mr. Kennick, so far as a circular railway is concerned. From Liverpool-street I should take the line to the Victoria Markets, and for a station should take that block of land bounded by Druitt-street, Market-street, Kent-street, and York-street. My idea in having a circular railway is that it should act the same as the tramways. I would not have any shunting-yards in the city, but would simply have a circular line to take the people round. From the Markets the line would go to Wynyard-square. I think it has been said that you cannot tunnel across from Liverpool-street in front of the Town Hall and under the Victoria Markets. I am not an engineer, and cannot say anything about that; but, if the line could not be brought that way, I think you could have a station somewhere in Goulburn-street, which would serve all that neighbourhood, and answer the purpose as well, and thence you could take a line in open cut behind the Town Hall. The property round about there is not of tip-top value, and I think that a lot of the work could be done in open cut, the same as in the case of the underground railway in London, where the railway was made in open cut wherever possible, and where the property was not very valuable. I suppose that all the line in York-street will be in tunnel. The line would then go pretty well as far as Little Essex street, near Cumberland-street, and then turn round to a station near Circular Quay. I presume that the station would reach from near the fire station in George-street and go over or under Pitt-street to Macquarie-place, near Bulletin-lane, and that the railway-line would then go north under Macquarie-street and the "Hôtel Métropole," and on to King-street. You could make a station bounded by Phillip-street, Hunter-street, Elizabeth-street, and King-street, if it were found desirable to take the line to King-street, and then go on to Liverpool-

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NOTE.—(on revision) : I desire to suggest as an alteration in my evidence and plan, that it would be preferable in selecting a route on the eastern side of the city to resume the premises known as the Creswick Club Hotel, at the corner of Bent and Bligh streets. By diverting the tram line from Bligh-street across this corner an almost direct route to the Circular Quay may be secured *via* Young-street, which would be better than that originally suggested by me *via* Loftus-street, or across the land now occupied by the Department of Education and Labour.

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street, and that would complete the circle, and then the line would run to the Benevolent Asylum grounds new station. The reason why I think this circular railway would be best is this: The railway people say they want to have a railway station at King-street for the long-distance traffic. We know that property there is very valuable, and if we were to have a terminal station at King-street you would bring congestion on to congestion, because all the traffic round about King-street and George-street is very congested. If you were to start the long-distance trains from King-street you would naturally bring into the King-street station luggage vans, mail vans, cabs, and many other things which would create more congestion than ever, and, besides that, if, in a few years, you should want to make an extension of the railway-station it would cost a great deal of money; whereas in the neighbourhood of the Benevolent Asylum grounds you could get property that already does not belong to the Government, for next to nothing comparatively, in order to make whatever improvements you might desire. My idea is that the new station at Devonshire-street should become what I may call the "Clapham Junction," for our railway traffic. There is some talk about taking a circular railway through Woolloomooloo. I do not think you want to go near there with a railway, because you have the Oxford-street and the William-street tramways to serve that neighbourhood. In having a circular railway you want to know how you are going to feed it, and how the people will run round the circle. I propose to run a circular railway line right round the suburbs, but not at present. I will tell you how far I propose to go now. In the case of the eastern suburbs you would start from the new station at Redfern, and take a line across Surry Hills to Darlinghurst. You would have a station in Surry Hills, where there is a big population, another at Darlinghurst, and another in Paddington—or, perhaps, two stations in Paddington, because there is a very big population there—and another at Waverley—at Charing Cross. You could then whip the people in from that thickly populated suburb, and take them round the circle in a very few minutes. You would then relieve Oxford-street of a great deal of the present heavy traffic. I forgot to say that the circular tramway, if properly worked—from Liverpool-street, one half of the traffic going through Castlereagh-street, and the other half through Kent-street—would knock the biggest portion of the bus traffic out of Oxford-street. The circular railway would give still greater relief to the traffic from Waverley to the new station on the Benevolent Asylum grounds. Now take the other branch through George-street West, the Glebe, and Annandale, and on to Leichhardt. There is a big population there, the same as there is in the western suburbs. The western suburbs are served better than any of the other suburbs. You can travel only by tram from Leichhardt or from Waverley to the city; but if you live at Summer Hill, for instance, you can come in by train. I think that the people at Waverley want good railway accommodation as well as those on the Western line.

2525. But you want to bring them in through Redfern? Yes; if I were living at Waverley and wanted to go to Melbourne or Bourke, and did not want to have a cab, I could then go by railway to Redfern, get out here and go on to the terminal platform and get into another train. That would be the proper thing to do. The circular railway would go to Waverley in one direction and to Leichhardt in the other, and as years went on you could take the line through Alexandria and Randwick, and across Marrickville to Stanmore, and junction there with the ends of the two portions I now propose. That might be in twenty years time from now, because the scheme altogether would cost some millions of pounds, and I do not think it is all required now, inasmuch as the population in most of those places is not very great at present. I propose to have those two branches—eastern and north-western—where there is already a large population. The stations would be long and narrow, and you would not require to resume much property, as some of the stations would, I suppose, be underground—some distance below the surface. As time went on you could put out as many branches as you liked to where the population would then be. In my scheme I have also provided a railway for the goods traffic to be taken round to Woolloomooloo. Mr. Eddy always said that you ought not to mix the passenger traffic and the goods traffic. I would run a line from Darling Harbour, *via* Sussex-street, to the west side of Circular Quay, and then have a branch from the west side of Circular Quay, by tunnel under Government House grounds, to Woolloomooloo. For a connection with a bridge to North Shore, you would run off the circle at Wynyard-square, or somewhere near there, and thus have a railway over the bridge for the northern traffic.

2526. I understand that you still adhere to the idea that the Devonshire-street station is to be the great central railway station? Yes.

George Neville Griffiths sworn, and examined:—

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2527. *Chairman.*] You are a very old resident of Sydney, and have studied this railway question for a considerable time? Yes.

2528. On the 15th February, 1900, you sent a letter to us, and perhaps it will be well for you to read that letter, in order to refresh your memory as to the evidence you wish to give? Yes; it is as follows:—

THE CITY RAILWAY.

Sir,

15 February, 1900.

As your honorable Committee is engaged in considering the various plans and suggestions in reference to above, the scheme put forward by the late Mr. C. A. Goodchap when Commissioner for Railways under the Jennings-Dibbs Government in 1885-6 will, I hope, be kept in view.

This scheme contemplated bringing the railway by a viaduct over Belmore Park to a tunnel just south of Liverpool-street; then by an open cutting alongside of Elizabeth-street through Hyde Park to a central station on the sites now occupied by St. James' Road, the Lands Titles Office, the Supreme Court Buildings, and St. James' Church; thence by underground tunnel beneath the Mint and part of the Inner Domain and Garden Palace Gardens to a point below Government House gates in Macquarie-street; thence by open cutting to Fort Macquarie, which was to be removed, and the whole point occupied as railway premises and shunting station.

This scheme contemplated the removal of the Supreme Court (and it must soon be removed or rebuilt) and the Lands Titles Office to the land now occupied by the District Court and Patents Office at the top of King-street, where there is ample space and a splendid site for noble law offices and buildings.

The main difficulty was about St. James' Church, which, it was suggested, should be rebuilt in an improved and modern form in Phillip-street.

The chief features of the scheme, too, were its inexpensiveness and the splendid central site for the station. No person can controvert the latter part, and as to the inexpensiveness, I believe the total cost of construction of line and resumption of land up to St. James' Place was estimated as under £500,000 as against the several millions involved in other rival schemes. As against the resumption of 1 or 1½ chain frontage of Hyde Park to Elizabeth-street was the great set-off that it was contemplated to remove Government House, and throw the whole of the Government House grounds into the Domain and the Botanical Gardens, building the Government House further out of town.

Now

Now that Federation is assured, and that the Governor of Federated Australia will have to reside over 100 miles from Sydney, Government House will no longer be necessary, for the State Governor will not require so palatial a residence, grounds, and stables.

G. N.
Griffiths.

Mr. Goodchap's scheme went further, too. It contemplated the sale of 1,000 to 1,500 feet of the east frontage to Macquarie-street from Government House gates down towards Macquarie Fort for stores and warehouses, with the railway at their back.

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This land, it was then estimated, would realise about £200 per foot, and its disposal would very materially, if not wholly, pay for the resumption of the Law Courts, the Deeds Branch, and St. James' Church. One other great advantage of Mr. Goodchap's scheme was, and is, that ample space is available at Macquarie Fort for shunting, and that bringing the wool to Macquarie Fort would do away with the transport of the wool through Sydney streets. I have only mentioned a few salient points of this scheme—than which none better has, to my mind, yet been proposed—in the hope that whilst your honorable Committee is sitting on this long vexed question of a city railway, the plans, and estimates, and papers, from 1884 to 1886 may be brought before it and considered.

I am, &c.,

G. N. GRIFFITHS.

The Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

2529. Would you like to amplify that before we ask you any questions? This vexed question of the city railway has been in existence at any rate since 1881; I have known of it since then. A Royal Commission was appointed in 1890 on the subject which has been before the Public Works Committee on several occasions since then. There are some main features which I wish to point out, so that they may not be lost sight of in the present inquiry, and the first is that whereas it is considered undesirable by many people that the public should be deprived of even a portion of Hyde Park, there was in the old scheme a compensation to be given, by the resumption of the whole of the Government House grounds, which would have been thrown into the Domain and to the Botanical Gardens, so that where the citizens lost a little, they would gain very much in the open grounds around the city. Next the idea was mooted that by bringing the railway to the top of the high ridge in the centre of the city, as it would be at that end of King-street, you could have a very central station there, the ground on which the Lands Titles Office, the Supreme Court, and St. James' Church stand, and also St. James' Road all being used as the site for a central railway station, with the addition of a little portion of Hyde Park, that space affording ample room. That line was absolutely surveyed, and I think that about the year 1884, borings were taken right through the Domain and the Government House grounds, and the line was almost planned out at that time. Then the other great idea was that there was ample room for a shunting station at Fort Macquarie, and it was also recognised then, and is recognised even more now, that the Supreme Court buildings must necessarily before very long be removed to what is called "Chaucery-square" at the top of King-street, and so the two things might be done at the one time. As regards cost, I have looked up some old papers. Mr. McElhone and I held a large meeting at the Protestant Hall in advocacy of this plan, and it was well received by the citizens; but since then so many schemes have been proposed, that I think this one has been partly lost sight of. There was one other point which was always much insisted upon, namely, that the bulk of the heavy goods (wool) traffic would go straight away from the Circular Quay or thereabouts, and that the present heavy wool traffic from Darling Harbour through Pitt and George streets would be done away with. A suggestion was made, which I think is a feasible one as regards monetary matters, namely, that it would be quite possible, without interfering with the public parks very much, to run the railway as proposed to the Government House gates, and then along near Macquarie-street to Fort Macquarie. We had a valuation made by Mr. Gorman, of Hardie and Gorman, of the frontage to Macquarie-street at that part, and his valuation was that land having a frontage to Macquarie-street there, with access at the back to the railway, would be worth about £200 a foot.

2530. That scheme, in your opinion, embraces economy, a direct line, a station at King-street, and a continuation to the waters of Port Jackson, at Fort Macquarie—those are its chief recommendations? Yes.

2531. Have you considered the question more recently, having in view the great traffic, and also the convenience which, apparently, is given to the citizens by the tramway along George-street? Yes, I have. My opinion is that it is still desirable to have the main railway station centrally situated, so that passengers arriving at Redfern may be able to go straight on, and not have to get out at Redfern, and avail themselves of the tramways.

2532. If that position were granted, do you still think that a station in the vicinity of King-street and Elizabeth-street would be sufficiently central, or do you think that the large traffic by the trams along George-street has indicated that the station should be more in the direction of George-street, if possible? The proposed station would be situated on the top of the ridge—where St. James' Church and St. James' Road are now—and it would give easy access to all parts of the city, with the exception, of course, of the lower end of Miller's Point, and down there, and no central station could give easy access to those portions of the city.

2533. Have you considered this scheme in view of further extensions possibly in the direction of North Shore and of the eastern suburbs? Without giving any engineering view of it, I have considered it in this way: That it is quite feasible to have a branch-off from a tunnel under the Domain beyond the Mint to Wookloooloo Bay, and also, as was proposed, to have a railway line going round the Circular Quay, with a branch to Darling Harbour, joining with a line that was proposed at one time to be run as a goods traffic line at the back of the wharfs at Darling Harbour. Of course, there was a great scheme for a bridge; but for my part I have always thought that a tunnel under the harbour would be a more feasible scheme. And if the tunnel scheme were adopted, there could undoubtedly be a line running round the Circular Quay, and then tunnelling and meeting a line of railway, which would run along the wharfs at Darling Harbour.

2534. The scheme before us contemplates an open cutting along the length of Hyde Park from Liverpool-street to St. James' Road? Yes.

2535. As you know, for some time past any interference with Hyde Park has been a great difficulty? Yes; I propose to give a *quid pro quo* for that in the resumption of the Government House grounds.

2536. And throwing that resumed land into the Gardens and the Domain? Yes. That was one of the original portions of the scheme, which appears to me to have been lost sight of recently.

2537. In the scheme before us, no large block of Hyde Park is contemplated to be taken for the purposes of a railway station or anything of that kind, but merely a sufficient width for the trains to run along? In addition to the sites of the Lands Titles Office, the Supreme Court, and St. James' Church, I believe that the original scheme contemplated taking a further block of about 100 feet, and to square off that end of Hyde Park. The idea was to have four lines of railway—two in and two out lines. 2538.

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2538. *Dr. Garran.*] You say that no person can controvert the splendiddness of the central site at St. James' Road; but we have heard a great many witnesses who do controvert it? Well, perhaps I should say that no one can properly controvert it.

2539. You think they have all done it improperly? My opinion is that that is the most central site for a railway station in the heart of the city.

2540. But it has been shown that the bulk of the people who used to be by the Elizabeth-street trams now use the George-street line in preference, because it takes them nearer to their places of business? As far as my experience goes, the electric tram is much pleasanter riding than the steam tram, and just at present the steam tram—owing to using far less coke and more coal—gives off a mass of dust and dirt.

2541. You think that is the reason? I think that is partly the reason. Everybody knows that the electric tram is pleasanter and runs more smoothly than the steam tram.

2542. You propose a tunnel all the way from St. James' Road to a little below the Government House gates in Macquarie-street;—have you measured the length of that tunnel? I have been along the route many times, but my recollection is not sufficient to say the length. The whole of the necessary plans and specifications were drawn up at the time and were approved of by the Railway Commissioners, and there were shafts contemplated to ventilate that route.

2543. Some of our witnesses say that in this climate anything like a long tunnel is to be deprecated? Very likely; but still at the same time I do not think the whole length of that tunnel would be, as far as I recollect it, more than 500 or 600 yards.

2544. You would not venture to propose an open cutting through the Domain, to get rid of that? No. It was at a depth, I think, of 45 feet from the surface. I lived at that time at Richmond Villa, in the Domain. I watched all those borings going on, and the boring in the Domain in front of where I lived was about 45 feet down to the roadway of the proposed tunnel.

2545. Do you think that an open-cutting by Government House would be objected to as spoiling Government House? I take it that Government House would be done away with.

2546. That is part of your idea? Yes. I think that at that time it was contemplated to move Government House.

2547. *Mr. Dick.*] You proposed to bring both people and goods along your extension, did you not? Yes, we did.

2548. Do you know whether any calculation has been made as to whether you would have room for shunting operations at Fort Macquarie? It is so many years ago that I cannot answer that question.

2549. Your station at Hyde Park or St. James' Road would not be in any sense a terminal station? No.

2550. You would not do any shunting there? No.

2551. If shunting had to be done along the extension it would have to be done at Fort Macquarie? Yes.

2552. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you considered the other schemes that are under our consideration? I have read them time after time, and have watched them; but I cannot say that I have considered all the various schemes.

2553. Well, some of them? We have recognised that it would be an enormous advantage to do away with the great traffic of heavy goods through the city, even from Darling Harbour. The Darling Harbour extension was carried out since the time I have spoken of, and that afforded great relief to the main traffic. A large quantity of wool—that for direct shipment—instead of being hauled on lorries and carts through the city, is now carried from Darling Harbour on lighters to the vessels that take the wool away. I do not mean the wool that is to be put up for sale by auction here; but the wool for direct shipment, and it does not come through the city at all.

2554. Have you compared this scheme with the other schemes you have seen? I have, but not in such a way that I think my evidence would be of any value.

2555. Do you consider this scheme superior to the others? I think there are many features in the old scheme which I have taken the liberty of saying I think are well worthy of the attention of the Committee. In a general way I think it has so many advantages that it commends itself to me as about the most feasible scheme. I think the best scheme of any would be a line going straight away from Redfern along Castlereagh-street; but it would cost such an enormous sum for resumption of land.

2556. You favour a scheme through Castlereagh-street to what point? I would still go for my shunting to Fort Macquarie, which, as far as I can see, is the only place available for that purpose.

2557. What is your opinion in regard to continuing the railway extension to St. James' Road or King-street only;—do you think that that would answer the requirements? I am afraid it would hardly be practicable, on account of the necessity of turning the trains round in shunting.

2558. You are aware, I suppose, that most of the schemes under consideration make provision only for carrying the extension to King-street? I am aware of that.

2559. I should like to know your opinion as to whether that would meet the public requirements? I do not think it would, because I do not think there would be a sufficiency. I suppose it would require something like 200 trains in and 200 trains out to carry on the traffic of the city now. In those days, as far as I remember, it was calculated that 150 trains each way each day would be sufficient.

2560. Do you consider also that it is necessary to carry the goods traffic from Redfern to some convenient point on the harbour? I think it would be desirable to do so, if it could be done.

2561. Most of the schemes submitted deal only with passenger traffic;—would you consider a scheme complete, even for passengers, if its termination were at King-street? I would not consider it complete; but I would consider it a great advantage for passengers to be able to run straight in, and not have to change into the trams at Redfern.

2562. When this scheme of yours was first made there was no Darling Harbour extension, and no electric trams? The Darling Harbour line then ran to Darling Harbour, but it was only a small line, and afterwards that line was increased, and various lines were run out from it. Therefore, you cannot say that there was no Darling Harbour line, but it was a very small line in those days, and has been very much enlarged since.

2563. Since the electric trams have been running, have you considered the general aspect of the matter, and as to whether they would be sufficient for the travelling public without railway extension? It is an immense disadvantage for a person coming into town to have to change from a train at Redfern, particularly if he has any luggage.

2564. You are, no doubt, aware that a large number of people who come into the city from the suburbs have offices, or other places of business, in different parts of the city—say in Kent-street, Sussex-street, and George-street;—if the railway were extended to King-street, would those people take the train to King-street in preference to taking the electric trams that run along George-street? Perhaps those who went as far as King-street would avail themselves of the electric tram; but I think you would find that for those people who went beyond King-street the advantages of the through train would be superior to the advantages of getting out of the train at Redfern, and changing into a tram. Any person going to a place between Redfern and King-street, and on the western side of George-street, would, perhaps, travel by the electric tram; but I think that those people going to places between King-street and Circular Quay would find that they would gain time by running through by train to King-street, because they would not have to lose time in getting into the tram.

G. N.
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2565. But even if those going to the Circular Quay might save time by taking a through train to King-street station, they would have to walk from King-street to Circular Quay, whereas the electric tram would take them all the way to the Circular Quay? Yes; but the line I advocate would take them to the Circular Quay.

2566. In that case, which way do you think they would go? The majority of the people who had no luggage, and who wanted to go to that locality, would, I think, go by tram; but those who had luggage would go, I think, as far as they could by railway.

Charles Trimby Burfitt, property valuer, sworn, and examined:—

2567. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Glebe Point.

2568. What is your occupation? I am a sworn valuer under the Real Property Act, carrying on business in Market-street, Sydney.

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2569. You wrote a letter to the Committee on the 7th March, 1900? Yes.

2570. Will you kindly read it? Yes; it is as follows:—

Sir,

7 March, 1900.

For more than twenty years I have been actively engaged in the sale of properties located along the railway, and consequently I have given much thought to the question of the extension of the railway from Redfern through the city. I am of opinion that the requirements of the travelling public would be met by extending the line from a central station on the Devonshire-street cemetery site on a viaduct across Belmore Park, entering a tunnel a short distance above where Wexford-street joins Elizabeth-street, thence along that tunnel to a point near the Water Police Court, thence on piers to the western side of the Circular Quay, and on to a station on Dawes Point; or from the point near the Water Police Court to Fort Macquarie. For passengers other than suburban the Devonshire-street station would be sufficiently central; therefore only platform space need be provided at certain points along the extension, with sufficient surface area to allow for getting to and from the platforms in the tunnels, and for ventilating-shafts. This scheme, besides meeting the requirements of the public, would do away with the necessity for erecting a costly and, to my thinking, most objectionable building in the business portion of the city, as well as allowing Hyde Park to remain practically intact.

I would state further that I strongly hold to the opinion that any extension of the railway stopping short of the Circular Quay will be found unsatisfactory alike to the public and the Department.

Trusting the suggestion here offered will receive consideration by your Committee,

I beg, &c.,

C. T. BURFITT.

The Secretary, Public Works Committee, Sydney.

2571. *Mr. Dick.*] Have you for some time held the same opinion concerning the direction in which the extension should go? I have.

2572. Has your opinion been at all modified by the results of the working of the George-street tram? Not in the slightest.

2573. Do you know that the George-street tram now brings in about fourteen out of every fifteen of the people who go to and from the Redfern station? Exactly.

2574. Would not that fact suggest that the people are more satisfactorily inconvenienced by that route than by one more to the east? No, for this reason: At the present time that is the most convenient way of getting into the city; but if they had an opportunity of remaining in the train, and going by it, say, to King-street, or to any other point at which they wished to get out, they would prefer remaining in the train, and going by it to that point rather than getting out of the train at Redfern and taking the electric tram. I may say that what I claim for this scheme is that it would be the least costly in the matter of resumptions; that it would supply the wants of those of the travelling public who are likely to use a railway extension scheme; that it would be patronised by most of such people, and that it would do away with the necessity of interfering with Hyde Park, and also the erection of a central station at King-street—which, I believe, is favoured by the Railway Commissioners. It would also take the train directly to the Circular Quay, where a large number of the people using the train would wish to get to.

2575. You say you think it is the least costly of the various schemes that have been put before the Committee;—have you estimated the cost of your scheme in the way of land resumption? I have not gone particularly into it; I merely judge by the number and locations of resumptions that would be required compared with other schemes. For instance, I take it that the principal resumption of private land would be at Wexford-street, where the entrance to the tunnel would be. Practically, the remainder of the land required is already Government property.

2576. Where would you have your station at King-street? I think the most advantageous place would be the site now occupied by the Land Titles Office, or the site now occupied by the Supreme Court. One of those sites would be ample for the purpose, because all that is necessary is to have sufficient space to get an approach to the underground platforms. The platforms being underground, you require only sufficient area for a stairway to get to and from the same. Therefore, the site of even the Lands Titles Office would be ample for that purpose, and it is generally acknowledged that the Lands Titles Office will have to be removed very soon because the area is so limited.

2577. You have not gone into a detailed estimate of the cost of resumption, either under your own scheme or under any of the others? No.

2578. You have taken a general view of it? Yes.

2579. Your scheme would be mainly in tunnel? Yes.

2580. Have you any estimate of the length of the tunnel? No, I cannot say further than that it would be from Wexford-street to Albert-street. In suggesting that the line should be taken on the further or western side of the Circular Quay, I do so with the view of ultimately extending the line to North Shore, and also to gain a larger area at Dawes Point for a terminus for shunting purposes. Of course, if it were taken to Fort Macquarie, and the area there found sufficient for shunting purposes, that would be a much cheaper route, and would answer the purpose I have in view.

2581.

- C. T. Burfitt. 2581. With respect to the tunnels, have you considered the most important question of ventilation;—do you propose that they should be ventilated artificially or by natural means? By shafts, they would be sufficiently ventilated. Of course, smoke from the locomotives would be very objectionable to the citizens, but by having the line in a tunnel you would minimise that to a considerable extent.
- 20 Mar., 1900. 2582. That is, so far as the people who are not in the trains are concerned? Yes. As to those in the trains, I think that the current of air through would be sufficient to take away the sulphur fumes and smoke, and prevent them from being disagreeable. Furthermore, I hold that if it were once admitted that a railway station at King-street were necessary, then undoubtedly the whole of Hyde Park would be taken some day for a terminus, and I hold to the opinion that a railway station located in such a busy part of a large city would be found objectionable—that the smoke and smut, and so forth, inseparable from a railway station and its surroundings, would be found very objectionable. For long-distance passengers the proposed new station on the Devonshire-street site would be central enough, because many of them, if they are coming into town, have to employ a conveyance to take their luggage, and it would cost them no more to take it from that station to wherever they intended to stop than it would cost to take it from the top of King-street. The city railway extension is largely for the accommodation of suburban residents who come into town and go out each day, and it is to their requirements that I think the greatest consideration should be given.
2583. With respect to that class of traffic, considering that in the busy portion of the day over twenty trains come in, where do you propose to do the shunting of those trains? At Fort Macquarie.
2584. Have you ascertained whether there is sufficient room there to do the shunting? I should think there is; I have looked over the site, and from what I can see I think that where the trains would emerge from the tunnel there would be ample space for a circle for the purpose of turning the trains.
2585. Have you considered your scheme in its relation to a possible extension, either by tunnel or bridge, to the northern side of the harbour;—do you think it would lend itself to either of those? Not beyond an extension to Dawes Point.
2586. Would it lend itself to an extension by bridge from Dawes Point? I take it, from my knowledge of the locality and so forth, that branches could be taken, one to the west for the purpose of taking the railway across a bridge to North Shore, and the other for an eastern suburban service.
2587. *Dr. Garran.*] You say you would have a circle to turn your trains round at Fort Macquarie? Yes.
2588. We have it in evidence from the engineers that you cannot turn our engines round on a circle of less than 10 chains radius;—do you think there is room at Fort Macquarie for a circle of 10 chains radius? Barely, I think. But as regards that, I may point out that if you had your station at King-street, which I believe the Railway Commissioners favour, you would have to do the shunting in the ordinary way, and you could do it in that way at Fort Macquarie. If the circle could be made, there is no doubt that in the working of the railways it would be a convenience. But you could do your shunting at Fort Macquarie with as great convenience as you could do it at King-street.
2589. I only wanted to know whether you had gone into any careful examination of the matter? Yes.
2590. You propose to begin your tunnel at the junction of Wexford-street and Elizabeth-street? Yes, in that neighbourhood.
2591. Do you cross Elizabeth-street on the level, or underground, or overhead? I propose to take it sufficiently far up from Wexford-street to enable Elizabeth-street to be continued under the viaduct.
2592. Without altering its present level? Yes; without interfering with it in any way.
2593. Looking at the large extent of tunnelling on your line, do you think that people coming into the city from the suburbs would prefer to remain in their railway carriages, and go through a smoky tunnel, or get out at Redfern and take the open-air tram along George-street? My own impression is that they would prefer to go through the tunnel, and so avoid the loss of time and trouble associated with changing.
2594. *Mr. Watson.*] As I understand your proposition with regard to Fort Macquarie, it is that the train should be shunted there, not turned round end to end, by a circular line? If there is sufficient space to turn them on a circle, or semi-circle so much the better; but, if not, adopt the same principle as it is proposed to adopt at King-street, and shunt in the ordinary way.
2595. Mr. Parry, the traffic superintendent at Redfern, stated that there was an objection to turning trains round owing to the necessity of always keeping the first-class carriages and the second-class carriages at the same ends of the platform, which, of course, turning round would reverse? That is a mere detail in railway management.
2596. Do you think that Fort Macquarie would lend itself sufficiently to shunting? Yes, amply.
2597. How many lines had you in your mind when you thought of this tunnelling? Four.
2598. The proposition at present before the Committee is to bring six lines into the city? That is merely a matter of increasing the size of the tunnel.
2599. But it would affect the amount of resumption and the cost of the scheme? My scheme is more a matter of which is the best route, and whether it should be underground or in open cutting.
2600. Do you contemplate having the long-distance trains brought to your terminus at Circular Quay, or would you let them remain at Redfern or Devonshire-street, or wherever the central station might be? If the matter were left to my management alone, I would bring them simply as far as Devonshire-street, but nothing in my scheme would prevent their being brought to Circular Quay. If the long-distance trains were used to pick up passengers at Strathfield, then by all means bring them into the city, but if the last stopping-place for those trains were, say, at Penrith, I do not think there would be any necessity to bring them beyond Devonshire-street. I may add that if the station were on that site I should prefer that all the frontage to Pitt-street be taken for it, including the Benevolent Asylum grounds and the convent and the other buildings on that portion of the street frontage.

WEDNESDAY, 21 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D. |ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the creation of a large Central Station.

Frederick James Miller, timber merchant, sworn, and examined:—

2601. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where is your place of business? Duncan-street, off Bathurst-street.
2602. *Dr. Garran.*] Where do you reside? At Croydon.
2603. I suppose that on ordinary days you come in and go out by the railway? Yes.
2604. Before the electric tramway was put down in George-street, did you walk to your place of business from Elizabeth-street? I either walked from Redfern or went by 'bus from Redfern.
2605. Which 'bus suited you the best? A George-street 'bus.
2606. Now that the electric tram is running in George-street, does that suit you better than the old steam-tram did? I never used the old steam-tram for business.
2607. Do you use the electric tram? Yes.
2608. In preference to the omnibus? Yes.
2609. That electric tramway has captured some of the omnibus traffic, and also some of the Elizabeth-street tram traffic? Certainly.
2610. If that electric tramway were pulled up for any reason, would the people in the west think it a hardship to have to climb up all the way to Elizabeth-street again? I do not think they ever did that.
2611. They took the omnibus? Always.
2612. But considering the large number of people in the west, who come from and go to the railway station every day, was the omnibus traffic equal to the requirements of all that large number of passengers? I can hardly say that. The traffic was carried somehow.
2613. Did a good many people walk? Yes.
2614. Do you think that some of those who walked now use the electric tram? I think they do.
2615. Let us suppose that the Commissioners' original scheme, or a substitute for it, were carried out, and that the terminus were made at King-street, near the Supreme Court, do you think that the people from the west would take the George-street tram to the railway, or would they go up to King-street? My opinion is that they would take the George-street tram.
2616. Would you do so yourself? I would.
2617. The tram is said to be a little slower than the train would be? Well, for the short distance I do not think that makes much difference.
2618. On a hot day, or on a wet day, you would get into the first conveyance that came along, I suppose? Certainly.
2619. And I suppose that men carrying bundles would prefer to get into the first conveyance that came along? I suppose they would.
2620. And so also would women carrying babies? Yes; I should think they would.
2621. The importance of the question lies here: before the electric tramway was opened, the Commissioners made a careful estimate of the number of passengers that came on from the railway station at Redfern to King-street in the trams; then they booked all those to the proposed new railway, and they calculated that on an outlay of £650,000, that they would get a good percentage interest on the expenditure; assuming that there was a penny more paid for single fares, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ d. more for season tickets, and about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. more for workmen's tickets, do you think, now that the electric tram comes in as a competitor, that the Railway Commissioners would get the whole of the tram fare they calculated upon? I do not.
2622. In that case their estimate of profit would have to be revised? Certainly it would.
2623. And we should either have to put a larger percentage on to the ticket fare or suffer a loss? Yes.
2624. Do you think that the people generally would bear 1d. or $\frac{1}{2}$ d. extra on the ticket fare? I do not suppose they would, but I am not in a position to say.
2625. Supposing they preferred, as we are told they would prefer, the railway to the tram, because they would not have to get out at Redfern and change carriages, would they use the railway if they were charged 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. more instead of the tram at only 1d. more? My opinion is that they would use the tram.
2626. The $\frac{1}{2}$ d. difference would be a consideration to a great many people? I think so.
2627. I suppose that there are a great many people coming in by the railway in the morning whose remuneration is really very slight—people employed in different establishments? Yes.
2628. And $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each journey would be 1d. a day? Yes; to them it would be a consideration.
2629. You think that that would be a sufficient difference to make them use the tram in preference to the train? Yes; I think it would. In fact, I think that they would use the tram by preference even at the same cost.
2630. We are told that there is a very strong objection, on the part of the railway customers, to getting out at Redfern and changing their vehicle;—do you hear much of that? I have heard of it. I have no objection to it myself—not the slightest.
2631. If the tram is brought up close to the platform where you get out at Redfern, and there is no delay in starting the tram, is there any very serious difficulty connected with it? There is no difficulty at present. That is my experience.
2632. I have been speaking hitherto about men of business going to their offices, but now take the case of ladies who want to go, say, to David Jones', or to some other shop in George-street;—would they take the train to King-street and walk from King-street to George-street, or would they take the tram at Redfern and be put down opposite the shop door in George-street? I do not know much about what the ladies would do, but I suppose that they would take the tram. What ladies I know now take the tram.
2633. For convenience? Yes, for convenience.
2634. I suppose that, in common with a good many other people, you have been a little surprised at the very large traffic on the George-street tram line? Yes, I have.

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2635.

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2635. Does not that prove that it has met a very great want? Yes, it has.
2636. And so far as the railway suburban passengers are concerned, does it not prove that the electric tram puts them down nearer to where they want to go than the old steam tram line did? Certainly.
2637. There is no doubt about that? None whatever.
2638. Supposing that a tram line were made down Kent-street and on to Miller's Point and Dawes Point, do you think that would serve any considerable number of persons? I do not know that it would be much better than the present tram line. I do not think it would.
2639. Would the Sussex-street people be better served by it? Kent-street is such a very short distance from George-street that I do not think it would make much difference.
2640. The reason I ask you that is because some persons have the idea that if a new station were made on the Benevolent Asylum site, and if three or four lines of electric tramway were laid along parallel streets in the city, they would really accommodate the whole of the suburban people who come in;—do you think they would? My opinion is that they certainly would.
2641. The officials of the Railway Department do not think so? Well, of course, they know better than I do.
2642. Their traffic is not distributed evenly over the whole of the day—there is a large quantity coming in in the morning, and a large quantity going out at night? Yes.
2643. And the railway officials say that they want a powerful haulage to dispose of that traffic—more powerful than the electric tram has at present;—when you come in in the morning do you see anybody waiting unable to get into the electric cars? I have noticed on different occasions, lately, that the tram has started immediately, and another tram has been behind it to take away the other passengers. I have not seen any delay.
2644. It has not struck you that the arrangements are unequal to the traffic? It has not. Of course I generally travel in a first-class carriage, and that gets into the station first, and probably I am away before the people from the back part of the train get out of the station.
2645. The first-class passengers get a "pull" over the others? Yes, in coming in.
2646. But is your carriage generally full? Yes, generally full.
2647. I mean the electric tram; it does not go until it is full? I think so. There has been no delay at any rate; whether full or not the tram has gone.
2648. Then, so far as you can see, the electric trams at present are equal to dealing with the traffic that arises at Redfern station? Yes; with the traffic that arises at Redfern station coming in.
2649. And going out the same? Going out it is very difficult to get a seat in the tram the other side of Market-street.
2650. Then the going out trams are more crowded than the coming in ones? In the evening they are.
2651. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What time do you generally come in in the morning? Generally 9 o'clock.
2652. That is said to be about the busiest time—I think the railway authorities say so? Well, I suppose it is.
2653. And you never find any difficulty in getting a place in the tram? I have never had any delay; in fact I have never had any difficulty in getting into a tram. I have seen people waiting for the next tram which was always standing close behind the one I got into.
2654. And, of course, if the trams were run more frequently there could be no possible difficulty in getting seats? Certainly not.
2655. You have always found that the electric trams are under thorough control—have you not? Yes; except in the event of accident.
2656. I mean that they are easier to stop, and seem to be more under control than the steam trams, so far as that is concerned? Yes.
2657. Therefore, they can run very close to each other without any danger? They can.
2658. Have you thought over the Government scheme at all? No.
2659. Speaking just casually, from your own idea of the matter, which do you suppose would be the more central station to suit the greater number of people, a station at the George-street Markets or a station at the top of King-street? A station at the George-street Markets.
2660. You have no doubt about that being the more central position of the two—that is, embracing the largest number of people in the city? I think that of those two positions the Markets are the more central.
2661. So that if any extension of the railway at all were made, you think that a railway with a station at the George-street markets would be more central to a railway going to a station at the top of King-street? Yes; that is, supposing that I were to consider railway extension into the city at all necessary.
2662. We have had several schemes suggested to us, and one is to have a central station at the George-street Markets, while the Government proposal is to have it at the top of King-street;—you think that, as a position for a station, the George-street Markets would be preferable to the top of King-street? No; you said more central. I do not think that George-street Markets would be preferable, for that is a very crowded place.
2663. In the event of a station being made at the top of King-street, and supposing that the electric trams in George-street were running, what boundaries of the city do you suppose that station would conveniently serve;—how far do you think it would be convenient for people to go back who landed at King-street from the train? Of course, I can only say what I would do myself. I reckon that if I were at Pitt-street I would take the train at King-street. If I were below that, I would either walk or take the electric tram to Redfern. I do not suppose that you would get any passengers by the train further west than Pitt-street at the outside.
2664. How far do you think railway passengers would be willing to go back south from King-street in preference to coming in by tram? This is a matter I have not thought of. I am only telling you my own opinion on the spur of the moment. I do not think that anybody would go further back south than Park-street, even if anybody would go that far back.
2665. Do you think they would go as far back as Park-street in preference to getting out of the tram at the corner of George and Park streets, and walking thence to their places of business? No, I do not.
2666. And what, on the north? I suppose that from Pitt-street people would go to the George-street tram; but that from anywhere east of Pitt-street they would go up to the King-street station.
2667. All these large Government offices would be nearer to the tram at Circular Quay than they would be to the railway at King-street? They would. 2668.

2668. Do you think that people would rather get out at King-street, and walk down to this part of the city, than come round in the tram? I do not know. I would rather take the tram myself. F. J. Miller.
2669. Supposing that the electric trams were multiplied—that is, supposing there was a tramway along Pitt-street, another along Castlereagh-street, and another along Elizabeth-street—do you think that it would be more convenient for people to be dropped at each street by these trams than it would be for them to come on by train to King-street and to disperse from there? Without the least doubt, I do think so. 21 Mar., 1900.
2670. So that really you think that a good system of electric trams would be more convenient than extending the railway? I do.
2671. *Mr. McErlane.*] According to your statement, you do not appear to think it is necessary to have the railway extended into the city for passenger traffic? I have thought so little of the matter that I would not care for my opinion to be put against the opinion of those who have thought more of it.
2672. I am speaking of your own opinion? In my own opinion it is not necessary to bring the railway into the city.
2673. That is in view of the new electric tramway along George-street to the railway station? Certainly.
2674. Previously to the establishment of the electric trams, what was your idea? The same as it is now—that the Redfern railway station, with more accommodation for the trains, is central enough.
2675. With regard to the traffic at Circular Quay, do you think that people from the western suburbs would, in the event of the railway being extended to King-street, take the train to King-street, and thence walk to Circular Quay in preference to taking the electric tram? I do not think so.
2676. Where is your place of business? At the foot of Liverpool-street.
2677. You do not use the steam tram at the present time? No; I have never used the steam tram.
2678. I mean, previous to the running of the electric trams? No, I did not.
2679. Did business people in your locality generally do the same as yourself? Yes; they generally walked to the railway station.
2680. And, in view of the electric trams, do you not consider that it would pay interest on the outlay to construct a railway into the city? I suppose that the Commissioners would make it pay by increasing the fares.
2681. Would that not reduce the railway traffic? Yes, it would.
2682. With regard to the city railway extension generally, do you think it advisable to have the terminus at King-street, or to continue the line to the harbour at Circular Quay? I do not consider it necessary.
2683. *Vice-Chairman.*] Admitting that it were necessary to have some extension of the railway into the city, where do you think the extension should go in order to meet the convenience of the greater number—along a route as proposed by the Railway Commissioners, skirting the eastern edge of the business portion of the city, or along a route going to the centre of the business portion of the city? All other things being equal, I think that the route going through the centre would be the better one.
2684. I suppose you have frequently heard this matter discussed by your fellow-travellers on the suburban line? Yes, I have.
2685. Can you give the Committee an idea as to why there is a general consensus of opinion in favour of a railway extension into the city? I have never heard anyone give a reason for it, excepting that we are behind the times as compared with other cities. That is what they say.
2686. You have heard no definite reason—for instance, the increased convenience if such an extension were made? Never.
2687. I think you stated in reply to a question put by Mr. Shepherd, that you did not think that the station at the Victoria Markets would be preferable to one at King-street, on the ground that you thought the place was too crowded? No. Mr. Shepherd asked me which was the more central, and I said the Markets. There can be no doubt about that.
2688. But you would not admit it was preferable? Well, it would require a practical engineer to see how the difficulties would be overcome, and I am not a practical engineer.
2689. I was going to ask you why you made that reservation—that you did not think it was preferable to the other; you think there is not enough space at the Victoria Markets? Yes, that is my opinion; but I am not an engineer.

James Cobban Smith, merchant, sworn, and examined:—

2690. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Strathfield.
2691. We may then take you as being a typical suburban traveller, whose place of business is west of George-street? Yes. J. C. Smith.
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2692. Will you indicate to the Committee what your views are on the main question of railway extension into the city? My opinion is that it is absolutely necessary to bring the railway into the city.
2693. On what grounds? That even with your electric trams you will not be able to cope with the traffic. My office and warehouse being in Clarence-street, my nearest point to the tramway is at Market-street. I take the tram from Market-street, and I do not exaggerate when I say that four times out of six I have to stand all the way to the railway station, and frequently I have to allow two, and sometimes three, trams to pass me before I can even get standing room. Certainly that is generally soon after 5 o'clock, when I leave my office on most days of the week, or soon after 1 o'clock on Saturday. At that time the electric trams do not, and cannot, cope with the traffic. How it will be when the electric trams are extended further out into the suburbs I cannot imagine. You will have one line of trams all up George-street. I have frequently waited at Market-street, and then have walked down to King-street to try and get a tram there, only to find when I got to King-street that all the trams were full.
2694. What method of conveyance into the city did you use before the George-street tramway was opened? Sometimes the steam tram, but more often the bus.
2695. And I suppose that the majority of business men situated to the west of George-street practically used the same mode of conveyance, did they not? Yes, practically the same.
2696. In what way do you think that an extension of the railway into the city along the proposed route would benefit gentlemen like you who have their places of business to the west of George-street? If the station

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station were made at King-street or St. James' Road I should unquestionably take the train to King-street, and come down King-street into Clarence-street.

2697. Would that be to gain time, or because the present tram along George-street is not sufficiently convenient? I should unquestionably save time by coming in by train to King-street.

2698. Have you made any calculation of the saving that you would make in that way? I should think from ten minutes to a quarter of an hour each way. You have to leave your office in time to catch a tram, then you must allow five minutes to catch your train after you get to the Redfern Station; therefore you lose at the very least ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, besides the extra time that the tram takes as compared with the time that a train would take in getting to Redfern.

2699. But presuming that a further extension of the electric tramways took place along the streets parallel with George-street, with the result that there would be a more speedy transit of passengers to the railway station at Redfern, do you think that then you would gain very little by taking the train at King-street rather than by taking a tram at one of the parallel streets? No; you would still lose the five minutes at each end—five minutes to catch a tram, and five minutes to catch a train—in addition to the extra time a tram takes, stopping at every street corner, as compared with a train that would run through from King-street.

2700. Have you ever inquired into the respective merits of a route down the eastern portion of the city and a route down the centre of it? No; I have only looked to the evidence that has been given with respect to bringing the railway to King-street or St. James' Road. I have always looked upon that as the most feasible and economical way of bringing the railway into the city. The other route would be so extravagant in expense that the probabilities are that the expense would always prevent it from being carried out.

2701. Do you know the estimated cost of the scheme now before the Committee? Yes; I do from the evidence of Mr. Deane. I have read all his evidence.

2702. Practically £1,500,000? Yes. Personally, I favour the St. James' Road scheme.

2703. On what grounds? As being the most economical. I have no sympathy with the objection to taking part of Hyde Park. I think that that portion of Hyde Park is practically of little value to the public. The few that benefit by it are as nothing compared to the multitude who would profit by it if it were utilised for a railway coming into the city.

2704. You say that that part of the Park is practically of little value;—do you not think that that was a determining element which led, not only the officials, but also the general public to select that site for a terminal station—I mean the fact that the land there was, so far as its value is concerned, not very important? Yes; I presume that would be the case.

2705. Supposing that all that area had been covered with buildings the same as any business portion of the city, do you think that there would have been a general agreement that that would have been a good place to which to bring the city railway? That is another matter altogether. I presume that if it had been covered with valuable buildings that fact would have very seriously affected the opinion of the authorities as regards bringing the railway into the city by that particular route.

2706. But what about your own opinion;—presuming that that area were covered with buildings, would you ever think of bringing the railway on that side of the business portion of the city, or would not you prefer to take it to the centre of it? If that area were all covered with valuable buildings, I should say that the lesser of two evils would be to take the railway to the other site, which would be more central.

2707. Do you really think that having a station at St. James' Road or King-street would be of any considerable benefit, as compared with the electric tramway, to a large number of people who now daily come into the business portion of the city? I do unquestionably. There is an immense traffic coming in by the railway in the morning, and going home in the evening, and it is an increasing traffic.

2708. I suppose you know that the George-street electric tram practically knocked the steam tram from Redfern station out? I presume so.

2709. Does not that show that people prefer to be taken further west than the line of the present steam tram? No doubt George-street is very central, and an immense number of people travel by the electric tram who do not go to the railway.

2710. But still during the busy hours of the morning and afternoon a very large traffic is taken by the George-street tram, a considerable portion of which used to go by the steam tram? Yes. I sometimes walked up to Elizabeth-street and went by the steam tram, but naturally now I take the electric tram in George-street.

2711. Do you think that your views on this question would be modified if a further extension of the electric trams were to do away with the present inconvenience of waiting for a tram, or getting into a crowded tram, and the delays consequent upon that? I do not see how any system of trams could do away with that.

2712. Supposing that you had a tram-line down Pitt-street, and another down Kent-street, in addition to the one in George-street, do you think that the three would not be able to cope with the traffic to the railway-station? You might cope with the traffic then, but still lose time. There would be still the inconvenience of changing carriages.

2713. That seems to be the main determining factor in the minds of the people who are clamouring for this railway extension, is it not? Yes; that, and, I think, the saving of time, and the avoiding of the inconvenience in getting to the station now. I admit that the convenience now is much greater since the electric trams were established compared with what it was before, when we had nothing but the wretched 'buses going up George-street; but what I foresee is that the electric trams will not be able to cope with the traffic.

2714. Not if they were further extended as suggested? You might cope with the traffic if you put them down Kent-street; but the traffic of Kent-street—in fact, everything comes into George-street in the end.

2715. But so far as those two periods of congestion during the day are concerned—that is, in the morning and in the afternoon—people travelling at those times generally are going to or coming from their places of business? Quite so.

2716. And they would invariably take that tram which would deposit them nearest to their places of business? Yes.

2717. Do you not, then, think that an extension of that kind would do away with the congestion during those particular periods? To some extent it would, no doubt.

2718.

2718. But you still hold that the delay in changing from train to tram in coming into town, and the delay in waiting for a train in going back, would outweigh any convenience of that kind in making a comparison between tram and train extension? Yes, I do. I hold that the railway ought to come into the city, and bring the people as near as possible to the business part of the city. J. C. Smith:
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2719. Do you also hold that the St. James' Road or Hyde Park scheme does that? Practically it would meet the difficulty. You come down hill from King-street, and I would always walk down King-street, and I suppose that nine-tenths of the people coming in would do the same.

2720. Do you think that your opinion is fairly representative of the opinion of suburban residents on this question? I think so. I have been living in the western suburbs twenty years, and have talked this matter over hundreds of times with suburban residents, and I think that that is generally the view they take of it.

2721. *Dr. Garran.*] When the Hyde Park scheme was first launched by the Railway Commissioners there was no other scheme seriously proposed? Quite so.

2722. And the opinion of the western suburban residents was that they would get that scheme or none? Yes.

2723. Supposing that there had been a scheme to bring you to the Victoria Markets, Wynyard-square, and Circular Quay, and that scheme had been put in opposition to the other, would the residents of the western suburbs have voted for the eastern line or the western line? I am of opinion that the residents on the western suburban line are not particular as to whether the railway extension comes in by the eastern or the western route through the city, so long as you bring the railway into the city. Speaking for the residents of the western suburbs, I may say,—Bring the railway into the city, and we do not care whether it comes in this way or that way, so long as you bring it in. What we fear is that if you recommend that way—and it means an enormous resumption of property—the expense will probably block it altogether.

2724. You want the railway extension somewhere? Yes.

2725. And you think it is safer to vote for this scheme than to go further afield for possibly a better one? Quite so.

2726. Which you might lose? Yes; which we might lose.

2727. You admit that the George-street tram has captured a large part of the Elizabeth-street tram business as regards the railway traffic? I do not know it of my own knowledge, but I should certainly conclude that that would be the case.

2728. If the proposed railway is made through to King-street, will the railway recapture what the steam tram has lost? Undoubtedly, I think so. The convenience that the railway extension would afford would be such that I think the larger portion of the railway passengers would make use of it.

2729. There are a great many people now getting out at Redfern whose business takes them into Elizabeth-street, or Market-street, or Park-street;—would they all go on to King-street by train and then walk back to those streets? There are not a great many that go to that part of the town. I have been travelling for a long time, and I found that the 'buses very seldom stopped until they got as far as the Town Hall, or even further than the Town Hall, in George-street. There was very little stopping before that.

2730. Then a station either at or near to the Town Hall would accommodate a great many people? Undoubtedly; if it were practicable, a station at the Victoria Markets, another station at Wynyard-square, and another at Circular Quay would undoubtedly accommodate the greater number.

2731. That would be a very complete scheme? Yes.

2732. If it could be carried out at a price that would pay? Yes, exactly—if it is practicable.

2733. In estimating the cost and the returns of the Commissioners' scheme, they expected to get for the proposed extension the whole of the passenger traffic that now goes as far as Market-street or King-street? Quite so.

2734. And they calculated that that would give them a fair interest on their outlay? Quite so.

2735. But if the scheme now before us be substituted for that scheme, and we are to spend £1,500,000, do you think that the suburban residents would pay 2d. or 2½d. more to be brought to King-street? Well, I should say that the suburban residents would pay whatever was demanded as the price of their season or daily tickets. They would certainly grumble if they had to pay an extra 2d. or 2½d. for the accommodation. But I have no doubt that an extra 1d. would meet the views of all the travellers.

2736. I want you to recollect that, at the same time, the Commissioners would be running a penny electric tram down George-street in opposition to their own railway? There is plenty of traffic for the electric tram down George-street.

2737. But that is not the question;—would the railway passengers, in order to save the 1d. or 1½d., get out at Redfern and take the electric tram? I would not.

2738. But there are a great many people who have to live on much smaller incomes, I suppose, than you do, and who come in from the western suburbs? If the railway fare from Redfern to King-street were 2d. or 2½d., in my opinion the majority of the people would have season tickets, and would travel by the railway right to King-street.

2739. But a great many employees with very small salaries would save the penny extra? They might save the extra penny; but there is not a large number of that particular class. If you see the trains coming in in the morning, you will notice that the passengers are nearly all first-class.

2740. You mean business people going to counting-houses and warehouses? Yes.

2741. They are not shop hands or factory hands? No. There is not a large population of that class living out in the western suburbs.

2742. The railway fares would be too dear for them to pay? Yes; and then there has been always the additional fare by either tram or 'bus to pay. I think that with the railway coming right into the city, you would find that the population of the western suburbs would, in a very short time, largely increase, and that the traffic would accordingly increase.

2743. You said in reply to the Vice-Chairman that the traffic on the line, as you see it, is now increasing? From my own knowledge and experience I know it has increased enormously in the last ten years.

2744. But we have had some evidence that it is now pretty well stationary? I think that one reason for that is the difficulty and trouble in getting into the city proper. I have no hesitation in saying that that has been the one thing that has kept the western suburbs back.

- J. C. Smith. 2745. You think that if this line were made to King-street the western suburbs would take a fresh start? I do, unquestionably.
- 21 Mar., 1900. 2746. And so there would really be a bigger traffic coming in than the Railway Commissioners originally counted upon, which was the existing traffic? I say that there would be an additional income arising from increased settlement in the western suburbs.
2747. And that would help to pay interest on a larger capital? It would.
2748. But still you would not venture to say that it would pay interest on £1,500,000? I am not competent to give an opinion on that point.
2749. If it were put to the western suburbs people, "To save Hyde Park we must spend £1,500,000," would they say, "Spend the extra money"? No; they would say, "Take Hyde Park." I think there is very little more than a sentimental objection against taking Hyde Park. Sentiment is no doubt worthy of respect at all times, but I think that a larger number of people would be benefited by the taking of that strip of Hyde Park for the railway. As a place for loafers to sleep upon that portion of Hyde Park is all right, but you dare scarcely go through it at night, and very few people make use of it at night.
2750. It has been suggested that if the park-land, taken for railway purposes, were to be valued, and if the money representing its full value were spent in making air spaces in other parts of the city not yet supplied with them, that would be a fair exchange? I think that that would be fair.
2751. And the sentimental objection would be got over? Yes. There is always that objection about touching the people's park; it is a lot of bosh, but still it exists.
2752. There are a great many people living in Sydney who are not close to a park? Yes, more than are close to one.
2753. A poor woman, with no servant to send out with her children, has, in some instances, no park near her into which she can send her children? Yes. All that park talk is only a cry.
2754. Then I understand your objection to the western line through the city to be purely a matter of expense? Yes, purely a matter of expense.
2755. If the proposed line to Hyde Park were estimated to cost £750,000, and the other scheme would cost £900,000, which do you think it would be better for the Government to undertake? For the sake of £200,000 I should say take the one that would serve the greatest number of people.
2756. That is the one going along the western route? Yes.
2757. You think that the extra £200,000 would be money well spent for the accommodation? Yes; it would be worth while for the sake of £200,000 perhaps, but not when the difference comes to be twice as much as that.
2758. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I think you said you found some inconvenience in travelling by the electric tram? Yes.
2759. At what time do you come in in the morning? I generally come in by the twenty minutes to 9 train in the morning from Strathfield.
2760. That is about the busiest time? Yes; I have never found great inconvenience in coming into town, but inconvenience in getting out.
2761. At what time do you generally go out of town? About from 5 to half-past 5 on most days, and 1 o'clock on Saturday, and I say that at those times, especially on Saturday, the electric trams are dangerously overcrowded.
2762. Do you not think that that could be modified to some extent by increasing the number of trams? It would, of course, if you could increase them. But they run now about every two minutes, the traffic is so enormous in George-street.
2763. They seem to be so thoroughly under control that they can be run within a few yards of each other with safety? I presume they can, but if you are going to extend them, as I understand the Railway Commissioners intend to extend them into the suburbs, you will have to have a line of trams right down George-street in order to cope with the traffic, unless you have trams in some other streets as well. I think that the trams in George-street have as much to do now as they can do, and that if you extend the electric system to the suburbs and put on more electric trams you will not be able to cope with the traffic in George-street.
2764. As it is now the whole of the traffic is crowded into George-street, because the steam trams have been practically taken off? Yes.
2765. If other streets were utilised for trams, do you not think that that would relieve George-street to a great extent? Undoubtedly it would; but I hold that nothing can take the place of a railway. In changing carriages you lose time, and in going back you must go five minutes early in case the tram should be delayed and arrive at the railway station late.
2766. In constructing a railway, do you think that the expense should be largely considered, it being a matter for all time? I should think that expense must be considered if you want to get a return on your money. If you go to an abnormal expense, any reasonable fares that you might charge would not give a return on your capital expended.
2767. In the construction of railways it is generally considered that at the first start they are not likely to pay? Yes.
2768. But as the traffic grows they return a good dividend on the outlay? Yes.
2769. In this case, of course, as the population increases so will the traffic of the railway increase? Quite so.
2770. Under those circumstances do you not think it would be better to place the railway in the best possible position? Certainly.
2771. With regard to expense, I mean, to a certain extent; I do not say anything outrageously expensive, but to the extent of a few hundred thousand pounds? Quite so.
2772. Do you not think that it would be better, subject to that qualification, to place the railway in the very best possible position? I do. I think that if you were to take the railway to the Victoria Markets, Wynyard-square, and Circular Quay the traffic would be simply enormous, especially to the harbour in the summer.
2773. Of course the ultimate result of this addition to the railway will be railway connection across the harbour to North Shore? Quite so.
2774. Do you not think that that ought to be kept in view? Yes, and also railway extension to the eastern suburbs.

2775. There is evidence to show that if the railway be extended to King-street, the railway authorities will have to go back as far as Liverpool-street to form a circular line to bring the railway down to Dawes' Battery; do you not think that that would be very inconvenient? It would, undoubtedly.

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2776. And in the King-street scheme, there is no provision made for any intermediate station—the trains are to run right through from Redfern to King-street; do you think that is wise? Yes. I would run the trains right through from Redfern to King-street, if they are not going any further—I would not have an intermediate station between those two places.

2777. Do you not think that that is giving rather too much consideration to the people who would be served by the King-street station—this is, those living, or whose place of business was in the immediate vicinity of King-street? Well, you must always give it to somebody.

2778. We have had ten schemes explained to us, and seven out of those ten included a station at Liverpool-street, but in the last two schemes which have been placed before us that station has not been proposed, but only one station has been provided for, namely, the King-street station? You see that the distance by train from Redfern to King-street is so very soon run over that you hardly want an intermediate station. Then I take it that in one of your schemes, which I think is a very good one—I believe it is called No. 10 scheme—you run the railway right out to the Domain, and thus make it form part of an eastern suburban railway system. I think that, sooner or later, you will be obliged to take your railway to the eastern suburbs, and that railway scheme seems to me to offer advantages in that respect which none of the other schemes offer.

2779. But still, that scheme is very inconvenient for an extension to North Shore? That is the difficulty.

2780. That scheme goes to King-street, and then to the back of the Art Gallery, and takes in $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres of the Domain for a shunting station? Quite so. I think that that is the next best scheme to the St. James' Road scheme, if you are going on that side of the city. But if you can go on the other side of the city, then by all means go on the other side of the city.

2781. Then we have another scheme proposed, to leave the main line at Eveleigh, to cut under by the Cyclorama, and go along by a lot of inexpensive properties—in fact, a lot of hovels which, in my opinion, it would be a good thing to clear away,—to have a station just opposite Christ Church, and to go through Goodlet's yard up near Bathurst-street, tunnelling under there to George-street, and thence to go along underground below George-street to the Victoria Markets, and to have a station in the basement of the Victoria Markets;—do you not think that that would be a more central position than King-street, if that scheme could be carried out? I think it would if it could be carried out. I suppose that the line would go on from the Markets to Miller's Point.

2782. The proposal is to tunnel under Kidman's and Lassetter's into George-street, continue *via* York-street to Wynyard-square, and from Wynyard-square to Argyle-street, and from Argyle-street to Dawes' Battery, with a view of ultimately crossing the harbour;—do you think that a scheme of that sort would be preferable to the King-street scheme? I do, unquestionably. If it could be carried out that would be a magnificent scheme. There is an enormous number of people coming from Balmain and other places in that direction whom that line would serve.

2783. One of the other Government schemes—there were three to which we were really supposed to give our particular attention—is called the Benevolent Asylum scheme, taking in the Benevolent Asylum grounds, and the Cemetery and the Police Barracks for the purpose of forming a very large station there; if that were done, it would afford great convenience for trams to be run in from various points? Undoubtedly it would.

2784. Supposing that a tram-line were laid in Sussex-street, or at any rate to the west of George-street, there being already one in George-street, and supposing that there were another in Pitt-street, another in Castlereagh-street, and another in Elizabeth-street, do you not think that that would be a very complete scheme to provide for the convenience of the public? It would be a complete scheme, but still you would not have brought the railway into the city. A railway will sooner or latter have to be brought into the city to go to North Shore and to the eastern suburbs, and why not bring it in now.

2785. I think you have been arguing chiefly on the ground of saving time? Yes; that, of course, is one of the chief things to which a business man looks.

2786. That saving of time would be confined to those whose places of business were within a certain distance of the railway station;—there would be no saving of time to anyone who had to go, say, a quarter of a mile, or anything over a quarter of a mile, from the railway station; for instance, if a person had to go to the corner of Bridge and George streets it would be no saving of time for him to be landed by the train at King-street, and have to walk to his place of business in preference to coming from Redfern by the electric tram, and being landed at his door by it? There would be no particular saving of time; but I think that he would save a little.

2787. The object, of course, is to give the greatest convenience to the greatest number? Quite so.

2788. It has been estimated here by one person that the King-street scheme would not convenience more than one-fifth of the business population, and another witness said one-tenth;—if it were even one-tenth do you think that we should be justified in going to the expense of carrying out that scheme for the purpose of conveniencing one-tenth of the business people of Sydney? I think that whoever made that calculation has made a very erroneous one. Take the traffic which the Railway Commissioners estimated the George-street electric tram would carry, and take the traffic they are now carrying, and you will see that the estimates were very wide of the mark, and so, in my opinion, would the estimate in regard to the railway be. The extension of the railway to the city would increase the traffic so much that I am sure that when people estimate one-tenth or one-fifth they do not know what they are talking about.

2789. Then I take it your view is that for an extension of the railway into the city it would be preferable to run the line that I have described on the west of George-street, having a central railway station under the Victoria Markets, and the line continuing thence to Wynyard-square and Dawes' Battery? I have no hesitation in saying that that would accommodate the greatest number of people.

2790. You think that that scheme would be preferable to the King-street scheme? Yes, I do from that point of view. Of course, in the matter of £ s. d., I am not prepared to say how it would "pan out," but for the accommodation of the travelling public that scheme would be the best.

2791. Supposing that the cost of the two schemes were the same, which do you prefer? Undoubtedly the western scheme, because I believe that it would accommodate the larger number of people. I have some idea of the enormous number of people that cross by the ferries into Erskine-street and to King-street from

J. C. Smith. from the Parramatta boats, and the Lane Cove and other boats, and surely it would accommodate them more if they could get to a railway station at Wynyard-square or at the Victoria Markets rather than having to go up to King-street. It stands to reason that that would accommodate an immense number of people whom the King-street station would not so well accommodate.

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2792. *Mr. Leves.*] Of course you are daily in and out from Strathfield? Yes.

2793. You have read all the different schemes? Yes.

2794. You are favourable to the western scheme—that is, Mr. Norman Selve's scheme? Yes. That would accommodate the greater number of people. I do not think there can be any question about that. The matter of expense is simply the one to be considered. It is my confirmed opinion that the railway ought to be brought into the city not only for the convenience of the travelling public, but also because of the danger to which the travelling public are submitted daily owing to the congested traffic of Redfern. I think there is a danger there which some day will astonish us if we allow it to continue, and I think for that reason alone this matter ought to be dealt with once and for ever.

Jabez Brown, timber merchant, sworn, and examined:—

J. Brown. 2795. *Vice-Chairman.*] You reside at Church-street, Randwick? Yes.

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2796. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where is your place of business? I have had none for the last eighteen months.

2797. Previous to that period where was it? At Pyrmont.

2798. Are you in favour of railway extension into the city? No. I do not think it would pay.

2799. Have you considered a number of the schemes submitted for our consideration? Yes. First of all I wish to say that I do not consider that a railway into the city is needed. I was born here sixty-six years ago. I was here when the first sod of the railway was turned, and when the first train was run. When the first sod of the railway was turned there were not twenty houses between the present railway station at Redfern and Botany, nor were there fifty houses between Mr. Shepherd's place and the 4-mile stone on the Newtown road. It is only about forty or forty-one years since the railway was started, and the Redfern station must now be really in the heart of the city. It is of no use thinking that the population is going to increase to such an extent as to make the railway pay better if it be brought into the city, for as the population increases, the trade of the city must go south, and not north. But, if it is necessary to extend the railway into the city, it ought to come along the western side of George-street. Our streets are so monopolised by the tram and other traffic that it would be monstrous to put a railway in King-street and Elizabeth-street. It is only a matter of waiting twelve months longer, and you will find that the tramways in George-street cannot carry the traffic there. Even before the electric trams are run out to Dulwich Hill it will be found that the George-street line will not carry them. There will be 80 trams running to Dulwich Hill, and about 120 running to Glebe Point, Balmain, and other places in that direction. How will the George-street line carry all those. It can hardly carry the trams running along that street now, running one every minute; and if the other electric trams were taken along George-street, then the trams would have to be run one every quarter of a minute. If you begin to monopolise our streets for the railway, what are you going to do with the trams.

2800. It is not necessary for them all to run down George-street throughout its entire length? If the electric trams continue to run to the present station at Redfern, the tram traffic will have to be divided somewhere, for the line along George-street, from Circular Quay to Redfern, will never accommodate all the electric trams. Three hundred and fifty trams would have to be run along George-street each hour, and how could that be done? You must have the streets east of George-street to run the trams in, and therefore if the railway is to be brought into the city, it must go to the west of George-street. I have here a plan showing the route that I suggest for a railway to go on that side of George-street. This sketch shows how I would bring the railway into the city at a cost of less than nothing if the Government would only do what I desire. I would not ask them to do anything wrong, but only to put £500,000 into the public Treasury. I was born at the corner of Bathurst-street and Sussex-street, in 1834, therefore I know a little of what I am talking about.

2801. Where is your starting point? My scheme starts from the tunnel at Redfern station—on the northern side.

2802. How do you proceed from that point? I quadruple the existing line to Darling Harbour, as far as Hay-street, and tunnel from Hay-street to Harbour-street, and utilise the square formed by Clarence-street, York-street, Market-street, and Druitt-street, for a railway station. I then tunnel to Wynyard-square, and have a station there; and thence I continue the line underground to Dawes' Point, where, if necessary, I would have a station; but I do not think it would be necessary to have a station there.

2803. Have you made a calculation of the length of tunnel to Dawes' Point? You could either tunnel from Wynyard-square to Dawes' Point, or you could make an incline, and come out at the top of Dawes' Point, and by adopting one of those plans you could go on by either a low-level bridge, or a high-level bridge to North Shore, whichever you liked.

2804. Have you made any calculation as to the height which would be necessary to have the line at Dawes' Point, with a view of carrying it over to North Shore? No, I have not.

2805. Which is the scheme you favour? I have alternative proposal, which I most favour.

2806. Where do you make the deviation? At Hay-street; and thence I propose to carry the line to Druitt-street, on the west of the other proposed line, and to go by Druitt-street by open cut to the square previously described by me for the other scheme, and then to continue by the other route suggested to Dawes' Point.

2807. You stated that this would be a very inexpensive line? Yes.

2808. Will you show how it would be inexpensive? The portion from Redfern station to Hay-street would follow the existing Darling Harbour railway line, and would not entail any additional expense, except for widening the cutting. From Hay-street to the Darling Harbour shed, the line would go through private property, which is partly built upon, but with very poor buildings. It would not be expensive to resume that land and pay for the buildings. From the Darling Harbour shed as far as Druitt-street the line would pass through what is really Government land.

2809. Is that land occupied and built upon? Yes.

2810. Is it leased from the Crown? No.

2811. From whom is it leased? Nobody. But when the Government sold the land, they sold the land fronting Sussex-street or Kent-street, only down to high-water mark, and when I was a boy high-water mark was in Sussex-street. For instance, Mr. Wentworth bought a large piece of land in Kent-street down to high-water mark, and when I was a boy they made Sussex-street. J. Brown.
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2812. You mean to say that that is reclaimed land? I mean to say that all the land from Liverpool-street to Erskine-street belongs to the New South Wales Government.
2813. That is, between Sussex-street and Darling Harbour? Yes. There might, perhaps, be odd cases here and there that do not belong to the Government; but I have been over the land with Mr. Perdriau, the Government Surveyor, and I know that different people have claimed the land lying between Bridge-street to Bathurst-street to high-water mark.
2814. With what result? They are holding it, and getting about £20,000 a year out of it.
2815. Is there any of what you call Government land further than Druitt-street? Yes; right along to Erskine-street.
2816. In making your calculation, you are estimating that the land between Darling Harbour shed and Erskine-street is Crown land? Yes.
2817. In the event of its not being proved to be Crown land, that would make a material difference in your calculation? Yes; it would make a difference of £150,000 if I am not right in regard to that.
2818. Continuing from Druitt-street to Market-street, you cross Sussex-street a little above Market-street? Yes.
2819. How do you propose to cross Sussex-street? There would be a bridge level with Sussex-street, and a cutting for the railway.
2820. After crossing Sussex-street, would you go in tunnel; Yes; right up on to Wynyard-square.
2821. Have you made any calculation as to how much that would cost? About £90,000, I think.
2822. Have you made a calculation sufficiently accurate to be able to state that positively? No, it is merely a guess; but I go by what I have read. I heard what Mr. Alderson said his tunnel would cost, and this tunnel will not be a bit larger or longer than his.
2823. Proceeding from Wynyard-square to Dawes' Point, do you mean to tunnel the whole distance? No; I would have an open cut after I got past Church Hill, and come out on the top.
2824. You said at first that you would tunnel down there? You could do that if you liked, and have a low-level bridge across the harbour.
2825. Supposing you were going to tunnel, what route would you take? Go along York-street.
2826. You would close that part of York-street altogether? Yes, from Margaret-street. I would have a station at Wynyard-square, and go out from the station at a high level at Church Hill.
2827. But what track would you follow to Dawes' Point from Church Hill? Follow the street all the way.
2828. You would have to have a central station somewhere? Yes, in Wynyard-square.
2829. What would you take for that? The park.
2830. You mean to take the park for a station, and the street for the railway line route? Yes.
2831. Have you anything to add in regard to your scheme? No; only that I am certain that whatever scheme may be adopted it must go along the west side of the city.
2832. But you have said that you do not consider that a city railway is at all necessary? I do not think it is. If you were to have a station near the mortuary and another at Victoria Markets there would be no necessity to run the railway trams at all.
2833. The Railway Commissioners say that the trams will not carry the railway passenger traffic, and, therefore, there is a necessity for railway extension into the city? In that case the railway must go along the western side of the city. I am sure that my scheme is the cheapest and easiest scheme that has been promulgated up to the present time.
2834. Have you given consideration to the number of passengers likely to travel by train, supposing that the railway were extended into the city? Yes; two-thirds of the people who travel now would travel by that route.
2835. You say that you would quadruple the present line to Darling Harbour? Yes.
2836. Do you think that that would be sufficient to carry all the passengers who would travel by that line? Yes.
2837. The Commissioners have said that they consider six lines necessary to come into the city? By my scheme I would not bring the country trains into the city, but would take them to the present station at Redfern.
2838. Your line is for the convenience only of the suburban residents? Yes. The extra money that would be obtained from ordinary travellers by the northern, western, and southern lines for conveying them over the extension into the city would not pay for the extra grease that would have to be used for their accommodation.
2839. You propose to leave them at Redfern, as at present? Yes.
2840. *Mr. Leven.*] What is the length of the tunnel from start to finish in your scheme? I suppose the longest tunnel would be 300 yards.
2841. All this tunnelling and everything else would only be for suburban traffic? Yes.
2842. You do not propose to utilise the line for any other purpose than that of suburban traffic? No, I do not.
2843. Therefore, the whole of the country traffic—north, south, and west—would still go into Redfern station? Yes.
2844. What object, then, would you have in extending the line to North Shore? I said that that was how it could be extended.
2845. You said that it must ultimately be connected with North Shore? Yes. And when we got that we could carry the north-country people by it.
2846. Do you not think it would be necessary to do that? Yes, I think so.
2847. What would become of your scheme then? It would be just the same. The same plant would carry the trains. There are only five platforms at Redfern, and I think only four lines of rails coming through the tunnel.
2848. According to your proposal, it would mean that the line would have to go to North Shore? I have not brought this sketch here to show what is to be done, but to show that what I propose is the nearest, easiest, and cheapest line into the city.
- 2849.

- J. Brown.
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2849. Yours is only a suburban line? You could make it only a suburban line if you like. If I were in a train at the Redfern tunnel station, and you were in a train at the Devonshire-street station, and were going to get into a tram, I would be in George-street at the markets by my train sooner than you would be by the tram.
2850. The whole of your scheme is a suburban scheme, is it not? No; it is a scheme for a railway into the city—you can use it for what you like.
2851. Does that include the main trunk line to the north? Yes.
2852. You recommend that as part of the scheme? Yes.
2853. What about levels? I daresay that you gentlemen have seen the way that the railway has been continued from Spencer-street station to Flinders-street station in Melbourne by a series of viaducts or bridges, and until we got to the streets where we would have to go over, we would have plenty of room to make a cutting, and could have one bridge to enable the drays to go over the railway. There is plenty of height to enable trains to be taken up to Wynyard-square.
2854. So in a main thoroughfare right in the middle of the city you would have a cutting and a bridge? Yes.
2855. *Vice-Chairman.*] The fact that you think that certain lands from Liverpool-street down to Market-street still belong to the Government determined you to take your line the way you have proposed? No, not exactly that; but my knowledge of the fact that the expensive tram system that the Commissioners are carrying out will not permit of a railway going the other way at all, because they will want all the room they can get from George-street to Elizabeth-street.
2856. The low cost of your scheme as set out by you is due to the fact that you think that certain lands now held privately are really the property of the Government? Yes.
2857. And could be used as a set-off against the cost of the railway? Yes.
2858. Presuming that the Government could not establish their right to those lands, have you any idea what the cost of your scheme would be then? It would be £150,000 more. But even if the Government had to buy the whole of the land necessary to take the railway from Liverpool-street to Margaret-street, it would not make more than £150,000 difference; but I am as sure as I stand here that they would not have to buy a foot of it.

THURSDAY, 22 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LANDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Spencer Brunton, merchant, and ex-President of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce, sworn, and examined:—

- J. S. Brunton.
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2859. *Chairman.*] Where is your place of business? My city office is 189, Clarence-street.
2860. You have also a place of business in Melbourne, have you not? Yes, we have.
2861. You are acquainted with the present proposal to connect the railway at Redfern with some part of the city proper? Yes.
2862. I understand that you wish to make a statement giving your views chiefly as to the direction which any connection of that kind should take—whether it should be more in the direction of the western portion of the city, or whether it should be near the junction of King-street and Elizabeth-street;—and also giving your own observation of the trend of passenger traffic to any particular part of the city,—is that so? Yes.
2863. At present you are residing in one of the western suburbs? Yes, at Strathfield.
2864. And have been doing so for some time? Ten years at Strathfield and two years at Ashfield.
2865. And, consequently, you are pretty well a daily traveller by the suburban trains? Yes. I understand it is acknowledged that the railway ought to be extended into the city, in view of the largely increased suburban traffic which, inwards and outwards, I am given to understand, amounts to nearly 50,000 passengers daily. I recognise that, situated as Sydney is on a peninsular, so to speak, and the eastern suburbs being crowded, people must, as time goes on, seek for fresh air and more room out on the cheaper lands of the western suburbs, or on the North Shore line, or on the line in the direction of Rockdale. The first thing to consider is the daily risk that passengers now run at Redfern, the railway traffic having to come through what I may call the neck of a bottle, it is admitted is very dangerous. Experts of the Railway Department have shown us that the present state of things cannot be allowed to continue, and in my opinion the time for making the necessary improvement is now opportune, and what is required to be done should not be delayed. If I may, I will read an extract from an address which, as President of the Chamber of Commerce, I delivered at the close of my year of office, and which is embodied in the report of the Chamber of Commerce for the year 1898-9, at page 34. This address was given by me before the Members of the Chamber of Commerce last August, and I have not altered my views on this subject since then. I then said:—

The necessity of bringing the railway into the city is now admitted on all sides. Notwithstanding the sentiment that has been displayed over the surrender of a few acres of Hyde Park, it appears to me that the original scheme of the Railway Commissioners (backed up by the Public Works Committee), which takes the railway to St. James' Road, is the most practical and economical one. As for the people dreading the encroachment on the parks land, it must be considered that Sydney has a larger area of park and recreation grounds in the city itself than in any other city in the world, taking park acreage to population into account. Also a railway going alongside Hyde Park need not destroy it for purposes of recreation, as is proved by the Princes-street Parks, Edinburgh, the railway through which is neither objectionable, nor an eyesore. With the provision already made for the shipment of raw products, such as grain, shale, and coal at Pymont, there is not the necessity for Darling Harbour railway along Sussex-street as formerly, as there is ample railway berthing accommodation for vessels at Pymont wharf and Darling Island, whereas with imports the goods have to be landed and stored

stored before they can be finally distributed in the city and suburbs or despatched inland ; but what is required is increased accommodation for Sussex-street for the cartage of freight to the intercolonial and coastal steamers. The blocks in traffic affect the despatch of goods from the port, and maintain high rates of cartage. Something will have to be done sooner or later by the City Council in widening the western or lower side of Sussex-street from Kent-street, so as to deal with this increasing trouble.

J. S.
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I am not going into the technical part of the scheme, nor the cost, because the several schemes that I approve of seem to cost within a few thousand pounds of one another. The only alteration that I would make is an idea that was thrown out by the Premier, the Honorable Mr. Lyne, to a deputation of the residents of the western suburbs, when he spoke about making a grand central depôt on the Devonshire-street site. A suburban railway into the city appears to me to be what is required, having in view a future extension to North Shore, and also one to the eastern suburbs, and also the fact that probably it will eventually become a circular railway. I consider that at this stage the question of goods traffic should not be taken into consideration at all.

2366. *Mr. Watson.*] Do I understand you to mean that, on further consideration, you now favour the Devonshire-street scheme as against the St. James' Road scheme, or in addition to it? In addition to it. I consider that the grand central station should be at Devonshire-street; but I would not accept that as the terminus, inasmuch as that would only bring suburban railway passengers 150 yards nearer, say, to the General Post Office. The Devonshire-street scheme would get over a great difficulty, I consider, in the way of the country and the holiday traffic, for it would relieve the suburban centre at King-street. Arrangements could be made by the Department for the despatch of certain country trains at two places, and thus avoid the rush and struggle which now takes place in getting to any particular platform. This railway, I consider, would be more beneficial to the suburban people within a radius of about 40 miles of Sydney than to the country people. The traveller to the country takes his luggage in a cab, and pays 1s. for conveyance to the railway, and he would have to pay the same amount for a cab even if he were to go to the St. James' Road station, and it would be better for him to go to the Devonshire-street station, where he could get quick despatch. Some people think that the grand central station should be made at St. James' Road, but my idea is that that should be on the Devonshire-street site, and that the St. James' Road station should be for the suburban traffic. I propose to separate the traffics. I maintain that there is a false sentiment about surrendering the Hyde Park land, considering that only half, or, perhaps, not half, the width up to the dividing track would be required for a station at that portion of Hyde Park. The area of the park land which would be surrendered would be nothing, considering Sydney's splendid position—its high land—surrounded, as it is, by the sea breezes from the harbour, and its perfect drainage. If you look at the map of Sydney you will see that from Darling Harbour across to Woolloomooloo Bay fully one-half of the area is taken up by park lands, and it is evident that the pioneers of the Colony were too liberal in granting that valuable space for that purpose, considering that the city of Sydney is somewhat analogous to New York, its business being all concentrated on a certain spot, just in the same way as the business centres of New York are on Manhattan Island, which is being bought up almost daily by the Astors, the Vanderbilts, and other rich men, because they know that there is really only one New York so far as business is concerned, and that is on Manhattan Island. The business portion of Sydney is analogous to that of New York, as it all seems to be concentrated on a certain point, jammed in by Circular Quay, Darling Harbour, and Woolloomooloo Bay, and I say that the dividing line of this peninsular is along Elizabeth-street, and that three-quarters of the travelling public coming to Sydney want to get into Pitt and George streets. That would not entail more than a four or five minutes walk from St. James' station. The remainder of the traffic goes to the west of George-street, but they can get only as far as Sussex-street. You must not consider that for the western side scheme you would get travellers from Ultimo or Pyrmont. The people who live there are not travellers. The reason why they live there is because they are poor, and they cannot afford to go further afield now; but I maintain that as time goes on people, with rapid transit and cheap fares, will get away from the business centres the same as the population in Castlereagh and George streets is getting less every year. I believe that residence in Castlereagh-street and other streets will in time become a thing of the past. You have to take into account the fact that new traffic has sprung up in the western suburbs. I refer to the theatre, night traffic which does not go any further west than the Town Hall or York-street. You have also to bear in mind that Saturday, Sunday, and holiday traffic would be to a considerable extent made up by people from the large and overcrowded districts of Woolloomooloo, Paddington, and Darlinghurst. That is a feature that seems to have been overlooked. People in those suburbs would go into the country in order to get fresh air. They are forced to reside near the city on account of their occupations. I consider that with the blessings of the Early Closing Act many shopkeepers who now live over their shops, and other people of that class, will be able to live to a very large extent away from the city, and with proper railway communication much more easily than they could have done hitherto, and without any personal loss. I would accept what I call the central station at Devonshire-street, only contingent on the extension of railway passenger traffic into the city, holding in view an extension to North Shore either by a tunnel or overhead bridge from Macquarie Fort, or by an overhead bridge from Dawes Point, and also holding in view a possible extension to the eastern suburbs. The question of a railway along the frontages of Circular Quay and Woolloomooloo Bay can be dealt with later on. A railway for imports is not so necessitous as some people think, inasmuch as the majority of goods are taken to the distributing stores direct from the ship's side, and for the export of raw products ample provision is made for direct communication to the ship's side at Darling Harbour and Darling Island. As to the question of a railway for goods along Darling Harbour, it must not be overlooked that the question of water frontages for private wharfs must be dealt with sooner or later by a harbour trust, and that scheme would take in railway communication along Sussex-street and Darling Harbour. I would refer to the overhead bridges that run through the main streets of New York. People going along the streets soon get used to the bridge and archways, which are also made the means of profit. I would also refer to the railway viaduct in Melbourne between Flinders-street and Spencer-street stations where the arches are made into useful stores for people who carry on business in that part of the city. I believe that the railway authorities obtain a considerable amount of revenue in that way. When I was in Chicago, and San Francisco also, I noticed that the passenger trains passed through the main streets. Those trains go at the rate of about 7 or 8 miles an hour, tolling a big bell. I think that a railway to St. James' Road would be very profitable to the Railway Department, and consequently to the public, for, of course, whatever capital is invested in a railway, it is the travellers who really have to pay for it. The increased

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cost to the passengers in the way of fare would not be very heavy, and as time went on, no doubt, it would be less. I notice that one scheme includes the resumption of all the available business frontages from Park-street up to King-street; but, in my opinion, that is unnecessary, and would be expensive, and would also be a great sacrifice of city property, the area of which we all admit is now very limited. In my opinion the country passenger traffic should be dealt with at the Devonshire-street station. The country passengers, that would alight from a train there, would not have to pay any more for a cab to convey their luggage from that station than they would have to pay for a cab from either Redfern or St. James' Road. It is the passengers of the city and suburbs, who represent 450,000 people, daily increasing in the western suburbs on account of the overcrowded state of the eastern suburbs, who must be considered. I consider railway extension into the city would result in advancing suburban property fully 10 per cent. in value. People would then be able with cheap fares and quick transit to have their own little homes and gardens away from the humid atmosphere and sea air of Sydney, which to a very great extent are not suitable to those who are delicate, or who suffer from asthma or lung complaints. I am not speaking as an expert, but am only speaking of the greatest convenience to the travelling public from my point of view.

2867. *Chairman.*] I understand that, as a commercial man, you take first the commercial aspect of the question—that it is desirable to get the best investment for the State in constructing a railway of this kind? I take that hand in hand with the convenience to the public. Even if the cost were more the public would be satisfied with the convenience of a central station, considering that in years to come the extra cost would gradually evaporate. I consider that this scheme is doubly commendable on account of its splendid position, and its small cost.

2868. You think that the St. James' Road scheme, which has already been inquired into and reported upon to Parliament, combines both economy and convenience? Undoubtedly.

2869. As regards the question of economy, there is no doubt that it is the cheapest scheme we have before us;—now with regard to convenience, we should like you to tell us whether, in your opinion, the results of the construction of the present electric tramway into the city have not shown us in a practical way that the greater number of people prefer to go more in the western portion of the city than in the direction of Hyde Park? No, I think not. The charm about the electric tram is that you have not to wait for a time-table. A tram starts every minute or two. People who go down by the tram move off towards Castlereagh-street, the same as I move off to Clarence-street. The traffic on the electric tramway has exceeded all anticipations, but it is not dependent merely on the traffic to the railway-station. It is to a great extent made up of what I may call pick-up traffic—people going from one part of the city to another. I do not think that since that tramway was opened, I have walked once even from King-street to Bridge-street.

2870. The pick-up traffic has developed enormously? Yes.

2871. But looking at it solely in respect to a connection with the railway system, do you think it is a satisfactory substitute for a railway into the city? No, because of the break of journey and the time you lose. People who go for a train at Redfern have always to be three or four minutes before the time, and they therefore lose that amount of time. Besides that there is the changing of carriages which is inconvenient, especially to ladies and children. Undoubtedly a through continuous service is best, even if you were to come at a slower pace from Redfern into the city.

2872. In your experience the changing of carriages has always been regarded as inconvenient? Yes; it is very tiring to delicate people.

2873. I suppose that you also have to put up with great crowding in the trams? Yes; there is no doubt about that.

2874. Especially in going out of town in the evening, during the busy times of the day, the crowding is very great, is it not? Very great. I live at Strathfield, in a place which cost me nearly £7,000. I am negotiating with two or three persons for a tenant; but I decline to put a sale price on the property, because I believe that in three or four year's time I will get more for it. I would let it now to a good tenant for very little interest on my money. If the sea-air does not agree with me where I am going to live, I shall go back to my own home. I think that the value of property in the western suburbs must advance.

2875. You resided in Melbourne for a good many years? Yes; until I was 25 years of age, and I have been here thirteen years.

2876. Is it not a fact that in Melbourne they have railways to their suburbs, and in many instances also tramways running to the same suburbs? They have.

2877. And is not the experience there that during the busy times of the day, morning and evening, notwithstanding the trams, the trains are filled with suburban passengers who prefer to go by a train to a station, and walk a little way to their homes so as to get there quickly, and avoid the delays of tram travelling? That is the case. There is ample traffic for both. The population of Melbourne is larger per square mile than the population of Sydney. Melbourne is very central. Everything seems to concentrate at the Town Hall; but here if you take a circle from Sydney about 15 miles, there is nothing out on the North Shore line at all. Some thirteen years ago we selected a site at Granville for carrying on our milling business. We spent £40,000 there, as we believed that the population must go up the western suburbs, and the population is working out that way every day. The question of local trade was not considered by us at all. A question was the junction of the two lines near Parramatta, shunting, and other accommodation, water and coal; but the main thing was that the population of the western suburbs must increase.

2878. Many people use the very argument that you have advanced, but to a modified extent, regarding the railway extension into the city—they say that the Redfern railway station will be the centre of the city directly, and why bring the people further in to the extreme limits of the city? But now that we have an opportunity of doing it, it is better to bring the railway right through to St. James' Road, because the North Shore scheme must be taken into account sooner or later. The same argument might apply to such stations at the Midland, Paddington, or St. Pancras, in London. Those are all centres for their own particular radius; but there is an underground railway which connects one with the other.

2879. You think that the railway should be brought right into the city; but that the place where the main central station, with all the large offices, should be, is the Devonshire-street site? Yes, I think so. At present great inconvenience is caused by the heads of departments having either to go from this part of the city to the Redfern railway station, or to bring men away from their work there if they want to give them instructions.

2880. I take it that you are still an advocate of what is called the St. James' Road scheme; but that you are not an advocate of the large central station with all the necessary offices being erected there? That is so. J. S. Brunton.
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2881. You would erect those at Devonshire-street, and you would largely do away with the objection to the St. James' Road scheme by narrowing the portion of Hyde Park that would be required to bring people to that station? Yes. I think that the matter is fairly compromised with the sentimentalists about Hyde Park in that way. I can understand some of them fighting as they have done, because if the grand central railway station were there, it might lead to further encroachments on the Park in years to come; whereas if the grand central station were at Devonshire-street there would be no necessity to widen the track in Hyde Park, and yet this line might become part of a circular railway. There might be three or four lines at the outside. I would have the grand central station at Devonshire-street used as a shunting station, one train coming in and another going out in the same way as the different platforms at Redfern now deal with their own traffic. You never see a train from Parramatta, for instance, at the Hurstville platform. I think that four lines of railway only would be required.

2882. You would not bring the up-country trains right into Sydney? No; I would leave them at the Devonshire-street station. It must be remembered that with the Eveleigh tunnel there is always some risk; but there would not be so much risk of collision or other danger if the base were further away from the neck than it is now. Trains puffing out with full steam on are not so controllable as they would be coming from further back.

2883. I suppose that, in suggesting this modified St. James' Road scheme, you have not thought out the number of parallel lines of railway that would be required? No; I have not. But, roughly speaking, I think that you would not want more than four sets of lines.

2884. *Dr. Garran.*] In Melbourne the railways come up to the edge of the town, do they not, in Flinders and in Spencer streets? Yes.

2885. And the street traffic is dealt with by the tramways? Yes.

2886. Has there ever been any demand in Melbourne for taking the main railways right into the city? No. They are as near the centre as they can pretty well get. There is the river Yarra on one side, and south of that there is South Melbourne and factory sites. Then, on the Spencer-street side, there is the West Melbourne swamp that is being filled up with silt from the river Yarra, and converted into docks.

2887. I asked you that question for this reason: Supposing we were, as you suggest, to make the main station on the Devonshire-street site—right up to Belmore-road—would a variety of tramways into Sydney, with that central station, practically answer all our present purposes? Well, we have stood the inconvenience for a long time, and I daresay we could continue it, but as a route is now proposed to Hyde Park, and the public are ready for it, and as the Railway Commissioners say that the danger is getting worse daily, I think that to relieve that alone is sufficient inducement to run the railway into Sydney.

2888. But the danger would be removed by the new station between Devonshire-street and the Belmore-road? We must connect the railway with North Sydney sooner or later, and the eastern suburbs are also entitled to a railway.

2889. I asked that question because some witnesses have said it would be sufficient, and I wanted to know what your opinion was? Now-a-days everything is done with such convenience and despatch that the question of time is considered, and some people are getting lazier every day, and they never think of walking as they used to do.

2890. We had only one tram into Sydney until a few months ago? Yes.

2891. That was obviously insufficient? Yes.

2892. We have now the George-street tramway, and that is already overcrowded? Yes.

2893. Supposing we had a tramway along Pitt-street for railway traffic purposes, and another along Kent-street or Sussex-street to meet the requirements of the wharf traffic, do you think that the four tramways would then meet present requirements? No; I do not think they would. I think that owing to the fact of George-street being a main artery, you there get the people who go into Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street the same as those who go to Kent-street and Clarence-street.

2894. As a passenger on the western line, you would rather give your extra penny to be brought by railway into Sydney than take either of the four trams which might put you down wherever you might wish to go? I think I would in wet weather, in order to save changing at Redfern. It is a struggle and bustle there morning and evening.

2895. You know very well that people like to be put down as near to their places of business as possible? Some do.

2896. And the ladies who come in in the afternoon to go shopping like to be put down pretty near to where they wish to go? Yes.

2897. The Elizabeth-street tramway has not thoroughly met that want, has it? Well, with the cross cable-line now it does; but even to walk from Elizabeth-street to George-street is not a great walk. A person cannot object to walking two blocks, and that is all that is.

2898. You spoke very strongly of the central character of the site at St. James' Road;—but supposing that that had not been practically open, but built upon, and had to be resumed at its value, do you think that it would have occurred to anybody that that was the finest central site in Sydney? I do. If it were even built over I would prefer to purchase it in preference to the other site down as far as the *Daily Telegraph* office.

2899. You do not think that the fact of this being park land, and therefore seizable, has had anything to do with its selection? No, I do not.

2900. Are you aware that in the present estimate of £650,000, £100,000 is included as the purchase price of the Hyde Park property? No; I did not know that.

2901. It is;—but we have had it in evidence that the real value of that piece of land is not less than £200,000; do you not think that if the Government take the people's park they ought to pay a fair price for it—to give half the value is to do neither one thing nor the other? I think that half would be a fair thing. That land may be worth £200,000, if you take the values of other lands in the city; but the Railway Commissioners have to work out the cost on a commercial basis. They say at 1d. they can earn £38,000 a year for the extra cost on the capital expenditure.

2902. But you would not say that we cannot afford to give the full value for the land we take, because if we did so 1d. would not pay us? I would not let £100,000 stand in the way. Whether the expenditure is to be £650,000 or £750,000 is not worth considering. 2903.

- J. S. Brunton. 2903. Supposing you agree to the extra £100,000, do you think that the western suburban people will agree to 1½d. being added to the fare? Yes, I do.
- 22 Mar., 1900. 2904. Paying for that land, and then using the money to provide open spaces in other parts of the city, would not diminish the public access to open ground? No.
2905. It would be taking it from one place and putting it in another? Yes.
2906. Supposing that were done, we might have to charge a little more to make this scheme pay? Yes, you would. But I consider that probably in ten years' time, owing to the increased traffic, you will be able to lower the fares, the same as is done by the railway authorities in regard to the carriage of goods when there is increased traffic.
2907. At any rate, you agree to the principle that, if for the sake of the suburban passengers, for whom this line is to be made, we have to go to the expense of nearly £800,000, it is fair that the suburban passengers should pay a shade extra to meet the cost of that? I do.
2908. You think the Railway Commissioners would be justified in making this a paying investment? I do.
2909. To give them at least 3½ per cent.? Yes; I think they could do that easily by adding 1d. It would be only 1s. 6d. a month for a first-class ticket, or 1s. a month for a second-class ticket.
2910. The well-to-do people might not object to 1½d., but do you think that the poorer class of people who come in by train would object to their proportionate increase? No, I think not. I think that those people who live in the western suburbs would continue to live there, and that more people would go to those suburbs. They not long ago paid 4d. by tram from Redfern to the city and back.
2911. But you must remember that the Railway Commissioners have a competitor of their own in the shape of the electric tram down George-street, for which they charge only 1d.; do you think that a workman would pay more than 1d. to go on by the railway if he could get out at Redfern and come into town by tram for 1d.? You should give them the option. The train would stop, and those who so wished, could get out at the Devonshire-street station, and the others could go on to the station at St. James' Road.
2912. You think that nothing less than a railway into the city will meet the traffic demands? That is my opinion.
2913. You say that you are very strongly in favour of an ultimate North Shore connection, and also an eastern suburban connection? Yes.
2914. Do you think that the site at Hyde Park lends itself as well either to a North Shore connection or to an eastern suburban connection as one at Wynyard-square would do? I do. I think that an extension could be made to North Shore from the railway at Hyde Park either by a bridge from Miller's Point, or by a tunnel from Fort Macquarie; also, that a future extension to the eastern suburbs could be made better from Hyde Park than from Wynyard-square.
2915. Mr. Deane's scheme for a railway to North Shore is not by going straight on from Hyde Park, but by going back and making a detour the whole length of the line from Hyde Park to Dawes Point, and that scheme is as long, if not longer, than the distance from Redfern to Hyde Park? I did not know that. But it is not the North Shore people that you have to consider altogether in this matter, but rather the people who live in the western suburbs.
2916. Do you think that there is no importance in the ferry traffic that comes into Sydney, and that those people should not be considered? No. But the railway to St. James' Road would give those people an opportunity of getting out of Sydney. A lot of those people go to the western suburbs to see their friends, but I admit that the traffic from the ferries is provided for sufficiently by the electric tramway from Circular Quay.
2917. That makes the North Shore people go down by tram to the water, shift into a boat, and shift again into the electric tram, and at last get into a train, and yet you are objecting to a single transfer at Redfern? At the present time the North Shore people want to get into the city principally; they do not want to go on to the Redfern-Burwood line. Their main contention is "We want the North Shore railway continued into the city, and then we will be contented." People who live at North Shore live there, to a great extent, on account of being near to the harbour, and fares being cheap, and they have the electric tram at Circular Quay, which takes them into the heart of the city.
2918. Do you think that they would want to be brought to Hyde Park? All that they ask for is to be connected with the city.
2919. Do they not really want what the electric tram is doing for them now—to be taken right up George-street? They want to get a high-level bridge connection if possible.
2920. Would it be possible to exact from them an additional fare that would pay for the cost of that bridge and that high-level railway? I do not think that the population over there is sufficient for that.
2921. They have a cheap ferry and cheap trams;—do you think that an expensive Government railway going across the harbour would carry enough people who would pay a fare sufficient to pay the interest on the cost of that expensive work? I know that experts have given their views. They have taken into account the big increase of traffic which they say would take place there in time to come; but I am sure that it would not pay for many years. All the passenger traffic of the North Shore would not be provided for by railway across a bridge over the harbour. People living at Blue's Point are entirely out of touch, for instance, with people living at Milson's Point, or at Lavender Bay, or Mosman's Bay, and ferry boats would still have to be run to those places.
2922. Some witnesses have given it as their opinion that there is plenty of traffic, and that it is growing very rapidly? I know that I may offend many of my North Shore friends by what I have said; but I cannot help that.
2923. *Mr. Watson.*] Admitting that the suburban lines around Melbourne are a convenience to the people whom they serve, what has been the financial result? The Victorian railways as a whole pay only a little over 2 per cent.
2924. I was anxious, if possible, to ascertain how those particular lines stood in that respect;—I am speaking of both the inner and outer circle lines, and I was wondering whether you had any information as to how they pay? I should imagine that the Kew, Hawthorne, and Richmond lines would be very profitable as sections, but they are all merged into one common account.
2925. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You are a strong advocate of what is known as the St. James' Road scheme? Well, I think it is the best.
2926. You are aware that the construction of that line would take up a considerable portion of the Park—some 13 acres, I believe—as proposed by the Railway Commissioners? Yes.
- 2927.

2927. Have you considered any of the other schemes for the extension of the railway into the city? Yes; J. S. Brunton. I have a fair idea of Mr. Norman Selfe's scheme, and I have seen the other sketches whilst I have been waiting here. 22 Mar., 1900.

2928. Well, failing the adoption of the St. James' Road scheme, what would you suggest? The adoption of the one going to the back of the *Daily Telegraph* office.

2929. You made a remark about making a compromise with those who are opposed to any of Hyde Park being taken by taking a smaller area? Yes; I think that would satisfy them, because if the grand central station were made there, there might be a probability of the Park being further encroached upon.

2930. The Government had an idea of making such a compromise by No. 10 scheme? Yes; but still you would run into the block facing Castlereagh-street.

2931. That takes a smaller area of the Park than the St. James' Road scheme would? Yes.

2932. How would you regard that scheme? It is not a bad scheme, but I like the Hyde Park scheme, because it is more economical and gives more room. You are not jambed up against a narrow street like King-street. You have to consider all that, because of the traffic in and out of the railway station. Near the St. James' Road station you would have the Queen's Square, and all the space up to St. Mary's Cathedral, affording a splendid open air space and plenty of room. However, I do not like that as a terminal station for all traffic. I would rather have the grand central station at Devonshire-street, and the suburban station at St. James' Road, and leave Elizabeth-street intact.

2933. But, under that scheme, they propose to take 7 or 8 acres of the Domain for shunting purposes, there not being sufficient room at the St. James' Road station? I would rather keep all the shunting at Devonshire-street.

2934. But would not the passenger trains have to go to King-street, and some considerable space would be necessary to allow them to shunt? Not necessarily. They could run on to a dead end, the same as for the last thirty years has been done at the St. Kilda platform. There is a traverser which moves the train, or a spare engine which draws away the train from the platform.

2935. Have you considered, in the event of another scheme being adopted, the revenue likely to be derived from it;—have you considered the cost of the resumption of property near the *Daily Telegraph* office, in the event of a station being built there? It would be something considerable; but failing to get this scheme, I would advocate a station on that site.

2936. Do you think that that line would be a paying speculation? I do. I have great hopes of the future population of the western suburbs, and also of the country people and holiday excursion people.

2937. You were asked, I think, by the Chairman how the electric tram would affect a railway into the city? The George-street tram in my opinion would lose a considerable amount of the railway traffic, but the pick-up traffic would always make that a paying line.

2938. I am speaking more particularly with regard to passenger traffic from the western suburbs; in view of the electric tram running along George-street, do you not think that a large number of the western suburban passengers would travel by the tram in preference to going by the train to King-street? I do not think so, except those going to the immediate vicinity of the Haymarket, to places within walking distance, who might get out at Redfern. I think that those who were not going to within half a mile of Redfern would go right on to the terminus.

2939. Would anyone having a place of business in Park, Bathurst, or Liverpool streets go to King-street and walk that distance back? No; they probably would go by the electric tram, or walk the whole way from the Redfern station as some do at present in the winter time.

2940. Do you not think that the majority of those people going to the west of George-street would travel by the electric tram, seeing that it would be more convenient than to walk from King-street? As regards those going out of the city at night, I daresay the traffic would be pretty well divided. I would rather walk from Clarence-street to King-street and catch the train there. I used to walk to King-street and go by the steam tram, because the George-street 'buses in the evening were so crowded and dangerous.

2941. As regards passengers going to North Shore or Manly from the railway station, would they not be likely to get out at Redfern and take the electric tram which will convey them to the Quay rather than to walk from King-street to Circular Quay? No; I think the majority of the holiday seekers would walk from King-street to Quay.

2942. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The great argument in favour of the extension of the railway into the city is the saving of time chiefly to suburban passengers; the question is which is the best site for the largest number of persons who would use the railway—the King-street site or the George-street site, for instance, the George-street Market;—which site do you think would serve the largest number? The two sites are not very far from one another, and either would be good; but I would give the preference to the St. James' Road on account of the accessibility and room; and the expense, of course, would be considerably less.

2943. What boundaries would you consider the St. James' Road station would serve conveniently, looking at the matter as a saving of time? People coming from places with three-quarters of a mile of St. James' Road, would, I think, walk up as far as that station. I suppose that the distance from Sussex-street to the Supreme Court is about half a mile, and people would walk up from their offices. But you have to consider, also, all the people in Woolloomooloo, Paddington, and the eastern suburbs, and they are considerable. I think that, with cheap fares, they would just as soon go into the country as down the harbour for a change.

2944. Looking at the map you will see an enormous blank space to the right of the proposed station;—do you think that is the most central position in Sydney, so far as the day population of Sydney is concerned? I think so. You must not consider that, because there is the Park, there is no population on the other side of it.

2945. The people living at Woolloomooloo or Paddington would hardly require to use that line at all, because they would be brought in by tram? I was speaking of those who would go for a holiday trip, and also those who have business there, but who can afford to live in the western suburbs.

2946. The great object of the extension of the railway into the city is to serve the business population of Sydney—people who come into business every day—and the question is, which is the best site to serve the largest proportion of the day population of Sydney—those people who come in every day to their business? Three-quarters of them would be on the north-west side of that site. But still it would not be any great hardship for a person to walk even three-quarters of a mile to the railway. However, this railway would bring a certain amount of new traffic, and you must take that into account when you consider

- J. S. Brunton*, consider the commercial aspect of the scheme. The railway authorities have to consider the holiday traffic on the Prince of Wales' Birthday, for instance, and other holidays when the traffic is enormous.
- 22 Mar., 1900. 2947. I do not think that the holiday traffic weighs much with the Government in proposing their scheme, but the chief thing is to accommodate the business people who come into town every day;—can you really say that you consider the St. James' Road more central for the business population of Sydney than, for instance, the George-street Markets? No; I do not suppose it is more central; but there is so little difference in length between the two places that I would still give the preference to the Hyde Park scheme. Some people would argue that Wynyard-square would be an excellent spot for a station. On that side of the city there are warehouses, but they do not carry a population anything like that of George-street and Pitt-street, where there are clerks and others employed, who live on the western line.
2948. Your business place is situated in Clarence-street? Yes.
2949. Which would be the most convenient place for you to be set down at—the George-street Markets or King-street? The George-street Markets would be more convenient for me.
2950. Do you not think that it would be more convenient for all these west of Pitt-street than for them to be set down at King-street? Well, although you may lose in one way you gain in another. At King-street you are nearer to the harbour than at Market-street, and people shopping, say, at Farmer's or Jones' could walk from King-street more easily, or quite as easily, as they could from the other place.
2951. You are acquainted with Mr. Norman Selfe's scheme? Yes.
2952. One object of that scheme is to make preparations for a line to North Shore? I can see that.
2953. In connection with the St. James' Road scheme, for a connection to North Shore, they would have to go right back to Elizabeth-street, and that would add quite a mile to the length of the line;—do you suppose that the St. James' Road scheme would be preferable to the other, looking ahead to a junction with North Shore? I do not know how they are going to North Shore—whether by bridge or by tunnel, but I think that a connection could be made by taking the railway in front of Goldsbrough, Mort, & Co.'s, at Circular Quay, by an overhead loop-line to Dawes' Point. That is what I would advocate if it were found that the only place where they could make a bridge was from Dawes' Point.
2954. You are aware, I suppose, that the Government scheme for bringing the railway into the city provides for no intermediate station between Redfern and King street? I think there should be an intermediate station.
2955. We have had ten plans explained to us, and seven out of the ten provide for a station at Liverpool-street; but in the recent plans proposed by the Government that station has been taken away? I think there should be a station somewhere about Liverpool-street.
2956. It is admitted that the electric trams are inconveniently crowded now; but if there were an extension of the system to other streets, do you think that that extraordinary crowding would be done away with? Yes; the traffic in George-street would be relieved if you were to have a tramway along Pitt-street, which I should be very sorry to see on account of the narrowness of Pitt-street, which is now the only main artery in Sydney which is clear.
2957. These trams would stop at every street;—do you not think that it would be considered more convenient by the majority of business people if they could be set down somewhere near their places of business rather than to be carried on to a particular point of the railway, and then have to walk a considerable distance to their places of business? Well, at King-street you get a cross service by means of the cable tram-cars, which could be taken by anybody who did not like to walk. The electric cars are crowded morning and evening by workmen living at Pyrmont and elsewhere, and that would still go on; but the principal traffic is undoubtedly the pick-up traffic from block to block, and it will continue to be so. The question of the railway traffic by tram was only a side matter, because it was thought that the railway would be taken into the city sooner or later; but at present the trams in George-street are getting a large percentage of the railway traffic.
2958. *Mr. Dick.*] I think you said that the business portion of Sydney was practically situated on a peninsular, bounded on the west by Darling Harbour and on the east by Woolloomooloo Bay? I think I did say that; but what I meant was that it was bounded on the east by the Park lands.
2959. You said that you thought that a line in Elizabeth-street practically divided that area into two equal portions? Yes.
2960. While you said that Elizabeth-street divides the whole of that area into two equal portions, it divides the business area in such a way that there is three times the amount on the western side of Elizabeth-street than there is on the eastern;—does not that suggest the propriety of either making the extension of the railway further to the west, or providing for the convenience of the public by a system of trams down the western side? Against that I say that the night traffic, the theatre traffic, and the traffic of other people who come to town at night, is really in George-street. They go into places within a short distance of the Town Hall, and that would be all within touch of the railway station at St. James' Road. If you were to bring the railway up to Wynyard-square, it would be certainly out of touch with places like the Criterion Theatre, the School of Arts, the churches, and such like. As I said, three-quarters of the business people who come to Sydney want to go to Pitt and George streets.

Edward Richard William Denham, J.P., produce merchant, sworn, and examined:—

- E. R. W. 2961. *Mr. Dick.*] Where are your business premises? 154, Sussex-street.
- Denham, J.P. 2962. Where do you reside? At Summer Hill.
- 22 Mar., 1900. 2963. You have given some attention to this question of railway extension? Yes, incidentally.
2964. Many reasons have been urged in favour of extending the railway into the city; one is the unsuitability of the present station yard and station at Redfern; another is the inconvenience to which passengers are subjected by having to get out of the train into the tram, and as a result of that the loss of time;—in the first place I may ask you, do you advocate an extension of the railway into the city? Yes; I advocate it for three reasons: the first is, safety; the second is the saving of time in transit; and the third is economy.
2965. Do you advocate the proposal as set forth by the Railway Commissioners—that is the St. James' Road scheme—or do you advocate the scheme now before us, known as the King-street scheme, or do you advocate some other scheme? If it is not a question of expense, I would certainly advocate the station being at the George-street markets, with a view to further extension to North Shore; but seeing the

the enormous amount of money that has been spent on the city markets, rendering that, in my opinion, practically impossible, it seems to me that one is thrown back to what is called the St. James' Road scheme, for the purposes of economy chiefly.

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2966. Presuming that the difficulty of the markets, or a station further to the west than the proposed station could be got over without any very great increase in the cost, would you then advocate such a western extension? Certainly.

2967. For what reason? First of all, to save time. I was brought up in a very peculiar school, where I learnt that time is money. By travelling in the train from Redfern through either to George-street markets or to St. James' Road, the journey could be accomplished in two or three minutes, whereas at the present time it takes either the steam or the electric tram ten or twelve minutes, or even longer, to get there. I could walk from Redfern station, *via* the Haymarket, to my premises in Sussex-street, between Market-street and King-street, in sixteen or seventeen minutes, and I could get there and meet people who had gone by the steam tram and walked down from King-street. On account of economy of time, for the last three or four years I have given up using the railway, and I drive in every morning, because I can do the journey in about twenty-five minutes, and the other trip takes much longer.

2968. Does not that suggest to your mind that even if the railway were extended to King-street, there would be no actual gain to you by coming in that way by train as against going by tram along George-street or Kent-street? On the contrary, because I take it that the train would run through from Redfern to King-street. Assuming that the train ran through from Redfern to King-street, the saving of time in going that way would amount to the best part of ten minutes each trip.

2969. How long would it take you to walk from King-street station to your place of business? I should say eight minutes at the outside.

2970. What, then, would be your total gain in time if the railway were extended to King-street? I should say, roughly speaking, fully ten minutes, because there is the time in stopping the train, and coming out of the station, and walking down with the crowd.

2971. Do you think that that consideration has swayed a number of the people of the western suburbs with respect to their advocacy of this proposal;—I mean the gain of time? I think that is one of the main things; but first of all is essentially safety. Safety is unquestionably the first thing. Whilst living along the line, I have seen how the traffic has grown during seventeen or eighteen years, and to me it really seems not to be safe; but it is for the experts such as the railway people to give an opinion on that point.

2972. You mainly support the St. James' Road extension on the ground of low cost? On the grounds of economy. I think that if the railway were at St. James' Road an extension could be made to the eastern suburbs, and possibly by tunnelling go to the North Shore ultimately. But if it were not a question of the cost to be incurred I would support what is called the George-street Market site scheme.

2973. You would support that because you think it is more central, and would convenience the greater number of people? Yes; but the question of cost seems to make it prohibitory.

2974. Presuming that we had an electric tramway from Redfern along Kent-street, which would be a more expeditious route for you to take—to go to King-street by train, and then walk from King-street down to Kent-street, or to go by tram to Kent-street? I should most certainly go to the terminus by train, because the tram stops at every place on the line, and that does away with the time you are desirous of saving.

2975. But by stopping along the line it sets down a greater number of people close to their places of business than the train would? Yes; but I take it that when the Railway Commissioners were issuing either suburban or long-distance tickets, the extra length of the ride would be included in the cost of every ticket, and whether people used it or not would be immaterial to the Railway Commissioners, because they would receive that money whether the ticket were used for the extra distance or not.

2976. You mean that they would charge practically the same from Strathfield to Redfern as from Strathfield to King-street? Yes; that is, they would add the extra fare on for the extension.

2977. In their calculation they added for the distance from Redfern to King-street a slight amount—1s. 6d. a month for first-class and 3d. a week for workmen's tickets and corresponding rates for other tickets—indicating that they will not charge as much from Strathfield to Redfern as from Strathfield to King-street? Well, if people have to pay for it, they will be only too willing to do so, especially at those low rates, for once in the train they would prefer to go on by it rather than to get out at Redfern and change.

2978. Then you do not think that even with an electric tram along Kent-street, parallel to George-street, running at the low rate of 1d., there would be much chance of its successfully competing against the extension to King-street? No, I do not; because the tramway and the railway would provide very largely for different classes of traffic.

2979. *Dr. Garran*] You say that your preference for an eastern route is based on economy? Yes.

2980. We have before us one scheme by a professional engineer, who says that he can take a line along the western route to Circular Quay for not more than £730,000;—now, supposing those figures to be verified, and that can be done, do you think it would be better to spend £730,000 on an eastern route or on a western route? That would depend on which part of the western side it was taken through.

2981. There would be a station at the corner of Bathurst-street and George-street, another at Wynyard-square, and another at Circular Quay? If that could be done it should meet practically all requirements, but I should very much question it.

Walter Sewell Buzacott, J.P., ship chandler, sworn, and examined:—

2982. *Mr. Shepherd*.] Your place of business is in Market-street? Yes, close to Sussex-street—within 30 yards of it.

2983. You use the train, I suppose, every day? Yes, and so do all my family.

2984. In coming into your business now you come in, I suppose, by the electric tram? I come in by the electric tram, but I seldom return by it without first going towards Circular Quay. It is more inconvenient to me than the omnibuses were, simply because it is so crowded, and it has created a traffic which it is not able to carry at certain times of the day.

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2985. At what hour of the day do you generally return? About 6 o'clock, and take a tram at Market-street and go to the General Post Office, and get a tram back, and then sometimes I lose my train.
2986. That difficulty would be obviated, I suppose, by an increase of the trams? To some extent.
2987. You have noticed, I suppose, that these trams are under most thorough control? Yes.
2988. The drivers are able to stop them in a few yards? Yes.
2989. There does not seem to be any fear of collision, therefore they can be run at very short intervals one after the other;—at present they have only a limited number, I believe, and the difficulty of crowding no doubt would be obviated if the number of trams were increased? From 6 o'clock to about half-past 6 they run very quickly—I think every minute.
2990. Are you aware of the various schemes that have been proposed to extend the railway into the city, or any of them? I have not given much thought to the matter recently, but in the past I have taken a great deal of interest in it. I think there ought to be a central station, and that the train should be brought from Redfern into the city; and so much do I believe in that, that I am not a partisan for any particular route, so long as you can bring the railway into the city.
2991. You are of opinion that there should be an extension of the railway into the city? Yes.
2992. Various schemes have been proposed, and of course the great object is to suit the suburban passengers, because it has been shown by expert evidence that the Redfern station would suit about 90 per cent. of the country people; therefore it is almost exclusively in the interests of the suburban passengers that the extension would be made; the great majority of the suburban travellers by the train are business people located in various parts of the city, and the question is what portion of the city would be most convenient to extend the line to; the Government proposal at present is to have a railway station at King-street; there are other proposals to go along to the west of George-street, and strike the George-street Markets, for instance, and then to go on to Wynyard-square;—which system do you think would suit the largest number of the day population of Sydney? I have heard the evidence given this afternoon, and I think that the line which would have a station at Bathurst-street, the Markets, and Wynyard-square would serve the largest number of business men—those who generally travel daily by train from the suburbs; but I know nothing about the cost of such a scheme.
2993. I suppose you are of opinion that the great convenience of the majority of the people is the principal object, and that cost, to the extent at all events of some thousands of pounds, ought not to stand in the way of the adoption of the most convenient plan;—is that your opinion? Yes.
2994. Apart from the proposed extension into the city, there has been a proposal to make an enormous station by taking in the Benevolent Asylum, and the burial grounds, and the Police Barracks site, abutting on Belmore Park;—do you think that it would be possible, in order to meet the convenience of the business people of Sydney, to form a station of that kind and from that point to run electric trams along the various thoroughfares, and for the passengers to change from the railway carriages there into the trams? I should think it would be much more convenient for them to go straight into the city without changing.
2995. Do you not think that whatever position the train might be run to, it would serve only those within a certain area of the station, whereas the trams drop people at every street? I think that the railway passenger service from the distant suburbs, and the country, is perfectly distinct from the tramway service, which provides for the nearer suburbs and the city—the two things are distinct, and each capable of doing a very large traffic. I do not think that you can make the one interest subserve the other.
2996. As I have indicated, the extension is almost entirely in favour of the daily passengers? My opinion is that Sydney is situated somewhat similarly to New York, and that it will need not only a tramway system for the city itself, but also a kind of circular railway, either underground or overhead, as well, as time goes on, and the city grows.
2997. Of course, Sydney is only a long strip, and therefore it is not likely that any parallel railway would ever be extended into the city; but there will only be the one railway whichever way it goes, and any further service required would no doubt be by tram, and, therefore, the great point if the railway is extended into the city is to adopt the plan which will serve the largest number, and I think you have said that you think the George-street line would serve a larger number than the St. James' Road line? Yes; but failing that I would be glad to get what is called the Departmental scheme.
2998. You think, then, that no system of trams would meet the requirements of the business people of Sydney? Not fully with the station at its present position.
2999. Of course, the Government proposal is to stop at St. James' Road? The weakness of that proposal is that there is to be no stopping-place at Liverpool-street. I think that there ought to be an intermediate station there.
3000. You must admit that only a certain area would be served by the King-street station—it would not serve the whole of the city? Not the King-street station alone.
3001. What boundaries do you really think it would serve—that is, the distances you would prefer going to King-street to travelling by the trams? I should think Market-street to Hunter-street, and then from Sussex-street across to Woolloomooloo; but the main traffic does not come from Woolloomooloo at all, but from the western side of Elizabeth-street.
3002. On the north how far do you think it would serve? I am not able to say; but I think that a good many people going to Bridge-street or that part of the city would take the tram.
3003. Do you think Sussex-street, on the west, would be favourably served by a station at King-street;—do you think that persons whose business was situated in Sussex-street would prefer to go to King-street and then walk from there to Sussex-street rather than go by the tram and be put down in George-street? Yes. But my own impression is that before long the Government would see the necessity of having trams from the ferries to the King-street station. I think there will be a thorough system of trams through all those streets where there is any amount of traffic. In other cities of the world I find that is the case.
3004. As far as the extension into the city is concerned it would not affect the ferry passengers at all, it would simply affect the people coming in by tram, and the object is to ascertain the best possible site for a railway station to serve the largest number of the people who come in every morning to their business, and I ask you again if you think it would be more convenient for them to be dropped at King-street, and to walk to Sussex-street, than to get out at George-street and walk to Sussex-street from George-street;—do you think that there would be any saving of time in going to King-street? I think there

there would be, because the trains would go direct from Redfern to King-street, and there are now, occasionally, blocks of the trams in the Haymarket, and as traffic develops those will increase. Take the case of Broadway, New York. If you get into a tram it takes you an hour to go into the city, but if you take the overhead railway, which stops at every alternate street, you can go into the city in ten minutes. When in New York I invariably took the overhead railway. The traffic in the street there gets blocked and the trams are not able to travel fast. We are frequently blocked now in the Haymarket on the trams.

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3005. There is a great difference of opinion about the area which the King-street station would serve—in the opinion of some the area which it will conveniently serve is bounded by Market-street on the south, Pitt-street on the west, and Hunter-street on the north; that would not be much more than 5 per cent. of the whole of the city of Sydney? That would comprise a large proportion of the daily travellers, though.

3006. No doubt it would; but still, according to your idea, it would leave all on the south of Market-street unserved? Yes, unless there were a station at Liverpool-street.

3007. An extended tram service would supply the need, probably, of the whole of the citizens; trams might be run along Sussex-street, Clarence-street, Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street, and then the whole of the city would be pretty well served? But suburban railway travellers, when they come into town, do not get out, very much, until you get to Market-street. The great majority whether they come by steam-tram or by the electric tram, go, at any rate, as far as the Town Hall by the electric tram, and as far as Market-street, by the steam-tram. The greater number of daily travellers must go as far as Market-street, at least; and therefore if you can provide from Market-street to Hunter-street, and from Sussex-street to Park, you provide for nearly all the daily travellers—there is no doubt about that.

3008. What time do you consider that you would save by going to King-street, and walking to your place of business from King-street, in preference to going along George-street by tram to the point nearest to your place of business and walking from there? I do not think that I should save a great deal of time,—perhaps from five to seven minutes. But to my mind it is not simply a question of time only, it is also a question of comfort and convenience. I may say that my two sons, who are in business with me, walk to the station at Redfern, and they get there as soon as I do, although I take the electric-tram, and we leave our office together.

3009. There is another consideration in regard to the western proposal, and that is, that it is almost a direct line to Daves' Point, from which it is proposed some day to throw a bridge over the harbour? Yes, that an advantage.

3010. You think that would be something in favour of that proposal? I think it would be greatly in favour of it, because it would relieve the traffic on the main line from Strathfield if people from the Northern line were to come from North Shore and to Sydney in that way. I should like to accentuate the fact that personally I find it exceedingly inconvenient and unpleasant now to get to the railway station at Redfern. A great many persons walk who would ride by the railway if it were brought right into the city. I should, of course, prefer it to come to the George-street Markets, but if it were to come to King-street I believe that all my friends who walk now would pay the additional fare gladly and take their tickets to King-street.

3011. *Dr. Garran.*] But supposing there were a tramline laid down in Kent-street or Sussex-street, and trams ran thence to the railway station, would not that suit you;—would you not in preference get into a tramcar in Kent-street and go straight to Redfern? I think it is possible I should. But I think the majority of business men would not prefer going by tram, which stops frequently, but would prefer going to the terminal station and going straight away by train.

3012. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you not think that the crowding of the trams shows their popularity? Well, you can create traffic. I was a month at San Francisco about a year ago, and there they have trams in almost every street, and they give transfer tickets; and in the morning and the evening, when business men are travelling, the trams are crowded, and you often have to wait for following trams. On public holidays they are crowded in the same way. It is a difficult thing to overtake the amount of traffic you create.

3013. *Chairman.*] You have travelled a great deal, have you not? Well, I have travelled a little.

3014. Did you come across any places similar to Sydney, where there is such inconvenience as exists at Redfern, with thousands of suburban passengers coming into Sydney and going home every day, and having to finish up their journey by means of a tram service? No; I did not. But I think our railways are exceedingly well managed.

FRIDAY, 23 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Alexander Gerard Ralston, Mayor of Burwood, sworn, and examined:—

3015. *Dr. Garran.*] You reside at Burwood? Yes.

3016. You are Mayor of the municipality there? Yes.

3017. I presume that you have frequently had under your consideration the policy of extending the railway into the city? I have frequently. I have lived at Ashfield, Croydon, and Burwood ever since 1874, and the necessity of extending the railway into the city, both as a matter of safety and as a matter of convenience, has been often brought before me.

3018. Did you find the inconvenience diminished since the George-street tram was established? As far as we people who have offices in Phillip-street are concerned, it is more inconvenient since the George-street

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3019. Then those in the eastern part of the city—what we may call all the professional people—are rather worse off now than they were before the electric tram was established? Decidedly so.

3020. It was stated in evidence by one of the Government officials—I think Mr. Kneeshaw—that going down that ramp at Redfern and under the causeway did not in any way add to the inconvenience of passengers? It means a delay of at least five minutes as a rule, and sometimes seven or eight minutes, which is a very serious matter to business men coming in in the morning.

3021. Does the steam tram now meet all the business trains that come in in the morning? I understand that it is supposed to meet them up till 10 o'clock; but as a rule we have to wait until two electric trams have gone by, and then the steam tram comes along.

3022. Then you lose something like five minutes more than you used to do? Certainly, five minutes.

3023. And all the business men that you know of look upon it as a matter of great importance to keep their seats in the trains and be brought right into the city? Yes; we regard it as a very important matter.

3024. When this question was first mooted the Hyde Park scheme was practically the only scheme before the community, was it not? I believe so.

3025. And that received almost an unanimous endorsement in the western suburbs? I think so. Very few people were against it, so far as I could find out.

3026. But was that on the ground that they looked upon that as the best possible scheme, or as the only practicable one? We regarded that as the only practicable scheme.

3027. You have never had the question put before you as to whether an eastern route or a western route would accommodate the most of your people? Well, since the other schemes were brought before the Government we have, more or less, considered the matter; but I think the great majority of the people are still in favour of the Hyde Park scheme.

3028. It has been put before us that the Hyde Park site would suit the people who attend the law courts, or go to Parliament House, or the principal hotels, or many of the clubs, but that it would not suit the majority of the business people whose places of business lie either in George-street or to the west of it? Well, as to that I can hardly say. Perhaps some of them are better served since the George-street electric tram was put on, but until that tram was put on, certainly, they were very badly off.

3029. The evidence before us is to the effect that the George-street electric tram has captured four-fifths of the railway business that used to go on to the steam tram in Elizabeth-street? As to that, I would not like to say anything. I think that the officials at the station could speak about that better than I can, but I should not have thought that it had captured such a large quantity.

3030. Fourteen out of fifteen, Mr. Kneeshaw says? There is this, too: the electric tram is very slow compared with the train, and I think that the people would prefer a train to take them and set them down at Hyde Park.

3031. If a route through the western portion of the city down to Circular Quay could be established, which would not be materially more expensive than the Hyde Park route, do you think that the majority of the people of the western suburbs would prefer a western route or an eastern route through the city? I should not like to express an opinion upon that.

3032. You do not think that has been thoroughly discussed? No, I do not think so.

3033. They are hot about the Hyde Park scheme because they want some scheme carried out? Yes; and that struck us as being the only scheme likely to be carried out.

3034. But supposing that Hyde Park had been fully built upon instead of being an open square, and that it would have been necessary to resume all the land required for a terminus there, do you think that that site would have been selected as the best central site for the whole of Sydney? I presume not; but I think that, probably, the King-street site might have been. It seems to me that to go to about that place is to go to the backbone, as it were, of the two divisions of the city. At present one part—that is the part towards Darling Harbour—has been more developed in a business way, but it seems to me that ultimately the Woolloomooloo side must be equally developed.

3035. Is it not a fact that the professional side is more on the east, and the mercantile side is more on west? Yes; that is so at present.

3036. And, I suppose, you have about an equal number of mercantile and of professional people in the western suburbs? Yes; I think we are about equally divided.

3037. Do you think if the tram-lines into the city were still further multiplied there would be any necessity to take the railway into the city? I think we ought to have the train right into the city. I do not think people should be asked to make the changes they now have to make. As the suburbs increase we have to go either further along the railway line or further away from it, and we do not mind losing a few minutes at that end, but we do object to losing time at both ends.

3038. The scheme that you rather prefer—which is the scheme before us and which we call No. 10—takes less of Hyde Park but more of private property, and the consequence of its taking more of private property is that the cost amounts to £1,500,000; now we have understood that all the people of the western suburbs, or at any rate all the first-class passengers, would be quite agreeable to having one penny extra per journey put on to their tickets; but, would they be willing to have 2½d. or 2d. put on for this more expensive scheme? I do not suppose they would mind very much 2d. or 2½d. first-class so long as they get the extension, but they would prefer, of course, to pay no more than necessary.

3039. But you see, that the difference between the cost of the Railway Commissioners' scheme and the cost of this substituted one is very great? Yes; I see that.

3040. And the Railway Commissioners estimated only a moderate profit on their investment, and if that investment is to jump up to £1,500,000 they will, in order to get a sufficient return, require to increase the fare for all classes of traffic? Yes.

3041. And you must remember that the second-class passengers will always have the option of going on the rival tram line which the Railway Commissioners will run through the city in opposition to their own railway? Yes.

3042. Do you think that the second-class passengers would pay ¾d. or 1d. more per journey? I doubt if they would.

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3043. To save $\frac{1}{2}$ d. they would put up with the changing from the train to the tram? Yes.
3044. I suppose that many of those second-class passengers are people who are engaged in shops or factories, and whose earnings are very small? Yes, and I do not think that time is of so much consequence to them as it is to the busy mercantile man or the busy professional man.
3045. Therefore, the calculation of the Railway Commissioners, which included passengers of both classes, might come a little short if we had to increase the fares for all classes? Yes.
3046. Do you think it would? Yes, I think it would.
3047. We have to take that into consideration now;—when that calculation was made the George-street tram was not running, and the George-street tram has surprised everybody, Government officials included, by its extraordinary popularity;—I suppose you have noticed yourself how crowded it is? Yes, I have.
3048. So crowded that the Government officials want very much to get rid of the railway traffic on it altogether, and apparently one of their strong arguments in favour of bringing the railway into the city is that the pick-up traffic alone would be quite sufficient for the electric tram? There would be ample traffic for the electric tram even if the railway were brought into the city, and the railway would also pay with a reasonable increase of fare.
3049. Are you one of those who think that the railway line should extend to North Shore some day? I think it should, some day.
3050. It has been pointed out that this scheme does not lend itself very well to a North Shore extension? I do not think that is a matter that ought to be considered at the present time. It seems to me that we shall probably require a route all round Darling Harbour ultimately, and that might connect with the North Shore line.
3051. If we make a shore line for accommodating the wharf traffic, it has been pointed out that we cannot get the elevation we want for crossing the harbour, and all the schemes before us which include a North Shore connection run along the ridge more or less on the line of York-street, in order to get the necessary elevation;—therefore your idea about going round the wharfs would hardly be good for a North Shore railway? Of course, I am not a practical man in these matters, but I do not see why this line should not ultimately join the North Shore line if necessary by an elevated railway road, something like the connection between Spencer-street and Princes Bridge in Melbourne.
3052. But the difference between the two levels there is not very considerable? No.
3053. A short viaduct connects those two lines? Yes.
3054. But a line of that sort would not enable us to go over the harbour at a height of 160 feet; that is the difficulty;—if we had to cross the harbour on a low-level, another line would do, but it is the necessity of having a line not less than 160 feet clear overhead, which makes it necessary to get up so high? Yes.
3055. Your office is in Elizabeth-street, is it not? At Wigram Chambers, Phillip-street.
3056. You cannot speak then on behalf of people whose business is in Clarence-street or Sussex-street, or down by the wharfs—as to whether this would suit them as well as would a station at Wynyard-square or the Victoria Markets? No, I cannot.
3057. You have not heard business people speak on that subject? I heard them before the alternative schemes were proposed, and they were nearly all in favour of the Hyde Park scheme, regarding it as the only practicable scheme.
3058. The Railway Commissioners' scheme was put down at £560,000, without any payment for land? Yes.
3059. Then Mr. Eddy proposed to charge £100,000 to the Railway Commissioners for the land, making the estimate £650,000; then it has been pointed out to us by valuers that the real value of the land proposed to be taken is certainly not less than £200,000, without reckoning anything for the intersection of the south-western portion of the Park;—do you not think that if anything is given for that land the full value of it should be given? I really do not see the necessity for that. It is all Government property from one point of view or the other, and I do not see why you should consider the value of the land unless the money given for it is to be used for some other purpose.
3060. We suppose that the money paid for it is to be used to give an equal value of open air spaces in some other parts of the city? I understood that £100,000 was to be devoted to turning the Devonshire-street cemetery and other land near there into a park.
3061. That was one suggestion; but the Government have the idea that that cemetery land is to be the future site of the great central station for Sydney, because it contains twice the area that could possibly be taken out of any available site in Sydney itself; you, knowing the cramped position of Sydney, and the value of land, will see that it would be very difficult to get 22 acres anywhere in Sydney for a great central station, and they can get 22 acres there, and as the commerce of the Colony grows, decade after decade, the need for space at the great central station will grow too, and this corner of Hyde Park would not be sufficient;—do you think it would? I daresay it would not—I mean not for the main central station.
3062. Then do you not think that it would be reasonable to pay the people the value of the land taken from them, and for that money to be used to purchase land for a similar purpose where it is actually more wanted? I do not know any places where it is really wanted. It seems to me that there are plenty of open air spaces about Sydney—there are plenty in the neighbourhood of Redfern, and plenty up at this end.
3063. Will you tell me how many there are in Ultimo and Pyrmont? I am not acquainted with those places.
3064. How many are there in West Sydney altogether? I suppose they are very small ones; but there is Wynyard-square and Flagstaff Hill. I suppose that is about all.
3065. And a little space—the triangle—near St. Phillip's Church, and a small one somewhere else;—do you not think that, if a quarter of Hyde Park is taken, it would be reasonable that the city should get the value of the money in air spaces elsewhere? Now that you put it to me in that way, perhaps it is a reasonable thing.
3066. That would raise the cost of the Railway Commissioners' scheme to £760,000;—supposing it were feasible to get a West Sydney line for £800,000 or £900,000, do you think that that would be a reasonable price to pay for it? It is very hard for me to go into the question of figures. One requires to know what interest the investment would be expected to bear, and what probably the revenue would be.
3067. Do you not think that a line running through West Sydney, and having a station at the Town Hall, another station at Wynyard-square, and another at Circular Quay, would carry a large traffic. It undoubtedly would carry a large traffic.

3068.

- A. G. Ralston. 3068. Quite as large as any line to the east? I do not think that it would carry a larger traffic, and I do not think it would be so convenient ultimately.
- 23 Mar., 1900. 3069. Do you not think it is rather important to connect with the ferry traffic at Circular Quay? I do not consider that that is of great importance. The people who use the ferry coming from the other side of the harbour are not people who would use the railway very much, whilst people coming in by train, if they want to go to the ferries, have plenty of time. The main object of bringing the railway into the city is to convenience the great majority of business men who come in day after day.
3070. Do not many business men live at North Shore? Yes; but they would come by ferry, and would not take the train to the centre of the city; they would take the tram in preference.
3071. They take the tram now? Yes.
3072. The ferry puts them down at a part of the city which is distant from their places of business? Yes; if you can get one means of conveyance to within a reasonable distance of your place of business, that is the best possible thing, but in that case you cannot expect to get one such means of conveyance.
3073. Mr. Deane has a scheme for connecting the North Shore with this scheme, but it means going out and making a large circle, and then coming back to Observatory Hill, thus making the distance as far as if you came from Redfern itself to Observatory Hill; that would be very expensive, and no shortening of the line;—therefore, it appears that this scheme does not lend itself so well to a North Shore extension as one with a station at Wynyard-square? Is it considered necessary that a North Shore extension should join on to this extension.
3074. To make a complete scheme of it, it would be? I do not see that that is a matter of urgent necessity.
3075. Otherwise you would have to have a second station in Sydney for the North Shore traffic? Well, if that were cheaper and more convenient, I do not see why that should not be done.
3076. It would be a great convenience to enable all the North Shore people to go to the railway station straight, if they wanted to? I doubt if there would be very many who would want to travel that way straight through.
3077. Mr. Dick.] Mr. Kneeshaw, the Traffic Superintendent of the Tramways, had a count made at the railway station, with this result: That out of the total number of people daily arriving at Redfern, and going from Redfern into the city, 55·8 per cent. went by the electric tram and 4·8 per cent. by the steam tram; or, in other words, out of every thirteen persons conveyed by tram, twelve went by the George-street line and one by the Elizabeth-street line;—does not that suggest that any extension of the railway along the Elizabeth-street route—as placed before us now and before the last Committee—would not convenience the majority of the people who desire an extension? No; I do not think it indicates that. I think that the falling-off in the traffic of the steam trams is a good deal owing to the inconvenience of them at present, as I explained at the commencement of my evidence.
3078. But there is such a wide difference between the numbers carried on the electric tram and those carried on the steam tram? Yes, there is. Besides, there is no doubt that all the people who go in the tram would not necessarily all go in the train; and a good many people who walk would continue to do so, even if there were a train.
3079. But those figures only include those who actually use the tram;—does it not, at any rate, suggest that an extension further west would convenience a greater number than the present proposed eastern extension? Perhaps from one point of view it does; but I think that ultimately, when Woolloomooloo is used as a business part of the city, as it will be, you will find that as many people will be inconvenienced by the eastern line as would be by the western—more perhaps.
3080. Under present conditions you do not think that the eastern line would suit so many as the western line? I cannot make that admission.
3081. Mr. Watson.] You laid some stress upon the possibilities of business extension in Woolloomooloo? Yes.
3082. Are there any indications of that at present? I think so. I think that the building of new wharfs and jetties by the Government, and the question that has arisen about resuming land for further wharfs there, show that. I also think, from what I have heard, that there is more demand for land there, than there has been for some time past.
3083. But, as far as retail business is concerned, the tendency seems to be to extend in the direction of Newtown, and so on—further away from the wharfs, does it not? Yes; there is no doubt about that.
3084. Are there any indications of the wholesale people shifting their centre of operations? From what I have heard from various sources, I fancy there is. I happen to be interested in a large property in William-street, Woolloomooloo, and we have had several queries about it lately. Some little time ago, at the time of the bank failures, it was practically unsaleable. It is a trust estate, and, within the last twelve months, we have had three or four people looking after it, and I know that one person wanted it for a warehouse.
3085. Mr. Shepherd.] Do you see plan No. 3? Yes.
3086. Looking at the proposed site for the station at Hyde Park, and the George-street Markets, which do you think would serve the largest number of the day population of Sydney? Do you mean as a mere matter of present convenience?
3087. For the convenience of the day population of Sydney—that is, those who come in from the suburbs every day to business? I will admit, of course, that the George-street Markets are nearer to the present centre of the city as it lies at present; but if the city extends it seems to me that it must extend eastward, and then the Hyde Park site would be nearer the true centre.
3088. Of course, the great object is to serve the largest number of railway travellers;—I suppose you will admit that? Yes.
3089. I think it will be admitted that the George-street Markets are nearer to the centre of the day population of Sydney than being on the extreme edge of it? Yes.
3090. Because, whatever may happen, the Park and the Domain will never be built upon, and if you look at the plan you will see what an enormous space there is—the space coloured green—which will always remain vacant, as it were—that is, the Domain and Hyde Park? The view I have always taken is that Woolloomooloo will be just as big a business centre as Darling Harbour, and it seems to be that things are indicating that. Darling Harbour is cramped, and cannot expand further conveniently. I admit that the George-street Markets are the centre of the city as it lies at present, but you have not sufficient space there for a station, and you want to serve the city as a whole.

3091. As far as space is concerned, we have expert evidence to show that there is ample room in the basement of the George-street Markets for a station—much larger than many of the London stations? Surely not for a terminal station.

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3092. It will not be a terminal station;—there is a proposition to go to the George-street Markets and make a station in the basement there, and then to go on to Wynyard-square, and from Wynyard-square to Argyle-street, and from Argyle-street to Dawes Point;—you can see that this is a scheme intended ultimately to cross the harbour? Yes.

3093. I suppose you will admit that a scheme that would admit ultimately of an extension to North Sydney ought to have some consideration? Yes, certainly.

3094. If we go to Hyde Park it will be much more difficult to go on to North Shore; the other plan shows a scheme of getting to the point from Hyde Park—that is, to go back to near Liverpool-street and take a long curve—nearly a mile out of the way to get to that point; that would indicate the inconvenience of it;—at all events, considering the present position of the city, you admit that the George-street Markets site is more central than the Hyde Park site? Yes.

3095. And also that there is an advantage in going in a direction that will ultimately admit of crossing the harbour, which that scheme would do? I decline to enter into a question as to the relative advantage of connecting with the other side of the harbour according to that scheme and according to the Hyde Park scheme. I have not considered that matter sufficiently.

3096. You have probably not heard of that scheme before? I did see something about Mr. Norman Selfe's scheme.

3097. You have evidently given the whole matter some consideration—you have taken an interest in it? Yes, from the point of view of our own safety up the line, for some time. Any one who saw the people who were injured in the 1894 accident would take a strong interest in the matter on the point of safety, and it seemed to me that the only scheme possible on the grounds of expense and practicability was the Hyde Park scheme, and that is why I am so strongly in favour of it.

3098. I suppose you do not think that the extra expense of one scheme compared with the other ought to be taken very largely into consideration, if the convenience of the public is largely increased? No; but the view I take is that the public will be sufficiently served by the Hyde Park scheme—so much so that the big difference in the cost is a matter of great consideration. You must weigh the difference of cost and the balance of convenience against each other. If the inconvenience is very slight and the difference in cost is very great, you should put up with that which is slightly inconvenient.

3099. Do you think the scheme which has been laid before us is the most practicable one;—you will notice that Elizabeth-street is blocked, a considerable portion of the Park is taken up, and there is a long circular line from King-street down to the back of the Art Gallery, $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres being taken out of the Domain? Yes; I see that.

3100. Do you think that is an advisable thing to do;—there is a mile from Hyde Park around to the back of the Art Gallery which is absolutely barren of traffic, and which would take twelve minutes to go through and back again, which would mean twelve minutes loss of time for every train that would come in? Taking the view I do about the extension of the city, I think the railway should be somewhere about there. In my opinion the Hyde Park scheme is a long way the more preferable. I would much prefer not to see any part of the Domain taken. I would rather see the whole of Hyde Park taken than any part of the Domain, which, in my opinion, serves a much more useful purpose than does Hyde Park.

3101. Well, this scheme takes about $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres out of each;—now, with regard to tram accommodation, you say you have been a good deal inconvenienced by the taking off of the Elizabeth-street railway tram? Yes.

3102. That is, of course, one view of the matter; but if your office were west of George-street do you not think that you would take the George-street tram in preference to the railway tram to the top of King-street? Certainly.

3103. The trams we know are now inconveniently crowded, but if there were a large extension of the tram system by running trams down, for instance, Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street, do you not think that would largely convenience the Sydney population? I think that will have to come in any case some day; but I do not think that that ought to prevent the extension of the railway.

3104. Are you aware that the proposed extension of the railway to King-street does not provide for any intermediate station? I saw something about that, but I also saw a proposal for a station at Liverpool-street.

3105. There is no station proposed officially at Elizabeth-street; it is intended that the train should run right through from Redfern to King-street;—seeing that the whole of the passengers leaving Redfern by train would be put down at King-street, how much of the city do you think that would conveniently serve? It certainly would not serve so conveniently as if there were a stopping-place also at Liverpool-street. But I suppose it would serve conveniently—although not very conveniently—all the Woolloomooloo side of the city. It would also serve the people who had to go to the ferries. It would serve them conveniently, and it would also serve all the people lying between wherever the railway is to be and over towards the Domain and the Gardens; it would also serve, I think, all the people down to Pitt-street, at any rate, on the west side.

3106. How far do you think it would serve people on the south? I think it would serve the people conveniently as far back as Park-street, and probably as far as Liverpool-street. It would be preferable to get out at King-street and walk back on a level instead of getting out at Redfern and walking uphill.

3107. But do you not think that people would be more inconvenienced if they were set down by the tram at the corner of George-street and Liverpool-street;—do you not think that that would be preferable to going by train to King-street, and then walking back to Liverpool-street? It would certainly be more convenient, in one respect; but that would be counterbalanced by having to change from the train to the tram at Redfern.

3108. Well, the question is generally a matter of time;—do you not think it would take a longer time for persons who go to King-street by train, and then walk back to Elizabeth-street, than to go in by the tram? That is a matter one could test very easily with a watch. The trams are very slow with all their stopping-places.

3109. The number of stopping-places is where the convenience comes in, because in that case everyone is deposited near his place of business, and if there were a multiplication of these trams, we would have them

A. G. Ralston. them running down each street;—do you not think that that would be more convenient to everyone whose business was south of Market-street, or even at Market-street—do you not think that a person would rather come in by tram and be dropped at Market-street, than go to King-street by train and walk back? I do not know; it is a good deal a matter of choice, I think. Some people would prefer one, and some the other. I would rather get out at King-street and walk than change into a tram and get out and walk again.

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3110. We are talking about convenience? You generally do what is most convenient to you.

3111. You still adhere to your opinion that the Hyde Park scheme is the most practicable? I think it is.

3112. *Mr. Levien.*] You have considered all the schemes? I cannot say that I have gone into them elaborately, but I have seen the various proposals. I have read them as they appeared, and it seems to me that, on the question of expense, and the question of ultimate convenience, and the question of safety, the Hyde Park scheme is the best one.

3113. As far as you are concerned, dropping you at King-street would be more convenient than dropping you in any other part of the city, considering your professional avocation? I have really not gone into the matter from that point of view.

3114. But is it not so? There is no doubt that it would be more convenient to me personally.

3115. You looked at the matter in that way, did you not? I do not think I did; but from a broad point of view—not to serve the present city, but the future city. I have been living along the railway line ever since 1871, and have seen how the population has grown, and how the train and the tram traffic has increased, and if the traffic goes on increasing in the same way you will have to provide for it to a greater extent than you could by putting trams down all the streets.

3116. *Chairman.*] You ride, I suppose, from Redfern to King-street in a tram? As a rule, I do.

3117. What is your observation as to where most of the people alight in the morning when you come in? I think most of them alight at King-street. A good many get out at Market-street; but I think most of them alight at King-street.

3118. Do you mean by the steam tram? Yes. As regards the electric tram, I think that passengers keep dropping out all along. I have not noticed a great number get out at King-street, except, perhaps, men in my own profession, doctors, and Members of Parliament, who, I have noticed, go up King-street by the cable tram.

3119. Are you aware that the Tramway Superintendent has sworn that of the passengers by the electric trams, 90 per cent. of those who come from the railway station by those trams are still in them when they reach Market-street, and 80 per cent. are still in them when they get to King-street;—you have no reason to doubt that statement? No, certainly not. I take it that there will be a speedy service of trams to the station wherever it may be, and so you could take your choice of getting out at Redfern and coming down by tram, or getting out at King-street and walking back. I will undertake to say that more people would go along by train into King-street and take the cable tram down King-street towards Darling Harbour, if they had to go that way, than would take the electric tram from Redfern, if they had the choice.

3120. *Mr. Watson.*] You say that supposing the proposed railway were constructed to King-street there would be more people go that way, and thence by cable tram down in the direction of Darling Harbour, than would get out at Redfern and go by electric tram to the same spot? Yes; if they had their choice of the two things, they would use the railway. Any of us who have lived in the suburbs for any time would prefer to be carried by the railway as far as possible.

3121. Because of the extra speed, I suppose? Yes.

3122. *Mr. McFarlane.*] The people to whom you refer as going to Darling Harbour would have to pay an extra penny in taking the cable tram? Yes; I think that if the steam trams were run more conveniently and more regularly a larger percentage of the people would go in them. People going to Parliament House, or people going to Castlereagh-street, get on the electric tram at Redfern, because it goes straight away, and then they have either to walk up King-street or take the cable tram. I have done that over and over again, not from choice, but because it is the quickest way, though an inconvenient one. That will, perhaps, account for so many persons now going by the electric trams.

Richard Watkin Richards, City Surveyor, sworn, and examined:—

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3123. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been requested by the City Council to represent them, or to give evidence here to-day on their behalf? I have been told by the Mayor and the Town Clerk to appear and to state that any evidence I may give would not commit the City Council in any shape or form, either as regards opinion or judgment. The Mayor, beyond that, said that I was to oppose any scheme that would affect the rights of the City Council over the streets, and that in the event of the streets being disturbed or affected, or occupied in any way, to what they considered to be the detriment of the citizens, or of themselves as a body, they would expect compensation therefor; also that, in the event of the railway being constructed over or upon the streets of the city of Sydney, they would expect it to be rated as a city property.

3124. *Dr. Garran.*] Did that question apply as to under the streets as well as to over them? Under or over.

3125. *Mr. Watson.*] As to the railway property being considered subject to rating, I presume that the City Council wish that to apply to premises that may be erected on land other than within streets? That is so.

3126. The City Council now desire that all railway property within their limits should be subject to rating? That was the Mayor's instructions to me. Beyond that I have received no instructions whatever.

3127. It seems that you are not here in pursuance of an invitation extended by the Committee to the City Council to give evidence on the scheme for city railway extension generally? No.

3128. They have not, so far as you know, authorised anyone to speak on their behalf in regard to that? No; I have had no instructions beyond what I have stated.

3129. And your evidence, as far as it is official, is restricted to the question of encroaching upon streets or other city property? Quite so.

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3130. Coming to that aspect of the matter, have you had any opportunity of studying the schemes, official or otherwise, that have been laid before the Committee? No; I have not. But this morning I saw the plan of the King-street scheme.

3131. Looking at this wall map of the original St. James' Road scheme, which took in a large portion of Hyde Park, and comparing it with the King-street scheme, as shown on the other map, which do you think would give the least interference with the roads or streets of the city? The St. James' Road scheme does not appear to seriously interfere with the streets. So far as the King-street scheme is concerned—starting from Redfern, crossing Devonshire-street, traversing the Benevolent Asylum grounds, crossing Belmore-road, passing through Belmore Park, and crossing Elizabeth-street at Foster-street, and then by curves crossing Campbell-street and lanes to Goulburn-street, going through properties between Nithsdale-street and Elizabeth-street, and tunnelling under Elizabeth-street, and thence going along the western side of Hyde Park to Park-street—I do not consider that the public ways are affected by the route thus far.

3132. It is proposed to make a deviation at Goulburn-street—which is tinted red—owing to the difficulty of crossing Goulburn-street at a sufficiently high level; it is proposed to divert Goulburn-street further south, and make a crescent of it:—would that qualify your previous statement that the route did not materially interfere with any streets? That is of no moment at all.

3133. *Mr. Leven.* Apart from the instructions you have already received from the Town Clerk and the Mayor, will you be prepared to give us your individual opinion as to the best line that we ought to construct for the city railway? Personally, with pleasure; but officially, I would not care to give it without the consent of the Mayor and Council in writing.

3134. Supposing a question were to be asked you by Mr. Watson, you would decline to answer a question as to which is the best line unless you were to get special instructions to do so? Yes, I would.

3135. Then your opinion will be given only according to the limited instructions you have received from the City Council as to what they think advisable? I would not mind giving my own opinion as far as I consider I would be safe within their criticism.

3136. Your evidence would be limited evidence, and not a free expression of your opinion, as well as indicating the lines suggested by the City Council? Quite so. I can say that the city railway extension, according to one or two of the suggested schemes, means a city improvement.

3137. *Mr. Watson.* And to that extent, of course, it would affect the City Council? Certainly.

3138. You said that from what you had seen of the plan respecting the King-street scheme, as far up as Park-street, you did not think it would materially interfere with the streets of Sydney? That is so. From Park-street northerly it is proposed to take in the whole width of Elizabeth-street and a portion of Market-street. That I do not think is a serious inconvenience; but I believe in view of the attitude of the City Council in regard to city matters recently they would expect compensation for such a resumption of Market-street, and also full payment, with interest added, for the cost of construction of each of those streets.

3139. But if there is no longer a frontage to be served by those streets where does the claim of the City Council to compensation come in:—I could understand their claiming compensation if another street were to be created in lieu of those portions that were taken, and thus causing the City Council to expend a large sum of money, but when they are not asked to incur any other liability in lieu of the streets taken over, can you give a reason why they should be compensated? They would certainly expect to be paid—take Market-street by way of example—for the paving of the footways, the kerbing of the street, and also the wood-paving, together with interest on the money expended on those improvements.

3140. On what ground? On the ground of the expenditure incurred in those works.

3141. The City Council, I presume, incur certain expenditure on streets, looking to the rates from the properties immediately contiguous to the streets to recoup them? Quite so.

3142. Well, if by the rating of the railway property they are reimbursed each year, the rates that they lose, by the abolition of those streets, then they will have no loss? I should not think they would. In giving that evidence I am mindful of the case in connection with the Railway Commissioners where a street was resumed, and we lodged a claim for the fee-simple. That was rejected, but the cost of the construction of the street was paid.

3143. But at the present time the property of the Railway Commissioners is not subject to rates? Just so.

3144. So that it would seem fair in that case that there should have been some repayment to the City Council for the expenditure they had gone to, as they were robbed, practically, of any chance of recouping themselves? That is so.

3145. Has the City Council expressed any opinion as to the desirability or otherwise of rating railway property? The City Council has not.

3146. I think you said earlier that it was their desire that railway properties should be rated? Yes. I may say that some years ago the Railway Commissioners erected a building that was contrary to the Building Act. The City Council took counsel's opinion as to the law on the point—whether we could force the Railway Commissioners to adhere to the Building Act or not—and counsel's opinion was given that the City Council had no power in the matter. I refer to those buildings opposite the General Post Office.

3147. Assuming that the City Council got power to rate the railway property which would be created by this King-street scheme, do you think that they would then be willing to forego any claim for compensation such as you have mentioned? Yes, I think so.

3148. Can you offer an opinion as to what basis that rating would be made upon? I fancy it would be at per mile—the value of a mile of construction.

3149. Taking a percentage on the capital cost of the work? Yes.

3150. What percentage, roughly, do you think would be necessary to yield a revenue to the City Council equal to that of which they would be deprived by the resumption? I cannot say.

3151. You have not gone into that? No. That would be rather a matter for the Treasurer or Town Clerk. I am not a financial officer.

3152. A portion of this scheme, or a subsidiary part of it, is to extend from King-street right through into the Domain; the first portion by tunnelling, and, in the Domain, after getting some distance into it, by open cutting to a carriage shed at Sir John Young's Crescent,—would that have any objectionable features from the City Council's point of view? None whatever.

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3153. Are there any other aspects of street disturbance you think it necessary attention should be drawn to? No; I do not see any by that scheme.
3154. Does the City Council regard itself as in any way interested in the parks within the city boundaries? Yes. In 1897 the question of taking portion of Hyde Park for city railway extension was submitted to the City Council. Five of the aldermen voted in favour of the land being given, and the remainder of the aldermen voted against it.
3155. So the consensus of opinion in the City Council was against any interference with the Park? Yes; and I think that is the opinion still.
3156. Although the City Council are not trustees, in the technical sense, for these parks, they, as representing the citizens, consider they have some interest in their preservation? Quite so. Two of the city aldermen—one representing Macquarie Ward and the other Bourke Ward—are trustees of Hyde Park.
3157. But, officially, the parks are not under the control of the City Council? No.
3158. Do you care to express any opinion as to the relative value of the St. James' Road scheme and the King-street scheme, from the point of view of park disturbance? The St. James' Road scheme seems to take a greater area of the Park, and to affect the Park to a greater extent.
3159. But it has been pointed out that the King-street proposal would involve the sacrifice of a larger total area of park land, though not perhaps in one block, than the St. James' Road scheme would? Yes, there is that in it, certainly.
3160. Can you offer any opinion as to the relative value of the parks from the point of view of acres, of public health, of convenience, and of comfort;—comparing the Domain with Hyde Park, would there be any difference in their value to the citizens, and if so, which would be the more valuable? I would not care to offer an opinion upon that.
3161. Do you think that the feeling would be in favour of preserving both of them? Yes, from a sentimental point of view; but, so far as public health is concerned, I do not think that the interference would be very serious.
3162. I do not know whether you have had any opportunity of looking into Mr. Norman Selfe's scheme? No, I have not.
3163. Even within the limit of your instructions, you have not gone into any of the other schemes that have been suggested? No, I have not.
3164. Do you care to express any opinion on the general question? Not beyond saying that, in my opinion, it is desirable to extend the railway into the city.
3165. Do you feel competent to express any opinion as to which is the more desirable route? No.
3166. There is, perhaps, one matter you may be willing to give an opinion upon, and that is this: Mr. Norman Selfe has made a proposal which involves taking the basement of the Victoria Markets for a wayside station for city railway extension;—can you offer any opinion as to either the desirability or the practicability of that? I would not care to do so, for the reason that the Queen Victoria Markets have already given the City Council enough trouble, and there is a great diversity of opinion as to their usefulness.
3167. *Chairman.*] With regard to the portion of the city where streets are to be intersected and partly resumed, and property resumed, from the Belmore reserve up to Liverpool-street, can you say, as City Surveyor, and having a knowledge of that part of the city, whether it would not be a very good thing if that part of the city, especially the locality known as Wexford-street, could in some way be done away with by resumption? From every point of view, if the whole of that area bounded by Macquarie-street, Campbell-street, and Foster-street, and by Elizabeth-street on the west, were resumed, it would be a city improvement of infinite value. It would give an opportunity of removing squalid tenements and reconstructing that part of the city which is very awkward in its configuration. That, I believe, the City Council would hail with pleasure.
3168. So that, as regards that particular portion of the street and land resumption, you think this is a very desirable route? Yes.
3169. I suppose what you really mean is that, in addition to the necessary width of resumption for the purpose of the running lines, it would be well if the Government could extend their resumptions there a little, so as to improve the whole locality? Quite so.
3170. But even a partial resumption would have a good effect? Yes.
3171. We received a letter on the 10th February from the Town Clerk, to this effect:—

Extension of Railway into the City.

Dear Sir,

Town Clerk's Office, Sydney, 10 February, 1900.

I am directed by the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Sir Mathew Harris, M.P., to say that he has been naturally expecting to be recognised or consulted in some way by your Committee during their deliberations on the subject of the extension of the railway into the city; and although he has no reason to think that they would so far overlook what is due to the city in this respect, he thinks it well that you should be reminded, least possibly the matter be overlooked,

The Right Worshipful the Mayor is prepared, if necessary, to give evidence before the Committee; but he takes it for granted that the opinion of the City Council will be sought before a decision is arrived at, for from the plans from time to time made public it would seem that this scheme will take over, or at least seriously interfere with, city streets, which have in themselves involved large sums in capital cost, and in case of resumption would have to be replaced at very great expense.

I am, &c.,

ROBT. MACE. ANDERSON,

Town Clerk.

The Secretary, Public Works Committee, care of Parliament House, Sydney.

That letter was acknowledged on the 16th, and the Mayor was informed that the Committee intended to invite the opinion of the City Council in connection with the matter; beyond an expression of opinion such as you have given to-day, have you received any instructions from the City Council to examine the various plans which are now before the Committee, with a view of giving evidence as to which is the best route? No; I have not.

3172. And I suppose you have not examined the plans? No: not beyond looking at two this morning.

3173. *Dr. Garran.*] You know the large number of cabs there are at the Redfern railway station? Yes.

3174. It is proposed by the Railway Commissioners to bring the long-distance traffic into Hyde Park as well as the suburban;—would that involve a large number of cabs being collected around King-street? Yes; I expect it would.

3175. Have you given any attention to the accommodation for those cabs on either of the two Hyde Park schemes? No. At the present time there is a cab rank at Hyde Park accommodating, I should think, more

more than 100 cabs. In the event of a rush of traffic there would be accommodation by using St. Mary's Road; but that would be rather inconvenient, because the gradient is rather a steep one.

3176. You know that under the scheme before us Castlereagh-street is to be a little widened; but do you think that, with a double line of trams running along Castlereagh-street, there would be room there for a cab-stand as well? That street is 42 feet between the kerbs. There would be room for a cab-rank on the eastern part of the carriage-way of Castlereagh-street, as widened on the plan.

3177. One of the Government witnesses suggested that an overflow stand for cabs should be in Phillip-street;—would there be any inconvenience in that? No.

3178. That would be nearer than St. Mary's Road? Yes; and more convenient by reason of the gradient.

3179. You do not think there would be any difficulty in accommodating the cabs? I think not. At the present time, in Devonshire-street, the cabs file from the railway gates to Castlereagh-street, and sometimes from Devonshire-street and Castlereagh-street to Cleveland-street; so that dispels the idea of the danger of having a cab-rank adjacent to a double line of tramway in a 42 feet roadway.

3180. But is not Devonshire-street really crowded now with the cab-stand, and the tramway, and the general traffic? Yes; but there is a cab-rank there, and it is worked.

3181. You are quite aware, I suppose, that Devonshire-street will have to be very much altered? Certainly; in the event of railway extension.

3182. It must be lowered at least 9 feet, and that would interfere with the drain which is underneath it? Yes.

3183. Some of the schemes proposed to block Devonshire-street altogether as a public highway, leaving it only for the railway service;—is there any objection to that? Yes; that is rather serious.

3184. It is proposed to make a substitute—either to make a deviation round by Belmore-road, a continuation of Castlereagh-street, or to make a new street under the railway opposite the junction of Pitt and George streets where the Police Station was? I should think the Castlereagh-street extension across the burial-ground would be preferable.

3185. Because it would not break the block of land? Quite so.

3186. You do not think there would be any great objection? No; provided that one or other of those roadways were substituted.

3187. Traffic going down Devonshire-street and coming to the city would be just as well accommodated by Belmore-road as by keeping on straight in Devonshire-street? Yes.

3188. And any traffic going the other way could take Cleveland-street? Quite so.

3189. So you see no objection to blocking Devonshire-street? No; provided that such an alteration were made.

3190. It is, of course, proposed that Belmore-road shall be widened? Yes.

3191. There is another scheme before us relating to the building of a new central station on the Benevolent Asylum site; have you formed any opinion about the policy of that? No; I have not.

3192. It would in no way be injurious to the city? I think not.

3193. The general opinion of the experts is that we cannot, without very great expense, make the present station-yard really a good one? I am of that opinion too.

3194. And that by crossing Devonshire-street we have 22 acres available altogether on which we can have a station that would last for all time;—you think that? Yes, I do.

3195. Is there any other place in Sydney where you could get 22 acres? I do not know of any.

3196. Even if we were to adopt the Hyde Park scheme, Mr. Eddy thought it would last only for twenty years? Yes.

3197. Would you like to see another quarter of the Park taken then? I would not.

3198. You think that a quarter of the Park is as much as ought to be taken? Yes, if taken at all.

3199. You think no more should be taken? Yes.

3200. Mr. Eddy was of opinion that if we wanted more space twenty years hence we must look elsewhere for it? Yes.

3201. Well, where is "elsewhere"? Government House domain.

3202. Is that central? It would not be as central as Hyde Park.

3203. Do you not think it would be more likely that we would have to go to the west side of Sydney? Probably, yes.

3204. And if we have to go to the west side of Sydney, will not land there be dearer twenty years hence than it is now? Certainly.

3205. And a western railway to go to the North Shore would be a more costly job to make than now? Yes, certainly. I may say at once that, in my opinion, any city railway extension should provide for connection with North Sydney.

3206. And do you think that it should also provide for a connection with the eastern suburbs? Yes; I do.

3207. Any scheme that lends itself to those two extensions would have something in its favour? Certainly.

3208. Do you think the Hyde Park scheme lends itself well to a North Shore extension? I do not see any engineering difficulty in it.

3209. Which way would you propose to go? That would require more consideration than I have given it.

3210. There is some difficulty in the way of tunnelling under the harbour, partly because we are not deep enough at Hyde Park, and we should have to get under very valuable properties, and perhaps cross the Tank Stream; and Mr. Deane's scheme is to go out of the station, and with a curve come back, and that would make the length of the line as far as going from Redfern straight to Wynyard-square, and as costly? Yes, I see.

3211. Do you think, on the whole, that a railway on the west side of George-street would accommodate as many people as one on the eastern side of it? No, I do not think so.

3212. You think that the Hyde Park station site is more central than a station at the Victoria Markets would be? Yes.

3213. Accommodate more people? I think so.

3214. We have had one scheme before us with a station opposite the Town Hall, another at Wynward-square, and another at Circular Quay;—would those three stations accommodate the bulk of the people? I do not think so.

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3215. Whom would they leave out? I fancy they would leave out the people of a good number of the southern suburbs—I mean Stanmore, and places in that direction.
3216. But they are not city residents? The residents of those districts have, of course, their business in the city, and I take it that most of them would be better served by the King-street scheme than by such a scheme as you speak of, although the Town Hall is practically standing on the centre of the city.
3217. The people who would be put down at the Town Hall would be very numerous? Not such a number, I should take it, as those who would be put down at Hyde Park.
3218. Now suppose we had a station at Wynyard-square as well as at the Town Hall, which would unload the most passengers—the Town Hall or Wynward-square? The Town Hall, I should think. The people alighting at Wynward-square would not be many of those who would go to the east, whereas the Town Hall station would empty its people to the east.
3219. Do you think it of no importance that an extension of the railway into the city should connect with the ferry traffic at Circular Quay? No; because I think that any city railway extension scheme should provide for getting over Circular Quay to connect with North Sydney.
3220. You do not think that the ferry traffic at Circular Quay is very important? It is important as it is; but it is not important, I think, in considering a city railway extension, because it is fairly well served by the tramway service now.
3221. You think the electric tram now does all that is wanted? I think so. It is a quick and a convenient service.
3222. I presume that you, in consonance with many others, are a little surprised at the enormous traffic on the electric tram in George-street? I have been.
3223. Is that any inconvenience to George-street? We anticipated a great deal of inconvenience, but so far as I am concerned officially, I have not experienced much.
3224. One witness—a professional man, too—said that any man going into George-street now takes his life in his hand;—do you think so? No, I do not. What does he mean?
3225. That it is dangerous to cross the street on account of the tram traffic? I do not think that is correct.
3226. Do you think that a similar tram service in other streets would be inconvenient to the citizens? No; I think it would be a very great convenience to the travelling citizens.
3227. Well, suppose there were half a dozen of them in the different streets of Sydney, all going to Redfern, do you think that that would supersede the necessity for extending the railway line? No, I do not think it would.
3228. You think that nothing will supersede the extension of the railway line? I think not.
3229. Where do you yourself reside? At Randwick.
3230. In the way of a railway, you would be served only by an eastern suburban line? That is all.
3231. Do you think that the present connection with Randwick gives you fairly adequate accommodation? "Fairly adequate" would about describe it; but we want it better.
3232. It is not good enough? No; but the Randwick people have asked for too much at times, and we are getting little by little, and the complaints are fewer now than they were some time ago. I think the Commissioners serve us very well indeed.
3233. Then you do not think that, at present, there is any need for an eastern suburban railway line? I would not say that.
3234. If we had an eastern suburban railway, would it not kill the paying character of the present tram service? No; I really think that as our population increases one would help the other. As commercial speculations, their time-tables would have to be arranged so as to work in with each other.
3235. We have it in evidence that the electric trams in George-street have robbed the railway trams in Elizabeth-street of an immense proportion of their traffic? Yes.
3236. Is that not because the George-street line puts passengers down nearer to their places of business? That would be the logical conclusion.
3237. You think it must be that? Yes; regarding railway traffic and tram traffic, it might be interesting to get a comparison between the Newtown and St. Peter's tram traffic and the railway traffic between Sydney and those places.
3238. The trams seem to pick up the people who live along the sides of the streets? Yes.
3239. The railway stations are not nearer than three-quarters of a mile apart, and people prefer to get into a tram that passes their own doors than to walk three-quarters of a mile to a railway station? Yes.
3240. And if they come in by railway they are put down at Redfern, and have at present to pay 1d, and used to have to pay 2d. for a tram into the city; therefore we cannot very readily compare the railway and the tramway traffic? No.
3241. All we do know is that the trams live in spite of the railway? Yes.
3242. If we were to make a railway to the eastern suburbs, do you think that the trams there would still live? Yes.

TUESDAY, 27 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.	JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined—

H. Deane.
27 Mar., 1900.

3243. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have considered pretty fully Mr. Norman Selge's scheme for an extension of the railway into the city, and also Mr. Greenwood's scheme for the same purpose, and that you have prepared a document giving your views on both of those proposals? Yes.

3244.

3244. Will you kindly read it to the Committee, taking Mr. Selvo's scheme first? Yes.

H. Deane.

27 Mar., 1900.

Mr. Norman Selvo's Scheme.

I HAVE gone very carefully into this matter, and have considered Mr. Selvo's plans and estimate. Mr. Parry has assisted me very largely in coming to my conclusions, especially those connected with traffic. Mr. Selvo divides his proposal into three sections—the first being the section of the city railway proper between Redfern and "The Rocks"; the second, comprising alterations between Eveleigh station and Devonshire-street; and the third being improvements at Redfern, and an enlarged terminus there. For convenience, I will take section 2 first.

Section 2.—This would necessitate the reconstruction of Wells-street bridge and the Eveleigh platforms in part, because the alteration to the gradients involved in passing the lines to the terminus over the descending lines to the city commences some distance along the platform from Wells-street.

Mr. Norman Selvo starts raising the long-distance lines in Eveleigh station which run into the terminus at Redfern, in order to get his city lines, of which he has four, and the Darling Harbour lines (two), to descend and pass underneath the long-distance lines, and go out through the George-street bridge. This section shows what is done.

3245. *Mr. Dick.*] We understood, both from Mr. Norman Selvo's plan, attached to his pamphlet, and from his personal description when going over the proposed route, that his city extension started at Eveleigh, and kept entirely to the west of the present lines until reaching the station yard about the Mortuary? That would be perfectly impracticable, because it would simply carry the quick trains into the City, leaving the slow trains on the eastern side to go into the Redfern terminus, the quick trains being on the western side.

3246. Is not a change in the character of the lines possible, in order to meet that difficulty, by putting the quick trains on the other side? Yes, if you reverse the whole policy of the Railway Commissioners in that respect, by starting right away from Homebush and Strathfield and reverse things; but I do not think it is possible. It would mean a considerable amount of expense, and an entire alteration of the existing order of things; but I think it is scarcely possible, because those lines have been evidently arranged on the one side for the slow traffic, and on the other side for the quick traffic, after very careful consideration, and the connections have been made to suit.

3247. *Dr. Garran.*] Would it not be possible to turn the the quick lines to the eastern side line just as easily as the slow lines—to cross over? I am dealing with Mr. Selvo's scheme; I am not working out a scheme for Mr. Selvo.

3248. You said, I understood, that it would be impossible to turn the quick lines to his city line? Oh, no.

3249. Well, if you were to turn the quick lines to his city line, the quick trains could go into the city by his line? But what about the slow trains.

3250. The slow trains could go too? But how would you get into the terminus. You want to do three things: to get some of the trains into the city, to get some of the trains into Redfern terminus, and you have to cross them over one another, because they are otherwise on the wrong sides.

3251. The points can be arranged as the trains come up, whichever way you want the trains to go? But not according to Mr. Selvo's plan. You cannot do it on that plan, because as soon as he leaves Eveleigh station with the city lines, he is in cutting, descending so as to get his grade of 1 in 73, and therefore no intercommunication between the lines north of Eveleigh station could possibly take place.

According to the section submitted, it would appear that the bridge would have to be raised about 6 feet. Cleveland-street bridge would also have to be constructed at a higher level, and the approaches raised. The altered grades lead into the Redfern terminus, and they would extend a considerable distance towards the station platforms, and necessitate the regrading and reconstruction of the whole of the goods and passengers sidings in Redfern station yard, and even then the working of the yard would be made very difficult.

Mr. Norman Selvo makes the end of his 1 in 70 grade, descending into Redfern terminus, about 320 feet from the end of where the platforms start. An inspection of his No. 6 plan will show that there being only about 320 feet of level, that is the only part where any connections can be made with the carriage-sidings and carriage-sheds; the lines from that point as they rise towards Eveleigh are therefore at a different level, and on a grade of 1 in 70, and it would be impossible to make the proper connections outside that length of 320 feet.

3252. *Mr. Watson.*] Assuming it to be difficult to make connections with the carriage-shed sidings, would it not be still more difficult to make connections with the goods-shed sidings, which are still further south in the station-yard? Well, just as difficult, except that I presume Mr. Norman Selvo intends his goods-sheds sidings to be continued through, along those blue lines on the plan. That is not very clear, but I think he intends to carry them at an unaltered level. He has, however, not connected them as required with the slow lines south of Eveleigh station.

3253. *Mr. Dick.*] Would that be a matter of serious moment if only long-distance trains came into the Redfern terminus? It is the opinion of the Railway Commissioners, and also my own opinion, that all the traffic ought to be kept together; but still it is a matter partly of opinion and partly of the expense of working.

The Chippendale School site would have to be resumed; also a portion of the Wesleyan Church. Considerable alterations would have to be made south of Eveleigh station, so as to make connection between the running-sheds and the new set of lines to the Darling Harbour branch; in fact, it is doubtful if the latter could be connected at all, or any of them satisfactorily. Extensive interlocking arrangements would also be involved. The line to the Mortuary station would be on a different level to the passenger and Darling Harbour branches, and must join the main lines at Wells-street instead of in the ordinary way. This would be most inconvenient in transferring engines and carriages between Redfern station and the Mortuary. The same difficulty would occur in connection with the city lines and the carriage sidings in Redfern yard. Connection in this case would be possible only south of Eveleigh station, and this would also apply to the transfer of goods traffic between Redfern and Darling Harbour, as there could be no connection between the Redfern and Darling Harbour branch, except south of Eveleigh. The whole of the signalling and interlocking arrangements in Eveleigh yard would have to be removed and remodelled. It is evident that provision must be made for storing suburban trains either south of Eveleigh, or somewhere on the new set of lines, as the space at Redfern could not be utilised, and the acre proposed by Mr. Selvo to be resumed from Goodlet and Smith's timber yard for shunting purposes would be useless for storing passenger trains. The estimate of cost for carrying out the works between Eveleigh and George-street bridge seems to be inadequate. The plans are not sufficiently definite in detail to allow me to check it with any accuracy. The ruling grade on this portion of the work being about 1 in 73 for 30 chains, this would control the loads of the trains, and as large sums of money have been spent to provide grades of 1 in 100 on the suburban lines, such expenditure would be partly wasted. It is clear that to work the city lines with a gradient of 1 in 73, either the train loads—that is, the number of carriages—must be reduced, or a completely different set of more powerful engines must be purchased for the purpose of taking the same length of train. In the first case the capacity of the line for taking traffic is seriously diminished, and in the second case expenditure is involved which is not provided in Mr. Selvo's estimate.

3254. *Mr. Watson.*] For the long-distance traffic it is proposed by Mr. Norman Selvo to start about 300 feet from the end of the platform with a grade of 1 in 70? Yes.

3255. And that continues, how far? About 1,600 feet; that is, nearly one-third of a mile.

3256.

H. Deane. 3256. Then you run down into Eveleigh station with a similar grade? Yes.
 3257. What effect would a down grade into the station, and an up grade out of the station, have on the long-distance traffic? The down grade into the station would not matter very much, except that the engine drivers would have to be very careful in applying brakes coming in. But a heavy, or comparatively heavy, grade going out of the station would be very objectionable. It would lead to difficulties in starting in bad weather, and it might limit the length of the train.

3258. To get the maximum of safety about a station, it is better to have, for some distance away from it, a line absolutely level? Yes; or to go into the station with a rising grade, which helps to stop the train, and to go out of the station with a falling grade, which helps to start the train. That is what is generally aimed at if circumstances permit; but a down grade into a station is scrupulously avoided. In the proposals that I have worked out for the city railway, I have a rising grade into the terminus, in each case, so that all trains would stop with less use of brakes, and in starting they would have a grade which would accelerate motion.

With regard to Section 3: the proposed plans for re-modelling the existing Redfern station by utilising existing platforms by extending them further north perpetuates present difficulties. Some of the proposals, as, for instance, the introduction of baggage and parcels offices under the station at Devonshire-street, would involve a very considerable lowering of the ground, and consequent expense. The whole design involves a very large expenditure in botching up defective arrangements instead of making a clean sweep, and laying out a new plan to suit modern requirements. The disturbance to the existing lines and platforms during the alterations would involve very great inconvenience and risk, and the whole of the signalling and interlocking arrangements would have to be removed and remodelled.

No. 1 Section.—As the present Redfern station would be entirely cut out of use for suburban and semi-suburban trains, passengers wishing to change to the main line would suffer very great inconvenience, which could only be met by stopping all long-distance trains at Eveleigh in order to enable them to change there.

Victoria Market Station.—The proposal to bring the railway into the basement of the Markets is quite impracticable. The space available is not sufficient for dealing with the large amount of traffic, and if the area covered is more than that at the Mansion House Station in London, it is to be remembered that the latter, though restricted, has been designed for passenger traffic, and is not a mere makeshift. It is to be observed, moreover, that the kind of business done at the Mansion House station is of a different character, and probably much simpler than that which would have to be dealt with at the Victoria Markets. Mr. Selve shows three lines of way coming into the Markets, one line brought under George street, the ground being excavated for the purpose, and afterwards covered over. One platform is 460 feet long by 28 feet wide, with heavy columns along the whole length about 16 feet apart, and in the centre is a heavy mass of brickwork 63 feet by 10 feet, and only 6 feet from the centre of the rail of one line, which would be a most serious obstruction to passengers. About 72 feet of the northern end of the platform is rendered useless by the stairway obstruction. The other platforms are equally inconvenient. The adaptation of the Market basement for railway purposes would involve, in my opinion, most dangerous alterations. Those considered necessary by Mr. Selve, and which are probably all that could be done with any degree of safety, do not give widths to agree with standard practice. The trains have to pass through passages 12 feet in width, whereas 14 feet is the recognised minimum structural width; but in some cases piers would stand only 5 feet from the centre line of the rails, instead of 7 feet at least as they should. Brick piers are left standing on the platforms only 3 feet 6 inches from the edge, whereas it is looked upon as an indispensable condition in railway practice that no columns or piers should stand closer to the edge of the platform than 6 feet. Mr. Selve has not shown how access can be properly provided to the platforms, and it does not seem possible to make adequate provision to deal with the large crowds which at times must enter and leave the station. The question of ventilation is dealt with in rather an off-hand manner, and though it may be possible to provide sufficient fresh air in the station to prevent excessive inconvenience to passengers, it is very unlikely that it could ever be made a properly-ventilated and pleasant place to be in, especially as the railway approaching the station is in tunnel right up to the front wall of the Markets at the south end, so that the smoke would drift out of the tunnel into the station. I gather from Mr. Selve's evidence that he considered Mr. Rennie approved of his proposal to use the Markets; but I would point out that on page 1 of his report, dated 19th December, 1898, he says: "The basement of the new Markets, near the Town Hall, is entirely unsuited for a railway station, and it would be a piece of vandalism to appropriate it."

Mr. Selve proposes to extend two lines only for suburban traffic beyond the Markets, the other two lines which he shows on his plan being extended to the North Shore. I have no hesitation in saying that two lines are not sufficient to take the suburban trains through to the terminus. There are no shunting facilities by which some of the trains could be stopped at the Markets and sent back: and the question arises by which other way will it be possible for trains to be carried back. As a matter of fact, they would all have to be carried through, and, according to Mr. Selve's plans, on two lines of way. This is not a workable proposal, as trains coming on to the Market station would have in some cases to wait for one another and proceed in single file to Wynyard-square and "The Rocks." If four lines could be carried beyond the Markets right through, all necessary shunting could be done at "The Rocks," if a sufficient area of land were resumed for the purpose. This, however, would preclude any portion of Wynyard-square being used as a station for the lines from the North Shore, as it is not practicable to bring in a separate branch train service at this point; and it is to be remarked that Mr. Selve's plans show no terminal station for the North Shore traffic, and it may therefore be assumed that, if he has thought about it at all, he must propose to work it in connection with some of the suburban trains in a see-saw manner. This, I need scarcely point out, is unsuitable for several reasons, one of which is that the ruling grade on the North Shore line is 1 in 50, while the ruling grade on the western suburban line is 1 in 100. With regard to the two stations—Victoria Markets and Wynyard-square—which are no doubt otherwise suitably located, they would be open to the objection that passengers would have to ascend and descend considerable flights of steps. With regard to resumptions and interruptions to business, between Market-street and King-street, I cannot believe that Mr. Selve has not very much under-estimated the difficulty of passing under Lassetter's and other buildings, and has not under-estimated the damage that would be done to the businesses now conducted on those premises. I understand that he proposes to resume in its entirety the Kidman's buildings, and remove them so as to throw the lines open to the air.

It will be seen from the foregoing that I do not consider Mr. Selve's scheme practicable.

To summarise: Mr. Selve's scheme fails chiefly in the following particulars:—“The ruling grade is 1 in 73 instead of 1 in 100 as it should be. The alteration of grades between Eveleigh and Redfern causes a want of connection between city and suburban lines with Redfern terminus for the interchange of passengers. It causes difficulty in interchanging vehicles and engines between sidings and carriage-sheds at the terminus—(1) City lines; (2) Darling Harbour lines; and (3) Mortuary station. It necessitates the reconstruction of the whole yard at Redfern. It renders impossible any proper connection of city lines and Darling Harbour lines with the engine running-sheds at Eveleigh. The Victoria Markets cannot be used as a station. With four lines to the Markets and two lines beyond, the traffic cannot be conducted satisfactorily.”

Any one of the above objections is sufficient to condemn the scheme, as they cannot be got over without altering the essential character of the scheme. I am sorry to have to say this, because one cannot but recognise the immense amount of pains which Mr. Selve has taken in the preparation of his plans.

I have a statement here which Mr. Parry was very anxious should go into my report, and I propose, with your permission, to read it. It is evidence on Mr. Selve's scheme, but in part it applies also to Mr. Greenwood's. It applies to Mr. Greenwood's scheme only so far as his arrangements are similar to Mr. Selve's. There is nothing in it specially applicable to Mr. Greenwood's scheme. The following are Mr. Parry's views, which I entirely endorse:—

To separate the country trains from suburban trains, those from the country to terminate at Redfern, and the suburban at Market-street or Wynyard-square, would be very unsatisfactory, and give rise to much irritation to travellers. The only trains which can be considered purely country trains are as follows:—

	Down.	Up		Down.	Up.
Southern mails.....	1	1	Goulburn day train	1	1
Western „	1	1	Bathurst „	1	1
Northern „	1	1	Tamworth „	1	1
Melbourne Express.....	1	1	South Coast „	2	2

Of course this number is largely increased at holiday times, and even these in some cases do suburban work. All other regular trains do some suburban work, and to start them from and terminate at Redfern would be most inconvenient to passengers using them.

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All tourist trains to the Mountains and to Moss Vale are used largely by business men, who require to go direct to and from their offices and trains with the least delay in transit and without changing, so that the country trains ordinarily form a very small proportion of those to be dealt with; but at holiday times the number of country trains is considerably increased, and provision must, therefore, be made to meet the maximum traffic, for if the arrangements are insufficient to meet holiday requirements, then the whole system breaks down at the most critical time.

It must be clearly understood that whatever scheme is decided upon, accommodation must be made for dealing with the maximum holiday traffic, and not be limited to deal with ordinary every-day business.

The suburban traffic on these lines differs from most other places, as the very large population is settled in the various suburbs along the line to Homebush, and there are sufficient travellers to enable through business trains, morning and evening, to be run alternately direct to or from almost every station (each station, therefore, has its express service), instead of stopping at all stations, as is usually done at other places. This mixing up of through with stopping trains necessitates special arrangements at the terminal for dealing with the same, and for separating the passengers for the various localities.

The cost in working the traffic by running country trains to and from Redfern, and suburban trains to the Markets or Wynyard-square, would be very much greater than by dealing with the whole business at one terminal station. A large staff would have to be kept at Redfern to deal with the country trains, whereas if the whole of the trains were dealt with at one new terminus the same porters would be available to deal with the country and suburban trains, because the country trains chiefly arrive and depart at times when the suburban traffic is light.

It will be seen, in reply to Question 1660 of Mr. Selge's evidence, which is as follows, viz. :—

1660. "Do you think you have room under the Victoria Markets to deal with such a large daily traffic?"

He replied :

"It is a question I have not gone into very deeply for this inquiry, because you could not tell where it would lead you to." So that Mr. Selge admits he has not given the subject full consideration, and therefore his evidence could not be relied upon, especially in view of the fact that the proposal has been condemned by Mr. Rennick, the Engineer-in-Chief for Victoria, who was specially deputed by the Government to report on the scheme, in the following terms :—

"The basement of the new markets near the Town Hall is entirely unsuited for a railway station, and it would be a piece of vandalism to appropriate it, even were it well adapted for the purpose."

Vide clause 12, page 1, of his report, dated 29th August, 1899.

In addition to which the proposal has been condemned by the responsible officers of the Railway Department who have given evidence.

Again, in reply to Question 1662, as to dealing with the urban and suburban traffic at Victoria Markets, Mr. Selge stated : "You would deal there with at least twelve trains an hour each way; I think you could deal with twenty."

As no details are shown on Mr. Selge's plan as to the method he proposes for dealing with the shunting of the trains, it is impossible to say what could be done, but it is quite certain that the arrangements would be absolutely inefficient to deal with the business required to be done.

In consequence of the city lines and the lines to the Redfern terminus being on different levels, so that no connection can be made between the city lines and Redfern terminus, except at Eveleigh, great inconvenience would be experienced in transferring horse-boxes, &c., coming from the suburban lines to Redfern terminus to go forward by through trains from Redfern. This would also specially apply to horse-boxes coming from suburban stations by suburban trains to go forward on special horse-box trains from Redfern to races, such as Rosehill, Kogarah, and Canterbury.

Mr. Selge's proposals of terminus for the city extension are vague and indefinite. He refers to doing shunting at Goodlet and Smith's yard, and between the Markets and York-street, but it would be utterly impossible to shunt the trains on the area proposed to be resumed, and, therefore, absolutely necessary to go on to "The Rocks," and there provide shunting yard and storage accommodation for trains and engines, even though the eastern extension is made, because the passengers would require to arrive from and depart to the eastern and western suburbs at the same time, so that only a small proportion of the trains would require to make the circle, as it is termed; and as by the alteration of grades between Eveleigh and Redfern there can be no connection between the city lines and Redfern terminus, except at Eveleigh, the storage accommodation at Redfern station could not be utilised for storing suburban trains and engines owing to having to shunt to and from Eveleigh and Redfern to get to and from the city lines, so that storing accommodation must be provided on the city lines for carriages and engines for the suburban and semi-suburban service.

Mr. Selge, in reply to Questions 1594-5, says he would have more room at "The Rocks" for storing carriages than is provided by the Hyde Park or King-street schemes.

Now, it has been clearly pointed out that the Hyde Park scheme is not intended to provide storage accommodation, and six lines have, therefore, been provided so as to enable the engines and cars to readily run to and from Redfern where the storage room is provided; then, as regards the King-street scheme, the area at the back of the Art Gallery only provides for a portion of the cars and engines—a considerable portion would still have to return to Redfern to store under that scheme, to facilitate which six main lines are provided between King-street and Redfern. As Mr. Selge only proposes to resume $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres at "The Rocks," it is very clear the area would be insufficient. Mr. Selge has an alternative to provide 20 acres net.

There is no provision made for a proposal for terminal arrangements in the city stations for the North Shore line, when it should be constructed. This would be absolutely necessary to provide for, because the North Shore passengers would require to arrive at the same time as those from the eastern and western suburbs, and a large number of trains from each direction would require to terminate on arrival in the city, unless a great waste of train mileage were incurred by running trains from the city to the suburbs empty in the morning and back in the evening, for there would certainly not be passengers to travel in them.

In determining the area of land required for terminal and shunting yard, it is useless speaking of it in acres unless the shape of the area available is considered, for 6 acres in a suitable position may be of more utility than 10 of an unsuitable shape.

I must say, in regard to Mr. Selge's proposed terminal arrangements at "The Rocks," there is evidently sufficient ground to do anything you like. I have not criticised that as a site for the purpose. Regarding it as a matter of space, I am sure that plenty of land of the proper shape could be found. The only difficulty would be the resumption, whatever that might be, and the extraordinary difference of level that there is between one side and the other.

3259. *Chairman.* You have also, I believe, prepared your comments on Mr. Greenwood's scheme? Yes.

3260. Will you kindly read them to the Committee? Yes.

Mr. W. Greenwood's Scheme.

In answer to Question 1847, Mr. Greenwood says that from Redfern to Circular Quay there would be provision for four lines of road, and two to the eastern suburbs, and later on he says from Redfern to Wynyard-square there would be four lines of way, and on to the Circular Quay, and on the suburban line, two lines of way. I would point out that he only shows four lines of way running parallel to one another as far as Bathurst-street. From there two roads rise in order to get to the North Shore, and two descend so as to get to the Circular Quay. The plan and section show this latter arrangement, which, therefore, may be taken to be his matured proposal. His estimates are not by any means clear, and those made for the same works at different portions of his evidence differ to some extent from one another. With regard to cost, Mr. Greenwood has, in my opinion, seriously under-estimated. He reckons, for instance, that the lines along York-street can be done for £50 a yard for the double road. I think he will find, taking all things into consideration, that that amount will be nearly doubled. The location passing the Town Hall and Markets, so as to get a through connection between York-street and George-street, is an impossible one. It is, at any rate, one that should not be attempted, as the risk to the buildings would be too great, and the curvature involved would be very objectionable. The idea of passing

H. Deane. 27 Mar., 1900. passing one line over another would lead to very serious difficulties. Mr. Greenwood has grades of 1 in 60, and 1 in 66. This would seriously limit the train-loads and involve—as in the case of Mr. Selve's scheme—more powerful locomotives, the objection against Mr. Greenwood's proposal being still greater than against Mr. Selve's, because his grades are worse. The location of the Circular Quay station is a most objectionable one. Mr. Greenwood says, in answer to Question 1894, as to the space taken up between the Custom-house and the other side of the Quay, that there would be practically none. I have shown on a plan the space that would be taken up, and it will be seen how serious the interference would be for the ordinary wheel and passenger traffic, and it would render the completion of the tramway system, as sketched out on the same plan, impossible.

Mr. Greenwood shows four lines parallel to one another as far as Bathurst-street; but although this is the case, the manner of the continuation of them prevents any shunting taking place at Bathurst-street. Consequently, it may be looked upon that two lines of way are intended for the North Shore connection, and two lines of way for the western and eastern suburban combined. Two lines of way are not sufficient to work the suburban traffic. There are trains from Parramatta, others from Homebush, others from Ashfield, others from Hurstville, others from Belmore, besides those from Hornsby, Penrith, and Campbelltown. There are also the Mountain and Moss Vale trains, and all those would have to come into the city. Some of them are fast trains, and some slow. Mr. Greenwood says they must be all slow trains through the city, so that the fast and slow trains would have to wait on one another at Redfern, so as to go in single file into the city. There are no terminal arrangements. If the line is made—as it must be made—into the city first, the eastern suburban line being left for later completion, something in the way of terminal arrangement is necessary. I understand that Mr. Greenwood does not consider it is necessary, and would merely shunt the trains beyond the station at Circular Quay and run them back—that is to say, he would run them back in the order in which they came. There would be no waiting for time and no re-arrangement to suit time for starting. In fact, they could not work to a time-table at all. Mr. Greenwood's stations at Wynyard-square and Circular Quay are open to the objection that there is not proper room for access or space for offices, and the Wynyard-square station is also objectionable on account of the depth below the surface. As regards the depth at which the Circular Quay station is situated, it would be a very difficult matter to make it watertight, and it would in any case be a costly operation. The use of concrete alone would not effect this, but some waterproof material in layers—as was adopted at Boston, U.S.A.—might answer the purpose. In order to reduce the objection as to length of tunnel, Mr. Greenwood makes his line open to the air, except between Bathurst-street and Wynyard-square—that is about half a mile—and he is of opinion that the ventilation would not be bad, because he says the time occupied in travelling cannot possibly be a minute in this case. (See answer to Question 2038.) The average speed between these two stations might possibly be 12 miles an hour, not more, or a mile in five minutes. The passage through the tunnel would, therefore, take two and a half minutes at least, and the tunnel would not have time to clear itself during those times of the day when traffic was heavy.

Mr. Greenwood's is a most unsuitable scheme, and, with the location and levels given, is not capable of improvement.

WEDNESDAY, 28 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIER, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

H. Deane. 28 Mar., 1900. 3261. Mr. Shepherd.] I think you said, yesterday, that there would be great difficulty in crossing the lines at Redfern station, according to Mr. Selve's scheme? There is no difficulty about crossing the lines. Mr. Selve does that in a satisfactory manner, so far as the mere crossing of the lines is concerned, but it leads to other difficulties, which are very serious.

3262. The way he described it to us was that his proposed line did not touch the Redfern lines at all after leaving Eveleigh—that he kept on the west side of them all the way down? It does not touch, and that is one point that I object to. Some of the lines descend, and the others pass over those lines. There are no means of connecting them after they leave Eveleigh.

3263. The only crossing he mentioned to us was near the Cyclorama, and that was where his line was to run under the present Darling Harbour line? His evidence, and plan No. 6, and section which is marked 8, shows clearly what he intends to do.

3264. And you think it would cause inconvenience to passengers if the suburban and the through traffic were to be divided in the way he proposed? I pointed out, in my statement, what the inconveniences would be. There would be the inconvenience due to the non-possibility of interchange of passengers at the terminus. The other inconveniences are mostly due to traffic considerations.

3265. Then, in regard to the George-street Market station—you seem to think that that is an impracticable scheme? I am sure of it; there cannot be any doubt whatever about it. I mentioned how very great the alterations of the basement of the markets would be. I think that I might recommend the Committee to call Mr. McRae, the architect who designed the building, and see whether he would approve of the piers, as the supports of the dome and the end, being cut away in the way indicated by Mr. Selve.

3266. Dr. Garran.] I gather from your criticism yesterday that you think that a disadvantage in Mr. Selve's scheme is that his extension does not go through the present station-yard at Redfern? Yes.

3267. And I presume you think that any extension should go through that station-yard? Yes.

3268. Not to do so would involve a great deal of complication and useless expenditure in the present yard? Yes; it would upset existing arrangements altogether, and the use of the carriage sidings and sheds.

3269. And involve, probably, a second station, and a dispersion of quarters, which would mean expense without any profit? The separation of the traffic is a point of which the Railway Commissioners make a great deal.

3270. Admitting all that, is there not something to recommend Mr. Selve's proposal, to begin your manipulation of the cross-over roads further back than you do at present? No; I think it would be a mistake.

3271. You have explained to us—and Mr. Parry has done so in greater detail—that your present trouble at Redfern arises from the shortness of the distance between the northern end of the tunnel, and the southern end of the platforms? Yes.

3272. Because you have scarcely room there to get in your cross-over roads, and your various points? Yes.

3273. Why not get over that difficulty, then, by lengthening the distance? I quite agree with that.

3274. If we were to begin the cross-over roads the moment we leave Eveleigh, we should then have quite as much room between Eveleigh and the northern end of the tunnel as we have now between the tunnel and the end of the platforms? Yes; but that is the wrong way to do it. The proper way to do it is to bring the station forward—not to run those points back. H. Deane.
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3275. I know that has been proposed; but, have we not a method for crossing the roads and lengthening these platforms to the south, by pushing the whole arrangements for your interlocking further south? No, it will not do to follow Mr. Selfe's scheme of lowering the lines.

3276. I am not talking of the lowering—I am putting that out of sight—I am merely speaking of pushing all the interlocking arrangements further back to the south, so as to make the present station-yard at Redfern more available than it is? If you were to do that, without putting the other lines down in such a way that you could not keep up a connection with them, it might serve the purpose; but then you would be under the disadvantage that you would have to take up and renew the whole of the station-yard.

3277. I quite admit that; but, if you say that the whole of the station-yard is unsuitable and dangerous, it is time we should take it up? No. The proper and least expensive way to do it is to extend the present station across Devonshire-street.

3278. Then, you face the whole of the expense of arching over Devonshire-street;—would that be less than the expense of merely altering these points? Yes. It is considerably simpler and very much less in cost; there cannot be a doubt about that.

3279. Then even though you could alter the points, as I suggest, and take them more to the south, you distinctly say that, having the land across Devonshire-street available, that is a cheaper and better method? Yes, and the safest. The other is absolutely dangerous, and would be very much more costly, because you would have to have a lot of temporary arrangements for running the traffic while you were altering some of the roads.

3280. That answer of yours involves building a new station-yard, to some extent, north of Devonshire-street, at once? If Redfern remains merely a through station, you do not want to make any material alteration.

3281. But we are told that Redfern must remain a station for very long trains, such as those that go away on holidays? That is, supposing that it is to be a terminus. If Redfern remains as a terminus, a complete alteration has to be made. If it remains merely as a wayside station, very little alteration is required to be made. That will be seen in the details of my estimate.

3282. We have been given to understand that if either the King-street plan, or the St. James' Road plan, is adopted, good as it may be for ordinary normal traffic, it will not be good enough to take the heavy holiday traffic in addition, and that would have to be accommodated at Redfern;—you know that some of the longest trains we send away are holiday trains? I think that you are mistaken about that in some way. I would like to have a reference made to the evidence given on that point.

3283. *Chairman.*] Mr. Parry did give some evidence on that point? Yes; but not to say that a radical alteration would be necessary. You could easily lengthen the platforms if you were to go up to Devonshire-street.

3284. *Dr. Garran.*] Are we to take the view of the present station, that we cannot economically improve it by shifting all the points? As a terminus—yes; but I will not agree with it in any other way.

3285. Then, if we do not continue it as a terminus, we need not cross Devonshire-street with platforms at present? I do not think you need.

3286. Simply taking the travelling lines over? Yes.

3287. And we should need no more expenditure north of Devonshire-street than is necessary for extension into the city? There would be some little alteration necessary at Redfern. There would be eventually some re-arrangement, but it would be of comparatively a trifling character.

3288. If we once begin to arch over Devonshire-street to carry your six lines of rail across, do you not think that there will be an irresistible temptation to the traffic managers to lengthen those platforms at once? If they have all the platforms as they want them, I do not see there is any necessity to do it. I do not think that the traffic officers would want to expend more money than is absolutely necessary.

3289. No, but they like all the convenience they can get? Yes, but they would not want to make more alterations than are necessary, because alterations mean inconvenience.

3290. I can understand that they do not like to ask for expenditure unless they cannot possibly help it? They do not like alterations because they mean temporary inconvenience,—and very often very serious inconvenience.

3291. But merely lengthening the platforms would not alter the signals, and so on? No. But if you can get rid of the terminal traffic at Redfern, you can lengthen the lot of those platforms, by bringing them right up to Devonshire-street, without any serious expense.

3292. Do I correctly understand that it is your own personal opinion, as an engineer, that the long-distance trains ought to go into Sydney, if we make this extension? Yes, I think it is a desirable thing to bring them all into King-street.

3293. As regards the long-distance trains, that come in from Melbourne, Queensland, and Bourke, what proportion of the passengers do you think would be left in those trains after they left Redfern to come into the city? I think that they would pretty well all come into the city—they would all come to the terminus.

3294. Even although there was plenty of time for them to get out at Redfern, and take cabs for their luggage? I think so, because the conveniences at a terminal station are so much greater for handling luggage.

3295. Do you think that a gentleman going, say, to Waverley or Bondi, instead of getting out at Redfern, and taking a cab from there to the east, would come all the way into King-street? I do. The distance to either Waverley or Bondi is practically as short from King-street as it is from Redfern, unless you open up some new and wide thoroughfares; it is just as easy, in fact easier. There are better roads out from Hyde Park than there are from Redfern.

3296. Then, you think the effect of bringing the long-distance trains in will be that they will bring the passengers with them? Yes.

3297. And you have not any fear that the bringing in of these long, lumbering trains into Hyde Park will block your suburban traffic? No. I think that the accommodation which it is proposed to provide will be quite large enough.

3298.

- H. Deane. 3298. You would be content to give the accommodation provided for in either of these two schemes? Yes.
- 28 Mar., 1900. 3299. You think the traffic could be worked as comfortably as it is now at Redfern? Very much more. Either of these two schemes has a very much better station than the present Redfern station. All the platforms are long platforms, at which trains of full length could be docked.
3300. And if either of these two Hyde Park schemes is carried out, do you think that there will then be any necessity for a central station at the Benevolent Asylum? No.
3301. Never? No.
3302. However the traffic may grow, this area of 10 acres will be quite enough for everything? Yes; I believe that it will be quite sufficient.
3303. Well, you told me the other day that 22 acres of the Benevolent Asylum site would not be too much, looking at the future? In that, I did not suppose that that was all to be covered over with platforms. Of course, there are other conveniences which railway working requires, such as storage, sidings, and sheds, which the surplus ground could be used for.
3304. But if you were planning a central station, intended to last for all time, would you not like to have room for all those superfluities? If you could get them there, close alongside, it would be very much better; but as we cannot, we have to do without.
3305. Could you ever get them at Hyde Park without taking in more of the park? No; and it would not be desirable to do that. I am quite sure that I should be the last to recommend it.
3306. What I want to get at is this: As we have this site between the present station and Belmore-road practically in the hands of the Government now, would it not be wise for the Government sacredly to keep that from being sold for any other purpose, and to reserve it for a possible station? I think it ought to be reserved; they ought not to dispose of it for any purposes other than railway purposes. I quite agree to that; but I do not see any necessity for reserving it for a station.
3307. Well, granting that the Hyde Park scheme will meet all our needs for the present—for East Sydney at least—is it not wise to look ahead, in a country like this, with its enormous possibilities for the future, and to keep sacred a site which, by the admission of all engineers, is the finest site we can now get in Sydney for a great central station? I should not oppose the reserving of it; I think it would be a very wise thing to do, but not with the view of making a station there, but with the view of utilising the ground in some way for the purposes of the railway.
3308. Then you do not think it will ever be wanted for a railway station? Well, I am very doubtful indeed about it. A little bit might be wanted for a station; but I do not think so.
3309. You have criticised, unfavourably, the two western proposals that have been put before the Committee;—have the Government ever definitely proposed any West Sydney line at all? Yes, a great many years ago they did; but the requirements of traffic were not so well understood at that time, I suppose.
3310. Is it a line that you would recommend now? No.
3311. Is it shown on any plan we have before us? Yes. It was dealt with by the first Royal Commission; it is scheme "L."
3312. There is a line marked on the plan attached to that Royal Commission's report,—going just west of the Markets and the Town Hall;—is that the route? It goes between Kent-street and Sussex-street; it goes all the way round by Miller's Point to what used to be the Naval Depot.
3313. Then that is not this plan, it is another? There is one I suggested myself, going into Wynyard-square with a loop.
3314. Was an estimate ever made of the cost of that line? If it was made it was submitted to the Commission at that time.
3315. There is this one, but this is not the one you refer to, because this goes under York-street from the Markets? I am not sure whether this is not the one.
3316. Here is one going round Dawes' Point? That is scheme "L," laid out under instructions from the Government.
3317. Do you know if any estimate was ever made of the cost of any of the western schemes submitted by the Government? I fancy, so; but in order to ascertain, I would have to refer to the Royal Commission's Report—I mean the first Royal Commission which sat in 1890 or 1891.
3318. The reason I ask is that Mr. Rennick, in his report, seems to imply that if he could do it at an equal cost he would prefer a West Sydney line to an East Sydney line; but the cost seems to him to be prohibitory;—where could he have got that idea, except from some Government figures? He may have drawn that conclusion in considering the matter himself. I should like to say that, in response to the express desire of the Committee, I have written a report on that matter for the Committee; and I have a plan and a section showing what, in my opinion, can be done—not what I recommend, but what can be done.
3319. And an estimate of the cost? I have given an estimate of the cost of the works, but I am not prepared to give an estimate of the cost of resumptions, because it is rather a long matter.
3320. Has Mr. Sievers had it before him to make anything like an estimate? No. I think Mr. Sievers has been away, and it was only a few days ago that I was asked to prepare the report. I have also prepared a report upon a possible connection with North Shore.
3321. You object to the stiffer gradients on the line you were considering yesterday;—no doubt it is better to have a grade of 1 in 100 rather than a grade of 1 in 60, if you can get it;—but is a grade of 1 in 60 an unusual grade for a city line or a suburban line? It would be very objectionable on our working. There are certain conditions of load and speed. Some years ago the Railway Commissioners went to great expense to quadruplicate the lines, and lift the lines over, or take them under the cross-roads, as the case might be, and to abolish level crossings, and at the same time to give grades of 1 in 100, on the suburban line. There is only one exception, I think—a short distance of 1 in 90—and in the position it takes that is immaterial. All that expense would, as it were, be thrown away if, on an extension of the same line—with the same trains running over it—the grades were very much steeper.
3322. Are the present suburban engines—that is tank engines—equal to taking an ordinary suburban load up a grade of 1 in 60? That I cannot say. They might crawl up at a snail's pace; but I am not sure they would. The suburban engines take trains of eight or nine carriages along the Western suburban line, and on the North Shore line they take trains of five or six carriages—in this case up a grade of 1 in 50.
3323. The same kind of engines? I believe it is the same kind.
3324. Have you not some grades of 1 in 40 on the North Shore line? No—1 in 50.

3325. Then, are we to understand that the present locomotive engines on the suburban lines are fully tasked now? I should say that they are properly adjusted to load and speed, and if you put in steeper grades you would either have to reduce the load, or you would have to reduce the speed. H. Deane.
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3326. For that reason you think it is essential that any city extension should keep to a grade of 1 in 100? Yes, I do; I think it is very important.
3327. It was proposed, I think, by Mr. Eddy himself, once, to make an extension line from Hyde Park to Circular Quay, which was to be on a grade of 1 in 60? Yes; but afterwards he was very sorry that he had ever mentioned it.
3328. I believe that he withdrew it afterwards? He did. He regretted very much having mentioned it.
3329. If one of the proposed schemes that go round to the back of Parliament House, under the Domain, to Fort Macquarie, were carried out, we could get down to the water level with a grade of about 1 in 100, I suppose, by a route of that kind? I do not think you could get down to the water level; but I would not be quite certain. You could get down to a station about the level of the top of Albert-street, I think.
3330. You see that one of the defects of your Hyde Park schemes is, that they have no railway connection with the ferry traffic at Circular Quay, and there may afterwards come a proposal to extend; and both these schemes, we are told, would admit of extension underground? You could extend either of those schemes by extending the lines on the eastern side of the city.
3331. The eastern line, we are told, will go under King-street, and could go on to Circular Quay, if required;—in fact, No. 10 scheme goes out from the centre of the platform to make that long curve round to the Domain? Yes, that is arranged so that you could get four lines at least under King-street.
3332. Is that carriage-shed very much above high-water mark? It is above high-water mark.
3333. It is above what would be the platform of a station anywhere down there—for Woolloomooloo Bay? I should think it would be about 20 feet above; but I cannot tell exactly without referring.
3334. It is a descending grade on all that line? Yes.
3335. Do you know what the rate of descent is? I think it is about 1 in 60.
3336. You consider that the carriages running there will always be empty carriages? Yes.
3337. But if that should form part of an eastern suburban line, as we are told it will ultimately, you will have the eastern suburban traffic on it? Yes.
3338. And you will be running that on a grade of 1 in 60? I hope to have steeper grades on that eastern line when I make it.
3339. Then you will have to have shorter trains? No. I think it ought to be made an electric line, and that, having a completely new stock, you could do what you like, and save a lot of expense.
3340. In putting down Mr. Selfe's figures, you did not reckon into the credit of his scheme what he proposes to do, namely, to sell 2,000 feet of frontage to his new George-street? No, I did not.
3341. And you did not debit him with the capitalised value of £2,000 a year, which it is proposed he should give for space in the basement of the Markets? No. I did not. I did not pay very much attention to the estimates. I did not think that the matter of expenditure was so important a one as those other serious objections that I pointed out.
3342. Mr. Selfe also proposed to sell a portion of the cemetery site, but that would be common to any scheme? Yes; and I do not think it ought to be included, because, if you leave the terminus where it is, you can sell that land at any time, and make something out of it. You might go to St. James' Road, and might cut up the High School site and sell that, and credit that to the railway, because that would be a very valuable site if the railway were brought there.
3343. You have been to London within the last few years? I was there in 1894.
3344. Did you happen to visit either the Clapham Junction station or the Willesdon Junction station? Yes; I know them both. I know Clapham Junction very well.
3345. There is a remarkable involution of lines there, is there not? Yes.
3346. Do they not go over one another, and under one another, like snakes? Not at Clapham Junction; but at Battersea there is an extraordinary network of lines going over one another, and under one another.
3347. What grades do they have to submit to in doing that? I dare say that some of them are steep; but I would not like to say what.
3348. A constant suburban traffic is run over them? Yes.
3349. You do not know if their engines are more powerful than ours? No; I cannot give particulars.
3350. *Mr. Watson.*] I suppose the point of your objection to have steeper grades is, that it would render useless a portion of the expenditure already gone to on the suburban line? Yes; that is one thing.
3351. So it is not so much a question of what any particular engines can do, as it is a question of having an engine going over a certain distance at a slow speed when the engine would be wanted to go over the whole of the distance at a fast speed? It would affect the speed and the time of travelling, even supposing that the engine could take the load.
3352. The Railway Commissioners, I suppose, arrange their suburban traffic at present to go at a certain speed with a certain number of carriages, and a particular class of engine? Yes.
3353. And your contention is that it would mean a re-arrangement of the engines and cars, and that it would practically waste the money that has already been spent in lowering the grades on the suburban line? Yes. That would particularly apply, of course, to the steeper grades that have been suggested.
3354. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you know what grade there is from Erskineville station to the level of Eveleigh station? Well, there is a steeper grade there than on the western suburban line; but the engines on the Hurstville line do not take the same load. I think there are seven carriages there, as compared with eight or nine on the western suburban line.
3355. This diagram of gradients, submitted by the Railway Department, puts it at 1 in 60? I dare say it is.
3356. It is also 1 in 60 rising from Carlton up to Hurstville? Yes, I think it is.
3357. Can you state definitely what difference there is between the load which the same kind of engine takes on the south coast suburban district line, as compared with the western district line, as far as Strathfield? I cannot state definitely, because I have not the particulars here; but I could easily get them. I think I have the information in the office. I know that the trains are shorter on the Hurstville line than they are on the western suburban line, and they do not make as good time either.
3358. If any scheme for bringing the railway into the city were to have steeper grades than 1 in 60, would it be a serious interference with the present suburban line arrangements? It would be a serious interference.

- H. Deane. interference. It would not matter so much for the short Hurstville trains; but it would matter very much for the Homebush and the Parramatta trains.
- 28 Mar., 1900. 3359. *Mr. Watson.*] The greater part of the traffic is on the western suburban line? Yes; and those trains are longer.
3360. The main passenger traffic is by that line? Yes.
3361. *Mr. Dick.*] Do they use the same kind of engine on both lines? I think so. There are two or three kinds of engines used. Class "M" is the kind of which there are most. I think there are about forty of those engines; and there are two or three class "C" engines, which have been altered and made into tank-engines, to suit the suburban traffic. Tank-engines do not have a tender, but carry the water either alongside the boiler or over it.
3362. Do you think that the present proposal for bringing the railway in to King-street lends itself to a connection with North Shore? Quite sufficiently. I do not think that a connection with North Shore should necessarily be into that station at all.
3363. I merely wish to know if it would lend itself to such a connection? Yes; either by bringing the line right round and back on the western side, or by running down by means of a tunnel, and using electric locomotives.
3364. Right down, where to? Under the Harbour, to connect with the North Shore line at the head of Lavender Bay. There would be no difficulty about that. It is perfectly practicable, because it is similar to what is done in America.
3365. Failing that, it would be necessary to bring the line back over a curve, say, to Liverpool-street, in order to get on to the main ridge of the city of Sydney, and then go onwards to North Shore? But I would not recommend that the North Shore trains should be brought up to King-street on that line. I do not see why they should be.
3366. Where would you recommend they should be brought to? I would run them into Redfern.
3367. By what route? I mentioned a little while ago that I had prepared a paper on that subject. I would rather read that in its entirety later on, and then you will understand the position I have taken up.
3368. You say in the statement which you read yesterday that you have no hesitation in saying that two lines are not sufficient to take the present suburban traffic through to the terminus? Yes.
3369. A witness, whom we had before us, made this statement:—

At St. Enoch's station, Glasgow, there are, every working day, nineteen trains arriving in a space of forty-three minutes. That is on one pair of rails. That is at the rate of twenty-eight trains an hour arriving on one pair of rails, at a terminal station in Glasgow. This information is copied from the *Railway Magazine* for November, 1898. At the present time twenty-two trains arrive at Redfern on four lines of rails; but as a matter of fact, in Glasgow there are twenty-eight trains arriving in an hour, on one pair of rails, every morning in the year.

If that can be done there, do you think the same amount of work could be done, say, on Mr. Selife's scheme? I do not know the arrangements at St. Enoch's station, Glasgow. I should require to see the plan, and also a description of the working, before I could judge or make any comparison. Besides, as regards working, I am not a traffic officer. I really only provide what I am asked to provide by the Railway Commissioners; I do not undertake any responsibility as regards traffic. I would suggest that you should give Mr. Parry notice of being questioned on the subject, so that he could look up the matter of St. Enoch's station, for there may be something there which is not made clear in that statement. I am afraid that the information is not very clear, for Mr. Greenwood was asked: "Is it a dead-end station?" and he said, "I believe so." If it were clearly described, I think he would have said either "yes" or "no." The best plan would be to get the *Railway Magazine* and see what information it gives on the subject.

3370. *Mr. McFarlane.*] There is a rumour that it is the intention of the Government to resume the eastern shore of Darling Harbour; in the event of that being done, how do you think it would answer for a city railway extension? It would be of no use for passengers.

3371. If that were resumed for an extension of the line from Redfern to Darling Harbour and Circular Quay, how would that, in your opinion, suit for passenger traffic? It would not suit at all.

3372. Do you not think it would suit? No; it is too far over, and not at all where passengers want to go. It might suit for a goods line, but that is a different question.

3373. If it would answer both for passengers and goods, would it not be desirable to construct a line there? I would not like to give a definite answer to that question without very careful consideration. Of course, a goods line might be made along there, and the same line might serve also for occasional passenger trains; but such a line would not serve for an extension of the railway into the city for passenger traffic for general and popular use. To run passengers close alongside Darling Harbour would not serve the general purposes of the city.

3374. Have you considered this view of the matter: if the Government were to resume that land, in any case, would it not be much cheaper to utilise part of that resumed land in the construction of the city line? Yes; but it would not serve the purpose of extending the passenger traffic into the city.

3375. Say, for instance, that there was a railway station at the foot of King-street, would that not be convenient to the great bulk of the people in the heart of the city? People would have to climb up over the hill.

3376. Well, that is not far from George-street? It is a good way up to that street. I go up it every day, but I generally take the tram.

3377. Well, in the event of that resumption it is more than probable that the Government would utilise the foreshore for the construction of wharfs? Yes.

3378. And then such a line would be very convenient for goods traffic? That is a matter for consideration, certainly.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY INTO THE CITY. PROPOSAL FOR A WESTERN ROUTE.

At the request of the Committee, I have gone into the question of a practicable western side city railway scheme, and now submit what I think is really the only way of carrying out such a scheme, with a ruling grade of 1 in 100.

The long-distance traffic would have to stop at Redfern, and a station to accommodate it would have to be built at the Benevolent Asylum grounds. From there four lines would be extended over Belmore Park and over what is known as Paddy's Market, then, turning round, would pass over Pitt-street and George-street, as shown on plan, crossing over Sussex-street twice and dipping down with a grade of 1 in 100 to the corner of Kent-street and Market-street, and from there would proceed in tunnel to Wynyard-square.

At Wynyard-square an underground station could be provided with four platforms, provided the roads on either side of the square were tunnelled under. From here the lines would be continued to what Mr. Selife calls "The Rocks," where storage and shunting sidings would be provided.

So far as I can see, this is the only practicable way of carrying out a western side scheme, with a ruling grade the same as on the Western Suburban line. This ruling grade is indispensable, as otherwise the trains would have to be shortened or a new set of locomotives obtained.

H. Deane.
28 Mar., 1900.

The accommodation suggested at Wynyard-square is all there is room for, but it is not really sufficient, and there would be great dissatisfaction amongst the public. If all the trains, excepting eighteen, *i.e.*, long-distance trains, are brought into the city, there will at times be a very large number of trains starting from or arriving at Wynyard-square station. This would have to be worked as a wayside station only—which means that trains for the suburbs after being made up at the terminal yard, instead of being allowed to stand at the platforms for ten minutes or more, could only be detained a short time to take up passengers and luggage.

I do not believe that the most perfect traffic arrangements would bring about a state of affairs satisfactory to the travelling public, and the scheme has the further drawback of not being capable of enlargement.

As regards cost, I should put that down at about £300,000, not including the station at Devonshire-street and not including the cost of land and compensation which would, no doubt, be considerable.

RAILWAY CONNECTION BETWEEN SYDNEY AND NORTH SHORE.

This should, I think, be treated as a separate matter. I see no reason why the North Shore trains should be brought to meet any city railway extension for the west, nor do I agree with the statement that no scheme for city railway extension would be complete without provision for a North Shore connection. I am convinced that each proposal should stand on its own merits, and a sufficient reason for that view is that the ruling grade on the North Shore line is 1 in 50, whereas that of the Western Suburban line is 1 in 100.

If, however, it were looked upon as a drawback to either the Hyde Park or King-street schemes, that no direct connection with North Shore over the harbour by bridge is practicable, I would point out—as I have pointed out before—that by running back to Liverpool-street and curving round to the west side of the city, that connection can be made.

On the other hand, by continuing two of the lines on the east side of the Hyde Park or King-street terminus, and dropping down with a steep grade, the railway could be run in tunnel under the harbour, and meet the North Shore railway at the head of Lavender Bay. This part of the line would be worked—as such a long tunnel should be worked—by an electric locomotive. Any statement that such a method is impracticable is met by the fact that on the Baltimore and Ohio railway electric locomotives are used to draw passenger and goods trains through a tunnel $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long. This system is growing in favour, and electric locomotives are being largely ordered for similar purposes by other railway companies.

If a bridge connection with North Shore is required, I would propose the following route, which, although it involves a considerable amount of viaduct, is perfectly practicable:—

It seems to have been decided that the proper headway for a bridge is 180 feet above high water, and I have, therefore, assumed this to begin with. From the bridge, between Dawes Point and MacMahon's Point, the lines would drop down towards Sydney on the south side with a grade of 1 in 50, passing close to the Grosvenor Hotel, and raised about 20 feet above the street. Thence the line would run, still with a grade of 1 in 50, taking up a position either between Kent-street and Sussex-street, or, if allowable, in viaduct over the centre of Kent-street, and would follow in a straight line as far as Liverpool-street; after which it would curve to the left, and, passing over George-street, Pitt-street, and Belmore Park, would ultimately join the Redfern terminus. A station can be provided between King-street and Erskine-street at levels such that access could be given by means of a bridge to Clarence-street, without the necessity of steps or steep ramps.

The cost of such a railway, which would need only two lines of way, I have not had time to go into. Without sketching out the various details it would be impossible to give anything with accuracy. If thought allowable to go overhead along the centre of Kent-street, a large amount of resumption would be avoided, with its consequent expense. If, however, the route between Kent-street and Sussex-street is followed, there is a large number of expensive buildings abutting on either Kent-street or Sussex-street, which must be resumed.

I have here sections of those two lines. I wish to say that I do not recommend the Wynyard-square route. I do not think the city traffic could be accommodated there.

3379. *Chairman.*] In regard to the scheme which you have just read proposing a line by way of Wynyard-square as far as "The Rocks," you speak very disparagingly of a station at Wynyard-square? Yes. I do not believe that you could there get the accommodation that is required for a terminal station. Although it is not technically a terminal station—that is to say, there are not terminal docks—as regards traffic it is a terminal station, and at a terminal station you want to provide for trains to stop longer than if it were merely a wayside station, and that means that the platforms are occupied by trains for a longer period than the platforms are occupied by trains at a wayside station, and more of them are therefore required.

3380. And you want more space? Yes; and that is the opinion of the traffic officers.

3381. Therefore, from that point of view, Wynyard-square is not a desirable position for such a station? Yes; otherwise, of course, it is very central and convenient.

3382. As you say in your statement, the position is all that is required, but the accommodation is not the same? Yes.

3383. In your second statement just read, you refer to a possible line from Redfern by way of Kent-street to connect with a bridge to North Shore? Yes.

3384. You say that that can be obtained with a grade of 1 in 50? Yes.

3385. Well, all along you have objected to a grade of 1 in 50 in other schemes? Not for the North Shore traffic. I mentioned that. The ruling grade of the North Shore line is 1 in 50, therefore any extension of the North Shore line might clearly have a grade of 1 in 50 as well.

3386. Would you advocate two lines of railway passing through the city—one going through the middle of Wynyard-square, and the other two streets to the west along Kent-street? I do not advocate a city extension on the western side, but if a connection is to be made over a bridge with North Shore, I think the route I have indicated is the one to adopt, and I think that particular location over Kent-street on viaduct might be very suitable. If Kent-street were a street with dwelling-houses in it, I would not recommend it for a moment; but as there are only offices, stores, and warehouses there, I cannot see that there can be any objection to running trains overhead through the middle of the street.

3387. If that line of railway were constructed along Kent-street, you would have a station between King-street and Erskine-street? Yes.

3388. Therefore that station would serve a large number of people coming from the western suburbs into the city, and also people coming from North Shore into the city—to that part of the city—would it not? Yes; but the people coming from the western suburbs would have to change at Redfern.

3389. It would serve people coming to that part of the city? Yes.

3390. That being so, would it not seem rather ridiculous to construct also a line of railway to Wynyard-square so close handy? Yes; I think so.

3391. Therefore, if that Kent-street line were thought of at all, seeing that it would serve a large number of people coming to the western part of the city, would it not be better for the second line to go up more in the direction of Hyde Park, and serve the people who would want to go to that part of the city? Yes; I think so.

3392. That is if two lines were to be constructed? Yes.

- H. Deane. 3393. I understand that you have prepared these two schemes at the request of the Committee, but you do not urge their adoption? That is so.
- 28 Mar., 1900. 3394. You have had this question of a city railway under your consideration for a great number of years; you have been examined before the Royal Commissions and Public Works Committees over and over again; of all the schemes that have been put before us, which do you think is the most desirable to carry out at the present time? I adhere to the St. James' Road scheme.
3395. After that? Then either No. 4 or No. 10.
3396. Do you put No. 4 before No. 10? It would depend very much on the cost of the resumptions. I am not sure about the cost of resumptions in connection with No. 4.
3397. You put the St. James' Road scheme first? Yes.
3398. Then comes either No. 4 or No. 10? Yes.
3399. No. 10 being the King-street, or modified Hyde Park, scheme? Yes.
3400. And No. 4 being the scheme which goes towards Pitt-street, at the back of the Pitt-street frontages, and at the back of the King-street frontages? Yes.
3401. Those are the three schemes which, in your opinion, are the three best? Yes; I do not think there can be any doubt about it.
3402. *Mr. Watson.*] Is your preference for the St. James' Road scheme purely from an engineering standpoint, or from the point of view of economy, in view of the fact that the land is practically free—free of improvements anyway? I like it best from an engineering standpoint, because you have a direct run in. You have a fairly direct run in with the others. I do not know that it makes very much difference. But I like the terminal arrangement of the St. James' Road scheme very much better than the terminal arrangements of No. 10 scheme, and it avoids the necessity of that run round to the back of the Art Gallery.
3403. It has been suggested that by taking a slightly wider strip from Hyde Park you could avoid the necessity of an extension into the Domain in connection with scheme No. 10? Yes; that could be done by taking a very small extra strip, and covering it over again. I do not recommend that, but point out that it could be done, and practically the same amount of park would be open to the public as is shown on that plan.
3404. Assuming that a central station were built at Devonshire-street or Belmore-road, and that it was then found expedient to extend railway communication into the city, either by a circular or some other method, would electricity be practicable for the extension within a reasonable time? There would be no particular advantage in having electricity; it would mean changing locomotives.
3405. I want your opinion about the practicability within a reasonable time, with a central station at Belmore-road, of running all the suburban traffic by electricity, and including in the suburban traffic an extension into the city, by tunnel if necessary, also run by electricity? It would not be practicable without altering the whole of the suburban working.
3406. As a railway engineer, can you say whether there are any indications that electricity for suburban or concentrated traffic is within a reasonable distance of being brought into operation? Yes; it can be done. It is quite practicable.
3407. Assuming, then, that you had, within a reasonable time, the suburban traffic run by electricity, and a city extension for suburban traffic only, run in a similar manner, would it not then be possible to utilise tunnels to a much greater extent than is advisable with steam traction? Certainly.
3408. And that, meaning less resumption, would also mean a very greatly decreased cost for a city extension, would it not? I do not know that it would. I cannot say that going in tunnel would make it cheaper than going with a line exposed to the air.
3409. Well, although the actual amount of works would be larger, would there not be a great reduction in the cost of resumption;—you would not interfere with property to anything like the same extent by having a tunnel at a deep level as you would by having an open cut or viaduct? No; you could go under George-street if necessary.
3410. And that would mean a minimum amount of resumption? Yes.
3411. Is it not a fact that the greater portion of the cost of railway extension into the city is, except in the case of the Hyde Park scheme, represented by the cost of resumptions? Yes.
3412. And that could practically be saved if you were able later on to initiate an electric railway system for the city and suburbs? Yes. That is how I think an extension could be made in the future, if, say, the St. James' Road proposal or No. 10 proposal should prove inadequate. By that time electricity would, perhaps, have come to be adopted for suburban work, and it would be quite permissible to have an underground line.
3413. I think you said incidentally, a little time earlier in the inquiry, that it was your hope to use electricity for any eastern suburban extension that might be ultimately decided upon? Yes; I should certainly recommend that any new line, such as the eastern suburban, should be worked by electricity, because you could adopt steeper grades and sharper curves.
3414. Well, if it would be a good thing for that, would it not be equally good for any class of traffic sufficiently concentrated to permit of stationary power such as electricity being used? If the construction of the suburban lines were now being contemplated, I believe the question of using electricity would be very carefully considered.
3415. Do you think that the application of electricity is sufficiently advanced to make it within a reasonable distance as far as railway working is concerned? I am sure it can be done. There is a lot of suburban traffic in America worked by electricity—with the overhead wire.
3416. I understood that the conduit system had become very popular there recently? It is used in New York and Washington.
3417. Does it seem to answer, notwithstanding the severe winters they have? Yes, it answers very well; but it is more expensive than the overhead wire. However, in New York, they will not have the overhead wire, and in Washington it is forbidden, so they have to use the other. There is a new system coming on, by means of which the tunnel conduit would be avoided. The late Dr. John Hopkinson paid a great deal of attention to it, and was advocating it before he died.
3418. That is something different from either the overhead wire or the ordinary conduit system? Yes.
3419. *Dr. Carran.*] Is the part of Kent-street over which you would take that overhead line pretty level? It is not unsuitable for the purpose. There is one pretty good dip.

3420. You could get your grade of 1 in 100? There is no steeper grade than 1 in 100 between Redfern and a station at Erskine-street—at least there need not be.

3421. It would be on iron pillars, I suppose? Yes.

3422. With either that or the other line, could you not go nearer to the back of the Town Hall than you do? No; not to get the grade. The difficulty is in getting over one street and under the other with the ruling grade.

3423. Where would you have your passenger station—near the Town Hall on that line? I think it would be possible to make a station about there. There would be one at Wynyard-square, and there might be one somewhere near the Town Hall. It shows a grade of 1 in 100, dropping down from the crossing in George-street till you get to Market-street.

3424. You would not object to have a station on a grade of 1 in 100, would you? There are stations on worse grades than that. It is not desirable; but it could be worked. Very likely the grades could be eased a little so as to be made to suit.

3425. But on that plan you have not provided for any station near the Town Hall? No: I have not.

3426. In that case, there would be no station between Redfern and Wynyard-square? No; there would not be, but one could be arranged for if necessary.

3427. *Chairman.*] I suppose that in the scheme you read to-day, proposing to go to Wynyard-square, you have not provided for any connection with the eastern suburbs? Not from that one. It could be taken round the head of Circular Quay on viaduct; but I do not think that that is desirable.

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THURSDAY, 29 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

3428. *Chairman.*] You were requested to supply certain information to the Committee? I was asked to ascertain how much extra width of land would be required in Hyde Park if the extension proposed to the back of the Art Gallery, in No. 10 or King-street scheme, were left out. The extra width required would be 60 feet. That would make a width of 140 feet to be taken off Hyde Park as compared with 80 feet in width to be taken off Hyde Park for No. 10 scheme as originally proposed, and as against 340 feet in width to be taken off Hyde Park for the St. James' Road scheme. There are two ways of doing it. The plan submitted shows a way of doing it with ten platforms.

3429. *Dr. Garran.*] On the plan before us the easternmost platform is 17 feet below the level of St. James' Road at that point; if you extend the station-yard 60 feet further to the east, then the easternmost platform will be still further below the level of St. James' Road? Yes; 2 or 3 feet additional at most, or about 20 feet in all. But the main approach to the station on the western side would be on the street level, and there would be no approach for vehicles on the eastern side. That is, of course, exactly the same as in the St. James' Road scheme. With regard to the front of the station in the No. 10 scheme, there would be no difficulty in arranging it on exactly the same plan as has been shown in the St. James' Road scheme, if that were preferred.

3430. *Mr. Watson.*] Would that additional width of 60 feet of Hyde Park be taken from Park-street right up, or would it be necessary only to take it for a portion of that distance? It would not have to be taken south of Park-street, but only between Park-street and St. James' Road.

3431. *Dr. Garran.*] Would you require to widen your bridge in Park-street? I scarcely think so. It might be necessary, but I do not think so. It might be necessary at the northern end for the branching of the lines towards those platforms on the east. But it would not make any material addition to the bridge.

3432. *Mr. Watson.*] I think you stated that the plan you have exhibited to the Committee shows that with the addition of the 60 feet you could make ten platforms? Yes, with a middle road in each dock.

3433. Ten platforms, with a middle road or refuge siding in each dock, would be equivalent to eleven platforms with only two or three middle roads? There would not be very much difference. I think that on the whole the eleven platforms would be preferred. I talked the matter over with Mr. Parry, and he thinks that the eleven platforms, as we had before, would be better.

3434. Of those eleven platforms, how many would have middle roads? Three.

3435. Supposing you wish to put in at King-street an arrangement of platforms similar to what was provided at St. James' Road, could you do that with the same additional width taken from Hyde Park? Sixty feet, yes. But there would be no cab road, as in the St. James' Road scheme.

3436. I mean as far as the working of the platforms and the accommodation is concerned? Yes, it would be the same.

3437. So, if an additional 60 feet in width were taken from Hyde Park, it would be purely a matter for your Construction Branch to arrange as to the manner in which you would fix the platforms, either ten with an additional number of refuge sidings, or eleven without those sidings? Yes.

3438. It would not affect the width at all? No; it would not affect the width. I have also studied the question of width supposing only the suburban trains were to be brought in. For that purpose I have shown on the plan four docks with eight platforms—that is to say, three double platforms and two single ones. In order to provide for future developments, each one of those docks has a third or middle road. That takes up exactly the same space as No. 10 scheme does—that is to say, it takes up 80 feet of Hyde Park; but it would leave the long-distance trains at Redfern—I mean those eighteen trains that were mentioned by me the day before yesterday.

3439.

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3439. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Would that necessitate an extension of the tunnel? No; that is without the tunnel.
3440. *Dr. Garran.*] Instead of the tunnel? Yes. I think that the avoidance of the tunnel in the present instance would mean that if at some future time—which I do not anticipate—the platform accommodation should prove to be inadequate, the facilities for bringing in and taking out the traffic could be increased by extending the tunnel.
3441. *Mr. Watson.*] If the scheme were extended by the additional width into Hyde Park, would it mean any material difference in the cost of construction to that point—that is, after subtracting the tunnel, and extension into the Domain? It would be very much less costly.
3442. How would it compare, in the matter of cost, with the extension into the Domain—for instance, what would be the cost of that scheme, with the additional width, to King-street, in addition to what it is now to King-street? I think that the additions to the King-street station, as suggested, by taking this 60 feet extra of Hyde Park, would cost about £35,000, and that would allow of the subtraction of the whole of the cost of extension into the Domain.
3443. *Dr. Garran.*] If you take that bit out of Hyde Park, and widen your station yard in that way, it will not necessarily involve your lengthening your buildings? No; I have not included that. It would only necessitate the widening of the roof over the platforms.
3444. Because if you were to lengthen the buildings, you would have to take down St. James' Church? Yes. But the buildings have already had sufficient accommodation provided for them, and I do not include that. I think that the £35,000 I have mentioned would well cover the difference.
3445. Then there would be a saving of over £200,000 by taking that extra piece of the Park instead of the Domain? Something like that.
3446. I should like to have a re-statement by you of the cost of the original St. James' Road scheme;—do I understand the Department still calculates that at £550,000, exclusive of the price for land in Hyde Park? The estimated cost for works was £550,000 originally. There would have to be added to that the £30,000 which the Railway Commissioners ask for, for additional station accommodation and offices. I think, further, that something ought to be added for the increase of prices at the present time.
- 3447-8. I want to get your up-to-date estimate of what the St. James' Road scheme would cost;—if we add the £200,000, which is estimated to be the full value for the park land to be taken under this scheme, that would bring the cost of St. James' Road scheme up to about £800,000? Yes.
3449. And that covers everything? Yes.
3450. Covers the cost of these buildings? Yes.
3451. And all the resumption between Belmore-road and Liverpool-street? Yes.
3452. That is the complete cost of that scheme? Yes.
3453. Everything told? I think so. It was £750,000, with all the allowances, before, and if you add £30,000, as I say, for extra office accommodation at the station, that makes £780,000, and if I am right in saying £25,000 for the increase in prices, that would make it rather over £800,000.*
3454. And your estimate for No. 10 scheme will include the increased cost for present enhancement of prices? Yes. The prices have been adjusted.
3455. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I think you said that in the event of additional traffic going to King-street it would be necessary to carry out the Domain tunnel? No. I only say it would be possible to increase the accommodation at the station—that is to say, to increase the facilities for working the trains by putting in that tunnel.
3456. I should like to know whether, in view of that increased traffic, it would not be possible to cope with it by extending the width of the proposed resumption of Hyde Park and making a couple of platforms underground for shunting purposes, leaving the surface of the Park intact, and not making the Domain tunnel? I do not like the idea of making platforms underground. You could open up the ground and roof it over again, but I think that, in working, the smoke would make it rather choky.
3457. Well, even without increased platforms, if accommodation were made underground for shunting purposes only, would that not, to a great extent, do away with the necessity of making the Domain tunnel? You want a good deal of room for shunting purposes, a good deal of width, and that would be very costly; in fact, I am not sure that you could do it altogether underground, because, where the roads diverge and cross one another, the required supports could not be put in, and there would be such a wide space to be covered over.
3458. Would not the making of that accommodation be less costly than the making of the tunnel, as proposed, in the Domain? I am not sure that it is at all possible: I do not think it would be practicable to make shunting room underground.
3459. I do not mean the making of a complete system of shunting underground, but to accommodate the increased traffic you were speaking of;—would it not be possible to make some provision to cope with that—it might be a very largely-increased traffic—in such a way as to avoid the necessity of making that long tunnel in the Domain? I should not like to say. I presume that you mean by running two or three roads out in tunnel so as to get the trains shunted.
3460. Yes? I think that what would be really required in the station would be more platform room. Of course, the object in making the extension would be to give more platform room by running the trains alongside off more quickly and allowing other trains to come in.
3461. I should like you to clearly understand that even in the event of making the proposed tunnel behind the Art Gallery, you would want the additional platforms you are referring to; if, owing to increased traffic, it were necessary to make those additional platforms, would it not be possible—instead of going that roundabout way, and making a tunnel, and taking a large portion of the Domain—to make provision for shunting purposes, in addition to the increased platforms, by tunnelling so as to have the shunting done at King-street or St. James' Road? I do not think it could be very easily done.
3462. Would it not be less costly than carrying a tunnel through the Domain? I scarcely think it could be done at all—that is, in a practical manner. You want a good deal of room. The space in the Domain would allow of a good many trains being run off and stood there while waiting.
3463. Would you not have to have additional platforms even if that tunnel were made? No. What I meant to imply was that if a project were worked out, such as we have at St. James' Road, with eleven platforms

* NOTE (on revision): Including £200,000 for the Park, instead of Mr. Eddy's £100,000, the total comes to £905,000. If Mr. Siever's recent estimated value of the Park, namely, £165,000, be taken, the total comes to £870,000.

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platforms, or such as the modification which I suggested just now, and if at some future time those eleven platforms should prove to be inadequate—and I rather doubt if they ever would prove to be inadequate—then, by running a tunnel, and making sidings as proposed, at the back of the Art Gallery, the same advantage would be gained as if you were to add two or three more platforms.

3464. I understood you to say that by having the eleven platforms you spoke of, it would not be necessary to have the proposed tunnel in the Domain? No, it would not; that is quite correct.

3465. If those eleven platforms were to prove adequate for present requirements without that tunnel, would it not be possible to make provision for increased traffic in future by making additional shunting space by tunnelling further under Hyde Park adjoining the station? You could not make the adequate shunting space by means of tunnelling. You might make additional lines and platforms, but you could not make adequate shunting space in tunnel.

3466. If you could make additional platforms, will you explain how you could not make shunting space? Well, the platforms simply take up long strips of space, and you would be allowed to have columns along the centre of them, but for shunting purposes lines want to diverge, converge, and cross.

3467. What length would be required for shunting—would it exceed the length of a long platform? Yes; you would want more than that, because you would want not only the length of the train and a good clear length free of the train, but also length enough for the converging lines, probably a couple of hundred feet at each end at the very least.

3468. That is, a couple of hundred feet longer than a long train? Yes, at each end. An ordinary cross-over road takes up about 150 feet, and if you are connecting not merely adjacent roads, but also roads further back than that, it takes up a good deal more space; therefore, you might want at each end of your sidings 200 or 300 feet for the purpose of making proper connections.

3469. A very great objection is to the taking of any part of Hyde Park or of the Domain;—you have made provision with regard to Hyde Park, but if this tunnel, in view of increased traffic, is carried out, and takes up 7 or 8 acres of the Domain, there may be a very serious objection to that, and I was wondering whether it would not be possible to avoid that by making provision for the shunting by tunnelling? No. Adequate provision could not be made in that way, otherwise there would be no necessity to go all the way round to the Domain, but the shunting could be done in the tunnel itself.

3470. The great objection that I saw was, not the cost of the tunnel, but the taking up of such a large area of the Domain—it takes up 7 or 8 acres of the Domain? Yes, it does.

3471. You think it would not be possible to make a tunnel alongside the proposed platforms to accommodate the trains or make provision for shunting? No; it would not serve the same purpose. There was another point on which I was asked for information, and that was as to the reduction that should be made if four lines were to be constructed instead of six. The leaving out of those two lines would mean a reduction of £52,000.

3472. *Mr. Watson.*] Would the resumptions be smaller in that case? No. I do not think that they would be practically smaller, and I have not allowed anything for that.

3473. *Dr. Garran.*] Mr. Greenwood's scheme is free from an objection that you made to Mr. Selke's, because it goes through the Redfern station yard? Yes.

3474. In that respect it is preferable? Yes.

3475. Between the Redfern station yard and the higher ground on the other side of the valley, it goes on viaduct;—every scheme that must go through the station yard to get into the city must go on viaduct? Yes; that is correct.

3476. You cannot avoid that in any way? No.

3477. That will be common to all the schemes? Yes.

3478. Mr. Greenwood explains to us that, as far as Bathurst-street, he avoids all expensive buildings;—have you noticed whether that is so? I think he is right there.

3479. Then, excepting for the gradient, which he makes 1 in 60, you do not make any objection to his line up to the time he reaches Bathurst-street? No; excepting that he has only two lines instead of four.

3480. But although the suburban traffic takes four lines coming in—two fast and two slow—from the moment you begin to go on to your city extension the trains must all go at the same pace over that? Yes. I referred to that, if you remember, by saying that if all the traffic, fast and slow, is to go on two lines the trains will have to wait for one another at Redfern, and then proceed in single file along the rails.

3481. But the pace that they will go from the moment you leave Redfern will be the same pace for all the trains? Yes; but there will be inconvenient waiting.

3482. Do you mean to say that in the Railway Commissioners' scheme—where you have six lines of rails—your fast trains coming in will go faster over that bit of road than the slow trains coming in will? No; there are no intermediate stations there, but there are in Mr. Greenwood's scheme. If there were a station in Liverpool-street, the fast trains need not stop there, but the slow trains would stop there, and, therefore, the fast trains would be proceeding faster over that space.

3483. But we presume that if you make a city railway you will stop the trains at every station;—that is done on every city railway in the world? I do not think you need assume that for the quick trains that come in.

3484. Do you know a single suburban line in the City of London where the trains do not stop at every station in the city? I do not think there is anything quite on all-fours with this particular extension, but there are lines in London and elsewhere where the trains stop at some stations and run past others.

3485. That is going out of London? Going out and coming in.

3486. Within the city limits, on what you might call city extension, you want to stop your trains at every centre of population where you have made a station? With regard to London, I do not remember any line, except the Metropolitan, and Metropolitan District Railways, which has more than one station in the City of London; but when you take London in its larger sense, you will find that some stations are run past.

3487. And if we had a station at Liverpool-street, do you think that some of the trains would not stop there? I cannot say what the Railway Commissioners would find it desirable to arrange; I only say that it would be quite possible; and, so far as I see, it would be a satisfactory arrangement to stop the slow trains only at Liverpool-street, and to run the quick trains on right through to King-street.

3488. That means, then, that we are to go to all the extra expense of two additional rails simply to accommodate a few fast trains that come in, and save them one stoppage? No. We have four lines there, and it is intended to use two of those lines for the quick trains and two for the others, so you have them separated already.

3489.

- H. Deane. 3489. As far as Redfern you have, and you continue that separation simply to give the fast trains a fast pace also between Redfern and Hyde Park? Not so. It is to give extra accommodation, so that the trains should not have to wait for one another before proceeding on in single file to the city. There are so many trains coming in close together in the morning that they could not proceed on one line of rails without very great cause of complaint—that is, irrespective of speed.
- 29 Mar., 1900. 3490. I suppose that the Town Hall, other things being equal, would really be a good site for a passenger wayside station? For a wayside station, yes.
3491. It is very central for a large portion of the passenger traffic? I do not know about being central; of course, any station you like to make is central for a certain area.
3492. Well, the Town Hall is a centre for a very large portion of the city? I would not object to the Town Hall on that particular scheme.
3493. It is a very good site? Yes; if you want to have a number of stations, it is a very good site for one.
3494. I understand that you see a great difficulty in the double curve that Mr. Greenwood adopts to get from George-street into York-street;—do you think it is possible by any allowable curve to make that passage from George-street into York-street? I see no reason to depart from our ordinary practice, and that is not to have any curve sharper than 10 chains radius, and in the case of reverse curves, to have a transition in between them. In the case of any curve less than 20 chains, I invariably put in transition curves; and no line ought to be laid out, whether in the city or elsewhere, unless it is provided with that. You will remember in the old times on the mountains the discomfort there was from the oscillation of the trains passing from one curve on to another. That has been got rid of chiefly through the alteration of the curve so as to admit of transition curves. It has partly been improved, of course, by cutting out some of the sharper curves, and putting in curves of larger radius; but the chief cause of improvement is, undoubtedly, the introduction of transition curves. On the North Shore and Milson's Point line I have introduced the transition curves, and the curves there are 10-chain curves. I would not think of recommending any line to be made without proper transition curves.
3495. Have you any 8-chain curves on the North Shore line? No; they are 10-chain curves. The first proposal that was made was to have curves of somewhat larger radius—I think either 12 or 14 chains—and the grade was to be 1 in 40. I tried to get rid of that 1 in 40 grade, and succeeded in doing so by putting in 10-chain curves; but that is no reason why you should adopt 10-chain curves elsewhere if you can avoid them. I would not go sharper than 10-chain curves.
3496. Then, if the Government insist on 10-chain curves and transition, you could not get by Mr. Greenwood's route from George-street into York-street? I do not think you could, and I do not feel convinced that the way in which Mr. Greenwood has arranged his lines—the one to rise and the other to drop after leaving Bathurst-street—would give them sufficient clearance where they cross; I am quite open to conviction in regard to that, but it is for Mr. Greenwood to prove.
3497. If he were putting in only a single line, and leaving North Shore out of account altogether, there would be no objection to tunnelling under York-street? If the objection to a tunnel does not hold good.
3498. For the distance, that would be between Bathurst-street and Wynyard-square? About half a mile. I pointed out that it would take about two and a half minutes to run that distance, and the tunnel would not have time to clear.
3499. Would it be possible to put in ventilating shafts at the side of the road? They are not satisfactory, and would not be much good.
3500. Not if you were to have a fan constantly at work? You could do something with fans; but it would only be a mitigation of the evil.
3501. You see some objection to Mr. Greenwood's plan of one line climbing up over the other? Yes; I do not think that they would clear one another. I have not properly checked it; but I am pretty sure that they would not quite clear one another.
3502. Mr. Greenwood's explanation is that with one going down 1 in 60, and the other going up 1 in 60, there would be space enough from near the end of the platform in Bathurst-street to York-street for the one to get 16 feet over the other, or high enough, at any rate, for one to clear the other? Well, it would be a very tight fit.
3503. What would be enough for the headway—would 17 feet? It depends on the kind of construction. I daresay that with a couple of feet more you might do it. You could not do it with arches only. I think it would have to be with cross-girders and jack arches all the way.
3504. You see that Mr. Greenwood is trying to do with one line through West Sydney, what the plan you kindly brought us yesterday does with two lines; you have given up the idea of making one line serve for the West Sydney local traffic, and at the same time serve for the North Shore bridge, and you propose a line for each purpose? No, I propose more than that. I propose that the North Shore service should be carried on two lines independently, and that if the western suburban traffic must be carried in on the western side of George-street, there should be four lines for that.
3505. Did you state the minimum height for the underneath line, or rather between the two lines? The minimum height required is 15 feet, and you want something for construction. I daresay that with a system of girders you could do it in a couple of feet.
3506. That would be 17 feet? Yes.
3507. What I was remarking on was that Mr. Greenwood is trying the economy of killing two birds with one stone—that is, by making one line give the accommodation which the West Sydney people are asking for by giving them three stations, and at the same time giving the North Shore people what they are asking for by beginning to climb at the Town Hall until he gets high enough to go with his line over the proposed bridge? That is very false economy.
3508. You think it would be better to separate the two projects entirely? Yes.
3509. You think it would come cheaper in the long run? Yes. It would make Mr. Greenwood's scheme—always assuming you could get between the Town Hall and the Markets—a very much better one if he left out North Shore altogether for the present and took some other route for that.
3510. That could be done, I understood, and could be added in afterwards, but at very great additional expense;—it would be much cheaper to do it at once? But then you cannot serve the two purposes in the way that Mr. Greenwood proposes.
3511. You think, even if Mr. Greenwood's scheme be adopted at all, he should drop the North Shore element out of it for the present and make it simply a city extension on the western side? Yes.

3512. Then there would not be the same objection as you have to it now? I should have one objection less.
3513. You would not even then like the grades, the tunnels, and the passing between the Town Hall and the Markets;—those would be your three objections then? Yes.
3514. Then we get to Wynyard-square, where, in Mr. Greenwood's scheme, we have two stations—trying to serve a double purpose we have stations at two different levels;—do you see any objection to that? I do not see any particular objection to having stations at two different levels if you can give the accommodation required; but the objection still holds that you cannot do the suburban traffic on the lower pair of lines.
3515. It would only be a wayside station? Yes, I know; but I have shown, I think, that you cannot bring the suburban traffic in on a pair of lines.
3516. That objection applies to the whole of the line right through? Yes.
3517. Then, from Wynyard-square, Mr. Greenwood's scheme curves round and goes to Circular Quay in a cutting; Mr. Selfe's scheme curves round in a similar way and comes to Circular Quay with a viaduct;—do you think a viaduct is preferable to a cutting, or *vice-versa*? I think a viaduct is preferable to a cutting, if you must go that way. Mr. Greenwood's scheme, in my opinion, takes up too much ground at Circular Quay. I do not agree with him when he says that it takes up, practically, no ground there. That plan showing the area taken, coloured green, does not differ very much from Mr. Greenwood's plan. I made that from his description, before I had seen his sketches on the city maps, and there is not very much difference. Referring to the broader space between Pitt-street and Loftus-street, Mr. Greenwood brings his line up under Pitt-street, and places his station a little further to the west; the platforms, I understand, are carried under Pitt-street, and there might be a slight difference to the extent of a few feet in the location; but on the whole it is the same, and it is quite clear that the space taken up at the Quay is very serious indeed. Mr. Greenwood says that he would have a crossing over his railway opposite the Custom House. Well, he might have one crossing, or he might divide it into two, or do anything he likes; but he says himself that the rails would be only 13 feet below the wood-blocking. Therefore, his bridge over the railway there would be 4 or 5 feet above the surface of the street.
3518. Could he get over that difficulty by sinking his railway 4 feet deeper? Then he would have a steeper grade. He has a grade of 1 in 60 down from Wynyard-square. Mr. Greenwood's idea is to put ramps on each side, so as to carry the traffic to the level of Circular Quay. That road, with those ramps being raised above the surface of the Quay, would, of course, have to be protected by a low wall with a parapet, and that means that very much extra space is taken from the Circular Quay. Now in this map which I have submitted, and which is on the board, I have shown the existing tram lines and the future extensions down Loftus-street and Castlereagh-street, when it has been proposed to complete the lines which will be laid some day, and it will be seen that the railway very much interferes with those. Now, I take it that the tramway system is a system that has come to stay, and we must not have anything which would interfere with the tramway system. In my opinion we want both railway and tramway. We cannot do without the tramways, and we cannot do without a very considerable extension of the tramways, and those tramways along Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street, or wherever they come, must be connected with Circular Quay.
3519. *Mr. Watson.*] A viaduct would permit of the tramways being brought underneath? Yes; because the piers could be adjusted in position so as to suit.
3520. But in this case, with a line 13 feet below the street surface, you would have to bring your trams over by a bridge 3 or 4 feet higher than that? Yes; it would be necessary to have a bridge, and you could not drop down on the other side rapidly. You could not turn your trams round, as he proposes to turn his train traffic round—on a ramp; but those must go right through and curve round with easy curves to make a connection with the existing lines.
3521. *Dr. Garran.*] Then you think the interference with the roadway at Circular Quay would be so serious that it should not be entertained? Yes; unless the levels were altered so as to put that railway right down below, or raise it right above on viaduct, I think it should not be entertained; but apart from the interference with the tramway traffic, it is a general interference with the use of all that space at Circular Quay.
3522. Would not an elevated road on iron pillars, such as Mr. Selfe proposes, also interfere with the omnibus traffic on Circular Quay? Not very much, I should think.
3523. The omnibuses could not get underneath it very well, could they? Yes, if you made it high enough.
3524. Could the electric trams run underneath it? Yes. It is only a question of where you put in your posts; but I am not recommending any such scheme at all.
3525. I am only asking you whether an elevated road would offer less obstruction to the prospective traffic? I think it would be very much easier to arrange for an elevated road across the quay than for a sunken one.
3526. Could not Mr. Greenwood, coming in on an easier gradient, come in with an elevated road, if an elevated road were preferable? Perhaps he could; but I am afraid it would not be Mr. Greenwood's scheme. He says that he would not put his name to a viaduct.
3527. In order to get to the Circular Quay, Mr. Greenwood has to cross the Tank Stream;—do you see any difficulty at all in diverting that? I have not considered that point; that would be a difficulty, I should think.
3528. It would not be an unconquerable one, I suppose? I could not say until I had looked into that.*
3529. Then going beyond the station, Mr. Greenwood proposes to do his shunting in a cutting or tunnel running into the Government Domain as far as the stables;—do you think there would be room enough to do that? No, it cannot be done.
3530. Could he get over that difficulty by adopting Mr. Rennick's plan of running up by the side of the Government Domain where the row of trees is, and going on to Fort Macquarie, and doing the shunting there,—for his scheme would lend itself to that very easily? As I said before I do not think anything should be done that would affect the tramway extension, and I consider that Fort Macquarie is wanted for tramway purposes.
3531. Therefore you are jealous of letting the railway get possession of it? Yes.

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3532.

* Note (on revision):—The difficulty is insuperable.

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3532. Still he could get over the difficulty in that way? Supposing Fort Macquarie were not otherwise wanted, I daresay he could do something in that way.

3533. Do you think it would be a difficulty with regard to spoiling Government House grounds—I mean Mr. Rennick's plan? Yes; Mr. Rennick's plan would.

3534. It is the same thing practically; you think it would injure those grounds? Undoubtedly.

3535. Under the system under which the Governor here will be only a provincial Governor, Government House will, perhaps, not be regarded as so sacred a place as it is thought to be now? I think it would spoil one of the beauties of the harbour, and it is to be hoped, in the interests of the public, that even if there be no local Governor here, the Government will not allow that place to be spoiled, because it certainly is a beauty as you come up the harbour, which ought always to be preserved.

3536. All you would see would be the roof of a station; then Mr. Greenwood points out that coming in where he does, his line lends itself with great ease to an eastern suburban extension—do you admit that? Yes.

3537. Supposing the engineering difficulties you point out are conquerable, would not his plan of having a station at the Town Hall, and another at Wynyard-square, and another at Circular Quay accommodate a very large number of people? Yes; I think it would.

3538. Do you not think that that would be a line of access to the city that would enlist a great many votes on its behalf, other things being equal? Yes; that is assuming that it is a possible route, and not an impossible one.

3539. Assuming it to be possible the stations would be well located? Yes.

3540. Now as to the cost—Mr. Greenwood puts down what appears to be a very low figure;—do you think that he could do it for £730,000? I have mentioned one item of expense. I have not troubled very much about the estimate, because the objections to his scheme are so serious apart from the question of money. But I have noticed that Mr. Greenwood said that he expected that a tunnel for a double line of rails along York-street could be done for £50 a yard; and it is not my experience that it could be done for that.

3541. Do you think that one tunnel to carry two lines could be done for £50 a yard? No; that is what I mean. Mr. Greenwood says that a double-line tunnel could be done for £50 a yard, and I do not think it could. There are so many difficulties that would crop up in connection with that, even supposing you could get between the Town Hall and the Markets. When you get into York-street the relative levels of those two lines, and their relative alignment, make the construction so difficult that I am sure the cost would run into a figure very far beyond what Mr. Greenwood says; but, as I said before, I do not lay so much stress on the matter of cost as on the other objections.

3542. If it could be done for £800,000 it would be a very cheap line, would it not? I think it would—that is to say, if it could be done for £800,000 and serve its purpose; but it would never serve its purpose.

3543. If he were to leave out the North Shore line altogether, would that greatly mitigate the cost? I am not sure, but I think that the estimate that Mr. Greenwood gives there is for two lines of way only, and that it does not include the North Shore part. Mr. Greenwood says that from Redfern to the Circular Quay there would be provision for four lines of road; but in reply to Question 1847 he says, "From Redfern to Wynyard-square there would be four lines of way, and thence to Circular Quay and on the suburban line two lines of way," so it is not altogether as clear as one would like to have it. But if four lines of way are necessary at all, they are necessary to the Circular Quay, and under Mr. Greenwood's proposal it would be absolutely impossible to put four lines along Circular Quay, even supposing that the public permitted such a tremendous absorption of the Circular Quay as that would necessitate.

3544. *Mr. Dick.*] How does the amount of land taken at Circular Quay compare with that absorbed out of public streets and public parks, under No. 10 scheme? There is nothing of the public streets absorbed under No. 10 scheme.

3545. What about Elizabeth-street, from Park-street to King-street? Yes; Elizabeth-street is absorbed there. I understand that the city authorities have expressed themselves to the effect that they do not mind that absorption. I would recommend the Committee to ask them how they would treat an absorption of a similar area, or even half that area, on the Circular Quay. I think the Committee would find that a very different view would be expressed. The cases are not at all parallel.

3546. Why not? Well, it is quite clear that the taking of a portion of Circular Quay would be more objectionable than the taking of that portion of Elizabeth-street. Mind you, I am not approving of the absorption of any street; but if one street or the other is to be absorbed, I should say that the absorption of Elizabeth-street, between Park-street and King-street, would do far less damage than the absorption of that strip on the Circular Quay.

3547. You say we might ask the civic authorities their opinion about an absorption on Circular Quay;—is it a fact that they have no jurisdiction whatever over Circular Quay? I believe that the Mayor of Sydney's jurisdiction extends over Circular Quay. I should say that it does. I know that Circular Quay has been wood-blocked by the Government, but I fancy that the Mayor and the aldermen of Sydney would not relinquish their right to express an opinion about the taking of a portion of Circular Quay.

3548. *Mr. Watson.*] At any rate, they are interested in the traffic that goes over Circular Quay? Yes. I do not think that you would find that they would give up any right.

3549. *Mr. Dick.*] I am not sure whether yesterday you stated that the lines in Mr. Greenwood's scheme from Bathurst-street to York-street went in one instance either under the corner of the Markets, or under the corner of the Town Hall;—is it a fact that the lines, as proposed by Mr. Greenwood do go under either of those buildings? They encroach on the foundations.

3550. Of which building? Of both buildings.

3551. Does that mean that he would have to cut away either of those foundations to get the lines through? Yes; unless the location could be adjusted to what Mr. Greenwood says to keep clear of them; but I do not think it could, in fact, I am pretty well certain that it could not, under those conditions which I laid down a little while ago; and I do not think that any engineer not responsible to the Government, as I am, should lay down conditions and say what is a proper thing to do. I mentioned just now that a 10-chain radius was the minimum curve that should be used, and that there should be transitions in between, and under those conditions it is my opinion that Mr. Greenwood cannot put his line between the Town Hall and the Markets without disturbing the foundations.

3552. But if he violated the practice which now prevails in your Department in these matters he might do it? I do not know. He has not shown it on his plan.

H. Deane.

3553. Can you give us any idea as to the comparative loads which could be taken by the same class of engine over grades of 1 in 100, as compared with grades of 1 in 60? Roughly speaking, it is in proportion to the grade.

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3554. That would be an engine like the engine you mentioned yesterday—I think the "M" class? Yes. To run under the same conditions of load and speed you would want power in inverse proportion.

3555. *Mr. Levien.*] Where do you get instructions to draw plans for a railway like this;—do the Railway Commissioners direct in any way what course you should take, or do you act upon your own responsibility with respect to what you yourself consider to be the best and most economical line and the line you would recommend? It depends upon what my instructions are. In many cases, in regard to the city lines, I have been instructed to lay down lines on certain routes.

3556. Well, what were your instructions for this city line? Do you mean No. 10?

3557. No, any of them? Well, take No. 10. I was instructed by the Minister to lay down a certain line.

3558. Then, with reference to No. 10, you took your instructions directly from the Minister? Yes; and I worked out the traffic requirements with the assistance of the Railway Commissioners and their officers.

3559. Did you from any of the Ministers, or from the Railway Commissioners at any time, get instructions to exercise your own discretion in drawing plans for a line that you thought you could recommend to the Committee yourself? I have never been asked to choose a line myself.

3560. Not at any time? No. I should like to say, with regard to that, that I have always so far had a free hand in making suggestions—that no Minister has forbidden me to make suggestions with regard to routes.

3561. No, but he has given you directions;—as regards No. 10 scheme, did you get your instructions from the Minister, saying, for instance, "You shall commence at this point and finish at that point"? Those were the instructions. The details I had to work out.

3562. But you were to mind those two points—the starting point and the terminal point were under the direction of the Minister? Yes, and more than that. When I first submitted No. 10 scheme to the Minister I proposed to go as in the St. James' Road line across Goulburn-street, and then follow the same course until reaching Liverpool-street, and then cut across to Park-street, but I was told that that would not do.

3563. You were told by whom that that would not do? I think it was the Premier.

3564. The present Premier? Yes—that the location was not suitable; and so I had to work the other plan out. It has the advantage of taking a strip of the Park close alongside of Elizabeth-street, instead of a cutting alongside as in that plan; but it has other disadvantages which I have pointed out. But that is what was decided, and the Ministers decided on that route.

3565. Then No. 10 scheme is a Ministerial scheme? Exactly.

3566. Coming back to the first question I put to you, have you ever been instructed to have a free hand, and give your individual opinion as to which you think is the best scheme yourself? Mr. Young, and the late Minister, Mr. Lee, often asked my opinion.

3567. Have they ever given you instructions, saying for instance, "Mr. Deane, we want you to look into the city railway question, and give us your own opinion as to the best route to take"? No, they have never put it in that way.

3568. Your instructions are limited instructions? The first instructions that I had in regard to a city railway were to work out a scheme terminating at Park-street. That was submitted to the last Royal Commission, and then it was suggested that the line should go on to St. James' Road.

3569. But you have not answered my question;—I want to know whether you have ever had a free hand—for instance, "Mr. Deane, work out what you consider to be the best city railway, and which route it should take"; have you ever had a free hand in that way? I have never been hampered in any way.

3570. That is not the question;—have you ever had a free hand—for instance, "Mr. Deane, your instructions are to work out the best city railway, taking the best route you can"? It has never been put to me like that.

3571. Then there is no doubt you have been hampered by being restricted by some instructions being given to you in every instance? I do not call it being hampered.

3572. You do not call it being hampered;—it is simply obeying instructions; but they have not given you a free hand;—they have told you, "We want so-and-so done. Here is our starting point, and here is the terminal point, and you must prepare a scheme accordingly"—is not that it? Yes. I look upon it that the extension of a railway between points is, in the first instance, a question of traffic and accommodation, and it is for the engineer to see how that problem can best be attacked. The problem has been put to me to make a railway between certain points, and that problem I have worked out.

3573. If you had had a free hand, would you have adopted any one of those ten plans;—of any one of those schemes that you have submitted, would you, of your own free-will, say, "That is the line I would recommend"? Yes. I should choose the St. James' Road proposal.

3574. You would? Yes.

3575. If they had given you the freest hand possible, you would have said, "That is the one I propose"? Yes; that is the one; and I think I have a right to say that I had a good deal to do with the improvements to that scheme, and making it as good and as suitable a scheme as it is.

3576. You have given every consideration to every proposal that has been submitted;—now, if you were disinterested in giving your opinion, would you say that, in your opinion, the St. James' Road proposal is the best? Yes, I would.

3577. Putting aside your position as head of the engineering branch of the Railway Department, you would recommend that proposal? Yes.

3578. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think that that is the best scheme that could be formulated, or, if you were asked to propose a scheme of your own, do you think that you would differ from that in any way? Except in minor details, I should not differ from it. I think it is a very good scheme.

3579. *Chairman.*] There is a question that Mr. Greenwood has asked me to put to you; in your written statement you say that Mr. Greenwood "reckons, for instance, that the lines along York-street can be done for £50 a yard for the double road"; Mr. Greenwood desires me to ask you what was the contract price

H. Deane. price for taking out the rock on the Darling Island branch, without explosives;—do you know that from memory? I do not remember exactly, but I think it was 4s. 4d. a cubic yard; and the contractors always professed that they lost over it.

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3580. You say that they took it at too low a price? Well, they said so. I do not suppose they made much out of it.*

3581. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you remember all the Government schemes that were placed before the Royal Commission in 1891? Yes.

3582. Do you remember Government scheme "L"? Yes.

3583. Was that scheme prepared in your Department? That scheme was prepared under instructions. The instructions were, I think, from Sir Henry Parkes; but I am not sure.

3584. What was your opinion of that scheme? I did not like it. It is an unworkable scheme.

3585. It was prepared under instructions from Sir Henry Parkes? Yes.

3586. And you think it was unworkable? Yes. It was worked out in my predecessor, Mr. Whitton's time, but I do not think that Mr. Whitton himself liked it. Mr. Whitton's own recommendation was to utilise Hyde Park. This proposal was afterwards appropriated by the Railway Commissioners and called the Railway Commissioners' proposal.

John Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

J. Parry.
29 Mar., 1900.

3587. *Chairman.*] Mr. Deane, in giving his evidence, reviewing some of the suggested schemes for a railway into the city, handed in a statement beginning with the words, "The following are Mr. Parry's views, which I entirely endorse";—that document was, I understand, prepared by you? Yes; in conjunction with Mr. Deane's statement.

3588. And I suppose that that document correctly states your views? Yes. With the permission of the Committee, I should like to refer to certain questions and answers that have been given in the course of this inquiry, and to furnish some information in reference thereto. Turning first of all to Mr. Selge's evidence, on page 72, question 1505, Mr. Selge in paragraph 5 of his memorandum says:—

No single station or terminus outside the business quarters of Sydney can possibly be of such service to regular daily travellers as a series of stations distributed through those districts of the city where the business premises are situated. (Therefore a series of stations should be distributed through the city in any scheme to be adopted. See Mr. Rennick's opinion that the western side of George-street is the proper route.)

Now Mr. Rennick, in clause 5 of his report, page 1, states:—

If cost did not govern, a line near to and west of George-street, bisecting the business portion of the city and curving round to Circular Quay, would, in my opinion, meet the requirements best; but the evidence points to such a line being enormously costly, and not likely to pay for many a year.

Again on page 3 of his report, Mr. Rennick states:—

On economic grounds, therefore, an eastern route must be selected, and that favoured by the Railway Department close to Elizabeth-street seems to meet the economic condition best.

Again on page 4 of his report, Mr. Rennick states:—

The western scheme, on account of the excessive cost of providing four or six lines with adequate station accommodation, and a terminal station at or near "The Rocks" is, it appears to me, out of the question, under present conditions of traffic.

So that it will be seen that Mr. Rennick favoured the eastern scheme.

At Question 1593, Mr. Selge is asked:—

Would you have room at your terminus for all the carriages which would have to stand there in the middle of the day? Yes.

His terminus being at "The Rocks"; and at Question 1594, Mr. Selge is asked:—

Would you have more room than there is at Hyde Park? Yes.

I wish to point out that Hyde Park was never intended to be a storage place. Six lines of rails are provided down from Redfern to Hyde Park for the purpose of the trains storing going to and from Redfern, at which the storage accommodation exists at the present time. Therefore, it would not compare with Hyde Park. At Question 1595, Mr. Selge is asked:—

Would you have more room than there would be in the St. James' Road scheme? I measured the standing room provided in the King-street scheme at the back of the Art Gallery, and I found that it amounted to 7½ acres. I have 7¼ acres in the smaller scheme which only extends from Cumberland-street to Harrington-street.

That is referring to "The Rocks." Well, the accommodation provided in the Domain at the back of the Art Gallery was not intended to accommodate the whole of the carriages of the through trains and the suburban trains, but only a portion of the suburban trains. The through trains, and a portion of the suburban trains, would still run back from the King-street terminal station to Redfern, to store. The accommodation provided at the back of the Art Gallery was to enable, during the busy hours of the day, the trains to run straight away through the station, and unload quickly, get out of the way, and run to the back of the Domain to shunt and return—also, of course, when they had finished work in the evening, some of them to go and stand at the back of the Art Gallery. At Questions 1601, 1602, and 1603, Mr. Selge is asked:

In your estimate of the suburban traffic, do you include the Penrith and North Shore line as far as the Hornsby Junction? Yes.

Do you include the Illawarra line as far as George's River? I have not gone into that question; but there is no reason why those trains should not come down.

Then it is only the great trunk line traffic that you deal with? Yes.

What I wish to point out is that in determining the question of through, or country and suburban trains, a definition should, in all cases, be sought for, because, if you take the through trains, pure and simple, they resolve themselves into very few; but if you take what we call the semi-suburban, although running long distances, they amount to a large number, and therefore affect the question very considerably. Mr. Selge does not appear to have taken into consideration the actual trains he is providing for in his scheme.

At

* NOTE (on revision):—The price paid at Darling Harbour for excavation in open cutting can have no bearing whatever on a price to be paid for a tunnel under a street, where the traffic must not be interfered with.

At Question 1650, Mr. Selfe is asked :

What led you to prefer a route more to the west—was it with a view of serving the greater number of people, or avoiding expensive resumption? No; it was simply to take the people where they wanted to be delivered. Nine men out of ten do not want to be delivered at the top of King-street; they want to be delivered somewhere near George-street. Nothing has better demonstrated what I have contended during ten years than the marvellous success which has attended the George-street tramway. That has put the seal on what I have been contending for all that time.

What I wish to point out is, that the passengers at the present time travelling from Redfern station by the George-street tram, do not indicate whether those passengers would travel to King-street or not. There is a very imperfect service now of the steam trams from the railway; in fact, during the greater portion of the day there is scarcely any such service, and in the morning the majority of people who take a steam tram, unless they wait, have to walk to George-street and get into the steam trams coming from the western suburbs. Therefore, rather than walk to George-street to get into the steam trams, many people simply get into the George-street trams at the platforms, and prefer walking at the other end. I know that to be the case to a very large extent. At Question 1662, Mr. Selfe is asked :

Presuming it was thought desirable not to go to "The Rocks"—stopping, say, at the Markets for the present—would you be able to make such arrangements there as would successfully deal with the urban and suburban traffic, and enable the trains to get back? You would deal there with at least twelve trains an hour each way. I think you could deal with twenty.

Of course, twelve or even twenty trains in our busiest time would not meet the business; therefore, assuming the maximum at twenty trains, it would not deal with the business we have to do at Redfern, and get the empty trains and light engines and such-like through. At Question 1677, Mr. Selfe is asked :

When Mr. Rennick came from Melbourne, do you know whether he had your scheme under consideration? He was under my charge for the first day. Mr. Reid sent for me, and as soon as Mr. Rennick came into town I was with him for the whole of the first day. For the rest of the week he was in charge of the Railway authorities; but he was so impressed with my scheme that you will see from his report that, in his opinion, it is absolutely the best scheme. He had no statistics as to cost, except what he could derive from the reports by the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee. From these Mr. Rennick naturally deduced that my proposals were extremely costly. He therefore says, "If cost does not govern the question, the western scheme is the best, and it must come some day." He told me personally, "I think Sydney must have two schemes—one through the centre of the city, and one down the west, and I have recommended going down Hyde Park, because it appears that costs nothing for resumptions." He was led to understand that the Hyde Park scheme would not be debited with any public or quasi-public property. Therefore, as he simply made estimates on the data put before him, the Hyde Park scheme seemed much the cheaper, and he recommended it.

Now, I know for a fact that Mr. Rennick's instructions were—as given by the late Premier, Mr. Reid, in my presence—that he was to consider Hyde Park as covered with costly warehouses or mansions, and that it was impossible to obtain that site. Those were his instructions in going forward with his investigations. With those instructions he reported that, in consequence of the cost, he recommended the Hyde Park scheme—the eastern route. When his report was sent in the Premier wrote the following letter to him :—

Dear Mr. Rennick,

The Treasury, Sydney, N.S.W., 7 January, 1899.

I have just received your Report on the extension of the railway into the city, which I beg most heartily to thank you for, as a most valuable contribution on the vexed question.

The only point I wish to allude to is the fact that the scheme including the station in Hyde Park was, however admirable, not within the intentions of the present Premier, and that I wanted you to proceed on the basis of some other solution—even if not the best—of the question. On that point your Report—you will forgive me for saying so—is almost silent. For instance, take this part of a sentence: "As it is shown in evidence that the eastern line can be extended from St. James' Road to the Domain near Circular Quay for less than £100,000, this seems to be the right thing to do at once." In other words, you practically brush aside the actual position of affairs—that the Government will not deprive the people of the use of Hyde Park as a park, and as covered with a series of important city thoroughfares, and sacrifice the actual to that extent to the "ideal," with which, I can assure you, I am already most fully acquainted. The "railway ideal," when it comes into contact with a "health ideal," must, I think, take second place, if, at any rate, any other scheme is possible, and within reasonable bounds of expense.

"What shall the eastern line be?" Under that heading a few lines only as to the alternative scheme.

Now, having put the Government under many obligations by your kind visit, and the great trouble you have taken, would you object to give me a short addendum report, confined entirely to the "next alternative scheme," showing me your full opinion of it, on the basis that the Hyde Park official scheme is out of the question?

Yours, &c.,

G. H. REID.

In reply to that letter Mr. Rennick again endorsed the eastern route. He modified it so as to disturb less of the Hyde Park, and then takes his line down to Circular Quay and on to Government House grounds. What I wished to point out is that Mr. Rennick was fully seized with the desire of avoiding an eastern route if it were possible to obtain a western route, regardless, so far as he was concerned as an engineer, of the cost. At questions 1700 and 1701, Mr. Selfe is asked :

Would the proposed station at Christ Church be merely a passing station? Yes; it would be practically a duplicate of the Burwood station.

Would that accommodate all the people who would require to get out between Eveleigh and Liverpool-street? Yes.

I desire to point out in connection with those two questions that for suburban passengers Redfern would be abandoned. It would become a through station for country trains only. Therefore the people in George-street West, Surry Hills, and Redfern—the district around that part—would be cut off from their vested rights which they have at the present time in Redfern station, and would have to go either to Eveleigh or to Christ Church. And there is no doubt that it would act prejudicially to the property-holders of George-street and George-street West, and also to the business establishments. Of course, if you retain Redfern, so that passengers can still get out or go through, then you do not disturb any vested rights. At question 1703, Mr. Selfe is asked :

Do you think that if Mr. Rennick had come here quite disinterested, apart from any Government control, and if he had positive evidence as to the cost of your resumptions, he would have absolutely favoured your scheme? I could not say that he was not disinterested; but I would say that if he came here with a clean sheet, without the influence of the Blue Books, which he told me he had carefully read, and had to make an examination for himself, without any extraneous influence, he would have recommended this western line.

I should like to point out that Mr. Rennick, who is an engineer of great reputation, was brought here by the Premier of the Colony and told distinctly that the Premier desired the next best scheme, either by going on the western side of George-street or any other, but he required another scheme, to avoid going through the Park. Now, it is unfair to imply that Mr. Rennick was unduly influenced by Blue Books or by evidence put before him. He would analyse the whole most carefully; he would take the *pros* and the *cons* as to the value of the respective schemes, and his reputation would certainly cause us to believe that

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that he would, after full investigation, recommend what he considered the best thing, and he recommended the eastern route. At questions 1713, 1714, 1715, 1716, and 1717, Mr. Selge is asked :

1713. Would your four lines be in the street, or would they occupy any portion of the Markets? Three lines would be under the roof of the building, and one line would be under George-street.

1714. Would you have ample room for shunting? There would be no shunting at all; that would be done either before we got to the Markets, in Goodlet and Smith's yard, or it would be done in the tunnels between York-street and the Markets.

1715. Would not that be likely to cause confusion? No; it could be arranged without any difficulty.

1716. How long would it take a train to come in and change the engine from Goodlet's yard to the Markets? It would take no longer than at Redfern at present. It is entirely a railway question, and cannot be affected by locality. Speaking as an outsider, I should say they could work twenty trains an hour in the Markets. I have put down twelve to be certain. Mr. Eddy said forty, both ways, with a hay line.

1717. Would there be sufficient room there to adopt the traverser platform system? There is sufficient room to work a platform by making a large vacant space under Market-street, but I should not advise that. The traverser platform was first proposed by me, in 1890, for the station on "The Rocks," but that is a dead end. It might be adopted at the Markets as long as they were a dead end, but it could be removed when the line was continued to Wynyard-square.

I wish to point out that Goodlet and Smith's yard is some little distance from the entrance to the Markets, and therefore engines and carriages proceeding from the Markets to Goodlet and Smith's yard would have to proceed back over the main lines, and therefore it is impracticable and would be valueless as a shunting-yard. With reference to the shunting arrangements in tunnel between York-street and the Markets, there is nothing to show you what they would be. That is all I desire to bring under your notice with reference to Mr. Selge's scheme.

FRIDAY, 30 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

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3589. *Chairman.*] I understand that you wish to say something in regard to Mr. Greenwood's evidence? Yes. Taking Mr. Greenwood's evidence, I would first of all refer to the third paragraph under the heading "Description of route," in his scheme. Mr. Greenwood says:

In connection with this scheme, I propose to construct a loop-line from near Stanmore to a 70-acre shunting-ground near Shea's Creek, on which I propose to build self-acting gravitation sorting sidings, thereby virtually increasing the size (or working capacity) of Darling Harbour goods yard to three times its present capacity, and relieving the main line near Eveleigh of all goods traffic passing from South Coast district to South, West, or Northern lines.

Mr. Greenwood, I think, is under a misapprehension in regard to the traffic to be dealt with. In the first place, Shea's Creek would be an altogether unsuitable place at which to provide marshalling or gravitation sidings for Sydney. Then, with reference to joining at Stanmore, it is patent that you would have to construct a separate line from Stanmore, to get to the gravitation sidings at Shea's Creek. From a Departmental point of view it is difficult to see what advantages would be gained by going to Shea's Creek, even for the South Coast traffic. Mr. Greenwood says that the capacity of the Darling Harbour goods yard would be increased to three times its present capacity. Now, the whole of the Southern traffic and the Western traffic, and a part of the Northern traffic, are dealt with in marshalling sidings at Clyde and Strathfield. The trains are taken out from Darling Harbour in the rough—they are not marshalled at Darling Harbour, but are simply picked up in the rough as they are loaded, and run away to Clyde and Strathfield, where gravitation sidings are already provided. So you see that the South and the West are already provided for, and partly the North, at Clyde and Strathfield. To take the Southern, the Northern, and the Western traffic out to Shea's Creek, would be to take it out of its direct course; and seeing that the trains are nearly all marshalled now away from Darling Harbour, the increased capacity given to Darling Harbour by having marshalling sidings at Shea's Creek would not affect materially the present conditions of Darling Harbour.

3590. *Dr. Garran.*] But would it not be more convenient to do that business nearer to Sydney than as far off as Clyde? No. It is just as well dealt with at Clyde for the Southern and Western lines. You can bring goods trains into those sidings without interfering with the suburban line at any time; you are not restricted by suburban traffic in bringing goods trains into Clyde from the country, as would be the case if the sidings were at Shea's Creek. Mr. Greenwood says:—

And relieving the main line near Eveleigh of all goods traffic passing from South Coast district to South, West, or Northern lines.

Now, the traffic from the South Coast to the Northern, the Western, and the Southern lines is infinitesimal; therefore there would not be the least justification for spending such an enormous amount of money for gravitation sidings at Shea's Creek. I now go to question 1854:—

Apart from the question of expense, what objection have you to a site either at King-street, under the No. 10 scheme, or under the St. James' Road scheme? In the first case, you would simply repeat the trouble experienced at Redfern. You simply remove Redfern up to St. James' Road, and have a dead-end there.

I think that considerable pains have been gone to to explain to the Committee the improved design of the arrangements at St. James' Road, and it cannot in any way be said that it is removing Redfern station to St. James' Road, with its difficulties. St. James' Road is not intended to be a storage yard, nor for a large amount of shunting in marshalling trains to be going on. That would be done by running the trains back direct to Redfern, and there marshalling them.

3591. And then back again to take up their places to go out again? Yes; that is, after they had done their work in the morning, they would go to Redfern to stable, and would be brought out again at night, and, after finishing their work, would be stabled again. 3592.

3592. What would be the cost of running each train forwards and backwards twice, as compared with what you do now, doing it all in the present station-yard? The distance would be about a mile.

3593. Would 4s. a mile be a fair estimate? Oh, no. Working in with the suburban line, the cost would probably be 1s. 4d. or 1s. 6d. per train mile.

3594. This question has arisen in the course of this inquiry, and I should like to understand it thoroughly: the average cost per train mile has been for many years about 4s., now reduced to 3s. 10d. by economies;—how comes it that your average cost is 3s. 10d., and yet the cost of running over this particular bit of road is to be brought down to 1s. 10d.? Because 3s. 10d. is simply taking the whole of the working expenses of the Department, including administrative staff, dividing it by the number of train miles; but it will be readily seen that, to get at the actual cost of running an empty train back to Redfern from St. James' Road, it would not be at all right to take the average cost per train mile. In dealing with that matter you must deal with actual costs.

3595. But would you not charge it with anything for administration or for coal? For coal we would; but not for administration.

3596. At any rate 2s. a mile would be ample to cover the whole of the cost? Less than that—for empty running I am speaking of.

3597. Then, there and back would be less than 4s.? Yes.

3598. *Mr. Watson.*] The men who would have to work the running back of empty trains from St. James' Road to Redfern would otherwise be doing nothing practically for some little time? Well, Redfern would probably be the men's home—I mean that they would sign on and off at Redfern; practically, that is what would be done in many cases.

3599. *Mr. Dieh.*] Still that must increase the amount of time the men would be working on those trains, or shortening the effective time of their working? It would to a certain extent. I now come to question 1857:

Have you any other objection, apart from the duplication, of the difficulties at Redfern with regard to the proposed site for a station? It is useless for long distance and suburban passengers.

I must confess that I am unable to grasp the meaning of that answer. We contend that the suburban business admits at the present time of our doing the business satisfactorily at the new station, and as regards the through passengers, we contend that the great bulk of the through passengers would come to King-street. I now come to questions 1889 and 1890—dwelling upon the question of dealing with the business at Circular Quay, and assuming that the railway were carried down to Circular Quay, and that the eastern extension were not constructed:

Would you not want a little more than that to do the shunting? I do not think so, but we might. The remaining portion I have charged to the other line.

If we stopped there for the present, would you have to go under the Domain? No; I have 15 chains available.

That is in length. I have placed before you the number of trains to be dealt with; I have placed before you the actual number of trains which have come into Redfern on holidays, and which runs into as many as 629, I think. You know yourselves what the business is,—fast trains coming in between slow trains up to Redfern at the present time. Now all these would have to be dealt with at Circular Quay, with two lines of railway, and 15 chains long. I hardly need say more to convince you that the arrangements would be altogether inefficient. Besides, Mr. Greenwood himself is evidently in doubt. He does not seem to have studied the subject; because when he is asked whether he would require a little more land, he says, "I do not think so, but we might." It is too serious a thing to start on with conjecture such as that. We want certainty before dealing with a large question such as this.

3600. *Dr. Garran.*] Could Mr. Greenwood get over that difficulty by adopting Mr. Rennie's proposal to run up from Circular Quay, and go along by the side of the Domain fence, so as to shunt at Fort Macquarie, because he could easily turn round to do that, and Mr. Rennie treated Fort Macquarie as being an ample shunting place? I know the business lay of the place, and that the ground is very high and rugged. I do not say it could not be done—that is, the traffic which two lines would accommodate; but we must start with the fact that two lines will not accommodate the traffic, and it is utterly absurd to think that they would do so.

3601. I understand that during the busy part of the day the trains would follow one another at intervals of four minutes? But even then it could not be done. I propose to deal with that matter later on. Now I come to question 1930, referring to Redfern station:—

What I mean is this: If we are going to carry two lines of rails northward for your city extension, you might as well, while about it, carry your other platforms northward, in order to lengthen them—the long-distance ones? I do not think there is any need to take the long-distance ones northward for some years to come. If you can now accommodate both the long-distance and the suburban trains in the present station, and if you were to take 90 per cent. of that traffic through, you must have sufficient platforms left there for the long-distance trains.

Therefore, Mr. Greenwood's intention is clear—90 per cent. of the traffic is to come down, and 10 per cent. is to remain at Redfern. The number of trains—assuming that you bring the suburban trains down to Circular Quay—does not govern the question of the suitability of Redfern station. That can be determined only by actually laying down a plan which has not been done. I now come to questions 1933 and 1934:—

Then you would take the suburban on two sides, or on one side? I would take them on the east side of No. 3, and east from No. 3.

That is at Redfern station.

Towards the produce sheds? Yes; and I would keep Nos. 5 and 6, and west of them, for long-distance traffic—for the present, mind you.

Now, Mr. Greenwood tells you that in his scheme he would bring the suburban lines to the east of No. 3 platform, and that he would bring his country, or long-distance trains, in on the west. The effect of Mr. Greenwood's alteration, in carrying his suburban lines over to the east of Redfern station, and making his long-distance traffic go to the west of Redfern station, would be that you would have to cross the whole of the suburban lines with the through trains, with all their shunting, to get to your carriage marshalling sidings, all of which are on the eastern side of the main lines; besides which, it would, of course, necessitate the tearing up, practically, of the whole of the yard, because the main lines would have

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30 Mar., 1900. 3602. Would that difficulty be got over if Mr. Greenwood were to put the suburban on the western side? Then you would be on the side on which all the carriages were stored. You would have the same difficulty of having to cross the suburban line—that is, if you make that a storage place. In either way it is not satisfactory. I now come to Questions 1939 and 1940.

We have had it in evidence that proper platforms ought to be 600 feet long at the least;—do you agree with that? No, I do not.

Not for suburban traffic? Not for suburban traffic. Certainly not; and I doubt it very much for long-distance traffic. If you go to the station on Monday night you will find that they put two engines on the Northern train, and those two engines, and the cars as well, do not measure 500 feet; but, if I were building a new station in the Benevolent Asylum grounds, I would certainly make the platforms 600 feet long.

What we ask for is to be able to deal with the work at the present time. The Northern mail train, with two engines—when it is up to its maximum—would be about 560 feet long. With a long heavy train like that, you do not want to be in such a position as to be obliged to pull up within an inch or two of the buffer stops. If you run in right to the end of the platform, you cannot get the engine away unless you pull out again. You would require to put in a traverser, and that would be 60 feet, and you would have to stop clear of that. Therefore, 600 feet for those trains is not too long. There are, of course, trains shorter than that—some, perhaps, not more than 200 or 300 feet long; but what we have to provide in working the business is not merely for the short trains, but also for the long ones. At holiday times, for instance, what is the use of a 300-ft. platform? The difficulty is not in dealing with the day-by-day business, but in dealing with the holiday business, and when we have the trains up to their maximum length. I now come to Questions 1944 and 1945.

But your two suburban lines would spoil the crossing from east to west? Yes; but if you were approaching the station from George-street, you could get to No. 5 the same as you do now; but the moment you lengthen No. 6 across Devonshire-street, you cannot do it.

You could do it underneath Devonshire-street by means of steps? Yes; I think it will be possible, for a considerable time, to work your long-distance trains in your present station, without lengthening your platforms.

Of course that is merely an expression of opinion. When you have taken No. 3 and east of No. 3, that practically leaves Nos. 5, 6, and 8. The other platforms are altogether unsuitable for through business. It leaves three platforms, and the roads would have to be thoroughly reorganised; therefore, it practically means tearing up the whole of the yard. I should like it to be clearly understood by the Committee that, in dealing with long-distance trains, I gave the Committee figures of ordinary daily traffic. But it must be remembered that at holiday times nearly the whole of those trains are duplicated, and in some cases triplicated. Then, instead of the Southern mail running in one division, it will run in two divisions, the Western mail will frequently run in three portions, and the northern mail will run in two portions, and the Melbourne express will run in two portions. Therefore, when we speak of the normal daily traffic, it does not meet the case at all.

3603. When you split the traffic up like that, the trains are not quite so long—they are shorter than the excessively long trains? Yes, they are. You must have separate platforms to run your inward trains into, and sometimes the Western will come in in two or three divisions, and the Southern in two or three divisions, and the Northern also.

3604. Is there not generally an interval of, perhaps, twenty minutes between those trains in coming in? The Southern and the Western mails in the morning come in close upon one another. If one of those trains is running a little late, they may perhaps arrive at Granville Junction at the same time, and afterwards run block and block with each other.

3605. You would have that same trouble at King-street? No; I should have extra platforms there.

3606. Am I to understand that if you were to have a heavy holiday traffic—double trains coming in from the north, the south, and the west, and the usual suburban trains—you could deal with it all at King-street? Yes. I now come to question 1951:—

I have no right to say that it is a hardship that that train is not carried into the city of Sydney; but, apart from that, what reason is there for carrying long-distance trains into the city? I say nothing. Fully 90 per cent. of the public are better served at Redfern than they would be at King-street. People residing to the east of Victoria-street, Darlinghurst, and from there right down to Darling Point, Rose Bay, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra, Paddington, Moore Park, Alexandria, Botany, The Glebe, Forest Lodge, and Pyrmont, are served better from Redfern than they would be from King-street. It is only one-tenth of those in town who would be better served from King-street than from Redfern.

We are not proposing to close up Redfern, therefore the whole of the through passengers for those places mentioned could alight at Redfern. No inconvenience would be occasioned to those people; they could either alight at Redfern, or go on to King-street, just as they chose. I now come to question 1955:

Simply an extra expense to the Railway Department? Yes.

We maintain that the running of through long-distance trains down to King-street would be a source of revenue to the Department.

3607. *Mr. Watson.*] You could not add anything to your long-distance passengers' fares for that little bit? Yes, we could put a long-distance rate on, according to the Railway Act.

3608. *Dr. Garran.*] But do you think that you could get half of the long-distance passengers who now stop at Redfern, to go on to King-street? I think we would get a large proportion of those who now stop at Redfern.

3609. Would it not depend a great deal on which suburb they resided in? Yes.

3610. If the cab-drive were shorter from Redfern to their house, I suppose that they would get out at Redfern? I now come to questions 1963 and 1964:

So, in your opinion, we can make a city extension with a very moderate additional expense to the present station-yard? Yes.

— There will have to be something done to adapt that to the change? Yes; I think that Mr. Deane, in one of the schemes, puts down £20,000 for alterations at Redfern.

But I, myself, know that that £20,000 was put down for an alteration very different from that which would be involved by leaving the long-distance trains at Redfern, and bringing the suburban trains through. That £20,000 was allowed for alterations at Redfern for simply running the present traffic through to St. James' Road. Therefore, that estimate of £20,000 is, altogether beside the mark, to alter the station as indicated by Mr. Greenwood; but, of course, it is impossible to say what his proposals are without a plan being furnished.

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3611. If you separate the long-distance traffic from the suburban traffic, would that put you to the extra expense of keeping a large number of porters at Redfern? Yes. Now, in the morning, the suburban passengers require very little attention; but, when the through trains come in they require the maximum number of porters you can put on. Those men come on duty at half-past five in the morning, and practically they have done their work, so far as the through trains are concerned, by 7 o'clock—I mean as regards the mail trains from the country. They are then available to do the ordinary work of the station—attending to the ordinary suburban business, and such like;—but if we were to divide the traffic, and have part of it at Redfern and part of it at King-street, then we should require two distinct staffs—there would be practically almost a duplication of the staff. I do not say that there would be a duplication, but there would be a very largely-increased staff as compared with what it now takes to man the one station. I will give more particulars of that later on.

3612. *Chairman.*] This position might arise: if some of the long-distance passengers were to get out in large numbers at Redfern, that would cause great delay to those people who would want to go on into the city, and you would have to keep two large staffs; I suppose that the Department would encourage people to go right through;—you would rather that they came right through? You must not measure the business merely by the number of passengers, you have also to deal with mail bags and parcels, and there are van-loads of parcels.

3613. *Dr. Garran.*] They would all come on to Sydney? Yes. The luggage is not much when compared with parcels and mails.

3614. But the long-distance passengers would occupy your porters only in the morning and the evening? Yes.

3615. In the middle of the day they would not be wanted? Yes, they would. For instance, you have the Melbourne express coming in at 10.50, and the Northern mail at 11.40, and you have also your Newcastle trains coming in, which have to be attended to as through trains.

3616. *Chairman.*] You do not think there is any danger of Redfern and King-street becoming like two city termini? Not if we come down to King-street.

3617. *Dr. Garran.*] You do not get over the difficulty in any case if you stop at Redfern at all, because it is a certainty that some of your long-distance passengers will get out at Redfern? Yes. It will be similar to what we get at Strathfield. We stop at Strathfield and collect tickets there, and people who live on the suburban line between Strathfield and Sydney get out at Strathfield and change trains, and that keeps the train three or four minutes. I estimate that more people get out at Strathfield from some of the trains than would get out at Redfern, and I reckon that for through trains you would stop at Redfern perhaps two minutes, or three minutes at the outside.

3618. But if you stop at Redfern at all you must have a staff of porters there? Yes, like we have at Strathfield. We should have a staff of porters there, but nothing like the staff required to deal with through trains at terminal stations. I now come to questions 1982 and 1983:—

You are providing four lines of rails only for your city extension and for the line to North Shore, whereas Mr. Deane provides not less than six simply to go to a dead-end station at King-street? Granted.

If he wants six for that, can you make four do for what is a double railway? Yes. Mr. Deane's own opinion was that only two lines were necessary, and he designed his scheme for two lines, and everyone else who sent in a scheme designed only for two lines. The Commissioners have gone in for six lines now, but their scheme in 1894 was for only four lines. The 1896 scheme provides for six. These six lines consist of up and down fast, up and down slow, and two service lines. Those two service lines simply go into the Redfern yard, and no further.

Mr. Greenwood is under a misapprehension here. Those two service lines go to the Illawarra Junction. As a matter of fact we have six lines now straight away from the Illawarra Junction—that is the junction of the South Coast line—into Redfern. The six lines brought down to St. James' Road, therefore, would give us six lines from Illawarra Junction right to King-street, and we should have the great advantage of being able to throw the whole of the South Coast traffic (which at holiday times is very large), on to those two service lines, and utilise them not only for engines and carriages going backwards and forwards, but also for suburban traffic in addition. I now come to questions 1985 and 1986:

Having re-duplicated that line, they found that two lines would no longer carry the traffic? Two lines would carry double the present traffic on the lines if the whole of it were slow: but they want to run a fast train alongside a slow one, and they could not do that on two pairs of rails, and that is the reason why they have constructed four lines of rails. I propose to let the four lines remain there, and they will still run fast trains from Strathfield to Redfern, but at Redfern they must stop.

You cannot run fast trains through the city? No: you must run them slow.

I hardly think that Mr. Greenwood could have been speaking seriously when he informed the Committee that the whole of the present traffic could be brought down on two lines. Take our ordinary daily traffic: Between 8.30 and 9 o'clock we have the following arrivals at Redfern:—8.33 from Ashfield, 8.33 from Homebush, 8.36 from Hurstville, 8.37 from Parramatta, 8.40 from Hawkesbury River, 8.40 from Waterfall, 8.43 from Richmond, 8.44 from Ashfield, 8.46 from Campbelltown, 8.53 from Penrith, 8.55 from Homebush, 8.55 from Mount Victoria, 8.58 from Homebush. Those are trains which now arrive at Redfern, and would require to go on. If the first two trains were thrown out of their time, they would affect the whole of the business. Those are incoming passenger trains in the morning, to say nothing about engines, and nothing about empty coaches. Those trains are alternately fast trains, and slow trains going on different lines. If you were to bring your fast trains and your slow trains up to Redfern, and then make them stop at Redfern and take their ordinary course on a double line, is it reasonable to think that business could be properly conducted? If we could say to this person "You must come in at 7 o'clock," and to another "You must come in at 8 o'clock," and to another "You must come in at 9 o'clock," we could distribute our trains, one after the other, very nicely. But many passengers want to get in to their business at 8.30, and all want to come in together; or at 9 o'clock, and all want to come in together; and the workmen in the morning all want to come in together; and it is by the way in which we deal with the fast trains and the slow trains that we have popularised the suburban line, and caused people to look upon that line as being a model for any other place to copy. I do not believe that there is another place in the world—and I am speaking advisedly now—that has such an admirable service of suburban trains as we have, because we have located the trains in such a way as to suit the business people; for instance, we bring a train-load of passengers, express speed, without stopping at intermediate stations, through

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through from Strathfield, another in through from Burwood, another in through from Ashfield, another in through from Summer Hill, another in through from Lewisham, another in through from Petersham. People have settled down to the habit of coming in by those through trains, and you practically fill the trains at those places, and then run them straight in. What would be said by the suburban passengers if anyone attempted to modify the suburban traffic, and reduce the fast traffic to a slow traffic? They would not tolerate it for a moment. I might here, perhaps, bring in a case quoted by Mr. Greenwood, to show that he could bring in all the existing traffic over two lines of rails. In replying to question 2167, Mr. Greenwood said:—

At St. Enoch's station, Glasgow, there are, every working day, nineteen trains arriving in a space of forty-three minutes. That is on one pair of rails.

This is what I have noted in regard to that statement: St. Enoch's station, which is a dead-end station, having two main lines and two branch lines, making four in all, running independently into the station, which has six platforms in two sets of three lines, and one set of two lines, the length of the platforms being, the longest, 957 feet, the shortest, 813 feet; the width of the broadest, 31 feet, and of the narrowest, 27 feet; the length of the roof is 525 feet. Area covered is about $6\frac{3}{4}$ acres. There are about 500 trains in and out during the day of twenty-four hours. The general manager, on being interviewed as to the work of the station, made the following statement:—

Notwithstanding its size, St. Enoch has been found quite inadequate for the large and increasing passenger traffic expected to be accommodated there, and we are at present busily engaged in enlarging and extending it. We are building a new bridge over the river Clyde, to carry four lines of rails, to replace the present one which carries two lines of rails, and the running lines from St. Enoch to Port Eglinton Junction are being quadrupled. When the enlarging and extending of St. Enoch station is finished, it will be practically double its present size, as we shall then have twelve platforms instead of six, and we hope, when the whole work is completed, to be able to deal satisfactorily with the increasing traffic for a number of years to come.

With reference to the work said to have been done at St. Enoch between the hours of 8:40 a.m., and 9:25 a.m., viz., fifty-four trains and engines, dealt with on two lines, it should be pointed out that the two lines only exist a very short distance, and outside of this the traffic is conducted on independent branch lines; also four lines of way on the part where the greater part of the traffic is concentrated for some distance before arriving at St. Enoch. Included in these fifty-four I find thirteen empty carriage trains, and thirteen light engines, which means that after arrival the empty trains are hauled out and taken away for storage or other purposes. In Redfern station, between the hours of 8 and 9 a.m., we deal with forty-five engines and trains, and if the empty trains are included, which have to be drawn from the platforms for storage purposes, the number is fifty-nine, and between 5 and 6 p.m. the number is sixty; and this does not include light engines to and from engine-sheds in Sydney yard. If we were to count the empty carriages, trains, and the light engines into our business at Redfern station, we should put before the Committee a statement very different from the one we furnished when we merely quoted the actual business done in passenger work. I produce a sketch showing that at St. Enoch's station there are two branch lines and two main lines, making four lines in all, running into that station. I now come to question 1987:—

I suppose that three-quarters of a mile is a fair distance for city stations to be apart from one another? Yes. You have four lines from Homebush to Strathfield; but, notwithstanding the fact that you have a double line joining at Strathfield, you do not put on an additional line to convey that traffic to Sydney; and although you have two lines from Illawarra joining near Eveleigh, you do not put on two more lines to carry that traffic.

You will see that Mr. Greenwood's reasoning here is not at all such as would prove that the whole of the traffic from the north, west, south, and South Coast could be carried over two lines of rails. At Strathfield, when the Northern line was constructed, it was first of all junctioned into a double line, but a double line would not carry the traffic. I am sure that many of you will remember that, before the suburban lines were quadrupled, a passenger never knew when he would get to Sydney, or get home again. It is eight or nine years since the quadruplication was done. Before that time, on holidays especially, the people would hang about the platforms for upwards of an hour waiting to get to Sydney. We could not go back to that condition of affairs after extending the railway into the city. If we were to do so, it would simply bring everybody connected with it into ridicule. I now come to question 2007:—

Will you explain to the Committee how these two lines are going one to cross or overlap the other? Simply by the fact that, starting from Bathurst-street, the one line rises and the other falls with a 1 in 60 grade, until such time as the difference of level between the two rails is 17 or 18 feet—sufficient to carry one line over the other.

If we were to bring the suburban trains down to Circular Quay, the introduction of a 1-in-60 grade on that extension would nullify, to a great extent, the large expenditure which the Railway Commissioners have incurred in quadruplicating the lines to make the maximum grade, or ruling grade as we call it, 1 in 100. I think it would be a great pity to introduce such a grade as 1 in 60 in the last mile of such an important suburban line.

3619. Are your suburban engines incapable of taking your average load up a grade of 1 in 60? Not incapable, but it occupies the section very much longer, and reduces the speed. We run nine cars on some trains—not on very many, it is true, but eight cars is a very common thing, and the speed on a grade of 1 in 60 would be very slow; in fact, I do not think the lighter class of suburban engine could haul the load.

3620. *Mr. Dick.*] How many cars do you send with the "M" class of engine along the Illawarra suburban line? Occasionally nine.

3621. And in two places on that line you have a grade of 1 in 60? We have one such grade, coming from Erskineville to join the main line.

3622. And the other going to Hurstville? I am not quite sure about the Hurstville grade.

3623. They are both 1 in 60, and with the "M" class of engine you can take nine carriages on that line? Yes, we do.

3624. *Mr. Watson.*] And the same number of carriages on the Western suburban line over a grade of 1 in 100, and with the same class of carriages and engines? Yes. But as regards coming from Erskineville to the Illawarra Junction, if you were associated with the working of the lines, you would very soon see the disadvantages of having such a severe grade. If the train happens to be brought to a standstill on that portion by signals, the struggling of the engine and the delay in starting again are most serious, and

and disorganising to the traffic in a busy time. We have had trains stuck up on the Erskinville bank, and have had to send out engines to bring them in, and the delay, apart from the sticking up, is frequently very serious, and brings about disorganisation. My point is that, if we are spending a large sum of money to do a certain work, why should we introduce what are, manifestly, evils into the design. I now come to Question 2025:

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What tunnels have we on our railways more than 30 chains in length? You have a tunnel at Lapstone which is 38 or 40 chains long. It has a curve at both ends. Half the tunnel at least is on curve, and it has a 1 in 33 grade. Since that tunnel has been built, I do not think that fewer passengers have gone over the mountains than used to go previously. It has not affected the passenger traffic in the slightest.

I think the best way to judge that statement would be to go through the tunnel itself. In the summer it is intolerable going through that tunnel. We have the same kind of thing on the South Coast line with our Offord tunnel. That has a 1 in 40 grade—not 1 in 33,—and in that tunnel we have had trains stuck up, and the passengers have been in the tunnel for twenty minutes with the engine struggling to get on, and the engine has at last had to back out down to Stanwell Park, and the driver has practically fallen off his engine stupefied. That has occurred not only once, but a number of times, and we have to reduce the load very considerably below the normal carrying capacity of the line in order to obviate that very serious difficulty.

3625. *Mr. Dick.*] What is the length of the longest tunnel between Sydney and Newcastle? I think it is about a mile.

3626. Can you tell us why we experience no inconvenience in going through that tunnel with the train windows open; whereas, in the Lapstone tunnel, with the windows closed, you feel a great deal of inconvenience? Because you have very little steam and smoke emptying themselves into that northern line tunnel. It is on an easy grade, and is constructed for a double line of rails, and you have a train through it only occasionally; but, with trains following each other at the rate, as estimated, of one every two minutes, it would be the greatest pity to construct a city railway in tunnel to be worked by steam. I have nothing to say about tunnels being worked by electricity. But if you bring in electricity, you have to consider the whole question of dealing with the suburban business by electricity, because the detaching of locomotives at Redfern, and the attaching of electrical motors, would simply be going back to the dark ages in dealing with such business.

3627. *Mr. Watson.*] You would have to work the suburban traffic right through with electricity? Yes. The only way that I could conceive of dealing with a city line only by electricity would be to make that line independent of the present line, and to construct a railway going by Redfern and let all the passengers change into it. I now come to Question 2036:

How long will people be, running at a city rate of speed between Bathurst-street and Wynyard-square? Something less than one minute.

I think that the distance from Bathurst-street to Wynyard-square is about 40 chains, or half a mile. Assuming that the train is going at full speed all that distance, then, at 30 miles an hour, which is a good speed for a suburban train, it would take just one minute in covering that distance, on a very easy grade—far below 1 in 100. Now, this portion of the line would be negotiated in a tunnel of 1 in 60. I do not know how long the tunnel would extend.

3628. Five hundred feet is 1 in 60, and the rest level? At any rate, you have a 1 in 60 grade in the tunnel, and it is clear that the trains would not be running at 30 miles an hour over that. Therefore, at the very least you can calculate two minutes for that journey, because, taking the average running on the suburban line—starting, getting up speed, reducing speed, and stopping at a station,—you would not go at a rate of much more than 20 miles an hour. The average speed to Homebush, including stoppages, is 7½ miles in thirty-three minutes, which is about 1½ miles an hour.

3629. Is that estimate for a train that goes through to Strathfield, or for one that stops at all stations? One that stops at all stations. The next Question is:

Not more than that? No; it cannot be. The difference in time between the trains leaving Burwood and the trains leaving Croydon is, according to the time-table, about two minutes.

Is that the same distance? No; that is about a mile, and that time includes stoppage at station. Therefore, the time occupied in travelling cannot possibly be a minute in this case.

Now, the time taken between Croydon and Burwood is three minutes. That is time-table time for all stopping trains. I now come to Question 2074:

But still, the Government have not said so to us; they have asked us to consider schemes for coming into the city;—therefore, we want to know whether you can make this service as a city scheme without an eastern suburbs extension, at present, at any rate? Yes; but to do that you must go back to the Government House grounds, or as far as the Government House stables, in an open cutting—construct, really, the eastern suburban railway as far as the Botanical Gardens fence.

I think I dealt with that question previously. It is clear that Mr. Greenwood intends, not only to put the whole of the passenger trains on to his double line, but he is going to work his empty trains and engines to and from Redfern and the Circular Quay on these two lines of rails.

3630. *Mr. Dick.*] It is only temporary; of course his scheme is really a circular scheme? Yes. But if we were beginning to run these trains from Redfern to-morrow, say, and as the passengers were kept standing there we explained to them—"We have only a double line to Circular Quay, but that is only temporary," they would want to know how long the temporary business was going to last. It would bring us all into most serious discredit.

3631. But I think that Mr. Greenwood made it clear, as far as his scheme is concerned, that he wants the whole thing done at once? I admit that; but I want to impress on the Committee the impossibility of dealing with it in the position of leaving it at Circular Quay.

3632. *Dr. Garvan.*] If it were to be made at once, there would be a number of trains coming in to Circular Quay for purely city purposes which would not want to go on the Eastern extension? Exactly.

3633. You would have to deal with those by sending them back? Yes.

3634. Could he deal with those—only a portion of the trade? Supposing that Mr. Greenwood's circular system were initiated,—the great bulk of the population of the Eastern suburbs is out in the direction of Waverley. These people would not go round *via* Eveleigh to get to Sydney; but would want to come in this direction. Therefore you would have the great bulk of your passengers coming in from the Eastern side

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at the same time as you would have them coming in from the western side, because they would have to get to their offices at the same time, some between 7 and 7:30, others at half-past 8 or 9 o'clock; and with the bulk of the passengers requiring to land in Sydney at the same time, you would get a congestion of business at both ends; therefore you must provide a means of stabling your trains, not only from the eastern suburbs, but also from the western suburbs, and a circular railway would not meet the case at all.

3635. *Mr. Watson.*] Would you not have two lines of trains, one going each way, on your circular railway? But I should be running trains absolutely empty in one direction; it would be a great waste of mileage.

3636. *Dr. Garran.*] Mr. Greenwood proposed, in his complete scheme, to have a stabling arrangement on his eastern line as soon as he reached a suitable place? I did not know that. I deal only with his proposal as I see it in the evidence. What I want to impress upon the Committee is the fact that a circular train is all right for a certain proportion of trains—that is, to give the suburban people a chance of intercommunication; but that, for the purpose of bringing passengers into Sydney in the morning, and taking them out in the evening, a circular railway becomes a waste, inasmuch as you would incur a greater mileage to deal with the business. A circular railway is all right where you are right in the middle of a thick population, as in London, and where you can put on a five or ten minutes' hourly service; it is all right when you are in the midst of a big floating population all the time, and can run your trains round and round constantly. But we have not those conditions to deal with here. I now come to Questions 2076 and 2077:

That would involve some unproductive running? Yes.

Would that be less costly than taking all this ground out of that land? Far less.

You have first of all capital cost for taking out the ground, which ceases, and you simply pay 3 per cent. interest; but when you were running trains all day, as is proposed, it is evident that there would be a great waste in running these empty trains. The next Question is 2078:

There would not be very much traffic to Redfern in the early morning, or late in the evening, would there? I think there are eight trains now every day which come into Redfern, and run back straight to Homebush.

As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to say what the empty running would be under the conditions that would affect the new line, and, although the estimate is far below the mark, there would, I am satisfied, on the new line be upwards of twenty empty trains requiring to come down. Of course, they might be utilised for city passengers—I grant that—but they would not be required. Question 2081 is:

So all you want to do is to shunt your trains from one line to the other? Yes.

I have gone into that question in regard to St. Enoch's Station; and I think I have clearly shown the Committee that Mr. Greenwood's statement is rather an airy way of disposing of such a vast number of trains. It would require very much more consideration and arrangement than that. Question 2083 is:

We are told that if we were to widen the scheme before us so as to make it as wide as the original one was, they could do without this long route? No; they could do nothing of the kind. The additional standing-room on the St. James' Road plan is only two more platforms. The standing-room would hold only two more trains.

That is hardly intelligible to me.

3637. It means that if we were to widen No. 10 scheme so as to add two more platforms, as Mr. Deane explained to us yesterday, we could dispense with that circular line? Mr. Greenwood says: "They could do nothing of the kind." We say that we can do it satisfactorily—in fact, we should very much prefer it. It would suit the working very much better to get the additional space and go back to Redfern and avoid touching the Domain at all. I would point out why. You will notice that the station in No. 10 scheme is contracted in width, because we have four lines of rails running right through to a place beyond—that is, through to the Domain. That means that we can deal with more suburban trains in a given interval of time. A suburban train arrives at that platform, discharges its passengers in three-quarters of a minute, then runs away, and leaves the platform free for another train to follow; therefore, the object of the extension is not so much for the stabling of trains, but to enable us to deal with more trains at this station by getting rid of them more quickly. It is a distinct disadvantage to take them round there in tunnel to stable. We prefer going back; but it was absolutely necessary, in consequence of our being restricted to a certain width of space. Question 2087:—

So far as respects the cost of working, it does not matter whether we go into the city on the eastern or western side? The cost per mile ought to be the same.

In reply to that, I wish to state that the King-street and Domain scheme is about 2 miles long—about 1 mile 12 chains from Redfern to King-street terminal, and then about 1 mile from terminal to carriage and engine storing sidings in the Domain. This scheme provides that at the Domain shunting yard sidings only a portion of suburban trains would stable, through trains and some of the suburban trains being run back to Redfern, &c., to the present sidings to stable. This division of the business, by having to shunt trains at Domain, King-street, and Redfern, will necessitate a shunting staff at both Redfern and the Domain terminal, whereas the St. James' Road scheme provides for all trains being stabled at Redfern, &c., as at present, which only necessitates the staff at Redfern and St. James' Road, besides which the extension from King-street to the Domain requires three additional block signal boxes in addition to the terminal shunting yard staff. Again, the St. James' Road station is practically on street level, and provided with cab road to through platforms, thus enabling luggage to be easily dealt with; whereas King-street platforms being considerably below street level with upper and lower end platforms, and ramps from main assembly platform to train platforms and the cab road, it is evident more staff is necessary at King-street than at St. James' Road to deal with the business; the additional mile of permanent way of 4 miles in the King-street scheme, together with the carriage sheds and sidings in the Domain, would have to be maintained beyond that required in the St. James' Road scheme. In the King-street scheme, also, a number of trains would have to run on to the Domain shunting sidings owing to the through platforms, which, in St. James' Road scheme would not have to run forward to the Domain, but would return direct to the suburbs loaded with passengers. In criticising the estimates given by the Commissioners, Mr. Greenwood, in replying to Question 2088, is erroneous in his figures. He has multiplied the number of trains per working day by 365 days in the year, which is incorrect, as there are only 313 working days, and on Sundays the number of trains is only about 125, and less than that number in winter months. Therefore, you see that, at the very start, Mr. Greenwood, in furnishing the Committee with an estimate

of

of the cost of working, is seriously out, because of the number of days he has taken. In estimating the working expenses for the extension, Mr. Greenwood criticises the figures furnished; but I would point out that in estimating working expenses for the extension, the basis assumed by Mr. Greenwood, namely, multiplying the number of trains by the number of days and the mileage, is a wrong basis altogether. I have explained this matter previously. It would not cost us 3s. 10d. per train mile to run to and from King-street and Redfern. That is the general average cost for the year. In framing these estimates, the actual additional traffic staff required to man the stations, &c., the additional locomotive staff (other than engine men), the number of men required for permanent way maintenance, and the approximate cost of the running of trains, and the additional mileage were considered. You cannot bunch it with the average for the whole of the lines. You have to take the circumstances applying to the particular place, if the Committee is to be furnished with an estimate that can be relied upon.

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3638. But you have put in no share for the general administrative services there? No; because you are taking what it is actually going to cost you, and that is what the Committee want to know—not what is the average cost of working throughout the lines, but what is the cost of working this particular section.

3639. *Mr. Dick.*] Would there be no addition, then, to the administrative staff for such a section? No; there would be no additional administrative staff. As a matter of fact, there would be a reduction in the administrative staff, for instead of the Railway Commissioners being down in these buildings, they would be at that station. The whole of the out-door traffic superintendence would be there, and there would be a general saving all round, apart from the additional cost of working the section.

3640. *Dr. Carran.*] You and your staff, and Mr. Richardson and his staff, would all be transferred to King-street? Yes. By having the staffs brought close together, we should be able to economise in very many ways. We should not want so many clerks for writing, and walking from one place to another, when the offices were close together.

3641. How do you communicate with the Railway Commissioners now—by telephone, or by writing? By telephone and by writing. But there is, of necessity, an enormous amount of travelling between the Redfern station and the Commissioners' office, and there would be an immense saving, difficult to put into figures, if the whole of the staffs were brought together.

3642. *Mr. McFurlane.*] Could not the Railway Commissioners have their offices at Redfern? Then the Chief Railway Commissioner would be right away from the Minister. Instead of wasting the officers' time, the Chief Commissioner's time would have to be wasted in going to and fro.

3643. Is there frequent communication between the Chief Railway Commissioner and the Minister? I should imagine so. Then, of course, Redfern is out of the way of the Commissioners.

3644. *Dr. Garrar.*] Which is the more important—that the Commissioners should be close to their customers, the general public, or close to their officials? To the general public, I should think. In his reply to Question 2088, and in criticising the estimate furnished, Mr. Greenwood put his own figures. He says:—

The Commissioners estimate the traffic at £32,000 per annum, which is really 10,240,000 passengers at 3d.

The Commissioners have said nothing about three-farthings. They have simply given a probable estimate of the receipts from the extension. They have clearly stated what the charges are which they propose. These are mentioned in the evidence, and, therefore, Mr. Greenwood should know of them; and it is misleading to bulk them into so many passengers at three-farthings. The basis on which the estimate is given is clearly set forth, and the figures have been again looked at by the Traffic Auditor, and the Railway Commissioners are satisfied that the estimate which has been furnished to the Committee by them will be realised.

3645. That estimate was made before the George-street tram had taken away a great deal of the Elizabeth-street traffic;—do you think that if you bring your railway into St. James' Road you will recover from the George-street tram all that you have lost to it? We should recover from the George-street tram very largely; but, in addition to that, we anticipate that owing to more people going out to reside in the western suburbs, the traffic will increase to a very large extent if the railway be extended to King-street. Large numbers of people now live at Bondi, Waverley, and Randwick, because they can get into a tram near to their business, and go home by it without changing; but if they could get into a train at King-street, I am sure that large numbers of people, who now live in the other suburbs, would go to reside in the western suburbs.

3646. Has the Department made any revised estimate in view of the changes brought about by the George-street tramline? No.

3647. You still go by the old estimate? Yes. I now come to question 2089:

But would not the traffic be much concentrated on this line—a great deal more going over it? If the Commissioners can work that line for 1s. 4d. per train mile, I want to take my expenses at the same rate.

I take it that Mr. Greenwood is giving you estimates formed by reasoning from analogy, and not from any information he has sought out for himself. The Commissioners have given an estimate for working the King-street scheme and the St. James' Road scheme. Mr. Greenwood says: "If the Commissioners can work that line for so-and-so, I can work mine for so-and-so." But it is of no use framing estimates in that way. In Mr. Greenwood's scheme, I think his total mileage is 1 mile 64 chains down to Circular Quay. But, in that scheme, as compared with the St. James' Road scheme, you would have to provide block signal-boxes at intervals on the extension, you would have to provide an additional staff to work Wynyard-square, and you would have to provide an additional staff for working Circular Quay; and it is the additional staff which is required to man the additional stations, and to do the shunting at the various places, which would increase the expenditure. I took the trouble to make a rough estimate of the traffic expenses alone of the three schemes. I am speaking now from a perfect knowledge of the business, having gone into it as closely as I could. In the St. James' Road scheme the traffic additional cost would be about £4,000 per annum, and in the King-street scheme it would be £9,400.

3648. *Mr. Watson.*] We were told that it was £8,000 per annum for St. James' Road? That is the whole thing. I am speaking now merely of the extra traffic employes. This is what I am perfectly sure about. As I have said, the figures are.—St. James' Road scheme, £4,000; King-street scheme, £9,400. As regards Mr. Greenwood's scheme, I am unable to give you an estimate for that, because I have not seen any plans which would give me details to work upon. For that reason I am unable to speak authoritatively,

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30 Mar., 1900. authoritatively; but making a rough estimate on my own basis, I calculate that the traffic working expenses would be about £10,000 at least. In dealing with estimates you ought to go into details and not take what are called average figures. I have explained to the Committee how the increase is accounted for. In the St. James' Road scheme you simply transfer nearly the whole of your staff from Redfern Station to King-street, leaving just sufficient at Redfern to deal with practically a suburban station such as Strathfield or Eveleigh. You bring the whole of the remainder of the staff to St. James' Road. In the King-street scheme we would, of course, transfer a large number of the staff from Redfern to King-street; but seeing that under the King-street scheme we would have to deal with a large number of trains for storage and marshalling purposes at Redfern, we must leave men there for that. Then we should have a shunting staff and a supervising staff at the Domain, and we should have to have block signal-boxes between King-street and the Domain, and in the Domain, in order to preserve the electrical block spaces between the trains; and when you come to additional block boxes and other things, you see the expense begins to swell greatly. I state this in order to show the Committee why it is necessary to go into the matter of estimates of railway working carefully in dealing with what actually has to be done or will have to be done. Question 2105:

Will you tell us what you think your traffic will be on your western line? I am going to use the Government figures for this. Mr. Kneeshaw stated that the number of passengers arriving at Redfern was as follows (I am speaking of one direction all the time):—he said the electric tram carried 13,000 daily. He further said that if there were no railway traffic at all—and he did not want it—his cars in George-street would still be filled. I contend that those 13,000 people will go down by the train on the western line, and I contend it for several reasons. In the first place there would be no changes, in the second place the trains would take 6 minutes to go to the Quay, whereas the time-table for the electric tram is 16 minutes.

Now in estimating the time for getting to the Quay on Mr. Greenwood's line, as compared with our present suburban working, it would take him at least 8 minutes, and not 6 as he states, to get to the Quay.

SATURDAY, 31 MARCH, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, J.L.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

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31 Mar., 1900. 3649. *Chairman.*] Will you now state further what you wish to put before the Committee? Commenting further upon the evidence of Mr. Greenwood, I would refer the Committee to a portion of the answer given by him to question 2131:

There would be a junction, which is, of course, a most convenient thing to do, at Liverpool-street, and the whole of the traffic that came into Redfern would have to be first carried to St. James' Road or the King-street station; then change carriages into another tram and run back to Liverpool-street and round to Wynyard-square.

Supposing we were to construct the railway to King-street at the present time regardless of the North Shore line, and supposing that in future years it should be considered necessary to connect the North Shore line with the main suburban line, I would point out that, supposing you had a North Shore line to Sydney, then, for all time, the great bulk of the passengers from North Shore would require only to come into Sydney; and it would be only what I may call the visiting passengers who would require to go between North Shore and the suburban line stations. Therefore the great bulk of the North Shore traffic that you would have to provide for would be to and from Sydney only, and it is contended that a station on the western side of George-street would be the most convenient for that traffic. I would point out that it might not be necessary to connect the main suburban lines with a North Shore line for a great many years to come; but, if it should be, then a plan I have here shows how it could be done.

3650. *Dr. Garran.*] Your explanation is intended to show that the proposed curve in the Hyde Park scheme, *via* Liverpool-street, will not be wanted at all? Yes.

3651. If you connect at all, you would go straight on? Yes. The only possible thing that you require for North Shore and the main suburban line is, to make a connection for visiting passengers between the various suburbs.

3652. Then your view is the same as Mr. Deane's—that you should separate the North Shore line absolutely from the project we are now considering? Yes; and the contention is that there will be no difficulty in dealing with the question eventually, when it arises. Question 2132:

It has been suggested, in reply to a question, that by taking 50 feet from Hyde Park, on the east, we might dispense with a long tunnel under the Domain, and with large stabling yards at Sir John Young's Crescent, thus making the station practically a dead-end one—what objections can be urged against such a scheme? The first is one that has not been mentioned so far, namely, the blocking up of the streets.

I merely quote that question in order to lead up to 2133:

We are now on the question of working the station? Assuming that from Liverpool-street to Park-street the line will be in cut and cover, practically the whole of the shunting will be done in tunnel.

What I wish the Committee clearly to understand, which I have endeavoured to point out previously is, that the large amount of shunting that is done now at Redfern will not be done at Hyde Park or King-street.

3653. *Mr. Watson.*] Looking at the King-street station as a complete one, practically on similar lines to the St. James' Road station, then I understand you to say that, without the proposed extension into the Domain, there would be no shunting done at that station—it would be done out at Redfern? There would be a certain amount of shunting done there, but the great bulk of the shunting would be done at Redfern. Now the marshalling sidings at Redfern are in the station yard, and therefore the whole of the shunting in connection with the marshalling has to be done in that yard. But shunting equal to that now at Redfern would not be done in tunnel.

3654.

3654. *Dr. Garran.*] The other day Mr. Deane marked the St. James' Road scheme with a cross on the south-western portion of Hyde Park, as showing the place where the shunting would begin? Yes. J. Parry.

3655. Under those circumstances, do you consider it would be best to have the whole of the line from that point to Park-street in open cutting, so as to be in daylight? It would be far preferable. 31 Mar., 1900.

3656. Because if it were not all in open cutting, there would be some portions in semi-darkness? Yes; it would be far preferable. Of course, there would be no objection to a passing bridge. My view is that we should keep it open. At any rate I should prefer to see it divided up—not to have such a long continuous stretch of covered portion. I am speaking from a railway point of view, and I say that it would be very desirable to have it open.

3657. As a practical man, you would rather work the trains in the daylight than in the dark? Yes.

3658. The cross-over roads begin at the point where Mr. Deane put the cross? Yes, for through running.

3659. Without that cross-over you could not make any train go into any particular platform? No, that is so.

3660. Do you want the two cross-overs—one from one side to the other side, and one the reverse way? Yes. I think that that cross is approximately near the right place, but I should put it nearer to Park-street—the end of the second tunnel.

3661. How many feet have you from the northern end of the tunnel before you begin your cross-over for shunting? I think that in the St. James' Road scheme the shunting would commence 20 feet south of the Park-street crossing. In replying to question 2160, Mr. Greenwood says:—

That makes a total of 40,000, which, multiplied by 2, multiplied by 365 days, gives a gross yearly total of 29,200,000 passengers, at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per journey.

What I wish to point out is that Mr. Greenwood has taken 365 days, which, of course, includes Sundays. Now, we have only 313 full working days, the Sunday traffic not being half of what the traffic is on the ordinary days. So his calculations are, at the outset, on a wrong basis.

3662. But, in any case, the Commissioners do not propose to put $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. a day on to the fares of their season-ticket holders? The basis on which their estimate is framed is clearly stated in their estimate, namely, by charging on an ordinary ticket $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. extra each way; the first-class season ticket, 1s. 6d. per month extra; the second-class season ticket, 1s. per month extra; and workmen's weekly tickets, 3d. per week extra.

3663. That would not come out at anything like as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per journey per passenger? I have not run it out, but the basis is clearly given there, and it can be clearly ascertained what it will amount to.

3664. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How much per passenger per journey do you think it would be in addition—would $\frac{1}{2}$ d. be an excessive estimate, taking all the different classes of passengers together? Taking the ordinary ticket holders, the season-ticket holders, and the holders of workmen's tickets, the total number of journeys per annum would run, approximately, into 27,500,000. The Commissioners' estimate was £38,000.

3665. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you say, roughly, whether the bulk of the passengers in the aggregate number of journeys would be season-ticket holders of one form or another? Yes; the great bulk of the passengers would be season and workmen's ticket holders. In replying to Question 2164, Mr. Greenwood said:

On two lines of rails, I can work all the traffic that will come into Redfern during the next twenty-five years.

I think it hardly necessary for me to go into that question in detail further, because I went into it fully yesterday; but on the face of it, I can hardly think that that statement was meant to be taken seriously. However, following on to the latter end of the same answer, I notice that Mr. Greenwood says:

At the present time, they number 329. Practically, the number of trains arriving at Redfern is stationary; there has been no increase in the last three years.

There has been an increase during the last three years. But what I particularly wish to point out, as I did yesterday, is that 329 trains do not cover the business to be done. Questions 2166 and 2167:

But the increase in the passenger traffic would not be spread equally over the whole of the day, would it? No.

And, therefore, could not be applied equally to every train? But I am taking the busiest time of the day—from 8 o'clock until 9 o'clock. The Government figures show that there are 5,565 passengers carried between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning. That is in twenty-two trains, which gives an average of 253 passengers per train. I say that a train of eight cars will seat 480 or 500 passengers; therefore, if you were to have double the number of passengers, you would not need to increase the number of trains, because the trains are only half full, according to the Government's own figures. It is shown that in the busiest part of the day there are only twenty-two trains arriving at Redfern. If you deduct four of those as being long-distance and semi long-distance trains, that will leave only eighteen trains per hour to be taken along the Western line.

What I want to point out is that Mr. Greenwood estimates that he would carry 480 to 500 passengers by each train. Now, as the Committee well know, a large number of trains—for instance, from Penrith, Campbelltown, the Hawkesbury River, or from Waterfall—do not carry 480 or 500 passengers each trip, and if we were to say, "We will not run a train unless it has 480 or 500 passengers on board," we would shut out the long-distance people. Mr. Greenwood's reasoning is not sound at all. You have to give facilities for people to come to Sydney and to go out of Sydney at the proper time.

3666. Your argument is that the working of the trains will not stand being averaged? Yes; the working of the trains will not stand being averaged. Supposing we were to say, "We will not run a Penrith or a Campbelltown train unless we have 400 passengers." The public would not tolerate such an absurdity. One train may not have 100 passengers, but it is a profitable train nevertheless. With regard to the evidence as to conducting a two-minutes service, I should like to say that if the city railway were independent of our present system, and you were simply running round a short line with a big population, and you had your stations close together, and also your block-boxes close together, and had light trains so that you could start them quickly and stop them quickly, it might be possible under such conditions to run your trains at a two-minutes' interval, because you would reduce them to a sort of tram service; but you cannot run fast trains and heavy trains and maintain a two-minutes' interval.

3667. *Mr. Watson.*] Especially with converging lines from different points? Yes. Take the Illawarra Junction. With all the trains mixing there, the matter would be perfectly impracticable. Question 2314:

And as to all these Government schemes, I may take it that your answer is the same answer? There is not one I would put my name to, saying that I, as an engineer, designed that scheme as a scheme for a city railway for a city like Sydney. I would be ashamed to put my name to it as a means of producing revenue on the capital you would have to expend. I say it cannot possibly produce such revenue.

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The only reply that I think that calls for is—and I speak advisedly—that the scheme has undoubtedly received the greatest consideration, chiefly in regard to its convenience to the public, but at the same time the economic side of the question also being taken into consideration. As to the engineers who have designed it, I think we can place every confidence in the gentlemen who have undertaken it. Mr. Rennick, the Engineer-in-Chief for Victoria, has endorsed the scheme, and I think it is reasonable to accept that gentleman as an authority, and you are aware, I believe, of the enormous amount of consideration that has been given to the scheme. Question 2315:

Have you anything to add? In reference to the question generally of building a terminal station, either at King-street or at St. James' Road, I would point out that if you build a station at either of those two places, it will necessitate two terminal staffs, for this reason—you may take a horse to the water, but you cannot make it drink; and you may build a station at King-street or St. James' Road, but the public will not go there. The greatest portion of the public will leave the train at Redfern, and consequently you will have to keep two terminal staffs—one at Redfern and one at King-street, if you have a station there.

I explained to the Committee yesterday that if the terminal station were at King-street you would still require a good staff at Redfern to deal with the ordinary business, but that the chief portion of the terminal staff would be brought down to the new terminal station. I furnished the Committee with an estimate showing the traffic expenses for each scheme which I had worked out most carefully and in detail. It gave, I think, an additional expenditure of £1,000 for the Hyde Park scheme—that is for traffic expenses only—and £9,400 for the King-street scheme, and, as far as I could calculate it roughly, £10,000 for Mr. Greenwood's scheme. Those estimates were not made haphazard, but took into account everything that would require to be attended to, and the business that would have to be done.

3668. If the King-street proposal were altered by taking a further portion of Hyde Park, and not carrying out with the proposed Domain extension, would the traffic expenses then be smaller in proportion to those of the St. James' Road proposal? They would be increased a little, for this reason: The Hyde Park station, as I understand it, would be practically on a level with the street; but at King-street, the main assembly platform would be 13 feet above the train platforms. Therefore you would have ramps going to the general platforms and buildings underneath the assembly platform at the end, and the means of transporting the luggage between the train platforms and the assembly platform would necessitate some additional expense, but not a very large one.

3669. *Dr. Garran.*] Would you have to wheel the trucks up the ramps? No. The luggage arrangements would be perfect, because you would put the luggage down by electric lift to the lower platform, and then convey it to any platform as desired, either by Aspinall's overhead carriers, or by truck—probably by Aspinall's carriers, which are found to work so well at some of the English stations. I am not sure that I explained to the Committee that I have had taken the time of transfer between the trains at Redfern station and the electric trams in the morning. I had a special officer watching. Two trains arrive in the morning at 8:40—one from the main suburban line and one from the Illawarra line. After the arrival of the first train, the time was taken. Of course some of the passengers got away on the tram within a minute after the arrival of the train; but from the time when the first tram left with the first lot of passengers until the last tram left with passengers from those trains, the interval was 5 minutes, so it may be taken as correct that, during the very busy hours of the morning, the time occupied by passengers in changing from train to tram may vary from 1 minute to 5 minutes.

3670. *Chairman.*] And, no matter how many trams you put on, that cannot very well be avoided? They were going away practically as fast as they could.

3671. *Dr. Garran.*] Is that any quicker than the steam tram used to be when that came into the station? The steam tram used to be worse, if anything.

3672. It took longer than 5 minutes? Yes; in the case of some trains, because you had them bunched.

3673. Then, on the whole, the electric tram gets people away more evenly than the old system did? I think so. If it would not be thought presumptuous on my part, I would most respectfully say that, as the superintendent charged with the responsibility of working Redfern station, I would most earnestly urge that some decision be come to with regard to this question of railway extension. Of course, it is immaterial to me, personally, what may be done—as to whether we go to Devonshire-street, on the Benevolent Asylum site; whether we go to the western side of George-street; or whether we go to Hyde Park; but I do hope that something will be settled which will enable us to get out of the present Redfern station. At holiday times there is a great strain on the staff, and also on myself personally, because, although I may not have to do the actual detail working of running the trains in and out of the yard, still the arrangements are mine, and the strain at holiday times is very great indeed in working the Redfern station, and I do hope that something will be done to give us relief.

3674. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The great object is to relieve Redfern station? That is my object.

3675. *Dr. Garran.*] You explained to us fully before, that your greatest trouble is owing to the shortness of your platforms, and the impossibility of lengthening them between the tunnel and Devonshire-street;—could you get over that difficulty, to some extent, by adopting Mr. Selfe's suggestion, and beginning your cross-over roads at Eveleigh? I am sure it would not be satisfactory. Suppose, for a moment, that we were to attempt that, we should have to take up the whole of the Redfern yard as it now stands. The existing platforms, apart from their being short, are inconveniently arranged. For instance, one portion of the main station buildings is between No. 3 and No. 5 platforms, and the other portion is between No. 6 and No. 8 platforms. Consequently, to get at those station buildings, all the passengers have to go on the main platforms, and you cannot control the business. You would have to tear up the whole of the yard; therefore, practically you would have to construct the whole of the Redfern station anew, and, in my opinion, you would be spending an enormous sum of money to do that, and what would be the result in the end? You would simply have taken up the little room existing, and would leave no room for future developments in the Redfern yard.

3676. *Chairman.*] Would it be very risky to do that and carry on the traffic at the same time? It would be most inconvenient for the public and the safe working of the traffic during the carrying out of the alterations would be seriously jeopardised. In saying this, I should like to state that I am speaking with authority. I have been charged with the supervision of the carrying out of several alterations in that yard, and the anxiety in dealing with the traffic during the time those small alterations—small as compared with what these would be—were going on was very great indeed. I will not say that it would be impracticable, because there is nothing impracticable, but I do say that it would be most undesirable and risky.

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3677. *Dr. Garran.*] Then I take it you do not think it really practicable to lengthen any of the platforms in a southerly direction? I do not think it reasonable.

3678. If they are to be lengthened at all, they must be lengthened to the north? Yes.

3679. Even if we carry out the Hyde Park scheme, it may be necessary hereafter to lengthen some of the platforms at Redfern? No.

3680. You think it will not be necessary? No; Redfern would then become a very easy station to work, so far as the passenger business is concerned. Speaking about the alterations to Redfern station, I may instance the number of times that the Spencer-street station, Melbourne, has been pulled to pieces, altered, and reorganised, and afterwards organised again. If they had set down a complete plan at the beginning, as they have done now, I think that hundreds of thousands of pounds would have been saved.

3681. But there they have an entirely different arrangement—all their platforms are on one side? Yes. The design of that station is not analogous to the design of Redfern station. If there is anything that wastes money, it is patching a place like the Redfern yard.

3682. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What would require to be done at Redfern station in the event of the Benevolent Asylum scheme being carried out? You would have to take up the whole of the platforms to remodel the whole of the connections between the main lines, and partly remodel the sidings.

3683. Could the whole of the goods traffic be done at the present Redfern station in the event of the Benevolent Asylum scheme being adopted? Yes; that which is done there at the present time.

3684. That would be a thorough relief of the Redfern station? Yes; so far as working is concerned, that of course would relieve the Redfern station, and remove all danger.

3685. *Chairman.*] I understand you have some figures of the traffic? Yes. The estimated revenue, as given by the Commissioners, for the King-street-Domain scheme, was £38,000, worked out by the Traffic Auditor at the rates set forth in the estimate furnished by them on 20th December, 1899. The estimated number of passenger journeys by ordinary daily tickets and season tickets between Redfern and King-street, based on the existing traffic to and from Redfern, is 24,562,957; the estimated number of passenger journeys by workmen's tickets, 2,923,824. Total journeys per annum, 27,486,781. This assumes that each season and weekly ticket holder would travel once each way daily, Sundays excepted. No allowance was made in the estimate for passengers who may alight at Redfern, as it was considered the increased traffic which would be obtained by the extension to King-street, together with the saving of rents which would accrue by bringing the whole of the staff into the terminal buildings, would more than compensate for the loss of passengers who may get out at Redfern. The Railway Commissioners in that estimate did not specify that there would be a saving of £1,710 in rent—for instance, £1,200 paid for offices in this building, Electrical Engineers' office, £330; and Tramway Manager's office, £180. Since that time two other houses have had to be taken for offices at a rental, I think, of £365. So that the amount saved from rent through the staff being removed from the various houses and this building into the central terminal station buildings would be about £2,075.

3686. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Would a similar saving be effected if the Benevolent Asylum scheme were adopted;—would that site do to build all the offices upon? I think so; but I am not quite sure. In that matter there comes in a question of policy as to whether the Railway Commissioners should be up at Redfern, away from the Minister and the centre of commercial business, or not.

3687. *Mr. Watson.*] In the projected station at Devonshire-street, have they provided offices for the Commissioners? Yes, I believe they have; but I am not in a position to make a statement on the matter.

3688. *Mr. Dick.*] Where did you get the 27,000,000 journeys from? The Traffic Auditor—from actual work done.

3689. Do you know what your total number of journeys last year was? Those are last year's figures.

3690. Last year's figures, plus the increase which you hope to get, are they not? Oh, no. I want to make that clear. That is work actually done. No allowance is made for passengers who would get out at Redfern, because it is considered that the increased traffic which would be developed by an extension of the railway, together with the rents to be saved by transferring the offices to the central building, would more than compensate for that which might be lost at Redfern.

3691. *Dr. Garran.*] The first estimate of all, for the first Royal Commission, was made in 1890? Yes.

3692. The traffic has increased since then? Yes.

3693. You have had the Illawarra railway come in? Yes.

3694. And some additional traffic from the Great Northern line? Yes.

3695. Do you remember the old estimate? I think it was £32,000.

3696. It has now gone up to £38,000? Yes.

3697. *Mr. Shepherd.*] That is a plan of the Devonshire-street proposal; every convenience required for the whole of the staff is provided for there, is it not? I think it is; but I had nothing to do personally with the arrangement of the rooms in that building. I can speak of the King-street building, but I cannot speak of that one.

3698. *Dr. Garran.*] Were you consulted as to the rooms in the King-street building? Yes.

3699. You would have all the accommodation you want there? Yes.

3700. And in the St. James' Road building? I have not looked at the arrangement of offices at St. James' Road, therefore I cannot speak authoritatively as to that.

3701. *Chairman.*] If the proposed station were built at Devonshire-street, together with all those offices, that scheme would be unproductive in the way of revenue from the railway, would it not, because the railway would stop there? Yes.

3702. There would be no extra revenue to the Department for all that expenditure? Not one shilling.

3703. *Mr. Dick.*] You see the plan of the station at the Benevolent Asylum grounds, and you note that the whole of the station area is roofed over;—do you think that is necessary? I do not know that it is an absolute necessity to have a roof over the whole of the station; but you would require a roof over all the platforms; and when you consider the appearance of the place, I think it is far better to roof the whole of the station. Besides, the great convenience of having a large roof like that is that you have a comprehensive view of the whole of the station under it.

3704. Would not that keep the whole of the smoke and other products from the engines within the enclosed area, and would there not be a tendency to corrode the iron girders, and so on? I think that would be infinitesimal. I saw a statement on that matter in one of the American papers not long ago, and I suppose that is where the idea has originated of the unsuitability of large roofs; but if the station

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roof were looked after, and given a coat of paint every four or five years, there should be no trouble as regards corrosion. People might just as well begin to argue that iron bridges are unsafe because the girders are subject to the steam of the trains going underneath. I suppose that this roof will be from 60 to 80 feet high. We have a hard and fast regulation that drivers are not to emit smoke while they are inside a station building. There is no necessity for them to do so, and it is carelessness for them to do it, and, therefore, it is a question of discipline to prevent smoke from being emitted in a main station building. They can prevent the smoke from being emitted in the station.

3705. With respect to the steam trams, were they taken off before it was found that the people very largely patronised the George-street trams, or for some time after the opening of the electric tramway did the two systems go on together? The steam trams were not taken off exactly, but people were discouraged from using them from the first morning the electric trams began to run, because of the great inconvenience of bringing the railway trams, which all had to stand in Devonshire-street, to the station.

3706. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand that the steam trams ceased running into the Railway station-yard as soon as the electrical trams began to run? Yes, the same morning.

3707. *Mr. Dick.*] Have you made any calculation as to the increased cost—or the waste, as it may be termed—involving in sending trains back from King-street to Redfern to be stabled, and then back again to the station, presuming that that long tail were cut off the scheme now before us? The cost would be less going back to Redfern than it would be continuing on to the Domain.

3708. In what way? Because a number of the trains under No. 10 scheme would have to go to the shunting-ground in the Domain for the purpose of reversing. The four lines, or fast and slow trains, are on through platforms. Therefore, the trains would require to go, whether they were returning immediately or not, otherwise you would get no advantage by having the through lines. From a working point of view, it would be better to go back to Redfern than to go to the Domain, if we had the increased width.

3709. *Mr. Watson.*] During the busy times the suburban trains would not be shunted anywhere? That is so.

3710. *Mr. Dick.*] But taking, for instance, the morning—you do not send out nearly so many trains as come in, do you? No.

3711. Then what proportion would be able to go into the station and stop there in the morning and then go out again as passenger trains? I do not think there would be many in the morning; they would be chiefly in the evening. You commence your evening business at half-past 4, and your trains begin to go from Redfern loaded to the suburbs, and they come back empty as fast as you can get them back. That would be the time when you would have a rush of traffic in the evening, and the trains arriving at through platforms would have to go on to the shunting ground to be marshalled in order to go back again and take a second or a third load, as the case might be, to the suburbs. But if all these platforms were terminal platforms, and you had sufficient platforms to accommodate the trains, then the trains would not require to go to the Domain. Another engine would come on to the other end of the train and the trains could go out every two or three minutes. Besides you would save the time that would otherwise be occupied in going from King-street to the Domain. In other words, you could bring in a train say from Homebush to the dead-end, and the moment it arrived it would discharge its passengers, and in two or three minutes you could have another engine ready on the other end of the train and load up your passengers, and it could go out towards Redfern on its second journey.

3712. With respect to the point about the trains coming in to Sydney not fully loaded; admitting all that you have said is true, does it not follow that a train, say, from Waterfall, which now has only 200 passengers aboard, though it has seating capacity for 400, would, if that district which it drains became more populous, be able to take twice the number of people in that district and that there need not necessarily be an increase in the number of trains? Provided that you make it a stopping train at all stations.

3713. I thought you said that a train might come right straight into Sydney from Waterfall—not stopping at all the stations—and that it might have only 200 passengers aboard;—well, Waterfall might become more populous, and might supply 400 instead of 200 passengers for that train; in that case, you would be able to get twice the amount of traffic from Waterfall with the same amount of trainage accommodation as you have now? No; because if I put on an engine suitable for running from Waterfall with speed, and if I wanted to give the people of Sutherland and Hurstville a quick service,—and that is the only thing that will develop the districts—I should not, as a railway manager, think of insisting upon that train having 400 passengers. It may transpire that it will be so, but I do not think that it will be found that all your trains will be fully loaded up to 480 or 500 passengers.

3714. How many carriages do you generally run on the Belmore line? Sometimes five, and sometimes eight.

3715. What is the ruling grade there? It is 1 in 100.

3716. How many on the Milson's Point line? I am speaking of the more powerful class of engines. We have different classes of suburban engines—we have the "M" class and the "CC" class. They are the most powerful suburban engines that we have. We have also a very large number of "F" and "E" classes, but those engines are not so powerful. We have 17 "F" class engines. Those are not so powerful as the "M" class engines, but you cannot throw those engines away, and you cannot ensure having an "M" class engine. If you are going to work your locomotives to advantage, you have to work your engines first train in and first train out, as far as you can, and a train may come in worked by an "M" class engine, and may go out worked by an "F" class engine. Take the North Shore line: The load laid down, in the past, was seven cars for an "M" class engine out of Milson's Point station, but that has been reduced by the locomotive officers to six cars, because of the unsatisfactory working involved, owing to the grades.

3717. You stated, in explanation of Mr. Deane's plan concerning an extension to North Shore, that you thought the people of North Shore would require to be brought only to a station on the western side of George-street? No, I said to Sydney—that they would require only to come to Sydney.

3718. But you indicated that Wynyard-square would probably be as far as they would care to be brought? I simply said that they would require only to come in to Sydney, and they would come in on the western side—it might be to Wynyard-square or further along, but I have not gone into the question as to where they would come to.

3719. I thought that Dr. Garran asked you where you would put them down, and that you said about Wynyard-square; if that were the case, I intended to ask you whether it would not suit the people of the western suburbs as well as the people of North Shore to come to Wynyard-square? There is not sufficient room to deal with the business there.

3720. Can you give us any idea from memory of the cost per mile of working the suburban line at present? No, I cannot; in fact, it is almost an impossible calculation. It might be done roughly, but I would not give a snap of my finger for it, because you would have to go into what should be debited to country business in connection with the suburban line, and what should be debited to the suburban line proper; the difficulty is in separating the two.

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3721. Has any attempt ever been made to artificially ventilate either the Lapstone tunnel or the Waterfall tunnel? Waterfall tunnel—yes. One shaft was put down, but, though it was put down, our difficulty still remains; in fact, it is since the shaft was put down that we have had the trouble I spoke of—of trains sticking up in the tunnel, and having to back out.

George McRae, Principal Assistant Architect, Government Architect's Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

3722. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in your present position? Two and a-half years.

3723. Prior to that you were the City Architect for the Sydney Corporation? Yes.

3724. For how many years? Twelve.

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3725. Have you studied the plans for an extension of the railway into the city, as suggested by Mr. Selfe and Mr. Greenwood? I have seen the basement plan here, showing Mr. Selfe's scheme.

3726. Mr. Greenwood proposes to go under part of the foundations at the north-east corner, of the Town Hall? I have not any knowledge of how far the foundations of the Town Hall extend beyond the plinth, but I should say not more than 1 foot or 18 inches generally. Mr. Greenwood's plan shows that the tunnel wall clears the plinth corner, but cuts into the area wall, and that area is used for supplying light and ventilation to the basement rooms, and there is a window right opposite to where the proposed wall would cut into the area, and that wall would affect the light in that room.

3727. But he is below the level of that window? If so he would not affect the light in that room.

3728. It is proposed by Mr. Greenwood, and he says his plan shows it, that the railway should go within a foot of the Town Hall foundations at the north-eastern corner of the Town Hall; do you think it would be desirable to have the railway traffic of the whole of the suburbs of Sydney brought by trains so close to that building? I do not think it would be desirable to have the tunnel so near to that building. The footings are sure to project, as I said, 1 foot or 18 inches, and that being a building of great importance, and a public building, I think that the running of the railway so close might ultimately have a tendency to, in a measure, cause cracks or settlements in that building.

3729. And possibly vibration? Yes; I think there would be a certain amount of vibration communicated to the building, because the tunnel wall, being so near the foundations—almost touching them—is bound to communicate a certain amount of vibration to the superstructure.

3730. The railway rails would, I understand, be about 20 feet below the street surface at that corner, and the top of the tunnel would be about 3 feet under the street surface;—do you think that 20 feet would be lower than the Town Hall foundations? I have no knowledge of the actual depth, but I should imagine that it would be. I do not think it is at all probable that the foundations go to that depth.

3731. If this railway tunnel, close to the Town Hall, were to be 20 feet below the road surface, and if the foundations of the Town Hall did not go down as much as 20 feet, would that necessitate underpinning the foundations of the Town Hall? Certainly.

3732. Would that be an easy job? It would be a very difficult job. It could be done, but it would be a difficult undertaking.

3733. *Mr. Dick.*] Are not the foundations of the Town Hall on solid rock? I should imagine they are on solid rock.

3734. Then, would there be any necessity for underpinning? Yes; they must be underpinned. So near the surface the rock would not be sufficiently strong to support the wall above if a side of the rock were cut away. It would be absolutely necessary to underpin the wall if the tunnel went lower than the foundations, going so close to the corner of the building.

3735. *Chairman.*] If you were City Architect at the present time, and you were asked to give your consent to a railway skimming that north-eastern corner of the Town Hall, as proposed, what would you say? I should advise the Council not to sanction it.

3736. *Mr. Shepherd.*] It would be attended with danger to the building? Yes; in my opinion it would.

3737. *Mr. Lericen.*] I suppose that underpinning is always undesirable? It always tends to weaken.

3738. *Chairman.*] And, independent of that, there is the undesirability of having trains running so close to the building, very likely causing vibration and possibly injury to the building? Yes.

3739. *Mr. Dick.*] This tunnel, if it were constructed, would have to be ventilated, and the ventilation shafts would be for the purpose of letting out a large quantity of smoke that would accumulate in the tunnel;—if any of those ventilation shafts came near to the Town Hall entrance or windows, would that be desirable in a building like the Town Hall? I do not think it would be at all desirable to have the ventilating shafts near to the Town Hall, unless they were carried up beyond the building, and even then they would be very unsightly.

3740. There is a large amount of steel and zinc work in the Town Hall? Yes, in the Centennial Hall—the large hall—the ceiling there is constructed of zinc.

3741. If smoke from the trains were to get into that building, would that be desirable; would it not seriously affect the decorations of the ceiling? It would be very undesirable to allow smoky fumes to get into the Town Hall at all.

3742. The windows of the Centennial Hall are mostly open? They are nearly always open during a performance—the clere-story windows.

3743. It is also proposed, under Mr. Greenwood's scheme, to cut over from the north-east corner of the Town Hall to the south-west corner of the George-street Markets, with the lower railway tunnel, but not going within 2 or 3 feet of the basement of the George-street Markets;—what do you say to that? I do not think that that would be so objectionable as touching, because this pier at the south-west corner of the Markets is a very large pier, and there would be 3 feet of solid rock between that and the tunnel, and therefore I do not think that the building would be affected.

3744. The construction of that basement is quite different from the construction of the Town Hall basement? Yes; and I do not suppose that the tunnel would go lower than the basement; besides, the pier

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pier is a very large one, and the angle of the building above is some distance from the corner, and there is a retaining-wall with a space of about 3 inches, and it would be very difficult to communicate any vibration to the pier directly. I do not think there is so much objection to the tunnel at that part as at the corner of the Town Hall, where it touches the building.

3745. Mr. Selfe, in his scheme, proposes to utilise the basement of the Victoria Markets for a central railway station, having a separate line of rails on the eastern side of the Markets, and under the footpath and part of George-street? On looking at the plan of the suggested utilisation of the Victoria Markets, as proposed by Mr. Selfe, I understand that the central portion shown in dark red indicates the brickwork which he intends to leave, and that the portion tinted pink, or a lighter colour, shows the portion that he proposes to take away. I should like to point out that there are four central piers, and that these piers are carried up to the underside of the main girders supporting the dome, and any interference with those piers would be a most dangerous, difficult, and almost impossible operation—an operation that I could not possibly recommend, and would not care to carry out.

3746. Mr. Watson.] You speak as the architect of the building? Yes.

3747. It was your design, and you carried it out? Yes. Referring to another plan exhibited, you will see a section of the dome resting on the piers previously mentioned. Mr. Selfe does not indicate in any way how he proposes to buttress or support these large piers. If half of each pier is taken away, as shown by this plan, he ought to put an equivalent buttress or amount of brickwork in to support the weight. I think it would be a very difficult and dangerous undertaking to move that portion of the pier.

3748. Are we to assume that it would be possible to buttress the piers up at a higher level than the existing brickwork, and over any railway platform that might be made there? Under the level of the ground floor it would be possible.

3749. Would that be an expensive operation? Most expensive, and most difficult and dangerous. Those four piers are carried up to the underside of the main girders supporting the dome. Then from these girders springs the dome wall itself. Any slight settlement caused by cutting these piers away would probably increase with the height, and damage or cause a settlement or crack in the dome, and would ultimately show itself outside the dome.

3750. Chairman.] At any rate it would be a very risky thing to interfere at all with the main central piers? Yes.

3751. That station will be a wayside station—it will be entered at the southern end by trains coming into Sydney, and the trains will run out at the northern end, and it will involve a considerable interference with the Victoria Markets foundations at either end of the building;—what do you say to that? The same remark would apply as I have already made. It is an extremely difficult operation. I refer to the southern end and the northern end where it is proposed to cut through piers. Those piers are carried up the whole height of the building.

3752. Mr. Watson.] Do those portions coloured deep red at the southern end and the northern end of the building represent piers as they now exist, or as they would be under Mr. Selfe's proposal? Those piers, as shown on plan, are shown as they would be if Mr. Selfe's scheme were carried out.

3753. The portions coloured pink are what Mr. Selfe proposes to take away in order to make room for his entrance and exit? Yes.

3754. And you say that the taking away of those portions at the two ends of the building would tend to destroy the stability of the building? Yes.

3755. And be a risky and expensive operation? Yes; risky, expensive, and difficult.

3756. From that answer I assume that you could not recommend that the scheme be carried out in the shape it is there proposed? I would be very strongly against any such scheme being carried out.

3757. Without destroying, in some way, the value of the general building, would it be possible to make that basement of any value for a railway station? I do not think that is at all possible. If the basement of the Market be taken for a railway station, I think that it will have a tendency to reduce the rental value of the premises above.

3758. There would be various things contributing to that, for instance, the presence of steam and other fumes? Yes; that would be most objectionable. If a railway station were made in the basement, it should be absolutely sealed off from the superstructure. No smoke or other fumes should be allowed to enter the upper floors, and I do not see how it is possible to prevent smoke or other fumes ascending, and at the same time to let the people go down into the station unless you make side entrances and entirely disconnect them from the interior of the building. But I notice that Mr. Selfe proposes to use the staircases. It is not possible to prevent the fumes from going into the building unless you seal the floor of the building above the station and carry the ventilators right up to the roof, and I think that that would be most impracticable.

3759. Chairman.] You will notice that it is proposed to run certain lines (coloured blue) under the Victoria Markets, and also to run a line, likewise coloured blue, under George-street; Mr. Selfe in order to connect his line under George-street with the lines under the Markets, proposes to honeycomb the basement, as shown by those red dots, by making cutaways right through, and, instead of the foundation which you thought it necessary to carry right down, he proposes to have a series of piers to supply the whole of the George-street frontage? Well, seeing that these piers at present carry the weight, and that the outside wall is merely a retaining wall, I do not see much difficulty in doing that. That could be done, because the piers already support the entire weight of the building, and those outside lines merely indicate the retaining wall and area.

3760. What was the object in having those piers instead of having a continuous wall? Cheapness for one thing, and also to get more room in the basement.

3761. The piers would be sufficient? Yes.

3762. There would be no objection then on that score? No.

3763. If the staircase going down to the railway were shut off as you suggest, would not the ventilation in the basement for the purposes of a railway be very defective and bad? Ventilation of some sort would have to be provided.

3764. Taking the whole of the proposal, do you think it is desirable? I do not. I think it is very undesirable to take the railway into the Victoria Markets. The basement was never designed for such a purpose, and I think it would deteriorate the building rapidly, and reduce the value of the superstructure, and I do not think that sufficient station accommodation would be provided.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 3 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVLES, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

John Kneeshaw, Traffic Superintendent, Tramway Department, sworn, and further examined:—

3765. *Chairman.*] Have you any statistics for the information of the Committee? Yes. The Committee J. Kneeshaw. asked me to supply certain returns, one in regard to the passengers travelling on the western system of tramways for January, 1900, as compared with January, 1899, and another dealing with the railway and George-street traffic. Over the Botany, Balmain, Glebe Point, Marrickville, and Leichhardt lines we carried, in January, 1900, 2,236,320 passengers. In January, 1899, we carried 2,069,920 passengers, an increase of 166,400 passengers in January of 1900, as compared with January of 1899. With regard to the railway and George-street traffic, in January, 1900, we carried 1,608,989 passengers. In January, 1899, we carried 248,580 passengers. I was also asked for a return of the passengers travelling on the railway tram lines for the year ending 30th November, 1899, as compared with the year ending 30th November, 1898. For the year ending 1899 we carried 2,838,780 passengers, and for the year ending November, 1898, we carried 2,833,740 passengers. There is only a difference of 5,040 passengers increase. I put in the returns as follows:—

PASSENGERS travelling by Railway trams, year ending 30th November, 1899, compared with year ending 30th November, 1898.

Period.	Passengers.	Period.	Passengers.	Period.	Passengers.	Period.	Passengers.
1898.		1899.		1897.		1898.	
December	259,020	June	231,120	December	258,300	June	223,330
		July	236,880			July	224,640
		August	233,640			August	220,140
1899.		September	227,160	1898.		September	221,220
January	248,380	October	223,920	January	258,660	October	239,940
February	230,940	November	224,640	February	220,500	November	236,340
March	252,540			March	246,600		
April	236,700			April	255,600		
May	233,640	Total	2,838,780	May	228,420	Total	2,833,740

PASSENGERS travelling by Western System of Tramways, January, 1900, compared with January, 1899.

Line.	January, 1900.	January, 1899.
	Passengers.	Passengers.
Botany	362,400	312,640
Forest Lodge and Balmain	362,560	301,280
Glebe Point	199,040	183,520
Marrickville	824,480	819,040
Leichhardt	487,840	453,440
Total	2,236,320	2,069,920
Railway	38,340	248,580
George-street	1,570,649	.....
Total	1,608,989	248,580
Grand Total	3,845,309	2,318,500

3766. *Dr. Garran.*] Does the increase in the steam tram traffic arise from a general increase in the number of passengers carried by railway, or from a larger number of passengers taking to the steam trams? I think it is due to an increase in the number of passengers travelling by railway.

3767. *Chairman.*] Are there any points in the evidence upon which you desire to comment? I notice that a statement was made the other day to the effect that the tramway traffic is not growing. Mr. Greenwood stated in his evidence:

The tramway traffic is not growing; it is stationary, and has been for some years. You can see that from the Commissioners' returns.

I should like to say that there appears to have been some misunderstanding. There is a large increase in the revenue of the city and suburban lines. Take, for instance, the twelve months ending June, 1899, as compared with the corresponding period ending June, 1898, and there is an increase of £22,187 in the revenue of the city and suburban tram lines. Taking the previous twelve months ending June, 1898, there was an increase of £1,725 as compared with the same period ending June, 1897. I would point out that towards the latter end of 1897 the tramway fares were greatly reduced—in some cases by 33 per cent. Therefore, if the Tramway Department earned a little more, it stands to reason that there was a much larger volume of traffic carried.

3768. *Mr. Watson.*] That remark will apply also to the later reductions to which effect has just been given? Yes; but we shall not be able to gauge those reductions for the next fortnight, perhaps not for a month, seeing that Easter comes at a period different from that at which it came last year.

3769.

J. Knecshaw. 3769. Evidently the answer of Mr. Greenwood was intended to apply more particularly to the western suburban tramways. If you examine his general answer, you will find that he was speaking of a railway line to reach the western suburbs by the city and suburban route. He states:

The western suburbs do not grow at all; the railway traffic from those suburbs is not growing.
The tramway traffic is not growing.

I take it that he was referring to the tramway traffic from those particular suburbs? In that case I will refer to the return which I put in little time ago, in which I showed that in one month there was an increase of 166,000 passengers on the western suburban lines alone.

3770. *Mr. Levien.*] When are the Commissioners' returns published? Every year.

3771. Mr. Greenwood was referring to the last return? That was published somewhere about last August.

3772. And I believe all the increases to which you have referred have taken place since then? Not the increase of £22,000 to which I have referred. That is mentioned in the last report of the Railway Commissioners.

3773. Then it is evident that Mr. Greenwood could not have considered that report? No. I desire also to draw attention to Mr. Greenwood's answer to Question 2113, wherein it is stated that if a person can ride 1½ miles on the tramway for one penny, you cannot charge mileage rates on the railway, if it is to compete with the tramway. That reasoning is not sound. A tramway is benefited by the pick-up traffic which a railway cannot possibly obtain. Therefore there is no reason why a mileage rate should not be charged on a railway. If the western suburbs railway scheme were adopted, it is hardly possible that the passengers would be conveyed right to Circular Quay for one penny, as was originally proposed in connection with the King-street scheme.

3774. *Dr. Garran.*] If you run passengers on the George-street tram for one penny, will the passengers on the extended railway line pay more? A large number of them would be season ticket-holders and holders of workmen's tickets. They would come forward. I am sure that the greater percentage of the ordinary passengers, travelling on ordinary tickets, would come forward, rather than undergo the inconvenience of changing at Redfern Station, and getting into a tram where they would probably have to stand. A large percentage of them have to stand now, and more would have to stand as the volume of traffic increased. In his answer to Question 2109, Mr. Greenwood estimates that under his scheme he could get 3,000 passengers per day from Circular Quay, and 2,000 local pick-up passengers by the western railway scheme. I am satisfied that he would not get one-tenth of that number. The Circular Quay traffic is well catered for by the present electric trams. They pass closer to the ferries than any railway scheme could do.

3775. *Mr. Watson.*] I understood Mr. Greenwood, in that connection, to mean that from Circular Quay he would be able to get 3,000 passengers whose objective was some distant portion of the western suburbs, and not merely people who wished to go up George-street? He is too sanguine even then.

3776. *Dr. Garran.*] Have any of your officers tabulated the number of people arriving at Circular Quay, per day, by the electric tram? No. Of course, the traffic is different now from what it was a week back. The proper time to take the traffic would be in the course of a week or two, when the ferry boats go to their proper wharfs again. The traffic just now is inflated. I desire to draw attention to Question 2100, which is as follows:—

They say that people would not get out to make a change, but would rather go straight on to their destination, and, therefore, that there would be more passengers by railway to Hyde Park? I say not one more.

I think that Mr. Greenwood, if he were asked that question again, would admit that his answer is not sound, because we have to bear in mind the large number of signed petitions for a city railway. The people who have signed petitions would be sure to travel by it. There must be thousands who would travel by it. I would also refer to Questions 1951 and 1952, in which it is stated that 90 per cent. of the public are better served at Redfern than they would be at King-street. The witness went on to refer to those residents east of Victoria-street, Darlinghurst, and from there to Darling Point, Rose Bay, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra, and Paddington, whom, he stated, would not be benefited by the extension of the railway to King-street. There, again, there is a distinct mistake. If those passengers were brought on to a central station at King-street, where they could join a tram travelling eastwards, or travelling to Woollahra, by William-street, they would be distinctly benefited. I should be inclined to say that the witness intended to state that 90 per cent. would be benefited by a city railway, rather than that they would not be benefited.

3777. He was referring to the long-distance travellers when he mentioned the 90 per cent.? Even they, if they were going to Randwick, Paddington, Waverley, and Woollahra, would be benefited by coming in to the city.

3778. I suppose it all depends on where their residences are situated? Yes; but there are no means of direct communication from the present railway station with those localities.

3779. The trams do not radiate from the present station? No.

3780. *Mr. Dick.*] Judging from what Mr. Greenwood said conversationally, he was referring mainly to people who come to the railway station, and go from there to their homes by cab, taking their luggage with them? There are a number who do that, but there are great numbers who take their luggage by tram. That is noticeable in the morning when the mail trains arrive. Numbers come into the city with a fairly large-sized portmanteau, tin box, or other baggage, which they convey by tram.

3781. *Chairman.*] With regard to Question 2123, Mr. Greenwood contends that the city railway would only give you an additional traffic of suburban people, amounting to £2,623 8s. 9d.? I have read that. I think Mr. Greenwood will require to reconsider that matter, because it is impossible that there would only be 1,150 people travelling by a railway to the city. Mr. Greenwood has taken the figures I supplied in regard to the passengers who travel by the steam trams at the present day, and who prefer to travel by them to the railway station to taking the electric tram.

3782. *Mr. Dick.*] Did you take the railway steam trams away before you started the electric trams down George-street? No. We started the electric trams to Redfern Station on a Monday. Up to the Saturday night we had run into the railway station as formerly. On the Sunday we shunted the whole of our steam trams in Devonshire-street, and on the Monday morning we ran eight or ten steam trams—between 8 and 10 o'clock—into the city, and we continue that now. Those are the only steam trams we run from the railway station. Practically, we discontinued the steam trams when we opened the electric trams.

3783. Where do you start those trams from? From the subway entrance in Devonshire-street.
3784. How many people travelled on the steam trams during the first week that both classes of trams ran into the railway station? They were not running in together. We changed on the Sunday night. On the Monday morning we started with the electric trams, and we had a few steam trams running from Devonshire-street as well, and those steam trams we have continued ever since.
3785. They do not come into the railway station at the same time? No.
3786. Presuming there would be no great difficulty in doing that, do you think you would get a large revenue from the steam trams if they ran into the railway station, as they did formerly? There is no doubt that a very much larger number of persons would patronise the steam trams than at present.
3787. Can you give any idea as to the proportion of the total traffic which is now taken by the electric trams, and which would patronise the steam trams? No. Again, referring to Question 2123, I notice Mr. Greenwood refers to 10,240,000 passengers at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. It is difficult to follow his reasoning, because he has divided money by a certain rate fixed by himself, and has brought it out into a number of passengers. His reasoning is unsound, because the numbers mentioned by him would not be anything like the numbers which would appear. You could never get a fair estimate of revenue on such a basis.
3788. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you examined Mr. Greenwood's scheme as far as it would affect a possible tramway extension towards Circular Quay? If the railway station were constructed between the Custom House and the front of the Quay, it would seriously affect the means of bringing the eastern suburban trams to Circular Quay. The eastern suburban passengers would expect the same facilities to reach their destination as would the western suburban passengers. It is contemplated to bring the eastern suburban trams to the Quay. A railway station between the boats and the tramway starting-point would be a great source of inconvenience.
3789. It has been suggested by various people that Macquarie Point, if enlarged by reclamation, or even without it, might be made available for railway purposes in the shape of shunting yards;—do you think that possible, or that the land there would be needed for tramway purposes later on? So far as I am aware, the Minister has already approved of the tramway being extended to Fort Macquarie, and there will be storage room there for tramway cars, which is urgently needed. Our shunting arrangements at Circular Quay are, at present, too limited.
3790. If your present arrangements are inadequate for the traffic now going to Circular Quay, would they not be much more inadequate if you brought the eastern suburban traffic that way, unless you got an extension to Macquarie Point? Yes.
3791. Would it be easy to get a crossing over the railway station at Circular Quay, such as is shown on Mr. Greenwood's plan? It would block the tram lines generally. It would be a great inconvenience, and the 'buses would continue to ply, and in that case the congestion at Circular Quay would be enormous.
3792. One object of extending the tramway system there would be to relieve the congestion of Circular Quay? Yes. I understand that the Minister has agreed to the eastern trams coming down there, and there will be a loop, such as is shown on the plan.
3793. Another suggestion has been made to take a railway line round by Circular Quay on a viaduct;—I presume that that would not materially interfere with the tramway extension? As long as the viaduct were kept sufficiently high to clear the overhead wires, and did not interfere with the trolley poles. That means it would have to be pretty high.
3794. What is the height of the headway? I think it is 18 feet.

John Horbury Hunt, Architect, sworn, and examined:—

3795. *Chairman.*] You will remember that you were examined before a Royal Commission in 1897 on J. H. Hunt, what was then known as the St. James' Road scheme? Yes.
3796. The matter which has been referred to us by Parliament is a somewhat modified St. James' Road scheme, coming a little more to the east, and not taking so much of the Park? I understand that. I will read what I have to say, and then I shall be pleased to answer any questions which may be put to me: "If the Government vote me the money required I will make at Redfern, in conjunction with the asylum site, one of the finest stations in the world." These are not my own words, but those of the late Mr. Eddy, as spoken to me. Repeating them with emphasis may be pardoned in justification of their solid truth and great national importance. With all the able advocacy that I have had the privilege of listening to on behalf of the many Government and private schemes, I still hold firm to my original proposal as here set out on this Government map of the city. The outline of the scheme is so clearly delineated and free from alternative proposals that I think it will enable you at a glance to grasp my intentions. I have looked over my previous evidence, and would respectfully ask you to consider it as evidence in this inquiry. I have no desire to withdraw or alter any of that evidence. I propose now, as originally, to extend the present railway station grounds right over the whole area of the asylum and cemetery sites, and their adjoining properties, up to and into Belmore Gardens, as here shown by the area filled in with black. On that area I would build only so much of a terminal station to meet the requirements of the city for a few years—say twenty-five—with full provision for extending from time to time to the full area here assigned for that purpose. To help you compare this terminal station area with the Hyde Park area I have tinted that portion of the Park green. I think I am right in stating that all railway authorities aim at having three sides of any important terminal station free and open for public use. You will please note how I have observed that highly important requirement. On the west side of the site there will be a street 100 feet wide, while on the opposite side there is a very wide space at the narrowest part over 100 feet wide. Then at the city end there will be a square measuring 700 feet by 350 feet, thus providing plenty of elbow room at this important spot. All this spaciousness Mr. Eddy had in his eye when he expressed himself as above. From this terminal station I propose to continue two lines around the city, with provision to extend to the North Shore, as set out in this map by thick black lines. The rails will be carried by viaduct construction from the terminal station to George-street at Goulburn-street; then by tunnel to York-street, behind the Markets, making use of the basement of the Markets as the first city station, the Kent and Sussex streets traffic to be taken to this station at platform level from a point in Kent-street, as here shown; the rails to be continued

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J. H. Hunt. continued to Wynyard-square in tunnel. Here we will have the chief city and suburban station, to be approached from George-street footpath at rail-level somewhere midway between Wynyard and Margaret streets, and in a like manner from Kent-street at rail-level. Thus, by these two points of direct communication between Kent-street and the railway, the whole of the western business section of the city will be well provided for. While approaching Wynyard-square station from George and Kent streets, it will have other approaches from York and Margaret streets, the whole area of this station to be open to the sky. From Wynyard-square we proceed to the site of the Education Department; there construct a third city station, continuing on by tunnel to Phillip Park, coming out of the Domain grounds in cutting, with a station in Phillip Park on the surface of the Park ground. From this station, we pass on under William-street, entering a tunnel at Stanley-street, coming out on a viaduct at about the junction of Goulburn and Wexford streets; thence to the terminal station. Much has been said by many of us in the past against tunnels. Depend on it, the time is not far distant when our overcrowded cities will have streets and sub-streets—call them tunnels, if you like—working in conjunction with city traffic. The largest length of tunnel in my scheme is that passing through the Domain, about equal in distance from Park to Bridge streets—or, in other words, about 50 chains. The inward and outward trains passing through this length of tunnel will be practically empty at all times of the day. The next longest tunnel will be about 30 chains, or a distance from Park to Moore streets. By this circular service two lines of rails will be able to do more work than four under the Hyde Park scheme—the trains can be run to follow each other with an intervening space of time equal to that of putting down and taking up passengers. While I am no advocate for a tunnel across the harbour, I have, however, shown on this map how such service may be made to fit in with my City Railway scheme. You will notice that I have indicated on the plan a branch line to be taken to Woolloomooloo Bay; this I propose for use in goods traffic from, say, midnight to early morning. To connect the central and terminal station with Randwick and the far eastern suburbs, a line is proposed to be taken thereto as set out in this map. I may be allowed to refer to a project unfortunately not submitted to you; it is however so closely allied to the present inquiry as to be worthy of some notice being taken of it. I mean the consideration in the matter of resuming the whole of that portion of the city known as Flagstaff Hill, commencing with the boundary lines of the harbour right back to St. Phillip's Church, as indicated on this map by the area tinted red. I think the elder members of this Committee will remember my bringing this proposed city improvement before the public from time to time for fully thirty years. In any other city but Sydney it would ere this have been an accomplished work. At present this section of the city is of the lowest commercial value, while if levelled down to, say, 5 feet to 10 feet above high-water, and with a railway station in the centre of that area, then the value of that section of the city would be of the highest commercial value. It would be a work of, say, fifteen years, and if skilfully handled the Treasurer could pocket a million of sovereigns out of the transaction. If it is determined to connect the North Shore direct with the City Railway, in accordance with my scheme of rebuilding the Flagstaff Hill section of the city, then bridge the harbour as here shown to carry the continued rails from Wynyard-square. Had I, however, the determination of this question, I would bridge the harbour as indicated on this map,—starting from the main land of Balmain on to Goat Island, then to Ball's Head. The whole of the short distance traffic of the Northern line should be brought to the terminal station by this branch line. There should be a station at Pymont, as here shown, with tram communication to the city. Permit me to say, and I do it with every respect to you, gentlemen, who are evidently conducting this inquiry with much care, that these isolated proposed city improvements are at best but a one-horse endeavour to making Sydney the finest commercial city in Australia.

3796. Will you amplify your explanation of the route you propose to take;—which part of the Devonshire-street station would you construct first? I should start by obtaining the whole of the area of the Asylum site, the cemetery, and all those adjoining properties about half-way through the Belmore grounds—all this area I propose to take for the purposes of a terminal station for the present and the future. From that point I start by viaduct construction, until I strike George-street at a level to be determined, and proceed under George-street to Goulburn-street. I pass under George-street, and outside the foundations of the Town Hall.

3797. At the back of the Town Hall? No; clear of the George-street frontage, this not interfering with the foundations. Then I get into York-street, and through George-street, behind the Markets. I then make communications from the platforms of the railway with the basement of the Markets, without touching their foundations. That would be the first getting-out place for the suburban traffic coming in.

3798. *Mr. Watson.*] Is that an open station? I make use of the basement of the Markets.

3799. *Dr. Garran.*] The rails would be under York-street? Yes. I go through York-street, behind the Markets. Before leaving the Markets, and in order to give business people of the western portion of the city a chance of getting to that station without climbing up the steep grades of the streets, I strike in at Kent-street, at street level, and have a subway into the Market floor level. Then I continue along York-street until I come to Wynyard-square. I look upon Wynyard-square as the chief business station. The Markets station might be the chief station for people coming to Town Hall meetings, and so forth; but the Wynyard-square station would be the principal station for business men. We have a large area in Wynyard-square available for a city station. I then can go, at kerb-stone level, from George-street, right to the rails at Wynyard-square, without difficulty.

3800. *Chairman.*] By a series of openings, I suppose? No. There is no difficulty whatever from an engineering point of view in carrying out what I propose. We should bring the rails to Wynyard-square, and make use of the whole of its area for the chief city station. If you cast your eye through Cole's book arcade, and imagine a space twice that width taken right through to Wynyard-square, then you will quickly see my intention and its practicability. We could then build above it for any purpose we chose to bring in a good revenue. Thus there would be no waste by cutting through and destroying a slice of George-street property. The same remark applies to the western side. Another piece of property could be cut through there, and the basement used for traffic, and the upper portion as a warehouse. We then proceed by an easy curve to Bridge-street. The railway engineers may pick me up in regard to Bridge-street. That will be the tightest piece of engineering of the lot.

3801. *Mr. Watson.*] You would go under the lowest part of Bridge-street? Yes.

3802. *Dr. Garran.*] If you go straight on you will come to the surface by the time you get to Pitt-street? We will avoid that. As I have stated we go on under Bridge-street, then at the Education Department.

J. H. Hunt,
3 April, 1900.

I would make another station. That would be the last city station. Then we go on through the Domain, and that is where there would be the longest tunnel, until we come out by an open cutting on the eastern side of the Art Gallery. Then, at the point where the Blind Asylum is situated, at Woolloomooloo, I propose to construct another station—an open station. Then I should pass under William-street, until I got behind the Museum and the National school, to somewhere about Stanley-street. I should then go by tunnel to the terminal station. By this means we should have, practically, a circular railway.

3803. At the hollow of Bridge-street you will have to cross the Tank Stream? I do not care a rap for any difficulties in the way—we only require skill and money to overcome them.

3804. Do you propose to be in tunnel all the way from Wynyard-square to the Education Offices? I start in tunnel from Goulburn-street to the Town Hall. I go in tunnel from the Markets to Wynyard-square.

3804½. *Mr. Watson.*] I see you have a branch line towards Woolloomooloo Bay? Yes; to help the Woolloomooloo commercial traffic. I think it would be an advantage—I do not however advocate it—to have a station there, connected with this line; we could use that line for a night service in freeing Woolloomooloo from goods traffic. We all know that we should not mix up the passenger and the goods traffic. I think here is a chance for the line being made use of at night in getting goods away from Woolloomooloo.

3805. *Chairman.*] Your proposal is for a city line to serve the suburban people only? Yes.

3806. The long-distance traffic is to remain at Redfern? Yes. It is known to you, gentlemen, that a very great friendship existed between Mr. Eddy and myself. We have spent hours talking these matters over. He told me more than once—and you have it on record—that he had no ambition whatever to go to Hyde Park; that it was a matter of money; and that if he had not the money to operate at Redfern he must go to Hyde Park. The centre of Sydney, eventually, will be Redfern. We are limited in our area of building operations for the city proper, hence the city traffic is, and will be limited, and we must provide for outer extension.

3807. Is it of any use asking you questions as to details? No; unless paid to work them out.

3808. *Mr. Watson.*] Or as to cost? Yes. I wish to repeat the evidence I have given relative to the proposed extension from St. James' Road, which is as follows:—

My desire to appear before you again arises out of the singular statement made to me at a previous inquiry, recorded as follows:—"The Committee would be quite unable to recommend your scheme without an estimate of cost. Any recommendation they may make to Parliament must be accompanied by a recommendation of cost." Therefore, to save my scheme from being pigeon-holed, I have resolved to waive my strong objection to giving approximate estimates, especially for nil. I have, however, safeguarded myself, and tried to protect you, by writing down a very liberal figure in the sum of £725,000 for my scheme, carrying with it the following items:—

Purchase all the properties on the Asylum site, also the small parcel of privately-owned land connected therewith, and all other city properties required to be purchased, or the owners thereof compensated.

Remove the human remains from the old graveyard to Rookwood.

Build a portion of a grand central station on the Asylum site, with platform area, &c., equal in all respects to what is now proposed for St. James' Road station.

Convert one-half of the basement-storey of the new Markets into a station.

Build under a portion of Wynyard-square and so much of the side streets as may be required to make this the chief city station for suburban traffic. No structure will be built above surface of Park. In no way will the property in the square be injured. There will be neither smoke, steam, nor noise connected with this scheme.

Resume 50 feet frontage to George-street, so as to make a passenger entrance from the level of the footpath right through to the platform-level of station in the square.

Build on this site offices for Commissioners of Railways, with other offices to let; out of this rent pay to the Corporation rent for one-half of basement of Markets.

Build under the square in Macquarie-place, and continue under Bridge-street into a portion of the vacant land at offices of the Education Department. This will be the Circular Quay traffic station.

Build a small underground station at the cricket-ground site, facing Art Gallery, for the use of suburban visitors to the Botanic Gardens and Art Gallery.

Build above ground a small station at Phillip Park.

From the point A, at the intersection of Goulburn and George streets, right around to the point B, at the intersection of Goulburn and Wexford streets, shown on plan, the road to be in tunnel, with two sets of rails, with signals and lighting plant complete; motive power, electricity.

While my proposal is a tunnel scheme, the longest length is but the distance from Goulburn-street to Park-street; in fact, you will see, on examining the plan, that it is a less distance than the length of the semi-tunnel for the St. James' Road scheme.

By the time the inward train reaches Macquarie-place (which will be by these short-distance tunnels) they will be empty of passengers, while the outward-bound traffic will commence at the Macquarie-place station, and in travelling to the great central station will pass along these short tunnels.

The real tunnel length of the line exists only through the Domain portion of the route, where the trams will be all but empty of inward and outward bound passengers.

You will please observe and take into consideration, when you are making your recommendation, that I have shown on the plan my line extended on to the site of the proposed future city platform (No. viii on plan), while still preserving the circular line. This proposed future city station, placed as here shown on the new and future area of the city, is to be for passengers and small goods, yet in two distinct stations and sets of rails, the goods to be taken by tunnel on to Darling Harbour station.

To compare the two schemes with fairness, then, you must add to the St. James' Road scheme the value of the Park lands and Asylum lands taken for the use of that scheme. £300,000 is the least value of those lands, and must be added to the £650,000 = £950,000. To this a further sum must be added for the widening of King-street and making a new street as an outlet for the traffic—there is a dead certainty of every penny of half a million being fooled away in trying to make this St. James' Road site fit for its work. £500,000 added to £950,000 equals (say) one million and a half as against three-quarters of a million for a complete scheme as proposed by me.

3809. *Chairman.*] You seem to be a strong advocate for the use of tunnels in the future? No, not a strong advocate.

3810. But you seem to think that they must come? Many things will be forced upon us which we do not like at the present day, and our present mode of life will be very much changed in regard to them. Personally, I prefer an open road to a tunnel; but if you cannot get an open road, what are you to do?

3811. Have you thought out the difficulty of ventilation in a tunnel? There will be no difficulty. I have private letters from friends at Home who say that it is a pity that some of those who object to tunnel traffic were not there to see how nice and clean and well ventilated everything is.

3812. As you are aware, our suburban traffic, so called, involves a good deal of long-distance traffic? I know that; but get a man like Mr. Eddy to control it, and he will make it work. I may mention that in

J. H. Hunt. order to carry the traffic out to the eastern suburbs, I propose to branch off from the Redfern station and go out to Randwick, as shown on my plan. If it is determined to connect North Shore with a tunnel, that tunnel will work with my scheme as shown on the plan. I propose to resume the whole of that portion of the city tinted red on the plan, as already, in detail, stated.

3 April, 1900.

3813. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the length of your proposed circular line? About 3 miles.

3814. How much tunnelling have you in that distance? About 50 chains will be the longest length out of 155 chains, or under 2 miles, divided into five sections. Of course intercepted by the stations.

3815. What length would the stations take up? The length of the Markets and the length of Wynyard-square, and station in Bridge-street, as shown in map.

3816. There would not be much of a blank between one tunnel and the other? The longest tunnel would be through the Domain, where the trains would be almost empty.

3817. Speaking generally, there would be a lot of tunnelling? No. In my opinion it is the shortest route which can possibly be devised for a line round Sydney.

3818. *Mr. Levien.*] Would it not save a lot of resumption? Yes; there would practically be little or no resumption, excepting in regard to property which it would be a blessing to resume—in Wexford-street. The line would chiefly go along the streets. A little piece would have to be resumed near Bridge-street.

Frederick Cavill, sworn, and examined:—

F. Cavill. 3819. *Chairman.*] How long have you been a resident of Sydney? Twenty years.

3 April, 1900.

3820. Have you taken an interest in the proposed railway extension? Yes; a very great interest.

3821. I believe that on the 26th March you sent the Committee a letter indicating a scheme for railway extension? Yes; I will read it:

Gentlemen,

Lancaster Villas, Ocean-street, Edgecliffe, 26 March, 1900.

I have the honor to lay before you for your favourable consideration a scheme whereby the construction of a city railway will be facilitated, and not only will the initial cost be a great deal less than of those schemes which have already been submitted you, but, by the collection of certain rents hereinafter referred to, the undertaking to a certain extent can be made to practically reimburse in part the initial cost of construction after a comparatively short period.

I propose taking as a beginning of the route the extension from Redfern to Darling Harbour, or, as a matter of fact, any other desirable route which would lead from Redfern station to the bottom of Liverpool-street in Sussex-street. That part of the city railway route is not an essential to my scheme, as it is evident that the obstacles to be surmounted are comparatively trifling to those which would attend the construction of the railway from the last-named point to the city proper, and with which my scheme deals particularly.

The railway would continue and utilise the western side of Sussex-street, and would be built upon arches, as shown in the accompanying sketch marked "A," these arches being made into stores facing Sussex-street, and the various streets would be crossed by viaducts. By a gradual ascent Erskine-street could be reached so as the altitude would approximate that of Wynyard-square. The railway proceeding in a northerly direction would cross Erskine-street and enter the central station to be built on an area resumed between the following boundaries, namely, on the north Margaret-street, on the south Erskine-street, on the west Sussex-street, and on the east York-street, the various intervening streets, Kent and Clarence, being connected by subways beneath the station.

The accompanying map and sketch will give an idea of the before-mentioned route and construction. I do not give the actual figures of construction and cost, as I am unable to procure them, but would most respectfully suggest that if the scheme herein set out should be deemed by you to be feasible, that it be submitted to your experts for computation as to its actual cost, &c.

By this city railway route, I would point out that if any further extension—say, to Circular Quay, and particularly to North Shore—were desired, it would by this route be greatly facilitated.

Contention might be raised as to the cost of a scheme such as I have set out; but I would point out that by the letting of the stores and shops which would be built beneath the arches aforesaid, the rents would eventually repay a considerable portion of the initial outlay.

In addition it would be greatly beneficial in rebuilding that part of the city which is at present greatly infected by the plague.

The front of the central station could be made an hotel like those in London, and made to face York-street, whilst Wynyard-square could be cleared for vehicular and other traffic, and which would be absolutely necessary for the promotion and conduct of good order before a station such as I have described.

In submitting this, my scheme for a city railway, I may state that further than any benefit which may accrue from the placing of my suggestion before you, I am totally disinterested.

I may state that if this scheme is carried out, the shops and stores underneath the viaduct would produce a rental of not less than £100,000 per annum. That would be tantamount to about 10 per cent. on an outlay of £1,000,000. I have made a slight alteration in my scheme since I sent in my letter. I said in my letter that I was uncertain which way to go after leaving the bottom of Liverpool-street, but on the plan I start from the Redfern station. From there I cross over Devonshire-street, take a good circle round the park, come in on the northern side of Campbell-street, and build arches there. There is a row of Chinamen's dens there which could be pulled down and built into arches, which would realise an enormous amount of money as stores. I would then take a viaduct across George-street, in a slanting position, so as to make a gradual sweep to the foot of Sussex and Goulburn streets. Then from Goulburn-street I would start my line proper. I would pull down the whole of Sussex-street, on the western side, down to the water's edge, destroying all the plague-stricken spots, and building up this line of railway, which would be 10 feet further back than the present frontage of Sussex-street. That would make Sussex-street 10 feet wider than it is at present:

3822. *Mr. Watson.*] West of Sussex-street you would resume? Yes; I would resume the west, and make the frontage of the railway 10 feet further back than the present line of shops.

3823. *Dr. Garran.*] You do not propose any parallel street close to the wharfs? It would be for the Government to do what they chose. They could make a very decent place of it. The whole of the line would be, comparatively, on a level. I would build the arches 20 feet high. I would make a gradual circle from Margaret-street, cut through "The Rocks," and come out at Circular Quay, on the western side of George-street, where you could build a station of any size you like. There is another line which I proposed, namely, to go to Erskine-street. That line would have to be made a little higher. I would then make Wynyard-square into a station. I believe, however, that a station at Circular Quay would be the best. In the event of the station being carried out, I would make an intermediate station somewhere between Druiit and Market streets. That would be halfway between Circular Quay and Redfern station. The stores to which I have referred would be 100 feet by 20 feet, and I think they would fairly fetch £5 a week rent.

3824. *Mr. Watson.*] I know of a place in Sussex-street, with five floors, which is only bringing in £4 a week? But my scheme would materially improve the street; it would be one of the principal streets of

of the city. If the scheme were carried out, the owners of property on the eastern side of Sussex-street would rebuild. I do not think the scheme would cost as much as the St. James' Road scheme, because the resumptions along Sussex-street would not amount to much. I would make the route I propose a traffic route. I would connect the line which is in existence from Darling Harbour with the bottom of Liverpool-street. We could then take all our stores and wool to Circular Quay, and the traffic around Belmore Park would be confined entirely to passengers. The whole of the city traffic, instead of being carried through the principal streets, as it is now, would be taken by rail. There could be a goods depôt at Circular Quay, and if it were not considered desirable to continue the line around the Quay, there would be little trouble in carting the produce from the goods station at the side of George-street to any part of the shipping around there.

3825. *Chairman.*] Have you estimated what the probable cost of resumption would be? No.

3826. *Mr. Watson.*] I suppose that what you claim as points for favourable consideration are cheap resumption along the western side of Sussex-street, and the possibility of getting revenue from the arches? Yes.

3827. You consider that the cost of resuming any other part of the city would be much greater than the cost of resuming Sussex-street? Much greater.

3828. You do not attempt to provide for the people on the eastern side of the city? That could be easily done by continuing the line of arches along Circular Quay, and tunnelling under the parks to Woolloomooloo.

3829. Your present scheme does not provide for the eastern side? My scheme could join any scheme on the eastern side.

3830. Supposing we only had enough money to build a line on either the eastern or the western side— which would be the most convenient? A line on the western side. Of course, if you built to Circular Quay, you could go anywhere you liked from it.

WEDNESDAY, 4 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Charles Fry, clerk, Registrar-General's Office, sworn, and examined:—

3831. *Chairman.*] Have you any evidence to submit? I desire to make the following statement:—

THE distinctive and, I think, original feature of the suggestion herein offered is the resumption for city railway purposes of a strip of Hyde Park, 60 feet (or upwards) in width, parallel to and adjoining College-street, for the full length of the Park. The proposal is outlined at length in the *Daily Telegraph* of 9th and 19th July, 1897.

The suggestion is for a loop-line (four or six lines of rails) for passenger traffic only. Being a loop-line the necessity for acquiring any considerable area for shunting purposes is avoided, all stations being way stations (as at Eveleigh). In order to minimise alteration of existing arrangements as to necessary uniformity of position of first and second class carriages, it is suggested that first-class carriages should always form the centre of train, second-class carriages being at both ends. *Vide* 8.18 a.m. train from Hurstville. The route (shown by red on sketch) would be from Redfern Station, *via* Devonshire-street Cemetery and Wexford-street, to a station (No. 1) at the intersection of Oxford-street with College-street; thence in deep cutting by a resumed strip of Hyde Park, adjoining College-street, to a station (No. 2) at District Court Buildings (Chancery-square) at top of King-street; thence by the most practicable route in open cutting through the Outer Domain to Lower Macquarie-street, a station (No. 3) to be placed in Inner Domain near Water Police Court.

If the eastern portion only of the scheme were to be carried out the line would run from station No. 3 to Fort Macquarie, which (when enlarged by spoils from cuttings) would serve as a shunting and terminal yard. A passenger platform might be required at Fort Macquarie.

Fort Macquarie is a possible point of departure for tunnel connection with North Sydney. From the station No. 3 (near Water Police Court) the line would be carried by viaduct across Circular Quay to the high rocky land (Harrington-street) opposite the Metropolitan Fire Station in Lower George street. Here a station (No. 4) would probably be required. From station No. 4 the line proceeds, partly by cutting, partly by short tunnel, to Wynyard-square. From Harrington-street the elevation would be sufficient to reach Observatory Park if bridge connection with North Sydney should be at any future time desired.

A station (No. 5) at Wynyard-square, excavated 10 or 15 feet below Carrington-street level, would be the chief station for western side of city. Connection by subways to the level of Kent-street or Sussex-street, would convenience Erskine-street and King-street ferry passengers. From the Wynyard-square station a tunnel 20 or 25 chains in length would connect with a station (No. 6) at Sussex-street, under the Sydney end of the new Pyrmont Bridge. Thence the route would be by Darling Harbour frontages, or other most practicable course to Redfern yard, having one other station (No. 7) intermediate between Pyrmont Bridge and Redfern (about the western end of Engine-street or Hay-street). The route, as outlined above, would be practically a daylight one. Only two short tunnels would be required, *i.e.*, those immediately north and south of Wynyard-square. The other tunnels would be road crossings only. They would be—1. Under Lyons-terrace and Liverpool-street; 2. Under Park-street; 3. Under King-street. Possibly also under or over Lower Macquarie street. No streets of any traffic importance would be blocked or crossed on the level.

The circuit of the city would be effected without entailing costly resumptions of privately-owned land.

The only resumptions of any magnitude would be—(1) At Wexford-street; (2) at Harrington-street; (3) at Darling Harbour frontages above the Pyrmont Bridge. At all these places the land is amongst the lowest-priced areas in the city, and the buildings are of a most inferior character.

The stations would be seven in number—No. 1 at intersection of College and Oxford streets; No. 2, at Chancery-square, top of King-street; No. 3 at Lower Macquarie street; No. 4 at Harrington-street; No. 5 at Wynyard-square; No. 6 at Sussex-street, at Market-street end of Pyrmont Bridge; No. 7 at western end of Eugene or Hay street, or Ultimo-road.

The feature of the proposal to which the attention of the Committee is most particularly invited is that it would inflict upon Hyde Park the minimum amount of curtailment and disfigurement compatible with utilising the Park in any degree for railway purposes. The railway in deep cutting with dwarf screen walls would be invisible from the city side of Hyde Park. The taking of only so small a portion would probably avoid the danger of arousing that sentimental opposition which defeated the St. James' Road scheme in 1897.

As previously stated, it would provide practicable points of departure for railways extension to—(1) Eastern suburbs *via* Cook Park and Woolloomooloo Bay; (2) North Shore, by tunnel, from Fort Macquarie; (3) North Shore, by bridge, from Observatory Park.

F. Cavill.
3 April, 1900.

C. Fry.
4 April, 1900.

C. Fry. I desire to add the concluding paragraph of the letter I wrote in 1897:—

4 April, 1900.

It is with a very conscious sense of my own incompetence to offer anything but the most general ideas on so important a question that I have ventured, at the risk of incurring some doubtless well-deserved ridicule from professional critics, to ask attention to the project as it has for some time past presented itself to my mind. So far as I have understood the various suggested schemes, the cost of land resumption, rather than that of actual construction, has been the rock on which many otherwise suitable proposals have been wrecked, and it has been the aim of these two letters to suggest a possible route on which the amount of land to be taken from private owners would be inconsiderable, both in value and in area. Not having any technical or professional knowledge, I cannot venture to offer any opinion as whether or not the cost of construction or the engineering difficulties are such as to place my proposals beyond the region of practicability. My only desire is that the scheme as outlined may attract the interest and attention necessary to ensure its examination at the hands of gentlemen qualified to express an authoritative opinion upon those points.

3832. *Mr. Watson.*] You have not attempted to go into any estimate of cost? No; I am utterly incompetent to frame any estimate of that kind.

3833. Have you made any investigation to see how far your levels would run? No; beyond walking over the ground, and roughly estimating that the scheme is practicable, possibly at the expense of deep cuttings. I believe the scheme to be practicable; but I ask for an opinion to be obtained on that point from someone competent to decide.

3834. Assuming that it were not advisable to construct more than the eastern half at the present time do you think your scheme as far the Water Police station would fairly meet the necessities of the travelling public? I think it contrasts very favourably with any of the other schemes I have seen. I have measured the distance from the District Court station to Warby's corner, Pitt and King streets, and find that the distance from the latter place to the probable entrance to the railway station would be 100 to 150 yards further than from the proposed station at St. James' Road to Warby's corner.

3835. Your proposed station at the District Court would be distant only 150 yards more from Warby's corner than a station at the corner of St. James' Road and Elizabeth-street would be? Yes.

3835½. The corner of College and Oxford streets is more convenient for a station than any of the other sites suggested in that locality? It is more convenient for the Surry Hills passengers.

3836. You suggest that if the eastern half only is constructed, Macquarie Point might be utilised for shunting? Yes.

3837. We were informed yesterday that the tramway service would probably require Macquarie Point for shunting purposes;—that would necessitate the finding of another place for shunting under your scheme? I think any scheme would be incomplete which did not serve the western side of the city. I have been a daily railway passenger for sixteen years, and my observation leads me to think that two passengers go to the west of George-street to one who goes to the east of George-street.

3838. You think it would be inadvisable to construct the eastern extension without continuing it westerly by way of Darling Harbour? Yes.

3839. Would the property which would require to be resumed be of great value? Apparently not. The houses are of an inferior character. Wexford-street, as you know, is one of the slums of the city, and the line would go more directly through Wexford-street than it would in connection with Mr. Rennick's or the St. James' Road scheme.

3840. Is your idea to join on to the existing Darling Harbour line? Yes. The idea all through has been to avoid resumptions, and that would be best served by getting into the Government yard at Darling Harbour as directly as possible.

3841. The present line to Darling Harbour has a steep gradient, in comparison with other portions near the city; consequently, a train travelling over your proposed line would be governed by the gradient at the Darling Harbour end? I think it would be possible to make the connecting line independent of the goods line gradients.

3842. That is, by carrying it on viaducts from Pymont Bridge? Yes. That is an engineering question. Of course, if land is available at little cost, engineering talent will overcome the difficulties of grades. It might mean extra cuttings, or the possible raising of the bridge at George-street. I believe the steepest part of that gradient is from Cleveland-street Bridge to George-street.

3843. Supposing the Hyde Park scheme were carried out, do you think it would conveniently serve the people? I think it would be very nearly useless to the people who arrive by steamer at the various Sussex-street wharfs.

3844. Have you any means of judging whether it is likely that, with a railway station at Hyde Park, the people on the western side of the city would use that railway station or continue to go to Redfern by the existing trams? I think they would travel by trams.

3845. *Mr. Dick.*] You propose to bring passengers down the eastern side of the city, and to send the trains back along the western side? I think they might be arranged to run alternately.

3846. You have stated that you think that for every two persons who go west of George-street one goes east? I think so.

3847. Would not that suggest that it would be better to bring people down the western side first, and along the eastern side afterwards? Yes. I think they might be made to run alternately.

3848. *Dr. Garran.*] You do not propose your scheme as a mere circular railway? No. I suggest that the trains coming from Hurstville should come in on the eastern or western side, and return direct to Hurstville. The train which came in from Hurstville would return to it.

3849. You do not propose to run through the Redfern line for your western station, but only for your eastern scheme? Yes. It would be necessary to have a passenger platform near the Mortuary, and there should be no shunting.

3850. But the train that came back into the yard would have to go to the suburbs again;—it would have to shunt back to the platform? No. Coming into the Redfern yard it would not stop at the same platform as it would on its return. On its return it would call at a platform somewhere near the Mortuary.

3851. Do you know the grades of your proposed line? No.

3852. Do you know what depth you would be in at the corner of Oxford and College streets? Twenty-five or 30 feet. The depth would be guided by Park-street. It would have to be sufficiently deep there to go under Park-street.

3853. You would have a station in a rather deep cutting at that place? A little deeper than what Eveleigh now is.

3854. When you are on what you call the water frontage blocks at the head of Darling Harbour you will be under high level? No. At the Wynyard-square station you would be below the street-level. At the Pymont Bridge end you would be under the level of Market-street and slightly above high water-level.

3855. And you have to climb the height from the water level to the Redfern station yard in that short distance? I should like to point out that, in the Darling Harbour yard, the rails are on the water level, and they have to do the climbing. From there, of course, it is steep from there to the Redfern yard. You could ease the grade considerably by starting as far back as Pymont bridge. C. Fry.
4 April, 1900.
3856. You would have a considerable descent from Wynyard-square to get under Pymont bridge? The depth of the station at Wynyard-square could be regulated so as to bring it out under the bridge.
3857. Would you go under Sussex-street? Yes; also under York-street, Clarence-street, and Kent-street.
3858. *Mr. MacFarlane.*] How would you convey passengers to the west of George-street? If it were desirable to come down the western side of the city first, the line would come down the present goods route to the Darling Harbour yard.
3859. You would have the train running both ways? Alternately east and west.
3860. It would be necessary, then, for the western passengers to get out at Redfern, and wait for a train to the eastern part of the city? If the trains ran alternately they need not do that.
3861. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you propose a double line? I think four lines each way would be necessary for the traffic.
3862. You are aware that the principal object in the construction of a city railway is the saving of time? Yes.
3863. Do you think the carrying out of your scheme would result in a saving of time to the passengers as against their travelling by the tramway? I think that a person in the centre of the city, having a knowledge of the time-tables, would know whether to walk to the eastern or western station.
3864. Your first station on the eastern side is at the corner of College and Oxford streets;—what portion of the city do you suppose that would serve? Oxford-street is, next to George-street, the chief artery of the city, and it would serve the Oxford-street and Surry Hills passengers.
3865. Then you do not calculate upon its serving the centre of the city? I think its chief value would be for the passengers coming down Oxford-street and from Surry Hills.
3866. You do not suppose any one would get out there and walk across the Park to Elizabeth-street? I think it is possible that those who wished to reach that part of George-street would; but my chief idea was that it would convenience Surry Hills and Oxford-street.
3867. Your next station is at the top of King-street, and then you go round by Phillip-street and come to Darling Harbour? You do not go near Phillip-street. You keep well to the east of the Parliamentary buildings and the Sydney Hospital, in order to avoid any possible complaint as to its proximity to the hospital.
3868. Do you suppose any of your proposed stations would serve the business people of George-street, as opposed to the George-street trams? Yes. Under my scheme you would save the change at Redfern.
3869. But you only have a station at Market-street and Wynyard-square? And the District Court, which would be of great convenience to the eastern side of the city.
3870. Do you know the distance from the station there to the Market-street or Wynyard-square stations? It is not much over half a mile.
3871. So that anyone wishing to reach a central position between those two points would have to walk a quarter of a mile? A quarter or a third of a mile.
3872. Which trams do you use now from the railway station? The steam trams.
3873. Do you find much delay caused in coming in by those trams? At present a considerable delay.
3874. In the event of an electric tram being run down Elizabeth-street, would you take it in preference to going to King-street by a railway? It would be more expensive, and there would be the break of journey.
3875. Have you heard many complaints about the delays of passengers coming into Sydney who have to change into the trams? Latterly, since the railway steam tram has been abolished, there have been a good many complaints.
3876. Do you think the steam trams serve the people better than do the electric trams? No, excepting in regard to those people who have to get out in the streets through which the trams run.
3877. Do you not think that the city could be well served by a good system of electric trams in the different streets? No. On the Illawarra line the regular railway passenger traffic does not commence until you get to Arncliffe. Up to that point the population which travels into Sydney does not, as a rule, travel by railway, but by other means of conveyance. The railway loses a large amount of revenue from places like St. Peter's, Erskineville, and Macdonaldtown. I think that if there was a good system of city railways those stations would be the largest revenue-producing stations which the Department possesses. At present they are much behind such places as Rockdale and Petersham.
3878. Under your scheme, you propose to reach Miller's Point, Dawes' Point, or Fort Macquarie? At Harrington-street you would have a sufficient elevation to make your own election as to which way you would cross the harbour.
3879. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have submitted your scheme as one to be inquired into by the authorities, to ascertain if it is practicable? Yes.

John Moore Smail, Engineer-in-Chief, Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage, sworn, and examined:—

3880. *Chairman.*] Have you examined the different schemes before the Committee? I have examined Mr. Solfe's, Mr. Greenwood's, and Mr. Deane's schemes. With regard to Mr. Deane's scheme the only sewer with which it is likely to come into contact is one crossing Devonshire-street. If the line is on a viaduct, of course, it will not interfere with it; but if it takes the form of a dip or tunnel it must necessarily interfere with it, and will require some deviation. J. M. Smail.
4 April, 1900.
3881. What depth is your sewer below the present Devonshire-street level? Not more than 8 feet.
3882. Is that one of your main sewers? It is a branch sewer of brick.
3883. The objection in regard to Devonshire-street would, of course, apply to all schemes of railway crossing Devonshire-street on viaducts opposite the present railway station? Yes.
3884. It is apparent that Devonshire-street would have to be lowered 9 feet in order to get under the railway viaduct? If that is the case, the crown of the sewer could be protected in a way which would be sufficient to carry the traffic. In other words, it would not cause the deviation of the railway line. Structural alterations could be made sufficient to carry the ordinary traffic. 3885.

- J. M. Smail. 3885. Then you do not see any grave objection from that point of view? No. The next sewer it crosses is the main Bondi sewer. That is deep enough to escape the line. It passes underneath Carter's Barracks and the Benevolent Asylum. The King-street and Mr. Greenwood's schemes intersects this line of sewers; but they will be above it. The King-street scheme also crosses a small branch sewer in Elizabeth-street; but that can be dealt with.
- 4 April, 1900. 3886. Supposing you wanted to go underneath King-street, so as to get the necessary grade to Circular Quay or Fort Macquarie, how far under King-street could you go without interfering with your sewer? It branches off at the corner of King and Elizabeth streets. It then makes a detour near Governor Bourke's statue. The sewers intersected there would be the Castlereagh-street and Macquarie-street sewers, which are quite deep enough to allow of a railway tunnel being made over them. They are from 20 to 30 feet deep.
3887. Supposing the railway tunnel were 20 feet underneath the street, what then? Then, at the point at which it crosses Macquarie-street, there need be no interference with the sewer.
3888. Do your sewers vary in depth according to their position in the city? Yes. Under the old system the Macquarie, Castlereagh, Phillip, and Elizabeth street sewers were put down deep, so as to accommodate deep cellars. The only objectionable feature I see in Mr. Greenwood's scheme is where the line crosses some storm-water sewers at Sydney Cove—that is, on Circular Quay—which would necessitate some structural alterations. I have gone into the matter with him, and he is quite clear as far as our sewers are concerned.
3889. *Dr. Garran.*] He crosses the Tank Stream? Yes.
3890. Can he do that? No. We shall have to alter the Tank Stream, or he will have to alter his railway.
3891. Is he satisfied that he can do it? Yes; there is nothing unsurmountable in it.
3892. *Chairman.*] Would it involve great expense? I think the whole lot could be done for £2,000.
3893. *Dr. Garran.*] Would Mr. Horbury Hunt's scheme intersect the sewer at Bridge-street? Yes. The sewer there is not more than 8 or 9 feet below the surface. The Bridge-street sewer hugs one side of the street, and he could keep clear on the other side.
3894. But he crosses it at right-angles? I understood he tunnelled right up Bridge-street.
3895. *Chairman.*] Where does your main tunnel which goes out to Bondi begin? At the corner of Liverpool and Oxford streets, where it is 110 feet deep.
3896. What is your minimum fall towards your main sewer? It varies according to the quantity of sewerage we have to take. The outfall sewer only has a fall of 3 feet in a mile; the others vary.
3897. Can you say, with regard to any proposal for a railway which does not interfere with the main sewer, that the ordinary reticulation sewers could be diverted, even if a line crossed their route? I take it that the people who have laid out the three lines I am speaking of have tried to interfere with sewers as little as possible. I could not speak generally on a matter like this.
3898. *Dr. Garran.*] If there were a tunnel under George-street from Bathurst-street, would it interfere with anything? No.
3899. Would it interfere with anything from the Town Hall, along York-street, to Wynyard-square? No. Mr. Green has a detailed way of getting over the difficulty near York-street Markets. He makes an upper and a lower level, which will avoid our sewers altogether.
3900. Does your sewer run along George-street? Yes; 24 feet deep. It was put down to drain the new Markets.
3901. If the Hyde Park scheme were adopted, could an extension of that line be made down Phillip-street without interfering with the sewers? I think so.
3902. And down Elizabeth-street? It does not touch the sewer in Elizabeth-street. It intersects Phillip-street and Macquarie-street.
3903. Does it go down Castlereagh-street? No.
3904. Is there any sewer in Castlereagh-street? Yes; there are sewers there. There is the Bondi branch, which varies from 20 to 30 feet deep. The old sewer there will be 20 feet deep.
3905. Then a 20-foot sewer would interfere with the railway line on the top of it? Yes; but the line could hug one side of it. There is room for that.
3906. Could you put a line on each side of it? Yes.
3907. And make two separate tunnels? Yes.
3908. Your sewerage would throw no obstruction in the way of extending a railway from Hyde Park to Circular Quay? No material obstruction. There are no engineering difficulties in the way.
3909. If we crossed Devonshire-street, and have to lower it 9 feet, would it be cheaper to make a new sewer or patch up the old one? You could patch up the old sewer so as to carry the passenger traffic.
3910. Is it a house sewer or a surface-water sewer? A house sewer. If at any future time lines were carried across, and we found the sewer was seriously interfered with, we could arrange to have a smaller pipe, which would take the sewerage from the houses into the Bondi sewer. That could be laid at a depth below the tunnel, or any depth below the subway, and the storm-water could be dealt with by the shallower one.
3911. Is a level of 10 feet below Devonshire-street sufficient to enable you to divert that sewer into the Bondi sewer? Yes.
3912. At present all that goes out to Darling Harbour? Yes.
3913. Would that be altered when the Shoan system comes into operation? Yes.
3914. Do you not allow anything to go into the lower levels which can be sent to Bondi? No.
3915. Some day you will have to divert the Devonshire-street sewer to Bondi? It should be done now. We were afraid to divert it into the Bondi sewer whilst they were making gas at the railway station. That has been done away with now, and the probability is that the Board will do the work soon, irrespective of the railway.
3916. When that is done Devonshire-street will not interfere with the storm-water sewerage at all? Excepting the storm-water which comes from Strawberry Hills.
3917. You could not divert the stormwater round by Belmore-road? No. I may say that, as far as the water-mains are concerned, the railway does not matter to us.
3918. *Chairman.*] From an engineering point of view, you do not see any engineering difficulties in the way? No; excepting in regard to Mr. Greenwood's scheme at Circular Quay.
3919. *Dr. Garran.*] I believe that under Mr. Selge's scheme the line goes close to the rear of your present offices;

offices; will it injure the foundation? Mr. Selfe explained to me that he laid out the line before the land was built upon; but it is not a detriment to us.

3920. Will you not require to build to the rear? We can always build over a railway tunnel. Even if the buildings were constructed first they could be tunnelled underneath.

3921. Are you going to make any deep cellars there? No.

J. M. Smail.
April, 1900.

Joshua Percy Josephson, A.M.I.C.E., sworn, and examined:—

3922. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand that you have some proposal to submit to the Committee? It has always been my idea that the centre of the city is the present Redfern station. The city is so situated that it cannot extend any further north, south, or east, and it must extend to the west. Different engineers, in speaking of this matter, have always come to the conclusion that as Redfern station will be the centre of the city for many years the railway should not be extended. I have been a constant traveller from Petersham for many years, and I have never found it inconvenient to transfer from the train to the tram. The electric trams are a great improvement on the old system. Who are the people who are clamouring for an extension of a railway? They are the western suburban passengers for a distance of 3½ miles. Beyond that distance we hear of no cry for extension. I refer, of course, to the extension of the railway for passengers only—not for cargo. No doubt the Redfern station has become cramped for room during the last few years. There are buildings and workshops there which never should have been there. It would, of course, be very expensive now to move the machinery sheds elsewhere. The carriage-sheds, the repairing-sheds, the storage department, and all the buildings west of the main line between Eveleigh and Macdonaldtown should be removed to a new site. All the hay and produce sheds near the institute should be removed to Wilson-street between Eveleigh and Macdonaldtown.

3923. Is there sufficient room for them? There would be, if the shops were removed.

J. P.
Josephson,
A.M.I.C.E.
April, 1900.

3924. Where would you remove the shops to? To near Vickers' factory, St. Peters. There are 80 acres of good land there, which could be resumed for about £100 an acre. I think this is the only country in the world where the Government run both the trams and the trains, and a certain section of the people want for the sake of their own convenience, one Department to fight against the other. I would suggest that we should resume the land from the railway station to Belmore Park, containing the Asylum, the Inspector-General's Office, the burying-ground, and part of the barracks. I would close Devonshire-street, come down to the residence of the Inspector-General, and make a new railway station there. I would extend the platforms back to the present railway terminus, and make a 3-chain road in front of the station. The old police station site could be resumed, and the trams could come down in front of the station. Then you could divert a road on the eastern side of the platform into the present railway yard, near the Railway Institute, where all the produce comes down at the present time. Every tram could then be brought past the station. I would not extend the railway further than I have mentioned. I think we have sufficient room for a central railway station for many years to come. If it is absolutely necessary that the railway should be extended, there are only, to my mind, two schemes which can possibly be adopted. The first is the Hyde Park scheme, and the other is the St. James' Road scheme. Some few years ago I was opposed to the utilisation of Hyde Park, but of late I have given up my opposition to it.

3925. I think that the objection has been to the resumption of a large area of the Park? I understand that the Railway Commissioners said that they would give the old burying-ground in exchange for a portion of the Park. Most people travelling by tram get out at King-street, and, as a rule, they do not go beyond George-street to their businesses. You must not lose sight of the fact that in a few years hence, we should have nothing but storage places all the way up Kent-street to Bridge-street. That means that passengers will still go further west. Under what is known as No. 10 scheme, property is resumed which will make it very expensive to carry out. It seems to me that that scheme is suggested in order to save the Park.

3926. Have you looked at Mr. Greenwood's and Mr. Selfe's schemes? Yes. I object to Mr. Selfe's scheme because his object is to connect with North Shore, and I do not think it is worth doing. I saw the excavations for the Central Markets, and I do not think they would stand any railway there. They are only 22 feet deep. I object to tunnels. Engineers have told me that the people of England do not like the tunnels which have been made there.

3927. *Mr. Levien.*] What is done with the smoke in the London tunnel? It is consumed. It seems to me that the desire of the Government is that that the trains should fight against the trams, and I do not see why that should be done.

3928. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you think George-street will be sufficient to carry the trams with the extended traffic which we expect in years to come? No; but I think the trams along George-street and Elizabeth-street will be sufficient.

3929. Do you think the travelling public would be sufficiently served by an extension of the railway station such as you suggest, and by the adoption of the system of electric trams which it is proposed to carry out? Yes.

3930. It has been stated that the majority of the railway passengers coming to Redfern would travel to a central station at King-street rather than change at Redfern and take the trams? It depends on where they are going. I do not think they would.

3931. If passengers wished to alight between Market-street and Liverpool-street, would they come to the King-street central station, or take a tram? They would take a tram.

3932. Which class of passengers coming to the city would take advantage of the train? First-class. I believe passengers would rather get out at Redfern station, and take a tram to Liverpool-street, than they would go by train to King-street, and come back again.

3933. Supposing people wanted to get out at Bathurst-street? I think 25 per cent. of them would take the tram from the Redfern station.

3934. Supposing people wished to go to George, Pitt, Clarence, or York streets? In my opinion they would take the tram.

3935. What about the Circular Quay passengers? They would take the trams. If I were going to the Quay, I would get out at Redfern and take a tram.

3936. What part of the city do you come to now? I get out at King-street. My office is in Stephen-court.

3937.

J. P. Josephson,
A.M.I.C.E.
4 April, 1900.

3937. What is your experience in regard to the delay which is alleged to take place in changing at Redfern from the trains to the trams? The delay takes place at the congested point opposite the Asylum, where all the trams have to cross each other.
3938. Do you use the electric tram? Yes, in the afternoon.
3939. Since the electric tram has been established, has there been much delay to passengers getting out at Redfern? I think not.
3940. Do you consider that the tram accommodation is sufficient to carry away the passengers as fast as they arrive? Yes. I have watched the trams. One will go away full, another partly full, and another with very few in it.
3941. What about the trams to the railway station in the evening? They are full. I have allowed half-a-dozen trams to pass me in order to get room in one.
3942. Does not that show that there are certain hours of the day when there are not sufficient trams? Yes; but many of the passengers are not railway passengers; they get out at Park-street and Market-street.
3943. Would it convenience the ordinary traffic if trams ran down some of the other streets? Not at all.
3944. Would it be necessary for people going to streets west of George-street and Sussex-street to have trams to those streets? I think not.
3945. Assuming that George-street cannot carry the traffic, what then? Of course, most of the George-street people will take the electric trams in preference to the steam trams. They will come from Castlereagh-street and Elizabeth-street to it. The steam tram to the railway does not run regularly now.
3946. You have suggested the removal of the produce sheds at Redfern;—would you move them in view of carrying out alterations at the existing station? I think it will not be long before we shall have to resume a little portion of Prince Alfred Park for the produce sheds.
3947. Would it not be difficult to get a more central position? They might be removed a little to the east of the Railway Institute. They might, however, remain where they are at present for some years.
3948. *Mr. Watson.*] You have stated that you think the tramway system might be extended sufficiently to serve, with a railway station which took in a portion of the Benevolent Asylum ground, all requirements? Yes.
3949. Do you think it would be inconvenient to vehicular traffic to have a tramway the whole length of Pitt-street? Yes.
3950. If that is so, would it not be advisable, with your station as suggested, to run a tram line for railway traffic down Pitt-street, only reserving the George-street tram for the western suburbs traffic, and thus obviating the crossing which at present takes place? Yes; that could be done.
3951. Do you think that with that alteration the tramway service generally would be reasonably sufficient for the traffic from the railway? Yes.
3952. Could you offer an opinion as to whether people west of George-street wishing to go to the railway would be likely to use the George-street line, or whether they would walk another block and take a tram along Pitt-street to the railway? My opinion is that they would take the Pitt-street tram, because they would then be able to get right into the railway station.
3953. With an alteration of that kind you think the terminus at or near Devonshire-street would be quite sufficient for railway travelling for some time to come? Yes, for some years.
3954. *Dr. Garran.*] You are the only suburban passenger who has come before us who has given evidence that there is no need for an extension;—have you found amongst the suburban passengers any who agree with you? Yes; I told several that I was coming before you, and they said, "We do not want an extension into the city."
3955. Some have said that the extension is wanted because of loss of time in changing, and others because of the inconvenience of changing, which do you think is the most likely? People object to changing their seat; it is a trouble to get out. I have travelled for fifteen years and I have never found it inconvenient.
3956. If the people who want the luxury like to pay for it, it should not be a reason against making the extension? No.
3957. The original estimate of Mr. Eddy was that he could do the whole work for £550,000, and that an additional charge of 1d. would be made on the first-class fares, and a proportional additional charge on the second-class fares, and so on;—Now we are told that the line will cost £50,000 more, because the price of material has risen; Mr. Eddy was induced to offer £100,000 for the value of the Park land, but it appears from the valuers that the land is worth at least £200,000;—do you think that if we took the land we ought to pay full value or one-half? I would point out that if the railway is carried to Hyde Park the property facing Elizabeth-street will deteriorate to third class property.
3958. *Mr. Watson.*] The railway might give it extra value for business purposes? It might. Of course if it deteriorated, Hyde Park would deteriorate, but nevertheless the full price should be paid for the Park, by reason of the depreciation, through the agency of the Railway.
3959. *Mr. Levien.*] Is there any particular advantage in being alongside a railway station? Yes, for a large hotel.
3960. *Dr. Garran.*] Supposing the full price were paid, and the cost of the line was £800,000, or 50 per cent. more than the original estimate, do you think the passengers would pay 50 per cent. more on their fares, when they can come down for 1d. by the tram? No. I know of many passengers who walk rather than pay the penny.
3961. Some of the witnesses say they would be willing to pay the extra fare? I do not think you will find half of them will do it.
3962. Do you mix a great deal with the passengers? Yes. Some of them have said, "We do not want to pay any more fare. We pay quite enough now."
3963. Is not there an agitation for a decrease of fares? Yes. Only yesterday there was a deputation to the Commissioners in regard to the Illawarra line.
3964. If the cost should be £800,000, you do not think there will be a revenue to pay a fair interest upon it? No.
3965. Still less would there be a revenue to pay interest on No. 10 scheme, which is to cost £1,500,000? That is so.
- 3966-7. The tramway in Elizabeth-street suits you where it is; but do you think it suits half the people who want to come into the city? I believe that if the tramway in Elizabeth-street were an electric tram it would be as well taken advantage of as the George-street tram.

3968. That implies that it would put people down where they want to go? Yes. The steam trams from the railway station do not run regularly.
3969. The Elizabeth-street trams suit many professional people who have their offices in East Sydney? Yes.
3970. Does it not suit the business people so much? No, they go more to George-street. Many people having business in the neighbourhood of Elizabeth-street prefer the George-street tram on account of its cleanliness and quickness.
3971. Supposing your office were in Clarence or Sussex streets, would you walk across the George-street tram to King-street to take the train so as not to be disturbed when you arrived at Redfern, or would you pick up the George-street tram? I would take the communication to Redfern direct.
3972. Do you think most men of business would do that? Yes.
3973. Many people say they would cross George-street and go to King-street for the sake of not being disturbed? I do not think they would.
3974. Do you think Hyde Park is equally as central position? At present it is a central part of the city.
3975. Would not a railway station at King-street accommodate a great many people? Of course it would. There is no doubt that if it were carried out it would be used as much as possible.
3976. Would a tram from the station to through West Sydney accommodate more people than one taken through East Sydney to Hyde Park? I think the one tram would be used as much as the other.
3977. Then, on the whole, we had better make the cheaper one? I think so.
3978. The great objection to the western one has been that it will cost too much money? Just so.
3979. The question has been asked whether, if we paid the full value of the land we took from Hyde Park and spent the money in making reserves elsewhere, it would not be a fair exchange? I think it would. All our lungs are in one spot,—Hyde Park being the lung of the city.
3980. I judge from your evidence that if a suitable station were built on the Benevolent Asylum site, and two or three electric trams were run into Sydney, the traffic would be practically coped with? I think it would for many years.
3981. That is not the evidence of most of the people who live between Sydney and Burwood? I have taken a radius of 34 miles.
3982. Do you think the long-distance passengers want to come nearer the city than Redfern? I think not.
3983. What about the passengers from Penrith and Campbelltown? They would use the extension at times, but they are not calling out for it.
3984. The cry comes from the suburban passengers? Yes.
3985. And mainly from those on the western line? Yes.
3986. We have evidence that there are 45,000 people who come and go from the western suburbs every day;—do you not think that most of them come on to Sydney? A great many of them do, especially on Wednesdays, when there are cheap fares from beyond Richmond and Penrith.
3987. You think that those people would sooner get out at Redfern, and be conveyed into Sydney by tram than go on to Sydney by rail? Not if the railway is made; but they are not agitating for it.
3988. Would it not be a great convenience to them? It would be a convenience if they wanted to go to the Court-house, but it would not be convenient if they wanted to go to Hordern's.
3989. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You think there is no need for the extension of a railway into the city, and that the trams are capable of coping with the whole of the traffic? Yes.
3990. By enlarging the station, greater facilities will be afforded to the trams carrying the passenger traffic? Certainly.
3991. About what area do you calculate a railway line to King-street would serve? I think that people who wanted to go to Bathurst-street would go by tram; they would not go to King-street by rail and then walk back.
3992. What streets north, south, and west would bound the portion which would be conveniently served by the King-street train? I do not think they would go further back than Bathurst-street.
3993. Do you think they would go that far? It is questionable whether they would.
3994. On the west how far do you think people would go? They might go to Pitt-street, but not further. If I wanted to go to Bridge-street, I would not take the Bridge-street train, I would take the tram. If the railway is carried to King-street, it certainly must not stop there. I do not think two-thirds of the people would ride to King-street.
3995. What proportion of the day traffic do you think the King-street station would serve? Not more than one-half.
3996. Do you think it would serve one-fourth? It is hard to say.

THURSDAY, 5 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Frederic Harrison Quaife, M.D., sworn, and examined:—

3997. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have taken a great interest in the city railway extension for many years? Yes. I attended the first meeting which was ever held, presided over by the late Thomas Walker, at the Exchange.
3998. Are you acquainted with what is known as the St. James' Road scheme, recommended to Parliament by a former Public Works Committee, and also by a Royal Commission in 1897? Yes.

F. H. Quaife,
M.D.
5 April, 1900.

- F. H. Quaife, 8999. Are you acquainted with what is now called the modified Hyde Park scheme, bringing the railway more to the west? Yes.
- M. D.
5 April, 1900. 4000. In April, 1897, you were examined at length before a Royal Commission on the subject of the extension of the city railway;—you then submitted a scheme which you had thought out, and I believe you now come before the Committee to give your present views? Yes. I had drawn out a plan similar to that contained in the printed report of the Royal Commission in 1897, considerably before that time. I went before the Royal Commission which sat at the Town Hall, and presented almost the same plan. My idea was, there being a difficulty about taking the whole width of the park between Elizabeth-street and the central avenue, to see whether or not a modification might be made which would save as much of the park as possible, and yet give equal convenience to that required by the Commissioners in their report on what was known as the Park-street plan—that is to say, taking the south-western portion of the park instead of the south-eastern portion. When it was objected that it would be inconvenient to stop at Park-street the Commission took the view that the St. James' Road scheme would be the best. I came to the conclusion that by taking in Elizabeth-street, and seeing that the Government had already got a large piece of ground between Elizabeth and Castlereagh streets, namely, the High School property and the property extending to Market-street, and by shunting the whole business across to the frontage of Castlereagh-street, and taking in the dilapidated and obsolete Court-house buildings, there would be an equal area of land obtained without very much resumption of property. Resumption there would have to be, and the resumption would embrace between Market-street and the Synagogue and the square block at King-street, north of the High School. Before I drew out the scheme, I went, by leave, to the Railway Engineer, Mr. Deane, and he kindly supplied me with the levels of the different points about that neighbourhood, and also gave me a practicable curve. I think the curve he gave me was one of 10 or 12 chains radius, but my plan was drawn on a 12 chains radius. I notice, however, that Mr. Deane now allows in that plan a curve of 10 chains, and that would make it easier to carry out. It would enable you, for instance, to shunt over the railway towards Castlereagh-street with a shorter distance between the Synagogue and King-street. If you went back to King-street, as I think you ought to do, you would save approaching the Synagogue so nearly as you would under some of the other plans, and it would be a great advantage to the building and its occupants.
4001. Do you understand No. 10 scheme? Yes.
4002. You might explain the difference between your scheme and No. 10 scheme? The distance between King-street and Park-street is 1,440 feet. The distance from King-street to the Synagogue is 1,150 or 1,200 feet. My scheme begins at the east side of Castlereagh-street; 30 feet of the ground east of it is added to the street to make it 92 feet wide. The station, as in No. 10 scheme, crosses Elizabeth-street and closes it, and goes into the park a little further—in fact, takes 190 feet of the Elizabeth-street frontage. It goes into the western porch of St. James' Church, and runs by a line practically parallel with Elizabeth-street to Park-street. A little more land is taken near Park-street for the purpose of carriage-docks, horse-docks, and so on. That is put in, because I find it in the plan of the Commissioners in connection with the Park-street scheme. The station would be practically level with Castlereagh-street, and therefore would be considerably below the level at the eastern boundary. There would be a wall there, and it would cut the park off from it. The western curve near Park-street would be practicable. The old Court-house would have to be taken down. I propose to widen King-street opposite the station about 10 feet, and then inside there would be width of 30 feet or thereabouts for carriage entrance to the front of the station. Most of the main traffic away from the station would run along Castlereagh-street. The platforms, as in the Commissioners' schemes are 700 feet long. My proposed approach through Hyde Park would be more easterly than the No. 10 scheme; it would come half way to Lovers' Walk. The south-west part of the Park contains certain avenues, and the trees there are very fine. It has always been a question with me whether we could get through the Park at the proper level and save them. On each side of the avenues there are open spaces which are not planted, and I found on getting the levels that you could get under the trees very fairly almost without damaging one of them. The trees would grow over the tunnel. As to the rest of the Park, I take the view that, if we have two or three open spaces in the Park with a railway running through, there can be no objection whatever. The city of Edinburgh has a railway which runs through Prince's Gardens, between the Castle and Prince's-street. My reason for going east is because the land rises from Elizabeth-street to the central avenue of the Park more than it does in the northern section, and the more east you go the more head you get over the tunnel. The land taken up lengthwise is not so long in the St. James' Road plan as in my plan. I go to King-street and the other plan does not. That being so it would be necessary to have the whole of this length with the lines jammed up against the Synagogue. In my plan I escape the Synagogue. If the line should go to King-street, it follows that it will be set back near King-street, and you will be able to get a much wider road near the Synagogue.
4003. You only take about 5 acres of the Park? About 5½ acres, but I take down St. James' Church, and I add the land where the church stood, and the eastern half of St. James' Road to the Park. If I take away three-quarters of an acre in one block I give it back in another place.
4004. Do you intend to preserve Elizabeth-street? No, I shut it up. I may mention that the trams would come along Elizabeth-street, turn off at Park-street, and go over the trains, coming out at a spot where the church now is, go along Phillip-street, and thus avoid the curve at Hunter and Elizabeth-streets. There would be a bridge at Park-street, and there the tram would become an elevated tramway.
4005. *Mr. Watson.*] It has been suggested by the Railway Commissioners that they will bring the eastern trams through Park-street, and on to Castlereagh-street, and thence to the Quay, instead of through the Park, and along Elizabeth-street. Of course, that will be another way out of the difficulty, and it would be very suitable as regards bringing people from the Quay direct to the railway. I was not aware until lately that it was possible to take the tram-lines along Castlereagh-street. I thought there were difficulties in the way in the shape of crooked streets, such as O'Connell-street and Bligh-street. That, however, is a very small matter. One advantage of my plan is that, instead of the railway traffic having to cross the tram-line, the tram-line would be out of the way. The main traffic coming from the east would have to cross it.
4006. *Chairman.*] Apparently your proposed line is similar in construction to that of the Department;—I suppose you estimate the cost of constructing your line at about the same—£550,000? Yes.
4007. I see in a former statement you put down the probable land resumption at £362,000, so that the total cost of your scheme would be about £912,000, irrespective of any value for the 5½ acres taken from Hyde Park? Exactly.
- 4008.

4008. You do not put anything down for that? No, except that I provide that if any portion of Hyde Park is taken, an equivalent will be given somewhere else. F. H. Quaife,
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4009. *Dr. Garran.*] Where is the money for the equivalent to come from? We have the equivalent in the shape of the cemetery. There might be some expense caused in dealing with the owners of graves, but that would be a small matter. 5 April, 1900.

4010. *Chairman.*] Do you still adhere to the scheme contained in the evidence given by you before the Royal Commission in April, 1897? Yes.

4011. Do you wish it to be embodied in your present evidence? Yes, as follows:—

A MODIFICATION of the 1890 Hyde Park scheme proposed by the Commissioners, saving a considerable area of the Park, and giving an area for the terminus equal to that stated to be required.

Levels of the important points are official, kindly supplied by Mr. Deane, who also supplied a practical curve (railway).

My remarks refer to the area for the station and yard at Park-street, and some important ones to the levels and conditions of the southern quarter of the Park.

Plan is drawn on a copy of the large city official map—sections 33 and 34—on a scale of 40 feet to the inch.

Boundaries of the land.

Castlereagh-street, north-west corner, to a point 60 feet along King-street East, beyond the Supreme Court about 400 feet; from that point to Park-street, parallel or nearly so with Castlereagh-street, about 1,440 feet; from Park-street point 145 feet to within 15 feet of south-east post of entrance to Park; thence curved line of 12-chain radius to a point about 30 feet from corner north-east of Synagogue; thence a line proceeding to that corner and along the northern boundary of the building to Castlereagh-street; thence back to starting point at King-street, about 1,205 feet, along east alignment of Castlereagh-street.

It might be necessary to take about 45 feet more at Park-street east of above, and thence to join the second line through the Park to a point about 580 feet from Park-street; and, also, a strip along Park-street east of that, sufficient for a roadway. The area of this land is nearly 13 acres, and includes all that is wanted for the station buildings, platforms, lines, and approaches.

To this should be added the rest of the site of St. James' Church, and that part of St. James' Road east of the line from King-street to Park-street, on the eastern boundary of the station ground. Of the above addition there are almost two-thirds of an acre, and it is meant to be added to the Park in lieu of some taken away. It is bounded east by a curved line from the church to the entrance of the avenue. It is shown by red and black lines in the plan.

Contents of principal area.

1. Tower and about one-fourth of the church.
2. Supreme Court and Land Titles Office.
3. Western half of St. James' Road.
4. Part of the Park—190 feet wide in the margin, and lessening at each end.
5. Elizabeth-street from King-street to the Synagogue.
6. Market-street, east of Castlereagh-street.
7. All the property from the Synagogue north boundary to King-street.

Appurtenances.

Area taken from Park is 5 acres, and $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres to avenue are left, including two-thirds of an acre more, added as described above.

Of this area the State already owns a large portion, viz.:—1. The Supreme Court and Registrar-General's Office.
2. The land on which the High School stands and on to Market-street.

The square block at King-street, between Elizabeth and Castlereagh streets, and also all south of Market-street to Synagogue would have to be resumed. This should be now much lower in value than formerly. There is not much good property on it. The old Court-house would have to be replaced probably where the Mint is, and that could be moved out to spare ground in the Barrack area. Such an institution should not occupy so magnificent a site as it does. A good part of the ground in Castlereagh-street has only rookeries and hoardings on it. Of course the church would have to be paid for, and it is unfortunate that a fine new building should have been erected for an additional Court-house close to it; but that is, after all, a small matter if the great public convenience of a railway terminus is considered.

Four hundred feet are taken because I understand that Mr. Eddy considers it necessary, or less of the Park might be interfered with.

The expensive and fine Synagogue is to be carefully preserved, and this limits our facilities of approach, as we must enter the ground from the south to the eastward of the central line of the station. The gentle curve necessary on the western side conveniently causes the widening of Castlereagh-street by about 30 feet, making it about 92 feet wide, which would give fine room for the great vehicular traffic which would be concentrated there. We still then get about 370 feet of width for the station.

I have followed as closely as possible the published plan for the Park-street station, and have provided room for similar platforms and lines; also an interior cab-road to go in at Castlereagh-street and rise over two of the westernmost lines to a road out at the Synagogue, on a grade of about 1 in 13 for 170 feet, then a level or slight rise over the bridge. Beside the Synagogue, a road nearly 30 feet leads out to Castlereagh-street, and has a gateway to Elizabeth-street; also a 5-foot footpath along the Synagogue wall. There, also, on the Castlereagh-street front, is provided a large luggage office, 100 x 85 feet, with a second front to a road-space opposite the Synagogue, but separated by a wall from the roadway mentioned above. Such an office is provided in the Park-street plan, and is to be on the surface of the ground, and have a lift from the long western platform to its floor. This may be done here, but I would have underneath this building a basement which might be used for electric power plant for the lighting of the station, and also for part of the power necessary for working the tramways proposed to be converted from steam ones into electric ones. It would be found probably more economical to run the current from this central point that from the Rushcutter's Bay station as proposed, and, if necessary, the room could be extended nearly up to the Synagogue, giving a very large space indeed.

Room in the yard is provided for seven distinct platforms from 20 to 27 feet wide, with the necessary room for the lines between, as proposed by the Commissioners' plan. The bridge at Park-street is also made wide enough for all the lines required, with two supporting piers, each 3 feet 9 inches thick, with room for three lines between the piers and abutments and four lines between the piers.

The levels shown are official, and give plenty of headway by raising Park-street from 1 to 2 feet over the bridge, and an easy grade on each side to Elizabeth-street and towards College-street. I think a fall of about 1 foot in the 580 from the ends of the platforms will require a 2-foot rise at Park-street; more fall would of course require less. According to Mr. Deane, a rise of 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet at Park-street would take them out level.

The level for the rails at the platforms is 64 feet, being 3 feet as required below the level of Castlereagh-street at Market-street, or 67 feet. The other levels at various points are shown on the map. The land rises on each side in Castlereagh-street. At King-street it is 74 feet, at Elizabeth-street 85, and near Phillip-street 95. At Park-street, near eastern boundary of the station land, the level is 82 feet; and hence there would have to be a deep cutting with retaining-wall from Park-street to King-street. Hence there would be required the excavation of the whole land from Castlereagh-street to the eastern wall, and this would be advantageous, as tunnels to the Quay and the eastern suburbs could run out from the last pairs of rails under Phillip-street and so on into Macquarie-street with plenty of head over them—20 feet being required for a double tunnel, but 15 feet or upwards for a bridge (10 or 11 feet over the tunnel). A tunnel can run along Macquarie-street to the Quay without any compensation payment by keeping it on the eastern side of the street. The level of the station would provide for all sanitary arrangements. The platforms are all of the same length as in the proposed plan, and the carriage road is 30 feet wide.

At King-street there is a widening of 10 feet for the extra traffic, and a roadway for cabs to the front of the station at the least part 35 feet wide, and as these cabs would be all taking people to the trains they would merely set down and drive

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drive away. The cab-stand would be in Castlereagh-street. I do not presume to go into station arrangements, except in so far as to indicate what seems practicable. The general level is so near that of the land at Castlereagh-street side that there would be everywhere very small descents to the platforms by either steps or inclined planes.

The traffic across the Park at Market-street would be provided for by either an over-head bridge or sub-way, from which, if necessary, communication with the platforms can be made, and ticket offices provided for requirements.

The trams along Elizabeth-street would be diverted across the Park-street bridge, and would curve round to the east side of the railway ground, and be carried on an elevated railway to King-street, where, by a reverse, they would pass across the cable tram, as at present, and pass into Phillip-street, joining the present lines at the north side of Hunter-street, and the awkward and very expensive curve from that street to Elizabeth-street would be abolished. The viaduct would be as light as possible, and its eastern edge would rest on the railway boundary wall, the other on the ground and eastern platform on iron posts; it would have to be about 22 feet or 24 feet wide. The curve at Park-street could be made much easier than the present one at Hunter-street, and there would be a gentle rise from Park-street to King-street. Here note that as the trams are probably to be converted into electric, the works would be much lighter than necessary to carry the present steam trams.

As the great mass of traffic would pass to an iron west of the station, it would be a great advantage to remove the trams as proposed, as the traffic would no longer have to pass over the tram lines, and the entire tram traffic would be virtually only the length of the Supreme Court further away. I consider this point of special value.

In advocating this plan it is well to point out that there has been a great increase in important offices and buildings within an easy radius of the site. Castlereagh-street, Elizabeth-street beyond King-street, and Phillip-street are becoming more used, and as the area required becomes greater, Woolloomooloo, near the water, will be taken up more and more; also the eastern part of the city, Darlinghurst, &c., should be considered.

If the station is west of George-street, the eastern part of the city and the eastern suburbs will be left out in the cold, as the people will have to cross the main business parts of the city to get to it, while a railway to the east will be rendered almost impossible by the tremendous cost of ground and destruction of important buildings.

The main features of advantage in this plan are:—

1. Its central position for a station, taking generally the city and suburbs, and the easy distance from it to the most important centres.
2. The ease with which lines can be taken to the east and the Quay, when required.
3. The comparatively small amount of valuable property to be resumed.
4. Half of the property required is already in the hands of the State.
5. About 7 acres of the Park are saved, and possibly more may be on revision by the experts.
6. The removal of the old Court-house and St. James' Church will be no loss, but rather a boon, to the architecture of the city.
7. The station is close to the general traffic, especially since the cable tram has been introduced.
8. The cost of construction of the proposed electric tram in Park-street would be saved—some £12,000 or £15,000. I should think this may be put against the removal of the new Court premises built next the church.
9. The proximity of the station to the great hotels and boarding-houses, clubs, public offices, the Library, Domain, Botanic Gardens, Hospital, &c.
10. The widening of Castlereagh-street would be a great advantage, and would probably quite make up for the closing of Elizabeth-street at the part required.
11. The great advantage of ending at King-street, so much nearer the centres than Park-street.
12. The southern part of the Park, where the new station is proposed, is much the better planted and grown than the northern part. Along the middle of it is a high ridge, from Bathurst-street to the avenue, and on this are the finest trees; and there is such a height here that by curving the line east from the Unitarian Church a good head could be got over the line, and tunnelling might get under these very fine trees without injuring their roots. North and south of them the ground might be opened, cut down, and, as much as possible, re-covered in. Near Park-street there is no valuable timber, as an inspection will show. The trees in the northern section are mostly old. Numbers have lately been lopped to make them grow better. If the lake in the southern part is injured, a new one might be constructed somewhere else in the Park to make up for it. The drainage will probably rather improve matters than otherwise in such a shaley soil. How little the presence of a high cutting injures trees may be seen near the Cleveland-street bridge, where there are some very fine and old trees in the grounds of St. Paul's Church, Redfern, which abut upon the railway yards.

The objections no doubt are:—

1. Mechanical. This the railway engineer alone can settle; but I have, so far as I know, avoided any.
2. The closure of streets. The gift of a fine railway terminus will quite make up for this.
3. The compensation. On any other route, the Park excepted, this will be simply enormous. It should be taken on the land-tax returns sent in by the proprietors, and with the usual additions for compulsory resumption and for buildings.

The block next King-street is no doubt the most valuable. The High School might be removed to the vacant semi-circle at the Colonial Architect's office—a much more suitable and quieter place; and, as I said before, the Law Courts to the present site of the Mint.

It would be fully worth the money to bring the station to King-street, and the additional distance would be only so much nearer the Quay for any extension.

I do not see why so much provision for horses and carriages should be made as proposed; there are about 540 feet of line frontage in the Park-street plan. All the racing stables, I think, are out Randwick and Waterloo way, and room for horse-box trains could be most conveniently got at Redfern or on the Benevolent Asylum site; but a little room for casual purposes may be easily supplied, and in my plan would require a little extension of the width of the Park-street end of the enclosure. This is shown on the plan.

Values.

Taking Mr. S. Perdriau's values, as published, the area of the land from the Synagogue to Market-street is about £260,000; the King-street block, £102,000; making £362,000. I would remove the Mint to Green's Road at the Barracks; remodel the whole site on which it stands, adding the space out to Albert-street from the Domain to Macquarie-street. On this area there should be room for fine Law Courts of all kinds, a new High School in a much quieter and equally convenient position, and a new St. James' Church, equally convenient with the present. The whole might be named Victoria Crescent, to commemorate the glorious reign soon to be celebrated.

4012. Have you studied the question as to whether the proposed line is too much up hill to the east? If we put the railway west of George-street we shall treat the eastern part of the city and the eastern suburbs very unfairly, because the cost of connecting with the railway under those circumstances will be so immense that we shall practically defeat the scheme until the present generation is dead and gone. I desire to read a statement I have prepared on the general question, as follows:—

CITY RAILWAY.—Points to be emphasised.

1. Incidence of traffic inward and outward between Market and Hunter streets—Main by King-street.—Business centre lies near here (geographical centre at Park and Elizabeth streets), especially since the North Shore suburbs have developed so much. The shipping interests also tend to keep business at this end of city. Woolloomooloo wharfage improvements accentuate this, and will bring more people to this neighbourhood. Easy extensions to North Shore and eastern suburbs are provided for in the plan. Tunnelling now much less difficult and much more used, *vide* the Thames, Mersey, &c., electric traction in tunnels does away with nearly all the objections to railway tunnels. Central station at King-street much fairer to eastern half of city and eastern suburbs, as otherwise it is quite out of any advantage from the extension.

Eveleigh.—A large population round the station, to whom it is of little use, except towards the suburbs, as it is only a short distance from Redfern, and then a change into the tram or other vehicle must be made. Any extension as far as King-street, or further, at once makes Eveleigh a very useful and paying station. It would probably be used ten or twentyfold over what it is now.

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The above is from my own observations during many years ; but it is backed up by expert evidence, notably that of F. H. Quaife, the late Mr. Eddy (Royal Commission, 1897).

2. The main extent of the passenger station required for the suburban traffic, not the long distance. The present time-table shows 273 suburban trains against 46 country inward and outward on an ordinary day. On Saturdays and holidays, proportions still more telling. Hence the large stations should be built near the travelling centres. All authorities agreed that it is bad policy to separate them. It is also cheaper to work a combined station than two separate ones. The long-distance trains could still set down at Redfern for the southern end of the city.

3. King-street within easy distance of all lines of communication throughout city. The traffic is getting beyond all the powers of the trams to deal with it. Changing cars is a loss of time, and a nuisance. Imagine the eastern people obliged to change at Darlinghurst to get into city trams, what indignation there would be, and yet the railway travellers have stood this ever since the line was first opened.

Saving of time would be from eight to ten minutes on every journey (say, to or from the Post Office). Trams running every minute cannot travel very fast. Through trams cannot be run. Hence the complaints already made about the slowness of the electric line in George-street.

4. Axiom of all railway experts. Terminal traffic of passengers must be kept entirely separate from that of goods.

5. Equal or greater area to be given at south end of city for a park if any of Hyde Park is taken. Serving 31,000 people instead of 16,000. Either lump sum of £160,000, or £1,000 a year from railway funds. Old cemeteries to be so dedicated. Done done elsewhere.

No more of Hyde Park would be needed in the future, as conditions would be altered.

The people who are so anxious to preserve Hyde Park are quite willing to give up Wynyard-square (one of the few small western reserves).

It has been stated that if the Railway Commissioners took a portion of Hyde Park it would not be long before they took the whole of it. That is nonsense. Mr. Eddy himself stated that no more of Hyde Park would be needed in future, as the conditions would be entirely changed. People seem to be perfectly willing to give up poor little Wynyard-square, but they will not give up a foot of Hyde Park. I may mention that, in connection with the Town Hall commission, Mr. Foxley, the then railway engineer, gave important evidence on the question of the difficulty of getting under the western streets without heavy damage being done to buildings, and heavy compensation being paid. I hope that you will endeavour to obtain some practical central scheme, and not build a big station at Devonshire-street.

4013. By that do you mean that an enlargement of the premises at Redfern and the stopping of the trains there will not suit present requirements? I think it will be a great blunder. To say that Devonshire-street should be our city terminus is absolute folly.

4014. Under your scheme 5 acres of the Park will be taken independent of the running line at the southern end ;—as a medical man, do you think it will be a serious thing to deprive the city of that lung? I do not think it is worth talking about. If you adopt my scheme you will take away the only dwellings of any consequence near the railway by destroying the frontage of Elizabeth-street, and the buildings on the other side are only shops. Therefore, I do not think you would do as much harm to the city as you would by putting the railway station at Wynyard-square. Excepting for the smoke, I do not see that a railway station is an injury to a city. I do not think the matter is worth talking about, seeing that within a stone's-throw you have the Domain and the Gardens, as well as 38 acres of Hyde Park, which will be untouched. The portion proposed to be taken is exposed to a western sun. There are a few good trees there, but the majority of the Moreton Bay fig trees there have to be lopped in order to keep them alive. Some day we shall have a change in traction, and all the city trains will be drawn by electricity. It seems to me to be proved by expert evidence that if we go west we shall have to spend a large amount in compensation. Why not spend that money on the eastern scheme. After the Illawarra railway was opened the Ministry of Sir Henry Parkes presented a Bill to Parliament for £600,000 compensation which had never been thought of, and the Government had to pay it. I hope that no such mistake will be made this time. It is necessary that we should carry the traffic of the great metropolis, and what does it matter whether we spend a few hundred thousand pounds or not? It will give us the most magnificent improvement, next to sanitary improvements, that I can think of, and one for which there has been a general request for over thirty years.

4015. *Dr. Garran.* You take as much private land between Elizabeth and Castlereagh streets as do the Commissioners? Yes.

4016. And you even go to a little more expense by partly dealing with the church? Yes.

4017. The total cost, according to your estimate, is a little over £900,000? You might say £1,000,000, as I did not estimate in regard to St. James' Church.

4018. But substantially the same work, estimated by the Government, is to cost £1,500,000 ;—how can you carry it out so much cheaper than the Government? I am not aware that is the case. Those were not the estimates put forward by the Government when I made my plan.

4019. They are the estimates put before us for No. 10 scheme, which is almost identical with yours? Before I could answer the question I should like to know where the incidence fall.

4020. You have not dealt with the Commissioners' more recent estimates? No.

4021. Either your scheme or No. 10 scheme will cost more than the original St. James' Road scheme, which the Commissioners put forward? Certainly; because of the resumption on the Castlereagh and Elizabeth streets properties.

4022. They originally estimated the cost of the work and land under that scheme at £550,000? £550,000 for the works, and £100,000 for the land.

4023. Then they estimated that 1d. extra on the fares would pay a fair interest on that expenditure ;—do you think that the first-class season ticket-holders would agree to pay the extra penny fare? I think they would be only too glad to do so.

4024. Do you think the second-class passengers would agree to pay an increased proportion? I think so.

4025. Do you think the holders of workmen's tickets would pay extra? My belief is that before long you will find the Commissioners reducing the fares, because there would be so much traffic.

4026. Is not there a disposition on the part of the suburban passengers to ask for a reduction of fares? No doubt we all like to travel cheaply, and I think the traffic would so increase that the Commissioners would be able to grant a reduction.

4027. Is there not a feeling on the part of suburban passengers that the railway authorities are making a large profit out of that part of the line which they utilise, in order to pay which goes to pay the loss on country lines? That used to be an established fact. I remember well when it was said that the line from Redfern to Homebush really paid the interest on country lines.

4028. Does that feeling exist still? I do not know. I do not see that it matters. It is all one concern.

4029. It matters in this way: If the Government borrow £700,000 or £800,000 to make the line, and immediately

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5 April, 1900. immediately it is opened there is a clamour for reduction of fares, what becomes of the profits? They would not get a reduction immediately; they would have to wait. They might clamour, but it would not be fair to grant a reduction at once.

4030. If it is granted prior to the line paying the interest on the debt, the country will lose money by the extension? The people will have to pay the extra fare now, either by tramway or 'bus.

4031. The tramway is paying its way—the question for us to consider is whether the railway will also pay its way? If people pay the extra fare on the extended railway they will not have to pay it on the tramway.

4032. Would they desert the railway? Why should they do so? Why should they get out of a comfortable carriage into an uncomfortable one, and lose seven or nine minutes on the journey? It is not likely that the people will get out at Redfern and go in an electric tram which stops at every corner.

4033. You consider that the people will not ask for such a reduction of fares as will make the proposed extension an unprofitable one? I do not think so.

4034. There are people who think otherwise? Well, if I were a Railway Commissioner, and they asked for it, they would not get it.

4035. Do you think, looking at the great difference in cost for the St. James' Road scheme and the present scheme, it is worth while, for the sake of saving a mere slice of the Park, to go to such an enormous extra expense? I consider that the 5 acres will be well used, and that what is preserved will be well preserved.

Myles McRae, provision merchant, sworn, and examined:—

M. McRae. 4036. *Chairman.*] I believe you are an old resident of Sydney, and a former Member of the Legislature?
A il, 1900. Yes.

4537. You were examined before the Royal Commission which sat in 1897 on the question of railway extension, and you then made a statement;—do you wish to emphasise that statement? Yes, and I wish to add one or two other features to it. I consider it an honor to advocate the late Mr. Eddy's scheme. It has been approved of by the ablest engineers in Australia,—the greatest of experts on railway transit and administration, Public Works Committees, and Royal Commissions, and finally by the Legislature itself. The last-named body indirectly approved of Mr. Eddy's scheme, because they referred the extension of the railway into the city to the Public Works Committee, who were sitting as a Royal Commission, and that Royal Commission recommended the late Mr. Eddy's scheme. The Public Works Act provided that the recommendation would have to come from the Public Works Committee sitting as a Committee, and the majority of the Members of the Legislative Assembly knowing the decision of the Royal Commission, remitted the question to the Public Works Committee, sitting as a Public Works Committee. I would like the Committee to consider thoroughly Mr. Eddy's scheme, and to realise the congestion that exists in the city at the present time, without going into the future consequent upon our narrow streets and the abrupt termination of those streets. Thoroughly realising the congestion that already exists in the city, let any disinterested citizen stand on the platform at Redfern and take a bird's-eye view of Mr. Eddy's scheme,—its directness into the city, passing through Devonshire-street Cemetery, Belmore Park by viaduct, and an open cutting through Hyde Park, terminating at St. James' Road, and making provision for a grand modern railway station on that elevated portion of the Park which will certainly add to the improvement and appearance of the city. It is a piece of good fortune that the coast is clear, there being no buildings in the way. Mr. Eddy's scheme relieves the congestion which exists in the city at the present day, and it does not close a single street. I want the Committee to realise this fact in connection with all other schemes. Mr. Eddy, in his great anxiety to preserve the lives of the travelling public who patronise the railways, knowing that a number of persons would object to touching Hyde Park, provides for the dedication of the Devonshire-street Cemetery (consisting of double the area of that portion of Hyde Park which is required in the public interest), which he proposed to convert into recreation grounds by expending £100,000, and making provision for £1,000 or £2,000 a year to beautify it. He went into figures, and he discovered that there were no less than 32,000 souls living within a radius of half a mile of the Devonshire-street Cemetery, as against 14,000 living within a radius of half a mile of Hyde Park. There is no doubt that the Devonshire-street Cemetery is a menace to public health. Had Mr. Eddy propounded a route which would have pulled down half the city, regardless of expenditure, no Government would have been able to withstand the pressure which interested persons would have brought to bear upon it. If Sydney were laid out similar to Melbourne there might be more to be said in favour of other schemes. People have been allowed to subdivide blocks of land in all sorts of shapes, and we are suffering from congested traffic as the result. I do not see that any other scheme can be placed on the same footing as that of the late Mr. Eddy. That scheme provides, when the traffic becomes congested at St. James' Road, for a circular railway touching Circular Quay, going round between George-street and Darling Harbour, and thence to Redfern by viaduct. He also provides for an extension to North Shore by bridge or tunnel, and an extension to the eastern suburbs. There is no doubt that the eastern suburbs cannot get a starting point until the railway is brought into the city. There is a good deal to be said in reference to Mr. Norman Selfe's scheme, but that portion of the travelling public who are on either side of George-street are already accommodated by a light railway in the shape of the electric tram, and to have a heavier railway alongside would be ridiculous.

4038. *Mr. Watson.*] Would not that apply to the eastern side in the same manner? Mr. Norman Selfe proposes to have a station in the Queen Victoria Markets

4039. Would not your objection as to its being ridiculous to have a heavy railway alongside a light one apply equally to the eastern and the western side? There is this difference. At present the traffic at the Queen Victoria Markets is congested, and with a railway station there we should have no ingress or egress. Not so with Mr. Eddy's scheme. The coast is clear under his scheme. Mr. Norman Selfe proposes to resume the Wynyard-square Park which is fulfilling its purposes from a recreation point of view, and which is surrounded by a dense population, whereas the portion of Hyde Park which Mr. Eddy proposed to utilise is commanded by day-sleepers and night-prowlers in search of prey. No respectable person is ever seen on that portion of the Park. It has failed to fulfil the purposes for which it was intended; in fact, it is dangerous for any person to go through there after sunset.

4040. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You say that the George-street traffic is already congested, and that it would be absurd to run a railway parallel with the electric trams? I think so. M. McRae.
4041. Do you not think that that is the very argument why a railway should be placed there—to relieve the congested state of the street? But it would increase it. There is no space there. Where could the passengers get in and out. Even now you are in danger of being run over there by vehicles or tram cars. 6 April, 1900.
4042. If you object to two lines running parallel, would not your objection hold just as strongly to the King-street route as to the other? No; because there is ample room going to King-street. There would be space for platforms, and also space for carriage drives. The public would not lose that portion of the Park from a "lung" point of view. In the open cuttings we could have flower-pots, and so on. It is not proposed to build shops and houses there, as it is on the opposite side.
4043. Do you not think that the great object of an extension to the city is to go to a point which will serve the largest number of the day populations? I made a computation some years ago. I took the eastern suburbs into consideration, and the conclusion I came to was that seven-tenths of the passengers who patronised the tramways got in and out at the corner of King and Elizabeth streets.
4044. That was before the George-street tram was established? Yes.
4045. Of course people would come from George-street and even west of George-street at that time to that point, whereas now they travel by the George-street tram? They are amply provided for, and do not want a second railway.
4046. But you calculate that because seven-tenths of the passengers got out at the corner of King and Elizabeth streets, they would do so, if the railway were extended to King-street? Personally, I always got out there, but now I get out at the Queen Victoria Markets, because it is more convenient.
4047. What area do you suppose the King-street scheme would conveniently accommodate? It would accommodate the eastern suburbs far better than Norman Selfe's scheme, and it would accommodate those who constitute the greatest portion of the traffic of our railway system. It is ridiculous to land them outside the city. In Melbourne, 100,000 people daily travel by train on account of the railway stations being in the heart of the city. Here not more than 40,000 travel by train, and the population of Sydney exceeds the population of Melbourne. I am satisfied that 10,000 people go home to lunch every day in Melbourne. They have only to cross the street to get into the Flinders-street or Princes' Bridge station. In West Melbourne there is the Spencer-street station; on the eastern side there is the Richmond station, about the same distance as Redfern is from where we are now. Then on the northern side there is the North Melbourne station. All these stations are as near to Melbourne proper as Redfern is to Sydney, and yet Melbourne has three stations in the city in addition. That is the reason why 100,000 people travel by train per day in Melbourne, whereas only 40,000 people travel by train per day here. It is only a favoured few who can live in the suburbs in Sydney. A working man cannot do it. With regard to workmen's tickets; until recently workmen were fined to the extent of 900 per cent. by the steam tramways. You go to Auburn or Oatley, 9 or 10 miles out of the city, for 2s. 10d. per week, and until we got the electric tram here it cost 1s. 6d. a week extra by the tram. Now it costs 1s. per week from Redfern into the city, an extra charge of 40 per cent., taking mileage into consideration. People lose a lot of time getting out of the train into the train. Many workmen have to be at their warehouses at 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning, and if they could travel right into the city by train, they and their families could live in the suburbs instead of in the slums, lanes, and alleys of the city.
4048. Do you not think that Redfern station is nearer to the centre of Sydney than is the Melbourne station to the centre of Melbourne? Certainly not. There are three stations in the heart of the city of Melbourne, independent of the Richmond and North Melbourne railway stations, either of the latter stations is as near Melbourne proper as Redfern is to Sydney proper.
4049. Is not Spencer-street station on the outer outside of Melbourne? No; it abuts on Bourke and Collins Streets, the two principal streets in Melbourne on the west. The Princes' Bridge and Flinders-street stations front Flinders-street, another important street on the south, and all the other principal streets of Melbourne running at right angles terminate at Flinders-street, and almost opposite the two central stations referred to. The very fact that 10,000 people go home to lunch every day in Melbourne, whilst nobody goes home here, is a proof that they are head and shoulders above us in railway transit. I was over there some time ago, and being interested in the extension of the railway into the city, I took notes, and I saw at once why our people do not live in the suburbs.
4050. Do you say that the working people do not live in the suburbs of Sydney? Very few in the railway suburbs on account of the loss of time in waiting for trams and buses in the city, and transhipment at Redfern. The charges of the Railway Commissioners in Melbourne for season tickets being about 23 per cent. less than the charges here—now about 20 per cent., since the recent reductions. The increased volume of traffic there enabling them to make the reduction. Only the other day our Commissioners were 100 per cent. out of their calculations as to the returns from the electric trams. A reduction of fares increases the volume of traffic. That has been the experience of Melbourne. The suburban passengers, who contribute largely to the revenue of the railway system of the colony, have a long standing grievance in not being carried right into the city, as the congestion at Redfern is dangerous to life and limb.
4051. Do you think if the station were enlarged, it would prevent the existing danger? No; even if the tunnel at Redfern were widened at a cost almost equal to an extension into the city, it would only be a temporary expedient; the railway would have to be extended afterwards.
4052. Do you think that an extension of the electric tram system would cope with the passenger traffic in Sydney? The electric tram system will have more than enough to cope with in conveying the suburban passengers on account of our narrow streets, without meddling with the railway traffic, and it is antediluvian to ask them to leave comfortable carriages at Redfern, waste time there, and afterwards rush into a tram. Thousands now have to stand on the footboards, crushed beyond endurance.
4053. It is proposed to have no intermediate station between Redfern and King-street;—do you think that is a wise thing? It would be better to have one at Liverpool-street, but the electric tram would accommodate intermediate short-distance passengers in the vicinity of Liverpool-street. There is no scheme that can be compared with Mr. Eddy's scheme, because it exempts resurrections, relieves the congestion of traffic in our narrow streets, and, contrary to other schemes, it does not close a single street.

FRIDAY, 6 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Charles Nicholson Jewel Oliver, Chief Commissioner for Railways, sworn, and examined:—

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4054. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to make a statement before being questioned? Yes.

THE most exhaustive evidence having been taken by the Committee on the city railway question, I deem it advisable to briefly place before you the Commissioners' views on the subject.

It has been previously pointed out that this question has been prominently before the public at various times since about 1856, between which time and 1890 a number of plans were formulated. In 1890 the whole question was referred to a Royal Commission, when no less than thirty-five different schemes were placed before the Commission for consideration. The inquiry commenced on 2nd April, 1890; a thorough examination was made into the whole of the proposals, and finally, in March, 1891, the scheme put forward by the Railway Commissioners to extend the railway into the city with a grand central station at the top of King-street, and on portion of the north-west corner of Hyde Park, was adopted and recommended, but from various reasons did not receive the sanction of Parliament.

The subject was revived by the Railway Commissioners in April, 1896, by a letter to the Premier and Minister for Railways, as one calling for immediate settlement in the interests of safety, &c., and suggesting an alternative to the King-street site that the city terminal should be erected in the south-west division of Hyde Park, bounded by Park, Elizabeth, and Liverpool streets, and thereby reduce the interference with Hyde Park. As a result of this representation, another Royal Commission was appointed by the Government on 22nd December, 1896, to make investigation as to the expediency and best methods of extending the railway system of the Colony into the city, or through the city and to the waters of Port Jackson, &c.

About twelve schemes were submitted and inquired into, and the subject dealt with most thoroughly in all its aspects by the Commission, who reported, on 1st June, 1897, in favour of the extension of the railway into the city, and that the best method of doing so was by the route and according to the plan described as the St. James' Road scheme.

This recommendation was then referred to the Public Works Committee to consider and report upon "the expediency of extending the railway system of the Colony from the present terminus at Redfern into the city, including the erection of a large central station in the north-western division of the Park, fronting St. James' Road."

The Committee made a further full and complete investigation, and on 1st June, 1897, reported in favour of the scheme recommended by the Royal Commission, and stated that the other schemes compared with it were "inadequate, inconvenient, unduly expensive, and, in some instances, of such a character that they could not be seriously entertained."

Owing to strong objections to the appropriation of Hyde Park, the question was then referred by the Premier, the Right Honourable G. H. Reid, to Mr. Rennick, Engineer-in-Chief for Victorian Railways, for the purpose of advising and reporting on the various schemes submitted, and he, after careful inquiry and inspection of the routes and sites proposed, pronounced the St. James' Road scheme, which had been adopted and recommended by the Public Works Committee as the best, but suggested an alternative scheme with a view to overcome the objection to appropriating Hyde Park.

The subject has now been referred by Parliament to your Committee for further consideration and report, and here I would invite your most serious consideration of the matter as one calling for urgent settlement, as the difficulties of working Redfern station are increasing to such an extent that a considerable improvement in the terminal arrangements is, in the interests of safety as well as to provide for the comfort of the travelling public, absolutely necessary, and should not be delayed.

The schemes investigated by the various Commissions since 1890, together with those which have been placed before your Committee, number upwards of fifty, so that it might fairly be said the subject has been exhaustively dealt with, and the Commissioners hope that the fruits of the Committee's labour will contribute to a speedy and final settlement of the question.

The Commissioners have considered the evidence given before your Committee on the various proposals, and it seems to them that, apart from the plans submitted by Mr. Deane, there are only two schemes which it is necessary to refer to, namely, those submitted by Mr. Norman Selfe and Mr. Greenwood, both of which have been most fully and carefully considered by Mr. Deane, the Engineer-in-Chief, and Mr. Parry, Out-door Superintendent, and their evidence is now before you. We concur in the conclusions arrived at as to the unsuitability of both the schemes to meet the requirements of a city railway and terminal.

With regard to the schemes prepared by Mr. Deane, and which are numbered 1 to 10, we do not regard with favour any of those numbered 1 to 8. No. 9 provides for an extension from Redfern to the Benevolent Asylum site, and the erection of a large terminal station thereon. This proposal would meet all requirements for dealing with the traffic so far as a terminal station is concerned; but it would not produce any additional revenue, nor—a matter of far greater importance—would the public convenience be served, inasmuch as it does not provide for a railway into the heart of the city.

No. 10 scheme, although not an ideal one, would meet the requirements of a city extension with a terminal station for long-distance and suburban trains at King-street, but if adopted we should prefer the suggested modification of the scheme, which has been made, of taking about 80 to 100 feet more of the Park, so as to provide additional platforms at King-street, and thereby avoid the necessity of the extension from King-street to the back of the Art Gallery in the Domain. In our opinion this scheme is the next best to the Hyde Park scheme adjacent to St. James' Road.

We desire, however, that it should be clearly understood that we consider Hyde Park is the ideal scheme, which stands out pre-eminently superior to any other that has been put forward, and we respectfully, but earnestly, commend it for adoption.

I have observed that it has been suggested that, in view of the plague, it would be a desirable thing to resume the wharfs round Darling Harbour and construct a city railway from Redfern, round the wharfs, to Circular Quay, both for passenger and goods traffic. This, however, would be most unsatisfactory for dealing with passenger business, and contrary to all modern practice, which is to keep the passenger and goods business entirely separate, as far as possible, in large cities. A line round Darling Harbour would be an enormously costly undertaking, and, so far as passenger business is concerned, would be most unsuitable, both as regards steep gradients and convenience to the travelling public, so that the suggestion is, in the opinion of the Commissioners, out of the question as regards passenger business.

Referring to the tramway question as affecting the railway traffic, it is the opinion of the Commissioners that the requirements of this traffic cannot be satisfactorily met by street trams, abundant evidence of which has been placed before you. What is required is a terminal railway station situated in a position reasonably adjacent to the business centres of the city. In this connection it cannot be substantially asserted that the Hyde Park or King-street schemes are inconveniently situated; indeed, it is respectfully urged that the evidence points to a contrary conclusion, and, in our opinion, no practicable scheme has been submitted which would be preferable to either.

4055. Do I understand that your statement is presented as the unanimous opinion of the Railway Commissioners? That is the unanimous view of the Railway Commissioners as a body.

4056. Since the adoption by the Royal Commission and the Public Works Committee of the St. James' Road scheme, the electric tramways, as you indicate, have been running from Redfern into Sydney;—I should like to know whether you think that a system of electric tramways to connect Redfern with the city, not necessarily along George-street alone, but possibly by more extended routes, is likely to satisfy the

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the demands of the travelling public? I think no tramway system can possibly accommodate the railway travellers. It is only necessary for anyone to take up a position at the Redfern platform during the busy parts of the day to see how inadequate the otherwise efficient service of to-day is. You cannot take people who arrive in hundreds by trains, away in trams which will only hold thirty or forty passengers. The result is that during the busy part of the day it takes quite five minutes to get away from the station, and then it is frequently what may be termed crush loading. If that is what happens to-day, the position will only be intensified as our suburban traffic increases. It is not a question of the number of streets through which the trams are permitted to travel. Of course, George-street is the street through which the electric tram travels now, and it carries the principal portion of the railway traffic, and, by-and-by, when we convert the western suburban tram-lines into electric lines, those trams will come down George-street, which will become very congested. That is only one phase of the question. Even supposing we had an outlet for the traffic from the railway station down Pitt and Castlereagh streets, it would not get over the initial and the real difficulty of lifting the people immediately after they leave the trains. The railway traffic of Sydney is an in-traffic in the morning and an out-traffic in the afternoon. I do not mean to say there is no traffic during the day; but the principal traffic is in the morning and out in the afternoon. In the afternoon it is difficult to lift the traffic. The worry and anxiety of people in the city as to whether they will miss or catch their trains by the George-street trams must be very great. The George-street trams—it does not matter how frequent they are—fill up. People may be waiting at the corner of King-street or Market-street, and tram after tram will come up full. This must be a tremendous strain on the people, and must cause them to lose a considerable amount of time. Therefore, it would be far better, even if the station were not, perhaps, situated in a perfectly central position, that they should be able to spend the time they now waste in waiting for a tram in walking to the station, where there would be a certainty of getting a comfortable seat, and they could go straight home. The difficulty is not only in the morning, but also in connection with the return traffic in the evening. The pick-up traffic of the city, and the traffic from the suburbs, which do not and cannot enjoy railway communication, must largely increase. It is only a matter of a few years, and the streets will be thoroughly congested. It is in the public interest that the railway traffic should be removed from the streets of the city—that is to say, that people should be put down in a central position, from which, by means of their own locomotion, they can be got to their places of business.

4057. Since the electric tramways have been started they have, I believe, been very largely patronised by people coming in the direction of George-street;—if the railway benefited by bringing those people into town the tramway would lose? That follows as a natural consequence. They cannot both have the traffic, but we really do not want that traffic on the tramways. We want, if possible, to compel the people, so to speak, to travel by the railway, so as to avoid putting any traffic on the streets which can possibly be kept from them. With regard to the George-street tram, I should like to point out that railway passengers have very little option as to the tram by which they shall travel, because we have practically withdrawn all the railway trams from Elizabeth-street. Even if the people are desirous of travelling by the old route they cannot do it. I have no doubt that that in itself has largely increased the traffic by the George-street trams.

4058. One great reason for the Commissioners and others advocating the Hyde Park scheme is that it will be a fairly remunerative one, as compared with the other schemes;—where is the increased revenue to come from? From the additional fares to be charged. We pointed out in our report that a certain revenue would be obtained by charging 1d. extra per passenger. I have, also, no doubt that the traffic would increase owing to the facilities which would be given to people to live in the western suburbs. It is astonishing what a loss of time there is in getting from Redfern to the city, or from the city to Redfern. It has often been estimated that it means to the business man a loss of about half an hour a day. It is largely a matter of opinion, but it has been thought out very thoroughly, and taking into consideration the possible acceleration of the train service, a business man could almost be lodged at the corner of King-street as soon as he can to-day be put down at Redfern.

4059. I suppose that if the residents of suburbs like Newtown and Macdonaldtown could get into a railway train, and be brought to King-street, they would not travel by bus? I must, of course, draw attention to the recent reduction in the tram fares, which possibly offer considerable inducement to those residents to travel by tram. I am of opinion, however, that the Newtown and Macdonaldtown people, who have been in the habit of travelling by train, would prefer to continue to travel by train if they were brought further into the city.

4060. Many people contend that the large traffic brought along George-street by the electric trams, is an indication that that is the centre of the city, and that Elizabeth-street is out of the way? I do not think that anyone would venture to dispute the fact that George-street is more in the centre of the city than is Elizabeth-street. I should not like it to be inferred that I am of opinion that it is absolutely necessary to have a railway in the centre of the city.

4061. It would be impracticable to have one along George-street? It would. Of course it is impossible to bring a railway to every man's door. As long as we can put it in a reasonable position, so that the people can, with a reasonable amount of exertion, get to it, it is all that the public can expect. We must also consider the changes which a city undergoes in the course of years. It is quite possible that the city will undergo a considerable change, and extend in the direction of Woolloomooloo and places in that locality. That would quite alter the centre of the city. Of course the business centre of the city at the present time must be admitted to be George-street.

4062. Do you consider that it is desirable that the suburban and long-distance traffic should be brought to the same terminal point? Undoubtedly. I would point out that many of our long-distance trains, which come from Moss Vale, Mount Victoria, and other places, do a large amount of suburban work, and if we were compelled to provide a special station for dealing with them it would be inconvenient to the public, and expensive to the country.

4063. Are you of opinion that it is desirable to keep the goods traffic separated from the passenger traffic? Certainly.

4064. Are you of opinion that it is a great advantage, in a large station such as is required for a terminus, for a level site to be secured, and one not approached by steps? If possible, it should be approached on the level.

4065. The schemes propounded by Mr. Selfe and Mr. Greenwood seem to have the disadvantage, in one

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or two instances, of having the station approached by steps;—do you consider that objectionable? It is a great disadvantage. I may mention that we have had to rearrange some of our suburban stations, and do away with level crossings, and introduce subways or overhead bridges. People object strongly to going down or up steps. Nothing is more objectionable to approach a station otherwise than on the level.

4066. Having studied this question for many years, are you of opinion that the St. James' Road scheme is the best, and that next to that, No. 10 scheme is the best? Not only am I personally of that opinion, but my colleagues are strongly of the same opinion.

4067. And you would advocate that in preference to a large central station at Redfern? Certainly. It would be an act of folly to attempt to create a station on the site of the present station, and even on the Devonshire-street site. I do not say you could not make a good station on the Devonshire-street site; but it would not be in the centre of the city, and it would not give that convenience which the public have been looking forward to for so many years. It would not obviate the difficulty with regard to the tram traffic—it would rather intensify it—and it would not return 1d. additional revenue.

4068. *Mr. Dick.*] You have made some statement as to the annual cost of the extension being met by increased fares; we have before us practically two schemes for improving Redfern Station, and its surroundings—one known as the No. 10 scheme, which includes an extension, and the other for the building of a large station on the Benevolent Asylum site; it is urged against the latter that as no increased charges can be levied to make up the annual cost of the work, a certain amount of capital will be expended and will remain unprofitable; with respect to the No. 10 scheme, the greatly increased cost over the St. James' road scheme will lead to the same result—that is, if the income is only £38,000, as set forth in your report;—have you considered that view of the question? In one instance you will convenience the public, and in the other you will give no convenience at all, besides laying the foundation of a difficulty which will ultimately prove insurmountable—I refer to the removal of the people by tram from the Devonshire-street site.

4069. It has been stated that if a railway station were built on the Benevolent Asylum site, and a new system of trams were inaugurated—one down Pitt-street, to deal solely with the railway traffic, and one down George-street, to deal with the western suburban traffic, and one along Castlereagh-street, to deal with the remaining part of the traffic—the convenience of the public would be fully met? I have heard the same views expressed myself; but they will not bear looking into. The traffic is going to increase. As I have already said, if anyone will stand at the Redfern Station for a few minutes during the busy part of the day, he will see how impossible it is for any tram system to adequately provide for the railway traffic. I do not care, even if the trams followed each other as fast as they could, the difficulty which occurs to-day at Redfern would occur just the same if we had a station on the Benevolent Asylum site. We should still compel the overtaxed streets of the city to bear a burden which they should not be called upon to bear, but of which they should be relieved at the earliest possible moment.

4070. You do not think that the present construction of the station at Redfern puts difficulties in the way of dealing with the travelling public by tram, which would not be present if we had a modern station on the Benevolent Asylum site? I do not see that the difficulty would be removed. No doubt you would have an enlarged exit from the station, but it would not reduce the number of people who went through it.

4071. Would it not enable you to handle the traffic more rapidly? It is possible that there would be a little improvement in that direction. I cannot see, however, why the public should be inconvenienced. Why should they be taken out of a train and put into a tram. Would it not be far better to allow them to go on to their destination by train.

4072. Of course, you proceed on the view that the Government scheme would do all you expect of it, namely, place the majority of the people near their places of business? I think it would.

4073. The business area of Sydney is, roughly speaking, of the shape of an oblong, at the south-eastern corner of which it is proposed to put a station;—would not a station more in the centre, and more north of our great business area, result in greater convenience to the people? There is only one way of answering a question put in that way; but I do not think that is the real point. We will assume for a moment that George-street is the centre of the city. I do not think, myself, that it matters much to the people wanting to go to George-street, or to Pitt-street, whether they are put down on the east or west side of George-street. That being so I cannot admit that a person who is asked to walk a short distance down hill or up hill, as the case may be, suffers any inconvenience. Therefore, the question to my mind resolves itself into this: in which position could the most convenient arrangement be made for the public at the least expense. I think that the answer to that is not difficult to find.

4074. Supposing you had your old system of steam tramways down Elizabeth-street, in conjunction with the present electric lines down George-street, would you like to hazard any guess as to the comparative numbers those trams would take of your railway passengers? No. There is no doubt that a large proportion would go by way of George-street, because George-street is nearer, we will say, to Pitt-street. At the same time, although it happens to be a few hundred feet or yards nearer to one point, it cannot be said that if the people have to walk that distance we inconvenience them at all. Many of the people who come to the different suburban stations have to walk all that distance every day, and even twice a day, to join their trains.

4075. Do you think the effective result of an extension to Hyde Park would be a saving of time, as against travelling by the electric tram, to the people, say, of Sussex-street? I do not think the Sussex-street people require to be considered in the matter. If you put the people who want to come to George-street, Pitt-street, and York-street, against those who want to come to Sussex-street, you will find that the latter are a very small quantity. Sussex-street is on the extreme west of the city. I am satisfied that the people who want to go there are out of all proportion to those who want to go to other parts nearer the east. The Sussex-street business, again, is confined to a certain class of business. It is a narrow street, and is always congested. One is impressed with the idea that there are hundreds of people in it; but if we put the same number of people into Pitt-street or George-street they would be practically lost.

4076. Is it not a fact that the majority of people do their shopping to the south of Park-street? I admit that a number of them do so. Of course the people of Brickfield Hill must live.

4077. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose that the chief object to be gained by any extension would be the relief of the present traffic? The principal object in getting away from Redfern is to provide the Railways

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Commissioners with reasonably safe facilities for conducting the traffic. Year after year we have represented that we are called upon to work the traffic under conditions which ought not to be allowed to exist. We say that if a removal is to take place—and it really must take place in the interests of all concerned—it should be to a position where the station will give reasonable facilities to the public.

4078. But still it would be a great advantage to relieve the present station of its present congested condition? Of course, the relief which is required at Redfern is the relief in connection with the traffic at Redfern.

4079. Is the station at present in an unsatisfactory condition, and dangerous? I would not like to say broadly that it is dangerous, but the working there is surrounded with an amount of danger and risk which should not be allowed to exist. It is not so much the relief of Redfern that is required as the affording of facilities for better carrying the traffic. The congestion at Redfern is largely owing to the arrangements of the yard and the way the place is laid out.

4080. In any extension which might be carried out, the convenience of the public would be the principal thing to consider? Certainly.

4081. And as an investment, I suppose, it should hardly be put in opposition to the convenience of the majority of the public;—in other words, the construction of a comparatively cheap line, although not so convenient as one upon which a few extra thousand pounds might be spent, would not be desirable? I think the convenience of the people should be studied with a due regard to economy.

4082. Ought not that to be a paramount object to be gained? I think the two should go together.

4083. You might manage to get a far cheaper line by going a mile away from your proposed site, but that would not be desirable, because it would not convenience the people? It goes without saying that you must study the convenience of the people, but that expression is a very comprehensive one. It depends on what may be meant by the convenience of the people—whether it is that some line should be decided upon which should practically go round the city in such a way that it would almost be a house to house service, or whether you should obtain a fairly central position, where you could not only land the people in a convenient place as regards the particular point which they want to reach, but upon which you could obtain facilities for working the traffic.

4084. I suppose that country travellers are well served at Redfern;—if they have luggage, they will have to take a cab at King-street, in the same way as they do now at Redfern? I cannot agree that the country people are sufficiently well served. They are equally entitled to go into the city as are those who enjoy the comfort of living adjacent to it. With regard to “cabbing” it, I have not the slightest doubt that if the station were more in the centre of the city the facilities for dealing with luggage would be of a more modern character. The facilities for handling luggage would be so much improved that people would not be troubled about it at all. They would leave it at the station and would find it at their homes when they got there.

4085. Is it not the experience of the Department that travellers like to take their luggage with them? Yes; because we have not yet been able to introduce other systems. We have, however, recently instituted another system in connection with the Melbourne express. An authorized man joins the express at Strathfield. If you want to get rid of your luggage he takes your address, and you find it there on your arrival. That is a great convenience to a long-distance traveller.

4086. Another argument in favour of the extension is the saving of time to travellers;—is that a reason why the proposed Liverpool-street station has been struck out of the scheme? No; it is not considered necessary to provide a station at Liverpool-street, but it would not be an expensive thing to place a station there in the future.

4087. We have had ten plans explained to us, and in seven of them a Liverpool-street station is provided. In the last two plans it is omitted;—can you state the reason of that? The Commissioners do not think a Liverpool-street station is necessary at present.

4088. Then the saving of time is not the chief object of constructing the extension? The saving of time is a very considerable object.

4089. Do you not think that a tram service could be instituted to meet the convenience of the public, equally as well as the extension of the railway into King-street? I do not. In view of the peculiar shape of the city, and the enormous tram traffic which will have to be carried as a pick-up traffic, and from suburbs which cannot be served by the railways, I consider that the greatest effort should be made to keep the railway travellers out of the tram-cars.

4090. Would it not be a great advantage to have a large station on the Devonshire-street site, which could amply deal with all kinds of traffic? That would depend on where your terminus was. If you took the line beyond such a station, the construction of that station would simply be a waste of money.

4091. Would not a large station at that point facilitate the running of additional trams, say along Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street? It would have nothing to do with it. As a matter of fact, the Commissioners have already recommended that tramways should be constructed down Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street. That is considered to be necessary for the ordinary suburban tram traffic, which must always be carried by trams, and the increasing pick-up traffic which will follow on the introduction of the system of penny sections.

4092. Even though the city extension were carried out? Yes.

4093. Is it intended, if the extension is carried out, to devote the Redfern station chiefly to goods traffic? No; it is not proposed to extend the goods traffic at Redfern. As a matter of fact, the Commissioners have just decided to enlarge the accommodation at Darling Harbour, in order that part of our goods traffic, which is now dealt with at Redfern, may be transferred to Darling Harbour.

4094. The point to which it is proposed to extend the railway—King-street—has a large vacant patch of land on the west, namely, Hyde Park and the Domain;—do you not think that a more central position would convenience a large number of the day population of Sydney? Of course, if you could get a station somewhere in George-street, I should say yes; but I think that of all the sites which are obtainable for the purposes of a city terminus, the Hyde Park site is certainly the best.

4095. I suppose the matter of expense enters largely into that idea? Assuming, as I have heard it put, that Hyde Park was covered with expensive buildings, and would cost as much money as the resumption of the centre of George-street would, probably we would say go to the centre of George-street if an equally convenient station could be placed there. We do not for a moment advocate that no consideration should be given for the park land which is taken. The late Chief Commissioner put that matter very forcibly

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forcibly before the Committee, and the views of the Commissioners on that point have not altered. We are perfectly prepared to pay—we do not say it is necessary to pay—but if the authorities say it has to be paid for, by all means let a reasonable charge be made, so that the city may have parks provided where a very large number of people think they are more required than at this particular spot.

4096. Do you think the St. James' Road scheme would be a paying one in the event of electric trams being run down Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street? Yes. I do not think the electric trams will interfere with the ultimate paying of the railways at all. The trams are controlled by the Commissioners, and they are not likely to be run in opposition to the railway. Although the railway may take traffic which to-day goes by the trams, one of the principal objects of the proposed extension is to remove that traffic from streets along which it ought never to be carried.

4097. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you considered the possibility of applying electricity to the suburban traffic in connection with the railways? Yes.

4098. Do you think that it is within the limits of practicability? It is within the limit of practicability so far as the traffic is concerned, but it would prove a very expensive luxury.

4099. In what way? Electricity can only be profitably worked with a large volume of continuous traffic, which we do not possess on our suburban lines. Apart from that the superseding of an efficient service, such as we have to-day, and the throwing away of hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of rolling-stock, is hardly to be contemplated.

4100. I should imagine that it is merely a matter of waiting your opportunity as your rolling-stock wears out? The opportunity of doing it would not occur for very many years.

4101. But I understand the Commissioners are doing something in that direction with respect to the tramways at the present time:—they are exhausting the rolling-stock in use before introducing the electric cars;—I understand that you do not intend to throw aside altogether your steam rolling-stock? No; it is being worn out.

4102. If you thought it wise to agree upon an electric system for the suburban and city traffic, you would adopt a somewhat similar course? Naturally; but there is a vast difference between a railway and a tramway service. The service we have to-day is a thoroughly efficient one for the purpose, and I am not aware that there is any real necessity for considering the introduction of electricity. Of course, if we had only to deal with a short suburban service it would be all very well; but even if we had electricity we should always have the steam motive power as well, running into the same station. At the best you would have to have a mixed service.

4103. Assuming that we could manage with an extended Redfern station in the direction of Devonshire-street, and with the tram system which the Commissioners have recommended for some few years to come and by that time electrical development has sufficiently progressed to admit of its consideration for suburban or other traffic, could you not then approach the city railway project with a much greater probability of giving the maximum of convenience at a minimum cost? It is quite possible to look forward to anything, but I do not think that there is any necessity to approach the subject in that way. It is quite true that if we are to have tunnels it would be better to have electricity. But it is better not to have tunnels.

4104. Is it not found that tunnels, with electric traction, are practically convenient? It has been found that tunnels are more endurable with electric traction than with ordinary steam traction; but I do not know that any one would construct a line in a tunnel if they could possibly get one on the surface.

4105. The only reason for going through a tunnel in the city would be to avoid the expense of resumptions? I think, in this country particularly, tunnels would be very objectionable if they could be avoided. There are certain inconveniences attached to the system you suggest. There would have to be a change of engines somewhere, or a change of passengers.

4106. I was applying my remarks only to suburban traffic, in which case it would come right through with one motor? A difficulty would crop up with our trains. For instance, take the train on the Hornsby line, which runs into Sydney. How would you conduct that traffic? Would you call that suburban traffic, and run an electric line right out to Hornsby. There is not the slightest doubt that you could carry out such a scheme, but, in my humble opinion, it is one which is not necessary.

4107. There are two objections to the Hyde Park scheme, the first being that it is an unwise thing, wherever it can be avoided, to take any portion of a public park; and, secondly, it seems to me that it would only give convenience to such a small portion of the city day population, that it would not justify the expense? In reply to that I should have to know how the word "convenience" is defined. I contend that Hyde Park is a convenient position for the very large majority of the people who would travel by train. I do not consider Hyde Park is inconveniently situated as regards York-street, and that is more than half the way, I presume, to Sussex-street, which has already been mentioned, and it certainly embraces three-fourths of the people who travel by rail.

4108. We have been told by some people, whose business is on the western side of George-street, that they, sooner than pass George-street, and walk to Hyde Park, would take the electric train in George-street and go to Redfern? I have no doubt that there are people who would say that, but the majority of people would not. It depends very often on the time at which a person wants to catch a train. It may be that he travels by a train which is not a crowded one—that is, when it is not a busy part of the day. He would then walk to George-street, and get a tram; but I undertake to say that the majority of people who go to George-street to-day between 5 and 6 o'clock would be willing to walk up King-street if there was a station there.

4109. Another phase of the question in regard to electric traction is this: You might be able, without great expense, to get nearer the centre of the business part of the city underground? That is quite possible; but I am quite satisfied no one thoroughly conversant with railway traffic would advocate that you should have an underground entrance into the city, if it could possibly be avoided.

4110. You admit yourself that if it were simply a question in each case of resuming the land with buildings, you would prefer George-street to Hyde Park? I did not say I should prefer it. We were talking then about the position—not about the site for a station. I expressed no opinion as to George-street as a site for a station.

4111. I was referring to the possibility of taking passengers underground along George-street;—it seemed to me that, with electric traction, you could, without resumption, take people closer to the present centre of trade? Certainly. I hope you consider the question of the accommodation which would have to

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to be provided underground, and the suitability of it to deal with the traffic which is dealt with at Redfern to-day.

4112. But, assuming the central station was at Devonshire-street, and that we could for a few years get through with the tram lines referred to by yourself a few moments ago, could we then have a probability, within a reasonable time, of electric traction being introduced? Your contention is that the people want to go to George-street. If they do they will not get out at Devonshire-street, no matter what accommodation we have there. They will have to be brought to George-street, and we shall have to provide facilities for receiving them, and for getting the trains away just as we do now. We should also want a parcels office and everything else underground for the convenience of passengers.

4113. That is only if we had a terminal station there? If we have a terminal station we must have it where the traffic is.

4114. I take it that the suburban passengers would not require luggage? The people travelling on the suburban lines have their parcels, &c., and must have accommodation.

4115. I do not wish to imply that there should be a terminal station at George-street, but that we should use electric traction to take the people underground near George-street? Wherever you make your stop, it is the travelling public who will decide what the accommodation is to be.

4116. Do you know whether the underground railway in London has very large stations underground? Personally, I do not. I do not understand that there is any comparison between the underground railways in the old country and our suburban railways. I understand that the underground railways are largely circular railways; they do not carry traffic such as we carry; it is an entirely different class of traffic.

4117. You have stated that you think that within a reasonable time there will be an immense increase in the tram traffic in the city, and in the ordinary suburban tram traffic;—and in order to cope with it you have recommended certain extensions of the service? Mr. Shepherd asked me a question as to what would be the effect on the railway traffic if we had lines down Pitt and Castlereagh streets. I stated that the Commissioners, irrespective of the railway traffic of the future, had already recommended those lines. The reason we have recommended those lines is this: we find there is no prospect now of being able to carry the whole of the western suburban traffic in George-street; in fact, we will not be able to accommodate the Leichhardt traffic unless we get some relief for George-street. The Commissioners had it under consideration this morning to wire Elizabeth-street, so that we could bring, as a temporary expedient, part of the electric trams down Elizabeth-street instead of George-street.

4118. Have you formed any estimate of what the probable percentage of tram traffic would be within the next few years? No.

4119. There has been a large increase lately in connection with the George-street tram? Yes; a larger increase than was estimated. When that estimate was made the fare was fixed at 2d., and it was afterwards reduced to 1d. It has been stated that the traffic was under-estimated; but the circumstances are different to-day from what were anticipated. Originally we estimated that we should run about forty cars in George-street, and we are now running about eighty.

4120. You have stated that you will, in the future, have three or four streets along which to run tramway traffic; you will have George-street, Pitt-street, and Castlereagh-street;—will you still retain Elizabeth-street? Yes; the conditions of the traffic are very different now from what they were when we only ran the tramways along Elizabeth-street. We never had the George-street traffic at all. All our trams were running down Elizabeth-street, which was absolutely a clear street. We did not pick 500 people up in what you might call pick-up traffic in a week. The pick-up traffic was infinitesimal. In George-street we have run into the heart of the city, where some hundreds of 'buses were plying. They carried much traffic from the suburbs which we are now carrying. The traffic which has been developed in George-street, excluding the railway traffic, is, to us, absolutely a new traffic. It must be remembered that the electrical system is going to develop the traffic. With the introduction of the penny sections it will develop a traffic which we have never had before. We contend that in order to provide for the growth of the traffic in the streets of the city, it would be a very good thing to take the railway traffic out of those streets altogether. We should thus convenience the railway travellers, and relieve the streets of the city of a traffic which they should not be called upon to carry.

4121. Assuming that you require George-street, and even Pitt-street, for your western suburban tramway traffic, would it not then still be possible to use Castlereagh-street for railway purposes, assuming that you had a station at Devonshire-street? It would be possible, but the railway traffic could not be satisfactorily dealt with.

4122. I mean apart from losing time, which is admitted? It would be quite possible without this consideration and at the present time to conduct the traffic, but it is not to-day that we have to look to. This is a question of determining the matter practically for all time. The city is not going to stand still. We must look ahead. The city is most peculiarly shaped, and every arrangement that is made should be with the object of keeping the traffic off the streets, if possible.

4123. I presume the Railway Commissioners were consulted in respect of No. 10 scheme, which has been put before us as an alternative? Yes.

4124. Do you not consider that that would afford greater facilities, as far as platform space and accommodation for trams is concerned, than the St. James' Road scheme; in the St. James' Road scheme you have provision for eleven platforms, two of them being rather short, and two docks, with a road between them; in the King-street, or No. 10, scheme there are only nine platforms, but in addition to the two with traversers and refuge roads between them, there are two straight-through platforms into the Domain? Yes; but one is a dead-end station, and the other is not.

4125. Would not greater facilities be afforded by the No. 10 scheme than by the Hyde Park scheme, because of it not being a dead-end station? A dead-end station is always the most difficult to work, and in a dead-end station you must have more accommodation.

4126. I want to know whether No. 10 scheme does not afford more accommodation than the old Hyde Park scheme? I do not know that it affords more accommodation. It is the accommodation which is differently arranged.

4127. As a matter of quick working, would not four through-platforms be better than six dead-end platforms? Six dead-end platforms would be utterly useless to work our traffic.

4128. There are four of the nine platforms in the No. 10 scheme which are through-platforms; they compensate

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compensate for six dead-end platforms out of eleven at St. James' Road; I want your opinion as to whether the four through-platforms do not really more than compensate for the six dead-end platforms in the St. James' Road scheme? In actual working you can do many things with a through-station which you cannot do with a dead-end station; but I am not prepared to say you would get the same facilities. After all, you must have your platforms. I cannot say that four platforms would be as good as six. It would all depend on actual working. You may have a work to do for which you require all your six platforms at once. For instance, you may want trains to stand for some time in order to receive their loading. No through platform would compensate for a deficiency of platform in that respect.

4129. But with a through platform you can get a train through for suburban traffic in a couple of minutes? But you might not want to do that. Our stations are not only for suburban, but for country traffic as well. Sometimes the Melbourne express and other trains stand at the station for half an hour. You cannot conduct that traffic on the run-through principle.

4130. I understood that the arrangement of the station was such that, of the nine platforms, five would be available for the long-distance trains which stand at the platforms, and that the other four would be available for the suburban traffic;—if that is so, it seems to me that at those nine platforms you can deal with more traffic than at the eleven platforms at St. James' Road? I doubt it; but I prefer not to express an opinion on a point like that, because it all depends on circumstances.

4131. It was stated during the last inquiry into the Hyde Park scheme that the accommodation then asked for would be sufficient for twenty or thirty years, and that, therefore, there would be no necessity to so extend the scheme as to take in any more of the Park;—it seems to me that, on the present occasion, there is an admission that the estimates then were not as liberal as circumstances have since proved necessary, and that an increase has now been asked for? Without looking carefully into the matter I could not reply to that remark, but I am satisfied that nothing in the shape of trying to get a little more of Hyde Park is intended. If there is any difference in the size of the station—I am not prepared to admit that there is—it has simply arisen from not strictly adhering to the arrangements of the building as set forth in the original scheme.

4132. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you given consideration to the schemes of Mr. Seife and Mr. Greenwood? Yes.

4133. From what you know of the business of Sydney, would not the sites they suggest be very central and convenient? They would be central, but highly inconvenient to the people who travel.

4134. Are not the Town Hall and Wynyard-square centres for a good deal of business? I do not think that Wynyard-square could be said to be a central site, although it is in a fairly central position.

4135. Is it not a fact that the neighbourhood of Hyde Park is well suited for professional men, who come into Sydney? It certainly is in the vicinity of the Supreme Court.

4136. Is it as central for the business people in George-street, and the west of George-street? Its position is not as central.

4137. Do you think it is central enough, considering the difficulty of getting good sites elsewhere? Yes.

4138. It is the difficulty of getting a good site elsewhere more than the absolute centrality of Hyde Park, which makes you favour it? That is so.

4139. Do you remember the original construction of the tram-line down Elizabeth-street? Yes.

4140. That was constructed, not to bring people into Sydney from the Redfern railway station, but to connect the passenger traffic with the exhibition? I believe so.

4141. But for that the Commissioners of the day would never have thought of choosing Elizabeth-street as the best route for a tramway into the city? No; but it might have been a question whether Elizabeth-street did not afford the best facilities at the time. Of course, I should not think of saying it was in a central position.

4142. The line having been made down Elizabeth-street, all the others converged from it? Yes.

4143. The consequence is, that the entire suburban traffic of Sydney has been carried into Elizabeth-street? Yes.

4144. Now that you have made a line down George-street, it appears from the evidence of your officers that it has captured thirteen-fourteenths of your railway business? It is true; but you must remember that they have not got the tram service in Elizabeth-street now.

4145. But allowing for that, is not the fact that the George-street tram has captured most of your railway traffic a proof that that tram puts people down nearer their business places than they were when carried by the Elizabeth-street line? I could not say that. I can only say that the majority of people go down George-street by the electric tram.

4146. As a matter of fact, they prefer the George-street tram? They travel that way certainly.

4147. If it has been proved that a tram-line down Elizabeth-street is not so suitable for your suburban customers as a tram-line down George-street, is a railway line into Hyde Park—which is practically alongside the Elizabeth-street tram—likely to be central for their purposes? I can assure you that they will be perfectly content with it, and they will not get out at the railway to join the electric tram.

4148. It comes to this, that though it may not be the best position it is good enough, and will capture the traffic? I think it is the best site which can be obtained, taking all the surroundings.

4149. The best site to be obtained means the cheapest to get at, and the cheapest to get possession of? I do not say that.

4150. But that is involved in it, is it not? That is not my reply.

4151. You say the Commissioners quite recognise that they ought to pay for the land they take from Hyde Park? We ought to pay something reasonable for it.

4152. Is a reasonable price for a piece of land its value or half its value? I think a reasonable price would be a reasonable value.

4153. Mr. Sievers and Mr. Perdriau have estimated that the land to be taken by the Commissioners under the old scheme would be worth £200,000, which is twice what Mr. Eddy proposed to give;—would you object now to saddling the cost of your scheme with £200,000? I do not think that is a question I should be asked, nor do I think it is one which needs consideration in the way it is put. After all, this is a public question. It is a question of the State railways affording the best facilities for the travelling public, and I do not think when it comes to a question of value of what is really State property that the utmost farthing should be extracted from the State for what is practically in this particular connection a transfer from one purpose to, I should say, a better purpose.

4154. £200,000 worth of land, which is now open space for the enjoyment of the people is to be taken away;—do you not think that it would be a fair exchange to give £200,000 in money
tc.

to find open-air spaces in other parts? If it is said that £200,000 is a reasonable sum to ask I express no opinion about it. I say again, however, that the utmost farthing of value, in a case like this, should not be extracted. I think the offer made by the late Mr. Eddy is a good one, and that it is worthy of consideration, in view of all the circumstances surrounding it.

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4155. The original estimate for the St. James' Road scheme was £650,000; if we add £200,000 to that to pay for the land, it will make it £850,000; Mr. Deane has told us that some additional cost must now be incurred, because the price of material has risen, and there will be additional alterations at Redfern; the total cost will, therefore, be about £900,000;—the profit which the Commissioners estimated would be made by charging additional fares would not apply if the larger sum were expended? It might not, but the traffic is an increasing quantity. If I had to express an opinion as to the Hyde Park scheme, compared with all the other schemes, I would say, "Pay twice the money for Hyde Park."

4156. You think, then, that if the St. James' Road scheme is not remunerative at the start, the increase in traffic will, in the course of time, bring it to a remunerative standpoint? I think that is a fair view to take of the matter.

4157. Since the first estimate of £650,000 was made the cost has mounted up—that is, if we have to pay for the land at Hyde Park;—I want your definite opinion as to whether the Commissioners still think that they can put the scheme before Parliament as a remunerative as well as a convenient scheme? The alteration of the estimate will not affect the traffic. Whatever our estimate of traffic was, it remains, subject, of course, to the increases which we know are occurring every day. No doubt the increased estimate would mean a certain loss, at the start, in connection with the transaction; but, under the circumstances, I think we are perfectly justified in advising the Government to adopt the scheme.

4158. Then, to some extent you would overlook the financial aspect of the question in consideration of the general aspect? Yes.

4159. In the plan put before us for a station at Devonshire-street, there is a pile of offices to accommodate the Commissioners and their staff; the same thing occurs in connection with the Hyde Park terminus;—is it more convenient for the Commissioners to be in the city near their customers than to be at the station near to their working staff? It is very important for the Commissioners to have their officers around them. At the present the loss of time, and inconvenience we suffer, when we want the attendance of a particular officer is very considerable. Wherever the central position is, there we certainly ought to be located, and there we ought to have our staff.

4160. If the Government agreed that the station should remain at Devonshire-street, would you rather have your offices there than have them in Sydney near your customers? We would not rather have them there, but we think wherever the terminus is our offices ought to be.

4161. Would you not find it difficult to face the expenditure of £1,500,000 on No. 10 scheme? That is what has to be paid to preserve Hyde Park as much as possible.

4162. Is not that an immense price to pay? I should think so. That scheme, I understand, is put forward—not by the Commissioners—but for the purpose of saving Hyde Park as much as possible.

4163. Would it not be a more serious thing for you to have to saddle your capital account with £1,500,000 for the sake of saving a strip of Hyde Park, than it would be to have to face an expenditure of £900,000 under the original scheme? We should prefer the original scheme under any circumstances.

4164. You think that the sinking of the difference of £600,000 of dead money would be a serious thing? I do not think there is any justification for spending it. I think the other, which is the cheaper and the better scheme, should be adopted.

4165. Is there not, at times, a pressure on the Commissioners from suburban passengers for a reduction of fares? I cannot say that it is a pressure. A very large deputation from the Illawarra suburbs waited upon us a few days ago, but they were not granted what they asked for. I think I sent them away fairly convinced that they were cheaply carried. I showed them that our fares were less than the fares in England, where, of course, the volume of traffic is much greater than it is here. Certain allusions were made to the Victorian fares being cheaper than ours. I was able to point out that the circumstances were special, and that the private tramways came into competition. I was also able to satisfy them, as men who had some regard for the public interest, that it would be improper to adopt fares which would have the effect of transferring the railways from a sound commercial concern to one which would be a burden on the State. I pointed out that a reduction in suburban fares for distances over one mile to the extent of 1d. for every single journey, 1½d. for every return journey, and 1½d. per day on each season ticket would cause us a loss of £40,000 a year, and such a reduction would not be appreciated. I believe the deputation went away quite believing that the fares they were charged were reasonable. I am perfectly satisfied that the public, if they get this extension into the city, will be prepared to pay the additional fare without murmur.

4166. You do not imagine that after the expenditure has been incurred, you will meet with strong pressure to reduce the fares? I do not think so. It would be unreasonable, and there would be no result from the pressure. We should be under an obligation to make the extension pay, and you might rely upon it that we could not accomplish that by reducing the fares.

4167. Some people are under the impression that by reducing the fares you increase the traffic? You do to a certain extent; but in this instance you would have to overtake the reduction, and we have not the necessary population to create increased traffic. The natural growth of the population will not do it. People from the Illawarra district very often say, "The train fares are driving the residents from our district." I reply, "It is difficult for me to combat a statement of that kind, but let me put this case to you: You have described your district as an attractive one; but look at the North Shore district, which came into existence after yours was established. The same fares exist at North Shore, and how is it that the people do not go on the Illawarra line as they do on the North Shore line?" They could not answer the question. New lines here and there do not increase the population, nor would reduction of fares, and that is the reason you so often find the Railway Commissioners deprecating either, more particularly as regards tramways. People say reductions will increase the traffic, but we say they will not. They may transfer the people from Burwood to North Shore, but the population is the same. Therefore we should not be likely to respond to requests to reduce the fares if we got the railway extended—at any rate, not until it was placed on a paying basis.

4168. The remunerativeness of your proposal depends entirely on the willingness of your customers to pay the extra fare you propose;—if there is a risk of their kicking at that extra fare, your calculations break down? If we do not get the money, they must break down, but the reduction of fares rests with the Railway Commissioners.

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4169. You are not apprehensive on that point? Not at all.

4170. Your scheme makes no connection with Circular Quay, other than that which would be caused by an extension of the Elizabeth-street line to it;—do you think it of any importance to connect the ferry traffic with your central line? I do not think it is of pressing importance. I do not know that there is such a business connection between the suburbs and the Quay as to render it necessary. Besides, it would be a very short distance to walk, and I really think that the people would not object to that short separation. The traffic would not be a regular one; it would be principally a holiday traffic, and it is very difficult to gauge the value of it.

4171. Do you think the people who arrive in the ferry steam-boats at Circular Quay are fairly accommodated now? I think so. You could not very well bring the train right to the Quay.

4172. If you take the Elizabeth-street tram to Circular Quay by way of Castlereagh-street or otherwise, you will then make a connection between Circular Quay and the station? Yes.

4173. You have not that at present? No.

4174. But you will make it? Yes.

4175. And do you think that will answer all purposes? Yes.

4176. *Chairman.*] Dr. Garran mentioned £200,000 as the market value of one-fourth of Hyde Park; but seeing that there are thousands of acres adjoining the comparatively small portion taken, and considering that a large portion of the travelling public will be inconvenienced, and that large quantities of land in other centres may be obtained for much less money than what is to be paid for the Hyde Park land,—do I understand you to say that those are matters which should be considered in determining the question of the value of the particular land to be taken? It seems to me that a fancy value has been placed on Hyde Park. You can obtain land for recreation purposes in localities where parks are more required for much less money. Therefore, the transaction should be looked at in the light of the fact that it is surrounded by special circumstances. If the money paid is sufficient to provide reasonable recreation grounds in other places, I think the circumstances of the case would be met. I do not wish to say anything against Hyde Park; but personally I cannot see the great value which is placed upon it. I can see many advantages in Hyde Park, or some portion of it, being devoted to purposes other than those to which it is applied at the present time. At the same time I can quite understand the sentimental cry which is raised in connection with this matter. As regards the value, I would ask the Committee to consider the matter as I have put it—that it is not the absolute value of Hyde Park as a beauty spot which has to be considered, but of Hyde Park required for a public purpose for which it almost looks as if Providence had preserved it, and the providing of spaces in other localities more in need of those spaces than the Hyde Park district.

SATURDAY, 7 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEU, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Charles Cowdery, Civil Engineer, sworn, and examined:—

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4177. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you had experience in railway construction? Yes.

4178. Have you had an opportunity of making yourself acquainted with the proposed schemes for railway extension into the city? I have watched them very closely ever since I came to the Colony.

4179. What is your opinion of No. 10 scheme, and the St. James' Road scheme? In a matter of this kind the first thing to look to is a railway which will be of the greatest use to the greatest number of people. We have had two splendid object lessons. The first is the steam trams from the station along Elizabeth-street. Of the business people, and of the people who come into the city shopping, not one in 100 went east of that line. The next object lesson is the George-street electric tram. We find it can hardly take the traffic away, thus showing that the bulk of the traffic is there or thereabouts. I contend that if a railway is taken to Hyde Park it will be on one side of this traffic, and not where it is required. The terminus should be somewhere in the neighbourhood of George-street or York-street. I am not prepared to say the exact route it should take, but it should have a future extension to the North Shore in view. That is a new suburb; but it has grown faster than any suburb around Sydney. Within a few years it will be larger than even the western suburban district, which the railway accommodates at present. I had reason to count the houses from one point to another on the North Shore two years ago, and twelve months afterwards I found that they had increased 33 per cent. When the North Shore railway was made six or seven years ago the authorities had no idea that the suburb was going to grow so fast, because they thought a single line would last for ever. In five or six years they have found out their mistake. In putting the railway where I suggest you will carry out three things. First of all you will have a city railway proper. You will have a link in the trunk-line of the country, and also a link for an outer circle railway, *via* Milson's Point, Hornsby Junction, Strathfield, and so on. At present there are twenty trains a day each way on the Milson's Point line. Those trains could then run round and round, and no shunting would be required.

4180. You are of opinion that any extension to the city should have in view the ultimate connection with North Shore? Undoubtedly.

4181. And that the extension should be constructed in such a position as to conveniently connect with North Shore? That is so.

4182. You do not think that either of the schemes referred to are calculated to afford that facility? I cannot see how they could possibly connect with North Shore unless by tunnel, which would be out of the question entirely in a climate like this.

4183. It has been pointed out that by going back to somewhere near Liverpool-street, and by making a curve, we could connect in that way? You could do that certainly, but the people would not put up with the back shunting very long.

4184.

4184. You think a plan of that kind would be objectionable? I think it is the worst plan which could be conceived. C. Cowdery.
4185. There is another proposal in connection with the extension from King-street, and that is to go to Fort Macquarie, and tunnel under the harbour to North Shore;—do you think that is practicable? I think not. On the North Shore the gradients are bad enough now, and that would make them worse. You would be at least 100 feet under the harbour from the present level, and that would have to be got over. 7 April, 1900.
4186. Another objection you had to either of these schemes is that they do not meet the convenience of the bulk of the business people? They certainly do not. The business people coming in from the western suburbs would, no doubt, come to the St. James' Road station, but the people from George-street and Darling Harbour way, going home at night, would not walk to the top of King-street, but would jump into the George-street tram and join the train at Redfern.
4187. You are aware that there is no provision for an intermediate station between Redfern and King-street? That there should be in any case, otherwise people wishing to get in and out of the train between Redfern and the terminus would derive no benefit.
4188. Have you mastered the details of Mr. Selve's scheme? As far as his scheme applies to the city, I think it is all right.
4189. He proposes to leave the line at Eveleigh? There I think he is wrong. I think it would be better to continue from the present terminus, across Devonshire-street through the Benevolent Asylum, across Garden-road, Belmore Park, over Hay-street, and what is at present known as Paddy's Market—the old portion of the building—and then across Campbell-street and Goulburn-street. Goulburn-street I would cross somewhere between Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street, and then follow Mr. Selve's line. I believe that would do away with the objectionable grade of 1 in 75, to which I believe the Engineer-in-Chief has such an objection.
4190. Do you think it would be practicable to form a station at the Victoria Markets? I think that is the only use to which the basement can be put.
4191. It has been pointed out that there would be a danger to the foundations if that idea were carried out? I do not think there is anything in that. I have the plans of a station in London which has been built underneath a church.
4192. With regard to what is called the Asylum site—would not any extension of the tram service from a station on that site be facilitated? Of course. I think the wisest thing to do is to construct a station on that site. It is as near the centre of population as possible.
4193. Do you think the tram system, if extended to further other streets, would be able to cope with all the passenger traffic? There is no doubt it would; but you must not lose sight of the fact that we must some day have a connection through to North Shore.
4194. At present the whole of the tramway traffic from the railway station is crowded into one street, but if an extension along Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, Elizabeth-street, and some other street west were effected, do you think the trams would be able to cope with that traffic? Undoubtedly. I have always contended that any railway would not accommodate the people so well as the future trams will do.
4195. You think it is quite practicable to form a station at the base of the Markets? I should form the platforms on the base, and keep the railways outside.
4196. Do you think the Asylum scheme would be a desirable one? I think it would meet all requirements until such time as the increase of population demanded an extension to the North Shore.
4197. Mr. Greenwood proposes to cross Devonshire-street, Belmore Gardens, and Paddy's Market on a viaduct, striking into Pitt-street; he would then tunnel from the Water and Sewerage Board's buildings to the corner of Bathurst-street, form a station there, and go down George-street, and between the Town Hall and the Markets into York-street;—what do you think of that scheme? I think that is very nearly the right route.
4198. Objection has been taken to the curve from George-street into York-street;—it is thought it would endanger the Town Hall? I do not think there is any danger of that. It strikes me that there would be a sharp curve there, and perhaps it would be better to go by way of George-street instead of York-street.
4199. You think either of these schemes would be preferable to the Hyde Park scheme? I do, because Hyde Park is on one side of the traffic.
4200. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand that you do not consider Hyde Park central enough for a railway station? That is so.
4201. Your idea is that we should have a city railway extension so constructed as to join the North Shore railway? Undoubtedly.
4202. Could not that be done from Hyde Park? The Hyde Park scheme does not lend itself favourably to connection with the North Shore.
4203. What is the nature of the difficulty? The whole of the trains would have to be shunted. Again, if you go on from Hyde Park, you will run across the best and most valuable part of the city.
4204. Have you considered the cost of land resumption in bringing a railway along George-street from Redfern? I have no doubt it would cost more than the Hyde Park scheme.
4205. How would you bring the railway from Redfern, say, through George-street to Dawes Point? Almost as Mr. Greenwood proposes.
4206. Would not that involve tunnel? Only a short one.
4207. And you object to running trains through tunnels? Yes, for any long distance; but I venture to say there would not be a tunnel longer anywhere than a quarter of a mile.
4208. Have you a fair knowledge of the passenger traffic from the western suburbs? Yes; I lived in the western suburbs some seven or eight years.
4209. Do you think the existing tramway arrangements sufficient to convey the whole of the passengers arriving by train at the proposed station on the Benevolent Asylum site? No. I should like to see an electric line down Pitt-street, and, perhaps, Clarence-street.
4210. Your idea is that, with an increased tram service, railway extension into the city is not necessary? Not as far as the traffic at present is concerned.
4211. Do you consider that increased tram accommodation would meet the increase in the traffic of the future? I have no doubt it would.
4212. If the proposed extension is carried out to Hyde Park, and the electric and other trams are run, which

- C. Cowdery. which would the passengers from the western suburbs be likely to use? I think it is likely that in coming to business they could continue in the train to the terminus, but in going home at night they would not take the train at the terminus. A man who is tired after his work, prefers to jump in the tram which is passing, perhaps his place of business, to walking to the top of King-street. It would be less fatiguing to do so.
- 7 April, 1900. 4213. Do you think the people who go to business west of George-street would come by train to the top of King-street, and walk down rather than travel by tram? I do not think I should do so myself.
4214. Do you think there is much inconvenience caused by waiting for trams at Redfern? I have seen nothing of that kind since the electric tram has been in operation—certainly not so much as there used to be.
4215. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you suggest a route coming through the station yard to West Sydney very much on the lines of Mr. Greenwood's scheme? Yes.
4216. The objection raised to that is that to get down so quickly you must have gradients of 1 in 60. The railway authorities object to anything worse than 1 in 100. They have reduced the whole of their grades as far as Parramatta to 1 in 100, and they have adapted the engine-power to the loads of carriages. They say that if you spoil the grade for the last 1½ miles of the line you spoil it for the whole of the line? I fail to see why it is necessary to have a 1 in 60 grade.
4217. The railway authorities say that to get under Goulburn-street you would require a 1 in 60 grade? I think there must be some error there.
4218. You admit it would be an objection to have a grade of 1 in 60? Rather than have that I would close Goulburn-street.
4219. You admit the force of the official objection? Certainly if the grade is 1 in 60. At the same time, they are calling for designs for a bridge on a grade of 1 in 35.
4220. That is on the North Shore line? Yes; but that will probably be part of the city railway some day.
4221. Mr. Greenwood's three stations would put people down near the Town Hall, Wynyard-square, and Circular Quay;—do you consider those three good passenger centres? Wynyard-square certainly is.
4222. Is not the Town Hall? Yes; but I hardly think one is required at Circular Quay.
4223. Do you think it is of any importance to connect the railway extension to Circular Quay? Not for passenger traffic.
4224. Do you think the present electric tram along George-street will sufficiently meet the requirements of the people coming from North Shore? Yes. Of course, if there was another tram-line up Pitt-street it would be better.
- 4225-6. It is proposed before long to alter the Elizabeth-street line by taking it to Castlereagh-street and to connect it with Circular Quay; when that is done the ferry passengers will have two routes into the city;—would that amply meet their requirements? Yes, for the present, at any rate.
4227. You do not look upon it as urgent that the railway should connect with the Quay? I do not think it is necessary.
4228. Some of the witnesses have stated that no plan would be complete and satisfactory which did not make such a connection? I do not think it is required.
4229. Nearly all the people who land from the ferry boats come to town to get to their business—not to go to the railway station? Certainly.
4230. Do you know where the steam tram shunting yard is? Yes.
4231. At the further end of the yard you are on a level with Macquarie-street? Yes.
4232. Would it be a good arrangement to have a tram-line from there to Fort Macquarie, joining the other line which comes to the Quay? I have not studied that.
4233. If we bring upon the electric tram-line at Circular Quay the whole of the present tram traffic, should we not cause a congestion of cars there? There would be more cars certainly; but it is a wide space.
4234. You have expressed an opinion in favour of making the Benevolent Asylum site a permanent central station, and then dealing with the traffic by multiplying electric lines through the different streets of the city? Yes, for the present, not losing sight of a future city railway.
4235. If we have four streets with trams converging on Circular Quay, we shall have a much greater congestion of cars there than we have now? But they would not be congested there more than they would be in any of the streets, because they would continue going round. They would not require to be shunted.
4236. But the carriages even now in George-street follow one another so rapidly that they make it quite as congested as is desirable;—if you quadruple that traffic you will have so many more cars on the Quay at the same time? Undoubtedly; but you do not notice much congestion on the Quay now.
4237. But if we take the whole of the tram traffic there, will it not become congested? Of course, it will be worse.
4238. There is a great deal of heavy traffic there? Yes; but a great deal of it is 'bus traffic, which will be cut out.
4239. And the drays going to the steamers? Certainly. At present the 'buses are often a great nuisance.
4240. Do you think that if we went to Hyde Park under any of the plans put before us we should out-grow the station there in the course of time? I do not think so. The moment you connected with North Shore that station would be a white elephant.
4241. Which would be a convenient place to bring the North Shore people into Sydney? Leaving the present line somewhere about Bay-road and getting across the harbour to Dawes Point.
4242. Would you make the terminus in Sydney? You would have a circular railway, and one would not be required.
4243. All the West Sydney routes which have been put before us, excepting that of Mr. Deane, have a certain length—39 chains—of tunnel;—do you think a tunnel of that length would be objectionable? I should prefer it to be as open as possible.
4244. Do you think a tunnel as objectionable as the Lapstone tunnel would be a good thing for suburban passengers? I should not think it necessary to have a tunnel of such a length. I should think there would be a number of gaps.

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4245. It has been pointed out to us that electric power is so rapidly developing that in a few years' time we may be able to manage the whole of our city traffic by electric-power;—there would not be the same objection to tunnels then? Certainly not.

4246. Is not that rather an argument in favour of postponing the construction of the West Sydney line until we can bring electric-power to bear upon it? It is an argument in favour of postponing the construction of both.

4247. But something must be done at once; the alternative seems to lie between making the Benevolent Asylum station at once, or some extension into the city at once;—what I want to point out is that we are not quite ripe for electricity and tunnels on the western side; therefore, if we are to have an extension into the city, it must be on the eastern side? I do not think you need construct any tunnels sufficiently long to cause them to be objectionable, even if we used steam power.

4248. Would not 39 chains of tunnel be too long? Yes; but I do not think it is necessary to put in 39 chains of tunnel. You might get two or three openings in that length—sufficient to clear the tunnel from foul air.

4249. One scheme brings the line under George-street in front of the Town Hall, and comes to the basement of the Markets, and thence to Wynyard-square, in tunnel? Of course you can ventilate into the street.

4250. Would a scheme which goes so far west of George-street as to carry the line to Kent-street, be of much use to people coming out of the Town Hall at night? I think that is too far to the west.

4251. Whereas Mr. Greenwood's scheme under the Markets would be convenient? It would, no doubt, be a convenient position for passengers.

4252. Then, in making a passenger line for West Sydney, it is not desirable to go too far to the west? No; the line of traffic is somewhere about George-street or York-street.

4253. Supposing we had a central station at the Benevolent Asylum—the existing tram lines down George-street and Elizabeth-street, another down Pitt-street, and another down Kent-street;—do you think those four lines should practically deal with the passenger traffic? They would.

4254. Then to the cost of the Devonshire-street extension you have to add the cost of two new tram lines which, we are told, would amount to £80,000 or £100,000 each? Yes; but at the same time you would get a return from them.

4255. Which would be the better—the expenditure of £200,000 to go to Hyde Park, or the expenditure of £700,000 on the Benevolent Asylum scheme, with two extra tram-lines? I should say the expenditure of £700,000 on the Benevolent Asylum scheme, with two extra tram-lines. The tram-lines would bring in money, whereas the other extension would, in a few years' time, be worthless.

4256. Do you not think that you are going too far in saying that the Hyde Park scheme would become useless? I cannot see what else it would become.

4257. A very large number of people who have offices in that direction could always use the line? I do not think many would.

4258. We are told that people would prefer to pay an extra fare to be taken on to the city without being disturbed? Therefore, I say that we should put the station in a position where it will give facilities to the greatest number of people.

4259. The Hyde Park extension would suit all the law people, the Parliamentary people, the great clubs, and some of the largest hotels, besides many business people who have offices in Castlereagh-street, Phillip-street, and Elizabeth-street? There would be a much greater traffic near George-street.

4260. Would there not be enough traffic to make the Hyde Park extension remunerative? I do not think so.

4261. Every scheme but Mr. Deane's tries to make a West Sydney line fit in with an extension to North Shore; Mr. Deane is of opinion that that is a mistake, and that if we make a West Sydney line for passenger traffic, we should not confound it with a line to North Shore? I do not agree with him.

4262. Do you think the two could be dovetailed together without sacrificing either? Yes.

4263. To dovetail the two means an awkward arrangement of one line climbing over the other, in tunnel? That is bad.

4264. You would not say that it is a desirable arrangement? I should not do it if I could avoid it, although it is done in other places.

4265. If you do not go into tunnel until you get to Wynyard-square, you would require a stiff gradient to get on the top of a bridge 160 feet high? That is so. Still it is the highest land we have. There are already grades of 1 in 50 on the North Shore line.

4266. But to go from Wynyard-square to the bridge we should require a grade of 1 in 40;—if we make a grade of 1 in 60 we shall have to come back as far as Bathurst-street? I am not prepared to say anything about that, because I have not the levels before me.

4267. Are you in favour of a circular line, turning round and coming back to Redfern; several of the witnesses say that that is the best—not that we should have a terminal station in Sydney, but a line along East Sydney, coming back along West Sydney? I do not think East Sydney requires a railway. I do not think it will be accommodated by a railway so well as it will be accommodated by future trams.

4268. Mr. Dick.] In your opinion we do not require a large terminal station in the city, whichever way the railway is extended? That is so.

4269. If it is necessary to build a large station on the Benevolent Asylum site, and, later on, it is found necessary to extend the railway into the city, shall we not, practically, be compelled to have a double staff—one at the terminal station, and the other at the Benevolent Asylum site station? No; the station in the city would really be a roadside station. There would be nothing to do beyond getting the passengers in and out, especially with a circular railway.

4270. But what if we have a terminus in the city? We should then require a little larger staff than the one we have at ordinary times.

4271. But we should have to shunt the trains? That is a matter of keeping an extra locomotive there.

4272. Would not 200 or 300 trains coming in and out per day require a large staff to manage them? I see no reason why they should. When a train comes in it can be got back again in about a minute and a half. When a train pulled up at the terminal station, there would be a spare engine on a siding or road in the centre. The moment the train stopped it would hook on to it, and the train would be ready to go back before the people got out of it.

- C. Cowdery. 4273. Do you anticipate any larger extension of the business area of the city in the direction of Woolloomooloo? Since I have known that district I have not seen much change for the better in it. New wharfs have recently been built in that neighbourhood, but the traffic is not very extensive.
- 7 April, 1900. 4274. Do you think the utilisation of Woolloomooloo Bay is likely to bring about any extensive change in the character of the houses and other buildings in that neighbourhood? It has never struck me that it would.
4275. You lay some stress on the rapid growth of the North Shore suburbs, and you have stated that people from there must be brought into Sydney;—have you considered which of the two methods is better for bringing them in—by bridge or tunnel? By bridge, undoubtedly.
4276. You think it is quite possible to dovetail the connection between North Shore and the southern shore, with an extension of the railway into the city? Quite so.
4277. At the point where the two extensions meet, you would have this state of things: from Strathfield or Parramatta to the point of meeting you have a grade of 1 in 100, with carriage loads and engine power arranged for such a grade. From the point of connection towards the North Shore, you have a much steeper grade—1 in 35, as far as the bridge is concerned, and 1 in 50 on the other side of the bridge? I know they have called for designs for a 1 in 35 grade.
4278. If that is the case, how are you going to dovetail your traffic arrangements? In the busy part of the day it is only a matter of putting on a pilot engine to take the trains up the grade.
4279. Would not that involve a good deal of delay? Of course the fact of putting the bridge there relieves the greater portion of the grades on the North Shore end.
4280. There is a grade of 1 in 50 between Pymble and Gordon, and there are also three pieces of heavy grade between St. Leonards and Milson's Point? A bridge would avoid a good deal of that. Between St. Leonards and Milson's Point the whole of it could be cut out.
4281. Between Pymble and Wahroonga the grades are 1 in 60, 1 in 75, and 1 in 81? Of course I am not prepared to say that those grades can be altered; but we know the Commissioners have altered a number of other grades with a little expense.
4282. Do you think it a difficult matter, from an engineering point of view, to go close to the Town Hall corner on the one side, and the new Market on the other, with a subterranean railway? The curves, I am afraid, would be rather sharp, but there could be no danger to the building.
4283. You can get two 10-chain curves there, but there is no transition between them? It is rather sharp.
4284. Have you had any experience in matters of this kind in other parts of the world? I have always followed railway matters through the means of the scientific papers, and I was born and bred on railway works. In England and in this country I have been largely employed in railway construction.
4285. Is it the practice in England to bring the suburban passengers to the heart, or the edge of the city, and then let them go to their places of business by means of trams or underground railways? In London the terminal stations are not nearer than is Redfern to the centre of business.
4286. Could we say this of London: that city people coming in from the suburbs have to change from one kind of carriage or railway into another? They have in most cases.
4287. Do you think the delay involved in changing from the train at Redfern to the tram is a matter to be so seriously considered as to involve the expenditure of something like £1,500,000 under one scheme and £800,000 under another? I do not.
4288. *Chairman.*] At which of the stations in London do the passengers coming from the suburbs get out of their trains into underground trains in order to go to their places of business? The station I used most was the Paddington station. To get into the metropolis you have to cross Parade-street, and get into the Paddington-street station. Of course, I am speaking of ten or twelve years ago. You have also to do it at King's Cross.
4289. Do people getting out of the train at Charing Cross go into other means of conveyance in order to reach their business? Yes, or walk.
4290. Do most of the passengers who leave Charing Cross station get into a tram or other vehicle to proceed to their business? The majority of the business people coming to Charing Cross have to go as far to their business as we have from Redfern.
4291. You have stated that you are strongly of opinion that it would be better to leave the main station at Devonshire-street, and have four lines of tram into the city, and that that would suit all purposes;—have you any details upon which you base your opinion? No; it is only my opinion.
4292. Can you tell us, in order to back up your opinion, what is the number of passengers at present travelling on the George-street tram per day? I cannot say. The tram is always very crowded.
4293. Are you sufficiently acquainted with the construction of the Town Hall buildings as to say whether the foundations would be affected under Mr. Greenwood's scheme of carrying a line below the foundations of the north-eastern corner? It may be necessary to under-pin them; but it is possible to do that without any danger to the building.
4294. Even if the line goes close to the buildings? Even if it goes under it.
4295. You would hazard that opinion even if the architect said it would not be advisable to do it? You can go under any building without interfering with the foundations, provided that due care and precautions are taken.
4296. Do you think there would be any vibration? I do not think there would be any vibration which would hurt the building.
4297. When you stated that a railway to the neighbourhood of Hyde Park would, in a few years, be useless, had you considered the possibility of an extension of trade and population in the direction of Woolloomooloo and the Woolloomooloo Bay wharfs? I have known the places for some years, and I see little difference in it now to what it was twelve or fourteen years ago.
4298. With largely increased shipping facilities, is it not likely that there will be an extension of trade there? There may be to a certain extent; but Woolloomooloo Bay is only a limited area compared with what we have on the other side.
4299. I suppose that district is not one where people live from choice? There is a large population of the working class there.
4300. Would it suit them better to have a railway at Hyde Park than at Wynyard-square? I think the trams would suit them better than a railway, because they do not live in the suburbs.

4301. But they may want to travel to the western suburbs? Some might occasionally, but a very small proportion. C. Cowdery.
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4302. If there is to be a future business development of the city, must it not necessarily go in the direction of Woolloomooloo? Either in that direction or to the south. I think it is more likely to go south than east.
4303. *Mr. Watson.*] You have stated that you think a central station at Devonshire-street, with a tram line down Pitt-street, would serve the people fairly well for some years to come? It would serve them better than they are served at present.
4304. Would it be sufficient for some years to come? Yes, until we are in a position to connect right through to North Shore.
4305. A rough estimate for the construction of a tram line down Pitt-street is £100,000; if we constructed that tram line we should, practically, obtain as much revenue from it as we would from the Hyde Park scheme? Quite as much, or more.
4306. Estimating the Devonshire-street extension at £530,000, and the Pitt-street tram line at £100,000—in all £630,000—the cost would not be more than the Hyde Park scheme? No.
4307. And we should have a larger area at Devonshire-street for shunting-yards and so on? Quite so.
4308. *Chairman.*] You admit that with the best of tram services to take passengers from a train, loaded with 300 or 400 people, there must be delay for some of them? A slight delay, of course.
4309. If a train comes in with 400 passengers, how long would it take to get them away by electric cars, seeing that we only run two cars together? But the cars would run in different directions—George-street and Pitt-street, for instance. In that case two lots of cars could be loaded at once.
4310. Do you suggest a number of platforms for tram cars at the railway stations? Of course they would have to be there, but we have no platforms for the tram cars at present.
4311. *Mr. Shepherd.*] There would be ample room for a station like the one proposed? Room could be provided.
4312. You are of opinion that the travelling public would prefer to get out at Redfern and come in by train to being brought comparatively into the heart of the city by train direct? Certainly; in preference to going to King-street.

TUESDAY, 10 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK JENDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEU, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Edward Johnstone Sievers, Government Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

4313. *Dr. Garran.*] When you were here on a former occasion, you stated that you had obtained a statement of the probable cost of land resumptions in connection with Mr. Selge's and Mr. Greenwood's schemes? Yes; I should like to increase Mr. Greenwood's figures a little. Mr. Selge's figures may be considered as outside the mark. Some years ago Mr. Selge consulted me when property was worth more than it is to-day, and he has based his figures upon the value of property at that time. With regard to "The Rocks" end, the estimate was based on a 4 per cent. capitalisation, which is too much for that class of property in that neighbourhood. I think it might be taken that Mr. Selge's valuation is quite outside the mark, with the exception of the basement of the Markets, and the damage to the properties between Market and King streets. E. J. Sievers.
10 April, 1900.
4314. The basement of the Markets is capitalised at £2,000 a year? Yes.
4315. Have you any of the sections between Eveleigh and the tunnel? I agree with Mr. Selge's figures up to that point—Druitt-street. I scarcely think we would obtain permission of the Town Hall authorities to use their Markets for all time for £50,000. No basis exists to go upon in respect of that matter. It is a question of interfering with the building, and a good many points would arise, and I am afraid that £50,000 would be looked upon as a low sum. Mr. Selge has estimated that he can tunnel below the buildings between Market-street and Wynyard-square, and take what land is required for £200,000.
4316. That would be more compensation than purchase? Yes; but unless a bill was specially prepared to deal with it under the Public Works Act, such an arrangement could scarcely be made. In order to run tunnels we should take the surface, because we take what are known as cellars, and they are not sufficiently low to be called tunnels. Therefore, the properties along the route would have to be resumed in many cases where they could not be dealt with privately. I think you might say that they would all require to be resumed. In that case the damage to business would be enormous.
4317. You think, then, that he has under-estimated that section until he gets to York-street? Yes; I think £200,000 is much too low. I am backed up in my opinion by the Principal Assistant Architect in the Government Architect's Office, who thinks, with me, that there would be a difficulty in tunnelling along York-street without interfering with the properties on either side. As regards Mr. Selge's new George-street proposal, I scarcely think there would be a market for 3,000 feet at £150 a foot at the present time. On the other hand, I do not think his 30 acres would cost £812,000.
4318. You think he has over-estimated the resumption of "The Rocks" property, and has over-estimated what he will get back from the new George-street frontage? Yes.
4319. We should like to know the exact difference between your estimate and his; his extension to Circular Quay is independent, to some extent, of his main line to Sydney, which terminates at "The Rocks";—he could make a purely West Sydney line without branching off from Wynyard-square at all? In that case I should say that what he calls his red scheme may be accepted as approximately correct, with the exception, of course, of the £200,000 between York-street and Market-street.

4320.

- E. J. Sievers. 4320. What we may call his purely West Sydney passenger line may be taken as a fair estimate? Yes; it errs on the safe side.
- 10 April, 1900. 4321. Your principal difference with him is as to what he would get in return for the sale of his new George-street frontages? Yes; and also the cost of the bit between the Markets and where he tunnels under York-street. I am inclined to think that the whole of the properties would have to be purchased, and the results of the re-sale would not be equivalent to the damage caused by loss of business.
4322. I understand that Lassetter's have premises on the other side of York-street, and a tunnel to them from their George-street premises? Yes; but they have the tunnel only on sufferance. Of course, if that tunnel were required, it might be regarded as a loss which the firm would not otherwise have sustained, and I am afraid that they might be able to get in a claim. With regard to Mr. Greenwood's scheme, I think the property could be obtained up to the Town Hall for about £250,000. I consider that the land would cost £410,000 altogether—that is, right through to Circular Quay. That is also inclusive of a fair value for a portion which he takes of the park at Wynyard-square.
4323. *Dr. Garran.*] What is your estimate of the portion of Wynyard-square he takes? I consider that he ought to be charged with £60,000 for the portion taken, and that is included in the £410,000.
4324. *Mr. Watson.*] Your only difference with him amounts to about £75,000? It is not very serious. I may mention that Mr. Greenwood's scheme was estimated for at the time of the land boom of 1888. Since then several buildings have gone up, and the lower end of Pitt-street has been improved.
4325. Then Mr. Greenwood's estimate is not an extravagant one? No.
4326. That is, on the assumption all through that he will not need to interfere with buildings or cellars? Yes; but I am of opinion that he will have to interfere with them. I should like the Committee to understand that resumption cannot be made of cellars and other places on the assumption that you will not affect the surface. The law as to driving a tunnel through a hill will not apply in regard to city property.
4327. What is your valuation of Wynyard-square as a whole? £120,000.
4328. *Mr. Levien.*] From where did you obtain your experience in valuing land? I have done nothing but value for the last ten years. Before that I dealt largely in city properties. I have a record of every sale during the last twenty years in Sydney. I was valuer for the Savings Bank between 1892 and 1896. Since then I have been doing Government work.
4329. Did the people who were taxed under the Land Tax Act agree with your valuations? They did, ultimately.
4330. Have you had any conference with anyone with reference to the valuation of the land to which you have been referring? No.
4331. Do the Crown Law officers always call you in connection with their cases? Yes.
4332. In all disputes, have they used your valuations as authoritative? Absolutely.

Mark John Hammond, J.P., sworn, and examined:—

- M. J. Hammond, J.P.
10 April, 1900.
4333. *Mr. Levien.*] I believe you were a member of the Legislative Assembly for many years? Yes.
4334. How many years have you resided at Ashfield? Twenty-four.
4335. Have you constantly used the suburban railway line? Yes.
4336. Have you any statement to make? Yes, I will read it.

The question of the extension of the railway into the city has been before the public for upwards of twenty years, during which time a number of schemes have been submitted, none of which, to my mind, should be adopted in their entirety. The proposed extension from Redfern to St. James' Road comes nearer the plan I would suggest than any other, and, therefore, so far as entering the city by that route I agree, but I widely differ from the scheme in other respects. For instance, I would not build a terminal station at St. James' Road. I am certain the quantity of land required for a large station, with sufficient shunting room, is not available there, unless by destroying the Park. And this is clearly shown in the evidence given before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in 1897, in which mention was made of relieving Hyde Park by carrying on some of the shunting of trains in a portion of the Government House grounds. See in that report questions 150 to 155. As to how long the size of the proposed site at Hyde Park would answer, the reply was clearly evasive, mentioning "that this station would be good enough for twenty years." I glean from the evidence given on that occasion that the size of the land taken for station purposes from the Park would be about 1,150 feet in length by about 400 feet in width, or about 13 acres in all. While this seems a large piece of land I may mention that, for a central terminus for the whole of the traffic of this colony, that, in my opinion, it would from the first day prove far too small. I am supported in this opinion by having visited many of the large stations in Europe. Frankfort-on-Main, I found to measure, covering the width of rails and platforms under cover alone, 800 feet x 630 feet; the station, offices, and buildings are outside of that. Birmingham, across the rails and platforms, measures about 300 feet by about 700 feet in length, exclusive of buildings. I disagree with the Hyde Park scheme, because it associates the country traffic with the suburban in the same station. I think they should be entirely separate. The suburban traffic does not require a large station in itself; it is the country traffic that mainly demands station accommodation; that combined with the shunting room at Hyde Park is the great obstacle in the way, and is the cause of so much serious objection to the extension of the line to St. James' Road. I will now roughly sketch out a plan that will admit of the line passing through Hyde Park to St. James' Road, and will remove all or nearly all the objections to that route. To commence with, I would resume the Devonshire-street cemetery, the grounds of the Benevolent Asylum, the Inspector-General of Police's grounds, and the Convent of the Good Shepherd. Pitt-street, from Belmore Park to Devonshire-street, should be widened to 100 feet; Devonshire-street up to Castlereagh-street might be closed, thus connecting the newly-resumed areas with the present Redfern site, making in all an area of between 30 and 40 acres. With Belmore Park on the north-east, and Prince Alfred Park on the south-east, a large central railway station should be built on that site suitable in size for the next fifty years, designed with a view to further extension when required. For the plan which I am about to propose, this great railway station would not be required for suburban traffic, and, therefore, the cost of it should not be made a charge against the extension of the line into the city. A large central station, as a terminus for four systems of country railways, is required, and cannot be done without. There are not less than thirteen terminal stations around London, and with the exception of two or three, none of them come near its centre; they are, nevertheless, very large stations, and they are required for country traffic. The suburban passenger traffic is conducted to the heart of London by a separate system known as the Metropolitan Circular System. I produce a rough sketch to give the Committee an idea of these separate systems, from which it may be seen that while the suburban traffic by the circular system requires practically no stations, every country terminus consists of a large station. Well, I would adopt a modification of the metropolitan system, as carried out in London, that would save the necessity of resuming much of Hyde Park. Besides the line through the Park, by adopting the circular system, would not require to be one-half the width of the line as at present proposed, thus saving land and expense, and removing the objections at present raised against that route. In order to explain the scheme that I favour, I will ask you to follow the route recommended by the late Mr. Eddy, from Redfern, through Hyde Park, on to the Circular Quay, somewhere about the Water Police Court. I would then, by turning to the left, pass round Circular Quay overhead, thence by tunnel through Flagstaff Hill, thence overhead round Darling Harbour, passing over all the streets leading to Darling Harbour without in any way interfering with the wharfs or the traffic leading to them continuing that course through the present Redfern site. I would not make that the limit of the Circular System; it should

should be extended on the western line, out as far as, say, Homebush; thus a train passing round the route I have just described would, on its return, pass through the new central station at Devonshire-street, and continue on to St. James' Road. There should be two sets of rails, so that trains would be constantly running both ways without danger of collision.

In any proposition for the extension of a railway into a city, I do not think it advisable to undertake the destruction of street frontages, the impression I have gained in the many cities of the world that I have travelled through, is that the object has been to avoid that as much as possible by either going underground or overhead, the latter I favour most, and, I think, is best. By adopting the Circular System of extending the railway into the city, sheltered platforms would be all that would be required for passenger traffic, and hence but little land would be required for that purpose. I feel thoroughly convinced that the Circular System, as sketched out, will be found, if faithfully gone into, to cost less to construct, and after it is constructed cost less to manage and maintain, than any system which involves the building of a large station and shunting of trains upon valuable city land. As an alternative scheme I would advise the Committee to take into consideration the possibility of improving and extending the electric tramway system. I am aware that the already improved system of conveyance has largely reduced the pressure for railway extension into the city, and it must not be overlooked that, no matter how perfect the system of railway extension into the city may be, much of the traffic will still go, by the trams especially, if the Circular System is adopted so that passengers may go, say, by George-street, and return by Castlereagh or Pitt-street, and *vice versa*. In my opinion, the double line should be continued from Circular Quay by way of one of these streets back to the station, and thence to and from the suburbs, the trams thus continually travelling both ways without shunting, and without danger of collision. Suburban passengers, however, object to changing out of the trains at the central station into the trams. To obviate this, I think, if the Circular System of electric trams were made to extend by way of illustration to Homebush, on the present railway lines in lieu of the suburban trains coming into the city, possibly that plan would make perfect the scheme of conveying the suburban passengers to the heart of the city without a break, and this could, I believe, be done at a comparatively small cost. If this could be done, and I see no reason why it could not, it would cause an immense saving, not only in the original cost, but in the working expenses thereafter. There would not be required one fourth the expenditure at the various suburban stations. Tickets could be issued to the passengers on the way from the suburban stations just as they are now supplied on the trams already running.

I may mention that in making this proposal to extend the tramway system that I still hold that it would be the right thing to resume the lands that I have previously mentioned for the purpose of erecting a large central station as suggested, as this station would be the terminus for all trains beyond the Metropolitan area, and would be in a situation that must yet become the very heart of the city.

4337. You understand the proposal to erect a central station at Devonshire-street? Yes.

4338. And if that were constructed you would favour the running of tramways all round the city? Certainly. The suburban passengers, however, object to transferring themselves from the trains to the trams. If we were going to adopt the tramway system I would favour an extension of the electric tramways to the distant suburbs.

4339. If the central railway station were on the Asylum site, you would favour tramways to the city and suburbs? If you left us in that position we should always be advocates for an extension of the city railway.

4340. Then you want the railway to come right down to the city? I want it carried through on the Circular System—two lines, one going from Redfern or Devonshire-street to St. James' Road, round by Circular Quay to the west side of the city, back to Redfern and out to the suburbs, and then back again; the other going by Darling Harbour, then to Circular Quay, back on the east side of the city, that is, by St. James' Road to the suburbs, and back to the city.

4341. You would not favour stopping at the Asylum site, and running the tramways from there? It is a magnificent makeshift system, but it would not be perfect. I favour a mode of coming into the city, either by railway or tramway, which will obviate breaking the journey. I know that the system of railway extension which I am now suggesting will not compare with the costliness of pulling down street frontages, and resuming valuable land. Under my proposal little land will require to be resumed.

4342. What is your opinion of the St. James' Road scheme? I favour the St. James' route from Redfern to the Circular Quay, but I am unfavourable to a resumption of a large portion of the Park for a country railway station, requiring immense shunting room, and a great width of rails, in order to accommodate the whole of the traffic of the Colony. We are trying to do too much in one station. In London there are thirteen stations, and although we are not a London yet, we ought to adopt our plans to meet an increase in population.

4343. Where would you propose the country station should be? I am satisfied that if you have a station at Hyde Park it will not be sufficiently large for all time. More of the Park land will ultimately be required to meet the demands of an increasing population, whereas at Devonshire-street you have from 30 to 40 acres of land which will give ample room for all time to come. At Hyde Park the station will be too cramped. The whole of the schemes which have been suggested during the last twenty years concentrate too much on too small an area.

4344. Where would you propose that the main trunk lines of the Colony should come to? To Devonshire-street.

4345. And the suburban line should come right into the city itself? Yes. Seventeen or eighteen years ago I proposed a scheme which would communicate through the city to the North Shore. I did that with the view of trying to prevent the construction of a line from Hornsby to Strathfield, and also to prevent the expenditure of money on the Milson's Point line. I thought it would be a saving if a direct line from the north could be brought into Sydney, and I advocated it eighteen years ago. Those lines, however, have now been constructed, and they alter the view I hold of the situation. I think now it would be an extravagance to mix up the extension of the railway from the western suburbs into the city with a connection with North Shore. If ever a line comes through, we shall require a great northern station of its own somewhere about Flagstaff Hill. If we try to connect a western line through Sydney with a northern line we shall knock our heads against a stumbling block which will prevent any extension of a railway into the city at all. The two things cannot be done at reasonable cost, and give an equivalent in the shape of convenience. Unless we are careful as to how we construct this line we shall not have half the people travelling by it; they will still come in by means of electric tram and other means of conveyance. Charing Cross, the most central station in London, communicates with a very large population at Clapham and other places. As a suburban station line, one would have supposed that if it could it would have commanded the whole of the traffic in that direction, but that is not so, as many passengers are yet carried by omnibus to and from Clapham. Again, within the last eight or nine years, an underground electric tramway has been constructed from London to Clapham to intercept and cut away traffic from the railway. Although there is a station in the heart of London it does not command the whole of the traffic, and so it would be in Sydney. We must not anticipate, even if we spend a large amount of money that we shall get the whole of the suburban traffic on the railway. One half of it will never go by it, no matter where we construct it.

4346. *Chairman.*] You are a strong advocate of separating the suburban from the country traffic? Yes.

4347.

M. J.
Hammond.
J.P.
10 April, 1900.

M. J.
Hammond,
J.P.
10 April, 1900.

4347. The late Mr. Eddy and the present Commissioners are very strongly of opinion that the suburban and up-country traffic should be brought to one centre;—would you place your opinion against their experience? It would be presumption for any man to do that, but we have had great generals who have made great mistakes on big battle fields, and common soldiers have seen it. I am positive of this, that none of the Commissioners can show any example in Europe to support them in their view.

4348. *Dr. Garran.*] But is it not difficult to find a similar city to Sydney elsewhere? Yes.

4349. *Chairman.*] It is proposed, not only to erect a large railway station for the convenience of the traffic, but to have the administrative offices therein;—do you not think it would be an advantage to have all the officials centred at the main place of operation? Certainly, and the scheme I propose will admit of that. I think the whole of the official business should be carried on in a central station building at Devonshire-street instead of at Hyde Park.

4350. Have you made any estimate of the cost of your circular railway? No.

4351. Supposing your scheme were found impracticable from an engineering and financial point of view, would you, as a traveller and a resident of the western suburbs, sooner be brought into the locality of King-street direct, by train, or would you get out at Devonshire-street, take a tram, and finish your journey into Sydney? If the scheme of which I speak could not be carried out, I would leave it to the electric trams to accomplish the rest.

4352. *Dr. Garran.*] Supposing the railways were private property and you were the managing director, would you build a big station at Devonshire-street and bring the people in by trams, or would you bring them in by rail to Hyde Park and let them find their own way to where they wanted to go? If I were the largest shareholder in a railway company I would advocate what I am advocating now—a circular system of railways; and in the event of that not being practicable, on account of cost or other objection, I would resort to the extension of the electric tramway. I would extend it to the suburbs and make it a circular, or a loop line, system. The heavy trains, excepting long-distance trains, would cease at Homebush, and the trams would take their place. The people could then get into a tram-car at George-street and go right out to Ashfield, or other places, and *vice versa*. I would recommend Castlereagh-street, if practicable, as the street by which the trams should return to and from the station or suburbs.

4353. You think that the electric system is possible of great development? I think so.

4354. Is it possible, if we construct a line to Hyde Park, that such line may be superseded by a larger use of the electric system? If the railway were extended on the plan I have submitted it would never give you an opportunity of extending the circular system of tramways within the metropolitan area. That would shut out the possibility of extending the electric tram to Homebush.

4355. Do you think there is any risk of an extension to Hyde Park becoming useless on account of the increase in the number of electric trams down the different streets? I have only made a suggestion about the electric trams. I am open to be convinced that it is an impracticable suggestion. I would never undertake the construction of a railway into the city until I was satisfied that the extension of the electric trams to the suburbs was not practicable.

4356. I suppose that if it can be done it will be done? There is no doubt that it will be done. Someone has stated that a large station at Hyde Park would be an ornament to the city; but we have too many ornaments without utility. I do not think a large station is an ornament to a city. No one thinks Charing Cross is an ornament to the Strand.

4357. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You object to the extension of the railway to Hyde Park as a site for a terminal station? I do not object to the extension of the line to Hyde Park—I approve of it on the route laid down by the Commissioners.

4358. But you object to a terminal station at Hyde Park? I do.

4359. In the event of the Asylum site being converted into a large station from which the tramways could be diverted to various streets, do you think those tramways would be capable of coping with the suburban traffic coming into Sydney every day? The tramway system is capable of meeting any demand. Before we had any tramway system the omnibuses met all demands, in, of course, a very awkward way, but the people put up with them for twenty-five years. In 1879 the steam motors commenced to run, and a larger number of people travelled by them than by the omnibuses, because of the improved means of communication. Now we find that still more are travelling by the electric tramway, because the communication is so much better. The improved systems of conveyance are meeting all demands. I can see nothing to prevent the electric tramway meeting all demands. At present it is only half a completed scheme. We run down George-street, and waste time shunting at Circular Quay, whereas we ought to run down George-street and return by way of Castlereagh-street or Pitt-street, to the railway station.

4360. Do you think the inconvenience of the suburban people could be better served by an extension of the tramway system than by an extension of the railway line to King-street? You are putting the case of a circular tramway *versus* a circular railway. If it were possible to run a metropolitan circular railway, and it was also possible to run a metropolitan circular tramway, in my opinion the tramway would carry far more passengers to the city than would the railway. If it were possible to have a circular system of railway to Homebush, and also a circular system of tramway to Homebush, and we had the option of coming in by rail or tram, I, for one, should come in by the tram, because it would drop me in George-street or Pitt-street, whereas the railway would drop me at St. James' Road, far away from the place where I usually get out.

4361. *Chairman.*] Regardless of whether it occupied you an hour or twenty minutes to come in? That would be an impossibility. I have already made provision against that. I have stated that we must inquire whether the electric tram system is possible. If it cannot bring in the passengers in the same time as the railway, it is shut out altogether.

4362. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The principal reason for the agitation for an extension of the railway into the city is on account of the saving of time;—would not the electric trams from Homebush occupy a longer time in coming in than would the railway? I do not see any reason why the tramways cannot come in per mile as fast as the train. There is no evidence to show that the trams cannot run a mile or 5 miles as quickly as can the trains. In my opinion, they can and will prove a quicker means of communication than the trains.

4363. As a rule, the tramway has so many places at which to stop? The tramway traffic would have to be arranged so that each tram-car would run through to certain stopping places similar to the through-train system now in vogue; the number of cars, of course, would be numerous and their services divided,

so as to provide a speedy transit to and from the city with the greatest possible convenience to passengers. Besides, passengers would save by being enabled to alight nearer to their places of business than would be possible by any plan of city railway extension. Anyone who will reflect for a moment will see that.

4364. *Mr. Watson.*] Such conveyances, then, would be looked upon as electric trains whilst they are on the existing railway, and as electric trams whilst they are in the streets? Exactly.

4365. *Mr. Shepherd.*] There is a vast difference between travelling in a train and in a tram;—the trams traverse streets where there is a continuous crossing of vehicles, and it would be impossible for them to obtain the speed which is obtained on a railway; therefore, the trams could not compete, as far as speed is concerned, with the trains? A train leaving Strathfield or Burwood, and coming direct to Sydney, brings in a number of passengers in quick time. The same thing could be applied to the electric train system. It could pass every station with its load and come right in at the same speed, and, if it were required, at a greater speed than the trams.

4366. Would you utilise the railway lines for the tram after going a certain distance? Yes; from Redfern to the suburbs.*

M. J.
Hammond,
J.P.
10 April, 1900.

John Horbury Hunt, architect, sworn, and further examined:—

4367. *Chairman.*] I understand you have some further statement to make? I desire to state that it is impossible to erect a station on Hyde Park under what is known as the St. James' Road scheme. I desire that there should be appended to my evidence the statement I made before the Royal Commission in April, 1897, as follows:—

J. H. Hunt.
10 April, 1900.

As an old colonist—but more especially as an architect following my profession in this city these thirty-five years—and, further, having for the past twenty years devoted much thought to the subject before you, while during the same time advocating through the public Press the practicality and possibility of making Sydney a beautiful commercial city, prompts me, gentlemen, to come before you to-day for the purpose of entering my strongest protest against any attempt to insert the thin end of the wedge of destruction to Hyde Park, which is certain to be its ultimate fate, by placing on any portion of that site a railway station—I care not how magnificent the conception of that building may be.

All of us must admit that there will be a great national and civic advantage to a young and fast-growing city like this by having its metropolitan railway station well placed.

Yet a chief city station with all its advantages is not the only, neither is it a paramount, feature in either our civic or national requirements.

Let it be remembered, however, that the metropolis of any nation is in a way national property.

In all earnestness, I ask, shall one of the main features of a naturally beautiful city as Sydney undoubtedly is, I repeat, shall that feature be now taken from us; yea, lost to posterity for ever. Gentlemen, I submit that this is no trilling question—one not to be brushed to one side simply to satisfy the requirements of a few rabid advocates of this Hyde Park station. I make no hesitation in saying that nine-tenths of these advocates have never carefully considered this important question, while very few have any fitness or disposition of thought for matters of this kind, simply their own selfish wants ruling their determination; and to fully satisfy these wants these men would have no compunction whatever in placing this big station building in the midst of the Botanic Gardens.

With every respect to our brother civil engineers, and especially our deservedly respected Railway Commissioners, I must say that these big railway structures are at best but ugly-looking fabrics, the larger in bulk the more intense in their inherent utilitarian ugliness.

On these grounds alone, a chief railway station should not be thrust into juxtaposition with our city architecture of the type that should adorn the frontages to Hyde Park. Big warehouses and a railway station are fitter companions.

All this will by some be termed sentiment—in fact, several who have already given evidence before you and to a previous Commission have spoken jeeringly of sentiment. Those gentlemen are, I fear, just a bit ignorant of the fact that this particular trait of character was notably very prominent in our ancient city builders, and cannot well be set to one side by our modern city builders.

Every true advocate for making Sydney a beautiful commercial city will require, and they will stoutly contend for, the absolute preservation of the whole existing area of Hyde Park.

The advocates of the Hyde Park scheme can depend on it that any attempt to obtrude on the Park any railway station or open cutting will be resisted in a surprisingly effectual manner. There are hundreds and hundreds of citizens who, in other ways than coming here to protest, will make their power felt. Why, it is a fact that such a proposal of vandalism would not have forty-eight hours' life in Victoria.

The streets bounding the Park will provide our coming architects with most valuable frontages for important future buildings in addition to several now surrounding the park.

The present or some closely-following Government will do well for the nation by making these sites secure for the purpose here advocated.

The necessity for preserving this our most important city square as such (and not to be turned into a railway yard) will, I am confident, when once brought straight home to your intelligence, be accepted in the manner and for the purpose which I now desire to set out.

If I were an autocrat as well as an architect, I would at once assign to our future Public Library the whole of the sites of the present Law Courts, St. James' Church, and the Registrar-General's Offices. Then, for our future Courts of Justice (to embrace all the Courts, except the Criminal), also the Attorney-General and Registrar-General's Departments, I would give thereto the sites of the District Court, Equity Court, and the Mint.

No better position can be named for those important offices. The architecture of such a group could then to exceptional advantage be seen and enjoyed from the Domain on the one side and from the Park on the other.

We have on the next and adjoining site the Cathedral of St. Mary's, which, when completed, will be one other grand feature in the Park view.

Next comes the Museum, which, when finished, will be a very imposing building.

Following on comes our Sydney Grammar School. The site adjoining this should be taken for the Technical Museum. Then at the corner of Liverpool and College streets I would place the Girls' Public High School (removed from its present position opposite the Registrar-General's Offices), thus completing the north and east side of our city square, while on the east side preserving that beautiful outlook over Cook Park. (Sentiment again.)

On the south side, at the corner of Oxford and Liverpool streets, I would place the future new Anglican Cathedral, this site to be in exchange for St. James' Church properly, together with the old parsonage property site. Let it be remembered that the present St. Andrew's is but a parish church. Permit me parenthetically to say that when the Church of Rome has completed its fine structure, then the Church of England will be aroused to a spirit of emulation; then this will be unquestionably the site for its cathedral.

On the west and fourth side we have the Synagogue, also the Oddfellows' Hall. This hall some of these days, no doubt, will be made more imposing architecturally, the remaining sites to be taken for various large public buildings, for instance, a grand opera house, while another will go for a grand theatre. Sites on this side of the Park are eminently suitable for the last-named buildings, as they would have the protection of streets on all sides. Others of these sites, with those on the south side, to be in time taken for various important buildings here might properly be found homes for all our learned and scientific bodies.

Hyde Park thus surrounded on its four sides with buildings of the public character here set forth, and of good architecture, then this Park would be a spot in our city which even the ultra-utilitarian man would be justly proud of—

yes,

* NOTE (on revision):—The plan, which at the request of the Chairman I forwarded to the Committee, shows roughly the route in connection with my proposal.

J. H. Hunt. yes, as proud as all of us are of the harbour—while few cities could compete with us in two such fine civic features. Will it not, therefore, be a great national mistake—yea, a big blunder—to intrude into this city square such a building as proposed, with its surroundings. Do what you will with a railway station, it will be foreign to the architectural capabilities of this part of our city. On the other hand, to do anything that will prevent the future conception of what I have so imperfectly set before you, will be a positive disgrace to our intelligence, and a disregard to our trustship for our successors, who may, to our shame, ask where exists the proof of the need for destroying this city square.

10 April, 1900.

REDFERN v. HYDE PARK.

On this plan of the city I have ventured to plot down my views of the extension of the railway into the city, with extended wharf accommodation, new sites for warehouses, together with some street improvements, all of which I respectfully submit should be taken up as one study, because they are each important features, and, from a commercial point of view, in any comprehensive plan of railway or other city improvement, they should not, in the interests of the whole city, be considered one aside from the other.

It is contended—and rightly so—that a railway terminus should be near the centre of the city, but what centre—that of 1897 or that of 1997?

In 1863 I was engaged in building a block of buildings near the Exchange, the site for those buildings having been fixed upon, because at that time (thirty-four years ago) that locality was considered to be about the centre of the city, while the old post office (standing on the present site) was spoken of as "up the town." Therefore, those of us who have had many years' practical experience of the growth of this city can best bear testimony to the fact that year by year the active commercial centre of the city is tending Redfernwards, where it will no doubt permanently fetch up ere fifty years have rolled by. On the other hand, it must be remembered that our toilers for daily bread are not now all engaged in Pitt, George, and York streets, as of yore. Do we not see springing up in every direction about Redfern places of business where thousands of employeés will be speedily required: quick and easy access to the central station just as much if not more so than those of us in the north-west part of the city, where we are limited in city area, while to the south-east there is no such limit.

It will be admitted on all sides that a metropolitan station wisely placed requires plenty of space all about it, within and without its own boundary lines. This, I think, is well provided for by my scheme, which, in a great measure, is that of one of those set forth by the Railway Commissioners. The area embraced in my plan being about 35 acres taken within the station fences, while on the outside of those lines there will be a road 100 feet wide; also a large square at each of the three angles where the roads meet, the larger of these having an area of about 5 acres. By this plan the city would have for the present and far into the future ample provision for its railway requirements. In these proposed station grounds there will be about three and a half times the area of the proposed Hyde Park scheme.

To seriously compare the many and important advantages of the Asylum site, together with its ample future requirements and great capabilities as against the few and less important capabilities and restricted future requirements that this Hyde Park scheme possesses, might well be termed playing with such comparisons. Now, as against the Asylum site, there cannot be advanced and successfully supported any railway engineering or civil engineering difficulty, or any architectural or civic objections thereto, for it has not any. Whereas, with Hyde Park site, neither railway engineering combined with civil engineering skill can make it a site for a station such as this city will be demanding ere long.

The Chief Commissioner says, in answer to 464 (previous enquiry), "How long do you think the station (Hyde Park) you have proposed ought to last?"—"I should think it ought to last twenty-five years; but, as I have already said, I would rather suggest, if any further accommodation were required, that the scheme to the west of the city should be considered." On page 22 the Chief Commissioner further says, "It is absolutely necessary that the station should be on the street level. . . . It would be most unwise to adopt any underground station or anything of the kind to deal with the main traffic of Sydney." Here we have the most reliable evidence from the highest authority amongst us showing that Hyde Park is not a perfect spot for the terminus, because it will be good for only twenty-five years; while the fatal objection to it is that it is an underground station. Mark the Commissioner's words—"It would be most unwise to adopt any underground station or anything of the kind." Mr. Eddy informed the Commission that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company had recently spent £975,000 to bring their station to street level by only a few feet.

It will be found that after the novelty of the new station has passed away which generally awaits upon new things, then the business public who are to be brought into the city from beyond Redfern, and shot out at Hyde Park, 25 feet below the street level, there left to climb up innumerable steps, and wend their way to the vicinity of Wynyard-square—mark you, the buses, trams, and cabs are supposed to be dispensed with by the adoption of this Hyde Park site—then on the homeward trip to have to climb up the King-street Hill, and of a hot summer afternoon to sit in a carriage sunk down into an excavation 25 feet deep; imagine all this, and the wail to follow, and the indignation that will be expressed for having adopted this what will be called "Dutch oven" terminus, or, on the other hand, "All-to-one-side-of-the-city terminus;" while the eastern residents will be severe in their censure for the unpardonable damage done to the Park grounds.

FLAGSTAFF HILL.

For fully twenty years past I have advocated, through the public press, a scheme for resuming the whole of the Flagstaff Hill and its surroundings to the extent shown on this plan by the neutral tint, and levelling the whole of that area down to the present level of the Circular Quay. This importantly-situated section of our city as now existing is, from a commercial point of view, all but useless to us. On this newly-formed area of the city could then be placed with great present and future advantage a truly city station at street level—in the position, for instance, shown on the plan by a red tint—with one or two underground stopping places *en route* to Redfern.

TRAMS.

I am of opinion that our Railway Commissioners are capable of serving in a most efficient manner the wants of the city people as well as the near-at-hand suburban residents, by trams traversing the city streets north and south, east and west; picking up and putting down the travelling public almost at their will, to an extent that never could be attained by a railway service for such short distances. On this plan I have indicated some extension of our tram service.

FLAGSTAFF HILL FOR WHARF AND WAREHOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

Those who are alive to the future commercial importance of this city will commend Mr. Reid for his forethought in commissioning you to take into consideration the desirableness of resuming the whole of the wharf frontages of Darling Harbour, and reconstructing that line of wharfage and improved warehouse facilities. No doubt all this will appear to some men a stupendous order; however, it is not a work to be done in five or twenty-five years. In conjunction with the Premier's project, I submit my scheme as set out on this plan for resuming the whole of the Flagstaff Hill locality, and level it down, as before stated. We could then have one line of wharf frontage from Circular Quay to the head of Darling Harbour, with an immense area for modern warehouses, thus making this important section of the city our chief seat of commercial activity.

As your Commission does not include the street question, it would be out of order in making any reference to what I have shown on this plan. It is, however, a question that cannot well stand out of the two subjects before you.

I also desire that the evidence I gave before the Public Works Committee in August of the same year should be further appended to my present evidence:—

The planning of the proposed station is, in my opinion, an unskillful piece of work, unworthy of a great terminal station for a great city such as Sydney will become. There is much in the architectural treatment of the exterior that is very pleasing.

It is a bit strange how the spirit of economy balances itself in the matter of trying to save money in an endeavour to secure park lands, and then spending money without stint in these station buildings. Pray what is the tower for?

The general planning is as bad as bad planning could be put to paper. May it never get beyond the paper stage of its existence. It is evident that the planning is the work of one brain, while the architectural treatment of the exterior is the work of one other (may I say) higher brain intellect. Spaciousness is absent in the planning, whereas it should be a prominent and ruling feature of the whole scheme, while egress and ingress should be of such ample character as to prevent the remotest feeling of want of freedom of action under the most trying circumstances, even to the demands of a double Eight-hour Day. It is, however, evident that the plan before us will not provide for the pressure of half an Eight-hour Day demonstration.

What

What is to be expected from this want of provision for ingress and egress, coupled with want of spaciousness? J. H. Hunt. Why, curses upon curses, attended by confusion in all its glory.

I have no fear of competent contradiction of this very severe statement. I should feel myself untrue to my profession and wanting in my duty as citizen should I hold my peace with such a faulty work as is this now before us. 10 April, 1900.

I will deal with a few details. We have here marked on the plan entrance hall, and figured 54 feet x 36 feet. Now, the term entrance hall belongs more properly to domestic architecture, while the above-named dimensions are such as to be found in any fair-sized private house. Many private residences that I have built have entrance halls of larger size than this so-called entrance hall to the proposed great terminal station of the New South Wales railways—a fabric to cost over £200,000.

While its chief entrance is planned at 54 feet x 36 feet, it is made of much less practical working value by having but one opening thereto of the great span of 20 feet for the means of ingress and egress. Make no mistake about it, gentlemen, the whole of the inward and outward foot traffic to this station will have to squeeze through this 20-foot hole. And then when the crush of outward traffic has cleared the outer 20-foot hole it is even then not clear of the walls of the station, but is met by a screen-wall of the covered way, along which you have to travel more than 100 feet to the right or the left before you are clear of the station, and this among vehicular traffic in a confined space. To criticise such bad planning is enough to make a fellow use the strongest unparliamentary language.

I repeat that the whole of the traffic will have to pass through this 20-foot hole, except, of course, those who go by cab or carriage to the Elizabeth-street side of the station. There are, I must in fairness admit, two other small side entrances far away from this main one, but they are about the comparative size of a back entrance to a yard of a small villa.

Next defect, and a cardinal one, is that the station is placed in a cramped corner. There is not, and cannot be made, a proper street outlet for the going and coming traffic, not even for the present-day service, to say nothing of that of the morrow. The Elizabeth-street side of the station is of no practical use to the general public, except those going to the station by cab or carriage. Here again, in this very simple matter of providing for a cab approach, the want of knowledge in the art of good planning is evident. Why, the cab approach to the old station is far and away before this proposed new one. Coming around to the main front, we find fully one-half of its length jammed into an embankment, and retaining-walls 20 feet high or deep. This is the very worst feature about the whole scheme, and is inevitable to the site. Here, again, there is no proper or sufficient get-away for traffic to and from this the main entrance; and further, let it be clearly put before the public, the undisputed fact that there is but this one side entrance to this station, namely, Elizabeth-street. The Park side is all buried against Park ground at a depth of from 20 to 25 feet above platform levels; therefore no public entrance can be had on this side—another inevitable bad feature of this site.

To grade the surface of St. James' Road from the Queen's Statue to the level of the main entrance (a fall of about 19 feet) cannot be properly and efficiently done, even by removing the Registrar-General's offices; in any case this block of public buildings must come down, or there will be no approach whatever to the station. Here is another obstinate feature of this jammed-up site.

Stronger evidence is before us of how cramped this site is—notwithstanding it carries a high-sounding title of roominess, namely, "Twelve acres of Hyde Park"; nevertheless it is not the site for a big terminal station, because you have not the required distance from St. James' Road to Park-street to get under that street without raising up some 9 feet, which will not be permitted, depend on that. The Sydney Corporation have from time to time been cutting away at this particular part of Park-street so as to ease its grade as much as possible. To lift that street up above its original level will not be tolerated, for this is one of the main approaches to the city from the eastern side. It is just a bit too much liberty for the Railway Construction Branch to take with this principal street.

To get under Park-street at its present level, then, the station will have to be what is termed an underground station, which we all know has been condemned by the late Chief Commissioner, and to support his condemnation he told us that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company spent close to £1,000,000 to bring their station to street-level by only a few feet. This Park scheme has these two difficulties confronting its promoters, namely Park-street levels, and the below-street level for the platforms of the station.

Here is one other objectionable feature, and one which will seriously affect the pedestrian traffic from the eastern suburbs, *via* Boomerang-street across the Park to Market-street—a traffic not to be thoughtlessly ignored by the Department; a traffic increasing year by year, which is now to be cut off by the station buildings, and shot along an overhead bridge 400 feet long, and of the capacious width of 15 feet. Double this width and you will be near the proper dimension. Are we not to utter a grumbling word as to the smoke we are to be enveloped in while crossing this overhead bridge with dozens of engines passing and repassing under our feet—for there will be no turning to the right or to the left to avoid such a nuisance. Ladies and gentlemen coming to business, wearing bright, clean, linen, will not be very presentable after walking 400 feet through smoke and moist steam. The unthinking public are having, permit me to say, dust cast into their eyes by the advocates of this scheme, while they are being misled by the arguments advanced by the Department; and not until the scheme is completed will they be able to see that they have been misled, and a big mistake made in a big national work.

One other prominent feature of defective planning is to be found in the main colonnade to the St. James' Road end of station, which is shown by figures to be 15 feet wide. Twice that width would not be too large for so important a feature. Better wipe the colonnade clean out of the plan unless it be of a proper width, and thereby save its cost. Step by step we find evidence that there is no real conception of the requirements of a big terminal station.

The evidence that has been given by the Department in the matter of protecting the rails in the deep cutting through the other section of the Park is as amusing as it is impracticable. They speak of them as "openings." This is a deceiving word. The rails passing along this deep cutting must be well and securely protected, or we will have to record year by year many serious accidents and loss of life. An accident in a deep cutting is more serious than in the open. To erect great high walls, as has been proposed, will never be tolerated, because it will give this part of the Park the appearance of gaol grounds. All this is on a par with the many other bad features of the scheme.

Mr. President, I have no hesitation in making these very unfavourable and strongly-expressed statements. They are, I think, fully warranted by the great public importance attached to the scheme.

I have no quarrel, and never have had any, with any of the departments. I am acting in this matter in the frankest and freest manner with all good-will towards those whom I am compelled to differ.

I have had a long term of practice in the profession of architecture; therefore, the knowledge thereby gained as to the fitness of these things enables me to judge correctly of what is here before us.

The evidence given by the late respected Chief Commissioner would lead one to believe that he considered Hyde Park an exceptionally fine site. I happen to know different to this.

Mr. Eddy, being a neighbour, I had the advantage of many talks on this subject while on our way home or coming into town of a morning. More than once he has told me he had no desire to go to Hyde Park, except on the score of saving money. During one of these conversations, about the later part of his first term, he said, "If the Government vote me the money required, I will make at Redfern, in conjunction with the Asylum site, one of the finest stations in the world."

It is proposed to place in the Park a terminal railway station jammed up on one side by a bank with a retaining wall of 22 feet, which can never be of use for railway purposes. We then have to negotiate the levels and the grades of what is now called Queen's Square. It is impossible to grade that street and bring it into other streets, and give a proper outlet or inlet for passengers in that cramped up corner. If we carry out this scheme thousands of pounds will be squandered in making it right again. Look at the North Shore line. That work is now being pulled to pieces, all through want of forethought. If the station is built on the site proposed the whole of the Park will certainly have to go, and even then it will be a bungle. The site is as unsuitable as it can be, while the No. 10 scheme is just as bad. With regard to the Devonshire-street scheme, I look upon it as one of the most unskillfully prepared designs for a station which could well be made, and that on a grand site. I hope the Committee will pause before recommending No. 10 scheme, or the St. James' Road scheme. We must preserve Hyde Park for the erection of public buildings all round it, to be, in fact, a city square.

WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 11 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Edward Johnstone Sievers, Government Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

E. J. Sievers. 4368. *Dr. Garran.*] Yesterday you promised us some additional or more precise estimates with regard to
11 April, 1900. Mr. Norman Selve's scheme and No. 10 scheme? Yes. In regard to No. 10 scheme, I desire to amend the figures I originally gave. I put in the following statement:—

CITY RAILWAY.—No. 10 Scheme.

Government property, including a strip 80 feet in depth of Hyde Park, from Liverpool-street to St. James' Road, also Supreme Court, Registrar General's Office, Carter's Barracks, and High School, say	£300,000
Private lands, business interruptions, &c.	540,000
Total	£840,000

As amended—

Inclusive of the whole of the private land required for No. 10 scheme, but excluding the tail fronting Sir John Young's Crescent, Domain, but taking a depth of 140 feet of Hyde Park, between Park-street and St. James' Road

£860,000

Or a difference of

£20,000

The reason I have increased the estimate is because I find more of the Park is taken than I originally thought.

4369. Have you separately valued the strip in the south-west portion of the Park? Yes, that is included in the £840,000. I put it down at about £110,000.

4370. What about the strip of the Park which, under the St. James' Road scheme, would be taken between Park and Elizabeth-street? That is about 760 feet, and it will be worth £35,000.

4371. *Mr. Watson.*] In No. 10 scheme, do you include the strip along the western edge of the Park between Park-street and Elizabeth-street? Yes.

4372. *Dr. Garran.*] What will be the value of the station yard between Park-street and St. James' Road? About £130,000.

4373. You estimated it at about £200,000 some years ago? Yes; but in the light of recent sales in the locality I have amended that calculation.

4374. If the St. James' Road scheme is carried out, the portions of the Park to be taken will be worth about £165,000? Yes.

4375. I asked you yesterday if you could give me a rough estimate in regard to Mr. Deane's West Sydney line. I find that a large portion of that line will be on elevated piers;—will they interfere with the value of the property beneath? I understand that we shall not interfere with the buildings.

4376. You might go over a man's cottage without hurting it? Yes; but if he wished to build, say, ten more storeys upon it we should not be able to go over it for nothing.

4377. Then, at present, it is impossible to value the cost of that line? Yes; from the data I have.

4378. When that line gets into Market-street it goes into tunnel? I think you could assume that it would be more expensive than Mr. Norman Selve's scheme up to that point, assuming that the land has to be taken. It must be remembered, however, that the land is capable of resale, so that one would be safe in assuming that it would cost about the same as Mr. Selve's line up to the Town Hall.

4379. Would Mr. Deane's estimate be as high as Mr. Greenwood's? I do not think it would be less than Mr. Greenwood's, and it probably would not exceed Mr. Selve's, whilst it might be a good deal less.

4380. In the revised estimate you have made in regard to the Park land, you have taken into consideration the fall in the value of land? Yes. I have revised Mr. Norman Selve's scheme, and I put in the following statement in regard to it.

CITY RAILWAY—NORMAN SELVE'S SCHEME.

REVIEWING the estimates on page 74, the gross cost of the route from Redfern Station to Wynyard-square, estimated at £500,000, may be assumed to be fairly reasonable, provided Mr. Selve's contention, that he can tunnel and underpin the properties between Market-street and the Square is borne out	£500,000
7½ acres of "The Rocks," bounded by Essex, Cumberland, Harrington, and Argyle Streets, estimated by Mr. Selve at £220,000, I think could be secured, including 10 per cent. forced sale, for	165,000
Approach from Wynyard-square.....	114,000
Excavation	66,000
Total	£845,000

Regarding the proposal to resume 30 acres of "The Rocks" with a view to levelling the land, creating a large terminal station, and extending George-street 100 feet in width, I find that an error has crept in as to the number of feet frontage which might be realised upon. Instead of 3,000 feet, Mr. Selve's figures should be taken as to read 2,000 feet. (The plans have been amended so many times that this is understandable).

In my opinion the resumption of the 30 acres estimated by Mr. Selve, to cost £812,500, would be obtained for, say, £750,000.

As to the resale, I do not think that the diversion of business interests from George-street North, as now existent, would immediately follow the new street. I am, therefore, of opinion that instead of £150 per foot, £70 per foot would be a closer estimate.

Therefore

Therefore, revising Mr. Selve's figures, I think a nearer approximate would be :—			E. J. Sievers.
Value of 30 acres	£750,000		11 April, 1900.
Mr. Fowler's estimate of excavation	120,000	£870,000	
Deduct—			
For resale of land	£140,000		
Value of route for North Shore extension	75,000	£215,000	
		£655,000	
Actual cost of 20 acres to be utilised		£655,000	
It will be noted, too, that Mr. Selve utilises approximately five-sixths of Wynyard-square, the value of which to-day may be set down at		110,000	
I understand, too, that there is a proposal before the Committee delineated on plan No. 26 to construct a central station and a terminus for the North Shore line, in the future, at Wynyard-square having, approximately, an equal area to that obtainable at Hyde Park. For this the additional cost would be		520,000	
inclusive of forced sale and business interruption.			
The cost of securing the land at Eveleigh for the improvement of the station approach may be set down at		96,000	
	<i>Summary.</i>		
Red scheme	£845,000		
Additional cost of Blue scheme	430,000		
		£1,275,000	
Making total cost of Blue scheme		110,000	
Wynyard-square to be added			

I may mention that I asked Mr. Selve if he had not made a mistake in having 3,000 feet frontage, whilst I had only 2,000 feet frontage. He admitted that he had. That took off £150,000 at once.

4381. Do you think a line through West Sydney will cost more for land resumption than one through East Sydney? Yes; if you terminate at "The Rocks."

4382. There is a desire on the part of some people to press the point that as the population lies to the west, the railway should go to the west. I want to ascertain whether the extra cost of the land would be in proportion to the extra volume of population on that side? I do not see any way of devising a cheaper scheme than under the figures I have given.

4383. You know the land in West Sydney? Yes.

4384. Do you think any improved route could be laid out? I do not think so.

4385. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How do you arrive at an estimate of the value of the additional 60 feet in Hyde Park? I have assumed that it will be of less value than land with a frontage. Anyone dealing with 140 feet would make arrangements for a frontage. I thought that, in taking it out of a public park, it should not be assumed to have no street frontage; otherwise it would be worth less money. I think we ought to assume that it would be dealt with as anyone else would deal with it.

4386. You have assumed that it should have a frontage? Yes.

William Sandford, Lithgow, sworn, and examined :—

4387. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are the proprietor of ironworks at Lithgow? Yes.

4388. Have you given attention to the question of extending the railway into the city? Yes; as a traveller of many years standing. I have had an annual season ticket over all the railways in New South Wales for many years. For eight or nine years I have travelled over the mountains to Lithgow on an average forty times a year. I travel occasionally to Queensland and Victoria. When a traveller arrives by an early morning train, between 5:30 a.m. and 6:30 a.m., he has, as a rule, to get into a cab, and drive to an hotel, and it is very inconvenient. During the last fifteen years I have been four times to Europe. I have travelled through America, and on three occasions from Naples to London. Arriving in Paris I have experienced the greatest inconvenience in having to drive from one station to another. When you get to Dover the inconvenience is repeated. All these things have occupied my mind, and have brought home to me the inconvenience which passengers experience on their arrival at Redfern Station. I have come to the conclusion that the best site for a railway station in Sydney is King-street. The neighbourhood of King-street is the home of the business life of the city. I will give an illustration of the inconvenience of the present system. Crowds of men desiring to travel to Melbourne, or to other distant places, rush upon the station platform at the last moment. If they could have got into the trains at King-street, they would have saved a considerable amount of time. Under Federation, everyone's income is likely to be doubled. That being so they will have plenty of money with which to travel, say, to the mountains; and we must look ahead to the increased traffic. I have discussed this question with 90 per cent. of the passengers who travel up and down, and they are in favour of having the railway station at, or as near to, King-street as possible. Again, we want the extension, not in tunnels, but in open daylight. There are occasions when we are detained in the Eveleigh tunnel, and it is very unpleasant. In the old country the railway people endeavour to avoid tunnels. The extension should come as near to King-street as possible, and we should do away with the existing nuisance at Hyde Park. I consider that it is a great nuisance that one portion of the Park, at any rate, should be occupied by those by whom it is occupied at present. They could easily move into the Domain, and we could utilise that part of Hyde Park for a terminal station. There is plenty of room for such a station at King-street. We require eight lines of rails, and plenty of space between the platforms. I would cover in with glass nearly the whole of the space between Elizabeth-street and St. Mary's Cathedral. What could not be used for a railway station at once, could be used for the trams, and a space could be utilised for long-distance travellers who have to wait for their trains. The more comfort and better accommodation we give the people the better the traffic we shall get. I have had a great deal of business with the railways. If I want to get to the Comptroller of Stores at Eveleigh it occupies me fifteen minutes. If I want to see the Superintendent of Tramways at Randwick it occupies me half-an-hour. If I want to go to the goods sheds it also occupies a long time. It also takes me half-an-hour to get to the Chief Mechanical Engineer. If we had one large station in the city the whole of the Departments could be housed in it, and the result would be a great convenience to business people. From the King-street station we should have electric trams along Macquarie and other streets to Circular Quay.

W. Sandford.
11 April, 1900.

- W. Sandford. 4389. You seem to regard the extension into the city mainly from the view of long-distance travellers? No. I was staying during one winter at Strathfield, and I know the inconvenience caused to people coming from the suburbs. Business people have to calculate minutes. I consider that the people should be brought from the suburbs to the business life of the city.
4390. The suburban traffic will, of course, form the bulk of the traffic which will go over the proposed extension, and which will help to pay? There is also a large through traffic from the west, north, and south. To make the traffic pay you require a number of trains, and no interchanging.
4391. It is a part of our duty to consider the financial aspect of the proposal, and we have evidence which seems to suggest that if a station were erected at Hyde Park or King-street, we would not get the bulk of the suburban traffic into the city, but that it would go by the electric trams down George-street; No. 10 scheme will practically cost £1,500,000; a matter for consideration is whether, under that scheme, we should obtain the whole of the suburban traffic;—have you considered the question of the eastern as against the western extension into the city? I have. People want to come into business, to the theatres, to Parliament House, to the lawyers, and to the doctors, and could they have anything better than King-street as a railway terminus, with tramways extending from it. If I were a resident at Strathfield I should certainly prefer the King-street site.
4392. Supposing it were possible to have a station somewhere near the new Markets, do you think it would convenience a larger number of people than one situated at Hyde Park? No.
4393. Do you know that out of every thirteen persons now alighting at Redfern, per day, twelve go by way of George-street, as against one by way of Elizabeth-street? There is no argument in that, because the steam tram along Elizabeth-street does not travel so quickly nor so frequently as the electric tram. The bulk of the passengers by the electric tram to the railway station, get in at the Post Office, and that neighbourhood. If they could go direct from the suburbs to King-street they would do so. If they could do that not one-fourth would travel by the electric tram, as they do now.
4394. You consider that there is little doubt that the main suburban traffic would, if the line were made to King-street, come to King-street? I do.
4395. I also gather that you consider that the King-street extension would suit the long-distance travellers because of its proximity to the large hotels? Yes, and to places of business. I may mention that, on Mondays, a train arrives from the west at a little after 4 o'clock, and at that hour every minute is valuable to business people. I consider that King-street will always be the centre for people wishing to come to the hotels, and to the greater proportion of the places of business.
4396. A large number of travellers who come from a long distance to Sydney do not wish to go to any of those places, but to their homes;—do you think King-street or Hyde Park would be as central for that class of passengers as would Redfern? At present a great number get out at Strathfield and Ashfield. If, however, you had a station at Redfern, anyone living, say, at Paddington, could take a cab home. Nevertheless, King-street would be the terminus for the great number who travel on the Western, Southern, and Northern lines.
4397. Your idea, then, is to utilise the whole of the northern part of Hyde Park? I believe it would pay to do so. Let the Commissioners pay so much for it, and convert it into a sort of Crystal Palace. Personally, if I had anything to do with the railways, I would try to buy the whole of the Park, and make it a suitable place for visitors, especially in the winter.
4398. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is it not a fact that persons coming from the country usually have portmanteaux, or something of that kind, with them? Yes.
4399. And at whatever point they get out they, as a rule, take a cab? That is the question. I do not do so myself. I use the tram to the "Métropole."
4400. It would not make much difference whether they took a cab at Redfern or King-street? You will find that, if the extension is carried out, a large hotel will be erected pretty near the railway station. You would find the hotel porters ready to meet you at the terminus, and you would not require a cab.
4401. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you not sometimes find hotel porters and their vans at the station now? Sometimes; but the system is not satisfactory. You would have to take a cab from Redfern to the "Australia Hotel."
4402. Can you not take the tram? There is the getting in and out of the tram.
4403. But that would not be likely to kill a man? I look at the matter at the point of view of saving time.
4404. Is it a greater exertion to get out of a train into a tram than to get out of a train into a cab? You would have to get out of the tram at the other end, and passengers, as a rule, have little things with them, which they have to carry.
4405. But you would have to get out of a cab at the other end as well? Yes; but the matter of saving time is of great importance.
4406. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do not some of the hotel people have their porters at the railway station now? The "Métropole" people do, and they charge pretty stiffly for their services.
4407. We have had evidence to the effect that the Redfern station would convenience fully 80 per cent. of the country travellers visiting Sydney;—do you think that statement is correct? I do not.
4408. An extension to King-street would convenience those wishing to go an easy distance from that spot, but it would not convenience a very large proportion of the passengers to the city of Sydney? I think it would. I do not see how the Redfern station can possibly convenience 80 per cent. of the country travellers. If that were so, the passengers with whom I have conversed would have expressed themselves to that effect.
4409. The great object of the railway authorities in extending the line to Sydney is to suit the suburban rather than the country traffic; if that is so, would it not be best to select some spot as a terminus which is nearest the largest number of business people? Yes; and I think King-street is the spot, and that it will suit the largest number of business people.
4410. If your place of business were in George-street, do you think you would be likely to come to King-street by train, in preference to coming along George-street by tram? If my place of business were in the Equitable buildings, I should come to King-street.
4411. In connection with the proposed extension, there is no intermediate station between Redfern and King-street? Personally, I should like to see one at Liverpool-street.
4412. On the eastern side of the city there is nothing, until you get to Woolloomooloo, to be served by the

the King-street scheme; under those circumstances, do you consider that King-street is the most central spot which can be reached? Yes; the trams even now go from King-street to Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, and beyond.

W. Sandford.
11 April, 1900.

4413. One of the schemes before us is what is known as the Asylum site scheme for a terminal station;—do you not think that the convenience of the passengers from the suburbs would be served by having a large station there, and an extended system of electric trams running down the various streets? No. The home of our lawyers, doctors, stock exchange and business people generally, will always be about and beyond King-street. Our Houses of Parliament will also be beyond King-street. There will be no commercial life around the Asylum. The Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Manufactures will not be there, and the business life of the city will not be there; it will always be between King-street and Circular Quay.

4414. Do you not know that the great mass of business people in Sydney are between Pitt-street and Sussex-street; directly you come east you get into Castlereagh-street, where there is not a great deal of business carried on;—does not that fact indicate that between Pitt-street and Sussex-street lies the chief portion of the city to be served by any system of railway extension? No. The electric trams, of course, work at present in connection with the railway, and the bulk of the passengers who travel to the railway board the trams about the Post Office.

4415. We have evidence to show that the majority board the trams between Market-street and the Post Office? I consider that, in addition to the suburban, the mountain traffic and other long-distance traffic should be considered. That traffic is an increasing one.

4416. The bulk of the evidence we have is to the effect that the country travellers would not be so inconvenienced by an extension of the line as would the suburban travellers? I can only speak of an experience of thirteen years' travelling, and I say that 90 per cent. of those with whom I have travelled are in favour of the King-street extension.

4417. I admit that the King-street extension would be convenient to people whose business is within the bounds of Market-street, Pitt-street, and Hunter-street; but nine out of ten people would take the tram in preference to coming to King-street by the railway? I beg to differ with you on that point. If you were a traveller from the Mountains you would arrive at a different conclusion. The hotel life of the city will always be in the neighbourhood of the "Métropole," the "Australia," and the Post Office. Most of the sharebrokers and other people are also in that neighbourhood.

4418. Do you not think that the Redfern station is as central as is the Spencer-street station, Melbourne? No; there you are within a minute's walk of a very large hotel—the "Federal."

4419. Spencer-street station is on the outside of the city, and so is the Adelaide station? I think it is acknowledged that it is a mistake that it is so. You may depend upon it that there will be a great traffic in the future, and that Sydney will become a second London.

4420. Of course, we cannot compare Sydney with London in regard to railway accommodation? If the London people could go back to the time when they made their first station they would not stop at Paddington, but would come into the heart of the city. The result is that they have spent millions of money in connecting their various stations by means of the underground railway. It is acknowledged by railway managers that we should go as near to the business life of the cities as possible.

4421. Are you acquainted with Mr. Norman Selfe's scheme? I have read of it, but it seems to me that New South Wales cannot afford at present to pay the enormous amount for resumption which we shall have to pay, especially if we can get a railway at a cheaper rate.

4422. Is it not considered that the cost of Mr. Selfe's scheme is in excess of the cost of the Hyde Park scheme? It is, so far as resumption of land is concerned.

4423. I think you will admit that the Market is a more central position for the business population of Sydney than the top of King-street? There is no room for a station there. It would do very well for a branch, or a suburban line station, but it would not do for a terminus.

4424. Then you are of opinion that Hyde Park is the best point to which to extend the railway? Yes. You will get a return for your money almost immediately from the adoption of that scheme, and you will not have to pay a large amount for the resumption of land. The finances of New South Wales do not, at present, justify a great outlay of money, and we should obtain a piece of land for which we should not have to pay an excessive amount.

4425. Do you not think that any system of extending the railway into Sydney ought to be considered in connection with the ultimate extension from North Shore? We have the electric trams to the Quay already, and we should convey our passengers over by steamer. If necessary, I would have steamers large enough to take the trams upon them, so that passengers need not change their seats. I may mention that the bulk of the passengers coming from the North Shore line do not go from Redfern by train. They simply come to the city. If they require to travel north, they can join the northern trains by means of the communication at present in existence.

4426. We have a plan before us by which North Shore can be reached from Hyde Park; in order to do that it will be necessary to go back beyond Elizabeth-street, and, by a circular route, reach Dawes Battery; do you think that would be desirable? No. I do not think the traffic would justify it for many years. You could accommodate the traffic in another way. We should treat North Shore in the same way as we treat Darlinghurst and Darling Point. North Shore is not a terminus for traffic—it is simply a suburb. If there were a bridge over the Harbour we could carry our electric trams over it, as is done in Brisbane. Personally, however, I contend that we should not have a bridge across the Harbour. The largest ships afloat should always be able to come up the Harbour.

4427. *Dr. Garran.*] You know that the Hyde Park scheme deals with a very limited area of land? I suppose the Commissioners did not wish to frighten the people by stating their intention of taking any more of Hyde Park at first.

4428. The site you decry—the Benevolent Asylum—gives us 22 acres of land, upon which we could make a station equal to all requirements? I do not see what is to hinder us from taking more of the Park.

4429. The advantages you mention in regard to King-street exist so far as the professional, Parliamentary, and club people, and a large number of those who have their places in Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street are concerned, but the people west of George-street say that a line in that direction would suit them better than a line to Hyde Park? Yes; but what about the other people.

4430. To accommodate all, we should require two extensions? We should accommodate the largest number.

- W. Sandford. 4431. Is not the largest number to the west; it is stated that the George-street electric tram has captured twelve-thirtieths of the railway passengers to Sydney:—do you think that if we extended the railway line to Hyde Park, it would recapture them? Certainly. Of course I assume that we shall have electric trams through every principal street.
4432. That raises the question whether we could not have electric trams from the extended station at Devonshire-street? I think the Committee ought to consider the large number of business people who travel from the Mountains and other places. The business people are the life-blood of any country.
4433. The basis upon which the profitableness of the extension exists rests on the original assumption that a railway to Hyde Park will continue to keep the whole of the passenger traffic which formerly got out of the trams at Park-street and Market-street; since the George-street tram-line has been opened, we find that the people do not now come along Elizabeth-street; I should therefore like to know whether the calculation that we should receive the additional penny from the whole of the suburban passengers is a good one? Yes; because those who were not carried to King-street would be carried from Redfern by the electric tram.
4434. But at present we get the additional penny fare without any additional outlay; in order to get the additional penny from the business people about King-street, we have to spend nearly £900,000? As a business speculation, I should certainly come down to King-street.
4435. The profitableness of the extension depends upon our keeping the people in the carriages until they get to Hyde Park? If I were the managing director of a railway company, and had this scheme before me, I should tap King-street for the traffic, notwithstanding the existence of the electric trams.
4436. *Mr. Watson.* With regard to the undesirability of tunnels, I should like to know what was the principal undesirable quality you noticed in the tunnels of the metropolitan railway, London? The stifling feeling arising from the smoke and fumes.
4437. I take it that the greater part of the objection to a tunnel is in regard to the smoke and fumes which an engine gives off? Yes; of course it is not noticed to such an extent when the trains are travelling fast.
4438. Do you think that the same objection to tunnels would exist if we had electric instead of steam traction? No; not with proper ventilation.
4439. From what is going on in America, it would appear that electrical traction is being applied not only to trams on the surface of the street, but also to concentrated suburban traffic? Yes. They have electric motors in America; but so far they have not been a success. Otherwise, I would have suggested that all suburban traffic in and out of Redfern should be conveyed by electric motors.
4440. Would you care to offer an opinion as to whether electrical traction for that class of traffic is within reasonable distance of being adopted? I would not like to say until the experiments which are now being conducted with regard to electric motors have been carried a little further.
4441. It has been suggested that if it were found advisable to adopt electric traction for the suburban area of our railways, it would put a new complexion altogether upon the city extension, as it would permit of tunnels being used without much objection, and would thus avoid the necessity for land resumption;—would that view of the matter in any way alter your opinion as to the desirability of going to Hyde Park? No; because I would have the electric traction through the streets above ground. The overhead railway in New York is a great convenience. All the railway managers in London avoid tunnels for the suburban traffic as far as possible. Tunnels, where electric traction is used, are less objectionable than where steam engines are used.
4442. Anyhow, it would put a new face on the possibility of dealing with suburban traffic if electric traction were found practicable? I admit that.
4443. The great majority of the country travellers who come to the city—leaving out the semi-country travellers who visit the Mountains at the end of every week—generally have to go to an hotel, or to the residences of their friends in the suburbs;—would it make much difference to them whether they came to Belmore Park, or to King-street? I think so, because the bulk of them would go to hotels. Take the people who are coming to the Show. The bulk of them will go to the various hotels, most of which are situated between King-street and Circular Quay.
4444. Can you say that most of them are situated between Circular Quay and King-street, when there are only the “Australia,” the “Oxford,” the “Métropole,” and the “Empire”? And a large number of others.
4445. If a man wanted to go to “Petty’s Hotel” he would require to take a cab from a station at King-street? Yes.
4446. The same remark applies to the “Royal Hotel” and the Grand Central Coffee Palace? Yes; but in that case he would only pay 1s. instead of 2s. as at present.
4447. Take, again, the case of a man who got out at King-street with a bag, and wanted to get to the “Métropole”;—I suppose he would sooner take a cab than walk? Yes; but the question of the saving of time again comes in.
4448. What time do you calculate a man could save, as between the Benevolent Asylum scheme and the King-street extension, if he wished to get to the “Métropole”? Eight to ten minutes.
4449. Of course, you are aware that a man has not now to wait so long at the railway station for an electric tram as he had to do when the steam trams were in existence? I am aware of that. That, of course, applies to suburban people who are coming in and out every day, but it would not apply to men who have luggage. It would take them a certain length of time to collect it. Again, the trams along George-street do not go near the “Métropole” or the “Australia” hotels.
4450. You do not regard Hyde Park as of moment to those who use it at present during the day? They could go a little further away—to the Domain. At present they are a nuisance. I consider that if we bring the station to Hyde Park, people in future years will say that it was the wisest thing to do, because of the facility it would afford for further extension of the station.

THURSDAY, 12 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
 WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Norman Selfe, M.I.C.E., sworn, and further examined:—

4451. *Chairman.*] I understand you have a written statement, which you would like to read, in reply to the comments of the Government officials on your scheme? Yes, as follows:—

N. Selfe,
 M.I.C.E.

REPLY TO MR. DEANE'S CRITICISM OF THE CITY RAILWAY SCHEME PROPOSED BY NORMAN SELFE, MEMBER INST. C.E. 12 April, 1900.

MR. DEANE'S remarks on this scheme are set out in his evidence on pages 163 to 165 of the Proceedings of the Committee, and are summarised in a paper which has been handed to me by the Secretary (Mr. Lyne). I find they may be considered as forty-five separate objections, and I presume they include all that can be urged against my scheme.

It should make me extremely proud to find that this scheme (promulgated by me, at my own sole cost, and through long years of careful attention to the requirements of my fellow citizens), now stands on a more solid foundation than ever, inasmuch as Mr. Deane, assisted by Mr. Parry, has not been able, after exhaustive criticism, to urge one valid or substantial objection to it. Nothing is now said by him, as was done in 1891, as to the conveniences which it will afford to the public; but at the same time no attempt is made to deny the fact that this Western Scheme looks further ahead, and, in view of extensions which must come in the immediate future, will ultimately be far cheaper than any of the official proposals. While forty-five minor objections are certainly brought forward, many of these objections are based on an entire misconception of what the details would be like when working plans are got out; others rely on a too hurried interpretation of the outline plans already prepared; while many altogether beg the questions they are supposed to settle. Taken altogether, they seem to me like objecting to live in a princely mansion because you dislike the colour of the front railings.

I now proceed to deal with Mr. Deane's criticism of my proposals for City Railway. His criticisms commence with section (2).

Objection (1).

Says—"This would necessitate the reconstruction of the Wells-street bridge and the Eveleigh platforms in part." "The bridge would have to be raised about 6 feet." These statements include the first of a long series of exaggerations.

Reference to the drawing shows that the points are placed 250 feet from the north side of the Wells-street bridge. With a rise of 1 in 70, it is certain that the ascent would be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet in that length, and not 6 feet, as stated.

Mr. Deane does not explain that only a very small part of one of the platforms would have to be altered, and that at one end only, in order to allow the Darling Harbour branch to come in. Neither does he say that when the scheme is worked out even that may easily be got over. He often makes such a remark, however, when difficulties on his own plans are pointed out. As the question of grades crops up in several of the objections, I propose, instead of replying piecemeal, to deal with them more fully when dealing with No. 10 Objection. I will only say here that before making the plans I had it from the best authority that 1 in 60 was common on the railways near Sydney, and I know that the Government is inviting tenders for a railway bridge to North Sydney, the permissible grades on which are 1 in 36.

Such being the case, why, I ask, should I make a difficulty about grades of 1 in 70? So far as my scheme is concerned, it is simply a question of a little more expense in some cases, and no extra expense at all in the city itself, to get as easy as 1 in 100. It is actually 1 in 90, and not 1 in 100, running into Redfern now, and when that is improved, then 1 in 100 may possibly be made the railway grade for the city extension over the whole western route.

Objection (2).

"Cleveland-street bridge would have to be constructed at a higher level." As it is part of the whole scheme although a non-essential as far as route is concerned, to remove the present obstructive tunnel, and give the Commissioners the greater room which Mr. Eddy and Mr. Parry have so clearly shown to be necessary, it is of very little moment that the new bridge would be made a few inches or feet higher than the present one. When the sketch plans are supplemented by working drawings, then will be the time (and it will be worth the while to do so) to consider whether the streets in this locality cannot be carried under the railway lines, as Mr. Deane proposes to do with Devonshire-street.

The objection, as it stands, is simply a statement; it cannot be treated as an objection at all, because the cost is allowed for in the estimates.

Objection (3).

"The altered grades run into the terminus and would extend a considerable distance towards the station platforms, and would necessitate the reconstruction and the regrading of the whole of the goods and passenger sidings in Redfern station yard." Now, the proposed new grade terminates half-way between the rear end of the present station and the tunnel, say 600 feet from the tunnel and 1,000 feet from the front end of the present platforms; it is therefore an unwarrantable exaggeration to say the whole of the goods and passenger sidings would have to be regraded and reconstructed on that account, because it is clearly evident that the greater part of the yard is on the unaltered level.

The evidence of Mr. Parry shows—Question 265, 15/7/97—"That, in the interests of good management, it is necessary to remodel the roads in that yard, and that a great surplus of points and crossings would have to be taken out with improvements carried out." He also makes it clear—Questions 290 to 322, 234, 24/2/97—that things are very bad now under the antiquated condition of things which exists at Redfern. When a proper approach is provided the Existing Lines Branch and the Interlocking Engineer will have an opportunity to make a model station yard at Redfern, although the principal part of the interlocking will not be affected by the new grades proposed, for a special reason.

Objection (4).

This statement is as follows:—"The Chippendale school site and a portion of the Wesleyan Church would have to be resumed." I cannot answer this, unless I know what the extra ground is wanted for; but I cordially support the suggestion (if suggestion it is), that while the improvement of Redfern is taken in hand, it might be a good thing to spend another £20,000 and have the church. The school is provided for in the estimates. The plans clearly show that the church addition is not an essential at present in order to get a proper turn-off to the city lines.

"Considerable alterations would have to be made at Eveleigh to make connections between the running-sheds and the new set of lines to the Darling Harbour branch. In fact, it is doubtful if the latter could be connected at all, or any of them satisfactory." Now, Mr. Deane must admit that the main lines run through Eveleigh, and have connections with the running-sheds. He can see by plan 6, that the city lines can get in to the running-sheds, and he must admit that he is able to plan any number of cross-over roads between the Darling Harbour lines and the city ones because they run parallel to one another. What then is the meaning of the paragraph as it stands? When Mr. Parry was asked (questions 358, 359, and 360, 25/2/97), as to the present connection of the Darling Harbour lines being satisfactory, with the projected improvements for a terminus, he gave three evasive answers, for the reason that he had already shown that the connection ought to be further back. It was largely on account of the very clear evidence which Mr. Parry and Mr. Eddy gave as to the present difficulties that I make proposals for removing them.

N. Selve,
M.I.C.E.
12 April, 1900.

Objection (5).

"The line to Mortuary station would be on a different level, and for the transference of engines and carriages it would be necessary to run back to Eveleigh." Both statements for once are quite true, and both are in exact accordance with the Commissioners' expressed desires. Evidence already given shows that they object to trains like those from Darling Harbour and the Mortuary station meandering all over the Redfern yard in front of ordinary passenger trains. (See evidence page 21, 366).

Under the proposed Hyde Park scheme it is intended to run return empty trains right back again to Redfern yard; but with a main signal-box at Wells-street, where every train would be put upon its own road, all such meandering of the trains over the place, as led to the great accident in the year 1891, will be done away with.

It must be admitted here, however, that the Mortuary building is the one redeeming feature of the Redfern terminus. It is an exquisite little piece of architecture worthy of a better position, and it should be removed if possible. The alternative plan No. 19 (which Mr. Deane does not appear to have seen) shows how the whole re-modelling of the new terminus and the city branches can be much simplified and cheapened if the Mortuary station is removed from its present position.

Objection (6).

"Connections between the city lines and Redfern yard can only be made by going back to Eveleigh."

This is again quite correct, and if it was on an official proposal, instead of on an unofficial one, it would be pointed out as the great merit of the scheme, because it gets over the present troubles, and the risk of accidents due to crossing at the immediate rear of the terminal platforms. When such objections are made to features specially introduced in order to obviate the difficulties in the present working so forcibly pointed out by Messrs. Eddy and Parry, it shows one of two things—either the different branches of the Railway Department hold different opinions on the matter, or else it is an evidence that any proposal from outside must be condemned, and at any price.

If the Railway Commissioners prefer to retain the present system, as it exists at Granville and is now being perpetuated at Strathfield, of crossing main lines on the level, then it is obvious that it can still be retained on my scheme. If the city lines, "fast and slow," are arranged so as to get on to the main fast and slow on the level, then the causes of nearly all the objections so far dealt with would disappear, and the cost of my scheme would be much reduced. Such level crossings, however, would not be allowed by the Board of Trade in London, and I did not see why Sydney should not profit by English experience, hence I proposed the better arrangement shown by the plans.

Objection (7).

"Signalling and interlocking arrangements would have to be altered, and the Darling Harbour connection with Redfern yard would have to go back to Eveleigh." The first part of this has been answered in the reply to Objection (3), and the latter part in answer to Objection (6). After the very clear statements of Mr. Parry in reply to Question 318, 24/2/97, and elsewhere, as to the restriction caused by the connection of the Darling Harbour lines, and also his statements in Questions 2428 and 2429, 12/8/97, that it was a feasible proposal of mine to take the Darling Harbour branch to the south of the tunnel, and that it would facilitate the working of the traffic; and also his remarks in 265, 15/7/97, about removing points and crossings—it is most unkind to keep on objecting to a proposal for giving the traffic management the very accommodation they have shown to be imperative. They say, "The present Darling Harbour points are too close," and when I propose to give them a little more room than they say "they are too far away."

Objection (8).

The next paragraph I cannot understand. As printed on the paper handed to me it reads—"It is evident that provision must be made for storing suburban trains either south of Eveleigh or somewhere on the new set of lines, so that the space at Redfern could not be utilised." This passage is probably a misprint; it conveys no meaning to me, and I cannot fathom the intention. I will simply point out to the Committee that a very brief inspection of the plan will show that as return empty trains come up from the city lines they can, if required, get on to the Redfern main lines at Eveleigh, and go into sidings at Redfern or Eveleigh. All the principal roads would be controlled from a main signal-box at Wells-street, therefore any accident which involved the personal equation, such as that already referred to, would be impossible. If the Hyde Park trains have to run all the way back to the tunnel points to get to the Redfern sidings, it is a very small matter for trains on the Western branch to get to them also, and they do it without running through the terminus, like the Hyde Park trains.

Re Goodlet & Smith's yard, I admit my words, in giving evidence, are not as clear as they might be, though no railway man ought to misunderstand them for a moment. I had no particular intention of shunting trains in this yard, but intended it as an engine yard for coal and water. The traffic officers will easily see that with the Markets as a terminus for some trains (either permanently or until the extension is made to Wynyard-square), an engine could follow an "up" train into the Market station from this yard, and be coupled up ready to take it out again before the train had discharged its load. The in-coming engine could either follow the train out on the same line and shunt into the yard, or shunt first north of Market-street, and then go back to the yard on the other line. (See Plan 20.)

Objection (9).

"The estimate of cost seems to be inadequate." "The plans are not sufficiently definite in detail." About cost, I shall show in another place that when compared with Mr. Deane's estimates I have been much more liberal than he has been, and it will be better to deal with the estimates together. The remark about the insufficient plans is a most unkind rub, seeing the very great expense I have been put to, and how my plans make plain to the most unprofessional eye how great will be the gain to the city, as compared with the desecration contemplated under other schemes. I cannot conceive what Mr. Deane would like me to do, and I submit to the Committee: Could I be expected to provide a more elaborate section than No. 5, which is here complained of?

I have put down for my cut-and-cover tunnel under George-street, £150 per yard. Now, on looking over Mr. Deane's evidence I have found that for his much more difficult tunnel under buildings, from King-street to the Domain, he only allows £137 per yard. (See Questions 56 and 65 of the present inquiry.) It is the same thing, I believe, all the way through, that my prices are higher than Mr. Deane's.

Objection (10).

This is a long and far-fetched complaint about the grade of 1 in 73 for connecting the city lines. It contains several statements which are not justified by facts, and when looked into will be seen to beg the whole question. Mr. Deane says: "It is clear that as money has been spent to provide grades of 1 in 100 on the suburban lines, to work the city lines with a gradient of 1 in 73, either the train loads must be reduced, or a completely different set of powerful engines must be purchased for the purpose of taking the same length of train." I am sure Mr. Deane has been dreadfully worried over this city railway inquiry, and I do not want to worry him more; but he must pardon me for pointing out that what I have quoted above is all rubbish, because there is another alternative which he forgot to mention—he should have added, "or the trains will have to go a little slower over the steeper grade."

Now, no one really believes it is intended that heavy long distance trains with the most powerful engines are to go careering over the city lines at express speed. It is not the case in other countries, at any rate, and is not wanted here.

Subsequent evidence has been given by Mr. Deane as to grades of 1 in 60 on the South Coast line and elsewhere, and he is to be one of the judges of designs for a bridge to the North Shore, for which the Government is now inviting tenders. This bridge may carry the railway on a grade of 1 in 36, whereas the grade of my proposed railway bridge for the same site is only 1 in 50.

In the face of these facts, it is rather difficult to take the objection to the 1 in 70 grades on my plan quite seriously, the more so as it is not imperative. Mr. Deane has probably noticed that the grades between George-street and the Markets can be made 1 in 118 and 1 in 100 without altering my proposals.

The hollowness of the objection to the 1 in 70 at Eveleigh, is emphasised by the fact subsequently admitted that on parts of the suburban lines there are already grades of 1 in 60 (Questions 3335, 3355, 3356); and that the present approach to Redfern is actually 1 in 90 and not 1 in 100.

As

As first stated, Mr. Deane says this grade is "In a position where it is, immaterial" (Question 3321). Now my 1 in 70 grades are in exactly the same "immaterial position" with regard to the terminus as the present 1 in 90, and they can be made 1 in 90 also if such is a *sine qua non*.

With a city extension down the western side, Eveleigh will become far the most important junction in the Colony, and no trains will rush through it at express speed. It does not seem to have occurred to Messrs. Deane or Parry that with the circle round the eastern suburbs the city trains would be able to run direct into the Redfern yard from the South *via* Erskineville.

Mr. Deane, however, must know that trains never run at 50 or 60 miles an hour into a terminus. It should be quite unnecessary for me to tell him, that the same exertion of horse-power by an engine as will take a train full speed on a 1 in 100 grade at 60 miles an hour, will take a 20 per cent. greater load at 50 miles an hour up a 1 in 70 grade.

If we consider slower speeds, then the horse-power required to draw a train up 1 in 100, at 40 miles an hour, is more than double the power required for the same load up a 1 in 70 grade at 20 miles an hour. As it is evident that any driver who attempted to take his train from Eveleigh into Redfern at express speed would be summarily dealt with by the Commissioners, the bottom falls out of this objection at once. I know that Mr. Deane is unable to say what are the grades of approach to the principal London stations.

In reply to Question 3322, Mr. Deane says the suburban engines might crawl up 1 in 60 "at a snail's pace." I do not know what Mr. Deane means by a "snail's pace," but he will find that if he looks into the matter that the tractive force required to draw a train 60 miles an hour up 1 in 100, is more than is necessary to take the same load 40 miles an hour up 1 in 60. In the absence of real or serious objections, Mr. Deane has, of course, done his duty in pointing out this feature on my plans.

SECTION (3).

Objection (11).

"The plans for remodelling Redfern by extending the present platforms, will perpetuate present difficulties." This statement is entirely in opposition to facts. The principal difficulties which the traffic officers of the railways have brought before the several boards of inquiry, are (a) shortness of present platforms. Well these are lengthened, and eight of them are to have triple roads. (b) Congestion, and crossing of Darling Harbour branch so close to end of platform. Well that is done away with anyhow. Without more explicit objections there is nothing more to answer that I can see here.

Objection (12).

"The introduction of parcels and baggage offices under the station would involve lowering the ground and consequent expense." As it is not said that it would be better to continue the present barbarous practice of wheeling trucks of baggage over passengers toes, and as no reason whatever is given against the introduction of such a modern manifestly convenient system as I propose, the "consequent expense" may be looked upon as justifiable. I look upon this paragraph of Mr. Deane's as equivalent to great praise for this part of my suggestions.

Objection (13).

"The whole design involves 'botching.'" To this I can only say I have carried out probably ten times as great a variety of engineering works as Mr. Deane has done, and I have never yet been accused of botching. I shall take equal care for the future that no "botching" is ever associated with my name. A bald statement of this kind, without explicitly setting out what is meant, cannot be replied to.

Objection (14).

"The disturbance to the existing lines would involve very great inconvenience," &c. Now, the quadruplication of the suburban lines involved great inconvenience, but, as in the present case, there would be a lot of virgin ground for a great part of the new work, it could be completed before the existing lines were touched, and therefore the disturbance would be minimised. "Signalling and interlocking arrangements" are here dragged in for the third time. I should have every confidence in leaving that work to Mr. Parry, seeing that he has put most of them in, and that he has clearly said a lot of them will have to go under any new arrangements that are made.

Objection (15).

"As the present Redfern station would be entirely cut out of use for suburban and semi-suburban trains, passengers wishing to change to the main line would suffer great inconvenience, which could only be met by stopping all long-distance trains at Eveleigh, in order to enable them to change there." Here is another place where Mr. Deane has forgotten something, because after the word Eveleigh he should have added "or such other station as the Commissioners may appoint for the collection of long-distance tickets."

I would answer this further by saying that in no country do trains run indiscriminately all over the lines. And in New South Wales, as in other civilised places, tickets are collected from long-distance trains before they arrive at the terminus.

Passengers from suburban stations now join or leave the long-distance trains at Strathfield, Eveleigh, and Granville. Many of the northern trains only come as far as Strathfield, and there make connection with those from Parramatta. With a proper city extension in operation, a man from Melbourne, if he keeps his seat, will go into the terminus at Redfern; but if he wants to go right at once to (say) Woolloomooloo Bay, then he will get out at Strathfield or Eveleigh when he hears the cry, "Change here for the city line," and take a city train. He will then be able, not only to go on to Woolloomooloo, but to go to any station on the city or eastern suburban line from Wynyard-square to Randwick. With the Hyde Park arrangement, however, as proposed, he would be just as far off his destination at the top of King-street as he is now at Redfern; and he would have to pay as much for a cab from the railway.

Objection (16).

Mr. Deane says, the proposal to bring the railway into the Markets "is quite impracticable." Well this statement has exactly the same value as that made by the man who said they could not hang him, but he was hung all the same. Mr. Deane, I feel sure, has not had time to look deeply into this matter. I know that when he first considered such a use of the Markets he did not think of going under George-street for the fourth line. This idea, however, since he saw it, has been incorporated into several official schemes.

Objection (17).

"The Mansion House station has been designed for passenger traffic." That is true, and I have never proposed to run goods traffic through the Victoria Markets. No doubt a line around Darling Harbour may in due course be proposed for goods; but as the now practically useless basement of the Victorian Markets, would be twice the size of the Mansion House station, and much more convenient with judicious adaptation—I am unable to see the application of the word "makeshift" in this connection.

Objection (18).

"The business done at the Mansion House station is probably much simpler than that which would have to be dealt with at the Victoria Markets."

Now the Mansion House is the principal station on the inner circle railway of the greatest city in the world. It had at least six branch connections in a very short distance fifteen years ago. A large number of the great English railway companies have running powers over it. The traffic is so intense that the trains are only a few yards apart, and follow at intervals of a minute or two all day long.

I have, therefore, no words to reply to the absurd proposition, that such a business is simpler than running the comparatively insignificant service, all under one organisation, would be which is required for Sydney.

Objection

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.

12 April, 1900.

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.

12 April, 1900.

Objection (19).

"One platform is 460 feet long by 28 feet wide, with heavy columns along the whole length, about 16 feet apart." Why does Mr. Deane not speak out more clearly, and say at once, "the edge of the platform is 16 feet from the centre of these columns, a very much greater clearance than there is in many places at important stations on the existing lines." Why does he not say, "the drawing is only a rough diagram, but when the matter is worked up in detail, it will be easy to give more room than the standard gauge of the railways." Such a statement would be a true one.

Objection (20).

"A heavy mass of brickwork, 63 feet x 10 feet, and only 6 feet from the rail of one line would be a most serious obstruction to passengers." Now, under Mr. Deane's standard gauge, the brickwork may stand within much less than 5 feet from one rail of a line. If the mass he refers to is on the "off" side it is much further away than necessary. If he means on the platform side, to be in the way of passengers, then a very little application of paint will alter the pencil drawing, and the brickwork thus indicated can be cleared out of the building without need for anxiety. (See reply after Objection 26.)

As *Objections 21 to 25* all refer to this Market building, it will be better in order to avoid repetition to deal with them in the aggregate, first reciting their special points *seriatim* :—

Objection (21) says: "About 72 feet of the northern end of the platform is rendered useless by a stairway obstruction."

Objection (22).—"The adaptation of the Market basement for railway purposes would involve, in my opinion, most dangerous alterations."

Objection (23).—"These alterations, considered necessary by Mr. Selfe, which are probably all that could be done with any degree of safety, do not give widths to agree with standard practice."

Objection (24).—"Trains have to pass through passages 12 feet wide, whereas 14 feet is minimum practice."

Objection (25).—"Piers would stand only 5 feet from the centre line."

Objection (26).—"Piers are on the platforms only 3 ft. 6 in. from edge; it is indispensable they should be 6 feet."

There is the appearance of some very pungent criticism in these six objections, but fortunately for both the railway and the Market building, not one of them has a good leg to stand upon. In the first place, I ask the Committee to note that I have a plan of the Markets as they are now, kindly lent me by the Mayor of the City, and on this I have indicated in a general way by pencil lines and broad masses of colour, how it can be made into a railway station, and one that will have infinitely more convenience for passengers than the Mansion House station, London, affords.

I have not attempted to draw new plans of this station, and show details, at a cost, perhaps, of hundreds of pounds, and I was of opinion that Mr. Deane, like other engineers, would be able to fill in in his own mind the smaller items that are not indicated; for, after all, it is absolutely certain that the questions connected with the alteration of the Market basement are comparatively small matters, if a western site route is desired.

It is quite possible that alterations to this building may appear dangerous to Mr. Deane, which to architects and engineers having the experience of a broader school, would appear simple and safe to undertake. It is only necessary for one to refer to the records of such works as were undertaken in the construction of the Metropolitan and District Railways, London, when lofty buildings were underpinned over the unstable London clay; or to point to the more recent work of the Boston subways, at Boston, Massachusetts, mostly through drift. Such a reference shows clearly that the problems which would have to be solved in order that the whole Market building (erected over the Sydney sandstone) might be underpinned, would be as child's play in comparison.

Only a quantity of superfluous brickwork needs removal in the case of the Markets, and would be unattended with any risk.

I will now introduce a few facts. At the present Redfern station there are piers only 2 ft. 6 in. from the edge of the platform; in the Queen Victoria Markets the closest pier under my proposals is 6 ft. 4½ in., and only for a small part of the length. Where Mr. Deane says the entrances are 12 feet, he is mistaken; the pencil lines are by mistake actually drawn 13 feet apart, and are intended for 14 feet. I have as much right to call them 14 feet as he has to call them 12 feet.

He admits that 14 feet is all that he requires, and that was intended; although 13 feet was shown by mistake, yet 16 feet could be given if necessary. So that criticism is a very far-fetched one.

I would point out to the Committee that these enormous piers now contain hundreds upon hundreds of tons of useless brickwork and only support an empty dome. To cut them away sufficiently to give the standard clearance, in accordance with Mr. Deane's statement of requirements, will reduce them to a sectional area of about 165 square feet each. When that is done there will still be ten times the material left in each of the four piers to support the drum and dome overhead as there is in one of the main piers of the lofty Post Office tower. (See *Exhibit No. 28*.) To put the case in another way, it may be admitted that the drum and dome over it, with the piers between, will weigh 3,000 tons. Now, when the basement is modified to give the standard requirements as to clearance and so on, then each of these unfortunate piers, which Mr. Deane thinks would be dangerous, would still have about 160 feet of section, instead of 16 feet each as at the Post Office tower; and the crushing load of the four would be about 200,000 tons.

When carrying one-sixth of what would crush them, then the safe load would be over 30,000 tons!

Objections (21 to 26).

It seems absurd to pursue this matter further; I am absolutely certain there are plenty of engineers in the Government service who could make the required alterations to the building without showing the smallest settlement.

If it should be decided that it would be a difficult task getting through the ends without a settlement, then taking down part of the ends, and rebuilding them, as was done recently at the Post Office, would obviate the difficulty at once. These objections, however, all fall to the ground, because plenty of contractors would undertake to remove every support of the building if necessary.

If such objections as these are the best that can be brought against the proposal to utilise the Market basement, and they dissolve into thin air under such a simple investigation, what weight can any others have?

Objections (27 to 29).

Have reference to ventilation. As no details of ventilation have been shown in connection with any of the Government proposals for sunk stations, I did not go to the expense of showing any such scheme in detail, on this plan, and it seems very one-sided to bring the question up here.

It will be seen, if my evidence is looked into, that I have said enough to show that all the smoke from standing trains can be easily cleared out. The problem is so small as compared with that which attaches to the long lengths of tunnel and the deeply sunk stations on the Metropolitan and District Railway, London, and to the difficulties which would attend the 2-mile long tunnel to North Shore, as favoured by Mr. Eddy, that it is probable the subject would not have been mentioned at all in connection with the Markets, had the scheme been an official one.

Objection (30).

Mr. Rennick's opinion is quoted to the effect that "The basement of the Markets is entirely unsuited for a railway station." And further, "It would be a piece of vandalism to appropriate it."

With the first part of the quotation from Mr. Rennick I, of course, entirely agree; it is unsuited at present.

I have, however, clearly shown, and any independent and qualified expert will confirm the fact, that the alterations I have indicated are not only practicable, but could be carried out without any risk.

With regard to "vandalism," as referred to by Mr. Rennick, I thought at first that that gentleman meant to say it would be a "vandalistic treatment" of the State railways to carry them into a "market cellar." I now understand from Mr. Deane that he thinks Mr. Rennick considered the Markets were too good for a railway station. Mr. Rennick probably did not know what the building cost, and what a monument of folly it is as it stands; he, perhaps, considers that the gorgeous and costly external ornamentation (notwithstanding its utter inappropriateness as applied to a market-house), should be sufficient compensation to the citizens of Sydney for the loss of £10,000 a year, the sum of the loss, which they now suffer by the venture.

To

To my mind, any loss to the citizens such as this is a loss to the whole community. It is in many ways a magnificent building, and, therefore, every private citizen and Government officer ought to assist by every means in his power any movement for putting it to an appropriate use. So far, I understand, not one witness has ever hinted that the position is not the very best that can be found for a central railway station—convenient for the business part of the city in the day, and for attendance at the Centennial Hall and the theatres in the evening.

N. Selve,
M.I.C.E.

12 April, 1900.

Objection (31).

"Mr. Selve proposes to extend two lines only for suburban traffic beyond the Markets." This is a purely gratuitous assumption, with nothing to warrant it. I never contemplated anything of the sort, and there is nothing to show it either on the plans or in the evidence.

Objection (32).

"There are no shunting facilities by which some of the trains could be dropped at the Markets and sent back." Another gratuitous assumption absolutely in opposition to the facts. Exhibit 20 shows crossings both in front of the Markets and behind them, on both the fast and slow roads. Goodlet's yard is close at hand for coaling and watering engines, and there is not the slightest doubt that with the facilities there possible, a traffic manager of experience could easily work twenty trains an hour each way from the Markets as a terminus, until the rails went on to Wynyard-square.—(Mr. Eddy said forty trains each way at a similar station).

Objection (33).

This inquiry, "By what way will it be possible for trains to be stopped at the Market and sent back," has already been practically answered. I would not say further. In the same way as trams are now stopped and sent back from No. 5 and 6 platforms at Redfern, by sending in another engine after the train to take it out again; or by shunting the same engine on to the other line, and then sending it round to the other end of the train. The facilities for such shunting would be much greater at the Markets, because of the crossings as shown at the north end beyond the platform. These crossings would enable the train to come up to its place at once instead of having to move up a second time, with the consequent delay, as now obtains at Redfern.

Objection (34).

The statement that "this is not a workable proposal" does not apply to any proposal of mine, but to an hypothetical assumption which Mr. Deane appears to have set up in his own mind, in order that he might have something to knock down. I have proposed nothing, and do not intend to propose anything, that is not in accordance with every-day advanced practice in connection with railways.

Objections (35 and 36).

"Running four lines through Wynyard-square would preclude any portion of Wynyard-square being used as a station for the North Shore line." "It does not appear practicable to bring in a separate branch service at this point." "The plans show no terminal station for North Shore traffic." "A see-saw method of working must be intended." "This is unsuitable, because the railway grade on North Shore is 1 in 50, while on the suburban lines it is 1 in 100."

There is a bit of a jumble here, but I will try to make things clear, working backwards from the last objection. Mr. Deane has admitted that he has made a mistake about the 1 in 100 grade, as there is 1 in 90 grade between Redfern and Eveleigh, and a 1 in 60 about Erskineville. Neither railway men nor passengers would ever expect that the North Shore lines should be worked by an extension of the Parramatta trains, which run on the aforesaid 1 in 100. When the bridge is built, and let us hope it will be soon, then the Milson's Point line, if extended to Eveleigh through the city, will naturally connect *via* Strathfield with Hornsby Junction, thus completing a circle. On this road the grade is 1 in 45, or 22 per cent. stiffer than the Milson's Point lines; not 1 in 100.

Mr. Deane has evidently not seen my plan No. 26, showing how a station as large as that in Hyde Park or King-street schemes can be established at Wynyard-square. If the traffic in future years should warrant it, this would be the starting point for the Newcastle trains, and save 9 miles of the journey.

Objection (37).

"With regard to the two stations, Victoria Markets and Wynyard-square, which are otherwise suitably located, they would be open to the objection that passengers would have to ascend and descend considerable flights of steps." This statement that these stations are suitably located is a great admission, and it atones for many hard rubs I have received; but the part which follows takes away my breath, and I can only answer it by other questions. Can Mr. Deane say where it is possible to find through stations, worked on the European system, at which passengers have not to go up and down either ramps or steps? Look at the awful climbing the Commissioners are now providing for passengers under the improvements at Strathfield. Look at the terrible ramps and steps Mr. Deane has shown in his design for elevated terminus facing Garden Road. Look at both the King-street and the Hyde Park termini, with their stairs and ramps, and consider the people from Woolloomooloo will have to climb up and down when they come and go.

Now, under my schemes, the entrances to the new terminus at Redfern are close to the natural surface. At the Wynyard-square station I can provide what would be practically level approaches, from George-street and from Kent-street, far superior to anything on the official schemes. The City Council in its wisdom sank the Market basement 22 feet deep, and, therefore (as Mr. Deane's gauge for height is 15 feet, or, say a minimum of 17 feet to the surface), it is only necessary to make the present pavement the platform level to get height sufficient for foot-bridges over the railway lines and platforms, and under the ceiling of the station.

Let the traffic authorities just say clearly what they want in the way of staircases, ramps, lifts, booking-offices, porters' quarters, &c., &c., and then it will be an easy matter to direct the preparation of a set of working drawings for the remodelling of the Market basement. It is possible, if it is necessary, to carry the great dome on iron columns, provide lifts for arriving passengers, and an entrance on the other, or eastern, side of George-street; but to find fault with a set of outline plans because nothing but the main features are shown (albeit they are sufficient to determine the feasibility of the plan or otherwise) is very hard when they have been prepared at private cost, and purely in the interests of the community.

Objection (38).

"With regard to resumptions and interruptions, I cannot believe that Mr. Selve has not very much under-estimated." "The difficulty of passing under Lassetter's," "the damage to business," &c., &c. I can say no more about resumptions; that matter is in the hands of the official valuator, and I understand his estimates are generally considerably below mine all round. With regard to difficulties of underpinning Lassetter's premises, it is absolutely certain that there will be no difficulty in getting contractors to undertake the work, and take all risks, should it be ever necessary to do so. As compared with the work of tunnelling in ordinary cities, such work over the solid Sydney sandstone is very plain sailing.

Objection (39).

"I understand that he proposes to resume, in its entirety, the Kidman's buildings and remove them, so as to throw the lines open to the air." This is quite correct, but, unfortunately, Mr. Deane seems to have quite overlooked the fact, when he penned his objections, Nos. 27 to 30. By the present acknowledgment those objections lose nearly all their force.

Objections (40 to 43).

Deal with my estimates and very little reply is required to show the fallacy of the method by which the sum of £1,834,000 is made up as the total cost of my scheme.

If Mr. Deane thinks it better to have an inferior terminal station at Redfern for £310,000, as he puts down, instead of the superior one, at a net cost of £70,000, as per the figures at bottom of page 75, then I must leave him to his opinion; but I quite object to the figures being used in such a way to prejudice my proposals in the eyes of the Committee.

Mr. Deane thinks my estimate of the cost of works between George-street and the Markets should be doubled, or increased by £160,000. This would make the cost, for say $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of quadruple line, come to £320,000, or equal to nearly £110,000 per mile for a single line. Now, on reference to my figures, I find I have put down the "cut and cover" tunnel, from Bathurst to Druiit streets, at £150 per lineal yard. While a reference to the proceedings of this Committee shows me, by the answers to questions 56 and 65, that Mr. Deane's tunnel, under the houses between King-street and the Domain, is only estimated by him at £137 per yard run. In a similar way I can show that all my estimates are ample.

By

N. Selfe,
M.I.C.E.
12 April, 1900.

By reference to Mr. Deane's general estimates for the Hyde Park scheme, for instance. On page 7 of the Report of the Public Works Committee in 1897, there is the estimate for bringing six roads—not four—from Redfern to Park-street, and Park-street is in a line with Druitt-street. The amount set down for excavation, viaducts, piers of bridges, retaining-walls, steel superstructure of bridges, and covering to the six-line tunnel in Hyde Park (which is double the length of the four-line tunnel in my scheme) with all sundry works, is the sum of £248,200. And yet my four lines, for the same length, over a much easier route, and with only half the tunnelling, are to cost 50 per cent. more than the six lines to Hyde Park. I do not think the Committee will require me to say more on this point, the figures are in print to speak for themselves. It is quite evident there is a different sauce for the goose than is allowed for the gander this time.

Mr. Deane kindly adds £60,000 to section 2, and £40,000 to section 3, without one word of explanation. The fact that the alteration of the grades at about the present tunnel would terminate south of the main road signals; and that the double "scissor" crossings, and the turn-outs to the car-roads and sheds would all be unaltered so far as the new grades are concerned, does not appear to have struck him. Quoting Mr. Deane's own words, "That is not worked out yet. There would be no difficulty in arranging it."

With all Mr. Deane's additions, he brings up my scheme to £2,100,000, and concludes with the words, "It will be seen from the foregoing that I do not consider Mr. Selfe's scheme practicable."

If we assume, for the sake of argument, that the sum of £2,100,000 can be found to make it practicable, as Mr. Deane proposes, we should, on its completion, have the equivalent, so far as the public are concerned, of the following works as proposed by him:—

The New Benevolent Asylum, terminus at	£ 561,600
The King-street scheme, terminus at	1,527,000
Three-quarters of a mile of the North Shore line, at Mr. Deane's own estimate, as applied to my scheme; works only without the resumptions and without stations.....	320,000

Or a total of £2,408,600

Nothing at all being included for the land, except that small sum of £90,000 for the properties between Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets. If £600,000 is added for the land, it will be seen my proposals come about £1,000,000 to the good.

MR. McRAE'S EVIDENCE.

Mr. McRae, the architect of the Queen Victoria Markets, has given evidence as to the conversion of the building, to which I reply as follows:—With regard to the smoke nuisance, questions 3735 to 3742 and 3763, there are two very complete answers. In the first place, my exhibit, section No. 5, and my evidence both show that perfect arrangements for ventilation can be easily made. Secondly, Mr. Parry's evidence, question 3704, shows that, in accordance with a hard-and-fast regulation, no smoke is emitted in a main station, and, therefore, there would be none to get away.

With regard to the removal of the screen wall at the George-street side of the basement, in order to leave all the eastern piers in the centre of a very wide platform, Mr. McRae says that that could be done, because "the piers carry all the weight," and "there is no difficulty in the removal of the wall" (questions 3759 to 3762).

With regard to reducing or altering the great piers of the dome, and making the 14 feet entrances at the ends of the main building, Mr. McRae may be pardoned for being a little nervous, and saying, "It would be an operation I could not possibly recommend;" "dangerous and difficult;" "I would not care to carry it out," and so on. It does not often fall to the lot of a young architect to obtain the honor and responsibility of designing a building to cost nearly £300,000, and Mr. McRae naturally, with a commendable interest in his work, cannot be expected to take kindly to any rough treatment of it. But here some ugly facts come in. In the first place, admitting that it is an ornament to the city, yet it is utterly useless, and a total failure, so far as serving the purpose for which it was built, i.e., markets. Secondly, the city—on the authority of the Mayor—is losing £10,000 a year on the venture. Thirdly, it is the most central site in the city for a railway station, and by conversion to such a purpose would be a success; and fourthly, there would be no difficulty in the world in taking out the whole of the present central supports and introducing new ones, if it were necessary, in order to effect such a conversion. The evidence of a hundred men that they could not do something would not affect the case, when other men say, "I have done it, will do it again," and give a guarantee for their work.

If this building was in America there would be no difficulty in getting tenders from contractors for lifting it bodily, and putting a couple of extra stories underneath it. As a matter of fact, the responsibility and care required would be much less than at Lasseters', and still less than has been incurred on the Metropolitan London Railway.

For strength of piers, &c., see reply to Mr. Deane's objection, No. 26.

4452. *Dr. Garran.*] What do you estimate would be the cost of your West Sydney line, pure and simple, as far as "The Rocks," from Eveleigh, after deducting what you would get back from the re-sales? £1,233,000.

Alfred Thomas Brindley, Assistant Architect, Government Architect's Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

A. T.
Brindley.
12 April, 1900.

4453. *Mr. Dick.*] Have you had the opportunity of examining the non-official schemes for bringing a railway into the city? Yes; I have been engaged with Mr. Sievers in making the valuations of the buildings in connection with some of them—the Elizabeth-street scheme, for instance, and that of Mr. Selfe.

4454. With respect to Mr. Selfe's interference with the supports of the Market and the basement, do you anticipate any danger to the Market from the character of the alterations he proposes? You could do anything if you spent the money; but I agree with Mr. McRae, that it would not be advisable to do it. You would require to take the end down to do it.

4455. Would there be any danger to the building? There is the chance of settlement and vibration.

4456. The scheme of Mr. Greenwood skirts the building on the western side, and goes close to the south-west corner? It would not go below the foundations of the market.

4457. Would there be any serious danger from vibration in the case of a tunnel along George-street? There might be to buildings with shallow foundations. Mr. Selfe takes the tunnel along York-street, close up to the walls of the building on the side of the street. It becomes a question whether he would not require to resume the warehouses on both sides of the street.

4458. *Dr. Garran.*] Have the warehouses, &c., any rights under the pathway? I think that, under the City Act, they are allowed openings of 18 inches.

4459. *Mr. Watson.*] If you went right up to the boundary of the private land fronting the street, and resumed the property as you suggest, could you, without great expense, under-pin and arrange supports to the walls, sufficient to make the buildings safe? Very great expense would be incurred; you would require the walls to be very thick to retain the buildings, besides the earth which carries them.

4460. The foundations, it has been stated, are on rock? If they are on rock they will be right enough.

4461. Being rock, would it be necessary to under-pin? No.

4462. Where you have rock foundations on either side, you can go pretty close to buildings without any great danger? Yes.

4463. *Mr. Dick.*] There has been a good deal of telephone tunnelling lately;—can you say what has been the effect on buildings on rock, adjacent to that tunnelling? There has been no trouble. A case occurred in Pitt-street, where settlement took place in connection with a building on soft ground.

4464. Are telephone tunnels put below foundations? They are 8 feet below the pavement. They are level with the foundations where there is a cellar, and 4 or 5 feet below where there is none. The telephone tunnel in front of the Public Works building is lower than the foundations, and no damage has resulted. The foundations are on rock.

4465. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is it not possible to adopt precautions to prevent injury to foundations in almost any instance? There is always the liability, if you underpin a building, of the material shrinking, and cracking occurring. You can take every precaution, and then there is likely to be a settlement.

4466. We have heard of instances of railways being run under houses and churches without doing damage? I myself have lived in a house which was built over the underground railway, London. It was built after the tunnel was completed. There was vibration, and we could hear every train which ran.

4467. Do you think there would be any danger of damage to the Market foundations, if Mr. Selge's scheme were carried out? I am of the same opinion as Mr. McRae that there would be danger. Of course you can do anything, if you spend enough money.

4468. You do not think it would be possible to provide against danger? There is always the possibility of something unforeseen happening. If you underpin with cement, there is a certain amount of shrinkage especially with a heavy building on the top.

4469. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you think it possible to put iron columns in the place of the existing piers? I should not care to attempt it.

4470. *Mr. Dick.*] Looking at the comparative sizes of the two piers, as outlined by Mr. Selge on plan 27, do you think there would be any danger to the dome of the Markets, if the supporting piers bore the same relation to the weight which the Post Office piers have to support? You would have to calculate the weight each of the piers is carrying. According to Mr. Selge's figures there is no danger.

4471. Would there be any danger to the dome of the Markets, if the piers bore the same relation as set forth in plan 27? I do not think so.

TUESDAY, 17 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

4472. *Chairman.*] Since you were last before the Committee I believe you have taken the opportunity to look through the various schemes submitted by witnesses, except those of Mr. Selge and Mr. Greenwood; the Committee would like you to give them your opinion upon those schemes? I have looked through these schemes, and I have gone into them as carefully as time will permit. The schemes generally have not sufficient detail to enable me to criticise them very closely; but I propose to deal with them *seriatim*, and make a few short observations on each. The first which I have on the list is Mr. A. C. Brownen's. I do not think Mr. Brownen's scheme would meet the case at all. As I understand Mr. Brownen is of opinion that the Devonshire-street site should be utilised for the main station, and he proposes besides that there shall be two circular lines. He says in a paper attached to a letter, dated 9th April, which the Secretary has handed to me, and which gives more information than was previously given:—

In accordance with my railway scheme, the line will be taken through the heart of the crowded districts around George-street West, the Glebe, Forest Lodge, Annandale, and Leichhardt, connecting with the main suburban line at Petersham. On the eastern side a similar line would tap the districts of Surry Hills, Darlinghurst, Paddington, Woollahra, and Waverley in due course.

It would be much easier if I had a plan of exactly what is proposed, so as to see how it would work out. There is so much marked on the plan that I do not know what Mr. Brownen proposes definitely for his scheme. It seems to be a circular scheme in principle; but I submit that that would not meet the circumstances at all. What people want to do is not to get from one part of the city to another so much as to be brought into their business in the morning, and to be taken away again at night. That is really the main object of the city railway.

Mr. John Shewan has a proposal to pass over Devonshire-street, and enter a tunnel under Castle-reagh-street, and go to Goulburn-street and Circular Quay, emerging at the Public Instruction Department. I am of opinion that a scheme, involving so much tunnel, could not be viewed with favour. The time has not arrived when a tunnel scheme would be acceptable.

Mr. Tuckwell has a scheme that he wrote about, but he has not appeared before the Committee. That also involves a long tunnel, and is therefore not a desirable scheme.

Mr. O. Mitride also has not appeared before the Committee, but he sent a letter which has been printed by order of the Committee. Perhaps it would be unnecessary to say anything further with regard to that. He proposes an elevated line to the south-east corner of Park-street; then to pass along College-street to the High School site; from thence to Circular Quay, Miller's Point, and North Shore. It would be very difficult to work out that scheme as an overhead proposal without incurring very great expense, and the railway would be unsightly. It could not very well be carried out; but there is not enough detail given to enable me to criticise it properly.

Mr. F. Alderson has submitted a scheme, and there is a map showing the course of the line. It might have great advantages for those who wanted to go in the particular directions which the line follows, but unfortunately it is of so serpentine a character that it would scarcely meet present requirements.

Mr. G. Neville Griffiths mentions a scheme that was recommended by Mr. Goodchap. He said it would have an underground station on the site of the Land Titles Office, the Supreme Court, and St. James' Church, and would go on from there to Fort Macquarie. I think Mr. Griffiths must be under some misapprehension about that line. Mr. Goodchap, in giving evidence before the Royal Commission in the year 1890, mentioned a scheme, and it was one that was worked out in 1885 or 1886. I was in the office at the time. But that line did not interfere with either the Land Titles Office, the Supreme Court, or St.

James'

A. T. Brindley,
12 April, 1900.

H. Deane.
17 April, 1900.

H. Deane. James' Church. It crossed under Liverpool-street near Nithsdale-street, went across the Park nearly parallel to Elizabeth-street, and would have a station near the northern end of the Park, but as it approached the northern end, and whilst it was still in the north-west corner of the Park, it diverged to the right, clearing the Supreme Court and St. James' Church, and after passing under the Mint, curved round to the left approaching Macquarie-street again, and then went on to Fort Macquarie. That was the one marked "J" in the schemes that were considered by the Commission. That is an underground scheme, and it has all the disadvantages of a tunnel scheme. It was intended at the time to have only two lines of rails, which we now know would be altogether inadequate, and a small shunting ground and terminal station at Fort Macquarie. I have explained the objection to having a terminal station at Fort Macquarie—the principal one being that that place is wanted as a terminus for the very important tramway system of Sydney. I think it would be a great mistake to hamper the tramway system for the purpose of providing shunting grounds for trains.

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The next proposal is that of Mr. C. T. Burfitt. In this scheme he has to tunnel all the way from Wexford-street. He passes over Belmore Park, and has a tunnel from Wexford-street to the Water Police Court. I do not think he could get into a tunnel in that way—passing over Elizabeth-street, then getting under the surface at Goulburn-street. He might by going over Goulburn-street, and passing under Liverpool-street as shown on No. 10, and in the St. James' Road proposal, but not at Wexford-street. Then he proceeds from that point, where he enters the tunnel, to the Water Police Court. From there he goes overhead to Circular Quay, and thence to Dawes' Point. The shunting he proposes as an alternative may be done at Fort Macquarie. I think that so long a tunnel, even if broken by a station at the Supreme Court, would be very objectionable.

The next proposal—that of Mr. Jabez Brown—is for a western side scheme. His proposal is far too vague in character for me to say very much about it. In fact, he has a number of alternatives, therefore one does not know which to criticise or remark upon. But the start off of his line is objectionable. He starts off along the Darling Harbour branch, which has a bad grade, and a line following this location would have the disadvantages that I pointed out, and one of the disadvantages of Mr. Selfe's scheme—namely, that it would take passengers away from the main Redfern station, and would allow of no interchange. I do not think that this scheme need be considered any further.

Mr. Horbury Hunt has submitted a circular scheme, which involves a main station at Devonshire-street. I submit that a circular scheme of that kind would not meet the case. It appears to me that Mr. Hunt's proposal contains a tremendous lot of tunnel. He says there is tunnelling for 50 chains only. I presume that he means that there is a single length of 50 chains, not that that is the aggregate length. It really does mean a continuous tunnel, whatever one may say. A covered-in station between two tunnels does not give perfect ventilation, and a station of course must be covered in to protect people from the weather. Whatever may be said of the selection of the route on the western side of the city, the return on the other side would not meet the case of a city railway. It might, possibly under some circumstances, be a useful line to have; but I take it that it is not what the Government are at the present moment contemplating. That scheme has all the objections that circular lines have, that they have no proper terminus. A terminus has been explained by Mr. Parry and myself as absolutely necessary in any scheme. You are not getting rid of the difficulty of an adequate terminus by running trains round. You cannot run the people round, you have to bring them in at certain times. During the day, when the traffic is light, you can run a regular service all round, but in the morning you are bringing men into their offices, and in the evenings, when the people have to be taken away from town, they all want to go out together. You do not want to run the trains round; but you want to start from the city, and to go out to the suburbs, and *vice versa*.

4473. That really means that if you bring the railway into Sydney to accommodate the large suburban traffic, it involves a terminal station in Sydney? Yes, you want a terminal station. You do not get over the difficulty by running the trains further round, and bringing them back on another route.

Mr. F. Cavill has submitted a proposal for a western side scheme. He carries his line on arches to Erskine-street, and has a central station between Erskine-street and Margaret-street south and north, and Sussex-street and York-street, west and east. He proposes to connect Kent and Clarence Streets by subways, and the level of his station, he says, is that of Wynyard-square. Apart from the fact that it would be difficult to arrange for a station at that point, I submit that a station on that spot would be too far on—too much to the north, and too much to the west. The centre of it would be slightly further north than Wynyard-square; but it would be to the west of it. It is a question whether it would be a suitable site or not. But I do not see how a station can be built there, and if it were, it appears to me that the cost of resumptions would be very serious, and the work would be very expensive.

Mr. Charles Fry has a proposal for a circular railway. The eastern part of his loop is along the eastern side of Hyde Park. He makes a station at the south-east corner of Hyde Park, another at Chancery-square, and another near the Water Police Court. On the other side he has a station at Harrington-street, near Wynyard-square, and he has one at the Sydney end of Pyrmont bridge, and another at Engine-street or Hay-street. I fancy the location will be found on the western side of the loop to be quite impracticable, and, taking it altogether, I think that this line would not serve the purpose for which it is intended—the eastern side of the loop being too far east of the city. And, further, you would not be able to give the accommodation on the western side that would be required to bring the people in on that side.

The last proposal which I have to deal with is that of Dr. Quaife. Dr. Quaife's plan seems to show a means of getting rid of the necessity of resuming the Synagogue. I believe that Dr. Quaife was the first to propose the utilisation of the High School site, which has been adopted in this No. 10 scheme. He seems to take up a width of 200 feet of the Park, between Park-street and King-street, as compared with 80 feet in No. 10 scheme, and 140 feet in the modified No. 10 scheme, for the eleven platforms. I am doubtful whether, even by taking up so much of the Park as 200 feet as Dr. Quaife proposes, the resumption of the Synagogue could be avoided. It does not look as if it could be, but it really wants working out. I think the cab-road shown by Dr. Quaife would be a little awkward; there would be some difficulty in regulating the level, so as to get over the line which it has to cross—the lines running into the western dock. But I should prefer to give a little more time to that proposal if the Committee wish me to do so. It is very difficult to say straight off what can be done under the circumstances. If the Committee think that 200 feet of the Park should be taken, I could see what is the best that could be done with that route, but I am afraid that, in any case, the Synagogue could not be saved in making a proper

proper station. I should also think that, if the Synagogue were left there, it would not be a very suitable place of worship, because there would be a great deal of noise from the rumbling of trains which could not be avoided. I can show the difficulty that would arise by reference to plan No. 10. In order to clear the Synagogue, the lines coming into the western side of the station would have to be shifted considerably over to the east, and you would lose a good deal of the advantage and convenience of the roads that you have at present, and the standing-room which has been provided at the end of each platform for engines. You would also lose the advantage of having the south-western corner for a large parcels office. It is very necessary to have that parcels office. I see that Dr. Quaife has left a space there, probably with the idea of its being thus utilised; but before expressing a further opinion about it, I should like to have time to work it out. What Dr. Quaife proposes is really a modification of No. 10 scheme; but he gives the additional advantage of having a cab-road; on the other hand it has the disadvantage of taking up a good deal more of the Park.

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4474. *Chairman.*] He says that he will take 5 acres of the Park? He probably only reckoned that portion of the Park between Park-street and King-street. I think No. 10 could be made to avoid the Synagogue if it could be set over a little and take in more of the Park; but it is a question whether it is worth while to destroy more Park property in order to avoid taking the Synagogue. I notice that Dr. Quaife has made three of his suburban platforms 27 feet wide only, instead of 30 feet; and one of them, between No. 10 and No. 11 roads, he has made only 20 feet, instead of 30 feet. On the other hand, he has a very wide platform on the western side of the station.

4475. Dr. Quaife estimates that his scheme would cost £1,000,000, as against the Government No. 10 scheme costing £1,500,000;—do you not think it is estimated rather low, his scheme being identical, apparently, up to the Park? He saves some land; but he takes St. James' Church.

4476. One of the great objections of the Department is with regard to the Synagogue;—you think it will be best to resume that site? Yes; that corner would be very useful in connection with the railway station. We should be very cramped in laying out the roads and placing the parcels office if that corner is not taken.

4477. That is the chief objection to Dr. Quaife's scheme? Yes

4478. That it would cramp your operations and interfere with the Synagogue as a place of worship? Yes.

4479. Of the two schemes would you prefer the Government scheme No. 10? I should, especially the modified one. I think the modified scheme is very much superior to the original one involving the Domain extension.

4480. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you prefer that to the St. James' Road scheme? No, I like the St. James' Road scheme the best.

4481. *Chairman.*] Since you were asked to give your opinion on these schemes, Mr. Hammond has been before us;—he says:

The proposed extension from Redfern to St. James' Road comes nearer to the plan I would suggest than any other, and, therefore, so far as entering the city by that route, I agree; but I widely differ from the scheme in other respects. For instance, I would not build a terminal station at St. James' Road. I am certain the quantity of land required for a large station with shunting room is not available there unless by destroying the Park. . . . I would resume the Devonshire-street Cemetery, the grounds of the Benevolent Asylum, the Inspector-General of Police's ground, and the Convent of the Good Shepherd. . . . With Belmore Park on the north-east, and Prince Alfred Park on the south-east, a large central railway station should be built on that site, suitable in size for the next fifty years, designed with a view to further extension when required. . . .

Then he proposes to separate the country or long-distance traffic from the suburban traffic, and for the suburban traffic he wants to have a railway similar to the London Metropolitan circular system. He says:—

I will ask you to follow the route recommended by the late Mr. Edly, from Redfern to Hyde Park on to the Circular Quay, somewhere about the Water Police Court. I would then, by turning to the left, pass round Circular Quay overhead, thence by tunnel through Flagstaff Hill, thence overhead round Darling Harbour, passing over all the streets leading to Darling Harbour without in any way interfering with the wharfs or the traffic leading to them, continuing that course to the present Redfern site. I would not make that the limit of the circular system, it should be extended on the Western line out as far as, say, Homebush. Thus a train passing round the route I have just described would, on its return, pass through the new central station at Devonshire-street, and continue on to St. James' Road. There would be two sets of rails, so that trains would be constantly running both ways without danger of collision.

That is Mr. Hammond's idea to have the country traffic at the Devonshire-street station, and to have a circular railway, not stopping at Redfern, but going right away up to Homebush? The map submitted by Mr. Hammond does not show that the return line goes through to the central station. That is a very serious objection.

4482. Would there be the same objection to this scheme which you have to other schemes of that character that you could not have a proper terminal station in the city? That is the case. You would have no terminus in the city. You want to bring the trains into the city, and finish with them there. It is a very great mistake to suppose that that is on the plan of the Metropolitan Railway of London. The Metropolitan Railway of London is essentially a circular line. It scarcely goes out to the suburbs, though it goes near such suburbs as Notting Hill and Kensington.

4483. The Metropolitan Circular Railway of London deals only with traffic which has come from a distance, and has been brought into some part of London, but is not a railway that goes out a long distance;—is not that so? The metropolitan line and the metropolitan district railways of London are connected together in a circle, or in an irregular oval. The metropolitan line is the northern part of the system, and the metropolitan district line is the southern part of the system; but they are worked together, and the trains are always going round and round; but there are, in addition to those lines coming in, the Great Northern trains, the Midland, the Great Western, and some others which run on the system and terminate in the city, and run back again. No arrangement that it is possible to make for the extension of our system from Redfern could be made to correspond with the Metropolitan Railway of London; it would not be the same thing at all. The Metropolitan Railway of London is not an extension of any suburban line, but it is a circle of itself.

4484. Mr. Hammond says that the suburban passenger traffic is conducted to the heart of London by a separate system now known as the metropolitan circuit system. That might convey to the mind of some people that those living out in the suburbs are brought direct into London, and then taken round London by the same trains on the circular system;—is that the case? No; that is not correct. The Metropolitan Railway of London and the Metropolitan District Railway—the two being connected—form a

- H. Deane.
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- circular line. It is not an extension of any suburban line. It is true that certain lines junction into the Metropolitan Railway, but they carry quite a separate part of the traffic, and this is not run round.
4485. *Mr. Watson.*] The passengers change, I presume? Some of the trains at the Great Northern, the Midland, and the Great Western Railway come in and run some distance on the Metropolitan Railway, and then run back, but they do not run round. The conditions are not at all similar to what they are here where a circular line would not answer the same purpose.
4486. The great bulk of those who would come in by the suburban lines then have to change into metropolitan trains to reach their destination? If they come into the termini of the Great Northern, Great Western, North-Western, and Midland railways they would have to change and go to a station on the Metropolitan Railway; but there are connections made some distance back from the termini in the case of the Great Northern, Midland, and Great Western railways, with the metropolitan lines, and it is those lines which do the chief suburban business.
4487. *Chairman.*] Is the tendency, in making railway communication in London, to bring people as nearly into the city as possible without changing trains? It is.
4488. They avoid changing by, as it were, merging the long-distance trains into an underground railway system? Yes. On the northern side of the Thames and you can get Great Northern trains, Midland trains, and Great Western trains in on the Metropolitan Railway. Then there is the North London Railway, which brings passengers into the city into Broad-street; the Great Eastern Railway, which brings passengers to their own terminus at Liverpool-street, also in the city. On the South London and South Eastern lines, and the Chatham and Dover, trains are run into Cannon-street and Charing Cross, and on the Chatham and Dover they are run to Ludgate Hill, in the city. The South-Western line, which terminates at Waterloo, and from there an underground electric line runs into the city.
4489. With regard to Mr. Hammond's scheme, one great feature of it is that it would have a large central station at Devonshire-street; if that is so it would not agree with the proposal to bring both the long-distance and suburban traffic into Sydney? No.
4490. If that were done, you must have a large terminus in Sydney? Yes.
4491. Do I understand, as regards his scheme, which is to separate the long-distance from the suburban traffic, the Department does not favour that idea? No, it does not.
4492. If the suburban traffic were brought into Sydney every day by means of a circular railway such as he suggests, it would have the objection that you could not well regulate your traffic at the busy time—the mornings and evenings? That is it.
4493. *Dr. Garran.*] Could Mr. Hammond get down from the Benevolent Asylum to Sussex-street, as he proposes, by a grade of 1 in 100? He could. I presume that his line on the western side would be carried on a viaduct. He could get the grades he wants.

TUESDAY, 24 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of extending the Railway System of the Colony from the present Terminus at Redfern into the City, including the erection of a large Central Station.

Robert Henry Gordon, Alderman, Borough of Willoughby, sworn, and examined:—

- R. H. Gordon.
24 April, 1900.
4494. *Chairman.*] You are deputed by your council to attend and give evidence regarding the proposed railway? Yes.
4495. Will you state what the evidence is which the council wish to convey to the Committee? The Willoughby Council desired me to attend and request that your Committee, in dealing with any scheme for introducing a railway into the city, will take into consideration the necessity of ultimately connecting the North Shore railway with the city railway. I represent the Corporation of Willoughby, and I also appear on behalf of the residents generally of North Shore suburbs, the population of which is considerable—over 50,000.
4496. That would be at North Sydney? North Sydney and North Shore generally. We would urge that, when this railway system which you propose is recommended, you should take into consideration the necessity of providing for this connection between the North Shore railway and the city extension. I would further add that we are unanimously of opinion that a bridge would be the preferable means of carrying the railway into the city from North Shore. Of course, the bridge would carry a tramway as well. As you are already aware, the tramway system at North Shore is very extensive, and the traffic is being carried down to the ferry which is worked by a private company. From that traffic a considerable revenue would be derived, which would go towards the cost of the construction of the bridge, if the passenger traffic were carried over it. That would, of course, mean that the bridge would have to be a high-level bridge, which would come in probably at Dawes' Point or Flagstaff Hill. We do not undertake to do anything further than ask your consideration of the claims of North Shore. We put the evidence before you as to what our requirements are, and would urge you to consider them seriously.
4497. Willoughby is on one of the most elevated portions of North Shore, is it not? Yes; Willoughby is the highest of the incorporated municipalities. It is 350 feet at Chatswood. At Turramurra and Wahroonga there is an elevation of 650 feet. Any system of railways introduced into the city would serve Willoughby, Lane Cove, and the high lands of North Sydney.
4498. How far does Willoughby come towards the south? To St. Leonard's Railway Station. It extends from there to Roseville.
4499. What is the distance between the two places? Three and a half miles.
4500. And what distance is your southern boundary from the waters of Port Jackson? Nearly 4 miles.
4501. You have mentioned that the population at North Sydney at present is about 50,000;—the bulk of that population would be situated between the southern boundary of your municipality and the waters of the Harbour? Part; say 30,000 of it.
- 4502.

4502. Are the bulk of those on the slopes of the Harbour? I do not think so. I think the bulk of them are on the high lands. R. H. Gordon.
24 April, 1900.
4503. Are not a great number on the slopes? A large proportion would be served by the ferry, no matter what railway system was introduced.
4504. This bridge, being 180 feet above the waters of the Harbour, would come well on to the high land;—do you know what the population would be between where the bridge would reach to and the waters of Port Jackson? It all depends on where you take it from. If you connect at Blue's Point it would serve two-thirds of the population I have mentioned.
4505. Two-thirds of the 50,000? Yes.
4506. Leaving about one-third that in all probability would still use the ferry? Yes; because if the bridge is connected with Blue's Point the tramway traffic would be turned on to the bridge.
4507. *Dr. Garran.*] You are sent here practically to ask the Committee to give their support to a route that will admit of the extension to North Shore? That is so.
4508. And also to advocate the making of a bridge instead of a tunnel? Yes.
4509. Perhaps you are aware that there have been put before the Committee lines running through East Sydney, and also through West Sydney? I have heard that mentioned.
4510. There are practically two parties—the West Sydney and East Sydney party? Yes, I understand that.
4511. Hardly any of the lines that go through East Sydney lend themselves to any extension to North Shore, except by way of a tunnel? I understand that.
4512. So, if we agreed to both your requests, we should be practically shut up to recommending the West Sydney route? I understand that that is so.
4513. What is the population of North Shore as compared with the population on the southern side of the water for whom the railway is to be built? You are referring to the railway bridge?
4514. No; I am referring to the railway extension now proposed into East Sydney, which will accommodate a certain number of the suburban population? I have tried to arrive at that, but cannot do so unless you indicate where the starting point of the bridge will be. If it is to come down to Lavender Bay or Blue's Point it will serve two-thirds; but I would urge that North Shore and the suburbs are increasing fast in population, and though you have only 50,000 to provide for now, I venture to say that the number will be doubled in ten years.
4515. What I have asked you about is this: The population that now comes in by railway, and for whom an extension is wanted, is a larger population than that which comes across the water from North Shore, and if that part of the population prefers the East Sydney route; you are asking that the interests of a larger population be subordinated to those of a smaller one? I am looking ahead, that is why I have come here. North Sydney, at present, has admittedly the larger proportion of the traffic coming over the ferries, and in the very near future the high lands will have a larger population than North Sydney. That is fast coming.
4516. But when that has come will it be a larger population than what comes in now on the south side? I am positive of it. The attractions over there are such that there must be a very large population in the near future.
4517. You see that nearly all the West Sydney lines run into about a million of money, and a bridge over North Shore would take perhaps another half a million; so to carry out your views we should have to spend £1,500,000;—I want to be certain that we are going to spend that in the interests of the majority? On actual figures, to-day, it would not be a majority; but in a short time it would be a majority. What we are afraid of is, that a scheme may be adopted that will preclude our railway from being brought in. It will be apparent that it will be necessary that the two railway systems should be connected in some way.
4518. Some have denied that; they say that the North Shore line may come in and have its own separate terminus? I do not think there can be any solid reason for that. It is a serious loss of time to the people, and a great drawback to the district, not having direct railway communication.
4519. Where do you suggest that a terminus for the North Shore traffic could be most conveniently placed? Somewhere about Cumberland-street; anywhere about there down as far as Market-street or King-street.
4520. You do not think it would require to go up as far as King-street? No.
4521. I want you to understand that it has been strongly held by witnesses that there is no necessity to connect the North Shore line with the line on this side? As one who uses the railway daily, I consider that the want of the connection involves a great loss of time and a handicap upon our suburbs that we cannot get a quicker mode of transit than we have at present.
4522. Do you come in by railway? Yes, every day.
4523. Does the east side suit you? I use the tram when I come to Circular Quay.
4524. When there were only steam trams I suppose you went to Elizabeth-street? No; I walked.
4525. Now that the electric tram is there you use that? Yes.
4526. Are you of opinion, travelling every day by that line, that more people want to come into West Sydney than into East Sydney? I could not say that, because I think that neither East nor West embraces the business portion of the city.
4527. No line would suit everybody? No. Quite as many people would be served by the one as by the other.
4528. Do you think it of any importance that this railway extension should connect with Circular Quay? Except for the shipping, I do not see where the advantage would come in.
4529. The bulk of your people do not want to go to the ships? No.
4530. They go to the offices and stores of the city? Yes; ours is a business population, not a working population.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY INTO THE CITY OF SYDNEY.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of J. Parry, Out-door Traffic Superintendent of Southern Lines, Department of Railways.]

TRAFFIC RETURNS, REDFERN RAILWAY STATION.

(No. 1.)

STATEMENT showing the number of Trains and Engines running between Sydney and Eveleigh on Boxing Day, 26th December, 1899.

Between the hours of--	Fast Lines.				Slow Lines.				Goods Lines.				Total on all Lines.															
	Down.		Up.		Down.		Up.		Down.		Up.		Down.		Up.													
	P.	G.	E.	Total.	P.	G.	E.	Total.	P.	G.	E.	Total.	P.	G.	E.	Total.												
A.M.																												
12 and 1	1			1				1					1				1											
1 " 2																												
2 " 3		1		1																								
3 " 4		1		1																								
4 " 5																												
5 " 6	1			1	2			2					1				3											
6 " 7	1			1	2			2					1				3											
7 " 8	3			3	3			3					3				6											
8 " 9	9			9	8			8					8				16											
9 " 10	11			11	6			6					6				12											
10 " 11	4			4	4			4					4				8											
11 " 12	3			3	3	1		4					3				6											
P.M.																												
12 and 1	1			1	1	1		2					1				3											
1 " 2	2			2	2			4					2				6											
2 " 3	3			3	1			4					3				7											
3 " 4	1			1	1			2					1				3											
4 " 5	3			3	8			11					3				14											
5 " 6	9			9	4			13					9				22											
6 " 7	5			5	4			9					5				14											
7 " 8	5			5	5			10					5				15											
8 " 9	3			3	5			8					3				11											
9 " 10	4			4	6			10					4				14											
10 " 11	1			1	2			3					1				3											
11 " 12	3			3	2			5					3				5											
Total	74	3		77	62	3		70	136	1	1	138	148	1		149	7	3	105	115	8		100	114	435	16	212	663

(No. 2.)

STATEMENT showing the number of Trains and Engines running between Sydney and Eveleigh on Friday, 2nd February, 1900.

Between the hours of--	Fast Lines.				Slow Lines.				Goods Lines.				Total on all Lines.															
	Down.		Up.		Down.		Up.		Down.		Up.		Down.		Up.													
	P.	G.	E.	Total.	P.	G.	E.	Total.	P.	G.	E.	Total.	P.	G.	E.	Total.												
A.M.																												
12 and 1	1			1				1					1				1											
1 " 2		1		1																								
2 " 3		3		3																								
3 " 4		1		1																								
4 " 5		1		1	2			2																				
5 " 6	1			1	3			4					1				5											
6 " 7	2			2	4			6					2				8											
7 " 8	1			1	5			6					1				7											
8 " 9	3			3	10			13					3				16											
9 " 10	6			6	6			12					6				18											
10 " 11	2			2	2			4					2				6											
11 " 12	3			3	2			5					3				8											
P.M.																												
12 and 1	1			1	2			3					1				4											
1 " 2	1	1		2	3			4					1				5											
2 " 3	2			2	3			5					2				7											
3 " 4	1			1	1			2					1				3											
4 " 5	6			6	2			8					6				14											
5 " 6	9			9	5			14					9				23											
6 " 7	8			8	4			12					8				20											
7 " 8	2			2	4			6					2				8											
8 " 9	2			2	4			6					2				8											
9 " 10	2			2	4			6					2				8											
10 " 11	1			1	1			2					1				3											
11 " 12	3			3	1			4					3				7											
Total	57	15	5	77	54	24		78	100	4		110	111			111	6	18	109	133	8	14	97	119	342	75	211	628

(No. 3)

RETURN showing number of Passenger Trains in and out of Sydney on a Friday in November during twenty-four hours, as per time-table, 1899.

Between the hours of—	Through Trains		Local and Suburban Trains.		Totals.		Total.
	Down.	Up.	Down.	Up.	Down.	Up.	
AM.							
12 and 1			1	2	1	2	3
1 " 2							
2 " 3							
3 " 4	1				1		1
4 " 5			1		1		1
5 " 6		2	5	4	5	6	11
6 " 7			7	6	7	6	13
7 " 8			14	13	14	13	27
8 " 9	1	2	8	20	9	22	31
9 " 10	3	1	7	10	10	11	21
10 " 11	1	2	5	4	6	6	12
11 " 12		2	5	5	5	7	12
P.M.							
12 and 1		1	5	5	5	6	11
1 " 2	1		4	7	5	7	12
2 " 3			7	4	7	4	11
3 " 4			4	5	4	5	9
4 " 5	3	2	9	3	12	5	17
5 " 6	4	1	20	14	24	15	39
6 " 7	1	1	18	15	19	16	35
7 " 8	1		5	12	6	12	18
8 " 9	1		4	6	5	6	11
9 " 10	1	1	5	3	6	4	10
10 " 11			6	5	6	5	11
11 " 12		1	6	6	6	7	13
Totals	18	16	146	149	164	165	329

(No. 4.)

STATEMENT showing the approximate number of Passengers arriving at and departing from Redfern Station during the busy hours of the morning and evening, Monday, 22nd January, 1900.

Between the hours of—	Number of Passengers arriving at Redfern.	Number of Passengers departing from Redfern.	Total number of Passengers arriving and departing from Redfern.
6 a.m. and 7 a.m.	1,042	302	1,344
7 " 8 "	4,276	238	4,514
8 " 9 "	6,127	339	6,466
9 " 10 "	1,843	650	2,493
4 p.m. and 5 p.m.	876	1,871	2,747
5 " 6 "	1,025	5,907	6,932
6 " 7 "	615	5,110	5,725
7 " 8 "	972	846	1,818
8 " 9 "	514	683	1,197
9 " 10 "	319	823	1,142
Total	17,609	16,769	34,378

Summary.

6 a.m. and 10 a.m.	13,288	1,529	14,817
4 p.m. " 10 p.m.	4,321	15,240	19,561
Total	17,609	16,769	34,378

Total number of Passengers arriving at Redfern, Monday, 22nd January, 1900..... 23,823
" " departing from " " " " 21,187

Grand total 45,010

STATEMENT showing the approximate number of Passengers arriving at and departing from Redfern Station during the busy hours of the morning and evening, Tuesday, 23rd January, 1900.

Between the hours of—	Number of Passengers arriving at Redfern.	Number of Passengers departing from Redfern.	Total number of Passengers arriving and departing from Redfern.
6 a.m. and 7 a.m.	929	337	1,266
7 " 8 "	4,233	261	4,494
8 " 9 "	5,565	306	5,871
9 " 10 "	1,426	508	1,934
4 p.m. and 5 p.m.	722	1,914	2,636
5 " 6 "	1,235	5,960	7,195
6 " 7 "	634	5,106	5,740
7 " 8 "	946	896	1,842
8 " 9 "	391	585	976
9 " 10 "	344	793	1,137
Total	16,425	16,666	33,091

Summary.

6 a.m. and 10 a.m.	12,153	1,412	13,565
4 p.m. ,, 10 p.m.	4,272	15,254	19,526
Total	16,425	16,666	33,091

Total number of Passengers arriving at Redfern, Tuesday, 23rd January, 1900

22,605

" " departing from " " "

20,623

Grand total

43,228

STATEMENT showing the approximate number of Passengers arriving at and departing from Redfern Station during the busy hours of the morning and evening, Wednesday, 24th January, 1900.

Between the hours of—	Number of Passengers arriving at Redfern.	Number of Passengers departing from Redfern.	Total number of Passengers arriving and departing from Redfern.
6 a.m. and 7 a.m.	947	316	1,263
7 " 8 "	4,396	245	4,641
8 " 9 "	5,041	256	5,297
9 " 10 "	1,370	553	1,923
4 p.m. and 5 p.m.	734	1,883	2,617
5 " 6 "	1,390	6,192	7,582
6 " 7 "	1,018	4,737	5,755
7 " 8 "	1,357	717	2,074
8 " 9 "	476	607	1,083
9 " 10 "	363	912	1,275
Total.....	17,098	16,418	33,516

Summary

6 a.m. and 10 a.m.	11,760	1,370	13,130
4 p.m. ,, 10 p.m.	5,338	15,048	20,386
Total	17,098	16,418	33,516

Total number of Passengers arriving at Redfern, Wednesday, 24th January, 1900

24,137

" " departing from " " "

21,503

Grand total.....

45,640

A1.

FURTHER TRAFFIC RETURNS, REDFERN RAILWAY STATION.

New South Wales Government Railways,
Outdoor Superintendent's Office, Sydney, 23 February, 1900.

Sir,

In accordance with the request of the Chairman of the Public Works Committee at the time of giving my evidence, I forward herewith:—

1. Statement showing the passenger trains arriving in Redfern, and which depart again from Redfern without the cars being shunted, during the busy hours of the morning and evening.
2. Statement showing the approximate number of passengers arriving at Sydney during the busy hours of the morning and evening by through trains, also local and suburban trains respectively. The through trains include all trains which run beyond Waterfall on the South Coast, Campbelltown on the South, Penrith on the West, and Hawkesbury River on the North.

I have, &c.,

JOHN PARRY,

Out-door Superintendent.

The Secretary, Public Works Committee, Sydney.

STATEMENT showing the approximate number of Passengers arriving at Sydney during the busy hours of morning and evening.

Between the hours of—	Monday, 22 January, 1900.		Tuesday, 23 January, 1900.		Wednesday, 24 January, 1900.	
	No. of Passengers arriving at Sydney by—		No. of Passengers arriving at Sydney by—		No. of Passengers arriving at Sydney by—	
	Through Trains.	Local and Suburban Trains.	Through Trains.	Local and Suburban Trains.	Through Trains.	Local and Suburban Trains.
A.M.						
6 and 7	53	989	.....	929	.....	947
7 " 8	.....	4,276	.....	4,233	.....	4,396
8 " 9	876	5,251	517	5,048	533	4,608
9 " 10	338	1,505	59	1,367	70	1,306
P.M.						
4 and 5	497	379	336	386	429	305
5 " 6	.....	1,025	.....	1,235	.....	1,390
6 " 7	177	438	138	496	121	897
7 " 8	.....	972	.....	946	.....	1,357
8 " 9	.....	514	.....	391	.....	476
9 " 10	99	220	100	244	77	286
Total.....	2,040	15,569	1,150	15,275	1,230	15,868

STATEMENT showing the approximate number of Passengers leaving Sydney during the busy hours of morning and evening

Between the hours of—	Monday, 22 January, 1900.		Tuesday, 23 January, 1900.		Wednesday, 24 January, 1900.	
	No. of Passengers leaving Sydney by—		No. of Passengers leaving Sydney by—		No. of Passengers leaving Sydney by—	
	Through Trains.	Local and Suburban Trains.	Through Trains.	Local and Suburban Trains.	Through Trains.	Local and Suburban Trains.
A.M.						
6 and 7	.....	302	.....	337	.....	316
7 " 8	.....	238	.....	261	.....	245
8 " 9	134	205	120	186	97	159
9 " 10	317	333	229	279	301	252
P.M.						
4 and 5	129	1,742	134	1,780	137	1,746
5 " 6	784	5,123	661	5,209	726	5,466
6 " 7	184	4,926	159	4,947	146	4,591
7 " 8	89	757	71	825	71	646
8 " 9	149	634	135	450	139	468
9 " 10	100	723	95	698	86	826
Total.....	1,886	14,583	1,604	15,062	1,703	14,715

STATEMENT showing the Passenger Trains arriving in Redfern, and which depart again from Redfern without the cars being shunted.

Train starts from—	Arrival in Sydney.	Departure from Sydney.	Destination of Train
<i>During busy hours of Morning.</i>			
Hurstville	7-13	7-18 (E)	Ashfield.
Belmore	7-20	7-26	Belmore.
Homebush	7-21	7-26 (E)	Ashfield.
Liverpool	7-16	7-20 (E)	Canterbury.
Homebush	7-25	7-35	Homebush.
Sutherland	7-35	7-40	Hurstville.
Homebush	7-45	7-50 (E)	Ashfield.
Rockdale	7-46	7-49 (E)	Homebush.
Hurstville	7-49	7-57 (E)	Ashfield.
Homebush	7-52	8-0 (E)	Homebush.
Rockdale	7-57	8-5 (E)	Homebush.
Belmore	8-1	8-10	Hurstville.
Como	8-17	8-20	Belmore.
Homebush	8-26	8-30	Parramatta.
Homebush	8-33	8-37	Homebush.
<i>During busy hours of Evening.</i>			
Hurstville	4-37	4-40	Hurstville.
Homebush	5-5	5-13	Ashfield.
Sutherland	5-10	5-20	Belmore.
Belmore	5-15	5-22	Homebush.
Homebush	5-22	5-27	Homebush.
Homebush	5-31	5-36	Homebush.
Como	5-40	5-45	Belmore.
Parramatta	5-44	5-55	Homebush.
Rockdale	5-45 (E)	5-50	Ashfield.
Homebush	5-52	6-0	Homebush.
Hurstville	5-57	6-10	Hurstville.
Homebush	6-2	6-7	Homebush.
Ashfield	5-54 (E)	6-3	Homebush.
Homebush	5-56 (E)	6-5	Homebush.
Parramatta	6-4	6-17	Ashfield.
Homebush	6-10 (E)	6-20	Homebush.
Belmore	6-22	6-31	Hurstville.
Ashfield	6-24 (E)	6-34	Hurstville.
Ashfield	6-31 (E)	6-42	Ashfield.
Homebush	6-33	6-37	Homebush.

(E) denotes empty trains

If any of the above trains arriving in Sydney should be several minutes late, it will be readily seen that they have to be filled and depart at the time-table times, thus reducing the time standing at the platforms. Frequently the trains arrive at the platforms, are discharged, and are loaded up in three minutes.

B.

[To Evidence of T. Alderson.]

FURTHER DETAILS OF MR. T. ALDERSON'S SCHEME.

Sir,

24 March, 1900.

Since my evidence on Friday, the 16th March, *re* my city railway extension scheme, I have examined and made some private inquiries about the engineering questions put to me *re* the electric trams and the present levels of the Redfern station, and my alterations. I find there will be ample room and little difficulty for my four special lines, besides the present goods lines grade, by making a start from or about the mortuary. I find the levels of present Redfern station is 60 feet above high-water mark; the George-street bridge about 31 feet. A new low-level passenger station, with covered platforms up to 800 feet or more, on this site, north and south sides of goods lines and the No. 11 platform, can be carried back to the signal station, leaving present head station for goods offices, or otherwise. Passengers to reach electric and steam trains will do so by steps or covered way about 15 feet, at the George-street bridge. By widening the bridge tunnel, including the present Goods Manager's office on the west side, will give ample room for both goods and passengers.

The head central station platforms can be carried from near Pitt-street to St. James' Road, with inlets and outlets at both ends, *viz.*, by resuming a small bit of property in Market and Pitt streets.

Re shunting, this can be done in the Domain or Darling Harbour for the heavy traffic, or even on the Princes-street site, if more ground is resumed. The Domain station would have to be more than the chain wide, *re* future extensions *via* Cowper's Wharf. All open cuttings here could be covered to protect trains, reserve, docks, &c.

Re time, I find, by coming in by trains, and meeting many suburban friends who travel daily by steam trams to Market-street, took fifteen to twenty minutes; electric, to same street, eight to ten minutes. All preferred not removing from their seats till they got to Drutt or Castlereagh streets. My route from Drutt-street could be taken more in a direct line to the Victoria Markets, *re* a station; but I doubt if it would be safe with large tunnels cut out of the foundation levels. This is an engineer's or architect's business.

Re excavations, if the quantity from tunnels and open cuttings can be made up by the dredging deposits, &c., like Rushcutter's Bay reserves, I have not estimated the cost, but claim my suggestion in previous evidence to be the first section of the near future of resuming all foreshores in Darling Harbour to Circular Quay.

THOMAS ALDERSON.

The Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

C.

[To Evidence of W. Greenwood, A.M.I.C.E.]

REPLY TO MR. DEANE'S CRITICISM ON SCHEME PROPOSED BY MR. GREENWOOD.

City Railway.

Macquarie Heads, Straban, Tasmania, 14 April, 1900.

Sir,

Having been suddenly called away to Tasmania, I am compelled to trust to my memory, as I have no copy either of my evidence or the evidence of the Government officials, neither have I the printed reports of former Commissions or Committees for purposes of reference—hence I am unable to give the numbers of questions and replies to which the evidence refers; neither am I able to reply to all the criticisms of Messrs. Deane and Parry, many of which are of a frivolous nature; but I will endeavour to refute all the criticisms which are worthy of notice.

In reply to comments by various witnesses, in reference to my proposed scheme, I beg to submit the following evidence.

Mr. Deane introduces a statement by Mr. Parry which he says has only slight reference to my scheme. The only point I need notice is as to the terminal stations for the North Shore trains, which I suggest might, and probably would, be at the Redfern Station, north and south of Devonshire-street.

Referring specially to my scheme, Mr. Deane is correct in assuming that four lines of way run parallel to one another as far as Bathurst-street, then four lines continue at different levels to Wynyard-square, the upper, or western, pair being intended for the North Shore Bridge extension; and the lower, or eastern, pair going towards the eastern suburbs. From Wynyard-square to Phillip-street, Circular Quay, there are two lines of way. The estimate, as prepared, included four lines of way from Redfern to Wynyard-square, and two lines of way from Wynyard-square to Phillip-street, Circular Quay, the amount stated being £720,000, which sum included land and works.

In order to meet a suggestion made by Dr. Garran, that I might require additional length on which to do shunting (or store trains) at Circular Quay station, pending the extension to the eastern suburbs, I said a portion of the proposed eastern suburban line might be made as far as the Government House stables, at a probable cost of £10,000, which would increase the estimated cost of the City Railway to £730,000, although this would correspondingly reduce the cost of the eastern suburban line to £840,000.

In reply to Dr. Garran, I stated that the cost of the upper tunnel to North Shore would be £50 per lineal yard.

Mr. Deane says he thinks my estimate low, although he has not gone into it, but to prove that I am low he quotes the item of £50 per yard for a double-line tunnel in York-street, and suggests that it would cost double.

My estimate is made up as follows:—

		Per lineal yard.		
Excavation	cubic yards	—70 @ 6s.	=	£21 0 0
Lining	"	—12 @ 35s.	=	21 0 0
Relay concrete and wood blocks.....	square yards	—10 @ 8s.	=	4 0 0
Permanent way and ballast—£4,000 per mile				2 5 0
				£48 5 0

Actual estimate..... £48 5 0

Mr. Deane stated that the contract price for excavating rock, without explosives, to be 4s. 4d. per cube yard, whereas I have estimated 6s. per cube yard. In the above estimate I have assumed that the rock will be taken out and replaced by lining; but in actual construction a benching would be cut in the rock from which the arch would spring—thereby reducing the actual cost to £40 per lineal yard.

Mr. Deane made some remark in reference to girder-roof near the Town Hall. This method of construction would, no doubt, be more expensive as regards the cost of covering or arch; but it is more than compensated for by the fact that the rock dips very fast from York-street towards Bathurst-street, hence the cost of excavation will be very much reduced.

Having clearly shown that the only item in the estimate which Mr. Deane ventures to specify as being too low, and which he predicts will cost nearly £100 per lineal yard, can be done for £10 per lineal yard under my estimate, I think the Committee will attach very little credence to his general statement that he thinks my estimate too low.

As to Grades and Curves.—I would call the Committee's attention to a section issued in the Addendum to the Report of the Royal Commission, 1891, wherein it will be seen that Mr. Eddy proposes a long grade (passing through a tunnel) of 1 in 45, to get from King-street to the Custom-house; and it is very significant that, although Mr. Deane and other officials gave evidence in reference to Mr. Eddy's scheme, none of them adversely criticised the 1 in 45 grade.

Mr. Parry, in his evidence, stated that the suburban engines of various classes were used indiscriminately on any of the trams leaving Redfern, and he further stated that to Hurstville or to Homebush the trains varied from six to nine coaches on either line—nine coaches being the extreme limit.*

Now as the grade on the Hurstville line is 1 in 60 for about 150 chains, with a station on the 1 in 60 grade, and the suburban locomotives work this line daily, there can be no possible valid objection to working 30 chains of 1 in 60 grade on the line as proposed by me.

With regard to Curves.—I would point out that curves of 10 chains radius are of frequent occurrence on the New South Wales railways at places where the trains run at quick speed; whereas the short curve of 10 chains radius proposed by me is near a station at which all trains stop, consequently trains must pass over the curve at slow speed.

I may mention that between Milson's Point and St. Leonards Mr. Deane introduced a 10-chain curve on a 1 in 50 grade (I believe in a tunnel), at a place where the country was comparatively open; whereas he takes exception to my 10-chain curve being introduced, in order to avoid interference with the Town Hall, on the one hand, and the Queen Victoria Markets on the other (the latter having been built since my original design). I submit such criticism is manifestly unfair and futile. I would respectfully point out to the Committee that the metropolitan railway was constructed with curves of 6 chains radius, and these curves were worked with rolling stock having rigid wheel-base, whereas I propose to work a 10-chain curve with New South Wales Government rolling stock, which is all fitted with bogies, this latter stock admitting of much sharper curves being used.

As to Tunnels.—Mr. Deane objects to these; nevertheless, on the scheme designed by him, and known as No. 10, he introduces a tunnel 1,000 yards long, and during his examination he stated that this tunnel would form a portion of the eastern suburban line when extended.

Mr. Deane very recently prepared what he terms a "practicable western side railway"; but even this line has a tunnel—probably as long as mine.

The scheme known as L, or L modified, which was also prepared by Mr. Deane, showed a tunnel, and also a 10-chain curve, and this scheme—designed for two lines of rails—although advocated by Mr. Deane as the best he could select out of about twenty-five schemes submitted, was rejected, not on account of the tunnel or curves, but solely on account of its excessive cost of about £2,500,000.

The Public Works Committee of 1897, in their report, state that any extension of the line from the vicinity of St. James' Road rendered tunnelling inevitable.

Mr. Deane subsequently stated that he hoped to eventually work the eastern suburbs line by electricity; but to this plea I am opposed, and agree with the opinion expressed by Mr. Parry (and during previous inquiries also by Messrs. Eddy and Thow), that electric traction is impracticable where traffic from Hurstville, Homebush, and other lines has to be worked in conjunction with eastern suburban and city traffic, although it might be feasible if it were used only on a complete circular line, with distinct and separate rolling stock.

As to Ventilation.—The evidence of Messrs. Foxlee and Thow shows that they apprehend no difficulty. I maintain that the climate of Sydney cannot possibly be compared to the damp and foggy atmosphere of London, yet, in spite of all the "inconvenience," the metropolitan railways have quite as much traffic as they can carry, and will continue to have, notwithstanding the much-belauded electric railways, which are far from being perfect in the matter of ventilation.

Mr. McRae, late City Architect, stated there would be no danger in passing the tunnel near the Queen Victoria Markets, but was afraid there would be a slight risk in passing near the Town Hall. At the time he gave his evidence he assumed the railway would be at a lower level than the foundations of the Town Hall (the depth of which neither of us knew); but I have since ascertained that the Town Hall foundations are as low as the proposed tunnel, hence this anticipated risk is removed.

With

* An intimate knowledge of the working of the suburban traffic leads me to think that Mr. Parry is labouring under a mistake, as nine coaches are scarcely used once in a month, if ever.—W. G.

With regard to the site of the Circular Quay station, I would point out that all heretofore suggested sites, including Commissariat Stores on the west side of Circular Quay, Custom-house site, stations on viaduct near Bridge's store, stations in Government House grounds, one and all are situate in most inconvenient and unsuitable places, whereas the site suggested by me is an ideal one for its principal purpose, viz., to accommodate the ferry traffic.

Accommodation of Traffic on two Lines of Rails.—The evidence of Messrs. Deane and Parry sets forth clearly that provided you had regular traffic on a circular or continuous line, by shortening the length between or increasing the number of your signal-boxes (or blocks), an almost unlimited number of trains could be worked over a single pair of rails; and as these are precisely the conditions obtaining on my line, they really confirm my statement that I can carry the slow-speed suburban traffic on one pair of rails.

Mr. Parry instanced the difficulty of two trains arriving at the same time, and quoted the busiest half-hour as that from 8.30 to 9 a.m. Of the trains which did actually arrive at the same time, some of them were long-distance trains, which I do not propose to carry beyond Redfern. In the event of two suburban trains being now timed to arrive together, the difficulty would be overcome by altering the time-table to the extent of one minute, thus enabling the trains to run at two minutes intervals.

Alteration to Redfern Station.—On this point Mr. Parry appears to be under some grave misapprehension as to what I propose. For the purpose of reference I class platforms B, A, 1, 2, and 3 as eastern, and platforms 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 as western.

I propose to retain the western platforms for the use of long-distance trains, and to transfer or prolong the eastern platforms across Devonshire-street into the Benevolent Asylum grounds, at a cost of £20,000; but as there would be no interference with rails, points and crossings, or signals (save and except, perhaps, the removal of the starting signals of the eastern platforms a few hundred feet further north), I do not propose to spend a single penny on any alterations to Redfern yard south of the end or cross platform.

At the present time platforms 5 and 6 are used both for long-distance and suburban trains, and occasionally one of the eastern platforms is used for long-distance trains; but I propose to use the western platforms exclusively for long-distance traffic.

As to my estimate of traffic including 365 days in a year, I would point out that 125 trains are run on Sundays. There are also some additional trains on Saturdays and Mondays, and on holidays the excursion traffic is greatly in excess. Therefore, I consider that the excess of traffic will compensate for the fewer trains run on Sundays, and, consequently, my estimate of 365 normal days may be taken as correct.

As to dealing with holiday traffic, I propose to provide for that at Redfern Station; and for an endorsement of this idea I beg to refer the Committee to the evidence of Mr. Eddy.

In reply to Mr. Deane, I would point out that connection between the western and eastern (or North Shore and Circular Quay) lines of way can be made at any convenient point between Belmore-road and Pitt-street, but preferably where it could be worked from an existing station signal-box.

As to Mr. Deane's remarks about my line at Circular Quay interfering with the roadway traffic and some projected tramways, I would point out that the laying down of a network of tramways in George-street, near the railway bridge, or the tramway loop recently laid down at Circular Quay, causes infinitely more inconvenience to street traffic than would my line at Circular Quay, and the amount of roadway taken up by my line is only a fraction of what would be required at Market, Castlereagh, and Elizabeth streets, and St. James' Road, were the Committee to adopt any of the St. James' Road or King-street schemes. As to the projected tramways being interfered with, I think that Mr. Deane would hardly class that as an insurmountable difficulty. With regard to Mr. Deane's anticipated difficulty with the water at the Circular Quay station, it would be an insult to Mr. Deane's professional ability were I to treat his remarks seriously.

As to the time occupied by a train in passing through York-street tunnel, I would point out that the ordinary passenger trains occupy only two minutes in travelling from Croydon to Ashfield (not Burwood), which is about three-quarters of a mile, and includes starting and stoppage at station for passengers to enter and alight; therefore, as the tunnel is under half a mile, I maintain that passengers would not be in the tunnel more than one minute.

As to the Method of Shunting at Circular Quay.—I most strongly urge that I contemplate the line being continued beyond the Circular Quay to the eastern suburbs (or at any rate to the head of Rushcutter Bay Creek, where ample siding or carriage storage room may be provided), but in order to meet the contingency of the city railway terminating temporarily at the Circular Quay, I would provide storage room for six or eight trains of suburban carriages by an extension of the line in the direction of the eastern suburbs, to a point near to Government House stables.

On a train from Redfern arriving at the northern platform at Circular Quay, the passengers would alight, then the train would be drawn forward clear of a cross-over road (laid in immediately east of the Circular Quay platform), an empty engine which had been standing on the southern road would back through the cross-over road on to the train, couple on, and draw the train through the cross-over road alongside the southern platform, from which the train would proceed towards Redfern, the time-table being arranged to suit. In the meantime the engine of the last train would run through the cross-over road and stand on the southern road to await the arrival of the next incoming train, when the above process would be repeated, the whole time necessarily occupied not being more than one minute. This method of shunting is very simple, and being carried out behind the trains does not interfere with the incoming and outgoing traffic, which must of necessity be the case at all dead-end platforms or terminal stations.

In Mr. Deane's opinion sufficient accommodation is not provided for passengers and offices at Wynyard-square and Circular Quay stations. My experience tells me it is adequate; but if the traffic officials wish to provide for a parcels traffic, then extra accommodation can easily be provided.

As to Estimate of Traffic.—As the statements furnished by the Railway Commissioners are delightfully vague, I have been compelled to fall back on the yearly reports and other means for ascertaining the average fare per journey per mile; and I have come to the conclusion that, after making due allowance for season ticket-holders, workmen's weekly tickets, and return tickets—not forgetting the fact that a proportion of the passengers are first-class—the sum of ½d. per mile journey, or the average receipt per passenger journey from Redfern to any station on the city railway, is within a very slight range of ½d., which sum I have adopted in all my calculations.

As to Working Expenses.—The Railway Commissioners in their report to the Royal Commission state that the working expenses for all trains to St. James' Road will be £8,000 per annum, which is equivalent to about 16d. per train mile; and on the same basis, due allowance being made for long-distance trains not running to Circular Quay, and adding a proportion for the longer mileage to Circular Quay, makes the working expenses on my line about £10,000. (See evidence.)

It must be self-evident to the Committee that as there would be no long-distance or terminal station on my line to necessitate an expensive staff, the actual working expenses must be less per train mile on my line than on the line to St. James' Road; and Mr. Parry practically admitted that more than half the long-distance passengers would alight at Redfern, thereby endorsing my statement that the St. James' Road (or King-street) terminals would necessitate duplicate expensive staffs at each station.

I would point out that the general opinion—both professional and otherwise—is in favour of the western route, even Mr. Goodchap, Mr. Eddy, Mr. Foxlee, Mr. Deane, and Mr. Rennick being in favour of it; but they were debarred from adopting it owing to its excessive cost, and rightly so when the chosen scheme of Mr. Deane cost £2,500,000, whereas I have shown that a much superior scheme can be carried out at less than one-third the cost.

The transfer of the traffic from Elizabeth-street to George-street since the opening of the George-street tramway is a positive proof of the desire of the public to be taken further west.

In the foregoing remarks I think I have cleared away all the serious objections which have been raised against my scheme. Of course there are many trivial and minor objections which I have not answered—not because they were unanswerable, but simply because I did not wish to take up the time of the Committee.

N.B.—As I expect to be absent from Sydney for some months, I shall not be able to attend before the Committee, but am prepared to forward written information on any subject they may require.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

I am, &c.,
WILLIAM GREENWOOD.

D.

[To Evidence of H. Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works.]

CITY RAILWAY—MR. N. SELFE'S PROPOSAL.

Department of Public Works, Sydney, 18 April, 1900.

HAVING perused Mr. Norman Selfe's reply to my criticism of his City Railway Scheme, in which he charges me with a large amount of inaccuracy, I cannot allow the matter to drop without submitting some further observations to the Committee.

Mr. Selfe considers that I have formulated forty-three objections to his scheme, and I will now deal with some of his replies thereto.

Objection No. 1.—Reference to Mr. Selfe's section (Plan No. 8) will show that my statements are perfectly correct. If Mr. Selfe has drawn his plan incorrectly, that is his fault, not mine. His remarks about the grade are not very much to the point; the fact remains that he has grades of 1 in 70 compared with what is practically the ruling grade on the Homebush-Parramatta line, namely 1 in 100, which must necessarily have a serious effect upon load or speed.

Objection No. 2.—With regard to the level of Cleveland-street bridge, the raising of this bridge, as well as Wells-street, above what Mr. Selfe considers necessary, might seriously affect the road approaches to the bridge and make them impracticable.

Objection No. 3.—According to Mr. Selfe's section (Plan No. 8) the termination of the grade at Redfern station end in 320 feet from the end of the platform, and not 1,000 feet as he says. If he has plotted his section incorrectly, that is not my fault. I have simply to deal with what he submits to the Committee.

Objection No. 4.—Mr. Selfe says that I can see by plan No. 6 that the city lines can get into the running sheds; that is, of course, possible if the shunting is allowed to take place south of Eveleigh station. He states that Mr. Parry had already shown that the connection between the different lines should be further back. As a matter of fact, although Mr. Parry stated that they ought to be further away from the Redfern station, he did not say they should be removed so as to cut out the connection from the present junction with the Eveleigh running sheds. The Railway Commissioners do not wish to go south of Eveleigh station to do all their shunting.

Objections 5 and 6.—The alternative plan (No. 19) which Mr. Selfe says "Mr. Deane does not appear to have seen," shows a proposed remodelling of the new terminus and the city branches much simplified. Unfortunately it is not explained how this is to be done. Mr. Selfe has all his city lines shown on the western side on that plan, and the lines into the Redfern terminal station on the eastern side, but he does not show how they have previously been crossed over to opposite sides. If he intends this to be a substitution for the other plan which I dealt with, I would point out that the necessary crossing over of the traffic south of Eveleigh on the level would be very objectionable. With regard to the crossing of the quick trains which now run on the western side over to the eastern side, and the slow trains which now run on the eastern side over to the western side, this is necessary in Mr. Selfe's scheme, but the Departmental schemes in no way require it, because the slow traffic and the quick traffic are kept on their proper sides right into the terminus at King-street.

With regard to the last paragraph under *Objection No. 7*, where Mr. Selfe mentions that the traffic authorities say "the present Darling Harbour points are too close," and that he, therefore, proposes to give them a little more room, I repeat that the proper way to get rid of the closeness of the Darling Harbour points is to push the passenger terminus further on, and not to shift the points further back.

With regard to *Objection No. 8*, the quotation from the proof of my statement includes a clerical error, for the words "so that," before "the steps," should be "as." This makes perfectly clear what I mean.

Objections Nos. 10 and 11.—My remarks *re* grades are quite correct, and not "rubbish." I have indicated that the steepening of grades will cause undue decrease of speed. Mr. Selfe thinks this a trifle, but it is not so. I have not stated, as implied, that the ruling grade on all the suburban lines is 1 in 100, and did not have to "admit" that there are grades of 1 in 60. The ruling grade on the western suburban line is practically 1 in 100, in spite of the short length of 1 in 90 at the Redfern tunnel; and the fact that there are two grades of 1 in 60 on the Illawarra line does not clash with my statement at all. This is not the western suburban line of which I was speaking.

Objection No. 15.—With regard to changing from the main line trains to the suburban trains, Mr. Selfe suggests that passengers have an opportunity of changing at Strathfield and Granville. Mr. Parry and I have pointed out that a stop at Eveleigh for country trains would be necessary under Mr. Selfe's arrangement in all cases, because passengers for the city line would certainly not tolerate having to change at these places and then be conveyed by slow trains into the city or to Eveleigh, where they would have to change again if wishing to proceed by the Illawarra line.

Objection No. 18.—My statement that the business done at the Mansion House station is probably much simpler than that which would be dealt with at the Victoria Markets is perfectly correct. Mr. Selfe should have explained to the Committee that the plan he submitted of the Mansion House station is obsolete and not as it is to-day. Therefore, to criticise further is unnecessary, but I may remark that Mr. Selfe is mistaken as to the six branch connections bringing traffic into the Mansion House station.

Objection No. 19.—The plan exhibited to the Committee is a completed and coloured plan drawn to a scale of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to 1 foot, and there is no endorsement that it is merely a rough diagram. The plan has been altered in several particulars since it was given to me to report upon. Mr. Selfe has furnished the Committee with twenty-five plans, and if these are rough diagrams, it is a pity that some of his energy had not been devoted towards giving those particulars, the absence of which is remarked on, and if they are only rough plans how is it possible to deal with them seriously.

Objection No. 20.—The proof from which Mr. Selfe made his quotation is incorrect. It should have read that the "heavy mass of brickwork, 63 feet by 10 feet, and only 6 feet from the centre of the rails of one line."

Objections Nos. 21 to 26.—With regard to the proposed alteration of the foundations of the dome, his reference to the construction of the metropolitan and metropolitan district railways, and the underpinning of lofty buildings, is not very applicable to the case. I notice that Mr. Selfe has now altered his plan of the Victoria Markets station so as to give the clearance which I pointed out as necessary, trimming away a lot more of the brickwork. I do not know whether the Committee are aware of this. I cannot say what the circumstances were in which piers were placed at Redfern station 2 feet 6 inches from the edge of the platform, but I will say that what might have been the practice thirty years ago is not necessarily the practice now; and the circumstances, besides, are very different. In one case the piers are near the extreme end of the dock, the other on a through line. With regard to the concentration of load on the piers of the central dome, I implied that it would be unsafe to back these about. I said the alteration would be dangerous, and I still think so. It is not a question of dividing the total load by the total superficial area, and seeing what the load per square foot is; that has nothing to do with it, and would be no guide as to the safety of the operation.

Objections Nos. 27 to 29.—The condition of portions of the long lengths of tunnel, and deeply sunk stations on the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District railways, is most objectionable, and we do not want the same conditions here, or anything approaching them. There is a great outcry against these conditions in London, and steps are being taken to introduce electricity as the tractive force. I do not see why the tunnel under the Harbour (said to have been favoured by Mr. Eddy) should be brought up as an argument against my views, as I had nothing whatever to do with that particular suggestion. There is only one way of making the Victoria Markets' site suitable for station purposes, *i.e.*, by pulling down the Markets and rebuilding them.

Objection No. 32.—I stated that there was no shunting facilities by which some of the trains could be dropped at the Markets and sent back. This is not gratuitous assumption, as Mr. Selfe suggests. Plan No. 20 referred to was submitted for the purpose of furnishing to the Committee a comparison between the Mansion House station and the Victoria Markets, and no more. Mr. Selfe's evidence is clear that he had not any definite proposal as to how the shunting was to be done. If he now intends plan No. 20 to indicate his proposal for crossings, the idea is absurdly inadequate to meet the requirements.

Objection No. 33 deals with the same matter. Putting my views on one side altogether, Mr. Selfe's views clash with those of the Railway Commissioners and Mr. Parry, and I am quite satisfied to leave the matter to them.

With regard to *Objection No. 37*, in objecting to flights of steps I make comparison with what is considered necessary for a terminal station. The passengers arriving and departing from the King-street or Hyde Park stations have not objectionable flights of steps to climb up or descend, and those stations are therefore far superior to Mr. Selfe's.

Objection.

Objection No. 33.—Mr. Selge has entirely misunderstood my meaning, I did not say that the underpinning was impossible. I said that Mr. Selge had under-estimated the difficulty of passing under Lassetter's establishment. I think I ought to know what underpinning is, seeing that I was actually employed in connection with the works of Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways and Widening between the years 1867 and 1869.

I have not thought it worth while to refer to a number of other objections, and with regard to the question of cost (about which Mr. Selge has much to say), a reference to my evidence will show that I do not consider it an important matter. The question is so much overshadowed by other essential considerations.

I have since seen Mr. Selge's plan No. 26, which he says shows "how a station as large as that in the Hyde Park or King-street scheme can be established at Wynyard-square."

This plan does not show a station at all, but merely an area coloured red, with no indication as to how platforms are to be placed and lines brought up to them, and till those are shown on it it is unsafe to state that the particular area is suitable for such a station. In fact it would be far safer to assert the contrary.

H. DEANE,

Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

D1.

CITY RAILWAY EXTENSION.—MR. W. GREENWOOD'S PROPOSAL.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 24 April, 1900.

HAVING been favoured with a perusal of Mr. Greenwood's proposal of the 14th April, commenting on my objections to his proposal, I beg to forward the following observations:—

With regard to his estimate of £50 per yard for a double line tunnel, in which he takes the excavation at 6s., I might point out that no contract for tunnel work in this country has ever been let for less than 10s., where explosives have been allowed. This is a question of covered way and excavation close to the surface of the streets without interfering with the traffic in the street; the conditions are much more difficult and the excavation would be very much more costly than in the ordinary tunnel. Furthermore, the cost of brick lining would be affected in the same way. If a roadway were constructed under York-street close to the surface, it would be necessary to arrange that the traffic of the street should be interfered with as little as possible, and the method adopted in Argyle-street, Glasgow, at the time of my visit in 1884, would be very suitable. Any such methods would be more expensive than carrying out the work in open cut. With reference to the grades and curves, Mr. Eddy's proposal, for a line to the Custom House with a 1 in 45 grade, was one which he lived to regret; he more than once told me that he was very sorry he had ever submitted it.

Although the Hurstville line contains grades of 1 in 60, the western suburbs line does not, and as a steeper grade would affect the speed or the load, I am of opinion that 1 in 100 should be the ruling grade.

Mr. Greenwood's statement that there are curves of 6 chains radius on the Metropolitan railway would, I think, be difficult to substantiate; but there are some sharp curves, possibly, of about 6 chains on one or two of the lines junctioning with the Metropolitan railway. I do not see why, in laying out an important city extension, the best possible conditions should not be adopted.

I have not offered any objection to curves of 10 chains radius, but such curves should have transition curves at the end, as on the Milson's Point and St. Leonard's line. I think Mr. Greenwood will see that under these circumstances it would be impossible for him to get round from George-street into York-street without seriously interfering with the foundations of the Town Hall or the Victoria Markets, or both.

With regard to the tunnel to the Domain in No. 10 scheme, this tunnel is for the use of empties only, but, as a matter of fact, I did not recommend it and would prefer to do without it. I was asked to work out a scheme on certain lines, and have already explained to the Committee that it did not originate with me.

If the eastern suburban line came to be made it would be a separate system worked electrically, and the use of electricity for traction purposes, when the power for the electric motors can be adjusted according to requirements, would enable steeper grades and sharper curves to be used without disadvantage and save a great deal of expense.

The objections to the use of electricity offered by the late Chief Commissioner and the railway staff, were to the introduction of it on any portion of the existing suburban line, and did not apply to a new line to the eastern suburbs.

As regards ventilation, I think Mr. Greenwood cannot be aware of the steps now being taken in London with a view of introducing electric traction on the metropolitan railway. The dissatisfaction on account of smoke and chokiness on that line is extreme, and it would be a great pity if anything, even remotely approaching these conditions, were introduced into Sydney.

As regards interference with the tramway system, I am afraid that unless Mr. Greenwood's line could be still further lowered at the Circular Quay, which would introduce other objections, the difficulty would be insurmountable.

Referring to the earlier proposals for city railway extension which Mr. Greenwood repeatedly mentions, such as scheme L, submitted to the first Royal Commission in 1890, I altogether repudiate the idea of its having been chosen by me, and I feel convinced that it was not the choice of my predecessor either. I have, I believe, already explained to the Committee that the survey was made and the plans prepared under instructions from the head of the Government at the time. When giving evidence before the Royal Commission I certainly did not recommend its construction.

All traffic questions I leave for Mr. Parry to deal with.

H. DEANE,

Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

E.

1899.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

EXTENSION OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEM FROM REDFERN TO THE CIRCULAR QUAY.

(REPORT OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF FOR THE VICTORIAN RAILWAYS.)

Printed under No. 5 Report from Printing Committee, 20 March, 1899.

SCHEDULE.

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No. 1.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Victorian Railways, to The Premier of New South Wales.

Proposed Redfern and City Extension Railway.—Brief interim Report.

Board of Land and Works (Railway Construction Branch).

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Melbourne, 19 December, 1898.

Sir,

In reply to your telegram of even date, I beg to report as follows:—

1. The most important business portion of the city of Sydney may be taken as extending from Redfern Station to Circular Quay, a length of about 1½ mile by an average width of 47 chains to the waters of Darling Harbour, to serve which, when the metropolitan population grows to twice its present number, will require two railways—one on the eastern side and the other west of George-street.

2. Redfern Station is much over-taxed now, and cannot with any safety remain the terminus for the whole of the passenger traffic much longer.

3. The extension to the northern limits of the city is highly desirable in the interests of the city, the travelling public, and the railway corporation.

4. The probabilities for expansion of traffic at no distant period, with proper railway facilities, are, I consider, three to four fold the present limit; and this should be provided for in any design worthy of acceptance.

5. If cost did not govern, a line near to and west of George-street, bisecting the business portion of the city and curving round to Circular Quay, would, in my opinion, meet the requirements best; but the evidence points to such a line being enormously costly, and not likely to pay for many a year.

6. No line located east of College-street, on the eastern side of Hyde Park, would adequately meet requirements.

7. If the cost of land resumption, or reasons of State, prevented the whole of the passenger traffic—country and suburban—being provided for at a central station on a suitable site, Redfern Station might still remain the terminus for long-journey trains without serious disadvantage beyond a slight extra cost of working; and the suburban traffic only need be carried into and through the city.

8. No city railway will suit the requirements that does not provide stations at about half-mile intervals between Redfern and Circular Quay—say, three or four additional stations.

9. If the line be extended to Circular Quay, space should be found near that station for train storage room during slack time of day and night. The number of trains requiring storage for an expansion of three times the present traffic would be very large, needing some miles of sidings. The only alternative would be to send the trains all back to Redfern or their suburban termini, which would entail empty running and great expense.

10. Any terminus short of Circular Quay should be designed with a view to speedy extension to that point, and all designs should permut a connection with North Sydney and extension to the eastern suburbs, &c. The traffic between North Sydney and the city and suburbs on the city side of Port Jackson must expand to large proportions within a short time.

11. For any midway terminus—say at Hyde Park—storage room might still be found at Redfern, but not for any large expansion of traffic without remodelling that station.

12. The basement of the new markets near the Town Hall is entirely unsuited for a railway station, and it would be a piece of vandalism to appropriate it, even if it were well adapted for the purpose.

13. The area proposed for a central station on the Commissioners' Hyde Park scheme would be perhaps adequate for thirty or forty years growth of traffic; by restricting the design to suburban traffic only, the area might be reduced by (say) 30 per cent., but not more, I think.

14. If a scheme of through running can be devised, and four lines of way are provided for, the width required at wayside stations would not be less than 132 feet, made up thus:—

Three platforms, each 30 feet wide	=	90 feet.
Space for rails, two, each 21 feet	=	42 "
Total		132 "

confined between vertical walls. Slopes, drainage, buildings, &c., might require a considerable addition to this.

Bearing on this question, the following comparison between the accommodation provided and proposed for Spencer-street and Flinders-street passenger stations, Melbourne, and that proposed in the Commissioners' scheme, Hyde Park, may be of value:—

Platform stalls for trains—

	Melbourne.	Sydney.
Flinders-street.....	14	
Spencer-street	8	
Total.....	22	11

Length, 500 ft. for through running 700 ft. dead end.

Total length of platform facing—

	Melbourne.	Sydney.
Flinders-street.....	7,000 ft.	
Spencer-street	5,100 "	
Total	12,100 "	7,430 ft.

Acres of ground covered by platforms, buildings, and lines between platforms—

	Melbourne.	Sydney.
Flinders-street.....	7½ acres.	
Spencer-street	4¼ "	
Total	11¾ "	8½ acres.

Although the number of trains now handled at Melbourne is three times the number in Sydney, it seems to me that, with good suburban facilities, Sydney must expand to an equal number with Melbourne.

I regret that time does not permit a fuller report. I shall be glad if you can give me a fortnight from now to prepare my complete statement, as I should like to peruse the bulk of the evidence taken by the various Commissions and study the topography of Sydney, which would enable me to put the matter in a much fuller and clearer light.

I have, &c.,
F. RENNICK.

No. 2.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Victorian Railways, to The Premier of New South Wales.

Proposed Redfern and City Extension Railways.

Board of Land and Works (Railway Construction Branch),

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Melbourne, 5 January, 1899.

Sir,

I have the honor, in accordance with your request of the 5th ultimo, to submit my views on the question of Sydney city railways.

Why is a city railway necessary? Because the great bulk of the business of Sydney is done in the city between Redfern and Circular Quay, on an area of about 1½ mile long by a width, between the city reserves and Darling Harbour, of about 47 chains, and on this area—now devoid of railway facilities—on account of its configuration and surroundings, the business must increase immensely as Sydney develops.

The number of people living in the suburbs and entering the city daily for business and pleasure is now very large, growing fast, and in course of time must become enormous; hence the necessity of providing quick, cheap, safe, and comfortable daily transit to and from this portion of the city is obvious.

It may be said, generally, that omnibuses are behind the age for street traffic in large cities; that surface tramways—horse, steam, cable, or electric—are only suitable for local and short traffic; and that railways—overhead, surface, or underground, on which an average speed, inclusive of stops, of 15 or 20 miles an hour can be given—are alone suitable for a large population living at some distance from their city businesses and requiring frequent transit to and from their homes in the suburbs. To the low-paid clerk, mechanic, shop-worker, factory-hand, and labourer, whom an efficient suburb railway system enables to live amongst healthy surroundings in the suburbs, instead of being cooped up in a city, it affords a priceless boon; and to persons of every class it means a large saving in time and money.

As to tunnel working, it is a choice of evils; but with a good system of ventilation, even steam traction may be rendered tolerable. However, the day of electric traction for all suburban traffic seems near at hand—even now it is a moot point whether it is not a cheaper system for large trains, as it undoubtedly is for small ones, than steam. But even at

at a slightly increased cost the extra cleanliness and comfort which it affords would justify its adoption for any extensive system of suburban traffic. The present suburban railways do not accommodate half of the suburban population; the other portion is perforce restricted to trams and omnibuses—a slow, costly, and uncomfortable service.

If Sydney were as well provided with suburban railways as Melbourne, the number of passengers, instead of being only about 18 millions, might reach 45 millions per annum, and the trams will still be required for local or short distance traffic. The omnibuses would, of course, be almost entirely abandoned.

The following is a comparison of suburban railways and tramways within a radius of 10 miles of the two cities:—

	Melbourne.	Sydney.
Suburban Railways, double tracks	10 No., length 85 miles.	4 No., length 40 miles.
Average number of trains in and out per day	about 1,200.	about 330.
Suburban passengers per annum	39,000,000.	18,000,000.
City and Suburban Tramways	about 48 miles.	40 miles.
Passengers per annum	38,000,000.	about 30,000,000.

So the future possibilities of growth in Sydney are large indeed.

Redfern Station is too remote from city businesses to meet present requirements. Measured in time it means more than a half-hour's walk or a quarter of an hour's tram ride to the northern end of the city; and in money, for those who ride, 4d. per day. By rail the time would be reduced to six or seven minutes, and the money to 2d., or 4d., per day, depending on the class of traffic.

The capacity of Redfern as a railway terminus is now much overtaxed, and relief must be had either by extending and remodeling that station at once, or by extending the railway through the city and providing adequate wayside stations for suburban and city passengers. If one of these stations could be made the chief city station, with provision for long-distance as well as short distance traffic, the railway ideal would be realised. The Commissioners' scheme for a central station in Hyde Park, at St. James' Road, would meet this most admirably.

From a city business point of view, the best position for the city railway would obviously be one dividing the business portion equally on the east and west, and, therefore, a line a little west of George-street would appear to fulfil this condition best; but the evidence taken by the two Royal Commissions and the Public Works Committee, which thoroughly investigated the question of "city railways," appears to show conclusively that a railway to fulfil all the requirements of present and future traffic along this route, would be enormously costly and not likely to pay for years.

On economic grounds, therefore, an eastern route must be selected, and that favoured by the Railway Department close to Elizabeth-street seems to meet the economic condition best. In this scheme it is proposed to extend 6 (six) lines into a central station in Hyde Park, and to deal with the whole of the passenger traffic at 11 platforms stalls. It may be taken that the maximum capacity of these 6 lines, 3 "in" and 3 "out," would be 72 trains "in" or 72 trains "out" per hour—the platforms and shunting space being sufficient to dispose of the trains—or nearly three times the present maximum hourly traffic at holiday times at Redfern Station. With such accommodation, four times the present ordinary traffic could be safely dealt with. This means that the accommodation proposed would suffice for about 80 million suburban and long-distance passengers per annum. The Melbourne suburban railway passenger traffic is now 39,000,000, and has been as high as 43,000,000 per annum. Sydney, if adequately supplied with suburban railways, might have as large a suburban traffic as Melbourne; so that the provision deemed necessary by the Railway Commissioners for a central station in Hyde Park seems moderate in view of the probabilities of expansion in the near future. For such a traffic as this, the space for storage of trains and spare carriages would need to be four (4) times that now occupied at Redfern and Macdonaldtown— $4 \times 328 = 1,312$ carriages, or $4 \times 4,842$ yards = 19,368 yards—equal to eleven (11) miles of sidings, which, with the necessary approaches and shunts, would cover an area of about 30 acres. The total area at Redfern yard now, inclusive of both passenger and goods accommodation, is only 27 acres; and hence the almost absolute necessity of adding to this area for storage ground to meet the expected growth of traffic; and hence also the late Chief Commissioner's emphasised statement that to give additional ground to Redfern Station, under any circumstances, would be of immense advantage. Whether Redfern remain the terminus for long-distance traffic or not, this enlargement to meet the future growth of traffic seems absolutely necessary. The simplest and best way of meeting this necessity would be, it seems to me, to divert Devonshire-street to a position 9 or 10 chains north of and parallel to its present one, and appropriate a sufficient area of the Benevolent Asylum and Cemetery grounds, as proposed by the late Chief Commissioner and other railway authorities.

As to the possibilities of growth of city and suburban traffic, it is a well-known fact that in New York the yearly number of passengers by tram and train is considerably over 200 per head of the population served; in Melbourne it is at least 180 per head; and in Sydney, with equal facilities, it would be as large, or, say, 40,000,000 by suburban railways and 40,000,000 by trams. The present suburban railway traffic is about 18,000,000, and the present tram traffic, perhaps, 30,000,000.

Supposing the first city railway be from Redfern to Circular Quay by the eastern route, and that all the accommodation proposed by the Commissioners be provided, then, on the growth of the city and business requiring further accommodation, a line along the western route, even at a very high figure, might be entertained. Sydney would then have magnificent railway facilities, sufficient for a metropolitan population of, perhaps, 1,000,000 people. New York may be instanced as a city whose chief business is concentrated, by force of natural surroundings, within circumscribed limits, the same as Sydney. Its width averages 2 miles, and although there are four leading elevated railways less than half a mile apart, and trams in nearly every "up and down" street, the traffic is so enormous that relief is now sought in every direction by the conversion of horse trams to cable and electric conduit, as well as by projected underground railways. In this connection the traffic of the New York elevated system is worth quoting as an instance of immense traffic on a city railway. This system is 36 miles long; capital, £15,000,000; number of locomotives, 334; number of carriages, 1,122 (equal to more than 200 trains); train mileage per annum, 9,827,000; passengers per annum, 185,000,000 (equal to ten times the suburban railway traffic of Sydney); earnings, £1,850,000; fare, 5 cents, up to 10 miles in some cases.

As the width of the chief business portion of Sydney is not one-third that of New York, the future traffic here for a large metropolitan population must become enormous.

Any comparison of present costs of schemes for city railways should be made on the basis of equal accommodation; thus, if it be deemed necessary to provide six lines from Redfern to, and a large terminal station at, Hyde Park on the eastern side, a competing scheme on the western side should also provide for six lines and a corresponding station; the same for any proposed extension to Circular Quay. Of course, any extension into the city should be designed to suit any projected line to the eastern suburbs and a connection eventually with North Sydney. North Sydney is growing so rapidly that an extension to Circular Quay seems to be an immediate necessity, and as it is shown in evidence that the eastern line can be extended from St. James' Road to the Government House grounds, near Circular Quay, for less than £100,000, this seems the right thing to do at once. The traffic to and from the ferries and shipping, and between North Sydney and the existing railway suburbs, as well as the ordinary city business traffic which might be expected on this extension, would, it appears to me, justify its immediate construction. Any terminus at Circular Quay should provide land enough for several miles of sidings for shunting and storage of trains. For this purpose an area on the western side of Government House would appear to be well suited.

The whole cost of a large central station, providing not only full passenger accommodation but offices for the traffic and general administration staff, should not be charged to any city railway. Of the total estimated cost of the Hyde Park scheme—£650,000—nearly half would be a fair charge to the whole Railway property of New South Wales, and the other portion only should be charged to the extension for suburban traffic; and the fact that the increase of revenue expected from the proposed extension is shown to pay handsomely on the total cost does not affect this aspect of the case.

What should be done?

The western scheme, on account of the excessive cost of providing four or six lines with adequate station accommodation and a terminal station at or near the "Rocks" is, it appears to me, out of the question under present conditions of traffic.

The project of resuming 24 acres of old Sydney at the "Rocks," cutting it down to a suitable level and making new roads, &c., at an estimated cost of £800,000, and then appropriating 10 or 12 acres for a central station and disposing of the balance of the land, cut up on modern lines into building allotments fronting broad streets, for (say) £400,000, is not one that should commend itself to Railway managers, intent only on giving the best available service to the people and still making the railways pay their way.

As a scheme for city improvement the remodelling of this place would be highly desirable if it could be achieved at some gain or without loss to the promoters; and this, no doubt, would be done were there "money in it" without linking it to a scheme of city railways.

If the eastern route be adopted, and everything seems to point to this as the most suitable under present conditions, then, when this railway becomes taxed to its utmost capacity, relief may be obtained by constructing the western line with several city stations for a suburban traffic only and connecting it by an overhead railway along Circular Quay with the eastern line at the Quay station. If it be deemed best to make the connection with North Sydney by bridge, instead of by tunnel, the western route would answer better for that purpose. With a rapid advance of Sydney business and traffic, the time may not be remote when this western line, and a connection with North Sydney, may become a necessity even at a very high cost.

What shall the eastern line be? Undoubtedly the Commissioners' scheme, with a central station for all passenger traffic at Hyde Park, and a continuation to Circular Quay, with adequate storage and shunting ground there, as well as at Redfern, is the best.

Next to that is their alternative dual scheme for a suburban station on the site at Market-street, between Castle-reagh and Elizabeth streets, with a terminus for long-distance trains only in the Park, and a continuation to Circular Quay as before described.

The next best thing to be done.

The next best thing to be done, failing either of these, would be to make Redfern the chief city station, taking in a large portion of the Benevolent Asylum reserve and old Cemetery, and diverting Devonshire-street to a position parallel to and 9 or 10 chains north of its present one. This would give the necessary increase in length and area to the Redfern Yard.

The railway should then be extended to Circular Quay for suburban traffic, and stations provided at Liverpool-street, at the High School, near St. James' Road, between Castlereagh and Elizabeth streets, making Circular Quay station in the Government House grounds, opposite Albert-street, the terminus. Here sufficient of the Government Reserves should be appropriated for shunting and storage room for future growth of traffic. This extension might be carried out without appropriating any of the surface of Hyde Park. Of course, nearly the whole of the long-distance trains under this scheme would be handled at Redfern, which would not be quite so convenient for the passengers as a more central station at St. James' Road.

The inconvenience, however, would be greatly minimised by the fact that these passengers could readily change from or to suburban trains at Redfern, which must always be a stopping place for all trains, and remain one of the most important of city stations. With the frequent suburban service required for a large increase of traffic, due to development and the construction of further suburban railways, long-distance passengers requiring to change trains at Redfern would be little delayed either on arrival or departure. Whether the chief station be at Redfern or at St. James' Road, the cost of working the traffic must be sensibly the same—perhaps a little in favour of Redfern—because trains when done running would be stored at the station they arrived at or departed from, instead of incurring the cost of empty running between Redfern and St. James' Road if the latter were the terminus. The chief difference would be only the relative convenience to passengers.

These alternate schemes, with many others, have been inquired into and reported on by two Royal Commissions and the Public Works Committee, who have generally recommended the Hyde Park scheme in one form or another. I have only dealt with them in what appears to me their order of merit.

It would be presumption for me, with limited knowledge of the circumstances, surroundings, and requirements of the Sydney metropolitan district, to attempt to formulate a better scheme than any of those suggested from time to time by qualified officers of the State, who have given as many years to the consideration of the question as I have days; but I have made a close scrutiny of the physical and business features of Sydney, watched the railway, tram, and omnibus traffic to and from the Redfern Station during the busy hours of the day, read and studied the reports and a large amount of the evidence taken by the two Royal Commissions and the Committee of Public Works, listened attentively to and carefully perused information tendered by advocates of rival schemes, received pertinent information fully and freely tendered by the Railway Commissioners through their officers, and from the Engineer-in-Chief of Railway Construction, Mr. Deane; and with all due deference I submit my conclusions on the question of Sydney City Railways.

In my interim report I compared the areas for railway passenger accommodation in Melbourne and as proposed for Hyde Park, Sydney. Dealing with the whole of the areas in occupation and for extension for all kinds of railway business, the following comparison may be of interest:—

	Melbourne (including Flinders-st., Spencer-st., and Newport).	Sydney (including Redfern, Eveleigh, and Darling Harbour).
	acres.	acres.
Approximate area occupied for—		
Passenger business, including running and shunting lines.....	60	20
Goods	130	55
Carriage sidings, carriage sheds, and engine sheds.....	80	45
Workshops, including approach lines, sidings, &c.....	80	35
Spare land available for extensions,	310	45
Totals	660	200

I have, &c.,
F. RENNICK,
Engineer-in-Chief, Victorian Railways.

No. 3.

The Premier of New South Wales to The Engineer-in-Chief, Victorian Railways.

Dear Mr. Rennick,

The Treasury, Sydney, N.S.W., 7 January, 1899.

I have just received your Report on the extension of the railway into the city, which I beg most heartily to thank you for, as a most valuable contribution on the vexed question.

The only point I wish to allude to is the fact that the scheme including the station in Hyde Park was, however admirable, not within the intentions of the present Premier, and that I wanted you to proceed on the basis of some other solution—even if not the best—of the question. On that point your Report—you will forgive me for saying so—is almost silent. For instance, take this part of a sentence: "As it is shown in evidence that the eastern line can be extended from St. James's Road to the Domain near Circular Quay for less than £100,000, this seems to be the right thing to do at once." In other words, you practically brush aside the actual position of affairs—that the Government will not deprive the people of the use of Hyde Park as a park, and as covered with a series of important city thoroughfares, and sacrifice the actual to that extent to the "ideal," with which, I can assure you, I am already most fully acquainted. The "railway ideal," when it comes into contact with a "health ideal," must, I think, take second place, if, at any rate, any other scheme is possible, and within reasonable bounds of expense.

"What shall the eastern line be?" Under that heading a few lines only as to the alternative scheme.

Now, having put the Government under many obligations by your kind visit, and the great trouble you have taken, would you object to give me a short addendum report, confined entirely to the "next alternative scheme," showing me your full opinion of it, on the basis that the Hyde Park official scheme is out of the question?

Yours, &c.,
C. H. REID.

No. 4.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Victorian Railways, to The Premier of New South Wales.

Board of Land and Works (Railway Construction Branch),

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Melbourne, 11 January, 1899.

Dear Mr. Reid,

In reply to your letter of 7th instant, I have to state that I regret to find my meaning has been made obscure by the omission of a few words in copying my report, page 15. I now forward herewith this page corrected for substitution, with the omitted words underlined in pencil.

The alternative eastern scheme—*which would not appropriate any portion of Hyde Park*—which I recommend is briefly this: Make Redfern the terminus for long-distance trains, and extend the railway to Government grounds, near Circular Quay, for city and suburban traffic, providing stations at Liverpool-street, at the High School site, Market-street (between Castlereagh and Elizabeth streets), and in the Government House grounds, Albert-street.

The plan which I enclose will show the general features. My scheme is for a covered-way through Hyde Park, open station at Market-street, tunnel and covered-way from King to Bridge streets, open line thence to Fort Macquarie. Levels for lines and stations to be fixed definitely by Mr. Deane. Level of station opposite Albert-street would be about 30 feet above datum, or (say) 20 feet above Circular Quay. I understand that if the surface of Hyde Park be kept intact there is no objection to tunnelling or "cut and cover" work with the necessary ventilating shafts there, if the Park be deemed the best route for the line. The exact location of the railway, the extent and nature of the works, and the accommodation to be provided at stations, should be left to the Constructing Authority and the Railway Commissioners. For an outsider like myself to properly indicate these, and also estimate the cost, would require a lengthened study, as well as a survey of the project. I have no doubt whatever that the scheme thus indicated, which would not be a costly one, though inferior from a railway point of view to the Hyde Park scheme, with an extension to Circular Quay, would in practice be found an excellent one, and amply meet requirements for many years to come.

In quoting Mr. Deane, that the extension from "St. James' Road" to the Government House grounds, near Circular Quay, could be carried out for less than £100,000, it should not be inferred that this applied to the extension of the Hyde Park scheme only. Perhaps *St. James' Road* was an unfortunate expression, but I used it only to indicate the northern end of the line recommended by the Public Works Committee. Whether a station be placed in the Park or at the High School site, between Castlereagh and Elizabeth streets, the extension thence to Circular Quay would cost practically the same.

I trust you will find this correction and explanation satisfactory.

Yours, &c.,

F. RENNICK,

Engineer-in-Chief, Victorian Railways.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

RAILWAY EXTENSION INTO THE CITY OF
SYDNEY.

(PARTICULARS RESPECTING INQUIRY BY PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.)

Printed under No. 4 Report from Printing Committee, 12 July, 1900.

[Laid upon the Table in answer to Question No. 31, Votes No. 14, 11 July, 1900.]

Question.

- (31.) Extension of the Railway into the City:—Mr. Norton asked the Colonial Secretary,—
- (1.) On what date was the question of extending the railway into the City of Sydney referred by this House last Session to the Public Works Committee?
 - (2.) On what date was the inquiry opened; and on what date was it closed?
 - (3.) On what date was the report of the Committee presented to this House?
 - (4.) How many witnesses in all were examined on the project?
 - (5.) On an average how many witnesses were examined at each meeting?

Answer.

- (1.) 20th December, 1899.
- (2.) The inquiry was opened on 6th February, the last evidence was taken on 24th April, and the resolution of the Committee was passed on 7th June, 1900. But the whole of the time represented by these dates was not occupied by this inquiry only. During the period from 6th February to 24th April, the Committee also carried on their inquiries in Sydney respecting the proposed Tuckian Flood Escape Scheme, Railway from Grafton to Casino, Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek, Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri, Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong, and central Railway Station and Administrative Offices on north side of Devonshire-street, as well as considering and passing their reports to the Legislative Assembly on the proposed Glebe Island Improvements, and Wharfage, Woolloomooloo Bay, and a Sectional Committee visited the Richmond and Clarence River districts to inspect, take evidence, and report with reference to the Tuckian Flood Escape Scheme and the Grafton to Casino Railway. The interval between 24th April and 7th June was, with the exception of one day, occupied by a portion of the Committee in the country inspecting and taking evidence relative to the proposed Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek and the proposed Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri, the Committee being desirous that this necessary visit to the western and north-western districts should be made before the present Parliamentary Session opened.
- (3.) The report has not yet been presented, but will probably be laid upon the Table next Tuesday.
- (4.) Forty witnesses were examined, ten of them more than once.
- (5.) The number of witnesses examined at each meeting was from one to four, the smaller number consisting of the official or expert witnesses, whose examination was necessarily conducted more in regard to detail than that of others, and those who submitted the more important of the private schemes.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDIX, AND PLAN,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

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

Printed under No. 1 Report from Printing Committee, 26 June, 1900.

SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPELEGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, Chairman.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Honorable ANDREW GARREAN, LL.D.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Vice-Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed railway be carried out, provided that some satisfactory arrangement be made whereby the district benefited shall contribute to the Railway Commissioners such sum as may be necessary to make good any loss on the construction and working of the line,—and not otherwise; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (IV), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

HISTORY OF THE PROPOSAL.

1. The first action in regard to the proposed railway appears to have been taken in 1883, when the Minister for Works approved of a survey being made. This survey, which, with some subsequent amendments, represents the route as now proposed, was completed in 1884, the length being 31 miles, and the estimated cost £387,267, or about £12,524 per mile. The same year £500,000 was voted on the Loan Estimates for the construction of the railway, and of that amount the sum of £34,119 was appropriated from the vote for the purpose of extending the railway from Cootamundra to Gundagai, a distance of three-quarters of a mile, into the town of Gundagai, and £2,748 was expended in survey and engineering work on the proposed Tumut extension. This expenditure upon the three-quarters of a mile extension into the town of Gundagai was, in reality, used for the construction of a part of the railway now proposed from Gundagai to Tumut. The explanation given of it is that the line towards Tumut passed nearer to the town of Gundagai than the line from Cootamundra did, and "upon the representations of the residents the Government agreed to construct a length of three-quarters of a mile, which would have formed part of the contract, Gundagai to Tumut, and the grades were altered at very considerable expense to enable a station to be made."

In 1886, the plans, &c., of the proposed line from the present Gundagai terminus to Tumut were laid upon the table of the Legislative Assembly, and approved; but in the Legislative Council it was decided to refer them to a select committee, and Parliament proroguing before the committee completed its labours, no further steps were taken. The matter rested until 1887, when the construction of the line was urged by the Member for the district. In 1889, the Railway Commissioners, in terms of the Public Works Act, reported upon the proposal unfavourably; and some alternative routes were then suggested. These, however, were found to be impracticable, and the original survey was thereupon revised and amended, with the result that, in 1896, the estimated cost, exclusive of land and compensation, was reduced to £148,310, or £4,723 per mile. Three years afterwards Ministerial approval was given to the line being included in the railway policy of the Government.

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE RAILWAY.

2. The line, 31 miles 35 chains in length, would begin at the terminal point of the Cootamundra to Gundagai branch of the Great Southern Railway, at 286 miles 56 chains from Sydney, and crossing immediately the Murrumbidgee River, skirt the western side of South Gundagai, and follow generally the main road to Adelong for about 9 miles, and Adelong Creek for about 6 miles further. There it would follow up Bunnaback Creek to the summit of the line, at 22 miles from Gundagai, and thence descend *via* Gadara Creek, which would be followed to its junction with Gilmore Creek, the direction of that creek being taken to the Tumut cemetery, which would be passed on its south side, the line ending at the marked-tree road close to the township, at 318 miles 11 chains. The works, with the exception of the Murrumbidgee River bridge, would be fairly easy. The ruling grade would be 1 in 50, with frequent curves of 10 chains radius. Private land would be passed through almost the whole length of the railway.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES.

3. The alternative routes suggested traverse the Tumut River valley, one on the west side of the river, starting from the Cootamundra-Gundagai line, at a point $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles above Gundagai, and the other on the east side, commencing about a mile beyond Coolac railway station, at 277 miles from Sydney. By these routes the Murrumbidgee River could be bridged more cheaply than by the route from Gundagai, but the creek crossings would be more numerous, and, on one of the routes, the earthworks more costly, while the junction with the existing railway would, it is pointed out, convert the portion between such junction and Gundagai into a minor branch line, worked either by a separate train and staff at a very heavy train mileage expenditure, or by running the main branch passenger trains down the small branch and back again, thus involving many miles of profitless work, and much delay to the main branch traffic. Reports from the railway surveyor who explored these routes, and minutes by the Engineer-in-Chief upon those reports, are published in the Appendix to the evidence given in the inquiry.

ESTIMATED COST.

4. The estimated cost of the railway, exclusive of land and compensation, is given as £148,310, or £4,723 per mile; but as the price of rails has gone up since this estimate was made it is necessary to add to the estimate to the extent of £155 per mile. On this point the Engineer-in-Chief says:—

I find, on looking into this estimate, that the rails and freight were taken higher than we have been in the habit of taking them at recently, and therefore, if the rails could be obtained at what I call the standard rate, £5 5s. per ton landed in the stores in Sydney, a reduction of £115 per mile might be made on this estimate. On the other hand, as the price of rails has gone up very much, a very large addition would have to be made. The price of rails landed in the stores in Sydney would probably be £7 10s., as against £5 5s.; that would be £270 per mile. Deducting £115 per mile, the present price of rails, £7 10s. landed in Sydney, would necessitate the addition to this estimate of £155 per mile.

The largest items in the estimate, apart from the permanent-way materials, are—earthworks, £29,438; bridge over the Murrumbidgee, £25,700; culverts, timber bridges, and small openings, £11,172. There are many cuttings and banks on the line, some of the former very deep, and this not only makes the cost of the earthworks a considerable item, but largely affects the cost of the culverts and the bridges. The estimated cost of land resumptions and compensation for severance is £8,000, which may, however, be reduced, the Land Valuer explains, when the line comes to be constructed. With the probable additional cost of rails, *viz.*, £4,871, and the cost of land resumption, £8,000, the total cost would be £161,181, or, in round figures, £5,200 per mile.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

5. The Railway Commissioners have three times reported upon the proposed line—in 1889, in 1896, and in 1899. Their first report “showed that the most sanguine results, if realised, could not for many years more than meet working expenses.” They could not recommend the construction of the line, and pointed out that if it were made at some future time the residents should convey the land required free of cost. In

In 1896 they drew attention to the fact that the branch line from Cootamundra to Gundagai entailed a loss of £6,474 per annum, and it had to convey nearly all the traffic that would be carried over the proposed extension, as well as the traffic secured from its own surrounding country. This clearly indicated, they said, how unprofitable the proposed extension would be.

Their last report is equally unfavourable. "The matter," they say, "has once more been the subject of careful investigation, and while there has been an increase in the cultivation of wheat in the district, the growth of maize and tobacco has decreased, so that in the main the traffic prospects are practically the same as when the last report was submitted in May, 1896."

The revenue from the line, "based upon a liberal estimate of existing and prospective traffic and by charging local rates," would be, the report states, about £3,900 per annum, and if through rates were charged it would only be about £1,700. Interest on capital cost and working expenses would amount to £8,150. The estimated annual loss would therefore be with local rates £4,250, and with through rates £6,450. The Commissioners point out that the Cootamundra-Gundagai line, over which practically the whole of the existing traffic of the district is carried, showed a loss of £4,161 for the year ending 31st December, 1898, and for nine years the average loss has been £6,458. These figures, combined with the fact that the area of land in the district suitable for cultivation is limited, are reasons they strongly urge why the line should not be constructed.

THE INQUIRY.

6. In carrying out the inquiry respecting the proposed line, the Committee took evidence in Sydney from a number of official and other witnesses, including two former representatives of the Tumut electorate in the Legislative Assembly; they then visited the Gundagai-Tumut district, examining witnesses at Gundagai, Adelong Crossing, Adelong, Tumut, and Brungle, and, as far as practicable, inspecting the route proposed for the railway and those portions of the alternative routes which could be seen by travelling from Tumut to Gundagai, *via* Brungle, along the Tumut River valley. While at Adelong the Committee divided, and drove out from the town to inspect the country to the south and south-west, with a view to ascertain the character and extent of both agricultural and pastoral land in those directions; and at Tumut the surrounding country, which would be, more or less, within the influence of the railway, was examined in a similar manner, visits being made to the Gilmore Valley, Lacmalac and Springfield, the Tumut Plains, and Batlow.

DISTRICT TO BE SERVED BY THE RAILWAY.

7. The valley of the Tumut is one of the most fertile parts of the Colony, but the quantity of agricultural land available, compared with what is to be found in many other districts, is not extensive. Most of the land cultivated, or capable of cultivation, is near the Tumut River and its adjoining creeks, and averages from about half to three-quarters of a mile in width. These narrow areas do not extend any great distance, the longest—with the exception of the river valley, which is some 30 miles in length—being about 18 miles. The view presented of the country on either hand during a journey from Gundagai to Tumut, *via* Adelong, offers but little prospect favourable to the railway. There are beyond the ranges between which the road runs, a number of localities where settlement exists and cultivation is carried on, but, though this is the case, no one of the three railway routes would, by reason of the intervening ranges, serve the agricultural land on either of the other two. Traffic must be looked for in other directions. Information gathered during the Committee's visit of inspection mentions Windowie, Gilmore, Blowering, Tumut Plains, Lacmalac, Bumbowlee Creek, and Gocup as valleys that would be within reach of the railway, where all the land is in occupation, partly by farmers with small holdings, either freehold or leased, on which both cultivation and grazing are carried on, and partly by holders of large areas, portions of which are let to tenant farmers, and the remainder devoted chiefly to grazing purposes, including the feeding of starving stock sent to the district in times of drought. In addition to the river and creek flats

flats there is very good land on some of the ridges, most of which is used for grazing stock, and some of it for the production of cold-climate fruits. Fruit and vegetables grown in the district are equal, and, in some instances, said to be superior, to anything of the kind produced in other parts of the Colony. Maize, wheat, and tobacco have been the principal crops.

A staff surveyor of the Department of Lands, examined at Tumut, described the country in the district as for the most part flat land or ridgy, forest country—the flats being particularly good, the lower ridges admirably adapted for wheat-growing, and the higher fairly good sheep country. A statement prepared by him, classifying the whole of the land which would be more or less affected by the construction of the proposed railway, describes an area of, approximately, about 960,000 acres, 440,000 acres of which—comprising 310,000 acres of pastoral land, and 130,000 acres of arable land—are alienated. Of the unalienated land, 65,000 acres are said to be arable land, consisting almost exclusively of rising ground, scattered over the district, and not taken up owing to its remoteness and difficulty of access. The Bago table-land to the south of Tumut, this witness stated, consists largely of very good land, which, though rather cold, is suitable for wheat, oats, potatoes, and fruit. Small areas around Batlow, distant about 20 miles beyond Tumut, a locality which two members of the Committee visited, are cultivated mostly for fruit.

The people in the Batlow and Bago districts would take their produce to the line where it crosses the Gilmore Creek, between Adelong and Tumut. In the direction of Batlow, for some 9 miles from the Gilmore, the land alternates between rich agricultural flats and hills suitable for pastoral purposes, the latter predominating. The country then changes to tableland, largely of a basaltic character, with in many instances a great depth of loamy, red soil. This land, being at a high altitude, seems exceptionally adapted for the growth of cold-climate fruits, potatoes, onions, &c. The existing orchards look in excellent condition, being in many cases irrigated with water brought from higher levels by old mining races. The timber on the tableland is heavy, and, consequently, expensive to clear; but as a small area of the richer land is sufficient to support a family, the cost of clearing should not necessarily prove a bar to settlement. In the vicinity, there seems to be room for considerable development in the way of close settlement and intense culture.

The following is a summary of the figures submitted by witnesses examined at Tumut, showing the areas of land cultivated, and of land said to be capable of cultivation, in various localities in the district:—

Locality.	Area cultivated.		Area capable of cultivation.		Total.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Parish of Mingay	571	.....	6,896	.....	7,467
Tomonoma ... ..	.....	.....	60,000	.....	60,000
Blowering... ..	.....	.....	905	.....	905
Tumut Plains	1,100	.....	13,000	.....	13,000
Micalong... ..	400	.....	19,600	.....	20,000
East Blowering	406	.....	2,424	.....	2,830
West Blowering Station	1,095	.....	1,255	.....	2,350
Parish of Gilmore	2,215	.....	6,420	.....	8,635
" Wyangle	254	.....	2,680	.....	2,934
" Mondongo	2,756	.....	2,183	.....	4,939
" Blowering	2,147	.....	672	.....	2,819
" Werboldera	690	.....	480	.....	1,170
" Yellowin	450	.....	6,000	.....	6,450
Talbingo ... ..	.....	.....	1,000	.....	1,000
Wondowie ... ..	.....	.....	1,247	.....	1,247
Gallifat ... ..	.....	.....	7,000	.....	7,000
	12,084		131,762		142,746

The maize and tobacco production has decreased of late. Why maize, which is of very good quality and impervious to weevil, should not be grown as extensively as before is not clearly explained; but it would appear that the cost of road carriage and the delay in reaching a market make the product unprofitable. Tobacco, for various reasons, is said to have almost gone out of cultivation.

Recently the dairying industry has been started, and, at the time of the Committee's visit, preparations were being made for enlarging the operations connected with it.

Mining

Mining is carried on profitably, though not nearly so extensively as in years past, at Adelong and a few other places in the district. Adelong, which is 22 miles by road from Gundagai, and the centre of a district bounded in one direction by the Gap (4 miles away), by Batlow (16 miles to the south), by Mount Adrah (14 miles to the west), and by Grahamstown (6 miles in the direction of Gundagai), depends principally on mining, there being very little agricultural land in the neighbourhood. In the opinion of the Chief Inspector of Mines, Adelong will for many years be the leading gold-field of New South Wales, as there the most permanent reefs exist that so far have been discovered in the Colony, and payable ground is being worked at a greater depth than in any other mining district; but want of capital in some of the mines, and over capitalisation in the largest, have interfered very much with the progress of mining operations.

The population of the district, or of the area that would probably be served by the railway, numbers about 6,000 or 7,000, a considerable proportion of whom appear to be in comfortable circumstances.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS—CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER'S ESTIMATE.

8. In the Chief Traffic Manager's report, upon which the Railway Commissioners' estimate of the probable traffic on the railway is based, it is stated that careful inquiry made on the subject of traffic prospects indicates that the position, as far as the production of the district is concerned, has not materially altered since the Commissioners dealt with the matter in 1896:

An increase has taken place in connection with the area under cultivation for wheat; but on the other hand, the cultivation of maize and tobacco has decreased. The population of Tumut, Adelong and district is about 6,000; the residents of Adelong and districts being dependent chiefly on gold-mining. The distance from Adelong to Gundagai, by an excellent road, is 22 miles, and the existing rates for road-carriage range from 10s. to 20s. per ton. The area of land available for future cultivation is limited, and it is very questionable if any material increase in the traffic of the district can be looked forward to in the direction of agriculture.

The Chief Traffic Manager is of opinion:

That the construction of the line would not have any appreciable effect on the amount of traffic which would be created for the purpose of main-line haulage; and when it is considered that the distance by road to Tumut is 9 miles shorter than that of the proposed line, it will be readily seen that it is a very open question whether the whole of the traffic of the district would be rail-carried.

In estimating the traffic he allows 25 per cent. increase upon that which exists to-day in order to cover any additional production or trade which may follow the construction of the railway, and basing his estimate on both arbitrary local rates and ordinary through rates, he gives the results as follows:—

By charging arbitrary local rates—

	£	s.	d.
Goods, stock, and wool	2,489	0	0
Mails, 31 miles, at £12	372	0	0
Passengers, 5,000, at 1½d. per mile	968	15	0
Parcels, horses, carriages, dogs	50	0	0
Total	£3,879	15	0

By charging ordinary through rates—

	£	s.	d.
Goods, stock, and wool	305	10	6
Mails, 31 miles, at £12	372	0	0
Passengers, 5,000, at 1½d. per mile	968	15	0
Parcels, horses, carriages, dogs	50	0	0
Total	£1,696	5	6

In view of the carriage by road being 9 miles shorter than that by rail, local rates, he considers, could not be maintained, and his opinion on this point is emphasised by the fact that on certain kinds of goods the rail charges would be higher than those by road. Not until Adelong was reached, he states, would much traffic come to the line, as most of the country between Adelong and Gundagai would be served by the railway from Gundagai to Cootamundra. Even at Adelong all the traffic of the place would not necessarily go to the new railway, for as the Adelong people would have to travel about 5 miles to reach the line, when goods were once on the drays there would be a disposition to take them to Gundagai, and,

in his opinion, it is more than likely that there would be competition on the part of teams with the railway. There can be little increase in production, he considers, and in any case the possible increase, he points out, is more than covered by the 25 per cent. added to the traffic estimate. With regard to starving stock, there is not much disposition on the part of stockowners, it is explained, to send stock into the district unless they are absolutely compelled to do so, as the cost attached to the undertaking amounts to a heavy tax on owners. The proposed line, in the opinion of the railway authorities, would practically be a further extension to cater for traffic already carried by the line from Gundagai to Cootamundra.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS—LOCAL ESTIMATE.

9. The evidence given by witnesses examined at Gundagai was to the effect that the existing railway from there to Cootamundra was quite sufficient to meet the requirements of the district, and that the proposed extension to Tumut would not pay. The increased traffic on the Cootamundra-Gundagai line, which has been apparent during the last four years, has been due, it was explained, to extended building operations in Gundagai, and to mining developments within $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of that town, not to anything connected with the district as a whole.

At Adelong the witnesses examined favoured the construction of the line, and expressed the opinion that while it would greatly benefit the district, it would, undoubtedly, obtain a considerable quantity of traffic; but special rates, it was admitted, might make it more profitable for storckeeper and others receiving quantities of goods to continue to use the road, especially as teamsters would be able to reduce their charges on third-class goods. For teamsters the district is peculiarly favourable, as the roads—though in some places steep—are in admirable order, and fodder, which is only required in winter, is generally plentiful and cheap. Ore from the mines, it was said, would be sent away by rail in large quantities; there would be a considerable traffic, in the season, with fruit; and the timber industry of the district, which is capable of development, would also contribute to the railway traffic returns. The Chief Traffic Manager's wool estimate was regarded by Adelong witnesses as below what it was likely to prove.

At Tumut, the evidence had been arranged with some care, witnesses representing different localities attending with information respecting each. The figures submitted, however, referred for the most part to the number of acres of land under cultivation and suitable for cultivation, and the yield from the various crops grown. Evidence was not forthcoming which would enable the Committee to test in detail the traffic estimate of the Railway Commissioners, but what was given questioned that estimate as a whole, and indicated that if the railway were constructed it would be largely exceeded. The land in the district was said to be most suitable for either cultivation or grazing, a comfortable living being obtained by farming and grazing, or by fruit growing, on very small holdings. The rainfall is heavy and regular, and the yield from crops very satisfactory. Large quantities of produce—wheat, maize, hay, potatoes, vegetables, and fruit—might be sent away to Sydney regularly if railway facilities were available. Wheat pays well under existing circumstances, but maize is often unprofitable because of the charges connected with carriage by road, and the delay in getting the grain to market. Hay also, is a product the farmer finds it difficult to deal with profitably; and potatoes, though equal to those of Warrnambool, have at times rotted in tons where they have been grown, through the want of means for getting them away to where they could be sold. Fruit of the best description, and in large quantities, it was urged, could be grown, and supplied when the Sydney market was bare of fruit from other localities; at present this industry is limited to what can be disposed of with profit locally. From these sources a large and valuable railway traffic, it was contended, would arise, and, with the addition of wool and mineral traffic, make the railway earnings much larger than the Railway Commissioners' estimate represented them. The wool produced in the district that would be put upon the railway, it was urged by two or three witnesses, was in quantity much greater than represented by the Commissioners, and one witness supported his statement by giving the names of the different stations and their annual output. It was also stated that the railway would materially develop the timber industry.

Re-examined

Re-examined in regard to the Commissioners' estimate, after the Committee's return from the district, the Chief Traffic Manager explained that the traffic prospects of the line had been ascertained by examining the railway books at Wagga and Gundagai railway stations to find the actual amount of traffic coming to those stations from the Tumut district. The amount was 5,000 tons, and in the estimate allowance had been made for 7,000. Inward tonnage had been allowed for to the extent of 3,400 tons, a quantity considerably in excess of that now sent to Gundagai. In the estimate of the quantity of land under cultivation, allowance had been made for the traffic produced from 17,000 acres, 5,000 of which were included for additional cultivation. This represents 12,000 acres as at present under cultivation, an estimate that agrees very closely with both the local evidence and the Government statistics. The estimate of wool traffic accounted, he stated, for every bale of wool grown in the district likely to be carried on the railway, the figures being arrived at after an exhaustive examination of the Gundagai railway books for the last three years. For fruit production 400 tons per annum had been allowed; but the railway rates for carrying fruit are very low and fruit production would not materially increase the railway revenue. So that, giving the project credit for much of the local estimate of increased traffic, the construction of the line would still result in a heavy financial loss.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EVIDENCE.

10. A careful consideration of the evidence and of what was seen during the Committee's visit to the district, leads to the following conclusions:—

- (1) The most advantageous route is that now proposed.
- (2) The line is an expensive one to construct, and runs almost entirely through private property.
- (3) To construct the line means, according to the Railway Commissioners—and there is much to support their estimate, even in the evidence of local witnesses—an annual loss of £4,250 with local rates, and £6,450 with through rates. Local or special rates, experience has shown, do not find favour, and if charged in the first instance are difficult to maintain.
- (4) The roads between Gundagai, Adelong, and Tumut are very good, and the distance between those places comparatively short, the direct road from Gundagai to Tumut being only $22\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It being possible and not improbable that teamsters would reduce their charges below the railway rates, for general merchandise, it is not unlikely that a portion of the traffic expected by the railway would continue to be carried by team, especially to and from Adelong. If such should be the case, the railway earnings would be so much less than estimated, and the loss so much greater.
- (5) The reasons put forward in support of the railway are that the traffic in goods, wool, stock, and passengers would be considerable, that present holders would largely increase their cultivation areas, that much additional land would be taken up and cultivated, or otherwise profitably used, that mining would be encouraged and extended, and that the timber industry would be developed. But though, doubtless, increased cultivation would follow the construction of the railway, it is not likely that the increase would for some years be very large, and the striking fact presents itself that a considerable proportion of the alluvial flats close to or within an easy distance of the railway at Gundagai is at the present time uncultivated.
- (6) The greater part of the land suitable for agriculture has already been taken up, and, judging by past experience, the holders have not tilled their lands to any material extent, and new agriculturists would to a large extent have to lease lands from the freeholder, a state of things which some witnesses urged has largely retarded the agricultural progress of the Tumut district.
- (7) From 20 to 25 miles is the recognised distance from a railway station over which produce may be carted profitably, and this is about the distance between Gundagai and Adelong, and Gundagai and Tumut. Localities outside Adelong and Tumut, but within the district, are further away, but even some of those are not out of touch with the present line. In other districts farmers cart their produce 30 miles to a railway. (8)

- (8) The district is regarded as one useful for the feeding of starving stock in times of drought, and such stock have been sent there, the largest number, at any time, last year. But, from a traffic point of view, this does not appear to be of much importance, for so exceptional is the traffic that until last year the railways had not carried any starving stock for six years, and prior to that none for ten years, and during the last twenty years this class of stock have been carried only three times.

DECISION ARRIVED AT.

11. The weight of the evidence being, in view of the estimated serious loss, unfavourable to the construction of the railway, the Committee are of opinion that before its construction is decided upon, some satisfactory arrangement should be made by which the district shall contribute to the Railway Commissioners a sum sufficient to make good the loss which must result from the construction and working of the line. Only on that condition do they approve of the proposed work being carried out.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

12. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings of 3rd February, 1900:—

“Mr. Shepherd moved,—‘That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Gundagai to Tumut, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, provided that some satisfactory arrangement be made whereby the district benefited shall contribute to the Railway Commissioners such sum as may be necessary to make good any loss on the construction and working of the line,—and not otherwise.’

“Mr. Watson seconded the motion.

“Mr. McFarlane moved,—‘That the motion be amended by the omission of all the words after the word “out.”’

“The amendment was negatived on the following division:—

Ayes, 2.
Mr. Levien,
Mr. McFarlane.

Noes, 5.
Mr. Trickett,
Mr. Shepherd,
Dr. Garran,
Mr. Dick,
Mr. Watson.

“The motion was then passed.”

W. J. TRICKETT,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 6 June, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Robert R. P. Hickson, Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a statement with regard to the proposed railway? Yes; I will read it:—

GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

R. R. P.
Hickson.

From the papers it would appear that the first action in regard to this proposal was taken in August, 1883, when Mr. Secretary Wright approved of a survey being made. 2 Nov., 1899.

The survey was carried out by Mr. Melrose, and its completion reported in December, 1884, the length being 31 miles, and the works estimated by the late Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Whitton) to cost £387,267 13s., or about £12,524 1s. 4d. per mile.

A sum of £500,000 was voted on the Loans of 1884 for the construction of this line, of which a balance of £463,133 now remains.

It will thus be seen that £36,867 has already been appropriated from the vote. Of this amount, £34,119 was spent upon the extension of the Cootamundra to Gundagai line into the town of Gundagai, the balance being for survey and engineering expenses.

In explaining this expenditure, I have to point out that the contract from Cootamundra to Gundagai terminated at a point three-quarters of a mile outside the township of Gundagai where it was intended to erect the station.

The line towards Tumut passed nearer to the centre of the town of Gundagai, and, upon the representations of the residents, the Government agreed to construct a length of three-quarters of a mile which would have formed part of the contract, Gundagai to Tumut, and the grades were altered at very considerable expense to enable a station to be made.

In 1886 the plans, &c., of the proposal were laid upon the Table of the Legislative Assembly and approved; but when similar action was taken in the Legislative Council it was decided to refer the matter to a Select Committee. Parliament, however, prorogued before the Committee completed its labours, and no further steps were taken.

The matter then rested until the year 1887, when Mr. Travers Jones, M.P., wrote urging the construction of the line. The same Member, in 1888, continued to press the matter, and in June of the following year the Railway Commissioners, at the request of the Minister, forwarded their report on the proposal, in terms of the Public Works Act, which showed that the most sanguine results, if realised, could not for many years more than meet working expenses. The Commissioners at this time could not recommend the construction of the line, and pointed out that if it were made at some future time the residents should convey the land required free of cost. Statistics supplied by Mr. Travers Jones, M.P., at this time showed that there were 11,288 acres under cultivation in the district to be served by the line, the number of sheep being 368,535; and cattle, 28,577.

Towards the end of the year 1889, the Brungle Progress Committee, per Mr. Travers Jones, M.P., applied for a survey to be made of an alternative route from Coolac to Tumut. Mr. Bruce Smith approved of an examination being made, and Mr. Burge, under instructions from the Engineer-in-Chief, carried it out. Upon the report of the examination being submitted to the Minister, he raised the point that as it was contended this alternative route would cost less per mile than that from Gundagai, would Mr. Deane express his opinion on the question, and the Engineer-in-Chief, in reply, stated that as the line surveyed from Gundagai would serve Adelong, which the alternative would not, and as the saving of £1,225 in interest on capital cost, which the alternative scheme was assumed to effect would be counterbalanced by extra cost of working a separate branch, he concluded that the line as at present surveyed would be the better.

The next step of importance was taken during the year 1891 when the Minister approved of Mr. Gilliat, the Examiner of Public Works Proposals, reporting on this line, and the conclusions this officer arrived at were that there was no apparent justification in either the character of the country, its settlement, or production, to take the line as proposed round by Adelong Crossing or Adelong, and he suggested a light line or tramway of the standard gauge, starting from South Gundagai to the west bank of the Tumut River, a distance of 19 miles.

In September of the same year a deputation from the residents of Tumut, introduced by Messrs. E. G. Brown and V. Parkes, M.S.P., waited upon Mr. Secretary Young, and, in urging the construction of the line, drew attention to the importance of the district as an agricultural centre with great facilities for maize and tobacco cultivation, and also to its richness in auriferous metals. Mr. Secretary Young promised to give the matter consideration and mentioned the above proposal of Mr. Gilliat, upon which he asked for the opinion of the Engineer-in-Chief.

The Engineer-in-Chief stated that a line of this length was impossible, for the reason that the winding necessary to give a grade of 1 in 40, as per Mr. Gilliat's report, would bring the length (19 miles) up to 28 or 29 miles, as compared with the original survey, 31 miles, so that the difference was trifling.

In December, 1892, Mr. Burge, under instructions from the Engineer-in-Chief, made an examination with the view of obtaining the Brungle route by extension from South Gundagai, and so avoiding the Coolac-Gundagai cocks spur branch, but this route proved impracticable.

R. R. P.
Hickson.
2 Nov., 1890.

On the 23rd of December, 1892, Mr. Secretary Lyne, upon the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief, approved of the original survey being amended, with a view to a reduction being made in the estimate. Mr. Burge reported its completion in July, 1894, and a considerable reduction was made in the estimate, the cost being reduced to £164,777, or about £5,248 per mile.

In April, 1896, the estimate was again revised, the works being designed on the basis of the "Pioneer" principle, and it now stands at £148,310 or £4,723 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation, for a length of 31 miles 35 chains.

Mr. Travers Jones, M.P., continued to urge the construction of the line, and in July, of 1896, introduced a large and influential deputation to Mr. Secretary Young upon the subject.

They pointed out that the farmers were greatly handicapped in conveying their produce to market. Owing to climatic conditions, droughts were of rare occurrence, and good crops always assured. 150,000 acres of rich Crown lands were available for settlement, and when grass would be scarce, sheep would have to be sent to the mountains. In addition, owing to the "halves" system operating among the farmers, agricultural matters would be sure to advance.

The Minister, in reply, drew attention to a report he had received from the Railway Commissioners, dated 8th May, 1896, portion of which was as follows:—"We would draw attention to the fact that the branch line from Cootamundra to Gundagai entails a loss of £6,474 per annum, and it has to convey nearly all the traffic that would be carried over the proposed extension, as well as the traffic secured from its own surrounding country. This clearly indicates how unprofitable the proposed extension would be."

The great item of expense in connection with this proposal is the Gundagai Bridge, and, in the estimate just given, a sum of £25,100 is included for it.

The question of the use of a combined bridge for railway and road traffic was carefully gone into, and reported upon by Mr. Deane and myself in March, 1894. We reported that a combined bridge could be carried out in two ways,—

Firstly.—The railway, road, and foot passenger traffic would be carried parallel and independently of one another.

Secondly.—The railway and road traffic would be carried on the same track, and the foot traffic carried on a footpath on the outside. The cost of the former would be about £128,000, and the latter about £90,000, and the conclusions arrived at were that not only from considerations of cost, but also of inconvenience, it is most undesirable to attempt the construction of a combined bridge.

In July, 1899, Mr. Donaldson, M.P., urged the submission of the proposal to the Works Committee, and the late Minister, Mr. C. A. Lee, approved of it being included in the railway policy of the Government.

The Railway Commissioners have been asked for a report to bring the matter up to date; but this has not yet come to hand.

The following is a description of the line:—This line begins at the terminal point of the Cootamundra to Gundagai branch of the Great Southern Railway, at 286 miles 56 chains from Sydney, and crossing immediately the Murrumbidgee River, skirts the western side of South Gundagai, and follows generally the main road to Adelong for about 9 miles, and Adelong Creek for about 6 miles further. Here the line follows up Bunnaback Creek to the summit of the line, at 22 miles from Gundagai. The descent is then made *via* Gadara Creek, which is followed to its junction with Gilmore Creek, the general direction of which is then taken to the Tumut cemetery, which is passed on its south side, the line ending at the marked-tree road close to the township, at 318 miles 11 chains. The works, with the exception of the Murrumbidgee River bridge, are fairly easy. The ruling grade is 1 in 50, with frequent curves of 10 chains radius. Private land is passed through almost throughout. The line from Cootamundra to Gundagai cost £270,000.

2. You appear to know this route from personal observation? I know it as far as the main road is concerned. It leaves the main road at Adelong Crossing. The portion from there I do not know.

3. You have not been over the whole of the line? No.

4. But you have been over it as far as Adelong Crossing? Yes; and I know the Tumut end.

5. The bridge is at Gundagai, is it not? Yes.

6. That, as a railway bridge, is estimated to cost £25,000? Yes.

7. You appear, in conjunction with Mr. Deane, to have inquired into the possibility of a combined bridge for a railway and for ordinary traffic? Yes.

8. Would you explain to the Committee how this very large apparent difference is made up from £25,000 to £128,000? One is for a timber bridge, and the other is for a steel bridge. The larger amount is for the steel bridge, not only to cross the river, but to cross the Murrumbidgee flats. There is a long flat on the Gundagai side of the Murrumbidgee River over which we have put a wooden bridge as the approach to our iron bridge, at a cost of about £14,500.

9. Then there is already a bridge over the river for road traffic? Yes.

10. When was that constructed? The iron bridge was erected about twenty years ago. The wooden bridge to it is only just finished.

11. What cost did that involve? I think £14,500.

12. That was the approach to the bridge? Yes. The old approach was in a dangerous state.

13. Is that a wooden structure? Yes.

14. Was that provided for out of Loan money? Yes.

15. And were the old bridge and the old approach charged to Loans? I expect so. They were built many years ago. I know that the new one was.

16. Is the bridge across the river at present of steel or wood? It is an iron bridge.

17. Do you know the cost of it? I can get it.

18. Is that bridge of such a character that it could be altered into a railway bridge? No; I do not think it could be done at any reasonable cost.

19. When was this inquiry conducted by you and Mr. Deane, as to the possible cost of a combined bridge? In 1894.

20. Have any alterations occurred with regard to bridge-construction between then and now, that would possibly cheapen a combined structure? Yes; it would cost less now.

21. Is not a kind of bridge called a composite bridge the sort of bridge you would construct now? I understood from Mr. Deane that the £25,000 was for a wooden structure.

22. A little while ago you said that the very great increase from £25,000 to £128,000 was caused by reason of the combined bridge having to be a steel structure? Yes.

23. If, to-day, the Department were constructing a combined bridge, what would be the character of it? It would be much cheaper—a composite bridge, partly iron, partly timber.

24. Could you tell us what it would cost? Not without going into figures. Those amounts would be reduced by at least one-third.

25. And that question of the construction of composite bridges, where we construct road or railway bridges separately, has engaged the attention of the Department as a matter of policy? Yes.

26. What are the views of the Department on the subject? Their views are that in case of a large structure it is more economical to build a composite bridge. Our designs are so arranged now, that we have those members of the bridge that are in tension in steel or iron, and those members that are in compression in timber. We get the best results, as regards strength, at a minimum of cost, in that way.

27. And that principle applies to all our bridges;—you are going in for the composite principle? It applies to all bridges over a certain size.

28. In the larger type of bridge the composite principle is adopted? Yes.

29.

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29. Now you refer in your statement to two kinds of combined bridges—one giving a separate track for the railway, and another for the road traffic; and one in which the road traffic would traverse the railway line? Yes.
30. In outlying districts like this, where economy is a great object in construction, would not the less expensive bridge answer all purposes, or are there grave objections to it? A good deal depends upon the railway traffic. If there is a good deal of railway traffic over the bridge, I do not care for the combined structure at all. It is very difficult to arrange a road for vehicular traffic over such a bridge. But in a place where there are only two trains a day, one going and one coming, I do not think there is any objection to it.
31. In a case of this kind there would not be frequent trains—at any rate, not for a long time to come? No.
32. So if the idea were entertained of having a combined bridge, in your opinion the cheaper class of bridge would suffice? We do not want a combined bridge now, because we have got a road bridge.
33. *Mr. Watson.*] Could the present road bridge be utilised? Not without a great deal of expenditure.
34. *Chairman.*] Is the present road bridge a high-level bridge? Yes.
35. Is the river there liable to floods? Yes; tremendous floods come down.
36. Is it a bridge above flood-level? Yes. Nothing else will do on the Murrumbidgee.
37. With regard to the character of the country that you know between Gundagai and Adelong, what is its nature as regards its surface or contour? Part of it is very rough, but there is some very good land. The extent of it on either side I could not say. I do not think that the good land is a very wide area. At Tumut there is some very fine land. The Tumut flats are very fine land.
38. Do you know what the distance is from Gundagai to Tumut by a straight line? By road, I think it is 21 miles.
39. Why is this great detour in the railway line necessary? On account of the rough country. The road goes very straight. It goes through land, some of which is patchy, but I cannot tell the width of it.
40. Is the country very ridgy? Yes, very ridgy; you get to a great height. The road is fairly straight from Gundagai to Tumut, but the country is of a broken character.
41. You say that at one part it is a considerable height;—what is the elevation? That I could not tell you.
42. It would be sufficiently high to necessitate a tunnel? It would be sufficiently high to prevent a line from coming that way at all. A railway by the route of the present coach travelling road is impracticable.
43. Taking the surveyed or red line on the map, for the distance that you know out of Gundagai, you say there is a considerable amount of good country; but you are not able to say to what extent? No. There is a great deal of good country at South Gundagai.
44. What character of country is it? It is all good agricultural land.
45. Agricultural flats? Yes.
46. Is it well watered? Yes; all that country is well watered.
47. As far as you observed, I suppose, there was a fair agricultural population there? Yes, I think so.
48. From there onwards, you do not know the country? Not until we get to Tumut. There you come into very fine country.
49. The best class of country to be served by the projected railway is, as far as you are aware, in the neighbourhood of Tumut? I think so.
50. Are you able to say what extent of country there is in and around Tumut under cultivation, or suitable for cultivation? It extends a long way from Tumut. In a north-easterly direction there are fine flats.
51. As far as the capabilities of the district to be served are concerned, your knowledge is of the Gundagai end and the Tumut end of the line? Yes.
52. You see the optional survey marked in blue to the east on the map? Yes.
53. Do you know that line? No.
54. What class of road is there between Gundagai and Tumut at present? A very good road.
55. Is it a metalled road? A great portion of it is metalled. It is an excellent travelling road the whole way.
56. I suppose you could let us know what has been expended on that road? Yes.
57. The original estimate for the railway was about £12,000 per mile? Yes.
58. Which is now reduced to £4,723 per mile;—could you tell us any reason why there has been such a very great reduction? Mr. Deane will give you the details of that.
59. *Mr. Dick.*] I see that on the parish map placed before the Committee three separate surveys are outlined;—could you indicate in what way the red line, now the official proposal, is superior to either of the other two? You can get that from the surveyor. I have not been over the line myself.
60. Do you know what officer made each of those surveys? Mr. Burgo made the last survey.
61. The one now before the Committee, coloured red? Yes.
62. Will you inform the Committee who surveyed each of the three routes? Mr. Melrose and Mr. Burgo. I think Mr. Melrose has been over them both. Mr. Burgo made the last examination of the red line.
63. You do not know who did the route marked green? No, I could not tell you; but Mr. Deane could give you all these particulars.
64. With respect to the grades and curves, has any attention been given to them since 1894;—the report says that the ruling grade is 1 in 50, with curves of 10 chains radius; each of these grades is steeper and the curves are sharper than the Railway Commissioners now propose? There are several grades of 1 in 50 proposed now. We try to get 1 in 60 against the load wherever it is possible. That is the grade that is practically fixed on this line. That grade is not suitable for very important lines, or through lines. Probably a grade of 1 in 60 may be obtained in this case.
65. Is it not a fact that even on lines of that kind the Commissioners have been cutting the grades out, and making them at least 1 in 75? Not to my knowledge.
66. Could you give an instance of a grade that is 1 in 50 on one of our railways? There is a little book here which gives all the grades.
67. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know whether any attempt has been made to get a suitable line to touch Adelong? I believe so. I understood from Mr. Deane that you cannot get round by Adelong. If you go into Adelong you have to come out again over the same route.

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68. Would it extend the distance much to go *via* Adelong? I cannot say that it would extend it very considerably.
69. *Dr. Garran.*] Taking that red route, do you know what the nearest point of the line would be to Adelong? About 3 miles, according to the scale.
70. Then a good coach road of 3 miles would practically give Adelong the benefit of a railway? Yes.
71. Then the red line would really give Adelong very great advantages? Yes.
72. What is the relative population of Adelong and Tumut? I do not know.
73. The fertile land in that district is in the valleys? Yes.
74. Which are very narrow and very rich? Yes.
75. The principal valley is the valley of the Tumut? Yes.
76. The red line does not seem to go up the valley of the Tumut, but up the valley of the Adelong Creek? Yes.
77. The best of it is from Tumut down to Gundagai? Yes.
78. You notice the blue line on the west of Tumut, and the green line on the east,—but both follow the route of the valley? Yes.
79. And either of those lines would accommodate the settlers on the rich land in that valley? Yes.
80. The red line would not be any accommodation to the settlers? No; but it would take in Adelong, which the blue and the green lines would not do.
81. The red line would suit the mining township; but the green and blue lines would suit the agricultural settlers? Yes.
82. So that, in a comparison between the two, we should have to take into consideration which class of settlers it would be the more important to accommodate? Yes; and the question of the cost of the two lines.
83. You say you have travelled over the coach roads, and you have spoken of rich land there;—is it volcanic, because it is high ground? You travel along as far as Adelong Crossing; that is practically in the valley. It is all good land there. You get into patchy land until you get down into the valley of the Tumut again.
84. Then the high ground which the coach goes over is not particularly good land? Some of it is good.
85. Is the land that is good there alluvial or volcanic? It is volcanic.
86. Is it red soil? I have really forgotten; I think so. It is volcanic, at all events.
87. You know the railway line between Gundagai and Cootamundra? Yes.
88. Was that a more difficult line to make than this extension would be? I do not know the extension along the red line at all.
89. Do you know how much the Cootamundra to Gundagai line cost per mile? No; but I can let you have the information.
90. The surveys that we have had, I suppose, practically exhaust all the possibilities? I think so.
91. The gentlemen who have done the surveying have been competent men? Yes.
92. And we may trust them to give us the best possible results? I think so.
93. Has any one officer gone over the three routes and compared them all? I am not quite sure of that. I think Mr. Burge did.
94. Has any one in the office compared the plans of all three? Yes.
95. All the gradients and curves, the amount of earthworks, bridging, and so forth? Mr. Deane has done that.
96. Is it the opinion of your best officers that the red line is decidedly the best of the three? Yes.
97. There is no doubt about that? No doubt whatever.
98. Is there much difference of opinion among the officers on the subject? I do not think so.
99. And you confirm that view? I do; I think it is the best line.
100. You spoke in your paper of a very great reduction in the expenditure which had been made by a revision of the line;—was that reduction due to increasing the grades or improving the permanent way? It was due to a combination of circumstances—first of all to the fact that, with the information before us now, we can make our estimates lower; in the second place, the cost of the bridge across the Murrumbidgee was very considerably reduced; and, in the third place, this is a line of a lighter character.
101. You refer in your paper to pioneer railways that we have been making on level country, but is it not quite impossible to make a line for £2,000 a mile in hilly country? It is quite impossible.
102. It may be a light line, but it cannot be a pioneer line? I do not think you could make it at all for that in hilly country.
103. We cannot get these very cheap lines for £2,000 a mile, except in level country? No.
104. If you have a grade of 1 in 30, such as we began with on the Western line, we must content ourselves with very small train-loads? Yes.
105. Where there is only very little traffic, would that matter very much? That is a matter of opinion. My own opinion is that it is a very great mistake to make any line with a grade of 1 in 30.
106. I have heard Mr. Whitton say, "Do not make a line of railway until you can afford to make a good line";—do you think that sound policy? I do. I do not think 1 in 50 is a bad grade for lines like this, but I should not like to see such grades on a main trunk line.
107. Are there grades of 1 in 50 on some of the Victorian trunk lines? I could not say.
108. Do you know what is the ruling grade between Cootamundra and Gundagai? The steepest grade on that line is 1 in 50.
109. Referring to the matter of railroad bridges, do you know the Penrith Bridge? Yes.
110. With your present knowledge, would you recommend again that we should have two bridges in one? I would not recommend it there, or at Singleton. We have two of these bridges.
111. Why would you not? Well, with our superior knowledge of bridges now, there would be very little difference between the cost of one bridge and the cost of building two bridges in one, and the nuisance and danger that there are from having vehicular and railway traffic on the same bridge are very considerable.
112. You would rather keep them apart? Yes.
113. If you want to keep your road bridge above the highest flood, and as you must take your foundations down to the solid rock, you have the expenses in either case, whether you make the bridges together or separately? Yes; but it is difficult to combine the two bridges economically.
114. Would there not be some economy in making one set of foundations for the whole, instead of two sets 100 yards apart? You cannot lay down a broad rule in connection with it. If there were a bridge of

of an enormous height to be erected, probably it would be cheaper to have one structure for the two, but, as a general rule, there is very little difference between the cost of two separate structures and a combined structure.

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115. Is that especially the case with the method of sinking cylinders? Yes. And the nuisance of having the two together is very considerable. We are building a combined structure at Camden, but there the circumstances warrant us in doing it. It is below the flood-level.

116. Have you any cases in which there is only one roadway, and where the traffic goes over the same part as the railway lines? No.

117. You have always two separate roadways? Yes.

118. Where you have only two trains a day, you might utilise the one road? Yes. There was an estimate prepared for that in connection with this case of the Murrumbidgee.

119. You would only have to shut up the bridge against ordinary road traffic, four times a day, whilst the trains are going each way? Yes, but it would be exceedingly difficult to do that at Gundagai, because the bridge there is of great length; it goes, not only across the river, but also across the flats.

120. Now that you have made a good bridge, with approaches, I suppose that practically settled the question for Gundagai about a joint bridge? Yes.

121. Road accommodation is all that is required? Yes.

122. You have merely now to think of the cheapest railway bridge that you could make? Yes.

123. The design will be such as you think economical to make, and safe? Yes. Mr. Deane will tell you how it is worked out. I do not think the bridge can be made for less than £25,000.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

124. *Mr. Dick.*] Have you any plans to hand in? Yes; I have plans and sections of the line. Plans to the scale of 4 chains to an inch; sections to a scale of 4 chains horizontal and 40 feet vertical; Books of Reference, and a compilation of parish maps showing the lines and deviations.

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125. *Chairman.*] Have you a description of the line? The description embodied in Mr. Hickson's statement was prepared by me.

126. Do you produce a detailed estimate of the cost? Yes.

127. Will you kindly read it? It is as follows:—

GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.—*Amended Trial Survey.*

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 31 miles 35 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 50; sharpest curve, 10 chains radius.

Description of Work.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
	£ s. d.	
Earthworks	29,438 15 0	938
Culverts, timber bridges, and small openings	11,172 19 0	356
Bridge over Murrumbidgee River.....	25,100 0 0	799
Overbridge.....	418 0 0	13
Level-crossings, cattle-stops, fencing, and road divisions	7,062 15 0	225
Permanent-way materials	26,293 19 0	837
Plate-laying at 1s. = £2,763 4s.		
Ballasting (½) at 3s. 6d. = £2,417 10s.	14,852 5 0	473
Sleepers at 2s. 6d. = £9,671 5s.		
Station works, including sidings	5,736 0 0	183
Station buildings—waiting-sheds, £625; goods-shed, £900; platforms, £400; station-master's houses, £700; loading-banks, £750; cranes, £400; weigh-bridges, £550; trucking-yards, £1,300; carriage-shed, £350; engine-shed, £700; coal-stage, £300; removing turntable, £300.....	7,275 0 0	232
Water supply	1,560 0 0	48
Telegraph	471 0 0	15
Gradient and mileage posts	471 0 0	15
Miscellaneous	1,000 0 0	32
Cost of works	£130,791 13 0	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 12½ per cent.	16,348 19 0	520
Total cost	£147,140 12 0	.....
Average cost per mile	£4,686 0 0	.....

Estimate, with new fastenings, £148,310 or £4,723 5s. per mile.

I should like to say that it can easily be understood that the costs of rails and fastenings are a very variable figure. I have decided in future to take a standard price of £5 5s. for the rails landed in the stores in Sydney, and to add or deduct according as the price of the rails varies from time to time, £30 per mile for every 5s. per ton difference in the price of the rails. I find, on looking into this estimate, that the rails and freight were taken higher than we have been in the habit of taking them at recently, and, therefore, if the rails could be obtained at what I call the standard rate, £5 5s. per ton landed in the stores in Sydney, a reduction of £115 per mile might be made on this estimate. On the other hand, as the price of rails has gone up very much, a very large addition would have to be made. The price of rails landed in the stores in Sydney would probably be £7 10s. as against £5 5s., that would be £270 per mile. Deducting £115 per mile, the present price of rails, £7 10s. landed in Sydney, would necessitate the addition to this estimate of £155 per mile.

128. *Mr. Dick.*] I find that the earthworks are comparatively large, and they amount to £938 per mile;—can you explain what is the necessity for that large expenditure on earthworks? This is not a light line, there are a great many cuttings and banks on this line. I will show the Committee a portion of the section, so that they will be able to judge what the difference is between a line of this character and lines such as the Committee have lately been considering. This line starts at South Gundagai, and immediately

H. Deane. immediately after passing the Murrumbidgee River there is a cutting 23 feet in depth, then another 10 feet in depth, and another 8 feet in depth; a little further on there is one 13 feet in depth. It will be found that still further along the line there is a succession of cuttings and banks, which brings the cost up to very much more than that of the type of line which has been recently considered. For instance, a little beyond the 290 miles, there is a cutting 53 feet in depth. That is on that sharp curve which I pointed out a little while ago, where the previous survey would involve a tunnel.

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129. Is it an extensive cutting? It is about 20 chains. There is one portion of the line which is pretty flat; but nearly the whole of it is a succession of cuttings and banks.

130. *Chairman.*] What is the character of the soil? In the larger cutting it would be mostly rock.

131. *Mr. Dick.*] I suppose the cutting would be mainly through the foot of the spurs? Yes. Where the road turns off to Adelong we keep close to the bed of the creek; but the line would follow round the foot of small spurs running off the range.

132. I suppose this line practically runs through country consisting of small valleys and ridges? Yes. There is an immense ridge just opposite Gundagai, on the south-eastern side of the Murrumbidgee River. There is an immense ridge which the line has to follow round, before it turns up into Tumut. The coach road goes in a more direct way over the ridge, and gets into the valley of the Tumut River, and so approaches Tumut from that side. The Tumut valley is a very fine valley with fertile flats.

133. Is there no tract of fairly level plain country which that line traverses? Not for any distance.

134. The second and third items each contains an amount of timber for bridges;—will you indicate where the timber bridges would be required on the line? The bridge over the Murrumbidgee is kept separate.

135. Yes, I mean apart from that? It would be understood that the deeper the banks of a culvert are the longer the culvert would be. If timber bridges are used the higher the timber bridges will be; therefore, in a line of this character the cost of culverts and timber bridges is necessarily much higher than it would be if the banks were low. Just beyond that big cutting that I mentioned, there probably will be a culvert. The embankment just beyond the big cutting, which I stated was 53 feet in depth, is 32 feet in height. A culvert will have to be placed in that embankment. The length of that culvert will be, approximately, three times the height of the bank, plus the width of the embankment, that is to say, it would be 313 feet long. If the ground were level and the formation low, the culverts would be very little more than the width of the formation, so you see that the character of the country very largely affects the cost of culverts. It is the same with regard to bridges.

136. I find on the parish map, placed before the Committee, that there are three main surveys, one marked red, which is the proposal now before the Committee; another marked blue, on the western side of the Tumut River; and one marked green, on the eastern side of the Tumut River;—would you inform the Committee who surveyed each of those three routes, and what are the particular characteristics of each? The only route that has been surveyed is the red one. The blue and green lines are simply explorations, reports on which, of course, exist in the office. The red line was, as mentioned, I think, in Mr. Hickson's statement, first surveyed in the year 1884. That survey is very nearly the same as the latter one, but it was a more costly line. In that bend that I mentioned, there was a tunnel put, instead of going round as we do now. The original line did not curve so much; the curves were very much flatter. The practice at that time was to put much flatter curves, and not to attend to economising the work as has been done in more recent years. The first survey was made by Mr. Melrose in 1885, and a revision of that survey was made by Mr. Hixson and Mr. Martin. I went over their survey when it was about half complete, and, except in certain places, it did not differ very materially from Mr. Melrose's survey. Later on, I think between 1890 and 1894, the survey was amended, sharper curves were put in and careful grading was adopted so as to reduce the cost to the greatest possible extent, and the estimate has finally been reduced by cutting out ballast and cheapening station buildings, and so on, to make it correspond, as far as possible, with lines of a cheaper character which have recently been under consideration. Of course, as I have pointed out, the reduction as regards earthworks and bridges could only be within certain limits, depending on the character of the country. I examined that survey when it was about finished. Mr. Burge has made an examination up the Tumut River, and the results of the examination are these lines shown in blue and green. In the valley of the Tumut River there is very good land. But to carry the line up the river to Tumut would necessitate leaving the Gundagai line somewhere about Coolac, and that would mean that if a junction were made there there would be a short spur running into Gundagai which would be expensive to work. A proposal was made to run straight across from Gundagai and work round the hill into the Tumut valley, but it was found quite impracticable. There is a pencil-line on the map, not very plain, showing how such a line would have to go, and although in the general direction it makes for the Tumut valley, the windings of the line bring the total mileage up to the mileage of the red line.

137. And is there much difference other than that already indicated between the two lines—one along Adelong Creek, and the other along the Tumut—as to cost? No, I think not. If it were possible to get from Gundagai on to the Tumut River without any trouble, there cannot be two opinions as to which would be the best route in every way, because once you get on to the Tumut River you are simply following the valley, and although you have to skirt round the hills, there would be no big rise and fall, such as you have on the red line. But you cannot get through from Gundagai to the Tumut River. That has been the bar against the adoption of that route.

138. Has any estimate been made of the cost of the Coolac and Tumut route? I am inclined to think that a rough estimate was made. I would refer you to Mr. Hickson's statement, where it says:—

Towards the end of the year 1889 the Brungle Progress Committee, per Mr. Travers Jones, M.P., applied for a survey to be made of an alternative route from Coolac to Tumut. Mr. Bruce Smith approved of an examination being made, and Mr. Burge, under instructions from the Engineer-in-Chief, carried it out. Upon the report of the examination being submitted to the Minister, he raised the point that as it was contended this alternative route would cost less per mile than that from Gundagai, would Mr. Deane express his opinion on the question, and the Engineer-in-Chief in reply stated that as the line surveyed from Gundagai would serve Adelong, which the alternative would not, and as the saving of £1,225 interest on capital cost, which the alternative scheme was assumed to effect, would be counterbalanced by extra cost of working a separate plant, he concluded that the line as at present surveyed, would be the better.

That means that there was an estimated saving of £30,625 on capital cost.

139. *Mr. Watson.*] At what rate would that be at that time? Four per cent., I think.

TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

140. *Mr. Dick.*] What weight of rails do you propose to use on the proposed line of railway? Sixty-pound rails.

H. Deane.
7 Nov., 1899.

141. The same as those to be used on the proposed railway from Cobar to Wilcannia? Yes.

142. In that estimate of £837 per mile, have you allowed for the recent increase in the price of rails, or do you think that before the construction of the work is proceeded with the price will be reduced? I have not allowed for the increase in the price of rails. The increase in the price of rails at present would make a difference of £155 per mile.

143. At what price per ton have you taken the rails? It was higher than the £5 5s. which I intend to adopt as the standard. The price taken in this estimate was £5 15s. I think it is much more convenient to have one price for all the estimates, and to make an allowance to correspond with the existing rates. I have not done it in this case; but I have simply taken the estimates that we made in 1896.

144. It is proposed to ballast one quarter of the total length of the proposed line? Yes; that is just an estimate. You might be able to do with less than that.

145. Would you consider 3s. 6d. a yard a fair price? Yes; a good average price, because a good deal would have to be broken stone.

146. The estimate in the case of the proposed Cobar to Wilcannia railway was 5s. per yard? Yes; because we have to carry the material a considerable distance.

147. It is owing to the difficulty of getting stone? Yes.

148. Would there not be stone available along the whole length of this line? No; but in a good many cases it would be available.

149. Where would you get your sleepers from;—are there any hardwood forests handy to the line? I shall have to get them how I can. I shall get some red-gum from the Murrumbidgee. I expect there will be some other kinds of timber available. Red-box is, I think, found in the neighbourhood. I have taken an average of 2s. 6d. Some will probably cost more, some less. The red-gum sleepers will cost more, as they will have to be sawn.

150. There are two items together in the detailed estimate, totalling £13,000—"station work, including sidings and stations," and "station buildings, &c."—that is rather a large amount for this short length of line, especially as it is to be purely of a pioneer class? You have to provide for a terminal station, and a terminal station is always expensive, and as the country is uneven, the earthworks will be rather heavy.

151. What earthworks do you mean? The levelling up for platforms and sidings. The estimated cost of the station buildings is not out of the way. I have given the details, and I think it will be seen that there is nothing of an expensive character.

152. How do you differentiate the two items—"station works, including sidings," and "station buildings"? The station works are earthworks—the permanent-way and metalling. The item "station buildings" includes the buildings alone. You will see that amongst station buildings there are no earthworks; but in station works there are earthworks, sidings, cuttings, banks, and metalling.

153. *Mr. Watson.*] You put the sleepers down at 2s. 6d.;—how does that compare with what you are paying in the southern district—say, on the line from The Rock to Green's Gonyah? I think the price is 3s. 1d. on The Rock line. These are all red-gum sleepers. But I fancy that I shall be able to get some other timber off the hills such as red-box, which will be suitable. Perhaps the sleepers will come to a little more, and we may have to make it up out of some other item.

154. Then, with regard to ballasting only one-fourth of the line, is it not likely that, with the heavy rainfall there is even in that district, you will require a greater amount of ballast than you would require in a district where the rainfall is lighter? I should scarcely think that we should want any more ballast in that district, because the cuttings and banks will be for the most part made through hard stuff, so that they will stand very well.

155. It is usual though to ballast well in districts where the rainfall is great, is it not? Yes; on the coast I should ballast throughout. It would be unwise not to do so; but still in the district where this line is to run, though heavy falls do occur they are not like the falls that occur in the coast district.

156. Do you think sufficient attempts have been made to ascertain if it is not possible to get a junction between the present terminus at Gundagai, and some point on the Tumut River. I think you said a trial survey had been made across there? An exploration has been made for a line from Coolac.

157. Has there been any attempt made to get a connection with the Tumut River direct from Gundagai? Yes; but it was unsuccessful.

158. Do you think that that has been as extensive an exploration as is necessary? I am quite sure that such a project would be impracticable.

159. Is the Tumut River much more desirable from a construction point of view than the Adelong route? Yes. If we could get up the Tumut River it would be very much preferable. There is nice land along the Tumut River comprising fertile flats.

160. If we could get on to it without having to leave a dead end at Gundagai, would it not be a suitable route? Yes.

161. I mean from an engineering point of view;—is the Tumut River route an easier one? Yes, I think it would be easier. It would not be a dead level line, and it would not be an easy line, because you see from the lines shown as the result of the explorations that it is a very crooked line. There would be a series of cuttings and banks along the line.

162. It would be easy in comparison with the other? Yes.

163.

- H. Deane. 163. The land in the valley of the Tumut River is supposed to be better, and to be more extensive than the good land in the Adelong valley? Yes, the country is better on the Tumut.
- 7 Nov., 1893. 164. The width of the good land is greater? Yes, there is more of it.
165. *Chairman.*] I suppose you use the full weight of rails on the line? Yes, 60-lb. rails.
166. Are they the heaviest weight? No; the heaviest weight used at present is the 80-lb. rail. The rails used on the Gundagai line are 71½ lb.
167. Why do you make the difference? The 60-lb. rail is the weight which we are in the habit of using now for branch lines; it is a very suitable weight.
168. That is the weight of rail on the light lines, is it not? Yes. We have not been ordering the 71½-lb. rails recently. I think it is unlikely that anything between 60 and 80 lb. will be used. Eighty-pound rails would be unnecessarily heavy for this line.
169. Is 60 lb. heavy enough, except for the main lines? I think it is quite heavy enough for a line of this character where the traffic would not be very large. If the traffic were going to be very extensive, I should recommend the use of heavier rails.
170. I notice that you provide for cattle-stops;—are you going to have them at the road crossings? Yes.
171. Do you use them generally now? Yes.
172. Are they found to answer all purposes? Yes, they answer only fairly well. They sometimes give a good deal of trouble, and they are always being improved in design. They are not altogether satisfactory, but they save a lot of expense in gatekeepers.
173. There have been no accidents through cattle getting on the line owing to their use, have there? No serious accidents. Of course cattle have been injured, but there have been no accidents to any train.
174. There is an item of £1,500 for water supply;—is that what pumping costs? Yes.
175. There would not want to be any intermediate supply between Gundagai and Tumut? No; but from £1,200 to £1,500 is what the water supply would cost.
176. That would be for a pumping-engine at the Tumut end? Yes. You have to lay pipes—probably you have to make a weir or excavate a tank; you have to put down a pump and erect an overhead tank.
177. There is a sum of £471 for the telegraph;—is that for railway purposes? Yes; that is a fair price—about £15 a mile.
178. That is not the electric telegraph? Yes; it is the electric telegraph, and it includes instruments which the Electric Telegraph Department always provide. An arrangement is made with regard to that between Mr. Walker and the Railway Commissioners.
179. Do they use the Oppenheimer iron poles? Yes; in this case wooden poles are allowed for.
180. The next item is pretty heavy—gradient and mileage-posts, £471? That is about right. On the flatter lines I have cut out some of the gradient-posts, as it is unnecessary to have them on a very light grade. Gradient-posts are considered necessary by the Railway Commissioners as a guide to the engine-drivers, and mileage-posts cannot be very well dispensed with.
181. This line goes nearly all the way through private land? Yes.
182. Has any inquiry been made by the Department as to whether the owners would give the land free? I am not aware of it having been done.
183. If it were not so, I suppose the land being rather valuable, it would add greatly to the expense of the line if the land had to be paid for? Yes; I do not think it would be so easily dealt with as some lines which have been recently considered. I should like to point out that the Commissioners said that they could not recommend the construction of the line, and pointed out that if it were made at some future time, the residents should give the land required free of cost. I have not heard of any promise to give land for the line.
184. Have you any doubt in your own mind as to which you consider the best route of the three marked on the map, whether the red, the blue, or the green line? I have not the slightest doubt myself that the line now proposed is the only line to be adopted.
185. *Mr. Leven.*] Would not the telegraph line cost more than £471, if iron posts were used? I have no information about it. The telegraph is always erected by arrangement between the Commissioners and the Telegraph Department.
186. How do you come to that amount of £471? It is based on the cost of previous lines.
187. Lines on which the same kind of posts were used? I would not be certain as to the kind of posts.
188. There is a great difference between the estimate of Mr. Whitton in 1884, and this estimate of 1889;—can you account for that difference? The line was laid out originally with flatter curves, and the bridge was intended to be of steel throughout, and it was estimated to cost over £100,000.
189. Which of these surveys was it that Mr. Whitton formed his estimate on—the red, blue, or the green one? It was approximately the red one.
190. So that all the other estimates are founded almost upon the same route? Yes; but this line that is submitted has been worked up much more carefully, and contains much sharper curves—10-chain curves.
191. And with the same amount of safety for the travelling of trains? Yes.
192. You would not like to give your own individual opinion as to whether you would make this line or not? No; I have not gone into that question. I have not studied the traffic or the produce of the district.
193. It would include the instruments? Yes.
194. *Chairman.*] You have been along this line yourself? Yes; I have been over it twice.
195. And did it strike you as being a very extensive district suitable for agriculture, or is it not merely a narrow strip of land? It is a narrow strip.
196. The route through which the line would run is between two ranges of hills? Yes.
197. How far are those hills apart? There is very little ground except at the start, until where you turn off into Adelong, and from there into Tumut. You are in a narrow valley, one may say. After you leave the flats of the Murrumbidgee it does not appear to me that there is much good land for cultivation until you get on to the Tumut River.
198. In the neighbourhood of Tumut, and especially in the north and north-east, is where the land is that would be suitable for agriculture? Yes; there is very fine land there.
199. Did you go along the main road, either coming or going? Yes, I have been along the coach road.
200. Is that a good road? It is very hilly; it rises to a considerable height, then descends again.
201. But still it is a good road, is it not? It is a good road, but the gradients are steep.
202. It is a formed, metalled road? Yes.

203. When Mr. Hickson was here we asked him as to the possibility of converting the present road-bridge into a combined bridge;—would that be practicable? It would be very undesirable; it would not pay to do so. H. Deane.
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204. Are there objections to combined bridges? Yes; especially in the case of such a long bridge as that one is.
205. What is the length of it? A little over 3,000 feet is provided for the bridge and viaducts.
206. The actual bridge is not very wide, is it? The length of the actual bridge is about 312 feet.
207. Is the policy at the present time against the use of combined bridges for railways and roads? Yes.
208. It is not desirable? No; they are costly to maintain, even if you can save capital expense. There would be the cost of watching the signals, and the delay to both train traffic and road traffic under the circumstances, because, unless the bridge were kept clear for the trains, the trains would be kept waiting whilst cattle or vehicles got off the bridge, and *vice versa*.
209. Would that be the case if there were two distinct roadways? No; but then that would not be cheaper than having separate bridges.
210. I suppose that in country where cattle and sheep are driven in large numbers, it is not desirable for railway trains to be running over the same bridges as the ordinary road traffic? It is far better to keep them quite distinct if you can.
211. *Mr. Levien.*] There is a big traffic over that double bridge at Singleton, and it has been there for many years, but I never knew of an accident happening on it? That is a comparatively short bridge.
212. There is a great traffic over that bridge, and both trains and other traffic go over the same track. It is on the main northern road? If that were again under consideration, a bridge of that kind would not be built. In this case there certainly would not be any saving. The road-bridge over the main channel would not be strong enough for a railway.
213. What will the bridge in this case be constructed of? I should build the channel spans of steel, and the rest of timber.
214. Would you call it a composite bridge? It would be a steel bridge—steel girders resting on iron and concrete piers, probably.
215. *Chairman.*] What has caused the very great reduction in the cost of the railway since the first estimate was obtained for this line—this drop from £12,000 a mile to £4,000 a mile? In the first place, there are differences in the cost of work. Cuttings, for instance, were put down at 2s. 6d., but I have estimated my cuttings at 1s. 9d. per cubic yard. That makes a considerable difference. Then, by carefully following the contour of the country, the quantity of earthworks has been very considerably diminished. By adopting 10-chain curves, the earthworks have been reduced down to about three-fifths of the original quantity.
216. Would altering your curves increase the distance? It makes a difference of about half a mile only. The bridges and culverts come to a good deal less than they used to, because the designs used are now much more economical than the old ones. Then the bridge over the Murrumbidgee River, I see, was put down at £113,000. That would be for a steel bridge, with steel spans right across instead of making it consist largely of a timber viaduct.
217. I expect the stations would cost more in those days, would they not? Yes. The stations are put down at £26,753, that is rather more than double what I have put down. In this estimate I have about £13,000 down for the stations. Then there are various other items which are reduced. There is a tunnel which I mentioned was cut out with closer alignment and sharper curves. It was 307 yards in length, and estimated to cost £16,276. You asked for a report on the Tumut River line. I now hand it in. There are several reports; there is a report in November, 1889, and a report in 1892. The report in 1889 is about the Tumut River proposal, and the report in 1892 is chiefly in connection with the proposal to get across from Gundagai. There are Mr. Burge's reports in those two cases, and reports of mine on the top of them. [*Vide Appendix.*] I hand in copies of the reports made in November, 1889, and in December, 1892, upon the alternative proposals of railway routes for reaching Tumut, made by Mr. Burge, then Assistant Engineer for Railway Surveys.
218. May I ask, at the same time, whether you are of the same opinion as you were then as to these two reports? I am quite of the same opinion.
219. If a railway were to be constructed, the route at present under consideration is, in your opinion, the best? Yes; that is the right one.
220. Do you regard a grade of 1 in 50 on lines of this kind as a reasonable gradient? It is the best that we can get. The flatter the grade the better, on any line.
221. Under the circumstances of the country, it is the best grade procurable? I think it is the only one procurable. The country lends itself easily to a grade of 1 in 50, and I do not think anything better is possible.
222. Is not a line of railway 31 miles 35 chains in length, to connect the two places, Gundagai and Tumut, which are only 21 miles distant in a straight line, or by the coach road, almost unique in our railway experience? I cannot call to mind any similar instance; but it is conceivable that, under like circumstances, it would be worth while to go round a long way to get an easy route.
223. Going such a long way round to reach a place at so short a distance would seem to argue that you should get something pretty good to recommend it, would it not? Yes; it does seem so.
224. You ought to tap a rich agricultural district of considerable extent, or a large mining centre that would possibly be a large feeder to the railway? Yes; of course, you have to make up your mind whether it is worth while to go to the expense to get the best route.
225. *Mr. Watson.*] I think you said you put down £18,000 for the bridge? No; £25,100.
226. Do you know what was the cost of the present road bridge with the new approaches? I could not say without inquiring from the Roads Branch.
227. I was under the impression that about £20,000 was spent on the approaches to the present road-bridge recently, without the steel structure in the centre? It is very possible. A road-bridge is more expensive than a railway bridge, on account of its width.
228. Would not the flats near Gundagai that have to be crossed be somewhat similar to the flats at Wagga Wagga, which the main Southern line crosses? Yes.
229. Have they not recently replaced the wooden structure there with a steel one? Yes.
230. Do you know for what reason? Because some of the timber had decayed. It had not been all carefully

- H. Deane.
7 Nov., 1899.
- carefully selected, and the design of the timber spans was not a very good one. They sagged under the heavy loads.
231. They replaced them with steel;—would not that argue that it was unwise to build wooden viaducts? I do not think so. When the Commissioners replaced the one at Wagga Wagga with steel they were replacing a bridge on a main line—an express line. This timber bridge, built of timber carefully selected, will last, I suppose, twenty-five or thirty years.
232. That is a pretty heavy annual charge—£1,000 a year for the bridge alone? It will very likely last a great deal longer.
233. What would approximately be the cost of a steel or iron viaduct? I have not gone into it carefully very recently; but I should think that a steel viaduct would cost a little more than double a timber viaduct.
234. Would an iron one cost the same amount as a steel one? There would be no saving in having an iron one. You can get steel work at very little more expense than iron, and it carries much more.
235. Reverting to the bridge question, the annual cost of a steel bridge would be 3 per cent. on £50,000, or £1,500? Yes.
236. Would that be practically imperishable? I do not think you could say that, because it is not known at present what the life of a steel bridge is. It is very often taken as interminable, but I think that is a very wrong thing to do. Anyhow, there are many cases of steel bridges which, after a time, have proved to be inadequate, and have had to be replaced, although not worn out. It is not safe to regard them as absolutely permanent structures.
237. Would you have to paint a steel bridge regularly to keep it in order? Yes.
238. What would it cost, roughly, to keep it going;—would it amount to 5 per cent. of its original cost? Much less than that. I should think from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 per cent.
239. How frequently do they paint them? They paint bridges when money can be spared. A good many bridges are only repainted when they urgently require it. They are always left as long as possible.
240. What proportion of this £25,000, to be spent on wooden viaducts with a steel bridge, would be represented by the viaducts and the bridge respectively? The steel bridge comes to £7,846, and the balance is for the timber viaduct.
241. That is, roughly, about £17,000 for the viaducts and about £8,000 for the bridge? Yes.
242. Of course, if the structure had to be replaced after twenty-five years its annual cost would be £1,750, including interest and the £1,000 that would disappear each year in depreciation. Then, when you subtract from that the steel bridge to the extent of £8,000 you would probably make it very level? It is a little cheaper to build a bridge of ironbark, allowing for depreciation, and allowing for the difference in the lives of the structures.
243. At the end of twenty-five or thirty years, you might want to increase the size or strength of the bridge, and a wooden one would give you a better opportunity of doing that? It would. You would have a better chance at the end of twenty-five or thirty years of building a heavier structure, if locomotive designs have progressed in the same way as they have done during the last twenty or thirty years.
244. And would the balance be in favour of local employment in connection with a wooden bridge? Yes; decidedly. The cost of a wooden bridge is nearly all due to labour.
245. So that, from all points of view, it seems that a wooden bridge in such a case is preferable? Yes.

Robert R. P. Hickson, Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

- R. R. P. Hickson.
7 Nov., 1899.
246. *Chairman.*] You are going to let us have some information, in the first place, about the cost of the present Gundagai bridge? The cost of the present bridge, which was completed in 1869, was £37,371, a portion being of iron and a portion of wood. The timber approach was reconstructed, being finished last year, at a cost of £14,541. You asked me the cost of the road between Gundagai and Tumut; 1864 is the first date we have of any expenditure on that road, and since that date there has been spent on making and maintenance £29,880, and the annual maintenance now is £1,000 a year for the 20 miles of road. The following is the Railway Commissioners' report on the scheme:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 6 November, 1899.

Proposed Line Gundagai to Tumut; length, 31 miles 35 chains.

In accordance with the request of the Honorable the Minister for Public Works, that we should again report upon this proposed extension, we beg to state that the matter has once more been the subject of careful investigation, and while there has been an increase in the cultivation of wheat in the district, the growth of maize and tobacco has decreased, so that in the main the traffic prospects are practically the same as when the last report was submitted in May, 1896.

The revenue which it is expected the line would yield, based upon a liberal estimate of existing and prospective traffic, and by charging local rates, would be about £3,900 per annum; and if through rates were charged it would only be about £1,700.

The estimated capital cost of the line, exclusive of land resumption—£148,310—at 3 per cent.	
would mean a yearly charge of	£4,450
And the working expenses would amount to about.....	£3,700
Total	£8,150

We may point out that the Cootamundra-Gundagai line, over which practically the whole of the existing traffic of the district is carried, showed a loss of £4,161 for the year ending 31st December, 1898, and for nine years the average loss has been £6,458.

As the area of land in the district suitable for cultivation is limited, we would strongly advise that the line be not constructed.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this sixth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, in the presence of,—	{	CHARLES OLIVER,
		Chief Commissioner.
		W. M. FEHON,
		Commissioner.
		DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
		Commissioner.

H. McLACHLAN.

247. In the statement which you have handed in you allow £1,000 a year for the maintenance of the main road between Gundagai and Tumut? Yes.

248. Would that go on all the same if the railway were constructed? Our experience has been that the reduction in the cost of maintaining a parallel road is very small indeed where we have made a railway, because

because the road has to be kept in order as an approach to the stations. The amount which we would save would be very little.

249. You have the main road from Tumut to Gundagai? Yes.

250. Do you think that would continue to be used? Not for through traffic, but it is bound to be used a good deal for local traffic, and as an approach to the various stations.

251. It would not do to let it go to ruin? No, you cannot let it go to ruin; and you cannot maintain it for very much less than is spent upon it at present.

R. R. P.
Hickson.

7 Nov., 1899.

WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

The Hon. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

252. *Chairman.*] The Commissioners have forwarded a report on this railway, dated 6th November, 1899? Yes; I have a copy which I will read.

253. Could you give us the reason for the line from Cootamundra to Gundagai being such a losing line? As a matter of fairness it might be stated that one reason of the loss is a much heavier capital expenditure than that now proposed.

254. That was a line which was constructed under the old regime? Yes.

255. Possibly at a cost of £12,000 per mile? At a cost of £10,000 per mile.

256. Do you know the country between Cootamundra and Gundagai? I have been over the line.

257. Is it as difficult as the country between Gundagai and Tumut? I do not think it is; but I do not know much of the latter route. As far as the engineering question is concerned, I would not like to speak as to the relative cost. The cost of the line is high between Cootamundra and Gundagai.

258. If the line from Cootamundra to Gundagai were constructed under modern conditions, and at as much reduced a price as this line is likely to be constructed at, do you think that it would be such a non-paying line, or what proportion would the loss be then? If it were built at the same rate of expenditure there would be practically very little loss.

259. Has the line from Cootamundra to Gundagai since its construction become a better paying line or otherwise? There is a statement made in the last paragraph but one of the Commissioners' report, that the loss which for nine years has averaged £6,450 was reduced last year to £4,161.

260. Indicating that it is improving? It was better last year.

261. As compared with the two previous years? I have not an analysis of the traffic. I think the improvement was to some considerable extent due to the increased stock traffic. A large number of stock was sent by that line for the pasturage, particularly from the south-west to the district beyond Gundagai.

262. What is the chief item of traffic on the Cootamundra to Gundagai line? Mixed goods business,—that is, quantities of ore, produce, maize, tobacco, general goods, wool, and stock.

263. Is it a cattle district? No; we have been carrying sheep principally.

264. That line was constructed, I think, before the Commissioners held office? Yes.

265. Is that one of the lines that the Commissioners looked upon as undesirable? No; I would not say that.

266. Coming on from Gundagai to Tumut, the Commissioners' report was very unfavourable;—how have they arrived at this result? They sent a traffic officer into the district.

267. Did you send Mr. Harper? One of his officers was sent, and the traffic returns were prepared through Mr. Harper. The officer was sent to collect information as to the traffic which would belong to the line, and he gave a return of the traffic which we might expect. As a matter of fact, 25 per cent. was added for development, and the results are shown in the Commissioners' figures.

268. By local rates, do you mean a special rate from Tumut to Gundagai and back? No. What is meant is charging a fresh rate from Gundagai; if you take a through rate, the through rate always tapers off. The local rate would start *de novo*. It is the same as if you were paying a rate from Sydney. The rate for grain from 1 to 30 miles would be about 2s. 6d., but if it were a continuing through rate the charge would be only 3d.; so it makes a very big alteration. That accounts for the difference in the figures.

269. That local rate is one which you adopt generally on lines which, at the outset, are not likely to be paying? Yes. We have on several occasions adopted this rate, although in regard to grain it has more often than not been waived, in order to encourage the growth of grain. Local rates were adopted on the Jerilderie, Berrigan, and Finley lines, but have been modified.

270. Then, if this line were constructed, there would be an absolute necessity that there should be special local rates? Yes.

271. Is there anything in that district which would lead the Commissioners to think that the traffic might be increased considerably by reason of the increased railway facilities? In the estimate they allow for an increase of 25 per cent.

272. And with that 25 per cent., what would be the annual loss? That is shown by the figures. £9,900 is the value of the traffic as against £8,150 for working expenses and interest.

273. Making an annual loss of about £4,000? Yes.

274. This direct road from Gundagai to Tumut appears to be only 20 miles? Twenty-two miles, I believe.

275. Whereas the distance by the proposed railway is 31½ miles? Yes; 31 miles 35 chains.

276. I suppose that that being so, the distance itself being so short, there ought to be something special to induce the construction of a railway at such a large expense? Yes.

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277. Do you know the country between Gundagai and Tumut, along the proposed line? Not personally.
 278. The book of reference shows that the line passes all the way through private lands? Yes.
 279. That item is not taken into consideration in estimating the cost of the line if constructed? No.
 280. If it were thought desirable to construct a line, I suppose the Commissioners would advocate that the land for the railway should be given free? Yes; they mentioned that in their previous report. They say in their report of 1889:—"If the line is made at some future date, we consider the residents should combine to have the land necessary conveyed free of cost."
 281. Have you the Commissioners' previous reports on this extension? Yes, they were as under. On the 5th May, 1896, they reported:—

The only favourable change that has occurred since that date has been the revision by the Public Works Department of the estimate of construction, which is now materially reduced.

In our report made in 1889 we stated that if the most sanguine expectations were realised, in our opinion the line could not, for many years, more than meet working expenses, and that it was doubtful whether that could be accomplished. We also stated that, looking at the matter from a commercial point of view, the construction of the line could not be recommended.

Since that date the district has not improved in any way; in fact the trade is less than it was on the date the matter was previously under consideration, and we therefore strongly recommend the Government not to entertain the proposal.

We would draw attention to the fact that the branch line from Cootamundra to Gundagai entails a loss of £6,474 per annum, and it has to convey nearly all the traffic that would be carried over this extension, as well as the traffic secured from its own surrounding country. This clearly indicates how unprofitable the proposed extension would be.

In their report, dated 20th June, 1889, the Railway Commissioners say:—

In accordance with section 13 of the "Public Works Act, 1888," we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief estimates the cost of construction of a single line of railway (exclusive of land and compensation) at £383,500

Annual cost—

Interest of construction, at 3½ per cent. £13,422

The cost of working the line is estimated as under:—

Traffic expenses..... £1,027

Permanent way expenses 3,876

Locomotive expenses 1,580

6,482

Total annual cost £19,904

It will be seen from the above figures that the interest on the capital expended in the construction of the line would be £13,422, and estimated working expenses £6,482, making a total annual expenditure, without taking into consideration the interest upon the amount required for the purchase of land and rolling stock, of £19,904. This sum there is no hope of realising from the revenue derivable from the line if constructed, as, although there is no sound basis upon which an accurate estimate of the traffic can be given, the most sanguine results, if realised, could not for many years more than meet working expenses, and it is doubtful whether that could be accomplished.

As to the district, there can be no question as to its fertility and its natural advantages for agricultural pursuits, and also as a pasturage ground for stock from the plains country during periods of drought; yet, giving the project the most favourable consideration, an annual loss would have to be for some years met from the revenue now derived from existing lines. Bearing this fact in mind, and dealing with the matter from a commercial point of view, the construction of the line cannot be recommended. At the same time, being the only mode of opening up a district possessed of great natural advantages, the residents, in a national sense, are not unreasonable in urging its construction.

If the line is made at some future date we consider that the residents in the district should combine together to have the land necessary for the construction of the line conveyed to the Department free of cost.

282. That report is dated the 20th June, 1889? Yes.

283. And the previous one was dated May, 1896.

284. So that these figures appear in 1889;—the total annual cost, interest at 3½ per cent. and working expenses, amount to £19,904? Yes. The cost of construction then was considerably more than it is now.

285. The same figures were given by the Commissioners in July, 1896? They gave no figures in 1896.

286. No figures were given in 1896, but in the report of the 6th November your estimate of the working expenses and interest is reduced to £8,150;—is not that a very marked reduction? Yes.

287. There is one paragraph in your report of 1889 which concludes with the following:—

At the same time, being the only mode of opening up a district possessed of great natural advantages, the residents, in a national sense, are not unreasonable in urging its construction.

—? Yes.

288. Do the Commissioners still maintain that view? I hardly think they do.

289. They do not look upon this line now exactly in a national sense? I do not think so.

290. But looking at it as a business transaction, and from a commercial point of view, the Commissioners do not recommend it? They do not.

291. *Mr. Levin.*] Can you tell us of any lines which have been submitted for some time, the construction of which the Commissioners have recommended? Yes; they recommended the Coonamble line.

292. They recommended the Warren line, did they not? They recommended the Warren line as being the best and cheapest; but they said that Coonamble was entitled to a railway.

293. Do you know how many lines they have recommended the construction of? They recommended the Narrabri to Moree line, the Grenfell line, and the Green's Gunyah line.

294. How many have they recommended of those that are about to be constructed? They did not recommend the Wilcannia line, but they recommended the Coonamble line.

295. What about the line from Narrabri to Walgett? They intend to go over that. The report with regard to that line is not yet ready.

296. Have they given consideration to the fact that the railways are bringing about population and settlement? Certainly; that is why they indicate that there is fair consideration to be given to a branch railway, from a national point of view, outside what you may call the strictly commercial point of view; and

and they have on more than one occasion laid it down that they do not wish to tie the Committee to the strictly commercial aspect of the matter where it can be shown that there is a prospect of a big development in a district, with consequent assistance to the parent lines.

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297. Tumut has a splendid climate, said to be one of the best in the Colony, and it is likely to bring about settlement, and to bring population there on account of their health;—do they take that into consideration? We have got equally choice health resorts within a couple of hours of Sydney. If you want a favourable climate you can find it on the Southern and Western lines at such resorts as Bowral, Moss Vale, Mittagong, and Katoomba.

298. Better climates than they have at Tumut? I think quite as good. Mount Victoria is much higher than Tumut, and Tumut is too far away.

299. You say that there is a falling off in the production of maize and tobacco in the Tumut district? Yes.

300. Can you tell us what the maize crops generally were about there? We had figures showing it. In 1896, according to the return that we had, the number of acres under wheat was only about 2,000 in that district. There were 5,000 acres under maize and about 1,000 under tobacco.

301. Can you tell me what is the reason of the falling off in the maize crop? No.

302. Do they grow as much maize as formerly without sending by railway, because of the competition of road carriage? I am not quite certain. The probability is that the greater quantity of maize goes into local consumption. In regard to wheat, I believe the flour that is grown is only sufficient for local consumption. There is not a big export of flour from that district.

303. I am talking about maize? I am not certain of the cause of the decrease.

304. Do you know the reason of the falling off of the production of the tobacco in that district? I think that was due to lower prices.

305. And to the greater growth of tobacco in other parts of the Colony? I could not say. The tobacco crop has been going back for some years. The officer sent up to report on the produce of the district says:—

In 1890, I am informed, the tobacco was at its best, and the estimated production then was 750 tons yearly, whilst now it is only about 350 tons. The falling off was due to two causes, namely, crops failing, and the lower price realised.

306. If they had railway carriage, so that they could bring their crops down to compete in the market, would not that help them? The estimate of the traffic allows for an increase of 25 per cent.

307. Do you think that that is sufficient? I should think so.

308. Does your officer report anything as to the quality of the tobacco at all? No.

309. What is the population of that district? The population of the district is about 6,000.

310. When was that? That was at a comparatively recent date. Mr. Harper, in a report only three days ago, says: "The population of Tumut and outlying districts is about 6,000."

311. Is there much wool produced in that district? The traffic in wool which we expect to get from Adelong and Tumut is 306 tons.

312. Has the drought any effect upon the supply of wool locally? I think not.

313. Is the country so good there that they do not lose much stock in time of drought? I do not think they suffer much from drought there.

314. Is the rainfall more certain there than in other parts of the Colony? They generally have a fair rainfall.

315. What would you depend upon principally to support a railway in that part? Maize, tobacco, and perhaps a little wheat, and general goods, wool and stock traffic, and passengers.

316. How about the mining and out that way? About Adelong it is principally gold-mining. A great deal of chrome ore has been coming from that district, but I do not think that the proposed line would take much of it. There has been a large traffic in chrome ore on the Gundagai railway.

317. Would there be any special rates charged along this line? The Commissioners' report points out that if we charge a special rate the earnings will be £3,900, but if we charge a through rate the earnings will only come to £1,700.

318. So a special rate would be more to the advantage of the railway revenue than a through rate? It would be about £2,000 better.

319. Do you think it is advisable, according to your experience, to make these, what I may call, invidious charges, because the railway is built on national principles for the advantage of all? Still it is only reasonable that where you give a concession or advantage to local people they should help to bear the burden of it rather than throw it upon the whole community.

320. Suppose the people give their land for the railway, do you not think that that is a *quid pro quo*? No. It is only a few people who would give the land, and the great number would benefit—people living back from the railway. The people who give the land would merely be those through whose land the line would run. There would be many people living away from the line who would get the benefit of the railway practically without paying anything.

321. I admit that that would occur in most instances; but in this case those through whose land the line will run would give their land in the interests of the country, and do you not think that it is a fair concession to make? They say, "Why should we be charged special rates who have given our land for the benefit of all concerned?" I think it is quite reasonable that where a line would entail a big loss the people to whom the accommodation is granted should pay some little extra charge rather than that the whole community should pay. The people on the sea coast are not benefited by the construction of the railway, but it will bring competitors against them, and yet they have to bear some part of the burden.

322. Water-carriage is cheaper than land-carriage;—can they not always compete against a railway? You are taxing them to assist their competitors.

323. A railway will bring population; do you think it is fair that when a railway is opened and the land-owners pay a special rate that they should suffer loss? I think that the special rate is a fair thing. If the district develops the Commissioners will always wipe out the special charge.

324. But they would not make a concession for past payments made by those people who brought the railway there? No; those people have had the benefit of the railway. According to our present figures, the loss on this line will amount to about £4,000 per year; but it would be a direct advantage to everybody in the district. The wheat-grower will be able to get his wheat carried from Tumut to Gundagai at about 2s. 6d. per ton; at present, I suppose, he is charged 15s. per ton.

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325. How many of these railways made within the last fifteen years are absolutely paying? Information is published in the Commissioners' report each year regarding some non-paying lines. I hand in the following statement, showing the earnings and expenditure upon the railways for the year ending 31st December, 1898:—

Line.	Length.	Capital cost.	Interest on capital.	Working expenses.		Total earnings.		Loss after providing for working expenses and interest.	
				Year ending December, 1898.	Year ending December, 1897.	Year ending December, 1898.	Year ending December, 1897.	Year ending December, 1898.	Year ending December, 1897.
Narrandera to Jerilderie, Berrigan, and Finley.	100 3/4	514,230	16,772	11,585	10,101	15,821	14,863	12,536	11,747
Junce to Hay	167 3/4	1,062,832	42,513	35,231	32,324	63,268	57,463	14,476	16,852
Wallerawang to Mudgee	85 6	1,043,285	40,101	20,292	19,694	34,830	32,608	25,563	26,671
Cootamundra to Gundagai	33 4/5	285,748	9,833	5,606	5,305	11,278	9,823	4,161	5,083
Goulburn to Cooma	130 40	1,463,074	51,208	25,215	27,495	34,092	36,631	42,331	42,047
Murrumburrah to Blayney	110 63	1,144,880	40,671	32,394	31,709	33,914	31,168	38,551	40,555
Orange to Molong, Parkes, and Forbes, Bogan Gate and Condobolin.	158 2/3	855,554	28,864	24,831	21,154	50,489	44,602	3,206	3,634
Blacktown to Richmond	16 12	197,509	8,279	8,370	8,278	12,412	11,483	4,237	5,074
Tamworth to Armidale	76 76	1,214,612	47,514	23,724	23,203	42,871	42,281	28,367	28,433
Armidale to Jennings	132 4/5	1,540,291	58,812	32,787	34,419	34,668	36,853	56,931	56,366
Hornsby to Milson's Point	13 27 1/2	618,211	22,525	16,096	14,534	25,765	22,440	12,856	14,602
Sydney to Kiama	71 5/2	2,186,673	73,930	106,127	105,203	152,798	142,987	27,259	37,631
Kiama to Nowra	22 43 1/2	380,816	13,334	5,042	5,127	6,253	5,956	12,123	12,504
Lismore to Murwillumbah	63 57	920,919	32,284	7,360	6,831	11,515	10,707	28,138	28,398
Sydenham to Belmore	5 3 1/2	207,518	6,983	4,888	4,829	3,937	3,947	7,934	7,923
Culcairn to Corowa	47 39	232,963	8,196	3,781	3,361	4,969	4,226	7,008	7,323
Cootamundra to Temora	38 69	192,847	7,187	4,979	4,986	9,300	8,651	2,866	3,519
Nyngan to Cobarr	81 27 1/2	324,625	11,652	10,276	9,927	21,477	20,177	451	1,392
Nevertire to Warren	12 33 1/2	43,567	1,525	2,277	Not open	2,937	Not open	865	Not open
	1,368 15 3/4	14,430,154	521,533	380,870	367,880	572,594	536,866	329,859	349,754

- 326-7. What do you say will be the amount of the annual loss upon this railway? About £4,200.
328. Do you know any line of railway of the same length on which the loss amounts to that sum? Yes; we have lines losing proportionately more money.
329. And this has been strongly recommended as having better prospects? I would not say that. Take the Cootamundra to Gundagai line. On that line we are losing £5,000 per year.
330. What is its length? Thirty-three miles. There is the line from Blacktown to Richmond, only half the distance of this proposed railway, and we are losing £4,000 per year on that. On the line from Hornsby to Milson's Point we are losing £13,000 per year.
331. And that is where all the land has been paid for by the Commissioners, but not on the betterment principle, and the railways are still working at these great losses? Yes. Of course, most of these lines were made before the Commissioners took office.
332. *Mr. Shepherd.*] About these special rates: when goods are sent the whole distance from Gundagai to Sydney is a special rate charged on the whole distance or only from Gundagai? No; a special rate would commence from Gundagai. It would be exactly the same thing as if you sent traffic from Sydney to Camden. You would pay the same rate as you would pay if sending goods from Sydney to Camden. You commence *de novo* from 1 to 30 miles again.
333. About the falling off in the maize crop, has no good reason been given for that? I daresay there has been. We sent an officer up there, and Mr. Harper will be able to give you full details.
334. I presume that the produce from Tumut all goes to Gundagai? Yes.
335. Is it not rather a rough road for some considerable distance? Yes; it is 22 miles by road.
336. I suppose that you are aware that Tumut maize generally commands the highest price in the Sydney market? I am not aware.
337. Are you aware that any overtures have been made to the owners of land as to their giving the land free for the railway? No; that would be received by the Works Department.
338. So that really has not been taken into consideration so far? No.
339. Can we look forward to any hope of enlarging the trade in the event of this railway being constructed? The Commissioners see no immediate prospect of a growth of traffic that would justify the construction of the line. They added 25 per cent. to their estimate for any increase of the existing traffic.
340. *Mr. Dick.*] Can you state whether the construction of the Cootamundra to Gundagai line was followed by any satisfactory increase in settlement and in agriculture? There has been an increase in the trade within the last few years, but I am inclined to think that it is largely due to the extra stock traffic.
341. You do not think that the increase in agriculture is commensurate with the expenditure on the railway? Personally, I think not.
342. The report which you handed in states that the country to be served by the line is undoubtedly highly fertile? Yes; but limited in area.
343. As a rule it is the practice to include within the traffic area of the proposed railway, as far as agriculture is concerned, a stretch of country 20 miles on each side of the line? That altogether depends upon circumstances. If you look at this line you will see that you will get too near to the Southern Railway in one part.
344. Is not that the usual practice? It is if there is no competing line.
345. Could you get 20 miles on each side of this line to draw traffic from? I hardly think so, because once you get beyond Tumut the country commences to be rough. It is not productive country.
346. Is it a fact that fairly high mountain ranges run almost parallel with this line on each side of it and not far from it? I do not know enough of the locality to answer that question.
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347. South of Tumut there is not an area of country likely to afford much traffic to the proposed railway? I believe not.
348. In taking evidence on the proposed extension to Wyalong we were assured by several pastoralists that the Tumut district is very favourably situated for the transfer thereto of starving stock in time of drought. Yes.
349. If this line were constructed would any material amount of revenue, year in and year out, be derived from such a source? There will be a certain revenue, and that has been allowed for; but there would be no great advantage in making a line for that purpose, as the stock goes there to-day.
350. Is it a fact that most of the traffic to be carried by this line is already carried over the Gundagai extension? Yes.
351. And that not much new traffic could be expected from the further extension of the line? I think not.
352. Do you think that the conditions of the country between Gundagai and Tumut are such as to offer an opportunity for exacting a local tax on the land in liquidation of the annual loss on the railway? The Commissioners recommended the same thing, practically, in connection with the Green's Gonyah line. They proposed that there should be a tax on the whole of the land that would be benefited. I have not had an opportunity of speaking with the Commissioners on the point, in connection with this line, and I am not aware whether they think it would be a fair thing to recommend.
353. Do you know anything of land values in the district? No.
354. I find from your report that since 1889, practically ten years, the district has not made much progress from a railway point of view? No; I do not think there has been a wonderful increase in the production.
355. And you see little or nothing to warrant any very great increase or development of the country? Not sufficient, the Commissioners think, to justify the making of a railway.
356. *Mr. Watson.*] Did the Commissioners make any attempt to get information about the prospect of either of the alternative routes which were surveyed from Coolac to Tumut? They did in 1896; but not when they were making this report.
357. Well, they say in this report, "Circumstances have not changed materially, respecting the line now proposed, since 1896"? No.
358. The general result is much the same as you expected then? Yes.
359. Would that apply also to the alternatives? Yes. The results were got in 1896, when the Commissioners were rather in favour of the route as now suggested if you are to adopt any route at all.
360. Is that intrinsically or after allowing for the extra cost of working the dead end between Coolac and Gundagai? I am speaking of it from a purely traffic point of view and of the traffic on the section.
361. And the prospect of revenue? Yes; I am speaking of the probable revenue to be got by going from Coolac or from Gundagai.
362. And you say that the results were in favour of the line now before us? Yes.
363. Is that owing to the better serving of the Adelong population by the proposed route? I think that that is to some extent the reason of it. The distance was the same, I believe, in both cases.
364. Of course, from a railway point of view, the working of the dead end from Coolac to Gundagai, which would be one result of making the line from Coolac, would be a bad thing? It would be inconvenient.
365. Would it mean much additional expense as compared with running trains right through? It would mean very awkward working. It would be preferable for us to have straightaway work.
366. Do you know if your officer inquired into the question of the possible competition of the existing road for some distance with the railway? That might happen for a small distance out; but anything close to the railway, if near Adelong or Tumut, would be sent by railway. The roads are pretty heavy, and the cost of the road-carriage in 1896 showed that road-carriage is pretty high.
367. So you think that we can actually compete, notwithstanding that the railway-carriage will be 10 miles longer from Tumut to Gundagai? Yes.
368. Whatever road you adopt to reach Tumut you lose a certain portion of the traffic that would accrue to the other road from Coolac? Yes. You would lose some mineral traffic, but it would come to the line ultimately. It comes to the Gundagai line. Then, of course, you would like to know which section gets the bigger traffic. The returns we adopt seem to indicate that the best results will be attained by making the line from Gundagai to Tumut.
369. Whatever route is adopted it will not completely serve the country included in both routes? No, I think not.
370. Possibly the traffic would still grow by road? That would apply to one large item—that of chrome ore.
371. Where does that come from now? It comes from nearer Brungle, I believe—that is to the right of Gundagai.
372. It is close to the Tumut River, is it not? Yes; this is the note we have of it:
- 2,685 tons of chrome ore were despatched from Gundagai by rail during 1895, but as it is produced near Brungle, the proposed line *via* Adelong to Tumut would not get it, consequently the traffic would be forwarded from Gundagai as at present, but if the line went from Coolac to Tumut *via* Brungle these ores would then be trucked from the latter.
373. In that case you would miss a large portion of traffic by the other route? Yes; but the general result seems to be in favour of the line *via* Adelong to Tumut.
374. Do you know whether the Commissioners or their officers have gone beyond Tumut, with the view of seeing whether there is any suitable country that would be tapped by the line? The Commissioners know, though they have not gone beyond there, that the country gets rough and mountainous. You get on the mountains in that direction. Mr. Levien suggested a sanatorium. The Yarrangobilly Caves are not far from there.
375. Would the tourists' traffic in summer-time be of any material importance? No, I think not, for this reason, that you have already got a nearer route to Sydney *via* Cooma. Cooma is only 264 miles from Sydney, but Tumut will be fully 50 miles further.
376. Would leaving the train at Tumut afford any great saving in coaching towards the caves, as compared with leaving the train at Cooma? It would be nearer to the Yarrangobilly Caves.
377. I suppose that a portion of those engaged in touring would look upon coaching as a thing to be avoided? Yes; but Cooma has other advantages—it is near the Kosciusko country. This would be advantageous as an alternative route—people would go one way and come back the other—but there would not be enough of that traffic to justify the making of a railway.

H. McLachlan.
8 Nov., 1899.

378. As regards the cost of working the proposed extension, would the same staff in charge of the rolling stock now employed on the Cootamundra and Gundagai line be sufficient to work this extension? No; we should have to get additional sets of men. The same men would work it one day, but those men would have to be changed the next day. It would be too long to work from Cootamundra to Tumut and back each day. It would be equal to appointing new men. Of course, the same locomotives would work the line through. Consideration has been given to that. We are simply charging what would be the actual cost of working it, and the officers have borne in mind what they could do in regard to working the present staff and existing engines.

379. With regard to Adelong, Grahamstown, and places such as those, which would be served by the projected line, is the population there understood to be permanent? There is a good deal of mining. The mining prospects of the district are good; I know that there are some good mines in the district likely, I should think, to be permanent.

380. I imagine that from their estimate the Commissioners expect a continuance of the present population at least? They do; and, as I said, they allow 25 per cent. increase in the goods business for development.

381. That is not a very large increase? Twenty-five per cent. is a fairly good increase to allow for a few years. There is no large back traffic likely to come in.

382. That is, no increase on the goods now known to be received from the Tumut and Adelong districts? Yes.

William Henry Hall, sub-editor, Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Office, sworn, and examined:—

W. H. Hall.
8 Nov., 1899.

383. *Mr. Dick.*] Have you prepared any statistics concerning the districts to be served by this proposed railway? I have.
384. Will you kindly read them?

Estimated population that would be served by the construction of the line—7,900.

ESTIMATED population of towns that would be served by construction of the line.

Town.	Estimated Population.	Town.	Estimated Population.
Adelong	1,400	Tumut	1,540
Adelong Crossing	300	Wondalga	100
Batlow	180	Blowering	290
Goonp	350	Brungle	270
Grahamstown	120	Mundongo	120
Tarcutta	240	Bombowlee	140

385. Has there been recently an increase or decrease in the population of that district? The population has simply grown along with the natural increase of the population of the Colony. There has been nothing out of the normal increase of the population. We made the estimate from the figures taken at the census, so then I took the police figures for the district, and I found that my number came within five of the number given by the police, showing that their collection by patrols came within five of the annual increase added on to the census of the population.

386. Could you define the limit of the area within which you have made that calculation? I have taken it as 20 miles on each side of the red line on the map.

387. What would the population be with Brungle omitted? The population of Brungle is only 270, and the population of Bombowlee is 140.

388. Is there not a fairly concentrated farming population round those centres? I could not say.

389. Leaving out those two it would bring the estimate down to 7,500? Yes. I have taken out the agricultural statistics for the last four years. They are as follows:—

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS—1896-99.

Districts.	Year ended—	Cultivation												Dairy produce.			
		Total area cultivated.	Wheat		Maize.		Other grains.	Hay.		Green food.	Area under—				Butter made.	Cheese made.	
			Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.		Area.	Area cut		Potatoes.	Grape-vines.	Other fruit orchards.	All other crops.			
									Wheat, Oaten, and Barley.								Lucerne
Adelong	31 Mar., 1896 ..	1,971	719	9,573	488	13,304	43	418	55	19	19	4	59	147	11,200	..	
	" 1897 ..	2,279	872	14,103	621	14,220	6	335	23	19	20	5	82	297	17,944	..	
	" 1898 ..	2,162	765	13,613	352	10,550	34	486	37	40	24	3	100	261	18,228	..	
	" 1899 ..	2,020½	1,270½	27,212	494½	10,730	41	541½	70½	5½	13½	6½	69½	168	14,638	..	
Batlow (Reedy Flat)	31 Mar., 1896 ..	832	227	2,753	217	6,415	24	246	..	4	61	..	25	25	2,458	2,411	
	" 1897 ..	1,025	353	5,562	311	7,605	82	194	..	6	66	..	24	19	3,548	2,179	
	" 1898 ..	1,125	856	5,270	401	12,045	59	219	..	..	50	..	34	6	4,424	400
	" 1899 ..	1,336½	640	11,715	334½	16,775	53½	253	1	6	75½	..	38	35	2,610	150	
Tarcutta	31 Mar., 1896 ..	1,253	529	6,892	77	2,200	82	351	..	14	24	..	5	176	9,280	1,000	
	" 1897 ..	1,351	720	8,713	3	120	47	372	..	11	5	..	6	178	6,270	1,300	
	" 1898 ..	2,400	1,527	12,795	53	470	39	682	..	19	3	..	9	68	29,401	800	
	" 1899 ..	2,693	1,436	19,445	40	450	71½	1,002½	..	1	..	..	11	131	6,420	700
Tumut	31 Mar., 1896 ..	8,850	1,807	30,894	5,362	201,402	164	927	25	22	52	5	86	349	30,215	18,040	
	" 1897 ..	9,742	3,205	53,473	4,645	198,664	334	723	5	14	76	4	92	659	39,359	19,043	
	" 1898 ..	11,565	4,728	35,363	5,917	179,192	147	863	5	47	60	4	83	622	32,222	15,310	
	" 1899 ..	12,538½	6,543½	137,307	4,172½	109,430	131½	1,024½	34½	21	53½	4	86½	407½	16,514	8,430	

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

WHEAT averages for the four years ended 31st March, 1896-99.

W. H. Hall.

8 Nov., 1899.

District.	Year ended.	Area under cultivation.	Yield.	Average yield per acre.
		acres.	bushels.	bushels.
Adelong	31 March, 1896	719	9,378	13·32
	31 " 1897	872	14,103	16·17
	31 " 1898	765	13,618	17·80
	31 " 1899	1,270½	27,212	21·43
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 17·79.				
Batlow	31 March, 1896	227	2,758	12·15
	31 " 1897	353	5,563	15·76
	31 " 1898	356	5,270	14·80
	31 " 1899	540	11,715	21·69
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 17·14.				
Tarcutta	31 March, 1896	529	6,892	13·03
	31 " 1897	729	8,713	11·95
	31 " 1898	1,527	12,798	8·38
	31 " 1899	1,436	19,445	13·54
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 11·34.				
Tumut	31 March, 1896	1,867	30,894	16·55
	31 " 1897	3,205	58,478	18·25
	31 " 1898	4,728	88,363	18·65
	31 " 1899	6,543½	137,805	21·06
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 19·12.				

MAIZE averages for four years ended 31 March, 1896-99.

District.	Year ended.	Area under cultivation.	Yield.	Average yield per acre.
		acres.	bushels.	bushels.
Adelong	31 March, 1896	488	13,304	27·26
	31 " 1897	621	14,220	22·90
	31 " 1898	352	10,550	29·97
	31 " 1899	494½	19,780	40·04
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 29·59				
Batlow (Reedy Flat)	31 March, 1896	217	6,415	29·56
	31 " 1897	311	7,695	24·74
	31 " 1898	401	12,045	30·01
	31 " 1899	334½	16,775	50·22
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 33·99				
Tarcutta	31 March, 1896	77	2,290	29·74
	31 " 1897	3	120	40·00
	31 " 1898	53	470	8·87
	31 " 1899	40	480	12·00
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 19·42				
Tumut	31 March, 1896	5,302	201,402	37·56
	31 " 1897	4,645	168,654	36·31
	31 " 1898	5,917	128,192	25·55
	31 " 1899	4,172½	109,430	26·23
Average yield per acre for 4 years = 31·66				

AVERAGE yield of Wheat and Maize per acre for New South Wales, 1890-99.

Year ended 31 March.	Wheat.	Maize.	Year ended 31 March.	Wheat.	Maize.
	bushels.	bushels.		bushels.	bushels.
1890	15·7	30·8	1895	10·9	27·0
1891	11·0	29·9	1896	8·7	27·0
1892	11·1	32·8	1897	10·2	27·2
1893	15·0	30·0	1898	10·6	32·0
1894	10·9	34·3	1899	7·0	31·4
			Average for 10 years..	10·4	30·2

W. H. Hall. 390. *Mr. Levien.*] The land under cultivation in 1898 was 11,565 acres, and for the last year 12,538½ acres, so there has been an increase? Yes, during the last four years there has been an increase from 8,850 acres to 12,538½ acres.

8 Nov., 1899.

391. *Mr. Dick.*] Taking the district from which the figures have been furnished, what is the general prospect that the statistics convey;—is the district stationary or progressive? Judging from the figures of the past four years it is progressive. In the Adelong district there has been an increase considerably over 30 per cent. in the four years, and in the Reedy Flat or Balrow district there is an increase of over 50 per cent. In the Tarcutta district, which would be very slightly affected by the railway, production is more than double.

392. In what item do you find the increase most apparent? In wheat.

393. Is it the same with regard to maize? The production of maize in the Tumut district has gone down 50 per cent. The yield in 1896 was 201,402 bushels, whereas in 1899 it was 109,430 bushels.

394. Have you got the return with regard to the production of tobacco? No; but I will get it. [*Vide Appendix.*]

395. Has the production of butter in the district increased or decreased? As far as Tumut is concerned, during the last year it has been very little more than half what it was in 1896, but the production in 1898 was larger than that in 1896 by about 7 per cent.

396. Could you state whether the falling off in the production of maize and other agricultural products has been due to the drought? I could not say.

397. *Mr. Levien.*] Have you ever been round the Tumut district? No.

398. How many acres are under maize in the Tumut district? During 1899 the area was 4,172½ acres.

399. What was the yield? 109,430 bushels.

400. I want to make a comparison between the return in that particular district and the average for the colony during the last ten years? The average for the colony was 32·2 bushels and the average in Tumut 31·66 for the four years. In 1896 the average yield at Tumut was 37·56; in 1897, 36·31; in 1898, 25·55; and it rose in 1899 to 26·23.

401. So it compares favourably with any other part? It is above the average of any other part of the colony within the last ten years.

402. *Mr. Dick.*] I suppose it is only reasonable to conclude that that district, in common with the rest of the colony, has, during the last four or five years, suffered severely from drought? I should say so.

403. And the falling off in the staple product of the district may be fairly attributable to that fact? I think so.

404. Do you think it reasonable to conclude that the rate of increase which in fair seasons has been exhibited by that district would, as long as land was available there, be maintained? I cannot speak from personal knowledge, but from what I have heard I believe that the character of the soil is such that it ought to give a far larger return than is indicated by these figures.

405. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you know anything as to the quality of the maize, wheat, or butter produced there? No.

406. Do the returns in your Department show the amount that the butter realises? Not at all.

407. How do you get your returns? They are collected by the police.

408. I suppose you can take them as being fairly accurate? Where we have an opportunity of checking them we find that they can be accepted as reliable. Here is a case in point. In that particular district there has been nothing out of the ordinary to increase the population, there has been no land thrown open to selection, consequently the increase in population should be only the normal increase shown from the date of the census, and when they were worked out with the police returns they corroborated those returns.

409. No doubt there has been a great increase of population although no land has been thrown open? There has been the ordinary increase.

410. *Mr. Dick.*] Do your statistics of population extend over any lengthy period? I only took them out for the most recent dates.

411. The figures disclose at any rate that the district is a fairly prosperous one and is exhibiting a fair rate of progress? Yes.

412. Have you any mining statistics? Only the gold production. Unfortunately the returns as to that are very defective in the Mines Department. They give no particulars in regard to Tumut or Tarcutta, but only for Adelong and Reedy Flat. The returns are as follows:—

MINERAL PRODUCTION 1897-8.

District.	Year.	Quantity of Gold won.	Value of gold won.	District.	Year.	Quantity of Gold won.	Value of gold won.
		Oz.	£			Oz.	£
Adelong	1897	19,691	76,795	Tumut	1897	Not obtainable.	.....
	1898	18,268	71,247		1898		
Balrow (Reedy Flat)...	1897	1,000	3,875	Tarcutta	1897	Not obtainable.	.....
	1898	1,301	5,042		1898		

TUESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

William Henry John Slee, Chief Inspector of Mines, Department of Mines, sworn, and examined:—

413. *Mr. Watson.*] You have a knowledge of the district proposed to be served by the proposed railway from Gundagai to Tumut, *via* Adelong? Yes. W. H. J. Slee.
414. There is considerable mining near Gundagai, is there not? Yes; right through from Gundagai to Adelong. 14 Nov., 1899.
415. About Gundagai it is principally reefing, is it not? Yes; it is principally gold-mining. There has been a good deal of alluvial mining.
416. Do you think that the railway to Tumut would have any effect upon the mines of Gundagai? It would have no effect upon mining at Gundagai, because Gundagai has a railway already.
417. Going from Gundagai there is, I understand, a considerable quantity of alluvial mining carried on before you get to Adelong? There is the whole of the Adelong flats, which formerly turned out such large deposits. They are unworked, and have been very little prospected.
418. They have been a little prospected? Very little. The prospecting done is mostly by boring, owing to the fact that there is too much underground water.
419. That is alluvial? Yes.
420. At what depth has the wash been found there when they have bored? As far down as 80 feet.
421. Do they find any at shallower depths than that? Yes; gold has been found right from the surface downwards.
422. Have the prospects been encouraging? The result has been to send several men away from Australia very rich. A. D. Shepard's mine, Grahamstown, turned out an enormous quantity of gold.
423. Are there any alluvial prospects between Gundagai and Grahamstown? Yes, right along these flats. I believe that, sooner or later, gold will be got, and worked in the alluvial, from Grahamstown right down to the junction of the Murrumbidgee, probably on the Murrumbidgee itself.
424. Do you know whether any attempt has been made recently to take up those flats for dredging purposes? Yes, I think so. Attempts were made before dredging came in, even to take it up on the old system of pumping.
425. But the water would be too strong for that? Yes; and the land is freehold, therefore it cannot be got at for dredging so easily as one would wish.
426. Would not a depth of 80 feet be rather difficult to work? That is on the deepest part. The average is 40 or 50 feet; 60 feet is considered the limit for actual dredging; it is not the limit for pumping.
427. At Adelong itself the reefing is more permanent? At Adelong there are the most permanent reefs that we have so far discovered in New South Wales. Payable ground is being worked at a greater depth there than in any other part of New South Wales.
428. Do you remember the depth? In March, 1877, the Great Victoria Company received the reward for being the first company to find payable gold at a depth of 800 feet. Two years afterwards the reward was got at Adelong for getting payable gold at a depth of 1,000 feet. The shaft is 1,140 feet in depth. That is the deepest place in New South Wales where payable gold has been obtained.
429. Is that Great Victoria mine being worked now? No. Unfortunately it was taken up with the Gibraltar mine, with the large capital of £300,000, and it was held back. They just cleared out the top levels, and there they left it. Very little has been done to any of these mines at a greater depth for the last eighteen or twenty years.
430. Is the Gibraltar mine, which is now the largest which is working there, being worked to any great depth? Not to a very great depth. The greatest depth would be about 600 feet; a good deal of it is tunnelling. The Gibraltar mine was idle for about two years, like the Great Victoria mine. Then it was retaken, and within 18 inches of the very levels where the former company left off, the proprietors got 4 ounces to the ton from a reef over 2 feet in thickness, and they kept that up for three years.
431. Of what nature is the country that they are in now—the Gibraltar mine? It is very hard. The ore now is refractory; so much so that they had 8 or 10 ounces out of concentrates after they had got 4 ounces of free gold to the ton of quartz.
432. How do you regard the prospect of the permanency of the Adelong field as a whole? I say now, as I said, I think, in 1876, in one of my reports, that Adelong will for many years be the leading gold-field of New South Wales, and I feel quite confident that the youngest man here will be very old indeed if he lives to see Adelong out. There are fluctuations there, as we have on all our gold-fields, but the Adelong reefs are defined, and it is in channels such as we have in no other parts of New South Wales. The channel cuts right through the country for 3 or 4 miles, in some places 8 or 10 feet in width, in other places 50 or 60 feet in width, and in those channels is the quartz. The principal mine at Adelong is on a high hill, and on the western side of the hill there is a reef called the old reef, and another called the Victoria reef. In the middle there is a reef going straight down. The other two reefs underlie that which must intersect them, and the general opinion is that if such is the case there will be very rich gold got. A little gold has been got in the middle reef, but not of a payable character.
433. Have you been to the bottom level of the Victoria shaft? Yes.
434. What were the indications then; were they such as to justify them in going on? Yes; they were quite sufficient; but the money all went in dividends, and when any money was wanted nobody would put their hands into their pockets to repay. There was nothing left for development. That is the true cause of the failure.
435. Are there any mines working now at Adelong besides the Gibraltar? Yes; there is a mine called the Caledonia. I recommended that they should receive assistance from the prospecting vote three or four years ago, and they have paid back the whole of the money to the Government, besides declaring very large dividends. It was only a syndicate of twenty or twenty-five persons. They have declared very good dividends ever since.

- W. H. J. Slee. 436. It is rather unique, is it not, to get money back that has been advanced out of a prospecting vote? Yes; it is a very few that can repay it.
- 14 Nov., 1899. 437. Are they on the same line as the Gibraltar mine? They are on the old line of reef. The Victorian line of reef is in the opposite direction. You can trace the old line of reef right into Gibraltar and right over to a place called Monkey Hill. There are three or four mines working on the top of Monkey Hill.
438. All on the same line? No.
439. It does not appear that the Victoria line of reef is being worked at the present time? The Victoria line of reef has been neglected of late years. There are also the Williams and Annat's mines.
440. Altogether there are a considerable number of miners employed about Adelong? Yes; two years ago there was a very large number of miners employed in Adelong. There are not so many now owing to the fact that the company having such a large capital, £300,000, they could not keep up the dividends, even with 2 oz. of gold to the ton.
441. There are a considerable number of men employed between Gundagai and Adelong at alluvial mining? Yes.
442. And there are also a large number about Adelong employed in reefing? Yes; both on wages and on their own account. They are their own masters. I believe the men at Adelong are more independent than most of their class.
443. Are the men working in small parties at reefing? Yes. They have leases of their own and they have formed themselves into parties of eight, ten, or twelve.
444. Will those small parties of miners be able to get as good results as those who are using air-drills, and so on? Yes; we have one of the best crushing plants in Adelong, the most improved, I think, that you will find anywhere.
445. Is it worked by water power? Yes; the owners Messrs. Wilson and Ritchie were engineer and far-seeing Scotchmen. They could see when a little thing was wanted, and they did not wait for others to tell them. I often used to say to Mr. Wilson, "I have seen something better than you have got," and he would say, "Well, let us have it," and he would soon have it too. They get their gold crushed, and keep their concentrates and send them away just as the Company does.
446. Does not the Gibraltar mine now do a lot of cyaniding? Yes.
447. But formerly it sent its concentrates away? Yes.
448. Do you anticipate that any large number of men are likely to be employed in dredging on the creeks? Yes. I think that sooner or later the Adelong reefs will be retaken at a greater depth. I have no doubt that they will again pour forth their wealth. Adelong to-day, if not ahead of Wyalong, is very close up to it in regard to gold production. Until Wyalong broke out it was for years the highest of our gold-producing districts.
449. Do you think there is any large development in dredging likely to occur along the creeks? There are several miles of country suitable for dredging, but it is freehold property.
450. Are there any indications of minerals towards Tumut? Yes, at the back of Tumut. I have been from Tumut to Kiandra three or four times, in fact through the whole Wee Jasper, and through the whole of those ranges there is a great deal of alluvial. There are many quartz veins there which have not been tested, because the country is too rough. There is a large area of basaltic country, which deserves to be tested. That of itself would bring a large population to the back (or mountainous country) of Tumut.
451. How far from Tumut would those indications begin? The nearest gold is within 10 miles of Tumut, and of Laemalac and Sandy Creek, where every gully has a little gold, and where you find in every gully a few men making a living at gold-getting.
452. Is it alluvial? Yes.
453. Are there any people there working quartz? There have been; but the country is rough, and it costs much to get the quartz away from the workings. As a rule, down to about 50 or 60 feet they get water; there is so much water in the hills. That prevents them from working.
454. Do you think the proposed railway would be of any assistance to people beyond Tumut? I have no doubt that a railway to the Tumut district would be of great benefit. It is a rich agricultural district. Adelong is a rich mining and agricultural district combined. Adelong is the treasury, as it were, for Tumut. They get their cash from Adelong. I have no doubt whatever that the railway would benefit the district if carried out, and that it would benefit the country at large.
455. Looking at it from a mining standpoint, more particularly if a railway were taken to Tumut, do you think it would be of any advantage to those people who are attempting to work quartz reefs 10 miles away? I think so; and we know that there are small veins of copper in the district. We do not know whether there is payable copper. People may go in for copper-mining or prospecting. At present they are only getting gold in that locality. We had one good copper mine, called the Snowball, between Adelong and Gundagai, but it has been idle for years now.
456. Do you know the country between Tumut and Coolac, down the Tumut River, to Brungle? Yes.
457. Is there any mining going on there? Sluicing has been going on there for years. You cannot find a gully where sluicing has not been carried on. The ground may not have been very rich, but it paid men to work it.
458. I believe there is chrome ore at Brungle? Yes. That is on the back route going to Gundagai, not on the road going to Adelong.
459. There is a proposal before the Committee for alternate routes, to start from Coolac and go towards Tumut, leaving Adelong out of count;—I want to know whether there are any mining developments on the Tumut River worth considering? They are working quartz reefs; but so far the shoots of gold have been very short. That means that three or four men could occupy the whole length of the shoot on gold; but at Adelong you could put 100 men alongside each other, and they would all be on payable gold.
460. Has your Department taken any note of the chrome mines at Brungle? I could not say. That business belongs to the geological surveyor. Mr. Carne, Geological Surveyor, reported on all the chrome mines in the district about two years ago.
461. From the point of view of gold-mining, I gather that there would be no comparison between the possibilities on the Tumut River, and those on the Adelong Creek? No. I do not know of any district which has the same promising features as regards permanency that the Adelong district has. That was the opinion of Mr. Wilkinson, the late Government Geologist, and we used to travel together a great deal.

462. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you think that with the construction of the railway there would be any considerable amount of revenue derived from the carriage of concentrates or of ore? I would not say that, because the time is not very far distant when every one of our gold-fields will have their own works, therefore it will not be necessary to send away any concentrates. If we find silver ore it may be different. W. H. J. Sloc.
14 Nov., 1899.
463. You think, however, that with the development of the country, a revenue would be obtained from the carriage of supplies to the mines? Yes. I believe that a railway going to Tumut, taking in Adelong, ought to pay almost from the very first. Of course the condition of a mining district always fluctuates.
464. Do you anticipate that between Gundagai and Adelong there is a possibility of reefs of a similar character to those at Adelong being discovered? No. The Adelong reefs seem to terminate within 10 miles of Gundagai; they seem to spread out there. There is a large number of reefs there now under different conditions. Going to Adelong, if you leave the main route, you can find mines working all the way.
465. The country is practically auriferous all the way? It is.
466. In what way does the private ownership of land retard dredging? The land belongs to two or three parties, or is supposed to belong to them; but I am afraid the owners cannot do exactly what they would wish to do.
467. *Mr. Levien.*] You say that right away from Gundagai down to Adelong mining is going on? Yes; it is auriferous country right through.
468. Suppose capital were expended there, do you think that payable mines could be discovered right through? I think so, provided the money were properly applied.
469. If the money were expended in a judicious way, there would be payable mines from Gundagai right to Adelong? Yes.
470. What knowledge have you of the Adelong, Gundagai, and Tumut district? I have known that district since 1874. I first went there officially in 1876.
471. So that you have a thorough knowledge of the district? Yes.
472. What is your opinion of that district, as far as mining and agriculture are concerned;—would you recommend the construction of this railway? Yes; I would recommend the construction of the railway, provided that Adelong got full interest in it.
473. What do you mean by full interest in it? I mean that the railway should come close to Adelong. That is where the population is. Tumut is an agricultural district. The mining district of Adelong is the main producing district. Adelong affords a market for the Tumut people.
474. Have those mines, in your opinion, been sunk far enough down? No. I believe that the time will come when we shall have those mines working at a depth of over 2,000 feet. They got into the hands, first of all, of people who had not more money than was sufficient to pay for the mines. Then they ran down to Sydney, having a great thing in their hands, and wanted to give somebody else a tremendous benefit, but those people would not take it. The consequence is that the mines remain idle—they have no money.
475. Then, taking your view of it, if that district were within a short distance of Melbourne or Ballarat, you think those mines would be all at work? They would be.
476. Your opinion, then, is absolutely that that is the best reef-mining district in New South Wales? Yes, and the mines would be all at work if they were in Victoria, and would be worked in a style different from that in which we work our mines in New South Wales. Instead of having a capital of £300,000, they would have a capital of £25,000 or £50,000.
477. What is the deepest mine there? The Great Victoria mine, 1,140 feet. They got a reward from the Government for finding payable gold at a depth of 1,000 feet. Mr. Wilkinson and I got out the stone and tested it.
478. How long ago is that? It was in 1877.
479. What depth is the mine now? They have not gone any deeper for the last twenty years. They are not working.
480. You think that if they had continued on that would have been a paying mine? Yes. They have all been hanging on, waiting for some one to take it up and invest a lot of money, the rest to come in blackmailing.
481. The Gibraltar mine is 600 feet down? Yes; that is about 2½ miles from the Great Victoria.
482. What is your opinion of that? That is a permanent mine; there is no doubt about it.
483. When were you last up that way? At the beginning of this year.
484. What signs did it show then? It looked very well.
485. Are the Government giving any aid to any of those mines? Yes; but unfortunately most of them are shallow.
486. How many have they given aid to? To several parties. As I have already said, they gave aid to one party who have already paid the money back without being asked, and have declared good dividends.
487. How many are there now receiving Government aid? Around Adelong there may be about five parties receiving aid.
488. Do you think that if a greater amount were voted by Parliament it would lead to the development of the mines? Yes; but I am rather in favour of having our mines developed at the greatest depth. I am not in favour of this system of going 50 feet down, but of testing the lower levels.
489. The people who get the aid frequently test the ground for the purpose of selling out? That is all.
490. If aid is given it should be on the understanding that the mine is carried on so as to make it payable? Yes.
491. You know that money is voted by Parliament to assist in developing the mines; but after the people have discovered gold they sell out? That is frequently the case.
492. Your object is to see that the mine is not only tested, but that they will go on and make it what you conceive to be in the interests of the country, a mine that will develop itself? Yes.
493. They would want further aid if successful? If they are successful, we expect our money back.
494. The moment they come on payable gold they cease to get aid? They cease to get aid; and we expect the money back that we have lent them.
495. Are there many alluvial mines in that district? There is a great deal of alluvial being worked now and again, but it is like the quartz, unless they have water they can do no good. Last year they found several nice nuggets about Gundagai. There are several good claims about Upper Adelong.

- W. H. J. Slee. 496. Is there any place where they could conserve water there? Yes; but the land has been nearly all sold. There is very little Crown land in that district.
- 14 Nov., 1899. 497. Suppose an Act were passed compelling the owners of land to let water-races go through their properties at a mere nominal charge, could it be carried out? Yes; we could commence sluicing. I believe the Government intended to start with a water supply at Shoalhaven some years ago. Several surveys were made for the purpose.
498. Races for mining purposes could be taken through private land for a merely nominal rent, could they not? The rent should be very little.
499. Then they could conserve the water, and make a charge accordingly? Yes. The rent would be less, no doubt, if they had covered races. The objects on the part of the owners is that open races are dangerous to the stock, which fall into them.
500. Have you heard of any accidents really occurring in connection with these races? Not of late; but some accidents occurred when the races were first cut. I knew of cases in which stock were drowned.
501. But, as a rule, is there any real danger from these races? No. The water for mining purposes could be brought in at a nominal charge. It is a thing that ought to be done in the interests of the mining population of the Colony.
502. Is there any copper in the Tumut district? There are copper stains there. There is a certain area of country where you will see the rock stained with copper. By sinking you might find a lode.
503. Do you think there is any copper there? There may be. There is one thing certain, that unless you have iron at the back of your copper lodes it never turns out to be any good.
504. You would be quite willing, having a full knowledge of that district, to give further prospecting aid there? Yes, I should be willing to recommend it.
505. With your strong belief that it is one of the best mineral fields in the Colony, you think it ought to be further developed by sinking to a greater depth, and to have this carried out aid should be given by the Government? Yes. In reports of mine in 1876, 1878, and 1880, you would find that I gave a description of Adelong, and made predictions that have come out almost correct up to this date.
506. Those reports are in the Mines Department? Yes.
507. If you could see the reports that you made in 1876, 1878, and 1880, would it enable you to give more information to the Committee as to the mineral resources of that district? I could only say as I said before, that I feel sure that before long Adelong will again rank with the first gold-producing districts in New South Wales. It has done so since I reported.
508. Has it kept up its prestige ever since? Adelong is our best gold-producing district. I am not sure whether it was beaten by Wyalong last year.
509. Having a good knowledge of mining, I suppose you have a fair idea of the agricultural capabilities of the district? I think that Tumut is one of the best agricultural districts that we have, except Richmond or Byron Bay. They can grow anything at Tumut. I think they could supply the whole of Australia with preserved fruits.
510. How about cereals? Wheat, oats, and potatoes grow well there. At Tumut a farmer can go in for all classes of farming.
511. The area of good land is limited, is it not? Yes; but it extends into the snow country.
512. It is very good for growing fruit and cereals? It is not inferior to any other land in the country.
513. And it is a healthy district? It is.
514. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is this shaft 1,140 feet deep, sunk vertically;—you spoke of coming from the crown of the hill? That is following all the way down from the surface. It is faulted in one part into a foot-wall; but there again it is followed all the way down.
515. You spoke of reefs coming in towards that deep reef from each side? Yes.
516. Have they junctioned yet? No; but they may join in time.
517. Is there much trouble with water at that depth? No; the water comes in at a higher level. The lowest level, 1,000 feet deep, is a dry level. It is wet where fissures come through the hill. They used to run the water down into the bottom, then pull it up all the way from the bottom.
518. I think you said that the reef is about 2 feet thick? Yes.
519. Is it that thickness all the way down? No; in some parts it is far wider.
520. The walls are well defined? Yes; there is a hard wall of granite there, forming a channel, and inside the granite there is a black slate formation in which the reef occurs; sometimes there are three or four veins in that channel.
521. Has the stone been of the same richness all the way down, or has it varied much? It has been the richest near the surface.
522. Do you think that fact has been the reason why they have not gone deeper? The reason, I think, has been that there has been no money kept for any bad time. When they had a crushing they declared a dividend.
523. Can you account in any other way for the apathy that exists? It is really downright want of enterprise that the Adelong reefs are not tested at a greater depth. A gentleman named Mollineux went into it rather extensively some years ago, but unfortunately he did not succeed.
524. Do you know when the Adelong reef was first discovered? Yes; I think it was in 1859 or 1860. In a report which I made in 1876 I gave the history of it.
525. Has the field made regular progress ever since? Yes. At one time it was enormously rich, and employed a lot of men. That was when it was first discovered, and worked by individual miners under miners' rights. That was all very fine until they got the cream off; then, when they had to go lower down, it did not pay them, the consequence being that they had to tackle it with capital.
526. Do you know what the output was last year? No; but the report of the Department will give that. I am under the impression that it was a little above or a little below that of Wyalong.
527. I think you said there are fewer miners there now than there were two years ago? Yes.
528. How do you account for that falling off? In this way: The Gibraltar mine was bought for a low price, and was floated in England for £300,000. They had satisfactory crushings, giving sufficient returns, and the mine would have paid good dividends on £60,000 or £100,000, but not on £300,000. The shareholders at Home, considering that dividends ought to come in on the £300,000, were continually forcing the hands of the manager here, and he resigned, knocking off a lot of men before he left, and the men they have left are prospecting.

529. But that, I suppose, affects only the one mine? Yes; the rest of the mines have still about the same number of persons employed; but the Gibraltar mine was the chief wage-paying mine. W. H. J. Slec.
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530. But surely 4 oz. to the ton in a 2-foot reef ought to pay enormously? Yes, they paid dividends; but if anyone will go and see the enormous machinery they have erected, they will see a good deal of surface decorations which should not have been gone into. I know of one instance in New South Wales where twenty-five stamp-batteries and concentrating machinery were put up, and the mine is only 80 feet in depth. It is not the mine that causes failure, but mismanagement.
531. Insufficient capital to carry on? It requires certain knowledge as well.
532. You seem to favour the idea of prospecting in that locality? I must let you have the report, so that you may see what I said about the district two or three years ago.
533. Is not the Prospecting Vote usually intended for finding out new country? We generally give assistance wherever it is most beneficial. People might not think so, but we have a large number at work in the back blocks of New South Wales, so far back that some people think that a white man has not been there.
534. With regard to agriculture, you seem to have a very high opinion of the Tumut district? Yes.
535. Is the agriculture which is carried on there chiefly to the north or to the south of Tumut? Chiefly to the south. It was out Kiandra way; it spreads out 12 or 14 miles from Tumut, towards Kiandra.
536. What is the nature of the country there? There is a good deal of volcanic country, slate, porphyry, and granite. There are dykes here and there of diorite. Of course, the basaltic country, as a rule, is the best for agriculture.
537. What are the principal crops that are grown there? I believe the principal crops are oats, wheat, maize, and potatoes. There are a few very good orchards there. They can grow beautiful grapes and the best of apples.
538. I suppose you have thought over this proposed railway;—what effect do you think it would have on the mining and agricultural industries? I think that mining and agriculture throughout the district would be largely benefited by the line. About 16 miles from Tumut, at a place called Batlow, which used to be called Reedy Creek, from 1½ acres of land 12 tons of potatoes were got. That was done in this way: A miner had a race running above his land, and he used to irrigate the land. I was sent to make some inquiries into the matter, as there was some objection raised to the man doing this sort of thing. I recommended that it should be encouraged.
539. Have you heard any complaints from agriculturists there as to the expense of getting their produce to the railway? Yes; I have often heard them say that they wished they had a railway.
540. And you think it would result in a larger area being cultivated? Yes; I believe that a railway, if made there, would not only do good to Tumut, but also to a large extent of country at the back of Tumut. It will cause settlement. You could never carry a railway up to Kiandra, but it would make the Kiandra district a good deal nearer to the market.
541. You are aware that all the land between Gundagai and Tumut is alienated? I think so, with little exceptions.
542. When mixing amongst the people there, could you form any idea as to whether they would be willing to give free of charge the land that would be required for the railway? I could not say that; but they have always been very anxious to have mining carried on on their land, and to give land almost for nothing for the purpose; but whether they would give land free for a railway I could not say.
543. It would add very greatly to the cost of a railway if the Government had to compensate them for the land? Yes.
544. With regard to the alluvial mining, what depth have they had to sink? It is very shallow. They are not down further than 30 or 40 feet. Most of the sinking is from 5 feet to 10 feet.
545. I suppose that most of the alluvial has been worked out? Yes.
546. *Chairman.*] Will you read from the report of the Department of Mines for 1898 the paragraph as to the returns from the Adelong mining district? Yes. It says:
- The Adelong gold-field is still producing a large quantity of gold, the figures for 1898 being 18,268 oz. as compared with 19,690 oz. during 1897. The Gibraltar Consolidated Company's mines contributed the bulk of the gold, having produced 13,450 oz. from 12,836 tons of stone. On the average this company employ 280 men all the year, and are operating from three shafts.
547. On page 57 it says that the value of the gold got at Adelong in 1898 was £71,264? Yes.
548. The report states that there were 512 men employed at Adelong? Yes.
549. And 107 men at Tumut? Yes.
550. And the Gibraltar Company employ 280 men all the year round? Yes.
551. That is, one mine alone employs 280 out of the 512 men? Yes.
552. Will you read from page 26 the paragraph about the gold got from the different districts? Yes. It is as follows:—
- The Wyalong field holds the position of premier gold-producer of the Colony, its total yield for the year being 34,582 oz.; Lucknow produced 27,536 oz.; Cobar, 22,253 oz.; and Adelong, 18,268 oz.
553. So that for 1898 Adelong came fourth as a gold-producing district of the Colony? Yes. But may I be allowed to enlighten you a little with regard to Wyalong. It is forgotten that when last year we reckoned the yield of the Wyalong gold-field a great deal of the yield obtained really belonged to former years—that is to say, that the tailings which had been accumulating in the past were subjected to the cyanide process. Therefore, you cannot say that the gold thus obtained was actually last year's yield. That must be considered. If Wyalong can keep up that return, all right; but the extra yield obtained by the cyanide process must have been very considerable.
554. *Mr. Dick.*] I think you said that the dullness in the mining industry in this district was due, in a large measure, to over-capitalising, and to mismanagement? Yes.
555. By over-capitalisation, you mean that there was not enough of the subscribed capital devoted to the legitimate purpose of mining? There was too much nominal capital, but not sufficient working capital.
556. You also said you thought that the construction of this line would lead to an improvement in mining in that district? Yes; I think it would.
557. In what way would it affect the question of the insufficiency of the working capital and the mismanagement? It would not affect the capital, but it might cause mines that are now idle to be taken up by other parties, who can get machinery at a lower rate. If a man come to New South Wales and buy a mine for £35,000, then go Home and float it for £300,000, you have no control in the matter; but still it is a wrong to the people concerned, and a wrong to the country. 558.

W. H. J. Sles. 558. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is there abundance of timber yet in the vicinity of Adelong? Yes; there is beautiful timber—plenty of straight, high, tallow timber.
 14 Nov., 1899. 559. Is it accessible from the line? Yes; it is close to it, and there is a good road.

Charles Ormsby Burge, Principal Assistant Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined—

C. O. Burge. 560. *Mr. Dick.*] I believe you made two trial surveys down the valley of the Tumut River, with a view to the construction of a railway to Tumut? No; I simply explored the route.

14 Nov., 1899. 561. Will you give us a description of the blue line on the map, to the west of the Tumut River, and point out in what way that route is unsuitable for railway construction? I would not say that it is unsuitable for railway construction, but it seemed to me that, as compared with the route indicated by the red line, it had certain inferior features. It is certainly not unsuitable.

562. Will you indicate what those inferior features are? The earthworks, I imagine, would be considerably heavier on the blue line than on the proposed route indicated by the red line. At the time that I compared the two lines there was an old survey of the ground shown by the red line. That survey has been very much improved since, so that the comparison that I made then in favour of the red line would be still more intensified.

563. Are there any great engineering difficulties along the blue line? No, none that one would call grave engineering difficulties; but the earthworks, generally, are heavier on the blue line than on the red line, and there are a good many crossings of creeks on that route. I think, also, there would have to be a tunnel. Of course, "engineering difficulty" is a comparative term. A tunnel is not, strictly speaking, an engineering difficulty; but if there is a tunnel required on one line and not on the other, that is greatly in favour of the line on which no tunnel is required.

564. What we understand by engineering difficulties would be any work that would make the line unprofitable;—does that description apply generally to the explored route on the east side of the Tumut River? The explored line on the east of the river would have involved a great number of creek crossings, but rather a moderate extent of earthworks. On the western side there would be more earthworks, but fewer creek crossings.

565. The green line is the Coolac to Tumut route, is it not? Yes.

566. The third paragraph of your report, dated 22nd November, 1889, is as follows:—

An examination of the estimate of the Gundagai to Tumut Extension shows that the bridge over the Murrumbidgee at Gundagai has been put down at £113,148. I consider this amount excessive; in fact, by adopting an economical method of construction, I am of opinion that it need not cost more than £64,000, and a saving would thus be effected of £49,148, which would reduce the estimate of the whole line, which now stands at £387,300, to £338,152.

The bridging of the river near Coolac would probably cost £29,000, or £35,000 less than the Gundagai bridge.

I understand now that the Gundagai bridge will be built for £25,000? That is Mr. Deane's report, not mine. The whole of that paragraph is more or less out of date now, because we have reduced the cost of designs for bridges, and materials are very much cheaper than they were. As regards the bridge, these figures would not at all represent the comparison now. There has been almost a revolution—a system of light railways has been introduced, and the estimate for the bridge at Gundagai, I believe, now stands before the Committee at £25,100. I do not know whether Mr. Deane has told you that that £25,100 ought to be increased now, because the price of steel has gone up very considerably, and wages have gone up. The cost of the bridge would probably amount to £30,000 now. If we were asked to estimate it again, I should think, judging by what I am asked, that the probable saving on the present estimate would be about £8,000 or £9,000 for the Coolac bridge, as against the Gundagai bridge.

567. On the second page of your report you state that, in your opinion, the construction of the Tumut-Coolac route would "involve the making of a tunnel of most gigantic dimensions, which is practically impossible";—that is what you refer to when you speak of the Tumut-Coolac railway? No; that has reference to the extension to Adelong.

568. *Mr. Watson.*] Supposing you had to go into Adelong, you would not follow the Adelong Creek? No.

569. Would the tunnel referred to be intended to get out of Adelong towards Tumut? Yes; it was a scheme which had been proposed, and which I alluded to as being impracticable. It does not in any way refer to anything on the blue or green line.

570. *Mr. Dick.*] Would some difficulty be encountered in coming from Tumut to Adelong? Yes; there would be something of the same sort. A very big ridge comes across to the east of Adelong, which would have to be intersected somewhere.

571. *Chairman.*] I suppose the great objection to either the blue or the green line is that either of them would start to the north of the proposed red line, and there would be a certain amount of dead line to be worked? That is really the main objection.

572. There would be no getting over that? No.

573. If you were to adopt either the green or the blue line you would start away towards Cootamundra? Yes.

574. In your report of 13th December, 1892, in the last paragraph but one, you strongly urge the construction of a low-level bridge—over the Murrumbidgee, I suppose? I referred to it, but did not strongly urge it.

575. What do you think of that idea now? I think it is very possible, but at the same time circumstances have altered. The prices of bridge construction have been greatly brought down. The necessity for doing it is not so very great, but still I think it quite practicable.

576. That low-level bridge means a bridge which flood-waters would go right over? Yes.

577. But I suppose that is a thing to be avoided, if possible? Yes.

578. Such a bridge is only to be used where the cost of a dry one would be prohibitive? Yes.

579. A bridge that would be above flood-level is preferable? Certainly.

580. You also say, in that same report, that when you were at Adelong the Progress Committee there were quite indifferent as to getting a railway at all to Adelong? Yes.

581. Did they give any reason for that? As far as I can remember they considered that having got a good road into Gundagai it need not trouble them very much, and they knew that the line could not possibly come very close to them, and that in any case they would have a considerable amount of cartage. My experience in country towns has been that the inhabitants are so very anxious to get railway communication on any terms that they express themselves very strongly about it; but in this case the people seemed rather indifferent. I thought that was a feature which should be mentioned in my report.

582. In regard to the red line which is now under consideration, where would be the most convenient place on that line for the Adelong traffic to reach it? It would be at a place called Callifat Swamp, about midway between Gundagai and Tumut. The red line rises over a summit at 303 miles. The people of Adelong have a very good road for about 6 miles, a well-metalled road. C. O. Burge.
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583. That would be much more convenient than having to go 20 miles to Gundagai? Yes.
584. Does the Adelong road strike the Tumut to Gundagai road? No; the principal road which they use from Tumut to Gundagai is what they call the "Marked-tree Road."
585. We know that the mail road from Tumut to Gundagai is about 21 miles;—does the road from Adelong to Gundagai strike that road? No, not until you get just close to Gundagai.
586. It keeps to the westward? Yes.
587. Is that also a good metalled road from Adelong to Gundagai? Yes; part of it is the old main road between Sydney and Melbourne.
588. I suppose that is a road on which a good deal of money has been expended? I think so; it is a level road.
589. Have you surveyed the red line? I have not surveyed anything myself; I have been inspecting the surveys.
590. Is it not possible to get a better grade than 1 in 50 on that red line? No; that was very carefully looked into.
591. Are you able to say whether the surveyed line is, in your opinion, the best obtainable? I think so. I went over it very carefully, and Mr. Deane also went over it.
592. At the Gundagai end it would be pretty expensive by reason of the bridge and the long viaduct? Yes.
593. What would be the construction of that viaduct which you recommend? Over the flooded portion, apart from the channel of the river, it would be an ordinary timber construction of 24-foot spans, then over the main channel there would be three spans of 104 feet each, I think, of steel, corresponding with the present road bridge, so that we should have our piers in the same line with those of the road bridge, so as to offer the least possible obstruction to the current.
594. I notice in your earlier report of 1889 you speak of a combined bridge for the use of road traffic, and for the railway as well? Yes.
595. Now that they have got a good road bridge over the river, would you advocate the conversion of that road bridge into a combined bridge, or would you advocate a separate bridge for the railway traffic? I had in my mind a more expensive bridge. I also had in mind the fact that the old bridge wanted a considerable amount of repair, and I knew that it had to be repaired in a very substantial way within two or three years. Therefore, I thought that when repairing the bridge, it might be a good opportunity to make it a combined bridge. Since then they have repaired the bridge, but without having in view any railway arrangements, because it would have to be built specially to combine the two. So that altered my opinion completely. I believe that Mr. Hickson and Mr. Deane are very strongly against the combination of bridges for road and railway traffic, and they have gone into it more closely than I have, though I still think it might be done in many cases.
596. I want your opinion, as a practical engineer, whether it would be more economical to convert the present road bridge into a combined road and railway bridge, or whether it would be better and more economical to construct a separate railway bridge? That is a matter that requires going into very closely, because you would have to look into the whole thing, and see how the present bridge could be adapted. I am doubtful whether any economy would arise from it now.
597. The conversion would be costly? I think it would; but it is a matter that would require more consideration.
598. Do you remember whether better grades could be got on either the green or blue line than 1 in 50, the lowest on the red line? No. My impression is that we should have more severe grades on the eastern lines, because we have to get over some very sharp summits. There is a special place which I have in my mind going up from the Murrumbidgee to the first summit on the blue line, and on the green line going down to the Murrumbidgee. I think we should have very great difficulty in getting down—I doubt if we could do it with a grade of 1 in 50. I had 1 in 40 grades in view when investigating these lines, that being the usual grade on country lines in those days.
599. Would you care to give an opinion as to which would be the better class of country to be served by the railway from a farming or productive point of view;—that is to say, whether the eastern or the western line? I am hardly an expert on that; but I think they are both very good. I should not like to say that one was superior to the other.
600. They are both good; but the productive land is somewhat limited in area? Yes; it consists of narrow strips in both cases.
601. As one of the heads of the Department, do you advise that the red line is the best practicable route? I do.
602. *Mr. Levis.*] You have a thorough knowledge of both of those lines? Yes.
603. Would you recommend the construction of the railway to Tumut? That is rather a difficult question for me to answer. I have not gone into the question as to the probable traffic.
604. I suppose you have inquired as to the capabilities of the district, the agricultural pursuits, and the mining? It seems to me to be very good country; but beyond that I should not like to give an opinion. There are many lines which are good for the country which do not pay, from the Traffic Manager's point of view.
605. What is your opinion from your point of view? From my point of view I should say that it would be a good line; but I should not like to say that it would pay working expenses. I do not think it is absolutely necessary that a line which is good for the country should pay working expenses and interest.
606. Are there any extraordinary curves, or very great engineering difficulties, in connection with the line? No.
607. It is a line that would be easy of construction? Yes, except, of course, as regards the bridge over the Murrumbidgee River. The cost of that is a large amount of money with which to charge a small branch.
608. You find that sort of thing throughout the Colony, do you not? It is not often you have a big bridge on a line only 30 miles long. It is a defect, there is no doubt about that.
609. Which route is the more difficult, the one represented by the blue or by the red line? The red line is the easier route, mile per mile, with the sole exception of the crossing of the river.

- C. O. Burge. 610. Of the two you would recommend the red line? I think on the whole that the red line is the better.
 14 Nov., 1899. 611. Both as to engineering and also with reference to the agricultural and mineral industries? With regard to agriculture and minerals, I should not like to form an opinion in favour of one line as against the other. They both go through very fair country.
 612. Mr. Watson.] Have you made an estimate of the cost of either the blue or the green line? No; we never had a survey made.
 613. There has been a suggestion made at some date, apparently, that the line, instead of going to Tumut, might be taken up the Adelong Creek, and from there on to Tumbarumba;—do you know whether any exploration has been made of the country from Adelong towards Tumbarumba? I am not quite sure; but I think that a survey was made.*
 614. There is a proposal now before the Department to reach Tumbarumba from Wagga Wagga? Yes.
 615. Could you give any particulars to the Committee as to the practicability of reaching Tumbarumba from Adelong? It is quite practicable. On the occasion when Mr. Deane and I went over the Gundagai to Tumut line, we went along to Tumbarumba and saw the country.
 616. What was it like from the point of view of railway construction? It was fairly rough.
 617. That was following up the Creek? Yes; but the route from the upper end of the Wagga Wagga line is rough also.
 618. From the map it looks as though you have a creek or valley to follow from Adelong to Tumbarumba, but nothing of the kind from Wagga Wagga? It is fairly rough, it winds about very much, and there are a good many hills. From Wagga Wagga to Humula it is a fairly easy line, not a very easy line, but from Humula to Tumbarumba it is very rough, and from Adelong to Tumbarumba I should say it is something of the same character.
 619. It is no better than the latter portion of the Wagga Wagga line? Not as far as I recollect.

WEDNESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. | ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Harper. 620. Chairman.] From a statement which has been handed in, it would appear that the interest and working expenses of this line will amount to £8,150, and the probable revenue is £3,900, leaving a loss of £4,250 per annum;—have you the details of the possible traffic and revenue? Yes; I will read my report:—
 15 Nov., 1899.

3 November, 1899.

PROPOSED RAILWAY, GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

Length, 31 miles 32 chains; estimated cost, £148,310, equal to £4,723 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.

CAREFUL inquiry has been made as to the probable traffic on this proposed line, and the result indicates that the position, as far as the production of the district is concerned, has not materially altered since the Commissioners dealt with the matter in 1896. An increase has taken place in connection with the area under cultivation for wheat; but, on the other hand, the cultivation of maize and tobacco has decreased. The population of Tumut, Adelong and district is about 6,000; the residents of Adelong and district being dependent chiefly on gold-mining. The distance from Adelong to Gundagai, by an excellent road, is 22 miles, and the existing rates for road-carriage range from 10s. to 20s. per ton. The area of land available for future cultivation is limited, and it is very questionable if any material increase in the traffic of the district can be looked forward to in the direction of agriculture. I am of opinion that the construction of this line would not have any appreciable effect on the amount of traffic which would be created for the purpose of main-line haulage; and when it is considered that the distance by road to Tumut is 9 miles shorter than that of the proposed line, it will be readily seen that it is a very open question whether the whole of the traffic of the district would be rail-carried. The estimated cost of the line indicates that it can scarcely be classed as a pioneer one, and, with a ruling grade of 1 in 50, it would be an expensive one to work.

The estimate of the traffic, allowing for 25 per cent. increase upon that which exists to-day, and assuming that arbitrary local rates were charged, is as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Goods, stock, and wool	2,489	0	0
Mails, 31 miles, at £12	372	0	0
Passengers, 5,000, at 1½d. per mile	968	15	0
Parcels, horses, carriages, dogs	50	0	0
Total.....	£3,879	15	0

The rates on which the above estimate is formed are local ones, and it is quite an open question whether, under the circumstances of shorter road-carriage, such rates could be maintained, and if, as I consider probable, ordinary through rates were charged for the purpose of securing the traffic the estimate would be:—

	£	s.	d.
Goods, stock and wool	305	10	6
Mails, 31 miles, at £12	372	0	0
Passengers, 5,000, at 1½d. per mile	968	15	0
Parcels, horses, carriages, dogs	50	0	0
Total.....	£1,696	5	6

I enclose a statement showing details of the traffic upon which these estimates are based.

621. Then, in the absence of local rates, the loss would be very great indeed? Yes, I think so.
 622. Is there any instance of a similar short line of railway competing with a shorter ordinary road in which local rates are imposed on the railway? I think not.
 623. It would hardly seem likely that the people would submit to local rates under the circumstances? I do not think they would. Certainly they would not on certain classes of goods. On certain classes of goods

* NOTE (on revision):—I find that no survey has been made.

goods local rates would mean a charge as high as 19s. 3d. per ton, practically what is being paid to-day; and to that would have to be added the cost of cartage from the railway-station to the stores, whereas, in other cases, it would be direct delivery.

J. Harper.
15 Nov., 1899.

624. That would be dearer than the road carriage? It would be, including the cost of delivery from the railway-station.

625. On the Berrigan line, I believe, you did start with local rates, but they have been modified? They were maintained for only one season.

626. Were they modified in response to a request from the people? Yes. The people asked that it should be done, and it was done for the purpose of attracting traffic that was closer to the Victorian border than had been anticipated.

627. I suppose you are not really getting the traffic with the local rates? No.

628. The drays and waggons were still competing? We were getting the traffic in the immediate vicinity of the railway-station, but we were not getting it from the Victorian border.

629. Have you lately been along this line? No; I have not been there myself for the last three years.

630. But you have been there? Yes, several times.

631. Do you know the routes? Yes, there is a route by Brungle and one by Adelong.

632. Start from Gundagai and tell us what you know of the character of the country along the route marked red on the map? To the south of Tumut there is a considerable quantity of cultivation, and also to the north-east and to the north. The greater part of the cultivation is in those localities. I do not think that very much traffic will come on to the line till you get nearly to Adelong. A certain portion of traffic will come in about 10 miles from Gundagai, but that will not be very heavy. The first traffic of any consequence would be in the neighbourhood of Adelong.

633. The country that the line passes through has not got a wide extent of good land? No, it is a narrow strip; it consists of a series of pockets.

634. Is the cultivation pretty continuous? No; the cultivation extends about 15 or 20 miles south of Tumut, but the area is very limited.

635. Then as far as Adelong we cannot look for very much traffic in the way of agricultural produce? No.

636. When you get to Adelong the chief item would consist of store goods for the mines? Yes.

637. And that does not appear to be a very large item, seeing that there are only about 1,600 people there? That is the population of the Adelong district.

638. For the Adelong people to take advantage of that red line, they would have to go well in towards Gundagai? Yes.

639. They could not make for it at right angles owing to the nature of the country? No.

640. Therefore the railway freight and fares from Adelong would be for little more than about half the length of the line? We should only get credit for it over 22 miles. To reach the railway they would have to cart a distance of about 5 miles. They would reach the line at a point about 22 miles by rail from Gundagai.

641. As regards the population of Adelong and the carriage of goods, the railway would get the benefit of about 22 miles? We credit the line with the 22 miles.

642. And the passengers about 16 miles? It is the other way about; credit has been given for the full mileage.

643. Owing to the formation of the country, it is impossible to get a short cut from Adelong over to Tumut, it being very hilly? It would be very costly to get it. I should not like to say that they could not get it. The disposition would be to come down in the direction of Gundagai.

644. I think you give the population of that district as 6,000? Yes, 6,000; that is the population of Tumut, Adelong, and the district.

645. With regard to the Tumut district, what area is there that is good for cultivation, the traffic from which would be attracted to the line? I could not say. There are about 15,000 acres under cultivation. Owing to the character of the country it is difficult to tell, but I do not think the traffic would be increased very much by reason of the railway connection.

646. It appears that, latterly, the cultivation of tobacco there has fallen off a good deal? Yes, the cultivation of both tobacco and maize has fallen off in that district.

647. That was a considerable item, was it not? It was, in value, but it never represented much railway freight. The largest quantity of tobacco ever grown there was about 500 tons.

648. There has also been a falling off in the cultivation of maize? Yes. I took the trouble to obtain some information from the Year Book, which shows that in 1896 there were 223,000 bushels of maize grown in the district; in 1897, 190,689 bushels of maize; in 1898, 151,257 bushels; in 1899, 146,455 bushels. The production of tobacco was, in 1896, 237 tons; in 1897, 520 tons; in 1898, 401 tons; in 1899, 290 tons. As far as tobacco is concerned, by charging local rates on the most that has ever been grown, we should obtain a revenue of only £100.

649. Is that a very large sheep-growing district? No.

650. What do you allow there for wool and live stock? We estimate that there would be 140 tons of wool per annum from Adelong, and 166 tons from Tumut, or about 1,800 bales, and there would be 250 tons of stock, which is a very liberal estimate for that district.

651. Is it a district from which they send much fat stock to market? Yes, at certain times of the year we get a considerable quantity from there.

652. What would be the charge from Tumut to Gundagai for a truck of fat stock? I may mention that we never charge local rates on stock traffic. £10 would be the charge through to Sydney for a truck of fat stock.

653. *Mr. Watson.*] How much extra would you get for the extra 31 miles? The charge would be 9s. 1d. per truck over that distance. I may say that if this applied to starving stock the rate would be 4s. 6d. per truck.

654. *Mr. Levien.*] Is that the charge for either sheep or cattle? Yes, for every truck load of sheep or cattle. As regards maize and wheat, in all cases—Berrigan was an exception—it has been usual to charge a through rate for agricultural produce. We get 3d. a ton for it as a through rate; but by charging a local rate we should get 3s. 6d.

655. *Chairman.*] Can you give us the same information with regard to the charge for wool for the extra distance? The charge would be 1d. per ton per mile, or for the whole distance 2s. 7d.

- J. Harper. 656. You have never charged local rates for agricultural produce? The local rates would be 3s. 6d.; through rates, 3d. per ton.
- 15 Nov., 1899. 657. Do you think that it is a district that is likely to expand in regard to agriculture? I do not think there is land there for much further cultivation.
658. Do you know the eastern routes? There is the Brungle route. I do not know that route; but in 1896 I had an estimate prepared which showed £800 less than the estimate for the Gundagai connection. Of course, a great deal of Adelong traffic would be lost if the line went *via* Brungle.
659. Either of those eastern routes would be through purely agricultural and pastoral country? Yes. The Brungle route would miss the Adelong traffic altogether.
660. And I suppose, as has been stated by former witnesses, the junction being to the north of Gundagai is a very grave objection? It would be.
661. From a running point of view? Yes; it would necessitate an independent junction at that point. It would be more costly to work.
662. *Mr. Shepherd.*] With regard to these local or special rates, they, of course, only affect the proposed new line? Yes.
663. The through rates would be charged as they exist on the main line? Yes.
664. Is that 19s. 3d. a ton for the whole distance, or only for the 31 miles? It would be for the 31 miles only.
665. What would the rate be from Gundagai to Sydney per ton? Through to Sydney it would be £7 17s. 4d. per ton from Tumut—that is, for goods of the third class, consisting of articles of general consumption—groceries, drapery, and things of that kind. It is a very comprehensive list. There are included square galvanised-iron tanks, shafting, certain ironwork, machinery, and so on. That class covers a very large proportion of goods.
666. Of course, the charge for agricultural produce is very much less? Yes; the local charge from Tumut to Gundagai for agricultural produce would be 3s. 6d. per ton; whereas the charge from Gundagai through to Sydney would be 15s. 10d. If, on the other hand, through rates were charged from Tumut to Sydney the rate would be 12s. 7d.—that is, 3d. more than the rate from Gundagai to Sydney.
667. Can you assign any cause for the decrease in the cultivation of maize in that district? I am inclined to think that it has been due to a great extent to the competition of the Northern rivers, and I assume that it has not paid the growers.
668. Do you not think it possible that the expense of cartage from Tumut to Gundagai might have something to do with it? As long as it paid to cart it in, and they got a price to cover it, that is not a very important item. As far as the cartage is concerned, the probability is that the charges in 1896 for road-carriage were greater than they are to-day. In 1896, notwithstanding that charge, there were 223,411 bushels of maize grown. In 1897 there were 190,689 bushels; in 1898, 151,257 bushels grown; against 146,455 bushels in 1899.
669. *Mr. Levien.*] Have you been in the district yourself making inquiries as to the traffic? Not since 1896.
670. Did you wait on the farmers and get the statistics as to agricultural production from them? No; the items were taken from the statistical records.
671. Not from information that you got direct from those people? No; I took the records collected by the police.
672. Does it appear from the Statistician's figures that the production of the district was enormously increased from the time when Mr. Travers Jones first made representations on this subject? My figures are from the Government Statistician, and whilst it may be that there has been an increase as compared with what was represented by Mr. Travers Jones, there has certainly not been an increase since 1896. The figures show a marked decrease. If the production was less than that when Mr. Jones supplied his statement, all I can say is that the position would be worse than we represent it now, from a traffic point of view.
673. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think it possible that the number of stock sent to the district whilst drought prevailed in other parts would have the effect of reducing the area under cultivation? I scarcely think so, because the same area is still under cultivation, but it has been devoted to wheat instead of to maize. There is a large increase in the area under wheat.
674. *Mr. Levien.*] It has paid them better to grow wheat than to grow maize? Yes; wheat has superseded maize.
675. Is it not a fact that the maize grown at Tumut is the best which is produced in the whole Colony? It is very good maize, but I cannot say anything about that as a reason for constructing a railway.
676. I see that in 1896, 223,000 bushels of maize were produced; was not that a very wet season—a season that would suit maize? I do not know; but the fact remains that the area under maize is less now than it was in 1896.
677. You cannot give us the number of acres under cultivation? No.
678. And you do not know what the absolute yield per acre was? No; but it can easily be got. The same area is under cultivation, but more of it has been devoted to wheat instead of maize, which shows that they have found that wheat pays better than maize, I should think.
679. Do you know whether the wheat grown in that district is of extra quality? I do not.
680. You say that tobacco would not pay, 500 tons being all that has been grown in one year? £100 is all the freight that we should get from that quantity.
681. Did the quantity ever exceed that at any time? I never knew it to exceed that. It is supposed to be the largest quantity produced in that district.
682. Take the Maitland district—you know that a tremendous quantity is grown at Wollumbine? Yes. I may add, in connection with maize, assuming that through rates were charged upon it, the freight would not amount to very much, because the through rates would be 3d. per ton, and if you had 4,000 tons of maize in addition to what is grown to-day the freight would only come to £50.
683. I suppose there is every chance of this district progressing instead of retrograding? I should hope that all the districts of the Colony would progress, but I do not think that the want of a railway there will keep it in a backward state. There are very few districts which are favoured with so good an average rainfall as this district is. It has a remarkably good rainfall, and I think that that is quite enough to counteract any disadvantages arising from cartage over 22 miles of road. We have many districts in the Colony

Colony where the farmers are carting wheat 30 miles over worse roads than that one. I will now put in a statement by Mr. Russell, the Government Astronomer, showing the rainfall. Average annual rainfall of all available places:—Gundagai, 24·05 inches; Tumut, 33·27 inches; Kimo, 23·78 inches; Red Hill, 36·36 inches; Rosemount, 33·17 inches; Adelong, 30·83 inches; Fern Hill, 35·60 inches; Glenrock, 48·86 inches; Tareutta, 26·90 inches.

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684. Suppose they get trucks to carry their stock, even though it was at half the rate you have mentioned—4s. 6d.—do you not think there would be a greater number of stock taken into that district? I do not think so. There is not much disposition to take stock into that district, unless they are absolutely compelled to send them. By the time that the sheep have been handled, and the cost of railway carriage has been paid, it amounts to a heavy tax on the stockowners. They only remove their stock under stress of circumstances.

685. What is the greatest distance you have known them to remove starving stock? I think that 350 miles is as far as we have carried any starving stock by rail, and that is quite exceptional. Until last year we had not carried any for six years, and prior to that we had not carried any for ten years, and we have only carried starving stock three times in twenty years.

686. That is an astonishing thing, considering the reductions made in freight, and the bad seasons we have had? The stock have not been starving apparently, for in twenty years we have only had occasion to give rebates on starving stock three times.

687. You say there is no great area of land in the district, either for cultivation or for stock? They cannot extend the area under cultivation very much, and the area available for stock is not a very large one.

688. What is the largest run in that district? I could not tell you offhand. You may judge what kind of country it is from the fact that under normal conditions it produces 140 tons of wool. That is equal to 1,000 bales.

689. How do stock fatten there? They fatten very well.

690. Do fat stock from that part fetch any higher price than other stock? I do not know. I do not think it matters much where the stock are fattened; as long as they are fat they will fetch a fair price.

691. *Mr. Dick.*] As a general rule, you consider that a district, the maximum distance of which is about 20 miles from a railway station, if provided with good roads, is not suffering any great hardship for want of railway communication? No. I think that many other districts in the Colony are suffering greater hardships than the Tumut district in that respect.

692. That would apply to the district to be served by the proposed railway? Yes.

693. Do you think that even if the line were constructed the teams would be able to successfully compete with it? I should fully expect competition to be maintained, especially as far as Adelong is concerned. The disposition would be, when the traffic was put on the drays moving from that direction, to continue on into Gundagai.

694. As far as the Adelong traffic is concerned, it ought to be a very large item;—it seems that they would have to put their goods on to carts at Adelong, cart it to the railway, then trans-ship it and have it carted into Gundagai? Yes; but the light in which I look upon it is this: it is practically about a day's journey for a team from Adelong to Gundagai; anything going in that direction they will carry at reduced rates.

695. Then, would not the fact that Adelong is not on the line, and that any goods sent to the railway for Adelong would have to be trans-shipped and carried by team some miles, have the effect of establishing a constant and probably successful rivalry on the part of the teams against the railway? It would certainly tend in that direction.

696. From what you have stated, I think the local rate which would be imposed practically approximates to the present charge for road carriage over the whole distance? That is on the class of goods from which we derive the most profit; they would inevitably go by the road.

697. In the course of another inquiry, which we held some time ago, we were assured that if this line were constructed a good deal of starving stock would be taken from the district of which Wyalong is the centre, to the Tumut district;—from your previous answers, I gather that you do not expect any revenue, except in times of exceptional drought, from such a source? I cannot get the information as to the absolute number of stock carried during last drought—the worst drought we have ever had. We carried ten times more stock than we ever carried before. I will get a return of the stock which we carried during the last season. The number of starving stock carried into that district was quite exceptional. Mr. McCaughey sent stock into a lot of country there.

698. I think you said you were of opinion that the available area which would be served by this railway is such that no material increase in the output could be anticipated? No; I am sure that the increase would be more than covered by the 25 per cent. addition that I have credited to the existing products.

699. Would the construction of this line have any effect in reducing the loss on the Gundagai extension? I am rather inclined to think it would increase it. What I mean to say is, that it would not create any new traffic.

700. It would practically mean making a further extension to cater for the traffic which is already catered for by the Gundagai extension? Yes.

701. *Mr. Watson.*] In the statement you read to the Committee, I think you gave the rate of road carriage between Gundagai and Adelong;—but I do not think you mentioned the rate of carriage between Gundagai and Tumut? I can give those rates. These are the rates to both Adelong and Tumut. It is practically the same distance to both places, and in each case the rates are the same. Adelong to Tumut, 10s. for grain; and for heavy loading, machinery, &c., 10s. or 15s. per ton; £1 per ton for general merchandise.

702. The general merchandise for which the teamsters get £1 a ton is a class of goods which you get 19s. 6d. for? Yes.

703. What would the line be credited with on that class of goods if you charged through rates? 11s. 4d. per ton. Then, of course, this must be borne in mind that you would have to add the carriage from the station to Adelong. At Tumut the goods would be delivered in the town practically.

704. You would have to add to that probably another 2s. 6d. per ton? They would not carry the traffic from Adelong to any point on the line for 2s. 6d. They would have to pay that much at Tumut to get their goods from the station.

- J. Harper. 705. If you are referring only to Adelong, the other rate would not be as much as 11s. 4d. ? It would be a little less.
- 15 Nov., 1899. 706. Assuming that on the down journey the goods go right up to Adelong, or to the nearest point ? There would be a difference of 3s., which would be about 8s. 4d.
707. And you would have to add on to that 8s. 4d., taking the Adelong traffic, how much do you think ? It would be 4 or 5 miles, I should think, to Adelong. I do not think that the goods would be carried much under 4s. or 5s.
708. That would bring it up to 13s. ? Yes.
709. Do you think that with a charge of 13s. to Adelong, and, roughly, a charge of 12s. to Tumut, road carriage could compete against the railway ? Yes ; and I can tell you another reason why they would compete : We have a reduction of the rate for truck loads of goods. The effect of that is that perhaps a storekeeper in one small town is not able to manage it by reason of the way that he purchases his supply. At Gundagai they are always able, by reason of the local trade, to get enough to fill a 6-ton truck. The result of that is that they get a very material discount on the ordinary rates, so the disposition would be, as far as the agents are concerned, to get the goods as far as Gundagai, and then distribute them from there.
710. In that case, would it not be possibly as cheap to reship a portion of the goods over the Tumut line ? I question that, because I think they would probably then make up the loading for Adelong and Tumut with the one team.
711. Have you been beyond Tumut in a southerly or south-easterly direction ? No ; but I have been out to Tumbarumba from Wagga Wagga.
712. Of course, if there is land beyond Tumut suitable for agriculture, that, with the construction of a railway to Tumut, would be more likely to be utilised than it is at present ? Decidedly ; they would be much closer to railway communication.
713. We have been informed that there is some good land beyond Tumut ? Yes ; I could not say what the extent of it is.
714. Whether you would get new traffic would depend on the amount of available land which now is too far away from a railway for profitable cultivation ? Yes ; and for which I have added 25 per cent. to my estimate.
715. I think you stated that you thought Tumut fairly well served as far as the district itself is concerned ? Yes.
716. In a previous inquiry I understood you to say that in an agricultural country any distance beyond 15 miles was rather too far from a railway ? Yes—that is to say, assuming that the cost of the line is such as to warrant the railway being built. But I do not look on this line as in any sense a pioneer line, as it is a railway which will cost between £4,000 and £5,000 a mile. I think I made a reservation at the time to the effect that that was where the roads were not available.
717. Of course, the cost of the construction of the line would not enter into any question as to what would be the greatest distance from a railway at which it would be profitable to grow wheat ? No ; but it would enter into the policy of the construction of the line.
718. Speaking as to the advisability of developing certain areas, you have to look at what would be the farthest point from a line at which a man can get a living by growing wheat ? Yes. People living 30 miles from a railway have made a living by growing wheat. A great many are doing so to-day, or they are supposed to be doing so.
719. If you regard 15 miles as a fair range for the influence of a railway in an agricultural country, it can hardly be said that Tumut, a distance of 22 miles from the railway, is properly served ? I say it is a fair distance. I am not prepared to say that it is a wise policy to bring all the agricultural areas in the country within 15 miles of a railway.
720. In any case, one would have to be governed by the amount of agricultural country available for development ? Decidedly.
721. From what you have seen of this district, you do not seem to think that the area of agricultural country is large enough to support a railway if it is going to cost so much as this line ? No. I cannot see that anything can arise to make it pay if the extension is carried out. I think that all these lines should be carried out with a view to their possible extension to other equally good or better districts beyond ; but I do not see anything in this district.
722. You say you have been to Tumbarumba ? Yes.
723. There has been a statement made that the line, instead of going to Tumut, might be taken up the Adelong valley, past Adelong, towards Tumbarumba ? I think there was an idea of that kind at one time.
724. If it were taken that way, there would be a possibility of its extension ;—is it good country about Tumbarumba ? It is very broken. It would be very expensive country in which to construct a railway.
725. It seems that all the good country about there is amongst ridges ? Yes ; practically it is in pockets amongst the mountains.
726. This estimate of £305, to be derived from goods, stock, and wool,—do you think they are calculated on the probability of getting all the traffic from the two points mentioned ? Yes ; and there is 25 per cent. added for the produce.
727. And that £305 represents the whole of the traffic ? Yes—that is, merchandise, stock, and wool.
728. This merchandise, stock, and wool, less the 25 per cent. increase, now goes over the Cootamundra line ? Yes.
729. There would not be that percentage of new traffic ? No ; it goes over the line to-day.
730. Are through rates now charged on the Gundagai line ? Yes ; there have been only through rates charged on the Gundagai line.
731. When that line was opened, local rates were not thought of ? No.
732. *Mr. Dick.*] We were assured, in evidence yesterday, that the permanency of this district as a mining field was assured, and that it is more than likely that further mineral developments will take place there ;—would you care to offer an opinion as to the prospect of the railway revenue increasing ? I should unhesitatingly say that the future of that district is assured. It is a rich mining district.
733. *Chairman.*] When you look on the map you see that when the line gets opposite Adelong it takes a right-angled turn into Tumut ;—do you think it would be any improvement if we followed the creek right down to Adelong, with a view of getting to Tumbarumba ? I could not say ; that is an engineering question.

734. I mean independently of the engineering aspect of the matter—I mean from the traffic point of view? There is nothing at Tumberumba of any consequence.

735. Then there is the probability of losing the Tumut traffic? Yes.

736. If you went towards Adelong that would increase the distance to Tumut, and the people would be sure to go into Gundagai? Yes.

737. So your view is that the line from Cootamundra to Gundagai is a mistake, and that it would not help that line to carry it further on? That is my impression. The following is a statement showing the production of maize and tobacco in the Tumut district for the four years ended 31st March, 1899:—

J. Harper.
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	Maize.				Tobacco.			
	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.
	bushels.	bushels.	bushels.	bushels.	tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
Adelong	13,304	14,220	10,550	19,780	53	116	126	37
Reedy Flat	6,415	7,695	12,045	16,775	.....	.....	.....	.....
Tarcutta	2,290	120	470	480	33	69	33	43
Tumut	201,402	168,654	128,192	109,420	151	335	242	210
Total	223,411	190,689	151,257	146,455	237	520	401	290

Charles Edward Rennie, Chief Draftsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

738. *Chairman*] Have you a statement to make with regard to this line? Yes; the map shows the tenure of the different classes of land 10 miles on each side of the proposed line of railway from Gundagai to Tumut. The amounts are as follows:—

C. E. Rennie.
15 Nov., 1899.

Alienated land	585,900 acres.
Reserves	217,800 "
Settlement leases	650 acres
Improvement leases	3,200 "
Snow leases	17,000 "
Crown land { Occupation license	108,700 "
{ Untenanted	55,700 "
	164,400 "

739. The route of the proposed railway, almost without exception, goes through private property? Yes; with very trifling exceptions.

740. *Mr. Shepherd*] Are you thoroughly acquainted with that district? I have no personal knowledge of the place at all.

741. *Chairman*] There is a reserve as you approach Tumut on the western side of the line;—is that a mineral reserve? That is the Adelong temporary common, and other adjoining reserves.

742. What is the area of it? About 18,000 acres, I suppose.

743. *Mr. Watson*] Is it available for mining, or does it include mining reserves? It includes mining reserves.

744. *Chairman*] Is it somewhat patchy country? I have no personal knowledge of that country at all.

745. *Mr. Watson*] Are those forest reserves held there under any form of occupation at present—annual license or occupation license? I could not answer that question without looking the matter up. I believe those lands are held under occupation license *

746. It is probable that the large area tinted brown on the plan, being unoccupied Crown lands, is of rather a broken character? Yes. There is a comparatively small area untenanted—only about 55,000 acres. The rest is under occupation license.

TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Christian Peterson, Assistant Dairy Expert, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

747. *Chairman*] I believe that you are acquainted with the district between Gundagai and Tumut? I spent five or six days in the district in September last.

748. In what part of the district? I went from Gundagai to Tumut, and through the Gilmore valley, and back from Tumut through Adelong to Gundagai.

749. Leaving Gundagai, you went in a south-easterly direction through Brungle to Tumut, and from Tumut you returned through Adelong to Gundagai? Yes.

750. What kind of country is it between Gundagai and Brungle? About Brungle the country is very good.

751. What is it like? There is a good deal of flat country there, though I did not see more of it than could be seen from the road, as I did not leave the coach.

752. Was it more suitable for agriculture or for dairying? It is particularly suitable for maize-growing, and very well adapted for dairying.

753. Do you speak of the country all the way into Tumut? No; there is a lot of barren country before coming to, and after leaving, Brungle.

754. Country suitable only for grazing. Yes.

755.

* NOTE (on revision):—Forest Reserve 2,040 is held under occupation license. Forest Reserve 1,961 is not under occupation.

- C. Peterson. 755. How far does that country extend south? I could not say, because I did not leave the coach.
756. But so far as your observation went? Two or 3 miles.
- 21 Nov., 1899. 757. Then you get into good country again? Yes; there is good country about Tumut.
758. Good agricultural and grazing country? Yes.
759. What is the width of the area of good land;—did you make inquiries on the subject? No; but I know that there is a lot of good land about Brungle.
760. How far does it extend—10 or 20 miles? On one side of the road, as far as one can see.
761. Then you get on to ridgy country? Yes.
762. When you get to Tumut, what extent of country is there suitable for agriculture and for dairying? I went along the Tumut River for a distance of about 4 miles above Tumut, and I saw there a lot of land which is adapted for dairying and for maize-growing.
763. Is it largely under cultivation? No.
764. What crops did you see there? Maize is practically all I saw.
765. Any tobacco? I did not see any tobacco.
766. We have been told that the tobacco crops have been allowed to drop off there considerably;—did you make any inquiries on the subject? No; because my business is connected entirely with the dairying industry. I went there to give instruction in pasteurization and butter-making.
767. Did you make a written report on the subject? Yes; I sent in a report.
768. Have you a copy of it? No. I do not think that I dealt in my report with the area of land available for dairying.
769. What is the country like above Tumut? It is black-soil country.
770. Is it flat? There are the river-flats—long narrow strips of flat land beside the river, and behind it there is ridgy country.
771. In your report to the Department what did you say about the character of the country in relation to dairying? I did not report upon the Tumut River flats. I went to see them rather because a gentleman in the district wanted to show them to me.
772. And what was the result of your visit? I saw that that land was well adapted for dairying.
773. Was it suitable for dairying rather than for agriculture? It was suitable for both purposes.
774. Can you tell us what extent of land there is in the district suitable for dairying? There is a good deal of country there suitable for dairying. The dairying land is rather scattered.
775. Does the good country cease 4 miles out of Tumut? (Going up the river, you get to ridgy country at that distance. The gentleman who drove me out informed me that there is a lot of good country beyond again.)
776. You did not go out to see it? No; I had no time to go further.
777. Did you go to any other part of the Tumut district? The object of my visit to the district was to give instruction in butter-making at the Rosebank Creamery, in the Gilmore valley. That valley is about 7 miles long.
778. And how wide? It is about 2 miles wide in the widest part.
779. How is it occupied? The land is used chiefly for corn-growing, and for dairying.
780. Is the factory an extensive one? No; it has only recently been erected.
781. Is it a co-operative factory? No; it is a private concern.
782. Are there any other dairy factories there? No; that is the only one that is started, so far.
783. Did you ascertain the number of dairy cattle in the district? No; I did not make any inquiry into that subject. I believe that information on that head is collected by the police, and forwarded to the Board of Health.
784. What quantity of milk can be dealt with by the factory to which you have referred? When I was there the factory was dealing with the milk of about 150 cows. The proprietor at the present time uses only the milk of his own cows; but he intends to erect creameries, and to deal with the milk of other producers.
785. So that at the present time the factory is a very small concern? Yes.
786. Did you gather any other information whilst in the district? No; I was not aware that I should be called upon to give evidence in regard to the character and resources of the district.
787. What kind of country did you travel through on your way back to Gundagai, by way of Adelong? That is not very good country for dairying.
788. Is the milk used in the factory you have spoken of good in quality? It makes good butter. At the present time they only manufacture for local consumption; there is no over-production.
789. Is the district a specially good one for the feeding of cows, and for dairying? Yes, a very good one.
790. Do you think dairying would be entered into there to a very large extent if the district had ready access to a market? I think so.
791. As a dairying district, how does it compare with the South Coast? I should say that they should be able to make butter equal to any on the South Coast.
792. Then, the district can be looked upon as a first-class dairying district? Yes.
793. Coming back by way of Adelong, did you make any inquiries as to the extent of country there suitable for dairying? No.
794. *Mr. Lavien.*] What kind of grass grows in the district? It is mostly natural grass that is growing there.
795. But grass of what kind? There are white grass, trefoil, couch, and rye-grass.
796. Any clover? I did not see any clover.
797. Are the grasses you have named good milk-producing grasses? Yes; very good.
798. What is the quality of the milk produced in the district? It is very good.
799. Is it as good as the South Coast milk? Yes. The climate is a cold one, and better milk is produced in a cold climate than in a warm climate, and on high land rather than on low land. The milk is as good as I have met with anywhere.
800. How is it for cheese-making—better than the milk down the coast? Equal to any on the coast.
801. What did you go to the district for? To give instructions in butter-making, not to make inquiries about the country. Butter-making is my particular line.
802. I suppose anyone can make good butter if they can get good cream;—there is no particular science in butter-making? Yes, there is. Everybody cannot make good butter.
803. Some grasses are better for milk-production than others, but it does not come within your province to

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- to inquire into the nature of the grasses in a district? No.
804. You are merely concerned with the making of butter? Yes.
805. Do you report upon cheese-making too? No; I have nothing to do with cheese.
806. Your business lies wholly with butter-making? Yes, and the management of butter factories. I give instructions in the pasteurisation of milk and cream and in butter-making. I visit all the factories and creameries.
807. You have no qualifications for judging as to the capabilities of different grasses for milk-production? I am not a grass expert, though I know the difference between rye-grass, clover, and lucerne, in regard to milk-production.
808. When you are sent to a district, is it not your duty to say that the grass there is or is not good for dairying purposes? Yes. In my report I state what grasses there are, and what weeds are commencing to appear.
809. But one does not feed cows on weeds in order to produce milk? That is so. My report refers to weeds which are likely to injure the milk and butter of the cows eating them.
810. Is this district a district in which you would be ready to start yourself if you wanted to commence dairying? Yes; it is a district which I should recommend.
811. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is the dairy to which you have referred the only dairy in the district? No; though it is the only one connected with the butter factory.
812. How many other dairies are there in the district? Six or eight.
813. Do you know how many cows they milk? At the most about 400.
814. Have you any idea as to the area of land they use? Some of the farms contain 3,000 or 4,000 acres; that on which the factory is erected contains 3,000 acres.
815. Have they any other kind of stock besides milking cows there? They had some fat stock; but they intend to go in only for dairying stock.
816. Are there no sheep there? I did not see any, though there might be some on the higher country.
817. Did you go south from Tumut for any distance? No.
818. Whereabouts is the principal cultivation? Along the river above Tumut; and there is a good deal in the Gilmore valley.
819. What is cultivated, chiefly? Maize, and there is also a good deal of wheat grown.
820. Have you any idea as to the area of land under wheat or maize? No.
821. Do the people there seem to be pretty prosperous? Yes.
822. Did you question them at all about the proposed railway? No. I did not know until after I left the district that it was proposed to make a railway there.
823. Had you been to the district before last September? No. I was away from Sydney about six days on the occasion of my only visit to the district, and I was working in the butter factory nearly the whole time, so that I could not see very much of the country.
824. Do you think that the district is capable of producing a much larger quantity of butter than it now produces? Yes.
825. Are they manufacturing cheese there? Very little, and only for local consumption.
826. The people of the district would have to take all their produce to Gundagai? Yes, if they wanted an outside market.
827. Did they not speak to you about the distance which they had to travel to get there? No; those with whom I came in contact did not complain much; but I do not think they produce very much.
828. Did they express any opinion as to the advantage which the railway would give them? I think that the gentleman who has the factory said that it would be well if there were a railway.
829. Did they say that they could produce more if they had a railway? They would produce more if they had better means of communication.
830. Is there much cultivation to the west of Tumut? I have not been out that way.
831. What is the country like between Tumut and Gundagai;—is it fairly good all the way? Not all the way; a good deal of it is poor country.
832. With stony ridges? Yes.
833. There is not a great deal of land fit for cultivation? There is good land at Brungle; but then you come to poor land again.
834. What kind of timber grows in the district? I did not take much note of the timber; but it is mostly hardwood.
835. Box or gum? Mostly gum.
836. Did you notice if the trees were straight? There are some good straight trees there.
837. And trees of good size? Yes.
838. You went to Adelong? I came through Adelong.
839. Does the mining seem to be going on there prosperously? With the exception of the Adelong mine I should not think it prosperous. I saw a few shafts there.
840. You did not inquire into the state of the mining industry there? No.
841. *Mr. Dick.*] Can you tell us in general terms what led you to conclude that the district was a good dairying district? The area of good grazing country there.
842. Do you consider the hilly country there as being not only available, but good for dairying purposes? Some of it is good for dairying, while other parts of it are not. I did not go over much of the country besides that traversed by the road.
843. You had not much opportunity to see what the country was like, but what you saw was good for dairying purposes? What I saw of dairying land was good for that purpose.
844. You cannot give us any idea as to the extent of good dairying land in that district? No.
845. Can you offer an opinion as to whether the dairying industry, or the growing of maize and other cereals, would create the greater amount of railway traffic? I think that the dairying interest would create more traffic than the growing of cereals, because, in addition to the butter which would have to be sent by rail, there would also be the pigs which would be raised, and the pig traffic alone would probably be as large as the cereal traffic.
846. Dairying is practically a new departure in the Tumut district? Yes.
847. What directed the attention of the people of that district to dairying? I think they look upon dairying as likely to pay better than grain-growing.

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848. Has the dairying industry had a fair trial there yet? I should not say that it has had a fair trial yet.
849. Have you seen the dairying country on the Northern rivers? Yes.
850. How does this country compare with that? There is not so much good country in the Tumut district as on the northern rivers, but what country there is is as good as any dairying country I have seen elsewhere.
851. Has it not been the practice in that district, when maize was low in price, to use it to feed pigs, and thus make bacon? I cannot say.
852. I understand you think that with dairying there will be a new departure, in the raising of pigs in the district? The raising of pigs always follows the dairying industry.
853. And you anticipate that a railway would obtain more revenue from the carriage of butter and pigs than from the carriage of grain if the district continued to be used for grain-growing? I do. Dairying requires more labour than agriculture, and will therefore bring more people into the district. That will increase the quantity of commodities needed, and the passenger traffic too.
854. On what acreage of land in the district could a man make a fair living if he went in for dairying? I should think a man would make a fair living on 150 acres of such land as I saw in the valley.
855. Is the land held in larger areas than that? Yes; it is held in large areas.
856. Then one advantage of the railway would be that it would bring about closer settlement upon smaller areas? Yes.

WEDNESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.		ROBERT HENRY LEVICK, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Hon. James Hoskins, M.L.C., sworn, and examined:—

- Hon. J. Hoskins,
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857. *Chairman.*] I understand that you represented the electorate of Tumut in the Legislative Assembly for a considerable number of years? For seven or eight years.
858. I suppose you are fairly well acquainted with the character of the district, and its agricultural and mineral resources? I have not been in the district for eight or nine years, but I was elected to represent it four or five times, and I have travelled through it repeatedly, so that I know fairly well what its capabilities are. The valley of the Tumut contains very rich land, but the extent of good land is limited, because of the narrowness of the valley. The same remark would apply to the land in the Gilmore valley. I never saw any cultivation on the ridges in the Tumut district, though that land may have been cultivated in recent years. When I represented the district the ridge-land was devoted to pastoral uses. The people there looked forward to a rush of sheep from the low country whenever there was a spell of dry weather.
859. The district provides a good feeding-ground for poor stock in dry seasons? Yes. Stock come up from the Riverina plains in dry seasons.
860. And a good many stock are depastured in the district all the year round? The country did not appear to me to be very heavily stocked—not the ridge country.
861. But in dry seasons the district is largely availed of as a place to send poor stock? Yes, from Riverina.
862. What is the nature of the ridgy country? Ordinary grass-land, but I do not think the grass is very nutritious. The grass on the flats at Brungle and other places, and on the land along the rivers, is very nutritious, but such land is limited in area.
863. When you speak of the Tumut valley, what district does the term include? I was referring to flats on the banks of the river.
864. Starting from where? I have never been down the river to its junction with the Murrumbidgee, but I know it from Tarrabandra to Tumut, and above Tumut.
865. Are we to understand that the best country is in the neighbourhood of Tumut and beyond? It does not extend very much beyond Tumut.
866. Five or 6 miles, perhaps? Rather more than that.
867. Is not that land well suited for agricultural and for dairying purposes? It is for agricultural purposes; I do not know enough about dairying to be able to speak in regard to it.
868. When you knew the district, was much corn and tobacco grown there? Maize was the principal crop there then, and a good deal of it was sent to Wagga direct, because that was shorter than to send it by team to Gundagai, and then by rail from Gundagai to Cootamundra, and from Cootamundra to Wagga. Wagga is the best market the Tumut people have for their maize. I have heard people say that Tumut maize is the best maize grown in the Colony, because it is not subject to destruction by weevil, whereas the maize sent from the Macleay, the Manning, the Hunter, the Richmond, the Clarence, and other rivers is very much damaged by weevil. At the same time, the Tumut people require a good price for their maize, in order to pay for the long carriage, and therefore they are generally undersold in Sydney by maize coming from the rivers.
869. I suppose that when you represented Tumut you generally travelled by the main coach road from Gundagai to Tumut? Once or twice I travelled by the southern road from Bowning, near Yass, to Gundagai, and thence to Tumut. Subsequently, when the railway was extended to Cootamundra, I used to take the coach from Cootamundra. When I was Secretary for Lands in a Parkes administration, and the Government was about to submit railway proposals to Parliament, I suggested the construction of a branch line from the southern railway towards Tumut. My proposal met with favour at the hands of the Government, and was sanctioned by Parliament, with the result that the line from Cootamundra to Gundagai

Gundagai was constructed. Since then I have been very much surprised—and I may almost say grieved—to learn from the reports of the Railway Commissioners, that that line entails a loss of about £4,000 per annum. When I submitted the proposal to the Government, I considered that the country between Cootamundra and Gundagai was very well suited for railway construction. There were no considerable streams to cross, and no ridges of any consequence, and the land was tolerably fertile, and, to a certain extent, cultivated. As the existing line receives, in addition to the traffic from Tumut and Adelong, traffic from the settlement between Gundagai and Adelong Crossing, I do not see how the proposed extension to Tumut can pay, while there is a loss on the existing line. When I used to visit the district, the cost of conveyance from Tumut to Gundagai was £1 a ton. The rate has of late years been reduced to some 10s. a ton. Now, the distance from Tumut to Gundagai is barely 21 miles by road, but by the proposed railway it would be 31 miles, and, it seems to me, that by competition the teamsters' rates will be reduced to 7s. 6d. a ton, which is not less than is charged in some other parts of the country, and on these terms I think the teamsters' competition will seriously affect the railway. The road from Tumut is a fairly good road. It is well culverted, and good lengths of it are macadamised.

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870. Three routes have been surveyed between Gundagai and Tumut—a western route following Adelong Creek for some distance, and two eastern routes, one on each side of the Tumut River;—from what you know of the country, do you think the western route will serve as large an agricultural district as either of the eastern routes? No.

871. Either of the eastern routes would serve more agricultural country than would be served by the western route? Yes.

872. Does the good agricultural country extend pretty well all the way along the Tumut River, from Gundagai to Tumut? I cannot say, because I have not been all along the river. I know that in some places the ridges abut more upon the river than in others, so that there are no flats worth speaking of.

873. Is it not a fact that the best agricultural land is in the vicinity of Tumut, and to the north-east of Tumut? It is good land all about Tumut, where it is flat. There is good land up as far as Tarrabandra.

874. All the way up the river? Yes; but in narrow strips.

875. Strips of 3 or 4 miles wide? In some cases not more than a mile wide; in other cases as much as 2 miles wide.

876. How far does the good land extend east from Tumut—3 or 4 miles? Not so far as that.

877. And south from Tumut? South from Tumut the country is very rough and ridgy.

878. Between Tumut and Adelong the country is pretty hilly and rough? Yes, except close to Tumut; and even there it is very ridgy on one side of the road; it slopes down gradually to the Gilmore Creek.

879. Was Adelong in your electorate? Yes.

880. What are your opinions in regard to Adelong as a gold-field? I cannot express an opinion in regard to it.

881. Is Adelong looked upon as one of the prominent gold-fields of the Colony? There will always be people getting gold there. An English company holds the Gibraltar mine there; but it does not pay.

882. The mining is mostly quartz reefing now? Yes, and there is alluvial working on the Upper Adelong.

883. When you advocated the construction of a railway from Cootamundra to Gundagai, had you in view the probable extension of the line to Tumut? I thought that if the line proved profitable, it would be wise to extend it to Tumut; but with the information which I now have in regard to it, I do not think it should be extended. I cannot understand that there should be a loss upon the Gundagai line, because that line serves an extensive district lying round both Tumut and Gundagai.

884. It is not very rich country beyond Tumut, out towards Tumbarumba? Some of the ridges are richer than those about Adelong. I believe that there is a little cultivation round about Tumbarumba, but very little.

885. I suppose you recognise that it is a somewhat unusual thing to propose the construction of 31 miles of railway to connect two places which are only 21 miles apart? I consider that the people of Tumut cannot find it difficult, seeing that they have a partly macadamised road, to carry their produce to Gundagai. Plenty of small towns in England, and still more in America, have to carry their produce 20 miles to get to a railway station.

886. Is the district such that you think the Government should construct this railway;—do you think that if the railway were extended to Tumut there would be a very great development of the district? I do not think so.

887. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you any idea as to the area of the available land about Tumut? No, I have not. I was only asked to come here yesterday; and therefore I have not made any inquiries into the subject.

888. Can you tell us what is the length of the Tumut valley, in which the strips of good land are situated, is? I am not well acquainted with the lower part of the river.

889. Narrow strips, such as you have described, could hardly furnish much traffic for a railway, if used either for agriculture or for dairying? I do not think they could.

890. Was any dairying carried on in the district in your time? Not that I am aware of.

891. We have been told that there is now a butter factory in the district, and from six to eight dairies; none of them existed in your time? No.

892. Was tobacco not grown in the district in your time? Yes; but its cultivation has diminished considerably, because the price came down too low. The Chinese were the main growers of tobacco, and they have largely discontinued to grow it.

893. Do you think that the proposed railway would assist Adelong at all? If it enabled the people there to get loading more cheaply from Sydney, it would, of course, assist them; and, with regard to the passenger traffic, it is, of course, more easy to ride in a train than to ride in a coach.

894. Do you think that the construction of a railway would increase the development of the mines? I cannot see why it should do so, because there is now a railway within 20 miles of Adelong, and a good road connecting Adelong with the Railway station.

895. And you do not consider the proposed extension desirable? I do not, because of the smallness of the return obtained by the Cootamundra to Gundagai railway. I do not think the Colony will be justified in extending the railway to Tumut until there has been an improvement of the traffic on the Gundagai line.

896. *Mr. Watson.*] I suppose you are aware that through rates are charged on the Gundagai line, although local rates are charged on many other branch lines;—if local rates were charged, might not the line

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line come nearer to being a profitable concern? I cannot tell you. I fancy that if the Government had charged local rates, and they were higher than the through rates, a large number of persons would have used their teams to compete with the railway in the carriage of goods from Gundagai to Cootamundra.

897. There is no competition of that kind between Temora and Cootamundra? The Temora line cost less than the Gundagai line, and therefore requires a smaller return to show a profit.

898. I think you said that there is a narrow strip of good land on both the Adelong and the Tumut Creeks? I did not say that there was much good land on the Adelong Creek, though on the lower part of the creek, near Adelong Crossing, there are a good few farmers, and there is a flour-mill there, though the man who built it lost a lot of money by it. There is a narrow strip of inferior land between the Adelong Creek and the Tumut River.

899. The farmers about Adelong Crossing are within easy distance of Gundagai? Yes. They would not contribute to the traffic of the proposed extension, neither would the farmers about Gundagai itself.

900. Is any of the country between the Adelong and Tumut Rivers good land, or is it all ridgy land? I cannot tell you. There is good land on the Gilmore Creek, though it is a narrow strip.

901. Are you aware of the existence of good land lower down, between the Adelong and Tumut Creeks? There may be patches of good land there, but I do not know of any.

902. It would seem to be mostly ridgy country? Yes. Going from Gundagai to Tumut, by way of Brungle, you go up very steep ridges, until you get to the flats at Tarrabandra.

903. The main coach road from Gundagai to Tumut goes over very heavy ridges nearly all the way? Yes.

904. *Chairman.*] Have you read the evidence of Mr. Harper? I saw the report of his evidence in the newspaper. I thought his evidence very truthful and just, and untinged with bias.

905. Do you think that the public would be prepared to pay special rates upon the proposed extension, seeing that it is 10 miles longer than the road? I think that if the railway were made the carriers would take loading for less than 10s. a ton, and many farmers would do their own carrying. There is some very fine land in the Tumut valley, but the settlement there is a mere nothing, compared with the settlement in the Temora, Young, and Tamworth districts.

Travers Jones, sworn, and examined:—

T. Jones.
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906. *Chairman.*] You are well acquainted with the district between Gundagai and Tumut? Yes; I represented the Tumut electorate in the Legislative Assembly for about fourteen years, with a break of three years.

907. Would you like to make a statement in regard to the proposal now under the investigation of the Committee? Yes. I was the proprietor of a mine on the Adelong Creek when the staked line, which it is now proposed to construct, was measured. At that time I was on the Adelong Progress Committee, and the Adelong people wished for the construction of a railway which would go through the town of Adelong. They therefore induced the Government, acting through me, as their chairman, to make a flying survey from Adelong to Bago, and from Bago to Tumbarumba. Mr. Hobson reported upon that project, and I travelled with him over the proposed route. So far as I remember, he reported that there was no engineering difficulty in the way of an extension of the line from Adelong to Tumbarumba; but, with regard to bringing the line into the Adelong township, it would be very expensive to construct a railway through what is known as the Gap, to Tumut. Some time after that, I went into Parliament, and while I was supporting the Jennings-Dibbs Government, something like £500,000 was voted by the Assembly, without debate or division, for the construction of a line to Tumut. The proposal then went to the Upper Chamber, and was there referred to a Railway Committee; but before the Committee had time to deliberate, Sir Patrick Jennings, because of some difference of opinion with his colleagues, threw up the sponge, although the Government had a majority of twenty or twenty-two. Thereupon the Tumut railway proposal, and other railway proposals, went overboard. Later on, I tried, on several occasions, to bring the matter before Parliament again, but the great obstacle in the way of the construction of the line was the necessity of bridging the Murrumbidgee, which it was estimated would cost an enormous sum, though the estimate has since been reduced very much by the Department, and now, from what I can learn, the cost of a bridge would not stand very much in the way of the construction of the line. To get over the bridge difficulty, I suggested that the existing bridge at Gundagai should be reported upon, so that it might be known if it could carry both the railway and the road traffic. It was known at the time that new approaches would have to be made to that bridge, because the old approaches were costing about £1,500 a year to keep in repair, and were dangerous to traffic. Mr. De Burgh, however, reported that the bridge had not been put up according to contract, and was not strong enough to carry a railway. I believe there was some dummy bolting in it, and that in many places where there should have been a bolt, there were only a nut and a head, a thing which has occurred in the construction of other bridges. The late Mr. Bennett backed me up in the opinion that it was possible to utilise one bridge for both railway and general traffic, and, so far as the argument that the trains would frighten horses is concerned, I would point out that the railway bridge now proposed is not a stone's throw away from the existing bridge. However, the Railway Construction Department opposed my suggestion, and some time afterwards the Adelong people actually told the Government that they would not be in favour of any railway which did not go through the town of Adelong. Now the staked line leaves Adelong at some distance on one side, and my constituents were therefore divided as to what was the proper route for the railway. I suggested that a branch line should be made from Coolac, and upon its being decided to erect a bridge at Gobarralong within 4½ miles or 5 miles of Coolac, I suggested that that bridge should be made suitable for both the railway and road traffic because, in my opinion, if trams can be run through the streets of Sydney without interfering with the other traffic, a train crossing a country bridge twice a day would not interfere with the traffic on a country road, and a material saving would be effected by using the same bridge for both railway and road traffic. One bridge is used in this way in other countries, and Mr. De Burgh refers to the fact that it is the custom to build such bridges in India. My opinion is that a line might be taken from Coolac through Brungle to Tumut, and afterwards might be extended from Tumut to Bago, and on to Tumbarumba, because the future market for Tumut produce is western Riverina. So far as the resources of the Tumut district go, we have all there that is required, both in the way of soil and of climate, for the production of crops, vegetables, and fruit. I was brought up to farming in the old country, so that I know what I am talking about when I make a statement of

of that kind. There is no better soil in the Colony than we have in the river flats about Tumut. The droughts, which cause so much hardship and loss in the Colony generally, have proved the salvation of Tumut. In a wet season the soil on the river flats is so rich that if you put in wheat or oats, it will go to straw, and you will get no head upon it; but, in a dry season, it will produce from 40 to 60 bushels per acre. They have been growing wheat on the river flats for the last five years to my knowledge, and have been getting very large yields, because the seasons have been dry. When the seasons are wet they put in corn, and the average yield per acre is from 40 to 60, and as much as 100, bushels per acre. Then there is a large area of forest land, in which there is rich chocolate soil. In many cases very good timber grows on this land, and land which produces good timber is fit for agriculture, and will grow crops. I have seen a very heavy crop of oats at Red Hill, which is a pastoral holding, where very little is grown except for the use of the station. I have also seen good crops at Sandy Creek. There is very rich soil there; but the country is used chiefly for pastoral purposes, because of its distance from a market. At Nottingham Forest I saw as fine potatoes as I ever saw grown anywhere, and fine vegetables too. Then I have seen good crops at Bago, and at Reedy Flat, though both of those places are too far from market to allow crops to be profitably grown there. No place in the Colony will grow better potatoes than are grown at Reedy Flat, and at Tumarumba. At Three Brooks I have seen turnips as large and as fine as I ever saw in the old country. At Tarcutta I have seen oats equal to those I saw at Red Hill. All the way into Tumarumba there is rich chocolate volcanic soil, fit to grow anything that can be grown in an English climate. The fruit grown in the district cannot be excelled in any part of the Colony. In the season, strawberries are as plentiful as blackberries are in many other places; but there is no market for the fruit grown there. When I was in Parliament, I tried to induce the late Hon. John Sutherland (who was then Secretary for Public Works), to have a special car sent to Gundagai for the carriage of fruit; and I have exhibited in the Legislative Assembly buildings specimens of apples and other fruits grown in the district, which could not be excelled. There are two drawbacks, however, to the progress of the district. One of them is the want of a Closer Settlement Act. If the Government were to resume large estates, such as the Bombowlee estate, the district would carry five times its present population, and would produce five times as much as it now produces. One great curse there—a curse which drove me out of the old country—is that of tenant farming. Under the system of tenant farming, men hold their land on sufferance from year to year, and the area at their disposition is limited. If the Committee visit the district, they will see what a difference there is between the happiness and comfort of the homes of farmers who own their own land, and the condition of the homes of the tenant farmers,—men who are paying £1 per acre per annum for land which was alienated by the Crown for £1 per acre. If the Government gave proper inducements, many of these tenant farmers would become landholders, but at the present time they have no energy, and no inducement to improve their homes. Another drawback to the district is its distance from a railway. The route which has been staked out by the Department simply runs into Tumut, and stops there, and I do not see how it is to be got any further. If the proposed line is made, the Brungle and Red Hill portion of the electorate, where there is a great deal of fertile land, will not be served by it, but will continue to use the existing line, and Tumarumba and Adlong Creek will be too far away to use it. I think that a railway, to meet the convenience of the inhabitants generally, should start from Coolac, and go through Brungle to Tumut, and thence, at a later date, to Adelong and further on. Another proposal is to cross at Sandy Fall, though I do not know so much about that route.

908. *Mr. Watson.*] We were told that it was practicable to get a route from Gundagai down the Tumut River? I do not think that there is anything to prevent the construction of a branch line from Coolac, and such a line would serve the whole electorate. I sent in very voluminous reports on the subject when I represented the electorate. In my opinion, Tumut is entitled to a railway. Any line which is made may not be such a commercial success as the Commissioners would like, but it will increase settlement and population. I know a good deal about the Riverina country, and I have had practical experience of several droughts there, and it is my opinion that agriculture will never be a success in that district, because of the insufficiency of the rainfall. You may have a good crop one year, but then you may not get another good crop for two or three years more. If New South Wales is to supply her own people with produce she will have to depend upon the old agricultural districts, such as Tumut. There is never a failure of the crops in that district. There was a failure of the potato-crop there two years ago, but that was owing to the destruction caused by a fly. I know a man, living back as far as Tumarumba, who supplied Tarcutta with potatoes, and he made from £80 to £100 an acre. It is a very poor crop of potatoes there which will not go 8, 12, and 15 tons to the acre. Because of the failure of the crop on the occasion I mentioned, Tumut had to depend upon imported potatoes. We have some of the best farmers in the Colony in the district, and they have gained prizes with their produce at Sydney, at Gundagai, and at Wagga. They have model farms, and carry on their farms on scientific principles; but it is very hard to get the old farmers out of the old grooves, and they continue to grow either wheat or corn, according to the seasons. I have done my best to improve the system of farming there. I got Mr. Thompson, of the Agricultural Department, to deliver lectures in the district on farming, and Mr. O'Callaghan to lecture on dairy-farming, and I got a person to go there to show them how to grow tobacco. There is no place in the Colony better suited for butter-making, bacon-curing, or jam-making than the Tumut district. From what I know of dairy farming, 10 acres of cultivation are worth 100 acres of grass, and you can keep as many sheep on 1 acre of artificial grass as on 20 acres of natural grass. Greasy wool is selling at the present time at prices which it has not reached before for twenty years. A gentleman to whom I was speaking recently, told me that he was selling his wool for 1s. 3½d. per lb.; and he told me that he had not lost any of his stock this year. With regard to the mining resources of the district I can say, as a practical miner, that in Adelong we have the Charters Towers of New South Wales, if there is sufficient encouragement given for the development of the field. The Caledonian mine has been lying dormant for years, though several of the local miners have tackled it; but the water was too much for them, and the ground was too hard, so that they had to give it up as a failure. Some little time ago, however, the Government were induced to give assistance to the party at work there, and I learn by this morning's newspaper, that they have had 10 tons treated at Dapto, and have got 9½ oz. of gold per ton. They have been getting rich dirt for some time past, and they have paid back to the Government a good part of the money advanced to them. I have never known a quartz reef to be worked out.

909. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the thickness of the reef? Between 2 and 3 feet. As a general rule, the reef in Adelong is not very wide. The gold is got chiefly in the pyrites ore. The Gibraltar mine has been

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been a great success, because of the assistance it has received by the spending of capital. They have channels north and south, and from 12 to 20 and 30 feet wide; but the ore there is of low grade, averaging from 8 to 10 dwt. The rich gold got in the Gibraltar mine is obtained from the east and west quartz reef. The last escort took away between 1,100 and 1,200 oz. of gold, and that came from only a few mines. I am convinced that there is a large future before the Adelong field, if sufficient inducements are given for its development. At the present time the insecurity of tenure causes a great deal of trouble. In Victoria, where they are working places like Bendigo and Pleasant Creek, they are getting as good gold now as ever they got, and at Bendigo they are down 3,500 feet. I have not the slightest doubt, but that at Adelong the reef will go down that depth, and will be found payable.

910. *Mr. Dick.*] You have stated that the Tumut district will grow anything? Anything that can be grown in an English climate.

911. If you look at the parish map, which is now before the Committee, you will see three routes marked, one following the Adelong Creek for some distance, and the other two the Tumut Creek; between the Adelong Creek and the Tumut Creek there is a fairly large tract of land;—how much of that land is fit for agriculture? The land between the Adelong Creek and the Tumut River is pastoral country, but there is some agricultural land on the branch creeks.

912. Then, whichever route is selected, it will draw agricultural traffic only from the narrow strips of flat land alongside the watercourses? The rich river flats are limited in width. The Tumut River flat extends for some 30 miles, but I do not know that its width will be much more than a mile. The staked line would shut out the country which would be served by taking a line from Coolac.

913. Would the Coolac route serve the agricultural country on both the Adelong and the Tumut creeks? It would serve the greater area of good country, but it would not serve the country on the Adelong Creek. The principal agricultural land on the western side is between Gundagai and Adelong Crossing, a distance of about 10 miles, and on to Grahamstown, another 12 miles. That country will always be served by the existing line. The best road in the Colony is that from Gundagai to Adelong.

914. You said that there is good land to the south of Tumut as far as Tumberumba;—now, if a railway were taken to Tumut, how would you get it on to Tumberumba? It would go *via* Adelong, and up the Bago. A flying survey was made of the route, and it has been reported that there are no engineering difficulties. The land there is forest land, with chocolate volcanic soil.

915. If the line stopped at Tumut, and the forest country you speak of were brought under cultivation, would the produce from it be taken to Tumut, or to the southern line towards Wagga? The difficulty which prevents the growing of produce there now will still continue to exist, even if the line is taken to Tumut. The country you speak of will still be too far from a railway to allow produce to be profitably grown there.

916. So that, even if the line is taken as far as Tumut, it will not bring into cultivation the forest land between Tumut and Tumberumba? I do not think so.

917. How far would the greater part of that forest land be from Tumut? The boundary of the electorate is, I believe, about 40 miles from Tumut, and within about 3 miles of Tumberumba.

918. How far would you have to go from Tumut to reach this good forest land? You would pass through the Gilmore valley, and you would get good land all the way into Adelong.

919. But that is going east? That is going towards Tumberumba. There are 12 miles of good agricultural land going into Adelong. Then you get on to what is called the Gap; and when you descend again you go up the Adelong Creek until you cross the range to Bago.

920. And then do you come to this good forest land, or is it still some distance away? We have very fair land up the Adelong Creek, though there is not any great area of it fronting the creek. Still the land between the creek and the range is fair agricultural land. Then you get up to Middle Adelong, a distance of about 9 miles. There is some good agricultural land there. You go up a steep range into Reedy Flat, and you get some of the best agricultural land in the Colony, and there is rather an extensive area of it. From Middle Adelong you go up a steep range, and then you get on to the tableland, and that is where the forest land is.

921. How far from Adelong? Fourteen or 15 miles.

922. And how far does the good land extend? All the way into Tumberumba.

923. It has been suggested that the Adelong Creek should be followed all the way down, and the line taken on to Tumberumba;—have you considered that as a possible route? I had a flying survey made of it. It is quite possible to take the line down West Creek, which leaves the Adelong Creek, to Tumberumba; but such a line would not serve Tumut or Brungle, or that side of the electorate at all.

924. But Tumut would be within 8 or 9 miles of a railway-station, instead of 20 miles, as it is now, and would have an easy grade instead of a heavy grade? Yes.

925. *Mr. Watson.*] If the Tumut people had to go to Adelong they would have a more level road than they have now to Gundagai? Yes, the grade would be very easy all the way to the Gap and into Adelong.

926. *Mr. Dick.*] You have stated that one thing necessary to make the proposed line pay is the resumption of the large estates in the district by the Government, and the cutting of them up into small holdings;—are we to understand that the large land-owners there are not at present putting their land to the best use? My private opinion is that all the people in the Colony have too much land, and that these large estates, except where the land is let out to tenant farmers are not put to proper use.

927. What would you call a large estate in the Tumut valley? I could not tell you the area of the Bombowlee estate; but it is pretty large. Nearly all the towns in the Colony are handicapped by the large estates which surround them.

928. If the Government resumed land in the Tumut district, what would they have to pay per acre for it? The last land sold there fetched £17 or £17 10s. an acre. The usual price for river flats is about £25 an acre.

929. Then, the resumption of this land by the State would be rather an expensive undertaking? If the Government resumed a large estate, they would not pay that price for it, because it would include a great deal of inferior land. A few years ago you could readily get £25 an acre for the land on the Tumut flats.

930. Is much of this good agricultural land lying idle at the present time? No; I think that most of it has been cultivated either by the owner or by a tenant farmer. A few years ago, when Chinamen were growing tobacco very successfully in the district, and were getting a very good price for it, the holder of land got as much as £6 an acre per annum rent for it, he doing the ploughing and harrowing; and the usual price when the Chinamen undertook all the labour was from 30s. to £2 an acre.

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931. If all the flats are being cultivated now, how would the construction of a railway lead to a greatly-increased production? There is a good deal that is not cultivated, though the farmers rent what they can of it. On the Bombowlee estate, I think the Europeans pay 30s. an acre, and the Chinamen £2 an acre.

932. Do you know the extent of that estate? No. There is another estate—Laemolac—where the land is very rich too. That land is largely in the occupation of Chinamen, who grow very large crops of corn on it.

933. Do you think that the development of dairying will lead to the forest country being used to pasture cattle? No. If I were going in for dairying, I should use the very best land. To dairy successfully, you must grow feed for the cattle. Ten acres of green crops are worth for dairying purposes 100 acres of grass.

934. With the extension of dairying, there must be a diminution of agriculture; which produces more revenue for a railway—dairying or agriculture? I have just returned from a visit to the Beechworth and Yackandandah district, in Victoria, and there the farmers have all given up agriculture for dairying. They told me that dairying has saved Victoria. One man told me that he milked seventy cows, and that their produce was worth from £2 to £2 10s. per day, and the money is coming in every week.

935. But which provides the more traffic for a railway? Agricultural produce. There is a great deal of difference between the value of a ton of butter, which is about £80, or a ton of cheese or bacon, which is about £30 or £40, and a ton of agricultural produce, but there would not be any great difference in the railway rates.

936. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You say that the reefs at Adelong are from 2 to 3 feet wide, and that there has been a considerable yield of gold to the ton? The last crushing in the Caledonia mine gave 9½ oz. per ton from 10 tons. They will crush the seconds at Adelong, and get between 3 or 4 oz. per ton from them. I have known the Gibraltar mine for the last twenty years. When they were in full work there before the strike they were employing something like 260 men in the mine alone, though I do not know how many they are employing now. I am informed, by men who ought to know, that the mine looks just as well in the lower levels now as it ever did. When it was in full work it averaged 2 oz. to the ton.

937. You say that the Adelong mines want encouraging;—what encouragement do they want? It takes a great deal of money to prospect and to open up a mine. Sometimes, after £100,000 or £150,000 have been invested in a mine, and a plant worth £10,000 or £20,000 has been put down, the capital becomes exhausted, and then it is necessary to apply for the suspension of labour conditions, while an attempt is made to obtain more capital. A suspension is given for a certain time, and then, if the labour conditions are not complied with, the lease is forfeited, and some man comes along and orders the company to remove its machinery within six months. These provisions of the law cause the whole trouble. In America you have to comply with labour conditions for a certain length of time, but if the mine becomes a payable one, and you are giving large employment, you can convert your leasehold into a freehold. Then, again, £1 an acre per annum is too much to pay for rent when land is leased for agricultural purposes for much less, and for pastoral purposes for as low as 1d. per acre. I consider that the mineral resources of this country will prove its salvation, and they have proved its salvation since the Banks smashed. Since a large number of men were sent out fossicking by the Government our mineral yield has increased tremendously, and it would increase still more if proper encouragement were given to mining. We are 100 years behind the other colonies in regard to mining.

938. If these mines are as rich as you say they are, why should they be idle? In all mines the gold is found in shoots. The shoot may be only 5 feet, or it may be 30 or 40 feet in length, and, after you get out of it, the stone in the reef will not go more than 2 or 3 dwts. You have to search for these rich shoots. At Adelong the rich gold is got in the pyrites ore. These pyritic shoots carry down until they lodge in a big white barren reef, and this white quartz has had to be sunk in 50, 80, and 100 feet before any more gold is obtained. When you get down a certain depth the shoots spread out like the roots of a tree. In the Gibraltar mine, they have got beyond the zone where the gold used to be found only in patches, and now the ore is generally payable.

939. What is the greatest depth that they have reached? The Victoria mine obtained £1,000 from the Government when it got down 800 feet, as the first mine to obtain payable gold at that depth. They then sank 1,000 feet, and got another £500. The board of directors, however, divided all the profits in dividends to keep up the price of the scrip; and, therefore, when they got into a fault, they had no money to carry on with; and that mine is shut down now, though it is one of the best in Adelong.

940. What is the population of Adelong now? At the last general election there were about 2,200 people on the roll for the Tumut electorate. When I was working an alluvial mine on Adelong Creek, Mr. Shepard was working the adjoining mine, and we employed between us something like 148 men. At that time the population, including women and children, was over 500 at Shepard's Town and Grahamstown alone.

THURSDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Ernest Macartney De Burgh, M. Inst. C.E., Assistant Engineer, Bridges Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

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941. *Mr. Watson.*] It has been suggested to the Committee, in connection with the proposal to extend a railway from Gundagai to Tumut, that it would be possible to minimise the expense of construction by using the existing road bridge for railway purposes;—from your knowledge of the bridge will you tell us what you think of the suggestion? *Mr. Burge*, of the Railway Department, spoke to me about this matter some years ago, and since then I have rebuilt the timber viaduct which leads to the bridge. After considering the whole matter carefully, I have come to the conclusion that the difficulties in the way of carrying a railway across the bridge more than counterbalanced the advantages which might be gained by doing so.

942. What is the nature of those difficulties? The original iron bridge across the Murrumbidgee at Gundagai, and a timber viaduct approaching it, were opened for traffic in 1869.

943. What is the character of the iron bridge? It is an iron-latticed girder bridge of three spans, resting upon iron cylinders, and each span is 103 feet in length. The total length of the whole structure is 3,025 feet—the timber viaduct being 2,716 feet and the iron bridge 309 feet in length. The roadway across the structure is 20 feet 6 inches wide. The viaduct however, is not straight, there being a curve in it of $8\frac{1}{2}$ chains radius, and a grade of 1 in 34 for a length of five spans. After thirty years' life, the old viaduct decayed, and last year I replaced it with a new viaduct.

944. Is there a viaduct only on the Gundagai side, or is there also another viaduct on the Tumut side of the river? There is very little timber work on the Tumut side of the river—only two spans; so that practically the whole of the timber work is on the Gundagai side.

945. Will you indicate the nature of the difficulties which would operate against using the bridge and viaduct for railway purposes? The difficulties are exactly the same in this case as I indicated to exist in connection with the Wilcannia bridge. Although the structure is amply strong for all ordinary traffic loads, even including a traction engine, it has not been designed to carry the concentrated load given by a train composed of a heavy engine and closely packed trucks.

946. Could the bridge and its approaches be strengthened at a minimum of expense to meet the conditions required by railway traffic? I have looked into the matter, and I have come to the opinion that the expense would be so great that the undertaking would not be economical. So far as the viaduct is concerned, the spans would have to be shortened, and we should practically have to build an additional pier for every pier that there is there now. A more serious thing still is that we should have to construct a new deck, in order that the rails might be flush with the roadway. The only bridge of the kind existing in New South Wales—leaving out the Camden bridge, which is crossed by a tramway and not by a railway—is a bridge between Moama and Echuca.

947. Is there not a similar bridge at Singleton? In the case of the Singleton bridge the road traffic and the railway traffic run on separate sides. On the Moama-Echuca bridge the rails are flush with the roadway so as not to interfere with the vehicular traffic.

948. The railway at Moama is a private line? There is a private railway from Moama to Deniliquin; but it is the Victorian rolling stock that is run over the bridge I am speaking of. That bridge is an endless source of trouble, because it is very difficult to keep the roadway in repair. It had a timber deck similar to that of the Gundagai bridge, but it was so unsatisfactory that last year we spent £4,000 in putting in a new floor with a view to getting rid of the annoyance.

949. Is there nothing in the private company's Act to require that they shall keep the bridge in repair? The bridge is kept in repair under an agreement between the Governments of New South Wales and of Victoria. New South Wales paid half the cost of construction and pays half the cost of maintenance. The Victorian railways run across the bridge into Moama. I do not think the private company's line extends beyond Moama, so that the bridge is not in their length.

950. Do you think that the cost of converting the existing Gundagai road bridge into a road and railway bridge would be greater than the convenience thereby obtainable would justify? Yes, and, not only that, but I am afraid that it would not be a satisfactory job when we had done it. The viaduct at Gundagai is amply strong for a traction engine, but even a traction engine is a little bit more for the iron bridge than we care about. The factor of safety there is not quite so high as we should have in one of our modern bridges. The Gundagai bridge is in a worse position for carrying railway traffic than the Wilcannia bridge or any of our new steel bridges.

951. Would it cost much to strengthen the bridge to enable it to carry a railway? I do not think you could do it at all with economy; it would be a very difficult task and the result would be unsatisfactory.

952. It is to be expected that the road traffic would largely diminish if the railway were constructed to carry the traffic between Tumut, Adelong and Gundagai? You would still have to keep the floorway in repair, and it would be bad economy to cut up the deck to make the rails flush. Even though the traffic might be smaller you could not let the roadway get into bad condition.

953. But with a smaller traffic less inconvenience would arise? Of course, the fewer the people going over the bridge the less the inconvenience. As a matter of fact we now try to keep the road traffic off the viaduct as much as possible, by making it go across the flats. We give access to the bridge near the river, so that the traffic can get on to it without crossing the viaduct.

954. While you do not compel the traffic to cross the flat, you encourage it to do so? Yes; in order to save the wear on the deck of the viaduct.

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955. What was the reason for the curve in the viaduct? In order to bring the bridge itself at right angles to the current of the river.
956. Could not that have been done equally well by making the viaduct straight? If that had been done, the viaduct would have been longer, because more of the flat would have to be crossed.
957. Can you tell us what the new viaduct cost? £12,292.
958. What was the original cost of the iron bridge? I cannot tell you.
959. What would you estimate the cost of putting up a similar structure to be? About £7,000.
960. Piers and everything complete? Yes.
961. That would make the cost of the whole structure about £20,000? Yes.
962. Did the £12,292 come out of revenue, or out of Loan Votes? Out of Loan Votes.
963. And the original cost of the viaduct and bridge too? I cannot speak positively, but I think that that is very probable. The last expenditure was taken from what we call a 30 years' loan, which is redeemable.
964. By so much each year? Yes; it is supposed to be so.
965. It is estimated that the proposed railway bridge, inclusive of whatever viaduct may be necessary to cross the flats, would cost about £25,000;—would you care to express an opinion upon that estimate? No, because, no doubt, the railway engineers have worked the matter out in detail.
966. Can you tell us whether a railway bridge should cost a great deal more than a road bridge? It ought not to do so. If you were to take the material used in the viaduct and distribute it so that it would meet railway loads, I think you would probably find that you had sufficient timber to make the viaduct suitable for a railway.
967. Would the same remark apply to the bridge also? No; not quite. It would cost a little bit more to make an iron bridge suitable for railway traffic.
968. I think you told us, when we were considering the advisability of using the Wilcannia bridge for railway purposes, that a saving was made in constructing railway bridges by not decking them;—would that saving be a considerable item in a bridge 300 feet long? The deck of an iron bridge is a small matter in comparison with the total cost of the structure, whereas the deck of a viaduct forms a very important part of the whole structure.
969. I gather, then, that a railway bridge would not cost a great deal more than a road bridge would cost? Not a great deal more.
970. You say that the iron part of the structure would cost more if erected for railway purposes than if erected for road traffic;—would a railway bridge involve longer spans? No; they would probably use more spans. In a timber viaduct you would have twice as many spans for a railway as for road traffic.
971. In your opinion it would not be advisable to use the present road bridge for railway purposes, even if it could be so used at a small cost? Of course, if the bridge could be made suitable for railway traffic at a small cost, I would say that it should be converted; but I do not think that it could be converted, except at a very considerable cost, a cost that in my opinion would not justify the undertaking.
972. *Dr. Garran.*] Any railway bridge will require a viaduct, just as the road bridge does? Yes; because they have to get across the flooded flats.
973. A viaduct of the same length? Yes; of about the same length.
974. Your bridge is above flood-level? Yes.
975. Then the railway engineers will not have to make their bridge any higher than your bridge? No.
976. How near will their bridge be to yours? I have not seen the survey. I do not know where they intend to cross the river.
977. If the two bridges are to be pretty close together, would it not be well to have the same number of piers in each, so that one set may lie exactly in front of the other, and not impede the stream? It would be an advantage; but I do not think it would be a matter of any serious importance, so far as the flats are concerned.
978. I am referring only to the iron part of the structure? If the iron bridges were near together it would be important that the piers should be in alignment, as nearly as possible.
979. If in the railway bridge they had to increase the spans to do that, it would slightly increase the cost of the work? By making the spans a little longer, they might save a pier, and the saving of the pier might compensate for any increase in the cost of the spans. It would be very difficult to give an answer to your question without making detailed calculations.
980. If it did not cost any more, there would be so much more reason for keeping the piers in alignment? If it did not cost any more, it would be a great advantage to keep them in line.
981. You do not know how the piers of the new bridge are planned? No; I have not seen the plans.
982. Should there not be a consultation between the two Departments, if the bridges are going to be placed close to each other? I have no doubt that there will be, if the work is carried out. At the present time we are building a bridge at Camden, which will be used by the railway authorities, and, of course, they consult us in regard to it.
983. It is a matter of some little importance that the stream should not be obstructed;—the river brings down a good deal of timber occasionally? Yes; a large quantity of timber comes down the Murrumbidgee.
984. Then, the clearer the way the better? Yes.
985. There is no possibility of avoiding the expense of a new railway bridge? The railway authorities must build a new structure, though I do not know whether they could find a crossing where they could build a more economical bridge.
986. There are several lattice-girder bridges on our railway lines? Yes.
987. Do you know what their spans are? There is a great variety of span in the bridges of the Colony.
988. And with lattice-girder bridges the part between each span is really, I suppose, a separate bridge? There is a class of bridge, called continuous, where that is not so.
989. In such bridges the strain is thrown a little backward and a little forward? The strain is continuous, and the bridge balances on the piers.
990. But, generally, lattice-girder bridges are separate structures between each span? Yes.
991. Each portion of the bridge carries its own load independently? Yes. The old Gundagai bridge is neither independent nor continuous. I do not know which style they meant to make it.
992. Is there anything to show whether it is wearing at any definable rate? No. I had the bridge cleaned and painted recently, and there is no apparent deterioration of the iron. I do not consider that the traffic over it is sufficiently frequent and heavy to cause any molecular alteration in the iron.

E. M.
De Burgh,
M.I.C.E.
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993. There is no vibration? The loads are not sufficiently sudden to cause any alteration in the iron itself.

994. Then the existing traffic does not sufficiently test it? No; but in the event of a heavy traction engine using it, it would stress it more than we are in the habit of allowing.

995. Has any traction engine been over it? Not that I am aware of.

996. Has any machinery from the Adelong mines gone over it? A 10-ton boiler went over it recently.

997. Were any observations made as to the deflection on that occasion? No, but 10 tons is well within the load.

998. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you know if floods are of frequent occurrence on that part of the Murrumbidgee? Speaking from memory only, I think there have been no serious floods there of late years. There was a very big flood in the Murrumbidgee in 1886 or 1887, but since then I have no record of any flood of sufficient importance to cause us to make inquiries as to how the bridges were standing.

999. That being so, do you think it would be of any advantage, from the point of view of economy, to construct a low-level bridge, and to cut out the viaduct? Well, instead of rebuilding the viaduct, I should have liked to take the road across the flat, and to climb up on to the iron bridge with an inclined approach. As I have already said, the bulk of the traffic does not use the viaduct now. The railway people, however, do not like to have their traffic interrupted.

1000. Do you know how long the water is up in time of flood? I should say that it would not lie on the flat for more than about four days at the outside.

1001. Would the construction of a low-level bridge, without a viaduct, be considerably cheaper than the proposed construction? Yes, very much.

1002. Would there be any difficulty in making the bridge low because of a rise on the other side of the river? They would have a difficulty in getting up on the Tumut side, because it is pretty steep there.

1003. Would that involve very much cutting? I have not seen the railway section; but I know that on our road it would not involve any serious work, as we use a much steeper grade. If they were working on a ruling grade of 1 in 70, or something like that, they might have to make a long cutting.

1004. Do you think the construction of a low-level bridge is worth considering, or is it out of consideration because of the rise on the Tumut side of the river? I could not say, because I have not seen the railway section. The Camden bridge, in flood-time, is submerged many feet, and the river which it spans rises much more frequently than the Murrumbidgee rises. We are building a new bridge at Camden now, but we are not thinking of putting it above flood-level, because that would involve the construction of an enormous viaduct. The traffic on the Camden line is probably stopped six or seven times in the year; but I do not think it would be stopped on the Gundagai line more than once a year.

1005. *Mr. Levien.*] At Singleton they have a traffic and railway bridge combined? Yes; but the railway runs on one part of the bridge and the road on another. The railway and the road traffic are not together.

1006. But it is all one bridge, built of stone? It is a timber bridge, upon stone piers.

1007. Has not each roadway the same strength? Yes, in that case; but more for appearance than for anything else.

1008. What is the difference in width? The railway portion is about 13 feet wide, and the road portion about 18 feet wide.

1009. Could the road portion carry the railway? Yes, with a certain amount of alteration.

1010. And the railway portion could carry the road traffic? Yes, with alterations.

1011. So that one portion is as strong as the other;—how many years has that bridge been standing? I do not know, but I should think about twenty years.

1012. I think it was the first bridge of any importance built in the Colony? Well, the original arches are there still. I repaired some of them lately.

1013. There is an enormous traffic over the Singleton bridge? Yes, a very heavy traffic.

1014. The bridge is crossed by the main north road, and is within three-quarters of a mile of the town of Singleton? Yes.

1015. No complaint has been made about the combination arrangement? Yes; there have been a great many complaints.

1016. Is it complained that the trains cause horses to shy? Yes.

1017. Can you tell me how many accidents there have been there? I cannot tell you how many accidents there have been, but I know that complaints are numerous.

1018. Have you ever heard of as many as two accidents occurring there during the last twenty-five years? I have no recollection of any.

1019. Has the Government ever had to pay one farthing compensation for accidents which have occurred there? I do not know.

1020. Is there any one in charge of the bridge? There used to be a signalman there; but he was not there the last time I had the bridge under my notice.

1021. I suppose he has been done away with because he was not necessary? I do not know.

1022. Have you ever been there when trains were crossing? Yes, often.

1023. Have you ever seen any accidents there? I would not like to be on the bridge with a flash horse when a train was passing.

1024. How many trains cross the bridge in a day—twenty? Yes, certainly.

1025. And yet you have never heard of an accident? No.

1026. *Chairman.*] If it were necessary to construct a new road bridge over the Murrumbidgee, the question of making a combined road and railway bridge might be one for serious consideration? Yes.

1027. But as we already have a road bridge there, and inasmuch as a new railway bridge would only cost £25,000, it would appear to be better to keep the traffic apart? Yes.

1028. To alter the present bridge so as to make it capable of carrying both road and railway traffic would entail a very large expenditure? Yes.

1029. So that in your opinion it would be better to have two separate bridges? Yes.

1030. Did you ever consider the question of constructing a low-level bridge at Gundagai? No; though, as I have said, I considered the question of doing away with the viaduct.

1031. If it were necessary to make a saving, would a low-level bridge answer? There is no objection to a low-level bridge, except that it occasionally causes an interruption of the traffic. 1032.

1032. Is there much traffic at Gundagai? You will have to get that information from some other source. From an engineer's point of view, there is no difficulty in constructing a low-level bridge.

1033. The question was seriously put forward by Mr. Burge, whether low-level bridges, such as they have used with considerable success in Queensland, should not be adopted in this case? I see no reason against it, if they can get a sufficiently good grade on the Tumut side.

1034. With a low-level bridge you save a great deal of construction? Yes; you only require to make about 300 feet of bridge, instead of about 3,000 feet. I should not like any misapprehension to remain in the minds of the Committee in regard to the road bridges of the Colony. People may say, "It is a very curious thing that when we ask, 'Will these bridges carry a railway?' we are told that they are not strong enough." There are about 52 miles of road bridges in this country, and they are thoroughly strong and in every way proper structures for the loads which they have to carry. They are in no way inferior bridges. But if we designed them to carry railways where there were no railways, we should be guilty of a great waste of public money. The bridges are perfectly good for any road traffic you can bring on them—people, stock, or even traction engines; but they are not designed to carry locomotive engines and trains.

1035. What is the utmost carrying power of the Gundagai bridge? It is designed to carry as dense a crowd of people as can be crowded on to it from end to end—that is 84 lb. to every square foot of deck; and it will carry a traction engine weighing 16 tons. It would take five times as much as either of these loads to break down the viaduct, or four times either of these loads to break down any portion of the main bridge, 5 and 4 being the factors of safety in each case.

1036. *Mr. Levien.*] What was the Singleton bridge built for? The Singleton bridge was built especially to carry a railway, and in making one part of it strong, they had to make the other part strong, or otherwise the whole structure would have looked ugly.

1037. Why should not other bridges be constructed in the same way, in anticipation of future requirements? It would cost immensely more to build all our road bridges in that way. The Singleton bridge was built for railway traffic rather than for road traffic. They would not have thought of building the bridge had it not been for the railway.

1038. *Mr. Shepherd.*] When you construct a bridge for a railway, it is stronger than a bridge designed for ordinary traffic? Yes.

1039. And a bridge designed for ordinary traffic would not be suitable for a railway? No.

George Charles Yeo, draftsman, Stock Branch, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

1040. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you know the country which would be traversed by a line from Gundagai to Tumut? Not personally.

1041. You appear here to give us information in regard to the stock of the district? Yes: I have here a description of the area likely to be affected by the construction of the proposed railway and a return of the stock in the area described. The area of the district to which my returns refer comprises about 492,000 acres. The boundary of the district commences at a point on the proposed railway about 10 miles from Gundagai, and goes thence by a line south-easterly; on the east the district is bounded by the range dividing the waters of the Tumut and the Baloo arm, or the Peak River; on the south by the range dividing the waters of the Tumbarumba and Bago Creeks; and on the west by the range dividing the waters of the Yaven Yaven and Tarcutta Creeks; thence the boundary continues north-westerly to the point of commencement. The following is the return of the stock in that district:—

Year.	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.
1896	684	6,724	123,600
1897	678	6,560	121,300
1898	700	7,055	128,330

Stock Traffic.

Year.	To and from—	Horses.	Cattle	Sheep.
1896	Gundagai and Tumbarumba and Yarrangobilly	580	1,200	220,000
1897	" " " "	620	1,515	385,000
1898	" " " "	760	4,300	582,000

Average clip—280 to 300 tons.

1042. How many sheep-owners are there in the district? I suppose there are about 200 people owning the 128,000 sheep mentioned in the return.

1043. Is 128,000 the largest number of sheep that have been in the district? Yes, for the three years I mention.

1044. Who are the largest owners in the district? Petersen and Sargood, J. F. McEvoy, and Dalgety & Co. The others are small holders.

1045. Are there any large breeders of cattle in that district? At Tuma, a little further south, they breed a good number of cattle, and those cattle are taken to Victoria or to Sydney, according to the state of the market.

1046. Is the district a healthy stock district;—do the sheep suffer much from foot-rot, fluke, and other ailments, or the cattle from Cumberland disease and tuberculosis? I have heard nothing of anthrax in the district, though tuberculosis is present more or less everywhere throughout the Colony. We have no complaints, however, about the unhealthiness of the district.

1047. How many travelling stock reserves are there between Gundagai and Tumut? I do not know that there are any.

1048. Then, how is the stock travelled? It travels mostly through the lanes. As a rule, the stock travel up the Adelong Creek, a little to the west of Tumut, and then branch off.

- G. C. Yeo. 1049. Are there any travelling stock reserves along that route? There is a travelling stock route from Tumut down towards Yarrangobilly. It varies from 20 chains to half a mile wide, and extends for a distance of, I suppose, about 60 miles.
- 23 Nov., 1899. 1050. Are there any commons intervening? No.
1051. Any annual leases, or any holdings of that kind? I could not say.
1052. *Chairman.*] The Tumut district is one to which starving stock are sent in great numbers in bad seasons? Yes.
1053. It is looked upon as one of the most reliable sheep districts in the Colony? Yes; the Riverina sheep are sent there.
1054. The district to which starving sheep are sent extends as far as Tumbarumba? Yes.
1055. Is the whole district a pastoral rather than an agricultural district? It is a pastoral district in summer-time, but in the winter-time, down towards Yarrangobilly and Kiandra, the country is empty, as it is too cold for stock.
1056. But are not the agricultural portions of the district limited in extent? Certainly.
1057. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is the hilly country good grazing land? I cannot say, because I have not been in the locality.
1058. They do not appear to have suffered from drought in the Tumut district as much as in other districts? No. The returns for the Gundagai sheep district will show you how the district generally has been affected during the last few years. The following table shows the number of sheep and cattle in the Gundagai sheep district during the years 1894 to 1898:—

Year.	Sheep.	Cattle.
1894	1,054,595	54,310
1895	968,640	45,503
1896	927,769	43,926
1897	907,590	41,159
1898	1,136,900	51,862

- Those figures show that 1897 was a bad year in the district, and it was a bad year pretty well everywhere.
1059. Was not 1898 a worse year? No. In 1898, in that particular district, things improved a great deal, because of an early rainfall.
1060. Do you know if they have to feed their stock there artificially at times? I cannot say.
1061. I suppose there is generally sufficient pasturage for the stock there? I think so.
1062. *Dr. Garran.*] Do your figures show the number of starving stock sent to the district? No, but they give an idea as to the number.
1063. Do you know where the stock came from? No.
1064. But mostly from the Murrumbidgee country? I think so. In 1896 there were 220,000 sheep travelling to and from Gundagai, Tumbarumba, and Yarrangobilly; in 1897, 385,000; and in 1898, 582,000.
1065. Have there ever been that number travelling before? I have not made a comparison with other years.
1066. Have you the figures for 1899? No. That return will not come in until the 31st December.
1067. If another 500,000 sheep were sent to the district, could they be taken in there? I cannot say. I do not think the district could have carried any more stock last year. I think pretty well all the Riverina stock were sent there then.
1068. In what other parts of the country could starving stock be taken? A lot of stock went up on to the Hunter, towards New England, last year.
1069. Could more stock have been taken there? I do not think so. From conversation which I had with people who sent sheep there, I learnt that they had to keep moving their stock about, because the grass was failing, and that in some cases they had to take them home again and feed them artificially.
1070. Do you think that we had as many starving stock on the high lands of the Colony last year as could be taken there? Yes.
1071. So that a dozen railways from the Darling would not have improved the position? No; because I do not think any more could have been taken.
1072. *Mr. Watson.*] Does it not sometimes happen that there are droughty conditions in Riverina, south of Wagga, and quite other conditions north of Wagga, and *vice versa*? Yes.
1073. So that although Riverina last year took up all the mountain area available for starving stock, it might happen next year that only part of Riverina would want to send stock away? Yes; I daresay that might happen.
1074. So that the fact that the whole of the country available was taken up last year is not necessarily a reason against the construction of railways into dry districts? Of course last year the drought extended all over the western district, whereas sometimes there is a good season in the north, although there is a drought in the south.

William John Hanna, Principal Assistant Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined.

- W. J. Hanna. 1075. *Chairman.*] You produce a tracing showing the roads branching out in a southerly direction from Gundagai? Yes.
- 23 Nov., 1899. 1076. Can you tell us the length of the various roads, and what they cost to maintain? Not from memory; but I will prepare a statement giving that information.

Joseph Clarke, Inland Mail Clerk, Postal and Electric Telegraph Department, sworn, and examined.

- J. Clarke. 1077. *Chairman.*] Will you furnish the Committee with the usual statistical information at your disposal in regard to the railway proposal which they are now investigating? The letter received from the Committee asks for full particulars of the mail contracts on and about the lines between Gundagai

Gundagai and Tumut. I have prepared a list of the mail contracts on the road from Gundagai to Tumut by three different routes, and by the lines branching out in all directions on both sides. The particulars are as follows—

J. Clarke.
23 Nov., 1890.

PARTICULARS of Mail Services between Gundagai and Tumut, and the branch lines therefrom.

Contractors'		Postal Lines.	Dis- tance in Miles.	Frequency of Communi- cation.	Mode of Conveyance.	Annual Amount pay- able to Contractors.	Date of Termination of Contracts.
Names.	Addresses.						
243 Wm. R. Elliott	Gundagai	Railway Station and Post Office, Gundagai.	4	No. of times per week. Once or oftener daily.	Spring-cart, 1 horse.	£ 33 0 0	31 Dec., 1901.
245 Andrew Paterson	Adelong	Gundagai, South Gundagai, Adelong Crossing-place, Grahamstown, Shepard's Town, Adelong, Gilmore, and Tumut.	36	Six	Coach, 3 or more horses.	184 0 0	31 Dec. 1901.
250 Cornelius McInerney.	Tarcutta	Adelong Crossing-place, Mundarlo, Hillas Creek, Lower Tarcutta, and Tarcutta.	27	Three	Sulky	74 10 0	31 Dec., 1900.
251 Michael J. Phelan	Batlow	Adelong, Middle Adelong, Balloo, Laurel Hill, Courabyra, and Tumberumba, <i>via</i> Hastedt's, Parrot Hill, and McBowling's, of Upper Tumberumba; with a branch mail to and from Tumberumba, Taradale, Upper Bago, and Batlow, <i>via</i> Bago, and Bago Station.	46	Two	Coach, 2 or more horses.	181 15 0	31 Dec., 1899.
		Adelong, Mount Adral, and Hillas Creek.	32	One			
252 John Hilton, jun.	Tarcutta	Adelong, Mount Adral, and Hillas Creek.	21	One	2-wheeled vehicle.	36 15 0	31 Dec., 1899.
253 George W. Lawson.	Sharp's Creek, Adelong.	Adelong and Sharp's Creek, <i>via</i> John Roche's and Green Hill station.	10	Two	Horseback	25 0 0	31 Dec., 1899.
254 Robert G. Reily	Wondalga near Adelong.	Gilmore, Upper Gilmore, and Batlow, <i>via</i> Windowie Public School, and along the eastern side of Gilmore Creek to Fern Gully Crossing.	18	Two	Horseback	29 17 6	31 Dec., 1899.
255 Michael J. Phelan	Batlow	Batlow and <i>Quartzville</i> , <i>via</i> Hides' Saw-mills.	16	One	Horseback	19 18 0	31 Dec., 1899.
246 George Danvers, jun.	Tumut	Gundagai, Gocup, and Tumut, <i>via</i> the marked-tree line; and	20	Three	Coach, 2 or more horses.	159 10 0	31 Dec., 1901.
		Gundagai, <i>Tarrabandra</i> , Brungle, and Tumut.	24	Three			
249 Alexander McKenzie.	Brungle	Brungle and Rosemount ...	8	Three	Horseback	27 0 0	31 Dec., 1899.
Receiving Office Keeper.	Wagragobilly ...	Brungle Bridge (on the Gundagai—Tumut Mail Line) and Wagragobilly.	2	Six .....	.....	10 0 0	.....
256 Edward Lynch.	Argalong	Tumut and Argalong	15	One .....	.....	20 0 0	31 Dec., 1899.
257 Henry G. W. Wilkinson.	Yellowin	Tumut, West Blowering, and Yellowin.	19	Two	Horseback	39 0 0	31 Dec., 1901.
258 Mrs. Ellen O'Shea.	Tumut	Tumut and Blowering; and Blowering, Talbingo, Yarrangobilly, Yarrangobilly Caves, and Kiandra.	12	Two	1 or 2 horse conveyance; when snow is heavy, on snow shoes or horseback.	90 0 0	31 Dec., 1899.
			54	One			
A. G. Bennett...	Spring Flat, Tumut.	Blowering, Talbingo, and Yarrangobilly; and to extend service to Yarrangobilly Caves from 1 November to 30 April (7 miles extra).	31	One .....	.....	30 0 0	31 Dec., 1899.
Total cost per annum						£ 963 5 6	

In all cases where the contracts end this year provision has been made for the continuance of the service next year.

1078. Many of these contracts would still have to be carried out if the proposed railway were made? The service between Adelong and similar places would require alterations, but it is probable that it would cost as much as, or more than, we now pay, because the passenger traffic obtained by the coaches reduces the amount that we have to pay. On the other side, towards Brungle and Gocup, we should probably make the service only bi-weekly, but at the present time we run the mails to and from Tumut by what is known as the marked-tree line, because it is shorter than the other road.

J. Clarke. 1079. Mr. Harper estimates the revenue from mails, &c., at £372—£12 a mile for 31 miles? Yes; that is the usual allowance. I have also here a statement showing the number of letters posted at the post offices, and the revenue derived from the post and receiving offices on the mail lines between Gundagai and Tumut, and the branch services therefrom, in the year 1898 :—

Name of Office.	Number of Letters posted.	Revenue.			
		Postal.	Telegraphic.	Money Order and Postal Notes.	Total.
Gundagai	199,620	£ 1,437	£ 551	£ 108	£ 2,096
South Gundagai	6,980	37	.....	.....	37
Adelong Crossing-place	7,360	60	8	.....	68
Grahamstown	5,420	11	.....	.....	11
Shepard's Town	13,870	88	.....	3	91
Adelong	90,520	806	341	76	1,223
Gilmore	3,590	22	.....	.....	22
Tumut	129,860	1,126	410	72	1,608
Mundarlo .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Hillas Creek .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Lower Tarcutta	2,420	19	.....	.....	19
Tarcutta	12,770	120	33	9	162
Middle Adelong .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Batlow	10,210	136	27	7	170
Laurel Hill .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Courabyra	1,580	29	.....	.....	29
Tumbarumba	45,540	526	156	57	739
Upper Bago .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Taradale .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Quartzville .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Mount Adrah	560	5	.....	.....	5
Sharp's Creek .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Upper Gilmore .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Brungle	3,260	32	.....	.....	32
Gocup	2,080	30	.....	.....	30
Rosemount .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Wagragobilly .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Argalong .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
West Blowering .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Yellowin .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Blowering	6,250	3	.....	.....	3
Talbingo .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Yarrangobilly .....	.....	5	.....	.....	5
Yarrangobilly Caves .....	.....	5	16	.....	21
Kiandra	8,730	113	51	14	178
Total	550,620	4,685	1,593	346	6,619

The following Return shows the Number of Mails, including Parcels, exchanged on the Lines :—

Gundagai and Tumut, <i>via</i> Adelong	124 bags per week.
Adelong Crossing-place and Tarcutta	27 "
Adelong and Tumbarumba	20 "
Tumbarumba and Batlow	4 "
Adelong and Hillas Creek	2 "
Adelong and Sharp's Creek	2 "
Gilmore and Batlow	6 "
Batlow and Quartzville	1 "
Gundagai and Tumut, <i>via</i> Gocup or Brungle	39 "
Brungle and Rosemount	3 "
Brungle Bridge and Wagragobilly	3 "
Tumut and Argalong	1 "
Tumut and Yellowin	4 "
Tumut and Kiandra	9 "
Blowering and Yarrangobilly Caves	3 "

1080. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has there been any increase in the revenue obtained from the district? I have not made any comparison in past years. The time at my disposal was not sufficient to enable me to do more than I have done, but I will forward the information asked for. [*Vide Appendix.*]

WEDNESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER, 1899.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Travers Jones, sworn, and further examined:—

T. Jones. 1081. *Chairman.*] I understand that you wish to add to the evidence which you have already laid before the Committee? Since I was last examined, I have written the following letter to you, sir, as Chairman of the Committee, and I should like it to be embodied in my evidence:

On being examined by your Committee *re* Tumut railway extension, it was my intention to suggest a route for consideration that would give railway communication to the greatest number of the inhabitants in the Tumut electorate and

T. Jones.

29 Nov., 1899.

and be more in the public interest than any of the proposed lines now under consideration; but seeing that my statement occupied about an hour, and fearing that if I prolonged it by going into this matter I might trespass too much on the time of the Committee, I decided that I would write you fully on the subject instead; and should the Committee take a favourable view of the information given in this letter, I can be further examined, and it can be put in as evidence, if necessary; and I now take the liberty of placing my views before you for consideration, viz.:—Since I advocated the extension of the railway from Adelong to Tumbarumba, via Bago, Humula and Tarcutta have been taken from the Wagga Wagga electorate and added to the Tumut electorate, and are known as the Humula Division, which I had the honor of representing in Parliament for six years. Having travelled to these via Tumbarumba and Tarcutta, and been through the length and breadth of the district and surrounding country on several occasions, I am in a position to state that it contains an extensive tract of land most suitable for agriculture and stock-farming. The district is blessed with a permanent supply of surface water, a copious rainfall, and most fertile soil, suitable for producing any crops or fruit that can be grown in a similar humid climate; and, seeing that this portion of the Tumut electorate is again agitating for railway communication, I consider that an extension from Wagga Wagga Railway station to Tumbarumba via Alfredtown, Lower and Upper Tarcutta, Humula, and Rosewood, would serve their purpose best; and in that case to connect it by rail with the rest of the electorate it would be advisable to adopt the staked line from Gundagai up the Adelong Creek to where it turns off to Tumut up to Moon's old water-mill on the creek above Adelong Crossing, and from that point extend the line into or near Adelong, up the creek, with the object in view of connecting this line of railway at Tarcutta with the extension coming from Wagga Wagga to Tumbarumba, which would not be over 25 miles in length, and would go through good agricultural and grass lands all the way. I do not think there would be any engineering difficulty in the way of extending the line from Adelong in that direction. The Nackie Nackie and Yaven Yaven Creeks would have to be bridged, and as they are much required for general traffic, being the main road to Wagga Wagga, they could be constructed (as I have already suggested) to carry both railway and other traffic. The Tarcutta gap on the range may require tunnelling, but, being slate formation, it would not be expensive; and on the whole, I consider that on a flying survey being made (which I strongly recommend) it will be found to be the most suitable for all parties interested. As the Railway Construction Branch is opposed to the proposed line branching off at Coolac, the Brungle end of the electorate will have to continue sending their produce to Gundagai, as the surveyed line would not benefit them. The extension to Adelong Crossing would bring Mundarlo and the rich river flats in that direction 10 miles nearer to railway. By extending it to Adelong, Tumut would be within 12 miles of it by a good road; and the Batlow and Bago inhabitants would be better served by a railway station at Adelong than by having to go a greater distance to Tumut, which terminus, I understand, they are supporting. The extension to Tarcutta would give the Mount Adrah and Hillas Creek (Tumut) electors an opportunity of getting their produce to market. A good extent of rich soil exists in this district, which produced valuable crops of tobacco leaf, when there was sale for it, a few years back. The extension from Wagga to Tumbarumba would serve Tarcutta, Oberne, Humula, Carabost, and Courahyra (Tumut) electors; and would also bring Book Book and Kyamba, in the adjoining electorate, nearer to the railway at Alfred Town.

The above facts must clearly show that railway extension into the Tumut electorate will have to be constructed in the best interests of the majority of the electors as a whole, and not in the interest of any one portion; and, to do justice to the whole electorate, I consider it necessary that the Committee's inquiry should extend into the Humula Division before arriving at a decision on the Gundagai extension, which cannot be allowed to terminate at Tumut or Adelong, in the general interest of the country at large.

In conclusion, sir, I may state that, in recommending this route, I have no personal interest to serve, having no stake in the electorate, and having made up my mind not to again enter Parliament as a representative of any electorate; and my only object in writing is to assist your Committee, if possible, in their deliberations in recommending the extension of the railway in the most suitable way to enable the majority of the electors of Tumut to get their produce to the best market, and to advance the progress and prosperity of the Colony.

I might point out that there will always be a market in Riverina for the produce of Tumut and the surrounding districts. Last year Adelaide buyers visited Albury and Tocumwal, and bought all the produce they could get there, conveying it down the river to Adelaide, where the crops are not so certain as they are in the Tumut district. I made a slight mistake in my evidence the other day which I should like to correct. I was asked the extent of the fertile land on the Tumut River, and I think I said that there were about 30 miles of such land. I have since ascertained, however, that the fertile land extends for a distance of 36 miles, from a place called Yarrawin right down to the Murrumbidgee, with an average width of 1 mile. The area of that land has been computed at 23,000 acres. Besides that land, there is good forest land at Gilmore, Mindary, and other places, of which it is computed there are about 170,000 acres fit for agriculture. Besides that land, again, there is grass land. The crop at Tumut in 1897 was the largest ever known in the district. In that year, from 20 to 40 bushels of wheat were obtained per acre, and from 20 to 60 bushels of oats, while the hay crop was 4 tons to the acre. It was computed that the wheat crop reached 100,000 bushels, and the maize crop 300,000 bushels. At the present time, the Tumut farmers have to pay 3d. per bushel to get their grain to Gundagai, and 15s. a ton for chaff, whereas the charge for carrying grain from Gundagai to Sydney by rail is only 4d. per bushel, and for carrying chaff only 9s. 6d. a ton. It would be a great advantage to the farmers of the district if the Commissioners would do at Gundagai what has been done at several railway stations in Victoria, and put up large sheds in which the farmers could store their produce. At the present time, when a rise in grain takes place, the farmers have to get their grain to the railway station from their farms, and it is probably a week before they can deliver it, and by that time the market has gone down again. If, however, they could store their grain at Gundagai, they would be able to rush it down to Sydney to meet a rising market. The erection of storage sheds at different railway stations would be of great advantage to the farmers in many districts.

1082. It seems to me that you have suggested to the Committee what is practically a net-work of railways? The line I advocated all through is a line from Adelong to Tumbarumba. That line would commence at Coolac, and would serve the greater part of the Tumut electorate. I was under the impression that the proposed line from Wagga to Tumbarumba went nearer to Tarcutta.

1083. For the carrying out of your project, the line from Wagga to Tumbarumba would have to be kept more to the east, so as to go near Tarcutta? Yes. Then it could be easily connected with Adelong. A line could not be taken from Adelong to Humula, because of the character of the intervening country.

1084. Do you think that Tumut might be avoided with advantage in extending the line from Gundagai? I should not like to see Tumut avoided, if the line could be extended from Coolac.

1085. But if the proposed western route is adopted, you think that it will be a mistake to take the line into Tumut? Yes, because if you take it into Tumut you will not be able to get it any further.

1086. If the line were taken from Gundagai to Adelong, and on to Tumbarumba, would the Tumut people be able to send their produce to Adelong without much difficulty? They would have only 12 miles of road to travel, and the road is a good one.

1087. Is it a level road? It is a level road until you get to The Gap. About 10 miles of it is pretty level.

1088. We have been told that the best patch of agricultural land in the district is north-east of Tumut? The land around Tumut is much richer than the land on the Adelong Creek. There is rich land for a distance of 15 or 16 miles up the river from Tumut.

1089.

- T. Jones.
29 Nov., 1899.
1089. If the line avoided Tumut, and went no nearer than Adelong, would not the farmers at Tumut, and to the east and north-east, prefer to go to Gundagai by road rather than to Adelong? No, because in going to Gundagai they would have to travel over 22 miles of bad road.
1090. Farmers living 5 or 6 miles to the east of Tumut would only have to go about 15 miles to get to Gundagai, so that would be as near Gundagai as Adelong? Yes; but, on the other hand, people further up the river would have to travel more than 22 miles to get to Gundagai. There is very little farming on the lower part of the Tumut River. Most of the farming is above Tumut.
1091. How do the people of Tumut get their produce to market now? They follow the marked tree line; but on several occasions I have known teams in wet winters, when that road has been in bad condition, to go round by way of Adelong, a distance of 32 miles. For years I obtained a special vote of £1,000, in addition to the ordinary vote of £1,000 or £1,200, for the marked tree line; but that road is not a good one even now. The Brungle road has had very little money spent upon it. Of course, when a carrier has his waggon loaded, a few miles do not make much difference to him, so that probably there would not be much difference between the rates to Gundagai and to Adelong. I still hold the opinion that a line from Coolac to Tumut, extended thence to Adelong and Tumberumba, would best serve the whole electorate.
1092. Are we to understand that you are not quite so strong upon the Tarcutta route as you were? I see now that the Wagga extension would be further away than I thought it.
1093. Then you modify the opinion you have already expressed? Yes. I was under the belief that the Wagga to Tumberumba line would touch Lower Tarcutta, and that Tarcutta and Adelong should be connected. Upper Tarcutta is about 27 miles from Adelong, and about 8 miles from the surveyed line from Wagga to Tumberumba.

John James Miller, manager, Farmers and Settlers' Co-operative Association, sworn, and examined:—

- J. J. Miller.
29 Nov., 1899.
1094. *Chairman.*] Your association has an office in Sydney? Yes.
1095. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there any special evidence which you wish to bring before the Committee? I was living at Cootamundra for twenty-five years, and my business has frequently taken me into the district which would be served by the proposed line, so that I know it very well. I wish to give evidence in support of the extension of the line to Tumut, and even beyond Tumut.
1096. What is the real market for the Tumut produce;—where is that produce consumed? Most of the maize comes to Sydney. The Tumut maize is the best on the market, and brings the best prices.
1097. And it is consumed in Sydney? Yes. During the last few years a good deal of maize has gone to Wyalong from the Tumut district.
1098. Is it used for horse feed? Yes.
1099. The Tumut maize can stand the long rail carriage, and yet compete with the coast maize? Yes, it tops the market; it grows prolifically, and is of good quality, and it is free from weevil.
1100. Its quality is due to the climate and the soil combined? Yes.
1101. The last witness intimated that the real market of the district was to the west? Yes, in dry seasons.
1102. Do they grow much lucerne or other hay in the district? No. The cost of carriage is too great to make the growing of hay profitable.
1103. Do they grow oats? It is good country for oats, and Tumut oats have taken the prize at the Sydney Show; but they have never gone in very extensively for oats.
1104. If there is a market to the west, would it not be better to extend the railway from Wagga Wagga to Tumut rather than from Gundagai? In my opinion the railway should be extended from Gundagai. Junee is about the centre of the Riverina district, so far as a western market is concerned, and a connection with the Southern line at Cootamundra would, therefore, be as convenient as a connection at Wagga. About 2,000 tons of produce were sent from the Gundagai district to feed starving stock last year.
1105. Even if the Cootamundra-Gundagai line were not in existence, you would recommend the extension of a railway from Cootamundra to Tumut rather than from Wagga to Tumut? Undoubtedly.
1106. Do the large landholders in the district use their land simply for grazing purposes? Principally.
1107. They do not cultivate? Very little. Some of the large landholders have allowed Chinamen to grow tobacco and maize on their land; but most of them go in for fattening stock.
1108. Which pays the better, pasturing or tillage? A combination of the two pursuits is the safest. In some seasons, when grain is low, it is better to go in for fattening stock. During the last two seasons beef has been a good price, so that it has paid to fatten, while, on the other hand, wheat has been low, and maize has not been high. In some seasons it pays to fatten, while, in others, it pays to grow crops. In wet seasons the land is too rich for wheat.
1109. Then you have to cut it for hay? Yes; otherwise it would be no good at all.
1110. And there is no market for hay? No, because of the heavy road carriage; but the district would be able to compete with other districts if it had railway communication.
1111. Then, the best thing to grow is maize, which will bear the cost of carriage, and fat stock, which will take themselves to market? Yes.
1112. Do you fatten sheep in the district? Yes. It is good country for sheep, and especially for crossbreds.
1113. It is not too wet for sheep? No; I think it is fairly sound country for sheep. In the wet season they may be a little liable to foot-rot; but, taking it all through, the district is good sheep country.
1114. During the last bad season was there plenty of grass in the district? The Tumut district was relied upon to save the Riverina sheep.
1115. Where did the sheep come from? By rail, from places west of Cootamundra.
1116. From as far as Deniliquin? From Howlong, Hay, and from as far as Barmadman.
1117. Were there as many sheep in the district as it could accommodate? In the present unimproved state of the country there could not have been more; but the country is capable of vast improvement.
1118. In what way? The timber could be cleared off. South-east of Tumut there are thousands of acres of hilly country which is suitable for stock, and, if it were improved, it would carry millions of sheep

- sheep in the summer months. Of course, the sheep would have to be shifted away before the cold weather came on. The district could only be worked in conjunction with country west of Cootamundra, but, worked in that way, it would save thousands and thousands of sheep.
1119. Could it take 50 per cent. more than it took last year? In five years you might, by improving it, increase its capacity 100 per cent. What is needed is to clear away the timber, so that the grass may grow. There is no difficulty about obtaining water.
1120. Is the grass there naturally sweet? It is not sweet until the country has been improved.
1121. You do not have to sow artificial grass? Artificial grasses are the best. Both red and white clover grow well there, and, if artificial grass were laid down on the volcanic land, it would become rich pastoral country. At the present time, however, I do not think much artificial grass has been introduced. I do not know of any place where paddocks have been laid down, though you can see clover growing along the roads.
1122. Do you mean to tell us that, although the country is so capable of improvement, the people who have held it for years have not improved it? The land to which I am referring is nearly all Crown land. I am referring to the country which was occupied by sheep during last summer.
1123. The land on the flats is, I suppose, nearly all freehold? Yes.
1124. But not the land on the surrounding hills? No; that is nearly all Crown land.
1125. Is the soil on those hills volcanic? Yes; and is capable of growing any kind of English fruit—raspberries, gooseberries, and all fruits of that kind grow there.
1126. Is the timber good? Yes; you can get trees 50, 60, and 70 feet high, and as straight as possible.
1127. *Mr. Watson.*] What kind of trees? Gum, messmate, and other mountain timbers.
1128. *Dr. Garran.*] But it is too expensive to get it out? You could not get it away very well by road.
1129. You had as many stock there last year as you could carry, in the present state of the district? Yes. The mountains were nearly full of sheep, and the sheep went away very well.
1130. They all went back in the winter time? Yes. Half of them have returned again this summer.
1131. Were they depastured upon Crown land? Yes, chiefly. Some people, of course, sublet their holdings in different paddocks to persons requiring them.
1132. The lessees found it more profitable to sublet than to use the land themselves? Yes; because they cannot keep sheep there in the winter time. It pays them better to allow others to bring sheep there during the summer months; and people holding runs west of Cootamundra are now securing land in snow leases and in other ways around Kiandra, and as far as Mount Kosciusko, to take their sheep to in summer time.
1133. Did the sheep coming into the district come by rail to Gundagai? Yes; most of them.
1134. If the line were extended to Tumut would they come to Tumut? Yes, and that would save the lives of many weak sheep. It is 22 or 23 miles by road from Gundagai to Tumut, and as a great many sheep had to travel as far again before they reach the pastures, very many died on the road.
1135. You do not favour the construction of a line from Wagga through Tarcutta to Adelong? No. The extension of the line from Gundagai is what is wanted.
1136. Do you think we should take Adelong into consideration? Yes; I think the line should go to Adelong, although that requires a detour. There is not much agricultural land around Adelong; but there is good grazing country there. Then you could take the line into Tumut, and eventually go up the Tumut River in the direction of Yarrangobilly. It is all good agricultural land up the river, though the width of the flats is limited. Tumbarumba is much nearer to Tumut than to Wagga, and by going from Tumut to Tumbarumba you go nearer Yarrangobilly, which will become a great pleasure and health resort, because of its caves.
1137. At the present time Wagga is the outlet for the Tumbarumba traffic? That is the way the mail coaches go.
1138. Is there a coach route from Tumbarumba to Adelong? Yes. It is not a bad mountain road. I have frequently driven over it.
1139. It is not the agricultural part of the district in which the improvement you speak of will take place, so much as the pastoral area—the hilly country? Yes. The river flats are limited in acreage, and are chiefly under maize at the present time, except on some of the large holdings. A good deal of cultivation and dairying will take place in the higher country about Batlow, Reedy Flat, and right on to Yarrangobilly.
1140. The grazing land, you think, will be improved? Yes. The grazing land in the district is more valuable than many people think, because it can be worked in conjunction with the grazing land in the drier parts of the colony, but not without an adequate railway service. After the shearing, the ewes and rams are turned out together into the paddocks, and, of course, when the ewes are heavy in lamb, later on in the season, you cannot take them home too easily. If the railway were extended, they would be able to get home in a very short time.
1141. But the railway would only get the traffic you speak of once each way in the year? Yes; but I think that many people would come into the district with their families. People go there now, and as the accommodation improves, it will become a sanatorium, and persons sending their stock will also send their wives and families.
1142. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the extent of the agricultural country at Tumut? The flats are from half a mile to 2 miles wide, and extend from Brungle to 10 miles above Tumut. The flats on the Gilmore Creek are about half a mile wide, and some very rich crops of maize have been obtained there.
1143. What is the rest of the country? Hilly country; but for the most part not barren rocky hills, but hills composed of rich volcanic soil. In some places ferns and timber grow very strongly; but the soil is really good.
1144. Do you think that the district will furnish a sufficient amount of traffic to justify the extension of the railway? Yes; I strongly advocate the extension of the line. I believe that it will ultimately pay, and that it will assist the present line to Gundagai. At the present time Gundagai is one of the most important stations in the colony. I think they sent away more fat stock from there this season than from any other station in the colony, and a good deal of that fat stock came from Tumut.
1145. Has there not been a falling off in the agricultural produce of the district of late years—in the case of tobacco, for instance? They have given up the growing of tobacco very largely; but they still grow wheat and maize. Nearly all the seed used about Cootamundra and that part of Riverina this year came from Tumut.

- J. J. Miller. 1146. Has there not been a falling off in the quantity of maize produced in the district? I do not know. In dry seasons some people have gone in more for wheat. If the land has gone out of maize, it has gone under wheat.
- 29 Nov., 1899. 1147. Which crop pays best? Maize is the standard crop there.
1148. How can you account for the falling off in the maize crop if the maize grown there brings the highest price in the market? Because they have gone in more for wheat in dry seasons. Last year the wheat crop at Tumut was a large one. Those who give up maize-growing go in for wheat.
1149. Is there much rich agricultural land which has not been brought under cultivation? Nearly the whole of the river flats have been brought under cultivation, though some of the land which was at one time cultivated is now used for fattening.
1150. Are the holdings large? No; a great many of them are small. A great many of the farmers there are tenant farmers.
1151. So that there is really not much room for extension? There is not much room for extension on the river flats. The improvement will take place further back, in the hilly country.
1152. Are you well acquainted with Adelong? Yes.
1153. Do you think that it is likely that Adelong will benefit much by the construction of this railway? I think it would be a pity to leave it off the railway line. It is a good mining district, and a good grazing district, and in some parts of it there is good cattle country.
1154. Have you been in the district lately? I have not been at Tumut for a couple of months.
1155. Have you heard the prospects of a railway discussed there? Yes, during the last twenty years.
1156. What do the people think about it? They think that they are entitled to a railway.
1157. And that it would be a great advantage to them? Yes.
1158. You say that there is not much opportunity for extending the agricultural operations of the district? Not on the river flats; but there are hundreds of acres of table-land which have a rich, red, volcanic soil, suitable for agriculture.
1159. And you think that the construction of the railway would lead to a great deal of cultivation? Yes, and to a great deal of dairying. You can grow anything there, and if you put in fodder for your dairy cattle you need have no difficulty in irrigating your cultivation paddocks, because suitable streams are available everywhere.

FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Gundagai, at 11 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LUNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Morgan Ryan, Mayor of Gundagai, sworn, and examined:—

- M. Ryan. 1160. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have been a resident of this district for a long time? About eighteen years.
- 1 Dec., 1899. 1161. You are pretty well acquainted with the country to be served by the proposed railway? Yes, as far as Tumut.
1162. Can you give the Committee a general idea of the area of land now settled upon, or which could be settled upon, if a railway were constructed from Gundagai to Tumut, by way of what is known as the Adelong valley route? No; but I think that there is scarcely any unalienated land upon that route. Nearly all the land there is occupied.
1163. What would be the general effect upon the district of the construction of the proposed railway? It might slightly increase the production of the district, as might be expected from the additional convenience which a railway would afford.
1164. What particular lines of produce do you think would be most affected? The railway might increase dairying slightly.
1165. And maize-growing? Not between here and Tumut. So far as I know, all the available maize land is in use. The alluvial flats in the district contain some of the richest land in the Colony, and that land has been in use for a long time. I do not consider that the proposed extension of the railway would increase the area of land in use, though land now being used for one purpose might, if a railway were constructed, be used for another. At the present time a good deal of the river land is used only for grazing, and they might convert this land into corn-growing land.
1166. Is it more profitable to use this land for grazing than for agriculture? It should be more profitable to use it for agriculture. It should be more profitable to till the land than to use it in its natural state.
1167. Has the fact that pastoralists of other districts have competed for the leasing of this land during the last few years prevented the holders from using it for agricultural purposes? I do not think so.
1168. Then, why do you think that the construction of a railway would lead to the conversion of the land from pastoral to agricultural use? The river flats in some places are used for pasturage because they are attached to pastoral estates, and form only a small portion of the whole property. If, however, a railway offered facilities for taking produce away, and it were found profitable to do so, the holders of these estates might till the flat land, and graze only upon the hilly country. In our district, where there is flat land in a pastoral property it is not broken up, but all the land on the estate is used for grazing.
1169. It is to be presumed that the holders of land will, under ordinary circumstances, put it to its most profitable use? Yes.
1170. Is it necessary to keep a little flat land for winter pasturage? Very little grass grows upon the flat land during the winter; but it is often necessary to retain that land for grazing purposes in order to secure access to water.
1171. There are three projected routes for an extension to Tumut—one following, to some extent, the Adelong Creek, and the two others going one on each side of the Tumut river. It would seem that the valleys

M. Ryan.
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valleys of the Tumut and of the Adelong Creek each contain a certain area of good agricultural land ; but if the line is taken along one valley it must exclude the other? Yes. Between the valleys to which you refer there is hilly country, very much of which is barren. That country is fit only for grazing.

1172. Then it is not likely that it will give a large amount of traffic to a railway? No.

1173. Taking Tumut as a centre, is there a large area of country to the east, south, and west which is likely to give traffic to a railway? On the west, and on the south, the Tumut River is bounded by the Kiandra Mountains, and that country is used only for summer grazing. They have to bring the stock away early in the autumn to prevent them perishing from cold and want of feed. It is entirely barren country. There is nothing to feed a railway, unless it is what is grown on the flats, along the banks of the Tumut River. These flats are of very limited extent ; they are not nearly so large as the flats on the Murrumbidgee, at Gundagai.

1174. Do you think the extension of the railway to Tumut would increase the stock-carrying capacity of the district? Well, when stock reach Gundagai they have a very short distance to travel by road before reaching the highlands.

1175. Has this district been stocked to its utmost capacity during the last two years? I do not know that it has been overstocked ; but it has been stocked to about its full capacity. The stock-owners here have found it profitable to sell their own stock, and to lease their paddocks to pastoralists from other districts. Many of the local sheep were sold as fat stock to make room for hungry stock coming here from other districts.

1176. What is the character of the road between Gundagai and Tumut? Going *via* Adelong, there is a first-class road for the first 16 or 17 miles, and people living along that road would be likely to continue to bring their produce into Gundagai, because they are not very large growers. They carry on a combination of sheep-farming and small agriculture, and they would bring their produce by road, even if there were a railway. It is only a few hours' journey for them to come into Gundagai by team, and they could return the same afternoon ; so I do not think they would use the railway.

1177. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The estimated cost of the proposed extension is £147,140. From what you know of the character of the district, and the probabilities of its development in agriculture, mining, and pastoral pursuits, do you think that the line would pay a fair amount of interest? I do not think I could offer an opinion upon that subject, because I have not gone into the figures. I am aware that there has been a loss upon the Cootamundra to Gundagai line ever since it was opened, and that, according to the official figures, that loss will be increased by the proposed extension. I think that people living 5 or 6 miles on this side of Tumut, once they have put their produce upon their drays, will not go back to Tumut to a railway station ; but that they will come on to Gundagai. Then, too, if you adopt the Adelong Creek route, all the traffic from Brungle and the district about there will still come to Gundagai. Gundagai is the proper outlet for all the country on both sides of the river, as far as Brungle.

1178. Is the road between Gundagai and Tumut fairly good? Yes ; I believe that the roads between the two places are in first-class condition.

1179. The distance between Gundagai and Tumut is about 20 miles by road and about 31 miles by railway? Yes, and that is a handicap to the railway. There are three roads from here to Tumut—the road *via* Adelong, the road *via* Brungle, and the marked-tree line.

1180. *Mr. Watson.*] Is the marked-tree line the road ordinarily used by the coaches? Yes.

1181. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I understand that the flats are the only portions of land supposed to be fit for agriculture? For maize-growing.

1182. The ridges are used more for pasturing? Yes ; but between some of the hills they cultivate wheat.

1183. What is the soil on the ridges? It is fairly good.

1184. They are not rocky ridges? They are rocky in parts ; but the soil is fairly good.

1185. Are the stock carried sheep or cattle? Both are reared in the district.

1186. Is the dairying industry now being largely entered upon? No ; there is not sufficient dairy produce made in the district to supply local wants. A great deal of the butter, and nearly all the cheese consumed in the district, are purchased in the Sydney market.

1187. A butter factory has recently been established here? There are a few little creameries, where the produce of small herds of cattle is dealt with. People are taking to dairying slightly of late.

1188. Up to the present time not much attention has been given to butter-making? Not very much.

1189. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway would induce people to go in for butter-making more largely? No. I am of opinion that the people who now hold the land will never become dairymen, but that it will be necessary to import persons specially trained to the work. The people here do not take to it. They stick to the old methods of cultivating the land, or they graze sheep and cattle.

1190. Do they appear to be an industrious, pushing class of people, as a rule? Yes. They are the general run of colonists.

1191. What are the principal crops grown between Gundagai and Tumut? On the Tumut River the principal crop is maize.

1192. They grow a good deal of wheat too? They perhaps grow as much as they consume ; but I do not think they very much exceed that quantity.

1193. The tobacco-growing industry was a rather large one here at one time? The tobacco-growing and the maize-growing are chiefly in the hands of the Chinese. I think you will find from the Railway people that the Chinese are the largest consignors of maize in the district. They cultivate land, which they either rent or purchase, with the assistance of their own countrymen, and supply the southern market, or send the grain to Sydney. There are a few Europeans ; but their output is very small as compared with that of the Chinese.

1194. Is there much land suitable for cultivation which has not yet been cultivated? I cannot tell you. I have not been to Tumut for some time, so that I cannot tell you if every available acre is or is not under cultivation.

1195. Are you acquainted with Adelong? I have been through the district.

1196. How does the mining industry seem to be progressing there? It is at present not so good a district as it has been for some time past. It depends almost entirely upon the Gibraltar mine, which is a big concern, worked by English capital, and maintaining a large population. As in all mining districts, if they get gold the population remains ; if they fail to get gold, the population leaves. It is not by any means an agricultural district.

- M. Ryan.
1 Dec., 1899.
1197. Have any of the mines there been worked to any considerable depth? Yes; I think they are the deepest in New South Wales. Some of them are over 1,000 feet in depth.
1198. Do you think the construction of the proposed railway would assist the development of these mines? No, I do not think it can. The value of gold is so great in proportion to the cost of carrying it, and the carriage of produce to the district is so low, that I do not think much could be gained by the construction of a railway.
1199. Do you think it is desirable to construct this line? I do not think so, because you have no means of extending it beyond Tumut. There is no country to be served beyond Tumut, because the hills there rise to the Kiandra mountains. There are a few flats and plains along the river bank; but they are very small, and they are already worked to their full extent for the production of maize, or by graziers. I cannot see that there is any justification at all for the construction of the proposed railway. They are within 20 miles of a railway station at the present time, and it seems to me that they are therefore not badly off.
1200. Do you think that a farming district should be satisfied to have a railway station within 20 miles? Well, there are people who use the Gundagai station who are 16 or 17 miles away to the south-west. Some who are a little further away go to Bethungra.
1201. You think that the farmers of Tumut are fairly well served at the present time? I do. They must have teams to cultivate their land, and to harvest their crops. At the end of the harvesting they use their animals to haul their produce to the railway station, and between times they do carrying for their neighbours. These teams have to be maintained all the year round in any case, whether they have to haul their produce into Gundagai, or have only 3 or 4 miles to go to get to a railway station. Last year there was a sudden rise in the price of wheat, and it went up to 4s. a bushel. Mr. McInerney, a large farmer, a few miles from here, could not get teams to deliver his wheat straight away; and several others, situated within 4 or 5 miles of the railway, were also unable to get teams, and, as the rise only lasted for a week or two, they lost their opportunity, and had to sell for 2s. 7d. a bushel. I mention this to show that farmers cannot take advantage of every rise in the market, even though they have a railway within a few miles of their holdings.
1202. *Mr. Watson.*] I think you stated that the ridges in this district were composed of fairly good soil? Yes, where there is soil.
1203. What is that land used for at the present time? For grazing.
1204. For the grazing of cattle and sheep? Yes.
1205. Is there any large proportion of the land used solely for cattle? When you reach Tumut there is not so much sheep country as upon the Murrumbidgee. The sheep over there get fluke, and they have to get rid of them. They run cattle in the forest country.
1206. Mr. Harper estimates that the proposed extension will only get 1,000 bales of wool;—that does not look as though a large number of sheep were being carried in the district? Well, if you increase the wool traffic on this line you will take it away from the Wagga line. By taking the line to Adelong you will be going 10 miles nearer to Tarcutta, Mlerslie, and other places in that district.
1207. If the ridges are as good as you say they are, why is there not a greater yield of wool, seeing that the rainfall of the district is so good;—is it because of the greater number of cattle carried? I could not enlighten you upon that subject.
1208. You told the Vice-Chairman that there might be an increase in the wheat production of the district by a number of holders converting their grazing land to agricultural purposes, and, later on, you said that a number of people might go in for dairying;—which industry do you think people would be most likely to go in for? People may clear more of their land and devote it to wheat-growing.
1209. Do you know sufficient of the land in the valley of the Tumut and the Adelong Creek to be able to express an opinion as to which would be the better route for a railway to take? I cannot see that a railway to Tumut would serve any purpose, except to benefit the producers on the other side of Tumut.
1210. Do you think that the people between here and Tumut are sufficiently well served at the present time? People living within a short distance on this side of Tumut will not go back to Tumut with their produce.
1211. Which do you think is the better route, supposing there is anything to choose between them? I could not tell you. I do not know the country from Coolac to Brungle.

Frederick John Clements, Railway station-master, Gundagai, sworn, and examined:—

- F. J. Clements.
1 Dec., 1899.
1212. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you prepared with any statistics as to the business done with Tumut at the Gundagai station? Most of my local returns are in Sydney, and the traffic manager can supply the information you want more accurately than I can; but I can give you a rough estimate. The following statement shows the traffic for the years 1898 and 1899:—

Years.	Special Class.			1st, 2nd, and 3rd Class.			General, in truck-loads.			Total.														
	tons.	c.	q.	£	s.	d.	tons.	c.	q.	£	s.	d.	tons.	c.	q.	£	s.	d.						
1898 ...	3,053	13	2	4,377	11	9	2,769	2	1	11,259	6	4	1,179	16	2	5,535	18	3	7,002	12	1	21,182	16	4
1899 ...	3,000	10	2	3,356	11	5	2,867	12	0	11,611	0	2	1,376	9	2	6,028	2	7	7,250	12	0	20,995	14	2

1213. How long have you been located here? For two years.
1214. So that you cannot speak with certainty as to the increase of the traffic? In compiling my returns for the Commissioners I have obtained a very fair idea of the traffic for previous years. The increase commenced within the last four years. Prior to that the traffic was stationary.
1215. Has the drought had any effect upon the traffic here? Yes, upon the inward stock traffic.
1216. Was there a larger business being done six years ago than there is now? No.
1217. So that the drought has not injured the traffic? No.
1218. Have you conversed with many people living between Gundagai and Tumut as to the probability of the district being benefited by railway construction, to any extent? No; I have no interest in it.
- The

F. J.
Clements.
1 Dec., 1899.

The increase to which I have referred is due to the improvement of Gundagai township, not to the increased traffic of Adelong or of Tumut. They may wish to attribute the increase to the whole district, but it has not been due to the whole district. During the last three years the building operations of this town have increased considerably, and most of our traffic increase is due to the amount of building materials brought by railway, the increase of population here, and the operations at the Prince of Wales mine, 3½ miles from here. At the present time the teamsters could compete with the main-line rates on a railway from Gundagai to Tumut. The teamsters are now carrying for 10s. a ton, and the cheapest rate for grain on the railway from Tumut to Gundagai would be 3s. 6d. a ton, and for back loading 19s. 3d. a ton, or 22s. 9d. altogether, as against £1.

1219. So that the teamsters could carry much more cheaply than the railway? Yes; if local rates were imposed, we could not compete at all with the teamsters.

1220. The special rates are rather more than double the through rates? I have not worked that out. Coal for the Gibraltar mine would cost 3s. 2d. a ton; grain, 3s. 6d.; building material, dressed, 6s., and undressed, 5s. 8d. The teamsters at the present time are carting both ways for £1, which would be 5s. 8d. less than the railway rates both ways would come to.

1221. You say that the increased traffic of the railway is due to an increase in building operations at Gundagai? Yes; and to the development of the Prince of Wales mine. I am of opinion that the traffic is likely to increase for the next twelve months, but that after that it will be stationary, or will fall back. That is my report to the Railway Commissioners. During the last eighteen months we have received over 1,000 tons of machinery for the mine, the freight upon which was very heavy, and to it the increase in the railway revenue was very largely due. Since the mine was established there has been a population there of 600 or 700 people, and the supplies and building material they have required have gone to swell the railway traffic. Since I have been here I have known fifteen new shops to be built upon one side of the street, and all the material used in their construction came by railway.

1222. The proposed extension of the railway would not serve the mine you speak of? No.

1223. What is your opinion of the proposed extension? That it would be a dead loss.

1224. *Mr. Watson.*] The total earnings of the Cootamundra to Gundagai line from freight and passengers was set down by the Secretary to the Commissioners as £11,278 for the year 1898;—he takes, I presume, that proportion of the freight which can properly be credited to the Gundagai branch, while you, in stating the Gundagai receipts as £21,182, put down the total revenue received at your office? Yes.

1225. From that amount something has to be deducted to credit the main line? Yes.

1226. To whom is the bulk of the goods consigned here? Most of the goods are consigned through agents; chiefly through Wright, Heaton, & Co.

1227. Do you know the consignees? Mandelson & Co., Pearce and Long, Myles and Park, the Gibraltar Mining Co., and others.

1228. *Mr. Ryan* indicated that the greater part of the traffic was done through Chinese firms? He referred to the despatch of produce, such as maize. Virtually, there are two firms through whom the maize is despatched—Ah Chee and Sanderson and Taylor, of Tumut. I do not know whether the Chinese grow the maize, but they are the chief buyers of it, and of tobacco as well.

1229. It mostly goes through their hands? Yes; through Ah Chee & Co.'s. I think you will find that there are only six regular teamsters on the road between Gundagai, Tumut, and Adelong, except when the rush comes. The wool and grain are carried by the farmers themselves.

1230. But six teamsters manage to cope with the carriage of store goods and the ordinary produce traffic? Yes. If I were a farmer, it would be my policy to get into the books of the storekeeper, so as to make him give me back cartage. I think that 15s. is the highest rate paid to the teamsters at the present time, though some of them are carting for 10s. a ton.

1231. Do they make any distinction between the different classes of goods? Yes. I have been informed by the teamsters that the existing rates would come down considerably if the proposed railway were made.

1232. About how much did you obtain for the carriage of starving stock during the last two years? I do not know. The freight was paid at the stations where the sheep were trucked.

1233. How many truckloads of starving stock came to Gundagai last year? 2,500 truckloads, each containing 100 sheep.

1234. What was the average rate per truck? They got 50 per cent. rebate, and some of the stations paid £4 16s. per truck.

1235. Can you tell us the average distance the sheep were brought, and the average price paid? All you could take would be so many trucks for 34 miles. Possibly, it would not be more than 7s. 6d. a truck. Some people obtained a rebate of 75 per cent. returning, and 50 per cent. coming.

1236. That would be a total revenue of about £1,500? Yes.

1237. Can you expect to retain that revenue year in and year out? No.

1238. For how long have you obtained a fairly large revenue from the carriage of starving stock? This is the first time.

1239. Do you think that that traffic has been entirely due to the exceptional duration of the recent drought? Yes.

1240. Are you likely to have a repetition of the traffic if there are tolerable seasons in Riverina? No. They are having a repetition of the drought in Riverina at the present time; but not one-fourth of the number of stock is coming to Gundagai this year that came last year.

1241. With ordinarily good seasons, do they travel many sheep by road to this district? Not to my knowledge.

George Woodbridge, land-owner, South Gundagai, sworn, and examined:—

1242. *Mr. Watson.*] You are an old resident of the district? Yes. I have lived within 12 miles of the town for a great many years.

1243. And you have had experience in farming and grazing? Yes; I have had a go at everything.

1244. What is your opinion as to the probable result of railway extension from Gundagai to Tumut? In my opinion it would be a great loss to the Government to extend the line to Tumut. If the Gundagai branch will not pay, I cannot see how matters will be improved by extending the line to Tumut.

1245. Do you think that all the traffic that could possibly come to a line from Gundagai to Tumut now comes to the existing line? Yes. All the traffic from the surrounding districts, from as far out as Tumbarumba, comes here. This is the depôt for the whole district. 1246.

G.
Woodbridge.
1 Dec., 1899.

- G.
Woodbridge.
1 Dec., 1899.
1246. Do you think there will be any considerable development of the country by the extension of the line to Tumut or beyond Tumut? So far as I can see the line could go no further than Tumut.
1247. But would its influence extend further? It might, to a certain extent; but I do not think it would be of great importance.
1248. Do you think that the land between here and Tumut is now being cultivated to as great an extent as it would be if the proposed railway were constructed? I can hardly say, but I do not think the construction of the proposed railway would make any great difference. If agriculture there would pay with a railway it would pay without it.
1249. That proposition will not apply generally; a point is reached at which a railway ceases to have influence, and where an extension would bring more land into cultivation;—you do not think that that applies in this instance? It is bound to apply to some extent. I know every valley and every hill. Whatever way you take the railway, though it may be a convenience to a great number of people, there will be a number of others whom it will not convenience, and who may as well come to Gundagai as go to any platform on the extension.
1250. The valleys of Tumut and Adelong are separated by country which one can hardly expect people to travel over to get to a railway? Yes. You might go to Tumut from Coolac through Gobarralong and Brungle.
1251. What is the character of that country? There is a good deal of flat country there.
1252. Are the flats of any width? In some parts they are pretty fair. I suppose in some places the flats are pretty well a mile or three-quarters of a mile in width, while in other places they are very narrow. Behind them it is principally hilly country.
1253. Do you think that is the best country for agricultural purposes? I think it is the biggest agricultural area between the existing line and Tumut.
1254. We have been informed that around Tumut there is a large area of good agricultural land? So there is. There is a lot of good land about Tumut.
1255. Is that land under cultivation now? A great part of it is used for grazing purposes.
1256. Is it suitable for agriculture? All the flats are.
1257. So that it is possible that if the railway were extended to Tumut that land would be brought under cultivation? It might be; but I do not say that it would be all brought under cultivation if there were a railway.
1258. How far does the good land extend beyond Tumut? There is a lot of good land extending for miles on the other side of Tumut. There must be 15 or 20 miles of agricultural land running up the river; but it is narrow.
1259. Would you consider that country beyond the influence of the Gundagai line;—do you think it would pay people there to grow maize and wheat, and to bring their produce to Gundagai? They do it now.
1260. But, inasmuch as all of the land is not cultivated, something must be keeping them from developing it properly? Some years stock is of no value, and other years grain is of no value, so that it is hard to know what will pay best. Just at the present time, stock is of great value; but I think that this year there are fewer sheep in the district than I have seen for many years. That accounts for the production of wool not being very large. About here they have sold most of their sheep.
1261. How would you class the land on the ridges and hills between the valleys;—would you say that the soil there is fair or that it is poor? Some of it is poor.
1262. And some of it is fair? Yes.
1263. Is any of it good? There is some good grazing land on the hills. It is good sheep country.
1264. How do you account for the small production of wool in the district? Because a great number of the sheep have been sold and sent away.
1265. And have the holders been allowing their land to lie idle? A great portion of the land is leased to pastoralists from other districts. For the last two years, I have leased my land to two graziers from Riverina. They drove their sheep down to Riverina, and shorn them there.
1266. So that, although a great deal of wool is grown in this district, it is shorn in other districts, and not credited to this district? Yes; the sheep are taken away in thousands, and shorn elsewhere. Mr. McCaughey had 50,000 or 60,000 sheep trucked to these parts last year; but I think we shorn only fifty odd sheep.
1267. The balance were shorn out of the district? Yes. The fifty sheep we shorn were stragglers. They are the only sheep coming into the district in that way which I have known to be shorn in the district.
1268. What do you estimate the average carrying capacity of the ridges to be? Where the land is rung and kept clean, it will carry about two sheep to the acre.
1269. All the year round? Yes. The land will not carry so much when it is in a rough state.
1270. Is it the practice to keep it clean? I am sorry to say that a lot of the land about here is in its rough state; but, if the scrub is kept down, it will run about two sheep to the acre. The river frontage at Gundagai will run seven or eight sheep to the acre. On the racecourse here they have run about nine sheep to the acre.
1271. For how long? For the year.
1272. Are many cattle depastured between here and Tumut? A good many.
1273. For fattening purposes? Yes.
1274. Do they breed the cattle here, or do they bring them in as stores from other districts? During the last year or two they have generally bought them.
1275. Is it a fact that the Gundagai district generally has been supplying most of the surrounding districts with fat stock? Yes. There are a good many on the rivers.
1276. In an ordinary season do many sheep coming to the summer pastures travel along the stock routes? They have often done so; but, during the last two years, it has been so dry that a great many sheep have been brought to Gundagai by train.
1277. But, prior to that, while the seasons were fair? In fair seasons the sheep have often travelled here.
1278. The fact that no store stock were brought here by rail in fair seasons does not prove that none were sent here for agistment? Yes. Sheep come here nearly every summer, unless it is an exceedingly good one.
1279. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the size of your holding? I have about 800 acres.

1280. Is it mostly river flats? No; it is ridgy country generally.
1281. You have not had an opportunity to use it for agriculture? No; but I have had a go at agriculture in a number of other places.
1282. On the flat land? Yes.
1283. And what has been your experience as to the capabilities of the district in that direction? My opinion is that if I had left the river flats alone I should have been in pocket. I have been growing corn and crops of all sorts during the last seven years, and I know that I should have had money in pocket if I had not done so.
1284. Your seven years' experience embraces the worst drought that the Colony has ever seen? Yes; but I have been farming ever since I was a boy.
1285. *Mr. Watson.*] The drought did not affect the district as much as other districts? No; it has been rather an advantage to this district.
1286. *Vice-Chairman.*] How do you account for the fact that farming does not pay? Some years you will get a good crop of hay and a big price for it, but, after a time, you will find a deficiency somewhere, and you will say, "This is not half the game I thought it was." I have had forty years experience of farming in this district, and I have had not made anything at it, nor have I seen anyone else who has.
1287. Are you trying to discount the statement of those who say that the river-flat land is amongst the best agricultural land in the Colony? It is when you get a year that suits. I have obtained 100 bushels of corn to the acre; but I have also gone through years when I have not got 100 cobs to the acre.
1288. *Mr. Watson.*] Because the season was too dry? Yes.
1289. There is no other cause to account for it? No. I have known a paddock, which my son has, to give 3,000 bushels of corn in a year, and I have known it to give only thirty bags of cobs in the year. That paddock contains about 33 acres. If a man were grazing on this land, he would do very well.
1290. *Vice-Chairman.*] Which of the three routes before the Committee would serve the largest extent of agricultural land? I believe that the most eastern route would serve the best land.
1291. What are your views as to the mineral prospects of the district between Gundagai and Tumut;—can we expect any further development such as has taken place at Adelong? Adelong is, I suppose, one of the most prominent mining districts in the Colony, and I believe they will be mining there when all the rest fail. Beyond that, I do not know of a great deal of mining going on there.
1292. We were informed by one witness that many of the gullies and small valleys to the south of Tumut showed prospects of gold, and that when there was water there were always small parties of men working there;—do you anticipate that the extension of the railway would give a stimulus to the gold production of the district? I do not think so. I fancy that a man could bring in any gold that he might get without requiring a railway. I do not think the Government should extend the railway on that account.
1293. But to go in for mining on a large scale requires expensive machinery? Yes; a great deal of machinery has gone to Adelong; but once the machinery has got to a place I do not see what benefit the Government is going to get from it.
1294. Do the people between Tumut and Tumbarumba send their wool and agricultural produce to Wagga or to Gundagai? All that is grown there is not very much, so that I do not think it matters very much which way it is sent. In some years you could grow good potatoes there; but it does not do very well for wheat or grain. I know the district very well, because I owned a place there for years and I was very glad to sell out.
1295. So that we cannot expect a large amount of traffic from that part of the country? No; there is a lovely lot of land about Tumut; but a few miles further on you have pretty well done with the good country.
1296. There is a lot of forest land there? Yes.
1297. I think *Mr. Travers Jones* informed the Committee that if that country were improved, by ringing and clearing the timber, even the highlands would be suitable for agriculture, and that at any rate its carrying capacity would be increased? Well, I should not like to undertake its improvement. I had a go at it myself once, but I believe that it would break the Bank of New South Wales to keep that country clean.
1298. Can you give the Committee any account of the movement of stock south of Tumut in dry seasons? A great many stock instead of going up the north side of the river come up the south side to Ellis' Creek, through Lower Tarcutta, along the Yaven Yaven Creek, and then on towards Adelong. When they get to Adelong they can go to Tumut, Kiandra, Tumbarumba, or anywhere else. Thousands and thousands of animals go that way.
1299. The extension of the railway would not interfere with the movements of that stock? Not a bit.

G.
Woodbridge.
1 Dec., 1899.

William Matchett, J.P., Postmaster, South Gundagai, sworn, and examined:—

1300. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have resided in the district for twenty years? Yes.
1301. Can you give the Committee a short statement embodying your views as to the expediency of constructing this line of railway, and the prospects of a profitable return? Yes. Having resided for so long a period in the district, and having traversed the whole of it, my opinion is that there is not sufficient land available to warrant the proposed expenditure, no matter what route is adopted. I have a thorough knowledge of the extent to which agricultural and pastoral pursuits are followed in this district.
1302. Is it your opinion that the area of agricultural land to be served by the proposed extension is very limited? From my knowledge of the district, I am thoroughly convinced that four-fifths of the available agricultural land is now under crop.
1303. And it is only reasonable to assume that the produce of that land is at present trucked at Gundagai? It passes my door on the way to the railway station. I live in the main street of South Gundagai.
1304. In your opinion, the proposed extension will only mean adding £147,000 to the capital cost of our Railways without there being any hope of a proportionately large amount of new traffic being attracted to them? Yes.
1305. Have you anything to suggest for the information of the Committee? I wish to endorse what has been said by previous witnesses to the effect that there is no prospect of opening up any new country which would tend to feed a railway once you get to Tumut.

W. Matchett,
J.P.
1 Dec., 1899.

- W. Matchett, J.P.
1 Dec., 1899.
1306. So that the extension of the line to Tumut would simply mean an extension to the extreme edge of the traffic-producing district? That is so.
1307. What is there to prevent the country beyond Tumut giving traffic to a railway? The rough, hilly, rocky, and scrubby nature of the ground. Going into Tumut, the first thing that meets you is a tier of mountains; beyond them you get another tier; and so on until you get to the Yarrangobilly Caves.
1308. You hold the opinion that the district between Gundagai and Tumut has approached very closely to its limit of agricultural development? I think so. I was round the district recently, and I noticed large paddocks, which two or three years ago were used to depasture sheep and cattle, under cultivation; but, knowing how the hills come in on both sides of the valley of the Tumut, I believe that there is very little land available beyond what is now being used. A considerable quantity of tobacco is grown in the district, but not so much as was previously grown. The principal agricultural product of the river flats is maize. The land is not suitable for wheat. While the land grows good straw, the cars will not fill, because the soil is too rich.
1309. Are not the river flats suitable for wheat-growing in a dry season? No; they would not be suitable for wheat in any season—not so suitable as good forest land would be.
1310. Do you think that the district has reached the limit of its pastoral development? I believe that it has. It was my business recently to look out for land available for settlement for a person who wanted some land; but I could not find anything like an area worth applying for.
1311. For pastoral occupation? For farming and pastoral occupation; for pastoral occupation chiefly.
1312. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is the land in this district nearly all alienated? Yes.
1313. What is the average size of a holding? The holdings here are of various sizes. Some of them are fairly large. Where the holdings are large they extend back into the mountainous country. That country is used for sheep.
1314. What distance from Tumut is the bad country to which you refer? There are 70 or 80 miles of broken country beyond Tumut. That country goes right through to the Snowy River.
1315. Before you come to good country again? Yes; until you get to the fall of the ground towards Cooma.
1316. Do you know if that country is taken up? I believe that a number of squatters have taken up a good deal of land above Tumut for what they call "summer country"; but they are only able to use it for sheep during four months of the year.
1317. Do many squatters avail themselves of these summer pastures? In dry seasons they are fairly well availed of; but not in good seasons.
1318. I suppose water is plentiful there? Yes.
1319. You are not in favour of the proposed extension? I think that, financially, it would be a failure.
1320. Your reason being that the extent of country suitable for agriculture is too small to justify the extension? Yes, that is my opinion.
1321. While the country available for stock is at the present time within easy reach of Gundagai? Yes; there are good roads and every facility in the way of reserves and camping-places for the travelling of stock.
1322. Do you know anything about Adelong? Yes; I am frequently in Adelong.
1323. What do you think of Adelong as a mining district? It is a very old mining district, and there are two or three mines at work there now. The Gibraltar mine—the principal mine there—is worked by English capital, and employs a large number of men. There are smaller mines also at work there, some of which I believe are paying, while others are not.
1324. The district is considered to be a pretty extensive mineral district? It is not so extensive as it has been represented to be. A great deal of capital has been expended in prospecting in the district, but away from the Adelong Creek, the Donkey Hills, and the other hills immediately around Adelong, they cannot get anything to pay.
1325. Have you been connected with any of the mining properties there? Not there; I have been connected with mining properties in this district.
1326. Can you give us any reason why there has not been such a development at Adelong as one would be led to look for from the richness of the field? No; except that the country is very hard, so that in many instances it is not found profitable to work it. If the ground could be worked more easily, I have no doubt that several more mines would pay handsomely; but, in consequence of the extreme hardness of the ground, and the expense of working it, mining is not generally found to pay there.
1327. You do not consider it a poor man's field? It is not by any means a poor man's field.
1328. Some of the reefs there are pretty rich? Yes.
1329. And pretty wide? The Gibraltar mine is one of the best. In former days, I believe, the old Victoria mine went as high as 30 oz. or 40 oz. to the ton; but that would be only in shoots.
1330. Do you think that the field is nearly worked out? It would require an enormous amount of capital to discover very much more worth going for there.
1331. So that we cannot look to the Adelong mining-field for a large increase of railway traffic? No; I do not think that the traffic from that field would be worth considering, seeing that there is such a good road between Adelong and Gundagai.
1332. You think that Adelong is sufficiently well served by the existing railways? I think that it is.
1333. *Mr. Watson.*] What would your estimate be of the carrying capacity for sheep of the country between here and Tumut? Taking it the whole year round, I do not think the hilly country would carry more than a sheep to the acre, on the average.
1334. *Mr. Shepherd.*] That would be about 6 acres to a large beast? Cattle will not do well in the hills.
1335. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that the hilly country beyond Tumut is as good as that between Gundagai and Tumut? Some of it is.
1336. Much of it? Not very much of it. Some of it is quite as good, the only difference being that above Tumut the feed is rather rough for sheep. Between Gundagai and Tumut the feed is finer and better for sheep.
1337. As you get higher the feed becomes coarser and scarcer? Yes; though, of course, it is better in the hollows.
1338. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you had any experience in cattle-raising? I have.
1339. What sort of a district is this for cattle-raising? Very fair.

1340. Does that include the ridges, or only the alluvial flats? There are portions of the ridges from which they can get access to the flats, and the water which is very suitable for large stock. Other portions of the ridgy country are too rocky and rough to be suitable for large stock, and are better adapted for sheep. W. Matchett,
J.P.
1 Dec., 1899.

1341. Do you know anything concerning the number of stock which come to this district by road? I have a fair knowledge of it. Most of the stock that travel to the mountains by road have to pass my door. Only small flocks travel any distance to get to this district; most of the sheep come by train.

1342. Is any considerable number of stock sent by rail from the lower to the higher country? Yes; in some seasons. When it is very dry, a considerable number is sent by rail.

1343. Where do they come from, chiefly? I could not tell you exactly. Sometimes I know from conversations with the drivers from what points they have started, what is their destination, and what number of stock they have in charge. Some of the stock come from the Lachlan and down the Murrumbidgee; but, during the last year or two, they have come from Hay, and the country in that direction, by rail.

Walter Edward Cox, Railway goods-porter, Gundagai, sworn, and examined:—

1344. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been here? Six years. W. E. Cox.
1 Dec., 1899.

1345. Have you occupied your present position all that time? Yes.

1346. What description of goods have been received at Gundagai since you have been here? Provisions, groceries, mining machinery, and timber.

1347. Has there not been a good deal of building material? Yes.

1348. Have you noticed any fluctuation in the traffic since you have been here? No; there has been one general increase. The traffic has increased more and more every year; it has not gone back.

1349. Where do you generally get the goods from? From Sydney and Granville.

1350. What do you generally send away from here? Wheat, maize, copper ore, mundic, concentrates, and tobacco.

1351. What part of the district contributes most to the traffic? The concentrates come chiefly from out Reno way, and from the Gibraltar mine, about 3 miles this side of Adelong.

1352. Is that the only mine which contributes to the traffic? Well, the others contribute nothing to speak of; they only send dray-loads.

1353. Is butter one of the articles sent away? No; I do not think ten boxes of butter go away in a month. Last week about six boxes of butter came from Tumut; but they were the first I have had for two years.

1354. And no cheese? No; I have never sent cheese away.

1355. Are you acquainted with the country between here and Tumut? I have been up there once or twice; but I do not know the country sufficiently well to be able to say anything about it.

1356. Do you know what the people along there think in regard to the proposed extension;—have you had any conversation with them about it? Not of any importance. From what I have heard they seem to be against it.

1357. I mean the people some distance back from Gundagai, and out towards Tumut? Well, as for the general carriers that come in from Tumut, I do not think I have heard one speak in favour of the line.

1358. But the railway would do away with their business? I think they could compete against it. They all seem to fancy that they could.

1359. Can you give us any particulars as to the stock traffic here? I had nothing to do with the stock traffic, except the starving stock that come by night. Last year was the first year that we had any starving stock brought here.

1360. Has there been a falling off during the last few years in the quantity of maize and wheat sent from here? I should say that there has been a falling off in maize, but not in wheat.

1361. What about tobacco? During the last three years there has been a large falling off in tobacco.

1362. Can you account for that in any way? They tell me that it is because of the low price obtainable for it.

1363. You say that you are pretty well acquainted with the country between here and Tumut;—will you describe the general features of the country within a few miles of the proposed extension? I do not think I know the country along the route of the proposed line. That line does not follow the road to Tumut.

1364. You know the flats where the cultivation is? No; you go Brungle way to pass them. I have been the other way.

1365. *Vice-Chairman.*] During the last few years have any consignments of farming implements been sent to this district? Yes.

1366. Do they come in rushes or are they gradual? Gradual.

1367. What about building material? We have had building material sent here in large quantities.

1368. And machinery for mining? Yes, in very large quantities—in consignments of 100 and 200 tons.

1369. Do you anticipate still further consignments of building materials for the town? Yes.

1370. Has the major portion of this building material been for the town of Gundagai, or for places further on? For the town of Gundagai and places round about, such as Reno.

1371. Has much of it been sent out towards Tumut? No; very little has been sent out towards Tumut.

1372. With regard to the goods sent away from Gundagai, which district produces the more—Adelong or Tumut? Tumut.

1373. Is there much difference between them? So far as regards weight, I do not think there is. From Adelong they send quartz residue, which weighs very heavily. From Tumut they send wheat and corn.

1374. Has there been much variation in the quantities of agricultural produce sent from the Tumut district during the last six years? Yes.

1375. In what direction? About three years ago we had a very good season, and about six years ago the season was very good. In between those times things have been very flat, and hardly any corn has been sent down, because the people have gone in for wheat.

1376. Have the consignments of quartz been fairly uniform in character? Yes.

1377. Are they likely to be maintained? Yes; we are getting more and more every week.

1378. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you tell us what proportion of traffic to and from Gundagai belongs to Tumut, and what proportion belongs to Adelong? The traffic from beyond 10 miles of the town of Gundagai would

- W. E. Cox. would not amount to more than half of the whole traffic, taking in Nangus, Brungle, and Reno. We get a lot of produce from Nangus.
 1 Dec., 1899. 1379. In what direction is Nangus? West from here.
 1380. And how far? About 10 miles.
 1381. If the proposed railway were constructed would you still continue to get the Brungle traffic at Gundagai? Yes.
 1382. Nangus would not be affected by the construction of the proposed line? No.

Harold Braine, stationer, Gundagai, sworn, and examined:—

- H. Braine. 1383. *Mr. Watson.*] You have been a resident in this and the Cootamundra district for a considerable time? For five years.
 1 Dec., 1899. 1384. And you have been through the Tumut district pretty frequently? Yes, several times.
 1385. Is there anything you can tell the Committee which you think will assist them in coming to a decision in regard to the proposed railway? Living in the main street of Gundagai, I am in a position to see the traffic that goes through the town, and I am certainly of opinion that it is not sufficient to justify the extension of the line to Tumut.
 1386. You refer to the traffic to and from the Tumut and Adelong districts? Yes.
 1387. Do you know enough of those districts to hazard the opinion that the construction of the line is likely to bring into effective use an area of land sufficient to make good any deficiency in the revenue that may now exist? From what I can see of the country round Tumut, I do not think there is much fresh land to open up. I have been all along the river as far as Talbingo, and I think the country there is all opened up.
 1388. How far would that be beyond Tumut? About 20 miles beyond Tumut. All the country worth opening up seems to have been opened up.
 1389. So that you do not think that much more land would be put under cultivation if the railway were taken to Tumut? I do not think so.
 1390. If the present traffic is as small as you say, and practically the whole of the district has been opened up, there is very little chance of the railway paying? That is my opinion. I may state that it appears to me that a good many of the residents of this town, who are competent to give an opinion as to whether the railway would pay, do not care to come forward. I have been speaking to two or three people who have business relations with people in the Tumut district.
 1391. Is it possible that they are afraid of being accused of bias? Prominent residents of Gundagai do not care to hazard an opinion as to whether the railway should be extended to Tumut, as they are afraid of creating ill-feeling between the two towns, and of losing business from the Tumut side.
 1392. The Tumut people are naturally anxious to have the railway constructed? Yes. One very prominent man told me that one waggon a week would carry all the necessaries required from here to Tumut, and bring the Tumut produce back. He is one of those who do not care to come forward and give evidence. I have lived nearly all my life on the South Coast. That is an agricultural district, similar to the Tumut district; yet when, some years ago, it was proposed to construct a railway for a far larger district than Tumut—the Bega district—to Eden, which I suppose is the second natural port in the Colony, it was considered that that line would not pay, although it would tap the adjacent Monaro country.
 1393. You think that that line had a greater likelihood of paying, owing to the larger area of country that would have been served by it? Yes. A good deal of traffic goes from Monaro to Eden and Merimbula, and that line would have tapped that traffic.
 1394. You argue that if the construction of that line was not justified the construction of the proposed line is still less justified? Just so. There is no mining around Tumut itself. Tumut is exclusively an agricultural district.
 1395. It is proposed that the railway should go fairly close to Adelong, where there is mining being carried on? Yes; but I think that the mining round Adelong is pretty well worked out.
 1396. The consensus of opinion expressed to us seems to be rather that there is every probability of Adelong continuing to be a mining-field? There is practically only one mine there,—the big Gibraltar mine.
 1397. Has there been any falling off in the prospects of the Gibraltar mine? I understand that there has been a falling off in its returns.
 1398. Summed up, you think that the proposed extension is not justifiable, either as being a line likely to open up new country, or as a line likely to pay? Just so.

SATURDAY, 2 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at the "Coach and Horses" Hotel, Adelong Crossing, at 11:30 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

James Edward Chard Turner, farmer and grazier, Adelong Crossing, sworn, and examined:—

- J. E. C. 1399. *Chairman.*] How many years have you been here? Thirty-nine years.
 Turner. 1400. I understand that you have a holding of about 2,000 acres? Yes.
 2 Dec., 1899. 1401. How many cattle have you upon it? About 250 cattle.
 1402. And how many sheep? About 1,000 sheep.

1403.

1403. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 140 acres under wheat and oats.
1404. What opinion have you of the district as regards its agricultural and pastoral possibilities? I do not think you can beat this district for a farming district, or for a sheep and cattle district.
1405. Is your land flat land, or is part of it ridgy land? Some of it is ridgy land, and some of it is flat land. The land on the flats is good cultivation land.
1406. Is the land on the flats the only land suitable for cultivation? Yes.
1407. Is it liable to be flooded? No.
1408. What is the carrying capacity of the grazing land? It will carry about a sheep to the acre, taking the flats and the hills together.
1409. All the year round? Yes.
1410. The climate is very favourable? Yes.
1411. What is your rainfall? I cannot tell you, but I never had a failure of the crops through drought. The only failure I have had has been caused by too much wet.
1412. The district is a peculiarly favourable one for keeping stock in good condition? Yes; in very good condition. If you do not keep too many they thrive well.
1413. Has this district suffered very much during the last five years' drought? No.
1414. It has given an outlet for large numbers of poor stock from other districts? There are a lot coming in now, not to this particular part of the district, but round about, a few miles away.
1415. Have your operations been satisfactory from a financial point of view? Yes.
1416. Are there many holders of moderate extent in the district like yourself? There are a few men between this place and where I live who hold 500 or 600 acres.
1417. Is the district between Gundagai and Tumut occupied by persons with small or moderate holdings or by persons with large holdings? Three miles beyond Adelong Crossing the holdings are large, but when you come to the Gilmore you get small holdings again.
1418. What is the width of the valleys in which the land is suitable for agriculture? Three miles up they run about a mile in width, but further up still the hills close in more.
1419. Then this valley is not of very great width? No; but further up it spreads and contains good wheat land.
1420. How do you get your stock to market? By sending them to Gundagai.
1421. How far is that? Twelve miles from my place, and 10 miles from here.
1422. Do you think that the people between your place and Gundagai require a railway for the conveyance of their produce to market, and the bringing back of their goods? Well, we are not badly off at the present time.
1423. If a railway were constructed from Gundagai to Tumut, from what distance beyond Gundagai would it be used? For about 12 miles out of Gundagai.
1424. Then you think that the railway traffic will commence about 12 miles on this side of Gundagai? I think so.
1425. For any intermediate distance it would not be worth while, having put one's produce on the waggon, to go anywhere than to Gundagai? It would not be worth a man's while to come 2 miles back on the line, instead of going only 4 miles further on.
1426. Seeing that the land here is so largely alienated, do you think that the construction of the proposed line would lead to an increase of population? No, I do not think it would increase the population of the district, though it might lead to the cutting-up of the large holdings so that better use could be made of them.
1427. Do you think that people, instead of going in for grazing so much, would go in for mixed farming? Yes.
1428. Would it pay a large holder better to cut up his holding and sublet it, or sell portions of it, than to keep it merely to depasture sheep and cattle? Sometimes it would. A few years ago it paid very well.
1429. Is there a sufficient area of flat land in the hands of large holders to enable them to sublet any number of farms? Well, there are a good many thousand acres between this place and Shepard's Town, about 8 miles up.
1430. That land is not being farmed at the present time? No.
1431. What area of flat land could a man reasonably live upon? A man ought to make a decent living out of 200 or 300 acres.
1432. Do you know the value of these alluvial flats? No.
1433. What rental do the farmers pay? Some of them pay as much as £1 an acre.
1434. Are they able to make a living at that rental? Yes, by growing corn, until the last two or three years; but lately the corn crop has missed in this part of the district, though it has never missed at Tumut.
1435. Is that because of the drought? Yes. Corn wants a good rainfall at this time of the year.
1436. The Tumut corn is about the best that goes to the Sydney market? Yes; and there seems to be always enough rain for it.
1437. Is it chiefly because of a possible larger use of the neighbouring land that you think the proposed railway would be beneficial? Yes.
1438. Do you think that the construction of the railway would directly or indirectly increase the revenue to be obtained from the purely pastoral country? Only by bringing weak sheep into the district.
1439. Last year a great number of weak sheep were brought into the Tumut district? Yes.
1440. Do you know whether the district was taxed to its fullest extent last year, or could it have carried more starving stock than it did carry? The accommodation has not been overtaxed so far, because none of the stock have died in the district.
1441. Do you think that this part of the district could have taken more starving stock, or was the country pretty well all occupied? I think that last year it was pretty well all used.
1442. How far have they to drive stock from Gundagai to get on to the good country? Some of the stock that come to Gundagai have only a few miles to travel from there, while other stock travel 8 miles, and other stock, again, 10 or 20 miles.
1443. If a railway had gone further out in the direction of Tumut, could they have taken more sheep into the country about Tumut and towards Tumbarumba? Yes, I think they could.
1444. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You say that £1 an acre is about the outside rental paid for land at Tumut? No, I was not talking of Tumut; I was talking of the district round Adelong Crossing.

J. E. C.
Turner.
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- J. E. C. Turner.
2 Dec., 1899.
1445. Nearly all the land between here and Tumut is alienated? Yes.
1446. And a great many small farmers at Tumut lease their land from the large holders? Odd farmers do.
1447. Do you know what rent they pay? I think as much as £2 an acre, if not more, has been paid by Chinamen for land in Tumut for tobacco-growing.
1448. Are there many large holders round Tumut? I cannot say.
1449. I noticed this morning, in coming from Gundagai, that a large extent of the rich land on the flats is covered with thistle;—why is that valuable land allowed to be smothered in that way? That might be Government land.
1450. Is there any Government land between here and Gundagai? There is some on the flats.
1451. Do they use the thistle at all? The cattle eat it, but the farmers do not cut it down to make ensilage of it.
1452. Do your stock keep in good condition? Yes; I never have any losses.
1453. You consider that you are fairly well served by the existing railway? Yes.
1454. So that the proposed extension would not be of any great advantage to you? Yes; it would come within a mile of my place.
1455. I notice that, in the paddocks about here, the wheat and oats are very much mixed? The wheat has been very dirty during the last two or three years.
1456. Is it used for milling or for hay? Mostly for hay. There is too much oats in it now to use it for milling.
1457. Do you think that the Government would be justified in constructing the proposed line, seeing that it will entail an annual expenditure of about £8,150, and will cost about £147,000? Well, the expense is rather heavy for the distance.
1458. Would it be possible to extend the line beyond Tumut? I have always heard that it could not be taken any further.
1459. There are almost inaccessible hills beyond Tumut? Yes.
1460. Do you think that the railway would obtain sufficient traffic to justify its construction? I think the question is too big a one for me to go into; but a good deal of produce would be sent by the line.
1461. In what way would the railway business be increased? By the carriage of cattle and produce in drouthy seasons.
1462. Is it not a fact that nearly all the good land in the district is now under cultivation? I daresay that most of it is. From here further on there are flats which are not cultivated. Between here and the Gilmore there is a good deal of land which used to be cultivated, but which is not cultivated now.
1463. Was it cultivated for any length of time? No.
1464. Why was its cultivation discontinued? The selectors sold out. They thought that when everyone was farming there was nothing in it.
1465. *Mr. Levis.*] How many bushels do you get to the acre? In a dry season from 20 to 25, and in a wet season about 12. Last year I think I had 30 bushels right through.
1466. That pays well? Yes.
1467. I suppose you are in favour of the construction of the line? Yes; it will do no harm, and in time to come it will do a great deal of good.
1468. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you give us any idea as to how much of the land in this district is devoted to agriculture, and how much to pastoral pursuits;—is one-third or one-tenth devoted to agriculture? I should think somewhere about one-tenth; but it might be a little less.
1469. According to Mr. Harper, the proposed railway would carry about 1,000 bales—that is, 140 tons—of wool in the year; but if a tract of country about 40 miles by 45 miles is carrying a sheep to the acre, the return should be about 3,000 bales of wool, and, even if 10 per cent. of the land is devoted to agriculture, the return of wool should greatly exceed Mr. Harper's figures? At the present time there would not be 10 per cent. of the land under cultivation.
1470. Would what was left of the land be devoted mostly to sheep or to cattle? To sheep, mostly.
1471. If the ridge land will carry a sheep to the acre?—? I do not say that the ridge land will carry a sheep to the acre. What I said was that on my own holding, the flats and the ridge land taken together, will carry a sheep to the acre.
1472. Do you think that 1,000 bales should be the total yield of wool from the country within the influence of the proposed railway? No; I should think it would be much more than that. From Mount Horeb they send away 120 or 130 bales, and they have more cattle than sheep.
1473. How far is that from Tumut? It is about 3 miles from Adelong Crossing, and about 13 miles from Gundagai. It adjoins my place.
1474. Do you think it probable that that wool would be carried on the proposed line? Yes.
1475. Where does it go at the present time? To Gundagai, and thence on to Sydney.
1476. So that it would appear that the estimate of 1,000 bales for this line is rather low? I should think it would be.
1477. *Mr. Dick.*] In Sydney a witness informed us that if the proposed railway were constructed, the farmers of the district would resort to pig-raising? They might do so. A great many pigs are sent away from the district even now.
1478. If the proposed railway were constructed, do you think it would pay better to grow maize for pigs than to grow it to send to market? I do not know whether it would or not.
1479. I suppose that when maize was at a low price, it would be more profitable to give it to the pigs? Yes; a good many farmers feed their pigs with maize when the price is low.
1480. Do you think we can anticipate much revenue from the carriage of live stock and bacon? I could not say what that revenue would be.
1481. What do you think of the prospects of the district, from a dairying point of view? It is a very fair district for dairying; but there are no large dairying places in it.
1482. How is it that hitherto they have not resorted to dairying in the district? It is too far from a railway, and the local consumption is not large enough. I have been dairying ever since I have been on the farm.
1483. Would the construction of the proposed railway enable you to compete in the Sydney market? I think it would.

1484. Do you think it would lead to an increase in the number of cattle run on the ridges, or is only the flat land suitable for dairying? It is only the flat land that is suitable for dairying. The Gilmore valley would be a great place for dairying.

1485. Is a certain number of stock brought into the district, year in and year out, or do they come only in times of drought? Stock come here mostly in the season for grass.

J. E. C.
Turner.

2 Dec., 1899.

MONDAY, 4 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at the "Royal" Hotel, Adelong, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKEIT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Frederick Charles Park, storekeeper, Adelong, sworn, and examined:—

1486. *Chairman.*] How long have you been here? About sixteen years.

1487. You are acquainted with the proposal before the Committee? Fairly well.

1488. What are your views in regard to the proposed railway;—do you think that its construction would be of advantage to the district? Undoubtedly.

1489. In what way? As a storekeeper, I think it would make it more convenient for us to get our goods up, and I presume it would lessen the cost of living in the district. Secondly, produce could be sent away much more cheaply than at the present time, when it has to be carted into Gundagai.

1490. How are goods brought here from Gundagai? By teamsters, along the main road, *via* Adelong Crossing.

1491. How many miles is that? Twenty-two miles.

1492. What rate of carriage do you now pay from Gundagai? The rate of carriage varies from 12s. 6d. a ton upon stuff like sugar, salt, and flour, to £1 a ton on what are termed case goods—ironmongery, drapery, &c., packed in cases.

1493. What is the rate of freight for wool? I do not think it is lower than 12s. 6d. a ton from Adelong. A good deal of wool is sent from distances varying from 4 to 20 miles from Adelong, so that, of course, the price varies; but I think you could average it very fairly at 12s. 6d. a ton for distances up to 30 miles from Gundagai.

1494. I suppose you are aware that if the proposed railway is constructed special rates will be charged upon all the goods carried between Gundagai and Tumut? Higher rates.

1495. Yes? Then it would pay us better to get our stuff from Gundagai by team. When we carted our stuff from Bowring, a distance of 80 miles, I am not certain whether it cost us 2s. 6d. a ton more or 2s. 6d. a ton less than the present highest rate for third-class goods.

1496. The Commissioners say that with special rates the proposed railway would return a revenue of £3,879 a year gross, and with ordinary rates £1,696 a year gross, while the interest and working expenses would amount to £8,150 a year, so that to get any reasonable return it would be necessary to impose special rates;—can you tell me what those special rates would be? When we had differential rates to Wagga we found it cheaper to cart our stuff from Wagga, a distance of 50 miles, than from Gundagai, a distance of 22 miles. Of course, if the rates on the proposed railway were higher than the road rates from Gundagai it would pay us better to continue to use the road.

1497. Mr. Harper says that—"On certain classes of goods local rates would mean a charge as high as 19s. 3d. a ton—practically what is being paid to-day; and to that would have to be added the cost of cartage from the railway-station to the stores, whereas in other cases it would be direct delivery." Then, later on he is asked—

Do you think that, with a charge of 13s. to Adelong, and, roughly, a charge of 12s. to Tumut, road-carriage could compete against the railway? Yes.

? Does the 13s. apply to all classes of goods?

1498. No, that would be the maximum? Then it seems to me that the advantage would be in favour of Adelong, because we should get third-class goods which now cost £1, for, practically, 17s.

1499. You think that under those circumstances it would pay you to use the railway? Yes, because on those figures we could save 3s. a ton.

1500. Do you think that with railway competition the teamsters could afford to reduce their charges? I am quite sure that they could on third-class stuff.

1501. Therefore, you agree with Mr. Harper, that if the Commissioners imposed special rates, they would be likely to induce competition? I am sure of it. If we were to have a railway here within twelve months, it would throw our teamsters out of employment, and they would then have to find either fresh occupation or fresh fields; and I think that rather than go away they would reduce their charges. If you can only show us a difference of 3s. a ton between the present rate by team and the railway rate to the nearest station, plus 4s. from that station to Adelong, it is a very open question whether the teamsters could not successfully compete. During the last six months it has been suggested that we should attempt to reduce the charge for third-class goods. There are many lines upon which we might hope for a much cheaper rate than £1 a ton.

1502. Is this a favourable district for teamsters; are the roads good and fodder easily obtained? Undoubtedly it is a good district so far as the roads go? I do not think you could get a better road than that between Adelong and Gundagai. Then too, we have a good average rainfall, so that I think the price of fodder here compares favourably with the price in other districts.

1503. We have always regarded this as a district beyond all others into which stock could be sent *ad libitum* in dry seasons? Perhaps you could form a better idea as to the position of the teamsters here

if

F. C. Park.

4 Dec., 1899.

- F. C. Park. if I gave you the prices of fodder. We are now selling corn retail at 3s. per bushel, chaff at £3 to £3 10s. per ton, bran and pollard at about 7½d. per bushel, and wheat at about 2s. 3d. Oats we get from Sydney.
- 4 Dec., 1899. 1504. *Mr. Watson.*] Where do you get your bran and pollard from? From Tumut.
1505. *Chairman.*] Those are fairly reasonable prices? We consider them low prices. I have known corn to be 4s. and 4s. 6d. a bushel, chaff £5 and £5 10s. a ton, and bran and pollard from 10d. to 1s. a bushel.
1506. Do you think that the railway would result in a large increase of traffic? The traffic might increase to a small extent.
1507. What do you think is the capacity of the district? I think that the prospects of Adelong as an agricultural district are limited. If you have a station within reasonable distance, there is plenty of land round Batlow and Upper Adelong which might be used. I think that that is one of the best districts in the Colony for fruit-growing, and especially for English fruits, such as pears and apples.
1508. But you think the output would be limited, owing to the limited area of land available? There is plenty of land available there, but it would cost so much to clear that I do not think men of only reasonable means could afford to clear it. We have always considered that instead of the Government asking £1 an acre for that land they should pay people £1 an acre to live on it. The land is undoubtedly good; but it is very heavily timbered. The fruit-growing land would cost about £10 an acre to clear, and after you cleared it you would get about £3 an acre for it.
1509. *Mr. Watson.*] Does your estimate for clearing land apply to land which has been ringbarked? I think so. I do not think there is any better land in the country for the purposes I speak of; but when it is ringbarked the bracken and wattle spring up, so that nothing can be done with it until it has been ploughed.
1510. *Chairman.*] Leaving that part of the country out of consideration, are the alluvial flats extensive? I do not know where you would find them, unless it is down the Adelong Creek, from Grahamstown to the Murrumbidgee. Then, too, on the Yaven you get a fair area of flat land.
1511. Do the flats widen out very much? Not very much; but the land is good grazing land.
1512. Is there much opportunity for the development of agriculture there? I should be sorry to give an opinion upon the subject.
1513. Is the agricultural land limited in extent? The agricultural land in the Adelong district is limited in extent.
1514. If a railway were constructed from Gundagai to Adelong, from what point would the people begin to use it for the carriage of produce? That would depend upon the location of the various stations. I should very much doubt whether farmers in the vicinity of the Adelong Crossing would take the trouble to unload there. I think that, having a fair road, they would go right into Gundagai.
1515. Then you think that the railway traffic would commence at a point 10 or 12 miles from Gundagai? Certainly not less than 10 miles from Gundagai. Of course, Adelong draws no trade from below Grahamstown, so that my answer is not biased in any way.
1516. Have the residents of this district at any time suffered any great inconvenience by reason of the want of railway communication? Well, I am bound to say yes, that we really want the railway.
1517. But have your goods ever been delayed on the road between Gundagai and Adelong? No: we get our goods fairly regularly. We are served by four or five teams, and I can send a wire to Sydney to-day and have my stuff up to-morrow.
1518. There is a daily coach from Adelong *via* the Adelong Crossing? Yes.
1519. What are the fares? 12s. 6d. return from Adelong to Gundagai.
1520. And how much single? I suppose 7s. 6d. I think that some of the coaches are a little cheaper than that.
1521. *Mr. Dick.*] Can you give the Committee some idea of the inward tonnage of Adelong? I should think the inwards tonnage of Adelong would be covered by £6,000.
1522. *Mr. Watson.*] Is that the freight paid? That is the freight paid to the Railway Commissioners. I base the figures upon what I know of my own business.
1523. And what would the freight from Gundagai to Adelong amount to? I should think to about £1,000 a year.
1524. *Mr. Dick.*] That is for general merchandise, exclusive of mining machinery, and carriage of that kind? Yes.
1525. *Mr. Levien.*] But does not a good deal of stuff come here from Gundagai that did not come to Gundagai by railway? No; I think everything comes from Sydney originally.
1526. *Chairman.*] Is Adelong a large distributing centre, or are the goods sent here consumed within a small radius of the town? Our district is bounded on the one side by the Gap, about 4 miles away; by Batlow, 16 miles to the south; by Mount Adrah, 14 miles to the west; and, going along the Gundagai Road, by Grahamstown, about 6 miles out.

Walter Whitley Webb, Manager, Bank of New South Wales, Adelong, sworn, and examined:—

- W. W. Webb. 1527. *Mr. Dick.*] Your business relations will enable you to state whether the district is or is not fairly prosperous? It is a very sound district.
- 4 Dec., 1899. 1528. Can you say whether it is progressing or stationary? I think it is progressing. Judging from my own business here, it is progressing.
1529. With any degree of rapidity? No; the mining operations largely influence the actual business of the town; but the district, as a whole, is certainly not going back.
1530. Do you know whether the agriculturists in the immediate neighbourhood of Adelong rent or own the land upon which they are working? I think that they are the owners of it, but there are not many of them, speaking for Adelong itself. I do not know anything about Tumut. The climate here is a good one, the rainfall is good, and the soil is good, so that, given the facilities which a railway would give, I think the population ought to increase.
1531. Do you think that the present method of sending goods to market puts difficulties in the way of the producer? I think so. There are fruit-growers in Adelong who, I think, would increase their orchards if they could get their fruit away more easily. Between here and Batlow, about 19 miles away in a southerly direction, the country is noted for its good potatoes, and for its fruit.

1532. What market would you expect the fruit-growers to cater for? The Sydney market, and also the Riverina market. W. W. Webb.
1533. Do you think that the conditions are so favourable that fruit-growers here could compete in the Sydney market with fruit-growers from other parts of the Colony? Well, one man at Batlow sends to the "Australian Club" and to "Tattersall's." He has a contract for supplying apples and other fruit. We are very late here, and Batlow is 800 or 900 feet higher than we are. 4 Dec., 1890.
1534. Has there been any increase in agricultural settlement here recently? No; the agricultural area round Adelong is limited.
1535. Do you look upon the ridgy country as suitable for fruit-growing? Yes; the hill slopes are very suitable.
1536. Can you tell us of producers who are making a success of fruit-growing in the district? There is a man named Barberie at Batlow who does very well with his fruit, and another man named Basham. He takes a team through to Wagga and to Cootamundra, and sells his fruit in the Riverina country. I think that a railway here would aid the mining industry, by allowing us to send ore away more cheaply, and that, in turn, the traffic in ore would aid the railway. At the present time we pay 12s. 6d. a ton to send quartz from the mines to Gundagai, and about 14s. 9d. a ton as railway freight from Gundagai to Dapto, the first distance being 22 miles, and the second considerably over 300 miles, so that there is a considerable disproportion between the two charges. Smelting seems now to be coming into favour more than ordinary battery treatment, and miners are therefore inclined to send more of their ore away to be treated. Of course, stone containing free gold is crushed locally.
1537. What would be the general effect upon the mining industry of a considerable reduction in the cost of carriage to the place of treatment? I am connected with one or two of the mines here, and I think that if the freight were much reduced we should be likely to send away for treatment stone that we now crush locally, in the hope of thus getting better returns, and having to pay less.
1538. Do you think that cheaper conveyance of ore from the district would give a stimulus to mining here? It would certainly be an advantage to mining operations here. The presence of smelting-works at Cockle Creek and Dapto gives us an inducement to send away our ore. Until lately we sent away only the concentrates; but if proper facilities were offered, we should probably send our stone away, not in tens of tons as now, but in hundreds of tons.
1539. Are there any mines which would be brought into practical working by the lowering of the price of carriage? There are a good many mines awaiting development, and the success of one would lead to the opening up of others.
1540. Inasmuch as you would still have to pay for the cartage of your stone a distance of 3 or 4 miles to get to a railway-station, you would not make a saving of 12s. a ton, even if the proposed railway were made;—how much would your saving be? It would be about half that.
1541. I suppose you get the stone carted to the railway-station for about 4s. a ton? It would depend upon the location of the mine from which it was sent; but I think that it would be easier to send it to a station somewhere on the proposed line than to take it down to Adelong Crossing.
1542. Can you give us a general idea of the cost of mining development in the district during your residence here;—has it fluctuated? The Gibraltar mine is the only mine that has made any stir since I have been here. Some of the other mines have been used up, and have dropped out; but there are one or two that are very promising just now—the Caledonia mine in particular.
1543. Do you anticipate any development of the mining industry here in the way of dredging? Yes.
1544. Is this looked upon as a good field for such operations? Yes, a very good field.
1545. Are many leases being taken up here? Yes. The Jennings Company have got their plant ready to start, and some other people have taken up 137 acres, and they are only waiting for developments.
1546. Is it a fact that anywhere along the course of the creek you can get good gold; but that continuous operations have been prevented by the water? I cannot say. Fossicking has always been going on; but I am not prepared to say whether operations have been troubled by the water. At the Bank here we buy a good deal of gold every week.
1547. *Mr. Watson.*] Alluvial gold? Yes.
1548. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you anticipate an increase in mining operations here in the way of dredging? Yes. I think we shall make a very good start after Christmas.

Thomas Arragon, grazier, Adelong Creek, sworn, and examined:—

1549. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been residing here? About six years. I have spent nearly all my life on the Nacka Nacka Creek. T. Arragon.
1550. What is the extent of your holding? There are about 3,000 acres in the holding I am living on. 4 Dec., 1890.
1551. Is it all on the Adelong Creek? Yes.
1552. What industries are you carrying on there, chiefly? I am growing wheat and wool.
1553. What number of sheep have you? About 5,000.
1554. That would be over a sheep to the acre? Yes. For the most part the land would carry nearly two sheep to the acre.
1555. What return of wool do you get? This year we have not yet finished shearing, but we shall send away about 9 tons of wool.
1556. Do you run any cattle? I have no cattle at all.
1557. What area of land have you under cultivation? About 200 acres.
1558. Is it all under wheat? Wheat and maize.
1559. In about equal proportions? No; there are about 25 acres under corn.
1560. What return of wheat do you get per acre? Last year we got about 12 bushels to the acre.
1561. And how much maize? I think about 50 bushels to the acre.
1562. How far are you from Gundagai? About 25 miles.
1563. What does it cost you to cart your produce to Gundagai? Fifteen shillings a ton.
1564. Do you find that charge a drag upon you? Not very much. Of course, if the proposed railway were made the charge would be less.
1565. What is the average distance from a railway at which farming can be successfully carried on? I think that the closer the railway the more successful the farming.
1566. But what do you think is the limit? I suppose 6 or 7 miles. 1567.

- T. Arragon. 1567. You can cart wool a much greater distance than you can cart agricultural produce? Yes.
- 4 Dec., 1899. 1568. Wool-growing is your chief industry? Yes; but a great deal of the land upon which the sheep are running would grow wheat.
1569. Can you form any rough estimate as to the quantity of land on the Adelong Creek which is suitable for cultivation? I think there are about 1,600 acres on our own place which would grow wheat.
1570. I suppose it is chiefly the flat land that is fit for cultivation? Yes; and the ridgy land as well.
1571. As a rule, is the land on the hills suitable for cultivation? The ridges will grow wheat very well. Wheat will grow up this way almost anywhere you can put the plough.
1572. Is there much cultivation on the hills at any distance from the creek? Yes.
1573. Do you cultivate fruit at all? Very little, except for domestic use.
1574. What kind of fruit is chiefly cultivated up the creek? Apples mostly. Quinces grow very well.
1575. And cherries? Yes.
1576. Is this fruit grown chiefly for home consumption, or is much of it sent to market? A good deal of it is sent to market.
1577. How do you think the construction of the proposed railway would affect the various industries here? I think it would improve the position of wheat-growing very greatly. The land west of Adelong is well adapted for wheat.
1578. Do you think that the present rates of carriage are to a certain extent prohibitive? Yes.
1579. The Commissioners estimate that there will be a deficiency of about £6,450 a-year if the proposed railway is constructed;—do you think there is any prospect of that deficiency being made up by the increased production of the district? I do not know; but I think that the loss on the line would be very greatly reduced after a while.
1580. Is not the land here rather difficult to clear? Yes.
1581. What does it cost per acre? The land immediately about here is not so difficult to clear as the land further up the creek—12 or 14 miles up; there it is very difficult.
1582. What is the average cost of clearing that land so as to make it fit for agriculture? About here I think that land which has been rung could be cleared for about £1 an acre, if the timber is dead.
1583. How long should the timber be rung before the land is cleared? Eighteen months or two years.
1584. Do those who are cultivating the land seem pretty well satisfied with the result? Yes.
1585. Do you think that the area under cultivation would be largely increased if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes.
1586. Are you connected with mining at all? No.
1587. Can you account for the apparent apathy displayed here in regard to mining operations? No.
1588. Mining operations here have fallen off a good deal of late? I think so; but I think that mining is likely to come on again very soon.
1589. Can you account for it having fallen off? No.
1590. Is mining still being carried on up the Adelong Creek? Yes, in places. There are fossickers all along the creek, and further up some people have claims.
1591. I suppose the mining there is chiefly alluvial? Yes.
1592. Is there anything else upon which you can inform the Committee having a bearing upon the proposed railway? I think that if the railway were extended the timber industry here would improve. There is good timber about Batlow and Bago, 15 or 16 miles further up. The timber there is very good and very useful.
1593. What kinds of timber are there there? Stringybark, white gum, messmate, and mountain ash.
1594. Is the district fairly well stocked with sheep and cattle? I think so, as a rule; but at the present time it is not a quarter stocked. Last year a great number of stock were sent up here from the droughty parts of the colony.
1595. If the district were fairly stocked, how could it accommodate the starving stock which it is said will be sent up here every year, and will provide traffic for the railway? Up here the people thought that they would have a bad season this year until the rain came, and now they are understocked.
1596. What are the principal grasses up here? They are all native grasses.
1597. Is there good feed all the winter time? Yes. The runs are not nearly stocked this year, nor were they nearly stocked last year.
1598. Can you form any idea as to the cost of clearing land about Batlow? At Batlow it would cost £5 or £6 an acre to clear land for a crop.
1599. Is it the usual plan here to ringbark before clearing? Yes.
1600. Do you think that a year and a half or two years is too short a period to allow for the dying off of the timber? I think that you can ring the timber so that it will die in two or three months. Of course, if you only take off the bark it will probably live longer than that.
1601. Do the people generally use the forest devil, or do they grub out the trees? They grub them out, or, if it is box country, burn them out.
1602. Is it possible to get that done for £1 an acre? I think so.
1603. Have you any idea as to the number of cattle and sheep in the district? No.
1604. Is dairying carried on here to any extent? Not to any great extent.
1605. Do you think it would be encouraged by the construction of the proposed railway? I think so.
1606. As a rule, is the grass here good grass for dairy stock? Yes.
1607. I suppose the difficulty of getting produce to market is somewhat against dairying here at the present time? Yes.

George Thomas Kenney Cole, miner, Mount Adrah, sworn, and examined:—

- G. T. K. Cole. 1608. *Mr. Watson.*] How far is Mount Adrah from Adelong? About 17 miles.
- 4 Dec., 1899. 1609. Have you a general acquaintance with the mining operations of the district, or is your knowledge of the subject confined to the country in the vicinity of Mount Adrah? I have a general practical knowledge of the subject.
1610. In what direction is Mount Adrah from here? I think about north-west. It is on the Wagga Wagga road.
1611. Is Adelong the business centre for people living round about Mount Adrah? Yes; all their business is done with Adelong.

1612. What are the prospects of Mount Adrah as a mining district? They are very promising indeed at the present time. Ninety-one acres of Crown lands have been applied for for dredging purposes, and I think that all the leases applied for with the exception of one have been granted. I think that about 400 acres have been applied for for dredging altogether, and the applicants are coming to terms with the landed proprietors. G. T. K. Cole.
4 Dec., 1899.

1613. Are there any mining developments there besides the dredging? There are a few reefs being worked.

1614. What is the character of the work? Jordan and Williams are down about 100 feet. They had a crushing of 12 tons, and they got about 18 oz. from the bulk, or about 1½ oz. to the ton. That was when they were down about 30 feet. On the bottom of the reef the stone is expected to average about 5 or 6 dwt. to the ton.

1615. Is any gold held in the mineral? Yes; there is a certain amount of pyrites.

1616. For the mineralised ore probably some higher treatment would be required? Yes; smelting or chlorination.

1617. What is your present idea as to the outlet for that class of ore? We bring it by road to Adelong, and have it treated at Rich and Wilson's battery here. The quantity of ore is so small that it does not pay to apply any saving method.

1618. The battery you speak of could not deal with pyrites ore? No.

1619. Then the proposed railway would be of great advantage to you in enabling that ore to be sent away? Yes. From the middle of Mount Adrah to the Adelong Crossing is a distance of about 14 miles.

1620. But it would be quicker for you to go to Adelong Crossing than to go to Gundagai? Yes; and it is good level country. The only drawback just now is that there is no bridge over Hillas Creek, but we are hoping to have a bridge constructed over the Yaven Yaven Creek during the present winter. If Hillas Creek were bridged as well, there would be nothing to stop us from going to Adelong Crossing. The teams can now go that way in dry weather.

1621. What freight do you think you will have to pay for the conveyance of ore from Mount Adrah to Adelong Crossing by the road you mention? We pay about 12s. a ton to have ore conveyed to Adelong, a distance of about 17 miles, and we could get it conveyed to Adelong Crossing for about 11s. a ton.

1622. How much would you have to pay to send ore to Gundagai by way of Adelong Crossing? About 14s. or 15s. a ton. The distance would be about 22 miles. Sometimes we should have to pay more than 14s. or 15s. a ton. The charge would vary with the seasons. Sometimes no teams are available, because they are all away carting grain or wool. I have paid as much as 30s. a ton to Adelong, and the lowest rate I ever paid was 10s. a ton, the week before last, for back carriage.

1623. The difficulty of securing teams might occur whether the railway were constructed or not? Yes.

1624. I suppose the cartage to Adelong Crossing would be higher, because there would be no back loading? If the train came to Adelong Crossing there would be a good deal of back loading. They get a lot of their heavy goods up now from Wagga. They send their wool down there, and get their goods back.

1625. Where do their goods come from—from Sydney or from Melbourne? Some from Melbourne, and some from Sydney.

1626. Does it pay better to bring goods from Wagga than to bring them from Gundagai? They think so, because of the differential rates. I came from Queensland to Mount Adrah in 1882, and I have obtained a good deal of gold there—I think more than any other person. I have had offers to go prospecting to West Australia, Queensland, and other places; but I fancy that there is something at Mount Adrah yet, and I am sticking to it. I got about £5,000 from a mine there. We treated altogether about 400 tons, and obtained over 1,100 oz. of gold. Some of the reefs have gone as high as 6 oz. to the ton.

1627. Do the reefs go down satisfactorily? After they have gone down a few feet, a kind of flaw comes in, and cuts them out; but they generally make again. In one case we went down about 40 feet, and then we had to go through a blank of about 50 feet, when we got a crushing which gave about 5 dwt. of free gold, and there is every appearance of the reef becoming larger.

1628. What are the prospects of mining immediately around Adelong? I think that they are very promising. I have been on the Palmer, the Etheridge, and other places, and there you would see from ten to twenty miners prospecting, for every one you see in this part of the country. In this part of the country they are all wages men, and when they are out of wages they will not prospect, but just hang about the town. I think that if there were more prospecting more reefs would be developed.

1629. Do you regard the mines at Adelong which have been unworked for a long period as worked out? Most decidedly not. When I went to Queensland in 1875, I met plenty of men who had been on Gympie, and they told me that Gympie was worked out. I have heard the same thing of Charters Towers, and the Etheridge; but we know that Charters Towers has since produced tons of gold; and so, too, has Gympie. At Gympie they came upon a very hard green slate, which it cost from £6 to £10 a ton to get through. From what I have seen in other places, I consider that the reefs here are not worked out yet.

1630. Then why have a number of these mines been practically abandoned? I think it is greatly due to bad management. When they were on good gold, they simply followed it down, making only small shafts, and they drank a lot of the money. Then, when they came to poorer stone, they could not afford to sink deeper, and when the workings were allowed to lie idle for a number of years the timber gave way, and the shafts collapsed.

1631. Are any of these mines now open for speculators to take up if they think fit? There are plenty of mines ready to be taken up. There is the Victoria mine lying idle, and there is a mine at Donkey Hill. A lot of properties are merely being held, while others are let on tribute. In many cases the holders are waiting for speculators to come along, or to see how other mines develop. I suppose a lot of people have not sufficient funds to carry on the work themselves.

1632. All the mines are not being worked on tribute? No; but most of them are now. The Challenger mine is doing well, and a lot of money has been put into it by local people. The Caledonia is another mine which is doing well. In 1885 or 1886 I was prospecting on the Gibraltar property, and we were told then that the mine was worked out; but since that time it has given satisfactory returns.

1633. Tributors are not expected to develop a mine very much? No; they only go in and clear out the old stopes.

- G. T. K. Cole. 1634. Their work is of very little value from a prospecting point of view? They do no prospecting at all; they only take out what is left. It would require capital to put the shafts into order, and to erect machinery—more capital than local syndicates seem to care about expending, though it is a local syndicate that has opened up the Caledonia mine again.
- 4 Dec., 1899. 1635. Do you think that the prospects of the district are encouraging, from a miner's standpoint? Yes. At Mount Adrah there are very few prospectors besides myself. We have ironstone lodes there, and on the banks of the Murrumbidgee there is a lot of good lime. People now complain that it is too far to cart into Gundagai; but Adelong Crossing would only be about half the distance.
1636. Do you think it is likely that the ore traffic will assume large proportions within a reasonable time? I believe so. I am living in hopes of it.
1637. How are the Gibraltar people treating their ores at the present time? I believe that they are treating them themselves. They have a cyanide and a chlorination plant.
1638. Then they would not require the railway for the conveyance of their ores? I do not think so.
1639. Is there as much mineral in their ore as you appear likely to get at Mount Adrah? Eighty per cent. more. Mount Adrah has not got to the mineral level. It is slate and sandstone country. My experience teaches me that granite always carries more mineral, while slate and sandstone are freer.
1640. If the Gibraltar people are able to treat their mineralised ores locally, would it not be possible for others similarly circumstanced to do the same thing? They would not have sufficient capital to erect a suitable plant.
1641. If large companies with sufficient capital were formed, they could do what the Gibraltar people are doing? Yes; they could treat their mineral on the ground.
1642. In that case the railway traffic would be very little? Yes.

Charles Purcell, farmer and grazier, Adelong Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Purcell. 1643. *Mr. Levien.*] How long have you been a resident of this district? I have been here ever since Adelong was first opened up—forty years or more.
- 4 Dec., 1899. 1644. How many acres have you? 2,900 acres.
1645. How much land is under cultivation? About 400 acres.
1646. What do you generally cultivate? Wheat and hay, but mostly wheat.
1647. And oats? A small quantity of oats; but I grow chiefly wheat and corn.
1648. What number of stock have you? On the average about 4,000 sheep, or sometimes 5,000 with the lambs.
1649. And how many cattle? About 100 head.
1650. And horses? I have thirty or thirty-five horses.
1651. How many sheep to the acre will your grazing-land carry? I have no leased land—it is all selected land—and the 2,900 acres carry 4,000 sheep. After the lambing, I get rid of about as many old sheep as I have lambs, so that on the average we run somewhere over 4,000 sheep through the year. We sometimes feed them on the cultivated land after the crop has been taken off.
1652. What do you think of the district as one to send starving stock to? I do not think it can be equalled in any part of New South Wales.
1653. Do many stock come here? They come here from all parts.
1654. What is the country like in the winter? It is very good in the winter.
1655. Have you plenty of feed here, winter and summer? Yes; I have not been compelled to move my sheep for eighteen years.
1656. Is there much grass-seed here? Only when you spell the paddocks.
1657. What yield of wheat do you generally get? On the average, from 12½ to 15 bushels to the acre.
1658. What is the best yield you have got? I have got as high as 35 and 40 bushels to the acre, but in some years it is much less.
1659. What yield of maize do you get? On the average, about 30 bushels to the acre.
1660. Have you ever sent any wheat to market? I have sold wheat to Taylor. That wheat was sent to Sydney.
1661. What did you get for it? 2s. 2d. a bushel in Adelong.
1662. You delivered it here? Yes.
1663. And it was then carted to Gundagai? Yes.
1664. What do you get for your corn? From 3s. to 2s. 6d. a bushel.
1665. What is the quality of your corn? It is pretty good, I think. I grow Clarence River corn.
1666. What do you think of this district for dairying? I think it is very suitable for dairying. We make very good butter, and the cows milk well.
1667. What is the timber like? We have very good timber higher up in the Bago country—mountain ash and urabbie, a very useful wood.
1668. Is there much land up there uncultivated, which would be cultivated if there were a railway? Yes. I think the land up there would be very good for farming, but it is very heavily timbered at the present time.
1669. What do you think it would cost to clear? On some patches the timber is very heavy, while on other patches it is lighter. I should think it would cost £6 or £7 an acre to clear.
1670. What do you think it would be worth after it was cleared? I can hardly say, but the crops there have been very heavy. Nearly every one who has cleared that land is satisfied that he can make a good living on it.
1671. What is your opinion in regard to the assistance which the proposed railway would give to the district? I think that the railway would do a great deal of good; it would give employment, and it would cause more land to be cultivated. There is money in wheat-growing at 2s. 2d. a bushel, or a little more, if we had a cheaper means of getting it away. We do a lot in chaff, too.
1672. The difficulty from which the farmers are suffering is the want of a quick means of transit to market? Yes; we are handicapped.
1673. Is your crop later here than in most places? Yes, much later.
1674. A letter written by a person signing himself "Maize-grower" states that the Tumut season being late,

late, the local farmer is slow in getting his produce to market, so that when he gets there there is a glut, and prices are, consequently, low? I have not had much to do with the Sydney market. C. Purcell.

1675. But you think that railway communication would facilitate settlement here? Yes. I would put 4 Dec., 1899.

1676. Do you think a railway would be of great assistance to you in sending sheep away? Yes. At the present time we have to send to Gundagai.

1677. How long does that take? It takes about four days to send sheep there.

1678. And you have to wait for notice from your agent before you can muster? Yes.

1679. So that I suppose it is five or six days altogether before you can get stock into the market, and by that time the prices may have gone down? Yes.

1680. The Chief Railway Traffic Manager has told us that there has been a great falling off in the output of tobacco from this district? The people here are under the impression that a ring has been formed who can do as they like in regard to the tobacco. I have had tobacco for four years past, but I am afraid to send it away. Two pence is the best offer I can get for it.

1681. What used you to get for it? As high as 9d., in the early days.

1682. Is the quality now as good as it was then? Yes; but we cannot sell it if we send it away.

1683. Do you think there is any opposition to the colonial leaf? No. We can still grow good enough tobacco.

1684. Would your sons increase their area if there were better facilities for getting to market? We are all working together. Although sheep pay fairly well, we find that we can make more money by doing a little cultivation, and one industry helps the other. I think that every farmer should have sheep, because they make the land stronger, instead of allowing it to get worse.

1685. Do you think that there are many besides yourself who would put more land under cultivation if the railway were made? Yes.

1686. What do you think are the prospects of fruit-growing in this district? We have one of the best climates for fruit-growing that you can get anywhere.

1687. I suppose that those who now grow fruit suffer from not being able to get it to market? Yes; especially those in the Bago country. There, our fruit is coming in when similar fruit is going out in other parts of the country.

1688. That is the time when the growers should be able to realise a good profit? Yes. The same thing applies to the potatoes. Potatoes are coming in there when they are done at places not further away than my own place.

1689. Do you think much land will be cultivated for fruit-growing if the proposed railway is made? I think so. If I were not in the position in which I am, the first thing I should do would be to take up, say, 20 acres of land in the Bago country for fruit-growing. Many others, besides myself, have thought that it would be a good thing to go in for fruit-growing there, and to start a jam factory. We have never known the fruit in that district to be bad; and wherever a miner has planted a few trees they are to be seen there still. It is a wonderful fruit-growing district.

1690. What is the quality of the fruit? The fruit is a good quality. There are thousands of acres of Crown lands in that district, and the land is well watered with little creeks, so that you can get water on to nearly every little holding. There is a small amount of gold in all the creeks. The greater part of Sharp's run, there, is Crown lands. It is a forest reserve. With regard to the Gibraltar mine, I should like to say that they send away tons of concentrates that they cannot treat here. I know that the manager of the mine is sorry that the railway is not coming to Adelong.

1691. Have you anything to do with mining yourself? Yes, I do a little in it myself.

1692. *Chairman.*] If the proposed railway were constructed, where do you think the traffic from the country you have been describing would strike the line? Either here or at the Gilmore; but I should think at Adelong. Mr. Hides has a saw-mill there, and he sends his timber to Wagga, and from there to Narrandera. The country is a splendid district for timber, and in years to come will provide accommodation for thousands of families.

1693. But it is very expensive country to clear? Yes; but you could grow crops in amongst the timber. The miners used to do that in the early days. They grew fruit and vegetables, and whatever they wanted. As the colonies become populated people will have to go there.

1694. Do you think it would pay a person to grow fruit there and send it to Sydney? Yes; it must pay. I have seen nothing like what can be grown up there. The great advantage of that district is that everything is late there. I have seen people dairying almost in the heart of the country I speak of. A Mr. Mitchell had a dairy up there, and got splendid butter; but things went to the bad with him, and the dairy had to be shut up. You can grow anything up there. The rent asked for some of the high land there for sheep is too high. They put as much as 9d. an acre on some of that land; but it is more suitable for small farming. I know men who had nothing when they started there years ago, but who are pretty well independent now. Mr. Basham is quite satisfied with what he gets off his 8 acres.

1695. Do you know the district thoroughly? Yes.

1696. Do you know the alternative routes for the proposed extension? Yes.

1697. What is the country like near Brungle? It is very good country. The river flats are very good; but the hills are not so good as the hills here.

1698. Do you think there is more land suitable for agriculture there than on the route *via* Adelong? No; the forest land here is better and flatter. While the river-flats there are better than ours, the land on the hills is not so good. We have many creeks here—Sharp's Creek, Yaven Yaven Creek, and others—upon which you could grow nearly anything. As Sharp's Creek there is a reserve upon which no doubt hundreds of families could settle if they could take up the land.

1699. Agriculture seems to have fallen off in some parts of this district;—how do you account for that? I think that people are afraid that they will have no market. It is only since the Gibraltar mine broke out that we have had a market.

1700. It would not pay to send to Sydney? No; we could not compete with Sydney. On one occasion there was a lot of corn stored up at Tumut, and the price rose to 3s. 6d. or 4s. a bushel in Sydney; but before they could get it away prices had fallen again.

1701. If the railway authorities imposed special rates, which would be almost as high as the rates now paid

- C. Purcell.
4 Dec., 1899.
- paid to teamsters, would the line be of any advantage to you? Yes, because it would enable us to get our stuff to market more quickly. In my opinion there are hundreds of tons of stone here which it would pay well to treat if we had proper machinery. The Challenger mine people have proved that it pays to send stuff away. Even the Gibraltar mine people, notwithstanding their good machinery, send their concentrates away. In some parts of the district mining operations are hampered very much by the presence of water after you have got down 50 or 60 feet, so that people have had to abandon their land. At Quartz Vale they have plenty of gold; but they cannot get down because of the water. In time those places will be worked, because the gold is there.
1702. But the railway would not alter that state of things? Perhaps if they had a proper crushing plant, and cheaper means of conveyance, they might be able to deal with their ore, and send it away.
1703. *Mr. Dick.*] What is the principal market to which Mr. Hides consigns his timber? He sends it to Narrandera, to Wagga, to Tumut, and to Adelong.
1704. Which is his largest market? I think the Wagga market.
1705. If the proposed railway were constructed, do you think it would pay him to send his timber by road to Adelong, and then by rail to Wagga, instead of sending it direct to Wagga? If the railway came to Adelong and to Tumut, he would do very well with his timber. Although he sends a great deal to Wagga, he also sends a good deal to Gundagai.
1706. It is cheaper for him to send his timber direct to Wagga than to consign it *via* Gundagai? I cannot say; but I have often heard him say that, if a railway were to come to Tumut, instead of having one mill he would have two or three. If people new of the quality of his timber, they would buy much more of it than they buy at the present time. I drew timber for a building in Tumut about thirty years ago, and it seems just as sound to-day as it was then. There is so much timber there, and the trees are so thick, that it is difficult to get a log out.
1707. Is that the land which you say will provide homes for so many families in the future? The country between there and where I am living. You get into that country about 14 miles from Adelong, and then you can go on about 20 miles towards Kiandra and the falls of the Tumut River.
1708. What proportion of flat lands is there on your own holding? I have about 1,000 acres that I could cultivate.
1709. About one-third of your holding? Yes.
1710. Is that a picked spot? No; it is about the usual run of the country. My place is rather more hilly than many other parts.
1711. You can only get flat land by following up the creek? Yes; but when you get well up the creek you come on to the tableland, where the country is flat, but heavily timbered.*

James Thompson Mackie, manager, Eilerslie station, near Adelong, sworn, and examined:—

- J. T. Mackie.
4 Dec., 1899.
1712. *Chairman.*] How many acres are there in the property of which you are the manager? About 30,000 acres.
1713. Is it chiefly purchased land? Purchased and conditionally-purchased land. It is all secured land.
1714. It is owned by Messrs. Petersen and Sargood, of Victoria? Yes.
1715. You have been managing it for about two years? Yes.
1716. But you have known the district for a great number of years? Yes, though not intimately.
1717. Before coming here as manager, you were managing a station in Riverina? Yes.
1718. How would you compare the two districts for grazing purposes? I consider that the Riverina country is better grazing country than this in ordinary seasons, though during the last few years it has not been. The seasons here are more reliable.
1719. What is the carrying capacity of your run? We shear from 22,000 to 24,000 sheep, but we do not stock heavily—nothing like so heavily as the majority of our neighbours.
1720. You have also a considerable number of cattle? We have 400 cattle; but we are reducing their number.
1721. Have you any other stock? Only a few horses.
1722. Your land carries about a sheep to the acre? Yes; allowing for the cattle. It would carry more if the land were all improved, but there are reserves which we have not touched.
1723. What proportion of the holding is reserved? I should say that about 4,000 acres have not been ringbarked.
1724. In its native state, I suppose the country will not carry much stock? No.
1725. The other part of the run is highly improved, is it not? Yes.
1726. Do you rely entirely upon the grass for your feed, or do you also grow crops? We do a certain amount of cultivation.
1727. Do the main flocks depend entirely upon the grass for their food? Yes.
1728. But you cultivate to a considerable extent to obtain food for your valuable stock? Yes; and also as security against very bad seasons.
1729. Would you have enough artificial food to carry the large flocks through a bad season? Yes; enough to pull them through two or three months. We grow lucerne and wheat.
1730. The crops are grown on the rich river flats? Yes.
1731. Do you find them very prolific? Yes.
1732. How many cuttings of lucerne do you get? We generally take two cuttings, and then let the animals in upon it; but we could get three cuttings, and in very good seasons, four.
1733. You go in extensively for siloing? Yes.
1734. Do you find that answer? Yes, very well.
1735. You say that the country is not utilised to its fullest extent;—what would you say would be using it to its fullest extent, if it were improved? That is a hard question to answer. It would depend very much on the manager, for one thing. One man wants to give his stock more room than another man would give. Many men would put on the place double the number of stock that we are now carrying.
1736. Do you fatten your stock? Yes.
1737. And send it away *via* Gundagai? Yes; and our wool goes by way of Gundagai.
1738. How far are you from Gundagai? Twenty-five miles.

1739.

* NOTE (on revision):—I consider that the line, as suggested by Mr. Hotson, to be brought through the town of Adelong, and thence to Tumut, and afterwards to be carried to Tumbarumba, is the most favourable route.

1739. What do you pay a ton to send to Gundagai? Fifteen shillings a ton, and the same for back loading, of which we get a considerable quantity. Salt, for instance, is a very heavy item. J. T. Mackie.
4 Dec., 1899.
1740. How far would you be from the proposed railway? I should think Adelong would be our nearest point; but if we could get through to Grahamstown, that would be the nearest point.
1741. How far are you from Grahamstown? Between 5 and 6 miles.
1742. What would it cost to get to some point on the railway about Grahamstown? I suppose about one-half of what we pay now.
1743. That would be about 7s. 6d.? Yes; probably about that.
1744. What does your clip realise in bales? Sixty tons.
1745. That would be about 420 bales? Yes; including the lambs' wool, the clip would amount to about 68 tons.
1746. *Mr. Watson.*] What weight of wool per head do you get from the sheep here? From 8 lb. up to 10 lb. The actual weight this year was 7 lb. 15½ oz., not including lambs. Lambs would average about 1½ lb.
1747. *Chairman.*] Mr. Harper has estimated the wool traffic of the proposed railway at 140 tons or about 1,000 bales;—is that an under estimate? I should say so, considering that our run alone produces 420 bales.
1748. Do you regard the proposed extension favourably, or unfavourably? I think it will do the district a lot of good.
1749. In what way would a development of the district, which would bring increased traffic to a railway, occur? Only by increased cultivation, the throwing open of reserves, and the improvement of the land.
1750. What would the reserves be suitable for, chiefly? I do not know the reserves, except our own. We are now considering an application for an exchange of land. We are willing to give up some of our good wheat land to get the land on the reserve, in order to consolidate our property.
1751. In regard to the practice of sending weak sheep here in bad seasons, would an extra 20 miles of railway make a big difference? It would make a big difference to the sheep.
1752. But do you think it would lead to the sending of a greater number of sheep here? I cannot say. If there is no feed for the sheep elsewhere, they must come here, whether there is a railway or not. Of course, if the line went to Tumut, the sheep would go further into the country. Last year we got 24,000 sheep up by rail ourselves, and we sent them back by rail. We are also getting sheep up again this year.
1753. You had to drive those sheep from Gundagai? Yes, without a bit of food.
1754. Did you lose many of them? No; because we had careful drovers, and they started before they got too poor, so that they could stand the journey.
1755. Is the district capable of carrying a very large number of sheep? Yes.
1756. That being so, why is it not stocked more heavily;—why is it that there is always food and to spare for other sheep? Because it is a summer country rather than a winter country.
1757. The country is not so good in the winter months? No. In cold weather stock want more grass, and the grass does not grow here in the winter as it does in the summer. In summer there is a rush of feed.
1758. The country is not good for continuous stocking? Not for continuous, heavy stocking. In the autumn you may get enough rain to give you feed to carry your own stock through; but not to carry through double that number.
1759. Do many of the other run-holders in the district grow produce for their flocks? I do not think so.
1760. What is the value of good grazing land here? Some of it is, I suppose, worth £10 an acre—that is, the land on the flats. The hilly land is not worth so much. The question is a very hard one to answer.
1761. What is the value of the alluvial flats, and the fringes of the hills upon which they grow crops? I cannot say; we have never sold or bought any of that land.
1762. Is there much land on Ellerslie suitable for agriculture, or is it chiefly pastoral country? It is chiefly pastoral country; but, roughly speaking, there are about 4,000 or 5,000 acres suitable for agriculture.
1763. That would be on the flats? Yes, and on some of the hills.
1764. All the crops are grown here without irrigation? Yes.
1765. And the rainfall is reliable? Yes.
1766. Of course, that land is not available for settlement? Some of it will be, if the exchange which I have mentioned comes about.
1767. The Committee have noticed small patches of cultivation on the common;—how do the holders get that land? They are residential lessees.
1768. What acreage do they hold? I am not sure whether it is 10 or 20 acres.
1769. They are people who follow other occupations, and cultivate this land in their spare time? Yes.
1770. *Mr. Shepherd.*] If you run a sufficient number of stock in the summer to keep your feed down, how do you manage to provide for your own stock in winter? There is generally enough rain in the autumn to give a fair spring for the winter.
1771. When do the stock which come here in the summer leave again? About March or April. If people allow them to stay longer they make a mistake. Last year we were running three sheep to the acre on Sharp's land until the 3rd of April, and by the end of April he had grass from 9 to 12 inches high on it, and was able to let it again after we had given it up.
1772. Is that usual? I do not think so. We generally get rains in March and April, which give a fair spring of grass in the winter.

Albert Edward Merryfull, storekeeper, Adelong, sworn, and examined:—

1773. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been a resident of Adelong? For twenty-six years.
1774. Do you agree with the evidence of Mr. Park in reference to the probabilities of traffic between Gundagai and Adelong? I think his estimate of the present traffic is a very fair one, but I think that a considerable quantity of goods come here to private people, for which he has not allowed. A. E. Merryfull.
4 Dec., 1899.
1775. What would that amount to? It would not make a great difference.
1776. *Chairman.*] £100 a year in freight? Yes, about that, I think.
1777. That is road carriage between Gundagai and Adelong? Yes. 1778.

A. E.
Merryfull.
4 Dec., 1899.

1778. *Mr. Watson.*] If a railway were made, passing Adelong about 3 miles to the east, what do you think would be the cost of conveying goods to Adelong from a station somewhere about West's Creek, or somewhere opposite the town? I think about 5s. a ton.

1779. That would have to be added to whatever charge is made for the railway carriage? Yes. Goods that now come to Tumbarumba *via* Wagga would come this way if the railway were brought near Adelong. Some years ago a survey was made up the Adelong Creek for the purpose of continuing the line on to Tumbarumba. All the Hillas Creek and Tumbarumba traffic would come here if we had a railway. A large storekeeper in Tumbarumba told me that he would prefer to get his goods this way, but they cannot be sure of getting them now. Then the people of Bago and Batlow would come here. It is Wagga that deprives this place of its rights.

1780. How is it that Wagga is able to compete with Gundagai? I do not know what the rates are now, but at one time it used to pay us to bring our goods from Wagga by team.

1781. What distance is that? Fifty-two miles.

1782. To allow this place to compete with Wagga for the Tumbarumba traffic through rates would have to be applied, because there are through rates to Wagga? Yes.

1783. Do you know anything of the country out towards Tumbarumba? Not further than Riley's Gap.

1784. How far is that? Nine or 10 miles from here.

1785. That country could be held to be within the influence of the line now projected? Yes. The proposed line would benefit the Gilmore country and places out that way. That would be the nearest point for the Batlow traffic, though, of course, if the terminus were here the traffic would come here. If the terminus were out at Godara, the traffic would go to the Gilmore.

1786. If the line were brought up the Adelong Creek, and terminated behind this town, the Tumut people would be at a disadvantage? There could be a branch line from here to Tumut. The only difficulty would be in getting through the Gap, and between here and Sydney there are many cuttings quite as big as would be required there. In my opinion, such a cutting would be the means of opening up the district, because it would open up many of the reefs that exist there.

1787. The Railway Commissioners tell us that it would be an exceedingly costly work to get through the Gap? Well, I think not. That is the route I favour. The terminus would be at the back of the town, and, subsequently, there could be an extension to Tumbarumba.

1788. Do you think that in the event of a railway being made the teamsters would reduce their rates? I am sure that they could not. They might reduce the rates for third-class goods.

1789. Do you think that teamsters could carry third-class goods for less than 17s. a ton? I am sure that they could not. Their rates for carriage depend largely upon the season. If there is a good season they can afford to cart the stuff for less, because they then have to pay less for fodder. I have seen the corn as high as 7s. 6d. a bushel, although at the present time it is only 3s. 4d. a bushel.

1790. During the spring and summer months the teamsters would rely upon the natural grasses for their working stock? Yes; but not in winter.

1791. In winter they have to buy fodder? Yes.

1792. You think that, so far as Adelong is concerned, a great deal more benefit would result from the construction of a line to Adelong, with a possible future extension to Tumbarumba, than from the construction of the proposed line? Yes. I think that if the Hillas Creek people had to go to either Adelong Crossing or Godara to reach the proposed line, they would prefer to go to Wagga, because the country that way is more level.

1793. You think that the proposed line will not draw any traffic from Hillas Creek? No. The people in that part of the district might as well go to Gundagai as to Adelong Crossing. Mr. Ryan, when he was under examination in Gundagai, stated that butter used there was obtained from Sydney, but I know personally that butter is being supplied to Gundagai from the Adelong district at the rate of 150 lb. a week. That quantity is being supplied by one person alone. Mr. O'Brien is going in for dairying on the Gilmore upon a very large scale, and soon we shall be able to stop getting butter from Sydney altogether. The only time I got butter from Sydney now is during the winter months. I do not suppose a box of butter has come into Adelong for the last two months from down the country. It is all locally supplied.

1794. *Chairman.*] Do you agree with former witnesses, that if the proposed line were constructed people would begin to use it from about Adelong Crossing? I think they would begin to use it from about Willieploma, about 6 miles out of Gundagai. They would come down from Big Ben Creek and about there, and down the marked-tree line.

1795. Six miles of road carriage would be worth saving? Yes.

1796. It is pretty well admitted on all hands that the proposed line would be a losing line to begin with;— what prospect do you see of the revenue increasing? Revenue will increase as more ground is taken up. From here to Tumbarumba, and towards Batlow and Bago, the higher the country the better the ground.

1797. That country would not be served by the proposed line to Tumut? No. If that line were constructed, the traffic from the country I speak of would still go to Wagga. There is an enormous quantity of timber out about Bago. There are three or four kinds of timber there which are largely used for coach and waggon building—urabbie and mountain ash. I think that thousands of feet of that timber would go to Sydney if the railway were taken out that way.

1798. What have you to say in regard to the starving stock traffic? Most of the sheep come to Gundagai by rail, and travel from there out towards Kiandra. If the railway were extended from Gundagai to Tumut it would benefit starving stock more than anything else.

1799. But it is only an exceptional traffic, in bad seasons; it is not a regular traffic? No; but this is chiefly a summer country. Of course, if the line were made, more ground would be taken up, and, as the district became more largely populated, the railway revenue would increase.

1800. Is the land available for population? Yes; thousands of acres.

1801. In what direction? Up Talbingo way, and out towards the caves.

1802. That is a good distance from here? I suppose it would be 60 miles.

1803. Do you think the traffic from that district would help the railway? It must help the railway.

1804. *Mr. Watson.*] Agriculturists would want a railway nearer than 60 miles? I refer to that district only with regard to its grazing possibilities. Another source of revenue would be the tourist traffic to the caves. Everything would bring grist to the mill. I am not in favour of the line as surveyed, but, if it were brought nearer to the town of Adelong, I should be in favour of it.

1805.

1805. If the line were taken along the Tumut Valley, it would be utterly useless to you? Yes. I think that when they were building the Gundagai bridge they should have made it strong enough for railway traffic, and then a great part of the difficulty would have been got over.

A. E.
Merryfull.

4 Dec., 1899.

Arthur Williamson Mollineaux, auctioneer and commission agent, Adelong, sworn, and examined:—

1806. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in the district? Nineteen years.

1807. In what respect do you think the proposed railway would benefit the district? I think it would benefit the district by making it possible for us to send our produce away more cheaply, more quickly, and with more certainty. At the present time we must depend upon the teamsters as far as Gundagai, a distance of 22 miles.

A. W.
Mollineaux.

4 Dec., 1899.

1808. Is it of any great advantage to be able to get wool away quickly? Sometimes it is, if you are consigning to any one firm of brokers, because otherwise you may miss a market. That happened, in my experience, about a fortnight ago.

1809. You are aware that the Railway Commissioners do not recommend the construction of this line, because there would be a deficiency of about £4,000 a year in the working of it? I agree that it will not pay at first, but I can hardly think that the deficiency will be so large. In my opinion, each year would make the deficiency less.

1810. I understand that most of the country here is alienated, and that the river flats are restricted in area, so that it is not easy to see how there can be any great increase in the agricultural production of the district? Although a great deal of the land is alienated, I think that if the railway were made it would be to the benefit of those who hold land to cut it up into farms, and, if they did not cultivate it themselves, to let it out to others, as has been done in other places. There is a considerable area of land suitable for agriculture along the Adelong Creeks.

1811. Did you know the district before the railway to Gundagai was built? Yes.

1812. Has that railway increased the production of the country 10 miles on this side of Gundagai? Yes; so far as Adelong is concerned there is more land under cultivation now than there was then, and each year it increases.

1813. What kind of crops are grown.—wheat? Wheat, both for grain and for hay, and oats for hay.

1814. Do they export it? Yes.

1815. Of late years has agriculture increased, or has it decreased? It has increased.

1816. Are the crops reliable year after year? Yes; I think that they are as reliable here as in any part of the Colony.

1817. Have you any idea as to the number of acres of land suitable for agricultural purposes within a few miles on each side of the proposed railway, between here and Adelong Crossing? There is a considerable area; but I could not tell you how many acres it comprises.

1818. At the present time what proportion of that land is under cultivation—one-half or one-fourth? I should say more than one-fourth.

1819. Are the people who are cultivating the land in a prosperous condition? Yes.

1820. Why is not more of the land under cultivation? Because of the difficulty and uncertainty of getting produce to market.

1821. You are aware that if special rates are imposed the railway charges will be very little lower than the present road charges? That would not refer to the charges for all kinds of traffic. It would not refer to the charges for traffic from the mines, for instance. I take it that the chief gain to the district from the construction of the railway would be in quickness and certainty of despatch.

1822. Do you think there need be any fear of the carriers reducing their rates so as to be able to compete successfully with the railway? I do not think so. I suppose if the railway were made there would be a station somewhere about Adelong Crossing, and another between here and the Crossing, and that would prevent them from competing. If there were no station between here and Gundagai it would be different.

1823. At what point on this side of Gundagai would the traffic to the railway commence? At a point about 6 miles on this side of Gundagai. The traffic from Big Ben Creek would come in there.

1824. Would it be worth the while of a person living 10 miles on this side of Gundagai to cart his stuff to a station at such a point;—would he not be rather inclined to go right into Gundagai? I think that people would cart to the nearest station, because in most cases they would use their own teams.

1825. Would the freight from the mines be increased if a railway were made? Yes. The gold here is largely mineralised, and the treatment of the pyrites ore has always been a source of difficulty. On the surface the gold is comparatively free; but, as you get deeper, the pyrites becomes heavier, and a lot of gold is lost if the stone is treated locally. Since the smelting works at Cockle Creek and Dapto were started we have sent the concentrates there for treatment.

1826. They would go by team to Gundagai, and thence by train? Yes. It is, however, becoming more the practice to send away the ore itself, perhaps only hand-dressed, and it is questionable whether in future the whole of the ore will not be sent away. The Gibraltar company have erected a very complete plant for the treatment of their ores, consisting of a battery, a chlorination plant for dealing with the concentrates, and a cyanide plant for treating the tailings. Finding, however, that they could not get all the gold by the chlorination process, they have been selling their residue to the Cockle Creek people, and they have since found it cheaper to ship the whole of their concentrates away without chlorination, notwithstanding the cost of carrying the extra weight.

1827. Do you know the rate of freight from the Gibraltar mine to Gundagai by team? No; from Adelong the general rate is 12s. 6d a ton. I suppose it would be a little less from there.

1828. What amount of tonnage do you think would be sent away? That question is a difficult one to answer; but I think that the treatment I speak of will encourage the development of mines here.

1829. Have the Gibraltar people made excavations to test their mine? I do not think they will give outsiders any particulars of their work. At the present time they are sending away between 30 and 40 tons of concentrates.

1830. What other mining developments do you expect here? The difficulty of obtaining firewood for the mines is increasing, and it is a question with the Gibraltar people whether it would not be cheaper to import fuel. I believe that they have imported some fuel at a cost very little more than what they now pay for

- A. W. Mollineux.
4 Dec., 1899.
- for firewood, and before long the price of firewood will be increased, because the wood-getters will have to go further out for it.
1831. Adelong is a very old gold-field? Yes.
1832. Why has it stagnated;—why has not the number of mines increased? So far as I can judge, the reason is that a sufficient amount of development work was not gone on with when the mines were paying. As no reserves were kept for development purposes when the rich shoots of ore were worked out they had to stop for want of capital.
1833. This is a mining field only for capitalists? At the present time it is almost solely a capitalist field. Two of our mines are over 1,000 feet in depth, while the others vary between 200 feet and 1,000 feet.
1834. *Mr. Watson.*] How are the deep mines doing now? One of them is working now at the 600-foot level, though that is not its deepest level.
1835. On tribute? Yes; at the present time the tributors are doing development work.
1836. That is rather unusual, is it not? No; of course, they do not do it if they can help it; but frequently instances have come under my notice in which the tributors are doing development work.
1837. Then we cannot look for any large increase in the mining population? Well, a few years ago there were not many men at the Gibraltar mine; but there are 250 men there now, and any of these old mines may be reopened at any time. Negotiations are now going on to my knowledge which, if successful, will probably lead to the engagement of a large number of men. The construction of a railway would, of course, reduce the rates of carriage to the mines—the rates on explosives, candles, steel, and other things required for the mines.
1838. Are you favourable to the line going as proposed, or do you think it should come round to the town of Adelong? I should like to see it come to the town of Adelong; but if you are to take Tumut into consideration, perhaps it is better where it is.
1839. It would be difficult to get to the proposed line from Adelong? Yes.
1840. That being so, do you think that the Adelong people would give the line the go-by and continue to send to Gundagai? I do not think so. I think that the proposed line would be better than no line at all, and that it would be made use of.
1841. *Mr. Shepherd.*] To what extent do you think the railway would be benefited by the traffic in pyrites? It is hard to say, because that traffic is only just commencing. It is only of comparatively recent date that they tried the experiment of sending the ore away.
1842. Cannot you form any idea as to the quantity of ore likely to be sent away? Well, I suppose 100 tons a month would be sent away, and the quantity would probably increase.
1843. The ore would go chiefly, I suppose, from the Gibraltar mine? There would be a good deal from the other mines as well. They are on the far side of the creek, and could more conveniently use the railway.
1844. How many mines are working now? About half a dozen, in addition to the Gibraltar mine. I anticipate that the ore will be sent without treatment of any kind, and that, of course, will increase the weight.
1845. Do you think that all the mines will send their ore? They must do so.
1846. *Mr. Watson.*] How much would concentrates be worth a ton? They vary from 2 ounces to 10 ounces a ton.
1847. One hundred tons of concentrates a month would only bring in about £60 a year to the proposed line, but if the crude ore were sent traffic would be much greater? Yes. The concentrates are not one-tenth the bulk of the crude ore.
1848. Estimating them at one-tenth, about £600 a year would be obtained from the ore traffic? Yes. I think it is quite possible that the traffic would amount to that.
1849. Do you think that the Gibraltar people will allow their batteries to lie idle? Well, their manager told me some time ago that their chlorination works were for sale.
1850. Do you think they would find it to their advantage to allow their batteries to lie idle, and to send away their crude ore? I think so.
1851. At Cobar, owing to the fuel difficulty, they reduce the ore to matte, and send it to Lithgow for treatment, bringing back coke;—the same arrangement might be made here if the fuel difficulty became very great? Yes; but here it is very difficult to prevent the loss of gold in treatment. The Gibraltar Company have to treat their tailings after they have been through the batteries and through the chlorination works.
1852. Do you know whether they get enough from the tailings to make that pay? I know that they can afford to buy the tailings from the other local battery, and cart them away for treatment. I think that there would be a considerable trade in timber if the proposed railway is constructed. There are large forests of timber up in the Bago district now, but at the present time it will not pay to send it away.
1853. How far will they have to cart it? They will only have to cart it to Adelong.
1854. What distance is that? Seventeen or 18 miles. A witness was asked this morning why there had been a falling off in the tobacco production of the district. The reason is, not that we cannot grow tobacco here successfully, but because the wrong kind of tobacco is being grown, and the Sydney merchants do not care to use it. They told me a little while ago that the taste for our kind of tobacco had gone out; but the growers here have not adapted themselves to the change.
1855. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose the American leaf is preferred? I do not think so. The tobacco grown in the Inverell and Tamworth districts sells readily enough; but I have been told that the growers in this district have not adapted themselves to the requirements of the trade.
1856. *Mr. Watson.*] Is the land which was formerly used for tobacco now used for other crops? No; it is used for grazing. I think there would be a considerable increase in the wool traffic if there were a station near Adelong. I think that the Yabtree and Mount Adrah clips, amounting to about 500 bales, would find their way here.
1857. *Chairman.*] How far are those places from Adelong? Fifteen or 17 miles from Adelong on the direct road.
1858. They would come within the influence of the proposed railway? Yes, if there were a station at Adelong Crossing; but I do not think they would come to Adelong itself. Either place would be considerably nearer than Wagga, where they go now. Then, too, the station supplies which now go from Wagga would be brought along the proposed line.

1859. Can you give us the names of any stations which now send to Gundagai, but would send to the proposed line if it were constructed? The stations I have named are the principal ones. I am afraid I cannot give you any fuller information on that subject. I should like to report what has been said by others in regard to the fruit-growing industry. There is no doubt that we can grow very fine fruit here. All the English fruits grow well, and, at the present time, a considerable amount of fruit is exported. The export of fruit would be larger if we had better means of conveyance. Our fruit does not all go to Sydney; some of it goes to Riverina.

A. W.
Mollineux.
4 Dec., 1899.

1860. You export fruit at the present time? Yes, though, of course, we import certain fruits as well. Then, there is a large area of land suitable for potato-growing, but the heavy freights keep back that industry.

1861. The soil is peculiarly suitable for potatoes? Yes. It is volcanic soil, and is very suitable for potatoes. I have a few figures here in regard to the mining industry which might be of interest. I have obtained the information from the Mining Registrar here. Since the 1st January, 134 acres of ground have been applied for in ordinary leases, 532 acres in special leases, and 2,022 acres for authority to enter under the Mining on Private Lands Act; a total of 2,688 acres. The number of miners' rights issued is 442, so that we may take it that there are over 400 miners resident in the district.

1862. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you know how many there were twelve months ago? No; but I think the number was then much about the same. At the Gibraltar mine there are about 250 miners at work; but, in addition to them, a number of men are employed as mechanics and in other ways about the mine, and others in getting firewood. A railway would be a great convenience to the graziers in facilitating the transfer of fat stock. I do not know that the number of fat stock sent from the district would be increased, but they would go away in better condition.

1863. *Chairman.*] Pastoralists would sooner send their sheep away by train than drive them 20 miles? Yes. If the stock is fat they like to truck at the nearest station. Store stock they sometimes prefer to drive.

TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Tumut, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Alfred Henry Chesterman, Staff surveyor, Department of Lands, Wagga Wagga, sworn, and examined:—

1864. *Chairman.*] How long have you been stationed at Tumut? Over nine and a half years.

1865. Are you well acquainted with the whole district? Yes.

1866. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the country beyond Tumut? I know the country from Tumberumba to the border. I have had fourteen years' experience in that part of the country. I also know the country north to Cootamundra, west to Wagga, and east to Kiandra. I have had nine and a half years' experience in that district.

A. H.
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1867. Taking the land along the surveyed route of the proposed line from Gundagai to Tumut, how would you characterise it? It is mostly ridgy, forest country, but in places the line runs through flat ground. After leaving the Adelong Crossing it rises into slightly hilly country.

1868. You are speaking of the country which would be traversed by the line? Yes.

1869. Tell us about the country generally? It is flat land, or ridgy, forest country, for the most part.

1870. The flat land is acknowledged to be good? Yes; it is supposed to be particularly rich.

1871. How do you regard the higher land? The lower ridges are admirably adapted for wheat-growing, but the higher ridges consist mostly of what I would class as fairly good sheep country.

1872. So that very little of that country would be actually non-productive? From my experience of the district I think it would be all more or less productive. Of course, there would be degrees of production.

1873. Can you give us a rough estimate of the proportion of flat land to the whole area of country within 10 or 15 miles of the proposed railway? I have prepared a statement classifying the whole of the land which would be affected, in greater or less degree, by the construction of the proposed railway as pastoral and arable land, and showing the extent of the flat land.

1874. To what area of country does that statement refer? In preparing my statement I went south to a point about 10 miles north of Tumberumba, which would be less than 30 miles from the Gilmore, where the nearest point on the railway line would be. As the traffic from that district at present goes to Wagga or to Culcairn, distant respectively about 70 and 65 miles, I consider that in the event of the proposed railway being constructed it would come to the Gilmore, because the distance is shorter. On the east I have taken in the Yarrangobilly table-land, the furthest point of which is about 45 miles from Tumut, and about 60 miles from Cooma, which is the nearest railway station on the other side. North-east I have gone a distance of about 20 miles; but I have not taken in a large area included in the coloured portion of the Committee's map—the Brungle Creek country, because I consider that that country would continue to be served by the existing line. Brungle is about half-way between here and Gundagai, and it is not likely that the traffic from that part of the country would come back to Tumut to get to a railway station. I have also excluded Adjungbilly, because I think that now that a bridge has been built at Gobarralong, the traffic from that part of the country would go to Coolac. Then I have gone north-east to a point already mentioned, and from there I come back to Tumut in a south-westerly direction.

1875. That would take you to a point about 15 miles from Gundagai by the proposed railway? Yes; about half-way between Tumut and Gundagai. I have gone very little outside the coloured area shown on the Committee's map. My figures have been taken from the parish maps, and, of course, are largely approximations; but I have endeavoured to be as accurate as I can. The area I have described comprises about 960,000 acres.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

A. H. Chesterman.
5 Dec., 1893.

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES (slightly adjusted and revised after compilation in parishes).
Total area affected, 980,000 acres—alienated, 440,000 acres; unalienated, 520,000 acres.

Alienated pastoral land	acres	310,000
Unalienated pastoral land	455,000	
Pastoral land	765,000	
Alienated arable land	130,000	
Unalienated arable land	65,000	
Arable land (includes all alluvial flats)	195,000	
• Approximate area under cultivation (including Adelong Crossing area) (about) 20,000 acres.		
Alluvial flat land (mostly alienated)—		
Tumut River and its tributaries	(about)	16,000
Adelong Creek	"	3,000
Hillas Creek	"	3,000
Total	"	22,000
Arable upland	173,000	
Tumut radius	720,000 acres	(145,000 acres arable, 575,000 acres pastoral).
Adelong radius	180,000 acres	(30,000 acres arable, 150,000 acres pastoral).
Adelong Crossing radius ...	60,000 acres	(20,000 acres arable, 40,000 acres pastoral).

Unalienated lands include all reserves, temporary commons, and leases, other than conditional leases.

Approximate Distribution of Land.

Locality.		Unalienated		Alienated.	
Parish.	Total Area.	Pastoral.	Arable.	Pastoral.	Arable.
<i>Tumut Area.</i>					
	acres	acres	acres	acres	acres
Mundongo	20,000	2,000	500	9,500	8,000
Blowering	20,000	6,000	200	6,000	7,800
Coolman	24,000	10,000	3,000	7,000	4,000
Tomorrana	23,000	6,000	3,000	9,000	5,000*
Baloo	35,000	30,000	2,000	2,000	1,000*
Nimbo	23,000	17,000	2,000	3,000	1,000*
Garnet	22,000	19,000	3,000	.....	40*
Part of Napier	10,000	5,000	2,000	2,000	1,000*
	(only included)				
Jibbeen	30,000	26,000	2,000	1,500	500*
Bogong	24,000	8,000	1,000	10,000	5,000
Talbingo	20,000	17,500	500	1,500	500
Jounama	20,000	19,000	1,000	.....	120
Goobarragandra	19,000	17,000	2,000	.....	.....*
The Peaks	20,000	17,000	3,000	.....	.....*
Boraig	27,000	19,000	3,000	3,000	2,000
Yarrangobilly	23,000	16,000	3,000	2,500	1,500
Pinbeyan	20,000	17,000	2,000	500	500
Buddong	27,000	22,000	2,000	2,000	1,000
Yellowin	25,000	14,000	1,000	7,000	3,000
Bago	19,000	4,000	1,000	11,000	3,000
Selwyn (W.)	23,000	14,000	5,000	2,000	2,000
Hindmarsh	23,000	9,000	2,500	8,000	3,500
Batlow	19,000	1,500	500	13,000	4,000
Gilmore	14,000	1,000	200	8,800	4,000
Wereboldera	16,000	7,500	500	5,000	3,000
Tumut	16,000	5,500	500	6,000	4,000
Minjary	15,000	2,500	500	8,000	6,000
Gadara	11,000	1,000	1,000	4,000	5,000
Courajago	24,000	11,500	3,000	6,500	3,000*
Wyangle	32,000	8,000	2,000	17,000	5,000
Part of Killimicat	18,000	800	200	11,000	6,000
Part of Courabyra	16,000	2,500	500	10,000	3,000
Parts of Buccleuch and Beaumont	16,000	13,000	3,000	.....	.....*
Part of King	16,000	13,000	3,000	.....	.....
	710,000	379,000	59,600	174,800	93,300
Childowla { extreme south } Peppercorn { extreme west } (say about) 5,000 acres and call all pastoral, &c.					
<i>Adelong Area.</i>					
Hillas	27,000	17,000	3,000	5,500	1,500
Dutzon	23,000	13,000	3,000	4,500	2,500
Nacka Nacka	33,000	16,500	2,500	11,000	3,000
Wondalga	12,000	1,000	.....	8,000	3,000
Adelong	13,000	5,500	1,500	3,000	3,000
Ellerslie	26,000	5,000	1,000	15,500	4,500
Wallace	19,000	1,500	500	13,500	3,500
Euadera	12,000	4,000	500	4,000	3,500
Calafat	16,000	1,500	500	11,000	3,000
	181,000	65,000	12,500	76,000	27,500
<i>Adelong Crossing.</i>					
Bangus, Mundarlo, and Willie Ploma ...	64,000	3,500	2,000	38,000	20,500

* Snow lands.

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1876. Does the unalienated arable land consist mostly of flats, or of rising ground? Almost exclusively of rising ground.
1877. Why has it remained unalienated;—is it reserved? Some of it has been reserved, but the reason why the balance has remained unalienated is its remoteness and difficulty of access. The land you speak of is scattered all over the district. Where Crown land is near to a market and accessible, but remains unalienated, it can be safely assumed that it is very poor land; but as you get away from population, and access becomes difficult, the land remains unalienated, even where the soil is rich. In the mountain country there is good soil, a good climate, and a certain rainfall; but that country is difficult of access, and the winter is rigorous there.
1878. You have included gold-field reserves in your statement;—there is a large gold-field reserve near Adelong? Yes. I have included all gold-fields and other reserves.
1879. On the Committee's map there is an extensive area of Crown lands south-east of Tumut, coloured brown—what is the character of that land;—is any fair proportion of it suitable for agriculture? In the parishes of Baloo, Nimbo, and Jibbeen there is a lot of very rough country; but, going north into the parishes of Coleman, Garnet, Napier, and Fomorrana, there is a lot of country which is very rich and capable of cultivation. That country is suitable for anything requiring a cold climate.
1880. Do you think that the table-land would be within the influence of a railway to Tumut? Yes, I think so, for agricultural purposes.
1881. Do you know what distance that land would be from any station on the main Southern line? The nearest station on the main Southern line would be either Bowning or Binalong, which would be too far off to attract tariff. At the present time the railway station nearest to its eastern border would be probably somewhere near Queanbeyan, on the Cooma line, but if the proposed railway were made the nearest railway station would be at Tumut.
1882. Going south, there are some portions of land coloured green on our map, can you describe that country? That country is known generally as the Bago table-land. It is very good country, and, with better means of communication, would be very suitable for closer settlement. It is splendidly adapted for fruit-growing, but it is not country which should be held in large areas. At the present time it is all shut up in forest reserves. The soil is very rich, and there is a very good water supply.
1883. That land is likely to be within the influence of the railway at the Gilmore? Yes; the whole of the area to the south of Tumut which is coloured green on your map. I consider that, on the average, that land is richer than the country to the east. The eastern country is more broken.
1884. Is it suitable for anything besides fruit-growing;—would it do for potatoes? It is suitable for potatoes, oats, and wheat, though it is rather cold for wheat, and it might do for barley. I have seen exceptionally good crops of potatoes there, and good crops of wheat.
1885. With regard to the moderately high ridges beyond Tumut, do they provide fair grass for stock in summer? Going south from Tumut, you are on ridgy country between the valleys of the Gilmore and the Tumut River, and a great deal of that is poor country.
1886. You go some distance before striking the table-land of which you have spoken? Yes; you must go 15 miles before the country begins to flatten out at all on top of the hills. For the first 12 or 15 miles the country is broken. There is a steep backbone, falling away in very steep gullies, but it begins to flatten out as you get further back.
1887. Can you give the Committee a rough idea of the value of the land through which the proposed railway will pass? The alluvial flat land through which it would pass after leaving Gundagai would be worth from £12 an acre to £6 an acre, as you got further away from the town. The flat land close to South Gundagai would be worth £12 an acre.
1888. Then there is the rising country? The rising country would be worth from £3 an acre to probably 25s. an acre. I suppose the average value would be from £2 to £2 5s. an acre.
1889. Twenty-five shillings per acre would be the minimum value? Yes.
1890. Of course these values would be exclusive of improvements in the way of clearing? Yes. I have given unimproved values. Very little land would be worth £12 an acre. The railway does not go over much of the flat land at South Gundagai; it keeps more to the back, upon the ridgy country, which is not worth more than £2 or £3 an acre.
1891. Assuming your estimate, as to the area of the land which would be within the influence of the proposed railway if it were constructed, to be correct, it would seem that that land should produce a fair quantity of the traffic? I think so. In my opinion, if there were better means of communication, the Bago table-land would commence to develop. I have no doubt as to the richness of that country.
1892. Is any part of it cultivated at the present time? There are small areas round Batlow which are cultivated.
1893. Mostly for fruit? Mostly for fruit. There are some small orchards there, and some of the land is under oats, while a little wheat and potatoes is also grown.
1894. Notwithstanding the fact that they are at the present time a considerable distance from the railway? Yes.
1895. The inference is that if the railway were brought a little nearer there would be a largely increased production? I think so. They have good soil, a good climate, and a regular rainfall.
1896. What kind of timber grows on the forest reserves? The best timber there is the urabbie (*Eucalyptus Globulus*), though it is not identical with the so-called Tasmanian blue-gum. There is a great difference of opinion as to whether it is the real "globulus," but it is very similar to it. I do not consider it as good as the Tasmanian blue-gum, though it is a very good timber. It is found scattered throughout the whole area, though not in large quantities. Then there is the mountain ash, which is a somewhat similar timber. It is to be found in fair quantities, and lasts very well when it is not in the ground, but it will not last well in the ground. There is also a great quantity of peppermint, or messmate, which is similar to the Gippsland messmate, but smaller. On the lower levels there is a fair quantity of white stringybark.
1897. Do you think there would be any considerable trade in timber for that district towards the western districts? I consider the timber there valuable, though if it were in Gippsland or Tasmania I should not consider it so valuable, because there is much better timber in those places. Comparatively, it is valuable timber, and I have not the slightest doubt that a good deal of it will be sawn up and sent away.
1898. As the timber is taken away the land will be cultivated? Yes.

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1899. Would it be expensive land to clear? I suppose it would cost £4 an acre. It should be rung first, and cleared after the timber has been allowed to die. If dealt with in that way, it would cost about £4 an acre to clear for the plough.

1900. *Mr. Dick.*] We have it in evidence that Tumut is at the extreme end of the country to be served by the proposed railway; but I gather from your evidence that to the south of Tumut there is a large area of unalienated land which, if a railway were constructed to Tumut, would be opened up, and would provide a large amount of traffic? Yes.

1901. You divide that part of the country into two portions, that from Tumut to a distance 15 miles south, which you describe as good agricultural land? I was referring then to the alienated land. For a distance of 15 miles south there is a lot of alienated land which is very good.

1902. Within 15 miles of Tumut, to the south, you say there is a considerable area of good land, though it has been alienated? Yes. The land on the Tumut valley, on the Gilmore, and on the Windcwie is very good; but the mountains in between are very rough.

1903. Is the ridgy portion of that 15 miles of country suitable for pastoral occupation? Yes.

1904. So that we may look for a certain amount of wool traffic from the ridgy country, and a certain amount of agricultural produce from the flat country? Yes.

1905. We then come to the Bago table-land, which you say is heavily timbered, though the soil is very rich;—what sized holding would be sufficiently large to enable a man to make a decent living there, supposing there were railway communication at the Gilmore? The size of such a holding would vary from 100 to 400 acres. In the richer country 100 acres would be ample, and I know an instance in which a man is making a living from 12 acres of fruit-trees.

1906. Where is his market? He travels to Gundagai, to Wagga, and, I believe, as far as Narrandera at times, carrying the fruit round himself. So that a man need not be cramped, and to allow him room to carry on a little dairying in addition to fruit-growing, I would allow from 100 acres up to 320 acres.

1907. How many families do you think you could settle in a small way like that? On the Bago table-land you could settle from 200 to 250 families, allowing them about 400 acres each, and including a certain quantity of pastoral land with the arable land. I do not class the whole table-land as arable land, because there are large areas there which are only pastoral.

1908. *Mr. Watson.*] If you were settling families there, you would give them some of the really good land, and some of the pastoral land? Yes. I would estimate the forest reserve there as capable of carrying at least 200 families.

1909. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you think that the proposed railway would divert a serious amount of the traffic that now goes to Wagga and Culcairn? It would draw a certain amount of traffic from the northern end of the parishes of Courabyra and King, but I have not allowed for much of that traffic. The radius of influence, as shown on your map, is only a little shorter than the radius I took in making my calculations. I do not think my radius is more than 4 or 5 miles longer than yours.

1910. It was stated by a witness in Gundagai that he had been requested by a man to take up about 2,000 acres in this district for farming and grazing, but that after diligent search he could not find a suitable holding of that size;—does your experience of the district lead you to believe that such would be the case? My experience is that the man with a small holding succeeds when the large holder fails. The country is not suited for grazing; it is suited more for small holdings and close settlement. I have known a man succeed on 50 acres and fail on 3,000 or 5,000 acres.

1911. *Mr. Watson.*] What country are you referring to? To the Bago country.

1912. *Mr. Dick.*] The evidence to which I referred applied to the country between Gundagai and Tumut within easy distance of the proposed railway;—do you think that the witnesses' difficulty was due to the fact that all of that land has been alienated? It would be very difficult to get 2,000 acres of unalienated land in one block close to the proposed railway, but E.S.E. and S. there are large areas of unalienated land.

1913. I suppose you constantly come into communication with the settlers here in your travels? Yes.

1914. Have you gathered from them that the construction of the proposed railway would lead to an increase in their production? So far as I can judge, that is their opinion.

1915. Are they pretty keen upon it? The outlying settlers who suffer most from the want of railway communication are. It is not the settlers immediately round Tumut who feel the want of a railway so much.

1916. A writer in the *Gundagai Times*, calling himself "Maize Grower," referring to the large land-owners of the district, says that they "might benefit by the proposed railway, but the struggling farmer who is gripped by the octopus would only see himself ground poorer with the advance of the Juggernaut";—do you think that the poor settler referred to will be able to find opportunities for his labour in parts not now occupied? I think there will be scope for such men in country not now occupied for agricultural purposes.

1917. Is there any other large district like the Bago and Batlow country which is within the influence of the railway? There is a small part of Cooleman and Micalong which might be suitable for the purpose of settlement, but there is not so large an area of good land there as on the Bago table-land. Then there is the Yarrangobilly table-land, which extends for a distance from 30 to 45 miles to the S.E. of Tumut. Talbingo is 25 miles from Tumut, and a few miles south of there the country begins to open out into a table-land. Then you get broken country, and then you get table-land again. I do not think, however, that that country will be developed to the same extent as the Bago country, because it is higher, and further away. So far as I know, there is no country similar to the Bago country in New South Wales. That country is somewhat like the Gippsland country, and has hitherto been neglected, because of its remoteness, but its resources are practically unknown. There is a large belt of mountain country there that has never had railway communication, and it has always been looked upon as very rough country, difficult to deal with, and worthless, but the soil is undeniably good, there is a good water supply, and the climate is good, so that one can safely say that with communication there would be a large amount of cultivation done there.

1918. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do the trees that you have spoken of—the messmate, peppermint, mountain ash, and white stringybark—attain any size? Not in comparison with the Gippsland timber; but a fair size if compared with the rest of the timber in this part of New South Wales. The North Coast trees would, of course, be much bigger.

1919. Are these trees growing pretty thickly? They grow in belts or large patches. You may get a belt of stringybark, and then come upon inferior white-gum or peppermint, and then a good belt of peppermint. On the higher levels you get mountain ash.

1920. The soil is pretty rich where these trees grow? Yes.

1921.

1921. Do you know of any land that has been cleared for £3 an acre? No; that is simply an estimate.* I have known patches of land in that district to cost £10 an acre to clear; but that was fifteen or eighteen years ago, when labour was very dear. Now we consider £3 a very high price for grubbing ready for the plough, after the timber has been rung. In the lower country, and even as far as Gundagai, I have known grubbing to be done, and the roots run out for from 17s. 6d. to £1 an acre.

1922. How long do you wait after the ringing of the timber before starting to clear? Two years.

1923. Then are the trees grubbed, or is a forest devil used? I have seen them using the forest devil for road clearing on the Bago table-land; but the work is mostly done by hand. My estimate strikes an average for the whole table-land. Of course, you might get patches, where the timber was inferior, which would not cost more than £3 an acre to clear, while in other places the cost would be £5 or £6 an acre. It is a large belt of country to strike an average for.

1924. What is the capacity of the pastoral land? Taking it right through, alienated and unalienated, the unimproved land should carry a sheep to about 4 acres, and the improved land about twice that. There are large patches of alienated land which will carry a sheep to the acre, and have been carrying more; but there are also large patches of mountain country which would not carry more than a sheep to four acres even when improved.

1925. What about cattle? In our estimate we generally allow five to eight sheep for one large beast, according to the class of country. There is country which is adapted for cattle and not for sheep.

1926. You have not classified any country as useless? No.

1927. Are not some of the ridges perfectly barren and rocky at the top? I think that there are very few patches of land which are not paying a certain amount of revenue to the Crown, and if the Crown derives revenue from them they can hardly be classed as worthless, though some of them are very poor. The lowest Crown rental is for an improvement lease on Talbingo, where the country is almost exclusively poor barren hills. Speaking from memory, the rental of that country is about a halfpenny an acre. The man who has it must think he can do something with it, because he is spending money upon it.

1928. Has there been a general advance in agriculture here of late years? Mr. Gilliat prepared a return in 1891, showing roughly 9,000 acres under crop, and I believe that within the same district there are now nearly 13,000 acres under crop.

1929. There seems to have been a great falling off in the tobacco crop, which was at one time rather an important industry;—can you account for that? Not from own knowledge; but I have heard tobacco-growers say that the excise duty killed the industry, while others say that it has been killed by the operations of a tobacco-buying ring in Sydney.

1930. *Chairman.*] This is the evidence of the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners:—

Do you know whether the Commissioners or their officers have gone beyond Tumut, with the view of seeing whether there is any suitable country that would be tapped by the line? The Commissioners know, though they have not gone beyond there, that the country gets rough and mountainous. You get on the mountains in that direction.

Your evidence differs from that? That statement bears out what I have said, that that country has hitherto been looked upon as very remote and rough. On account of the poor roads people would rarely go into it, and so a misconception arose in regard to it. I have been forced to go through it, and to camp in it. During the first few years that I was in the district I had a hatred of that country, but, as I got to know it better, my opinion of it changed, and I came to hold the view that I hold now, that there is a big future before it.

1931. Are there any farms there at the present time? There are farms round Batlow, north of the parish of Courabyra, and at the head of the Tumbarumba Creek. There are one or two little holdings, too, in the parish of Cooleman; but in other places the country is almost deserted, except for grazing purposes.

1932. Is the result of such settlement as has taken place such as to lead you to believe that there will be a large increase? Judging from the success which has attended the Batlow farmers, even under the adverse circumstances brought about by want of proper means of communication, I think there will be a large production there.

1933. How many acres of land are suitable for agriculture in the hilly country beyond Tumut? I have not made any estimate regarding that part of the country especially; but on the Committee's map it is stated that there are 80,000 acres in the Bago forest reserve. Allowing 400 acres to a holding, 200 holdings could be taken up there. None of that country consists of alluvial flats; it is ridgy table-land. I did not include the whole of it in my estimate of the arable land in the district.

1934. Have you considered which would be the best route from Gundagai to Tumut, the eastern route, or one of the western routes;—which would serve the largest number of people and the largest area for agricultural and pastoral country? All things considered, I think that the proposed route *via* Adelong is the best. I think it would be productive of the greatest good to the greatest number. In my general statement of the area of arable land available, I have reduced the total area obtained by taking out the parishes separately by 10,000 acres. I have done this in order to be on the safe side.

William Daniel Patrick O'Brien, proprietor of dairy factory, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

1935. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been a resident here? Off and on, for about thirty years.

1936. What is the extent of your holding? A little over 3,000 acres.

1937. What industry are you carrying on? At the present time, mixed farming and dairying.

1938. How many cows are you milking? About 130 at the present time; but I am making provision to 5 milk 400.

1939. I understand that you have all the latest appliances in connection with your factory? I have the necessary appliances for dealing with the milk of 200 cows; but I have also let a contract for the erection of separators, churns, butter workers, and refrigerating plant, to treat the milk of over two thousand cows. That plant is being got ready now in Sydney, and most of it is now on the ground. I intend to buy the milk from other people.

1940. Do you find your holding well adapted for dairying purposes? It is splendidly adapted for dairying purposes.

1941. What is your average return from a cow per week? Last winter I had 700 head of cattle on the land, though, of course, I did not milk as many as that. I reckon that when we get into order each cow will return me £8 a year net.

1942.

A. H.
Chesterman.
5 Dec., 1899.

W. D. P.
O'Brien.
5 Dec., 1899.

* NOTE (on revision) :—Revised estimate: £4 per acre for Bago and Batlow.

W. D. P.
O'Brien.
5 Dec., 1899.

1942. But what return do you expect to get in butter? I have only recently started, so that I cannot give you any accurate information; but we get about 1 cwt. of butter a day now, milking 120 cows. In the spring-time here everyone has cows, and it is very difficult to sell your butter. Dairying will not pay unless you have a refrigerating plant which will enable you to store your butter when prices are low.
1943. You are quite satisfied with the result of your experiment so far? Yes.
1944. And you are going into it very largely? Yes. When the refrigerating plant is up, I intend to establish creameries in different parts of the district. I shall buy milk at those places, and bring the cream to my central factory.
1945. How much land have you under cultivation? Last year about 120 acres.
1946. What were you cultivating chiefly? Wheat and maize.
1947. What is your average yield? From about 70 acres of ground I obtained 700 bags of wheat.
1948. Were they 4-bushel bags? Yes. The yield would be beyond that.
1949. How much of your land do you consider suitable for cultivation? 1,900 acres.
1950. Are you likely to bring under cultivation a larger area of land than you have under cultivation at the present time? When I have my full number of cows, I shall cultivate regularly about 200 acres for winter feed.
1951. Have you any difficulty in delivering your produce at Gundagai? Yes, great difficulty. I often get orders for maize which, if I could get it into the trucks in time to catch the market, would obtain a good price; but, by the time I have hunted about for a team, and have got to the railway-station, the market has gone down again, and I have lost the rise. If we had a railway here, we could always have our maize ready, and we could send it away directly we got an order for it.
1952. Would you be encouraged to go in for agriculture much more if you had a railway? Certainly. Whether we get a railway or not, I intend to develop my industry, and to pluck all I have in it.
1953. What is your average return from maize? I have about 50 acres under corn, but I have not weighed it yet.
1954. Can you guess at what the return would be? About 2,500 bushels.
1955. I think the Tumut maize is as a rule the highest-priced maize in the Sydney market? Hordern's manager told me that he would at any time be willing to give 3d. a bushel more for Tumut maize than for any other maize in the world.
1956. Do you know what there is in the climate here to prevent weevil from getting into the maize? It is a remarkable thing that, although you may bring the weevil here in old bags, and put your corn into those bags, the weevil will die out. Our corn seems too hard for them. There may be something in the climate or in the soil which prevents the weevil from attacking the maize here.
1957. Maize was much more largely cultivated here a few years ago than it is now? Yes.
1958. Can you account for the falling off? Yes; it is due to the fact that there is no rival market. We should have a good market in Wagga and Narrandera if there were a railway; we should not depend upon Sydney at all. The railway would not only enable us to send our produce to places where there would be a ready sale for it, but it would enable the people there to send their sheep here in dry seasons.
1959. But the people here have the same facilities now as they had in former years? In former years less maize was imported from America. Now-a-days the steamers are so large that the market is swamped by one or two importations. The people here could compete with the American producers if they had facilities for sending their produce to market, because they would then not only save a certain amount in railway carriage, but they would be able to catch the market when prices are good. Now-a-days people about here go in for things which give them less trouble, and about which they are more sure.
1960. What do you think a fair distance from a railway for agriculture? A farmer should be as near to the railway as he can get—perhaps 8 or 10 miles. By extending a railway from Gundagai to Tumut you bring it 22 miles nearer to the farming population.
1961. What extent of country is there to the south of Tumut? There is an enormous quantity of land there which is suitable for agriculture.
1962. Is it not a fact that the hills approach pretty close to Tumut? No. The hilly country will grow produce wherever you can get a plough on to it. At my own place I got 50 bushels to the acre last year right up the side of a hill.
1963. From what distance beyond Tumut do you think traffic would come to a railway? I think traffic would come to the railway from 20 miles round—from beyond Batlow to as far as Talbingo. Although the ranges come in close in places, there are valleys and ravines where thousands of acres of land would be cultivated if there were any means of getting the produce away.
1964. Are the hills good right up to the crown? Yes. On the Gilmore you can lockspit the hills right up to the top.
1965. Are there no rocky ridges there? Yes, in places.
1966. Where there are rocks the land is not of much use, even for grazing? I do not know of any land in the world which will carry more stock per acre than the Gilmore valley land—that is, on the natural grasses.
1967. You have had experience of mining at Adelong? Yes.
1968. What is your opinion of the Adelong mines on the whole? I was eight years at Charters Towers, which, I suppose, is one of the biggest gold-fields in Australia, and when I came back I took up the Gibraltar mine. I had to get others to assist me; but I managed that mine for ten or twelve years, and during the last twelve months I was managing it I paid away £75,000 in wages, for machinery, and for railway freights. To-day between 250 and 300 men are employed there, and I suppose about £400 a week is paid away in wages. When I first came to Adelong there were one shop and a few public-houses and I would not have given £100 for the best hotel there; but now there are plenty of shops, and everyone is doing a rattling trade; so that if the farmers want ready cash they take their produce to Adelong. I am still largely interested in mining there. I am interested in the Gibraltar mine, but I am still more interested in some of the old reefs there. About thirty years ago the mines at Adelong employed, I suppose, over 1,000 men. They are idle now, but that is because, after getting through the shoot of good stone, they have got into a poor zone. The Gibraltar mine was being worked forty years ago, and was given up; but I had great faith in it. From what I had seen at Charters Towers, and other places, I believed that if they sank lower they would come on to the gold again, and it turned out to be right. All the mines in Adelong are now in the state in which the Gibraltar mine was when I went there. It only

W. D. P.
O'Brien.
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only requires capital to develop them. The reefs in Adelong are truer quartz channels than I have ever seen in New Zealand, Victoria—where I was reared and where I have worked in many of the mines—or at Charters Towers. The main reef in Adelong is the truest reef I have ever seen, and I am quite confident that if it were sunk upon it would last for many years. I intended to sink upon it myself. At Charters Towers the reefs pinched out at a depth of 150 and again at 700 or 800 feet; but now, at a depth of 2,000 feet, they are getting as good gold as ever. I am negotiating with some gentlemen in England to bring capital into Adelong to develop the Great Victoria mine, and I am confident that within the next two years the population of Adelong will have increased by over 2,000 people.

1969. Do you think that the construction of a railway would give any impetus to mining operations here? Certainly. The appliances they have at Dapto are so very complete, and their charges are so reasonable, that it will pay mine-owners, instead of erecting their own plants, to send their ore to Dapto for treatment. If there were a railway thousands and thousands of tons would be sent away every year.

1970. Does it not seem strange, if these mines are so rich, that those who were working them could not get sufficient capital to go on with? Yes. Adelong was under a blight for many years. While you are getting gold you ought at the same time to keep developing the mine; but the first promoters grabbed all there was in sight and left nothing. Part of what they took away should have been used in developing the mines. If that had been done, the mines would be working to-day. There is so much swindling and bad and swell management in connection with mining that is very hard to get people to invest in mines.

1971. Do you know anything in regard to the fruit-growing capabilities of the district? Yes. I had an orchard from which I used to get 2 or 3 tons of apples, but I could not get rid of the fruit, so I rooted the trees out.

1972. Would it not have paid you to have carted the fruit to market? No; you could not give it away. I brought ninety-five trees from Sydney and just put them in without giving them a drop of water, or taking any trouble with them, and now, three years after, there is not one dead. There is an enormous quantity of ground up Batlow way which would make splendid orchards. The fruit-producing capabilities of this district are unlimited. There are thousands of acres of red loam which would grow any kind of fruit for which a cool climate is suitable, and there is also a large extent of country which could be irrigated at very little expense, but at the present time there is no market for anything that is grown there.

1973. Have you any other reason for thinking that the proposed railway should be constructed? Another reason why I think it should be constructed is because of the quantity of good timber in this district. About Narrandera, and out that way, there is no timber for fencing and house building. Whether we get a railway or not most of the timber required there must go from Pilot Hill near here, where there is a large forest of splendid trees. If there were a railway we could deliver that timber in Wagga for 12s. a hundred, and employment would be given to thousands of men, because, instead of a water-wheel mill, large steam mills would be erected. But without railway communication the district will take a long time to develop, because it is so inaccessible. The timber is splendid, and would do for making fruit-boxes, butter-boxes, and other things of that kind, and the supply of it is really unlimited.

1974. How far is this forest from the nearest point on the proposed railway? I suppose 14 or 15 miles.

1975. Would it pay people to cart timber that distance? Yes.

1976. Do you think the railway would benefit largely by the timber traffic? Yes. If there were a railway here this would be one of the most prosperous districts in the Colony. I do not know any place like it in Australia for small holdings. No doubt it will go ahead whether we get a railway or not, but it would go ahead with leaps and bounds if we had a railway.

1977. Is there any other matter which you would like to bring before the Committee? There is any amount of country in this district which abounds with minerals. At Billyparoola there are any number of reefs, and thousands of acres of chrome which it would pay to work. I tested a copper lode a man found the other day, and it assayed 40 per cent. of copper, but it would not pay to work, although the lode is a big one, because there are no means of getting the copper away.

1978. *Mr. Watson.*] Where was that? Above Billyparoola. Within about 20 miles of Tumut.

1979. *Chairman.*] You have stated that if a railway were constructed to Tumut it would serve the farmers for 20 miles around;—can you explain why, with a railway to Gundagai, there is very little farming within the 20 miles between Gundagai and Tumut? The only explanation I can give you is that the people along there have not much sense. Any man who is within 10 miles of a railway should make the very most of his land. If I were there I should do it.

1980. But you say that if there were a railway to Tumut people 20 miles out would go in for farming, whereas our actual experience is that people within 20 miles of Gundagai do not farm? If the railway comes here it will give a stimulus to various industries, and the district between Gundagai and Tumut will be developed.*

1981. A former Member for the district told us that it would never go ahead until there was closer settlement, and the alienated land around Tumut was made available for settlement—he said that the agricultural land here was largely held by private owners;—is that a fact? Yes, that is so.

1982. How do you propose to get over that difficulty? If we had a railway, and a larger population—which would be bound to follow—the large holders would be induced to split up their holdings.

1983. It would pay them better to let the land out in farms than to keep it for sheep-runs? Yes. All the Adelong valley is held by Mr. Crane; but, if a railway came to Tumut, it would pay him better to cut that land up into 100-acre blocks and lease it.

1984. But as land increased in value the owners would pile on the rent? You cannot pile it on too much.

1985. We have been told that the rents have been so high as to largely drive agriculturists out of the district? Where people have their own holdings they are much more prosperous. On the Gilmore, the people are thrifty, and they have nice homes of their own, and accounts at the bank, and they are their own masters. It is the curse of Tumut that there is too much of the landlord system there. With a railway coming here, it would pay the landlords to split up their land.

1986. Have you gone in for dairying enough to be able to say which pays the better—dairying or the growing of crops? I think mixed farming pays the better.

1987. Keeping cows and growing stuff to feed them? Yes; nothing will pay better, because there is an unlimited market for the produce.

1988.

* NOTE (on revision) :—The land here mentioned, I am informed, in most cases is financially locked up. The reputed owners have no say in it.

- W. D. P. O'Brien.
5 Dec., 1899.
1988. Dairy produce does not give much traffic to a railway? If the dairymen are given opportunities for sending away their produce, they must employ a large number of people. Whether the railway pays or not, the railway system of the Colony is a national asset, and if the railways pay in the aggregate, we should be satisfied with what they do in the way of placing people upon the land. Instead of ten families here we might have 1,000, and every person who comes into a district is worth £50 a year to the country. 1989. You regard not only the direct benefit, but also the indirect benefit of railway construction? Yes. 1990. Which do you think would be the better route for the proposed line—by way of Adelong or following the Tumut River? I have not gone into the matter; but I think the greater advantage would be gained by adopting the Adelong route. 1991. Do you regard Adelong as a place which should be convenienceed if possible? Eventually there will be a branch line to Tumbarumba, and I think that is the best place for it to start from. 1992. Do you think that this is a district in which a small holder can get a good living? Yes. 1993. What acreage do you think is sufficient for a man here? If there were a railway to Tumut a man could make a living on 40 acres here. 1994. By mixed farming? Yes. 1995. Is that on the rich flats, or on the ridgy land? Taking a little of each—average land. 1996. *Mr. Watson.*] The Railway Commissioners anticipate an annual loss of £1,271 on the proposed line if special rates are charged, or £6,500 if through rates are charged, and, in the latter case, they think that the teamsters will be able to compete with them, because the road is 10 miles shorter than the railway;—under those circumstances, do you think that people in the district within the influence of the railway would be willing to guarantee the Government against loss to the extent of, say, 1d. per acre per annum? I think they would. I should. 1997. A similar guarantee has been entered into in connection with other lines? By such a system you are placing a handicap upon the men who are far away from the large centres of population. If we had to pay a halfpenny per acre, for instance, we should be still worse off than we are now in competing with the people at, say, Goulburn. 1998. But do you think that the people here who would benefit by the construction of the proposed railway would be willing, in the event of there being a loss, to make it good to the maximum I have mentioned? I should be prepared to do so; but are you going to tax the landowners between Sydney and Albury for the benefits they have delivered from railway construction. I do not think the arrangement is a fair one. 1999. The difference in the position is this—the Albury line is a profitable concern, but it is anticipated that there will be a large loss on the working of the proposed line; once the loss were made up, there would be no tax? I am quite prepared to pay something extra, so far as my own holding is concerned. 2000. *Chairman.*] Mr. Harper puts down the production of maize for the districts of Adelong, Reedy Flat, Tarcutta, and Tumut as 223,411 bushels in 1896, and 146,455 bushels in 1899;—can you explain the decrease? I think it is to be accounted for by the increase of the importations from America. A large cargo comes in from America, and the price goes down at once before our maize can be sent in. If we had a railway to Tumut, we could send the maize away directly we received notice from the agents that the market was a good one. 2001. They do not store their maize here at all? No. People in a small way cannot store it very long, because they want the money for it. One year farmers were compelled to sell their maize at 9d. a bushel. 2002. *Mr. Watson.*] Why? They were poor men, tilling rented land, and they had to get rid of their maize to pay the landlord. 2003. What was the price in Sydney then? I think 1s. 2d. a bushel.

Robert Dear, Mayor of Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

- R. Dear.
5 Dec., 1899.
2004. *Mr. Levien.*] How many years have you been in this district? Thirty-three years. 2005. What is the population of the district at the present time? I think it is something like 6,000. 2006. Is the district a fairly prosperous one? I think that the district was more prosperous when I first came here than it is now, because the population was smaller then? Now, what money there is in the district is more distributed. 2007. Is the population increasing yearly? Yes; during the last three years the population of the municipality has increased by something like 200. It is only a small municipality. 2008. And is the trade of the district increasing? Judging from my own experience it is not going back. If anything, it is increasing. 2009. What is the general impression on the subject in the minds of those with whom you come into contact? The farmers complain of the depression, which they attribute to the cost of carriage to market; but I think that in other ways business is not worse now than it has been for a good many years past; in fact, I think that on the whole it has improved. 2010. What is your opinion in regard to the proposed railway? I was always under the impression, from what I heard of the original estimate, that it would not be anything like a paying line; but I think that upon the very much reduced estimate which is now being put forward it will pay within a very short time. 2011. What do you think of the evidence of the Mayor of Gundagai? My opinion is that his evidence verged so closely upon the untruthful that it is hard to distinguish it from it. 2012. He seemed to be prejudiced in favour of Gundagai? Yes, decidedly; but he was long enough in Tumut to have been able to give much straighter evidence than he gave. 2013. When he was in Tumut did you ever hear him express a strong desire to see the railway brought here? No; he was only an employee then, and I do not know that there was any very great agitation for it while he was here. 2014. You think his evidence rather warped? I think that it was very considerably warped. 2015. Do you think that if there were a railway here more land would be put under cultivation? Yes. 2016. Do you think that the construction of a railway to Tumut would be a great inducement to people to cultivate? Yes; the railway carriage would be much cheaper than the land carriage. 2017. You heard Mr. O'Brien express the opinion that it would be an advantage to have a quicker means of getting to market? Yes; and I quite agree with his evidence on that point. I know that it is often not possible to get our produce away from here in time to meet a rise. 2018.

2018. Mr. Harper has shown that there has been a decrease in the corn crop of this part of the Colony;—do you account for that by the opening up of land on the northern rivers? In re-settling the electorates, a considerable portion of the Tumut electorate was cut off and attached to the Gundagai electorate, and that alteration affects the returns compiled by the police. R. Dear.
5 Dec., 1899.

2019. But do you not think that the opening up of so much land on the northern rivers has affected this place a great deal, so far as maize-growing is concerned? Well, that is a subject upon which I cannot speak with authority. I think this district has been affected, not only by the opening up of the northern rivers, but also by the importation of corn from foreign parts.

2020. Have you any idea as to the quantity of wool that goes from here? No.

2021. What do you think of this as a fruit district? Well, some of the fruit I have seen grown on the higher land, and notably at Reedy Flat, was the nearest approach to English fruit that one is likely to get in this Colony.

2022. This being a colder climate, you would be able to get fruit when the fruit of other places was done with? Yes; at Batlow they grow immense crops of potatoes, though they have only the local market to send to at the present time. The possibility is that the railway will greatly increase the growth of potatoes.

2023. Which of the proposed routes do the people here favour? I think the Adelong route would serve the greatest number of people. When Mr. Melrose made the original flying survey, I drove him all over the country. Along the Gadara, at Calafat, and on the Minjary Mountains there is some of the finest land you could get, but it is not under cultivation, because there is a difficulty in getting to market from there.

2024. You have a good knowledge of both routes? Yes.

2025. You think the route *via* Adelong would serve the greatest number of people, and would open up most country for agricultural and for pastoral purposes? Certainly, for agricultural purposes. I think that a good deal of the land now used for pastoral purposes would be used for agriculture, if the proposed railway were made.

2026. Does much starving stock come into this district in times of drought? Yes; there were over 500,000 sheep last year. I do not think they all travel by the railway. A great many travel by road where they can. There are a great many sheep coming here this year. They are coming here almost daily now. The Railway Commissioners speak only from what they hear, and from the statistics which are given to them. They visited the place on one occasion, getting here at 11 o'clock in the morning, and I do not think they left the hotel till they went away again about 2 o'clock. When the House decided to refer the proposed railway to the Public Works Committee, the Commissioners sent Mr. Usher up here. I got a wire from him to say that he was coming one day, but he did not come until the next, when he came at 10 o'clock, and went away about 12. Perhaps the following particulars in regard to the Tumut municipality will be of interest to the Committee:—Tumut has been incorporated for twelve years, and its present revenue from rates is £443 10s. There is a municipal debt of £1,488 1s. 1d. on general rates, and £123 13s. 4d. on Nuisance Prevention charges. £749 16s. 9d. is the amount of the rates in arrear. £90,850 19s. 2d. is the value of improved land, and £17,672 of the unimproved land. In December, 1898, the population was 1,357, and in 1887 under 1,000.

Edward Brennan, grazier, Gocup, sworn, and examined:—

2027. *Chairman.*] How far is Gocup from Tumut? Gocup is situated about half-way between Gundagai and Tumut, upon the marked-tree line. Properly speaking, it extends from the Gilmore Creek to half-way to Gundagai. E. Brennan.
5 Dec., 1899.

2028. You are about 10 miles from Tumut? About 8 miles.

2029. Is your estate a large one? I have about 4,000 acres in all, taking both Crown land and conditional purchase land.

2030. What stock do you carry? Sheep and cattle.

2031. How many sheep? About 4,000 sheep, and 200 head of cattle.

2032. Can you carry that number all the year round? Yes, in good seasons. In bad seasons we carry about 3,000 sheep and 150 head of cattle.

2033. Do you do any farming now? Very little. I used to farm at one time.

2034. Why did you give it up? I find it easier to get my living by grazing.

2035. Have you a statement to make to the Committee? Yes. Mr. Godfrey, a practical farmer, and myself have been requested to give evidence in regard to the Gocup part of the district. Mr. Godfrey lives on his own farm, but he also cultivates land that he rents. We went round to the principal holdings, and obtained information as to the number of acres capable of cultivation, but not under crop, and the number of acres under crop. The area of Crown lands on Gocup is about 5,810 acres, and it is principally fit for sheep-grazing, though about 900 acres are fit for growing wheat, oats, or barley. The area of freehold and conditionally-purchased land in county Wynyard, parish Minjary, is 10,568 acres. There are 4,174 acres with a river frontage, most of it fit for cultivation, except where there are lagoons and swamps, which cannot be cultivated in very wet seasons; but some of that land gives very heavy yields in very dry seasons. The land is fit for growing wheat, barley, oats, maize, potatoes, pumpkins, and some of it is fit for tobacco. All sorts of fruits that have been tried grow well here. The soil and climate are fit for cotton and sugar growing. Besides the land referred to in the foregoing statement there are 2,722 acres of land fit for cultivation, but not under crop, and not including Mr. S. Gordon's land, because he has promised to give his own returns. There are also 571 acres under crop, Mr. Gordon's land not included. This land extends to the Gilmore Creek, and takes in part of the parish of Tumut.

2036. What is the area to which your statement refers? We come to the Gilmore Creek, about a mile out of town, and then we go about 10 miles along the marked-tree line towards Gundagai.

2037. And how much land do you take in on each side of the road? About 4 miles back from the river frontage. The dividing range would be our boundary.

2038. So that you speak of a district about 10 miles by 4? Yes, about that.

2039. If a railway were constructed to Tumut, *via* Adelong, where would your produce be taken? To Tumut.

2040. Do I understand that the traffic would come back 10 miles to Tumut rather than go on to Gundagai? Yes. After you get out a distance of 8 miles there is very little cultivation. The farms there are small, and

E. Brennan. and the farmers all deal with Tumut, because they sell their produce to the storekeepers here, and none of them produce enough at a time to make a truck-load. They bring their produce here, and when the storekeepers get enough to make a truck-load they send it away by waggon to Gundagai, and thence by train to Sydney; but it would be far better if they could send it by train right through.

5 Dec., 1899.

2041. The road further on toward Gundagai is very hilly and rough? Yes. There is one farmer, about 12 miles out, who cultivates about 20 acres of wheat and a little maize, and he brings all his produce to Tumut; but we have not included him, because he is nearer to Gundagai than to Tumut, and is outside the boundaries of Goemp.

2042. What do you do with your wool and stores? I get all my supplies from Tumut at the present time; but our wool goes to Gundagai direct.

2043. If there were a railway to Tumut, would you still send your wool to Gundagai? Yes.

2044. What does it cost per ton to send wool from your place to Gundagai? From 15s. to 20s. a ton.

2045. What would it cost to bring it to Tumut? They would deliver it in Tumut for about half that.

2046. The train rate for wool from Tumut to Gundagai would be about 2s. 7d. a ton? In that case I would bring my wool to Tumut, because it would be cheaper, and the distance would be less. A man could take a load of wool from my place to Tumut and get back again the same day; but it takes two days to go to Gundagai.

2047. What is your tonnage inwards and outwards—wool and goods? I could not tell you very accurately; but I daresay 20 tons would cover the inwards traffic—salt and wire chiefly—while the wool would come to 6 or 7 tons.

2048. *Mr. Watson.*] What weight of wool do you get from a sheep, on the average? It depends upon the sheep and upon the season. On the average, I reckon upon 5 lb. or 6 lb.—7 lb. would be an outside average for my sheep.

2049. *Chairman.*] Of your 4,000 acres, what area is suitable for agriculture? On the river frontage there are approximately about 900 acres, and of that area about 600 acres would be fit for cultivation. Most of it would be fit for wheat, maize, oats, or barley; but some of it would not grow maize, though it would grow wheat. Some of it is very good for growing lucerne. There would be about 300 acres suitable for wheat, oats, or barley, but not for maize. Besides that, there are little patches in the different paddocks.

2050. Would there be 1,000 acres, in round figures? Very nearly that area.

2051. *Mr. O'Brien* told us that it paid a man better to use his land for agricultural purposes than for sheep;—if that is so, why have you gone in simply for sheep? Agriculture might pay better if there were a railway; but at the present time the cost of carriage is against it. I think that all the best land would be under cultivation if we could get cheaper and quicker carriage to Sydney; but under present circumstances it is much easier to run sheep.

2052. You appear to have about 600 acres of one class of the land, and 300 or 400 acres of another class,—how many acres of each kind of land would be required to keep a man who was going in for mixed farming? A neighbour of mine who has been living there for thirty years has reared a family upon about 280 acres of land, to which there is not a river frontage. His land would be similar to the forest country I speak of. 300 or 400 acres of the land on the river frontage would be richer than any land than he has. When I was a boy, my father was a tenant on the estate which *Mr. Gordon* now owns. *Mr. Broughton* lived there then, and he had about twenty tenants, who made a living by farming the land which they rented from him. That was before the Act of 1861, after which people took up land for themselves. Produce was much dearer then than at present.

2053. Did he send his produce to Sydney? At that time they sent produce from this district to Albury, to Lambing Flat, or Young, as it is now called, to the Lachlan, and to Kiandra; but, since then, good country in those places has been taken up by farmers, who supply the local market.

2054. A witness has given it as his opinion that foreign competition has thrown back the wheat and maize growing industry in this district; is that so? *Mr. Godfrey*, who is a practical farmer, will be able to speak on that point.

2055. Would the Tumut valley route suit you better than the Adelong route? No. If the line were brought from Coolac, the nearest platform would be as far from my place if not further than Tumut. The line would be on the other side of the river from my place, and I should not be able to get to it except by crossing the Brungle bridge. There is a better road to Tumut.

2056. Which route do you think would serve the best country and the greatest number of people? I think the Adelong route. That line would tap the whole of the country on the Adelong Creek, and about Tareutta and Tumbarumba, where a great deal of maize, wheat, and barley would be grown, while the mountain country is well adapted for wool-growing.

2057. And it would also get a good deal of the Adelong traffic? Yes; it would go as near to Adelong as they can go with a railway.

2058. If a railway were brought to Tumut, would you resume agricultural operations, or would you let your 1,000 acres of arable land to tenants? I could not answer that question. I think that if a railway were made, agriculture would pay better than pastoral pursuits, because there are many crops which could be grown; but I cannot tell you which would be the most profitable way of dealing with the land.

2059. You would use it in whatever way suited your own ends best? Yes.

2060. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that if the proposed railway is constructed it will pay within a reasonable time? I think so.

2061. The Railway Commissioners seem to think that there will be a deficiency for a considerable length of time;—do you think that the people in your district would be willing to give a guarantee against any loss? I cannot answer that question for other people.

2062. Can you answer it for yourself? I cannot, because I do not know how much we should have to guarantee. The amount might be more than I could afford.

2063. The loss is estimated at £4,271 a year. Would you be prepared to pay your share towards making good one-half of that loss, supposing it was spread over the whole area benefited by the construction of the line? I have not the faintest idea as to what it would come to, spread over that area.

2064. Would you be prepared to pay an amount similar to what you now pay in land-tax, to make good if necessary any loss upon the proposed line? Yes.

2065. *Mr. Levien.*] You might have, on top of that, a Local Government tax? If I had to pay other taxes

taxes, my answer would be "No," because I am pretty heavily taxed as it is. I am paying a rabbit tax, a land tax, and other taxes now.

2066. *Mr. Watson.*] If the railway paid, the tax to which I referred would be discontinued? So I understand.

E. Brennan.
5 Dec., 1899.

John Hides, saw-mill proprietor, Bago Forest, sworn, and examined:—

2067. *Mr. Dick.*] How long have you been in the district? About twenty-three years.
2068. Have you been mainly engaged in the timber trade all that time? Yes.
2069. What kinds of timber do you deal with out there? Our principal timbers are mountain ash, messmate, urabbie, and a few kinds of gum.
2070. To what uses are those timbers put? The mountain ash is a very good building timber, and is largely used for building purposes. At Narrandera they have built a good many waggons of it, and one of them took the prize at the Narrandera Show three or four years ago. Mountain ash is used mostly for the body-work, not for the wheelwright's work.
2071. What do you use the messmate and the urabbie for? Some builders like urabbie for the waggon-bearers, because it is a strong heavy timber. It is also used for bridge-planking and other heavy work. Messmate is a very good timber for ground-work; it is not so strong as the urabbie, but it is more lasting in the ground.
2072. Of which of these timbers do you send most away? I send most mountain ash away. Mountain ash makes good wine-casks, and a cask which will hold about 700 gallons has been made of it. All the staves for the casks of one vineyard come from our mill, and I have sent a good many cask-staves to Albury. In some places the mountain ash is not so hard, but our mountain ash is more closely grained. In Gippsland the mountain ash is more porous than ours.
2073. Are there many people besides yourself engaged in the timber trade? There is another saw-mill about 8 miles from where I live. It cuts timber for the Upper Murray country. Those people have been there nearly twenty years.
2074. How many thousand feet do you get through in the year? In some years I put through about 250,000 feet, which is equal to about 750 tons, and 10,000 palings, which is equal to 30 tons. At the end of this year I suppose I shall have put through about 600 tons.
2075. What is your chief market at the present time? I send a great deal of timber to Hardy, at Wagga, and to the stations round about. At Tula they have been using my timber for ten or fifteen years past. It is consigned to the Whitton railway-station. I have also sent some down to a place near Hay, for gate-making and other purposes. At Yabtree and Gillingrove they always use my timber.
2076. What effect would the construction of the proposed railway have upon your market? It would make it much larger. The larger consumers are greatly against having timber brought to Wagga by team. Last year I could not get all the timber true, so that I had to abandon my orders. It costs about 12s. a thousand for every 60 miles of railway carriage; but to get to Wagga it costs me about £4 a thousand. If the proposed railway were made, I could get the timber to Wagga for 1s. or 1s. 6d. less than I pay now, and I could send it to Narrandera much more cheaply.
2077. Would you open up any new markets? I should make more use of the markets I have. I could sell a larger quantity of timber if I could get it away.
2078. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you consign all your timber from Tumut? It would be an advantage to me to do so. Instead of paying about 7s. 6d. a hundred to get to Gundagai, I should have only to pay about 5s. 6d.
2079. Are the forests out your way being thinned out, or is there still an extensive area to operate upon? This year I have cut about 200 logs, obtained within a mile of my mill, and there is a lot of timber there yet. There are places close to the mill where the axe has never been put into the timber. There are hundreds of thousands of feet on a few acres in some places.
2080. Can you form any estimate as to the quantity of timber you would be likely to cut if the railway were brought to Tumut? I could cut at my mill from 3,000 to 4,000 feet a day if I could work full-handed. In four hours we can cut about 1,500 feet.
2081. How many feet go to the ton? 1,000 feet of green timber are equal to about 3 tons, and 1,000 feet of thoroughly seasoned timber are equal to a little over 2 tons 5 cwt.
2082. So you could cut about 7 tons a day? Yes.
2083. If the railway were brought to Tumut could you find a market for 7 tons a day? Yes, because I could get all the Gundagai trade.
2084. Would you be able to get your timber to Tumut without difficulty? Yes; the dry seasons often prevent me from selling my timber, because when the road is not in good condition you cannot get teams.
2085. The construction of the proposed railway would not improve matters, so far as that is concerned? I could deliver timber at Gilmore at any time, except in the middle of winter, when the snow was on the ground; but in dry seasons it is difficult to travel. We can get very little timber through to Gundagai until after Christmas, because the travelling stock eat up all the grass on the roads.
2086. Do you think 7 tons a day is a safe estimate of the probable work of your mill? Well, a great deal depends upon the demand for timber; sometimes more is wanted and sometimes less. I have between 30 and 40 tons to go to Wagga now.
2087. *Mr. Levien.*] What is the soil like when you have taken out the timber? It is very good soil, and very deep. We have grown white beet and red beet there from 1½ to 3½ lb. in weight.
2088. What crops do you grow? We do not grow any crops; we only grow a few vegetables for our own use.
2089. If the proposed railway were constructed it would cost you about the same to send timber to Wagga by train as it costs you now to cart it there; but you would be able to send it more quickly? Yes.

J. Hides.
5 Dec., 1899.

Bartholomew Soden, grazier, Batlow, sworn, and examined:—

2090. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been residing on your present holding? For six years.
2091. What is the extent of your holding? 2,000 acres.
2092. What number of stock have you? I carry, on the average, from 1,500 to 1,800 sheep.
2093. Any cattle? Yes, a few milkers.

B. Soden.
5 Dec., 1899.

- B. Soden.
5 Dec., 1899.
2094. Have you any cultivation? Just enough for the use of the home—about 20 acres.
2095. What is your average wool return? From 5 to 6 lb. to the sheep.
2096. What distance are you from Tumut? 20 miles.
2097. In what direction? South.
2098. Is there much good land beyond you? Yes, thousands of acres.
2099. Is it similar to your own land? Yes.
2100. Are you able to carry nearly a sheep to the acre all the year round? Yes; I did it right through last year.
2101. Has your lambing been successful? Last year my lambing was 75 per cent., and the year before 86 per cent.
2102. Have you disposed of your surplus sheep, or has your flock been increasing? No; I have disposed of the surplus.
2103. Do you get a fair price for your wool? Very fair. I have not sold it yet this year.
2104. Is it considered of very good quality? It is not so good as the dry-country wool.
2105. Is any agriculture carried on near to where you are? Yes, on small areas.
2106. But nothing of any large extent? No.
2107. What success have those had who have cultivated? They have been very successful with oats and potatoes.
2108. What returns have they got per acre? As high as 80 bushels of oats to the acre; but from 50 to 60 bushels would be a very good average.
2109. Do they grow the oats chiefly for grain, or for hay? For both hay and grain.
2110. What weight do they get in hay per acre? The weight varies very greatly. A man took 3 tons of hay off an acre of land last year, while others got as little as 13 cwt.
2111. What have you got at your place? Last year I got about 30 cwt. of hay to the acre. A small patch of wheat which I put in as an experiment yielded me 25 bushels.
2112. Is any cultivation going on beyond you to the south? Yes, a little.
2113. How far from you? There is no cultivation of any extent more than 3 or 4 miles south of my place.
2114. Is any fruit-growing attempted out in that direction? Fruit-growing will be the principal industry there. I know a place where a man and his wife, with his son and daughter-in-law, and another man, earn a very handsome living off 4 acres.
2115. What kind of fruit? Principally apples and English fruits, such as raspberries, currants, and gooseberries.
2116. How is that country watered? Splendidly; it can nearly all be irrigated.
2117. There are running creeks there, I suppose? Yes; and the water could be brought by means of races from those creeks.
2118. What effect do you think the construction of a railway to Tumut would have upon that district? I think that it would induce close settlement, and encourage fruit-growing. I rent my land, and, as my lease expires in a short time, I intend to give up grazing. I have purchased about 4 acres of orchard, and I intend to go in for fruit-growing.
2119. What would be a fair area for a man to get a living upon in your immediate neighbourhood? It would depend upon the occupation he followed. If he combined farming with fruit-growing, from 100 to 150 acres would be ample. His returns from that area would be greater than his returns from a larger area. If a man intended to adopt pastoral pursuits, he could do with nothing under 2,000 acres.
2120. Do you think that that would be a sufficient area to enable a man to make a fair living? I think so.
2121. What kind of grasses have you here? We have a grass which we call summer grass, though some call it kangaroo grass. It is a tall grass, with a head very similar to oats.
2122. Is it pretty plentiful about here? Yes.
2123. Is that your principal grass? There are other grasses. There is a great quantity of wild clover.
2124. Has the district been settled for a long time? I think there were diggings at Batlow thirty years ago or more. You will find the clover on the top of some of the highest mountains about there.
2125. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway will have the effect of bringing small holdings into occupation? Yes.
2126. Is most of the land there alienated, or is it chiefly Crown lands? It is nearly all Crown lands, though it may be held under annual lease.
2127. Do you think that if the proposed railway were made it would be largely occupied by small holders? Yes.
2128. Are there many others besides yourself? Yes; the population is fairly thick round about Batlow.
2129. Do they all seem pretty well satisfied there? They seem to be doing fairly well.
2130. Do you find it an inconvenience to be so far from a railway? Yes, a great inconvenience.
2131. What does it cost you to deliver produce in Gundagai? Thirty shillings a ton.
2132. Do you think that the proposed railway will obtain sufficient traffic to justify an annual expenditure of £8,150? That is a question I could not answer; but if the railway is made, there will be an increase of population, and therefore, I think, an increase of railway traffic. One gentleman at Batlow has planted out 25 acres of fruit-trees, and he intends to increase his area to 60 acres next year. I think that the jam-making industry will spring up there.
2133. You would still have 20 miles to go to a railway station if the proposed extension were made? If the proposed extension were made I should only have to go to the Gilmore, a distance of 15 or 16 miles.
2134. Do you not think that that would be an excessive distance? No; we could comfortably go there and back in a day.
2135. How far is it from your place to Gundagai? About 40 miles.
2136. You are in favour of the construction of the proposed railway, and you think it would be of advantage to the country? Yes; because I think it would induce population to settle in the district. We have an annual fruit show up where I live, and last year the Government Fruit Expert, who made the awards, said that the apples were the best he had seen in New South Wales.
2137. I suppose Gundagai is too far for you to deliver fruit there? Yes.
2138. *Chairman.*] What kind of country is it between Gilmore and Batlow? The Gilmore valley contains the picked land of the district. Then there is the Windowie valley land, which is also very good; and besides this there is good grazing land.
- 2139.

2139. Are the valleys wide or narrow? They spread out and come in again.
 2140. How wide is the widest—5 miles? Yes, in some places.
 2141. Is this rich land largely cultivated? Every foot of the best land in the valley is cultivated, I think. 5 Dec., 1899.
 2142. What crops are grown? Wheat, oats, and maize.
 2143. And they grow luxuriantly? Yes.

B. Soden.

5 Dec., 1899.

Robert Rex Timmis, storekeeper, Batlow, sworn, and examined:—

2144. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been a resident of Batlow? For twenty-seven or twenty-eight years. R. R. Timmis. 5 Dec., 1899.
 2145. Has there been any great change there during your time? It was a good place when I first came there; then it dwindled down to nothing, and now it is improving again.
 2146. When you first went there it was a mining centre? Yes.
 2147. But afterwards the mining fell off? Yes; and the miners took to growing potatoes, fruit, and oats. Now it is more an agricultural than a mining district.
 2148. The rejuvenation of the district is due to the capabilities of the soil and the agricultural development you speak of? Yes.
 2149. Where do the people obtain a market now? At Tumut, Gundagai, occasionally at Wagga, and a little fruit goes to Sydney.
 2150. Do they also send potatoes away? They do not send potatoes further than Gundagai.
 2151. Is the carriage too high? The carriage from our place to Gundagai is from 30s. to 35s. a ton, and, therefore, people cannot compete with the people on the railway line.
 2152. Do any of the people up there go in for dairying at all? Very little.
 2153. What is the general character of the country round there? It is all very rich basaltic soil.
 2154. Is much of it broken country? It is hilly country.
 2155. But not too much so for use? Not for fruit-growing. Some of the hills are rather too steep for ploughing, but there is a lot of good country there, and a great deal of it is still open.
 2156. What is the rainfall? About 56 inches.
 2157. Then comparatively poor land ought to be productive there? Yes; and we have plenty of water for irrigation.
 2158. Do you anticipate obtaining a larger market for your potatoes if you get railway communication? Yes, I think so, if we had a railway to Tumut.
 2159. I suppose the people in your district would send to the railway somewhere about Gilmore? Yes; that would be about 14 miles.
 2160. What would it cost you to take potatoes and other produce from Batlow to the Gilmore? About 10s. a ton.
 2161. The freight upon potatoes from Sydney to Gundagai is 23s. 5d.? Yes.
 2162. If it costs you from 30s. to 35s. a ton to send produce to Gundagai, you can be easily undersold by the people living nearer to Sydney? Yes, though we get a better price for our potatoes than they get for the Sydney potatoes.
 2163. If the proposed line were made, the charge for conveying potatoes from the Gilmore to Gundagai would be 3s. 8d. a ton, and, adding 10s. for cartage, 13s. 8d. from Batlow to Gundagai, as against 30s. at the present time;—that would be a considerable saving? Yes.
 2164. Do you think that there is room for a great improvement in the potato-growing industry? Yes, a very great improvement.
 2165. Sometimes there is a considerable glut in the potato market? Yes. Our potatoes have been allowed to rot some years.
 2166. Has there been no way of using them? Only by giving them to the pigs.
 2167. How are the people up your way getting on at the present time? They are making a living. Most of them own their own holdings.
 2168. Have they small plots of land? Yes; and I think that, generally, the smaller the plots the better they get on.
 2169. Are there any local circumstances which improve your position for competing with people in an outside market? No; except that our fruit and potatoes are better than the fruit and potatoes from other places. They are grown in a colder climate, and they are, therefore, more solid and of better quality.
 2170. Do they keep better? Yes.
 2171. Your season is much later than that of the districts nearer Sydney? Yes; we are a month or six weeks later. We are about 1,500 feet higher than Tumut.
 2172. That, perhaps, would give you an opportunity of getting into the market when it was bare of produce? Yes. We anticipate being able to keep our apples right through the year until now. We have a few that we have kept from last season, and I know that a couple of weeks ago they were quite sound. We believe that if we had railway communication we should be able to supply the Sydney market when it was bare of fruit from Tasmania and other places.
 2173. Is any large proportion of the Crown land in your district suitable for settlement of the class that there is there already? I think it all is.
 2174. For fruit-growing, combined with other industries? Yes.
 2175. That would lead the Committee to anticipate that if the proposed railway is constructed there will be a considerable increase in the population in your part of the district? I think that there will be.
 2176. Would the class of production which that district affords yield much railway traffic? I think so. Acre for acre, I think that a great deal more goes from an orchard than from any other holding.
 2177. What kind of mining is carried on there? Chiefly ground-slucing.
 2178. Were there any appearances of reefs? Yes, but they have not been very good so far.
 2179. You do not anticipate that the construction of the proposed railway will have any effect upon the mining industry there? No.
 2180. What possibility is there of an increase in population between the Gilmore and Batlow? There is a strip of 5 or 6 miles of very good land there, and then you go through about 9 miles of very poor country—grazing country.

- R. R. Timmis.
5 Dec., 1899.
2181. The strip of 5 or 6 miles, to which you refer, is already pretty well occupied? Yes; it is a narrow strip of very rich land.
2182. And, at the present time, it is cultivated to pretty well its fullest extent? Yes, I think so.
2183. Then you have 9 miles of grazing country? Yes; just where the road runs, but 2 or 3 miles from the road it is very good country again.
2184. Would the produce from the land which is off the road go towards the railway? Yes. The road from Tumbarumba runs through the land.
2185. Is it settled now? There are a few selectors on it; but it could be opened up still more.
2186. What would be the capacity of the grazing land you have referred to? I could not say, but I suppose a sheep to the acre. It is very fair grazing country.
2187. You would not expect very much development from that country? No; but the basaltic country is capable of very great development. The greatest drawback to the occupation of the district is that the land is so heavily timbered. The country has been rung, however, and is in a fit state for clearing, so that the clearing would not cost one-third of what it would have cost seven or eight years ago when the land was first selected.
2188. Has the Government land been ringbarked by the lessees? No.
2189. It is still in its natural state? Yes.
2190. And it would take some little time to get it ready for clearing at a cheap rate? Yes; but there is a great area of country already ringed.
2191. Is that country available? It is alienated land, but the produce from it would help to increase the Railway traffic. The Government land consists of a forest reserve from which timber is being drawn. That timber would be a considerable item in keeping the railway going.

George Clout, *seur.*, farmer, Upper Brungle, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Clout, *seur.*
5 Dec., 1899.
2192. *Mr. Levien.*] How long have you been living in the district? Since 1865.
2193. Then you have a thorough knowledge of the whole surrounding country? I have a perfect knowledge of the Tumut district.
2194. How many acres of land do you hold? 308 acres.
2195. Is it under cultivation? Yes. I make my living by cultivating it, and I have done so during the whole of the time that I have had it.
2196. What crops do you grow? Wheat and oats, chiefly.
2197. Have you any statement to make to the Committee? Yes. Any estimate with regard to the probabilities of a railway to Tumut being a self-paying concern cannot be relied on if based on the present output of produce. To anyone who has given consideration to the matter, it is clear that with the extension of the railway into our midst, that output will be doubled, and in some cases trebled. With regard to our staple products, viz., wheat and maize, I need not say much; the output of these commodities is steadily advancing, notwithstanding the handicap under which we labour, and it needs no great amount of discernment to perceive the impetus that would be given to their production if the extra freight cost of 3d. per bushel were saved to the farmer. The average yield per acre is higher than that of any other part of the Colony, and the quality is equal to anything that can be produced, as evidenced by the success obtained by Tumut farmers at exhibitions all over the colonies, and repeatedly at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show in Sydney, and also at the Calcutta Exhibition, the Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London, and at the World's Fair at Chicago. But for the present, I would rather deal with those commodities, which, on account of the absence of a cheap and expeditious means of transit, we are virtually debarred from producing, viz., hay, chaff, and potatoes. With regard to the former of these commodities, it is a well-known fact that the two-thirds of the chaff used in Sydney is imported from Victoria and elsewhere, because the most favoured localities in this Colony, of which Tumut is one of the principal, are prohibited by insufficient means of transit from supplying it. To make this clear, I would point out that the freight charge per road to Gundagai is 15s. per ton, and thence to Sydney, the charge is 9s. 6d.; the cost to Sydney thus being 24s. 6d. per ton. When loss of bags, cartage, and commission charges are added to this, the entire value of the article is eaten up. The result is that we have to leave the industry severely alone. Had we the railway to Tumut, our freight charge to Sydney would not be more than 10s. per ton, and in a district like this where 4 tons per acre is not at all an unusual thing, sufficient hay could be produced to not only supply local requirements, but we could send a surplus to Sydney which would go far towards crowding out the Victorian article. Again, in seasons of drought, when such a large demand is created for fodder in the drought-stricken districts, we could supply thousands of tons, but that the freight charge forbids it. An effort was made during the past dry seasons to open up trade in this direction, but the expenses attached thereto prevented it being persevered with. The same arguments apply to the cultivation of potatoes. We have a district almost equal to the famous Warrnambool for potato-growing, but have to confine ourselves to local requirements, as it is very rarely that the Sydney market will warrant the payment of the heavy cartage freight, in addition to the railway charge. As a matter of fact the Riverina country, which was our former market for this commodity, is now supplied from Sydney with Warrnambool and Circular Head potatoes more cheaply than we can supply them, as they have that direct railway communication, which up till now has been denied to us. As a consequence of this, potato-culture has become very much neglected, so much so that in some seasons local requirements are not met, and the same state of affairs will exist until a cheap and expeditious means is provided for getting rid of all surplus products. The area of land adapted for growing potatoes, and in fact roots of all kinds is practically unlimited. Turnips, mangels, beets, &c., grow to perfection. Much of the mountain country, both as regards soil and climate is admirably adapted for such, with special advantages for irrigation, on account of its bountiful water supply, a system which is much practised by landholders in that locality. The whole of the trade of these mountain districts trends to Tumut, and once the railway is an accomplished fact, Tumut as a produce emporium will hold the leading position in the south-western portion of this Colony. Poultry-farming is an industry which would flourish under altered conditions, but the expense and delay in forwarding by road to Gundagai makes it almost prohibitory at present. Dairy-farming too, which up till now has been almost entirely neglected, has great potentialities in a district which is so eminently suited for it. Immense quantities of such products as those I have mentioned could be produced in this district, did not cost of transit forbid it, but the
advent

G. Clout,
senr.

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advent of railway communication would give a great impetus to our agricultural industry, as it would enable our farmers to compete not only with those of the neighbouring colonies, but also to hold their own against all-comers in the markets of the world.

2198. What acreage have you under wheat? I cultivate about 50 acres altogether, and I have about 25 acres under wheat.

2199. And how much under oats? I have 12 or 15 acres under oats.

2200. What yield do you get to the acre? From 40 to 50 bushels of oats, and about 25 bushels of wheat.

2201. I suppose you sell your produce locally? Yes, mainly, but I have sent produce to Sydney at various times.

2202. If the proposed railway were constructed, how would it affect the district? I believe that the production of the district would be almost doubled if the proposed railway were constructed. If we could get rid of our surplus produce every year at a reasonable price, we could grow with much more confidence.

2203. I suppose you have a fair knowledge of other districts? I have a knowledge of the south-western districts of the Colony.

2204. Do you think that this district will be of great service in producing supplies for the drought-stricken parts of the Colony? Yes. Riverina would be our best market if we had facilities for getting there.

2205. I suppose you would be prepared to pay a little more than you now pay if you could get to market more quickly, and get there when the prices were good? Yes.

2206. That is the main point, I believe. I understand that if the people here could have got their tobacco away in time they could have sold it at a high price? That applies still more in regard to maize. At the present time people are often unable to take advantage of a favoured market because of the want of teams.

2207. *Chairman.*] You live east of the township of Brungle? I am 9 miles from Brungle proper.

2208. How far is Brungle from Gundagai? It is 13 miles from the Brungle Post-office to Gundagai.

2209. So that you would have 20 miles to get to Gundagai? Not quite, because I would not have to go to Brungle proper. I am only 18 miles from Gundagai.

2210. And how far from Tumut? Thirteen miles.

2211. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it suit you better to cart to Tumut, and to pay 33 miles of additional railway freight, than to cart to Gundagai? It suits me better to come to Tumut, because I can get here and back in a day. I cannot get to Gundagai and back in a day.

2212. Have you a better road to Tumut? The roads are about the same.

2213. I suppose that the railway charge for agricultural produce is very small? Yes, it is scarcely noticeable on a distance of 20 or 30 miles.

2214. That being so, would you avail yourself of the proposed railway? Yes.

2215. Is there much land out your way which would be suitable for agriculture? Yes; the greater part of the parish of Brungle is good agricultural land. Of course, Lower Brungle is nearer to Gundagai than to Tumut. Lower Brungle is on the valley of the Tumut River.

2216. *Mr. Levien.*] Did you read the letter signed "Maize Grower, Adelong Crossing," which appeared in the *Gundagai Times*? Yes, I read it; but I do not think the writer lives there.

2217. Do you think the statements in that letter are a slander upon the people about here? Yes. As a rule, the farmers here are as independent as any men in New South Wales.

Lewis Margules, grazier, Tomorrara, sworn, and examined:—

2218. *Chairman.*] I understand that you live at a place about 20 miles east of Tumut? Yes.

L. Margules.

2219. How large is your holding? About 1,100 acres.

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2220. Do you farm the land, or run sheep upon it? I use it for grazing principally. I only farm for my own use.

2221. What is the extent of the agricultural and pastoral country out your way? Taking Tomorrara as the centre, there are about 100,000 acres within a radius of 6 or 7 miles, and of this area I consider that fully 60,000 acres are suitable for agriculture. The land I speak of is table-land country, there being a fall towards Tumut and a fall towards Yass. There are about 12 miles of flat country there, and most of it is suitable for agriculture.

2222. Is the good country in patches? No; there is good rich soil throughout. There are high hills there which are too steep to be cultivated, but the country is mostly undulating.

2223. Has it been improved much? The greater part of it has been ringbarked and suckered, but it has not been cultivated. There is no way of getting produce to market from that district at any profit, and, therefore, the country is used mostly for summer grazing. There is more money to be made by renting it to Riverina pastoralists than by grazing on it yourself.

2224. When any of it has been farmed, has the farming been a success? Yes, a great success. One man who cultivated about 50 acres told me that last year his yield was 25 bushels of wheat and 30 bushels of oats to the acre, and I have had as large a yield as that myself, though I have only cultivated the land on a small scale.

2225. Is a large expenditure necessary before the land can be cultivated? In its natural state the land is heavily timbered, but where the country is ringbarked it does not require very much to get it cleared.

2226. How much? Thirty shillings an acre where it has been ringbarked for any length of time.

2227. Is this land available to settlers, or will it be available within a reasonable time? It has all been taken up, and it is returning revenue to the Government. There are a great many settlers there already.

2228. And you think that they would improve their land? Yes; they would go in for growing different kinds of produce, if they could send it away. Then, too, the large holders would give settlers every opportunity to go in for farming. It would be a good fruit-growing district, and dairying could be carried on very profitably there. At the present time the land is used solely for grazing.

2229. Will you tell the Committee what is the character of the land south of your holding which is coloured yellow on the Committee's map;—according to the Government figures there are about 50,000 acres there? Yes; but that area takes in Cooleman and other places which I have not taken in. The

whole

- L. Margules,
5 Dec., 1899.
- whole of that country would be alienated if there were means for getting the produce away. More and more people go there every year. From three to four years ago most of that country was all open country, and was hardly held under lease at all, but now large portions have been selected. Of course, there are some old selections there too.
2230. Then that land has not been left because it is worthless; population is gradually creeping up to it? Yes. Of course the climate in the winter months is very severe, and, as you get south, there are heavy falls of snow there. About 40,000 acres of the 100,000 acres I have spoken of would be first-class grazing country.
2231. Would it carry a sheep to the acre? Yes, the improved land; but a lot of it is worthless until it has been improved, because there is so much timber upon it. It is surprising what a difference a little improvement makes to it.
2232. Would Tumut be the most accessible railway-station from that place? Yes.
2233. It would be more accessible than Gundagai? Yes; the traffic has to come down to a point called Kyley's Creek in order to get through the mountains, and when it is there it is only 10 miles from Tumut, whereas it is 22 miles from Gundagai. All the traffic must come to that point before it can turn either to Gundagai or to Tumut.
2234. Are the roads there very bad at the present time? Yes, they are mountain roads.
2235. Could they be made fairly good without any great expense? Yes; good grades could be got without very much expense. It is mostly side-cuttings that would be required. There would be no rock-cuttings.
2236. Does wheat-growing pay better than corn-growing now? I could not say. We are not in a corn-growing district there. We could not grow corn with certainty there.
2237. Is there any frost in the district to destroy the fruit crops? Very seldom. Last year our fruit crop was destroyed; but that happened right throughout the Colony. Apples and cherries will grow well in that part of the country, and the trees will keep on bearing. Small fruits can also be grown there.
2238. Do you know any other parts of the Colony which are better than the district that you speak of? No.
- 2239-40. You look upon your district as an exceptionally good district for cereals and other crops? Yes; I consider it the garden of the Colony for such crops.
2241. Have you a selection? Yes. There is a good deal of mineral country in the 100,000 acres to which I have referred. A lot of men are making comfortable livings there from alluvial mining and by reefing. Tin has been found in different parts, and silver has also been found. At the present time that area produces no railway traffic; but if we could get a market, about 30,000 or 40,000 acres would produce traffic for a railway. I do not think the people there are afraid of a day's work, and they will go in for whatever pays them best.
2242. I suppose that with good land and a reliable rainfall farming would be largely followed? Farming will pay best under any circumstances.

George Godfrey, senr., farmer, Gocup, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Godfrey,
senr.
5 Dec., 1899.
2243. *Mr. Dick.*] How long have you resided at Gocup? About thirty years.
2244. You have at various times acted as judge on behalf of the Government at local shows? Yes.
2245. And you have also taken a prize for model farming? Yes, on two occasions.
2246. What are the possibilities of the district immediately around Gocup? I think you can expect that double the area now under cultivation will be cultivated if the proposed railway is constructed.
2247. What prevents the people from doubling their area now? We have no market except the Sydney market now, and prices are very low, so that those who can do well at other occupations do not bother about farming.
2248. Would the construction of the proposed railway enable you to compete successfully in the Sydney market? Yes, because we could get our stuff away so much more quickly and cheaply.
2249. What obstacles stand in your way now? Well, on the far side of my place the roads are very heavy.
2250. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you mean towards Gundagai? Yes; and I have to pay nearly as much for carriage from there as from Tumut.
2251. *Mr. Dick.*] How far are you from Gundagai by road? Thirteen miles.
2252. And from Tumut? Eight miles.
2253. Are the grades against you, going to Gundagai? Yes; it requires a strong team to take a load from my place to Gundagai.
2254. Even if the proposed railway were constructed you would have 8 miles of road carriage? Yes; but I could do my carting then with a small team.
2255. It would be a decided advantage to you to have the railway extended to Tumut? Yes; I could do my own carting then instead of hiring a team.
2256. Mr. Brennan has given us certain figures concerning the land within the parish of Minjary, county of Wynyard; but he told us that there were about 5,810 acres, which he was not sure were suitable for agriculture. He stated that you would be able to tell us how much of his holding would be fit for agriculture? About 1,000 acres.
2257. Is the land all of one quality? No; some of it is forest land, but a great deal is river frontage.
2258. He told us that in the parish of Minjary there were about 10,568 acres of freehold and conditionally-purchased land, of which a certain area was river-frontage land, and suitable for agriculture;—how much of that land is suitable for agriculture? About half of it. A lot of it is low country, and under water at times, but it is all good land. Some of the good soil reaches up on to the high land, but not much.
2259. Is much of it being cultivated now? Not of late years.
2260. Can you tell us why that land went out of cultivation? I think it pays them better to graze at the present time. The price of produce is low, while carriage rates are high.
2261. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway will materially alter the present state of things? In years to come, all of that land will be under cultivation. It is all good land.
2262. What is the size of your holding? 230 acres.

2263. How much of it do you cultivate? Seventy acres, and there are 70 more which I could cultivate. G. Godfrey, ^{senr.}
2264. What do you grow chiefly? Wheat, oats, and maize, and I have grown tobacco.
2265. What is the average yield that you obtain? From forest land, taking one year with another, I have obtained from 15 to 20 bushels of wheat. I got as much as 25 bushels to the acre when I first broke the land up, and as much as 35 bushels from the river land. 5 Dec., 1899.
2266. How much of your 280 acres is river flat? I have no river flat myself, but I have rented river-flat land at Gocup.
2267. The general tenor of your evidence is that at the present time road carriage is so high that it is better to use the land for sheep-grazing than for agriculture? Yes; with the exception of the very rich land.
2268. And you say that, if the railway were extended to Tumut, land which has been under cultivation in years past would again be put under the plough? Yes; and I think, too, that a great deal of new land would be cultivated.
2269. *Chairman.*] Does your land extend as far as the Gilmore Creek? No.
2270. Is it exceptionally good land? No, it is only middling forest land. There are some little flats in it which were formerly covered with ti-tree, and they are very good. The low land is all good land for maize-growing, especially in dry seasons; but in wet seasons the forest land is generally the best for wheat.
2271. Do they crop their land continuously or do they occasionally rest it? I crop my land continuously, but I change the crops. I do not put in the same crop every year.
2272. How many flour-mills are there in the Tumut district? Two.
2273. One a water mill and the other a steam mill? Yes.
2274. Have there ever been more? Yes; there used to be another mill on the Gilmore.
2275. Why was it discontinued? I could not tell you. In olden times they used to send a great deal of flour out of Tumut, but this has all been cut off now.
2276. Have you been here very long? I have been thirty years where I am living now.
2277. Notwithstanding the difficulties attending farming in this district, as a rule have the farmers been successful? Well, in my own case, I have just about made a living for myself and my family.
2278. I suppose you have always sold your produce locally? At one time I used to sell horse-feed a good deal by the road-side. That was when the teams used to travel to Goulburn, but now I cannot do that, and therefore I do not grow so much hay. I generally sell my produce in Tumut now, though I sell some of it in Gundagai.
2279. Is your acreage sufficient for a man to make a living upon? I have made a living upon it by following agriculture and by running a few cattle and sheep.
2280. Is yours rented land? No; it is conditionally-purchased land.
2281. Do you think the fact that the land round Tumut is largely owned by private owners is likely to prevent it from being extensively cultivated? I do not think so. I think that if people could get a market for their produce they would be willing to rent land, though the rents are pretty high.
2282. A man could get more by leasing his land for agricultural purposes than by running sheep upon it? I think he could get more for rich flat land.
2283. Could a farmer afford to pay £1 an acre for rented land? Well, they do pay as much as that in some cases.
2284. Is it not rather a heavy rent? I should think so if I had to pay it.
2285. Especially when, in addition, there are cartage charges to pay? Yes. There is 4d. a bushel for cartage and the price of the bags, so that when you have paid your rent there is not much left.
2286. In some of the large agricultural districts near Sydney they pay much higher rentals than £1 an acre for flat land? Yes; but there they are close to market.
2287. *Mr. Watson.*] What have you to pay to send your wheat and other produce from Gocup to Tumut? I always bring it in myself.
2288. And do you convey your own produce to Gundagai? No; I pay 1s. a bag to have it taken to Gundagai. It requires a strong team to take produce to Gundagai, and if you are sending produce away by train you must send it by the truck-load in order to get the cheap freight.
2289. If the proposed railway were constructed it would cost 3s. 6d. a ton to convey wheat by train from Tumut to Gundagai;—that being so, would you bring your wheat to Tumut? Yes; because I could not send it to Gundagai for as little as 3s. 6d. a ton.

Patrick Halloran, farmer, Blowering, sworn, and examined:—

2290. *Chairman.*] Blowering is 9 miles from Tumut, in a southerly direction? Yes.
2291. I understand that you have a statement to make to the Committee? Yes. My statement refers to an area of land extending for 5 or 6 miles along the river frontage, and running back for a distance of 4 or 5 miles. In that area there are about seven settlers, and the area of land suitable for cultivation but not now used for that purpose would amount to: Corn land, 105 acres; and land suitable for wheat and oats or oats alone, about 800 acres. The approximate yield of grain and other produce per acre on land cultivated during the last few years has been: Wheat, 26 bushels; and corn, 47 bushels. Some farmers have grown crop after crop on the same land for thirty-five years, and the land has yielded 50 bushels of corn to the acre, two crops yielding as much as 50 and 70 bushels to the acre, by ploughing 8 or 9 inches deep. If all land were cultivated properly, the average yield would be 70 or 75 bushels to the acre. The area of land suitable only for pastoral pursuits is 2,601 acres, and it is capable of carrying one head of cattle to 4 acres. The timber in the district comprises gum, box, stringy-bark, and mountain ash, close in; and a little further back, there are thousands of acres covered with mountain ash, messmate, stringy-bark, and white gum, the mountain ash running 60 and 70 feet without a branch. This belt extends from Micalong right through Gobragandra, Blowering, and Yarrangobilly, to within 8 or 9 miles of Kiandra. Strawberries, gooseberries, raspberries, mulberries, blackberries, cherries, plums, apricots, peaches, nectarines, almonds, walnuts, apples, melons—water, pie, and rock—passion-fruit, pears, quinces, oranges, lemons, loquats, pomegranates, and grapes, will thrive in the district, and 329 acres of land are likely to be planted with fruit-trees if the railway is constructed. Hundreds of tons of pie-melons grow wild, and are allowed to rot in the paddocks because we have no railway. Our fruit lasts all the year round, and when the Batlow and Tumut apples are gone we have oranges, lemons, and early cherries. Copper and other minerals. P. Halloran, 5 Dec., 1899.

P. Halloran. minerals are known to exist in the district, but they have never been worked. Pumpkins grow well through corn. If the railway were constructed, about 1,470 pigs would be reared. Hops grow well on the flats when they were tried some years ago, but the district is too far away from the railway to make the industry profitable. Vegetables such as potatoes, onions, peas, beans, carrots, turnips, parsnips, pumpkins, vegetable marrows, cauliflowers and cabbages do well. A great quantity of chaff would be sent away if there were a railway, but, owing to the long distance to the station, the cartage takes away one-third of the profit. At present there is no encouragement offered to the farmers to break up more ground. Sugar-beet was planted here some years ago, and it did remarkably well. If we had a railway here, we could get our reapers and binders to work, and save the straw which is now destroyed. About 18 cwt. of straw could be saved on every acre of wheat-land. There are three or four firms in Tumut who buy grain, and then they hire all the available teams to carry it to Gundagai, so that if the farmers did not sell to them they would have to wait three or four months before they could have their produce carried to the railway station.

2292. If the railway came nearer you could do your own carting? Yes. At the present time you can only take two truck-loads a week from Blowering to Gundagai.

2293. If there were a railway, how many people would settle upon the area that you speak of? I suppose that there is room for half a dozen farmers there, supposing they went in for wheat-growing. I do not know how many acres of orchard are necessary to keep a man; but fruit-trees will yield as well in that district as in any part of the Colony.

2294. Do you think that 50 acres would keep a man? I think so. Fifty acres of wheat-land would keep a man, though he would not make a rich living on that area. Until lately none of the high ground has been broken up, because it was considered unsuitable for farming; but, of recent years, they have found that wheat grows better there than on the river flats, and is less likely to be affected with rust.

2295. How is the country occupied now? It is used for grazing.

2296. Would it be available for farming if the proposed railway were made? Yes. It belongs to various owners.

2297. Have your neighbours stated that with better access to market they would go in for farming in preference to other occupations? Yes; and they have been very cautious in the statements they have made, because they are afraid of having their land tax increased. They have not made things appear better than they really are.

WEDNESDAY, 6 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Tumut, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEU, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Samuel Gordon, farmer, grazier, and dairyman, Gocup, sworn, and examined:—

- S. Gordon. 2298. *Chairman.*] How many miles do you live from Tumut? Six miles out, on the marked tree line.
6 Dec., 1899. 2299. How much land do you hold? 2,500 acres.
2300. How many sheep do you run? I have no sheep.
2301. How many cattle have you? 360 head.
2302. And how many horses? Sixty head.
2303. How much land do you cultivate? I cultivate 290 acres myself, and on the halves system, and I rent 890 acres.
2304. What is the character of your land? It is alluvial flat land.
2305. What crops do you get? I get from 35 to 40 bushels of corn to the acre, and about 25 bushels of wheat to the acre for 250 acres. I have also 15 acres under oats.
2306. Where is your market? I sell my produce locally, but it ultimately goes to Sydney. It is taken to Gundagai by team, along the marked tree line.
2307. What do you pay for carriage? About £1 a ton.
2308. That is for the 16 miles from your place to Gundagai? Yes.
2309. That is pretty high? They will not take it for less.
2310. Is that because the road is so hilly? Yes; it is a heavy road.
2311. If the proposed railway were made, I suppose you would send your produce back to Tumut, and consign it from there? I intend to go into dairying altogether.
2312. But would it not suit you better to grow crops upon your rich land? No; dairying would be better. I would use that land for grass.
2313. I suppose you could feed a large number of cattle upon those paddocks? On the rich land you could run a beast to 2 acres. There are 1,300 acres of alluvial land, and 800 acres of ordinary forest country. I have more forest country on the other side of the road.
2314. Do many other people intend to convert their cultivated land into paddocks? No, I do not think so.
2315. If the district is going to be used chiefly for dairying, it will very much diminish the railway traffic? Well, I speak only for myself, I cannot speak for anyone else.
2316. What do you get for the land you lease? Thirty-shillings an acre.
2317. That is for the rich land? Yes.
2318. Can a farmer make a living when he has to pay so high a rental as that? Yes, he can do so easily.
2319. What is the area of each farm? I have leased out 290 acres. The size of the farms runs from 35 to 40, 50, and 60 acres.
2320. Are all your tenants making a living by the cultivation of the land? Yes, by growing maize and tobacco. They are Chinese.
2321. All of them? Yes; though I am working some of my ground upon the halves system with European labour.

2322. I understand that the tobacco crop has not been satisfactory lately ;—is that because the tobacco grown is not of a kind that is cared for? Yes. S. Gordon.
2323. Then we may regard the tobacco-growing industry as one that is likely to collapse? Yes, unless they grow a better quality of tobacco. 6 Dec., 1899.
2324. The production of corn has gone down ;—is not that rather strange, seeing that the Tumut corn has such a good reputation? I believe that it fetches 1d. a bushel more than other corn; but the cost of carriage prevents our farmers from competing satisfactorily with the farmers in other places.
2325. If the proposed railway were made, would the farmers in your locality bring their produce to Tumut and consign it from there, instead of sending it to Gundagai? I think so.
2326. It would not cost anything like £1 a ton to do that? No.
2327. Is there a large area of agricultural land available for small holders? Well, I have moved very little about the district.
2328. Some of those who are opposed to the construction of the proposed railway say that the land round about Tumut is all held by large landed proprietors, who let to the farmers ;—is that a fact? I do not think so. I have been in the district fifteen years, and I let my first leases for periods of ten years, but, during the last five years, I have given only annual leases, because I intend to resume the land, and to put it under grass.
2329. Dairying is rather a new industry here? I have been engaged in it for ten years.
2330. Where have you sent your produce? To Tumut, Adelong, and Gundagai, and now I send to Sydney as well.
2331. Do you make a fair profit by sending to Sydney despite all the charges you have to pay? Yes, a fair profit.
2332. Are there many others who send milk and butter to Sydney? I do not know.

Hamlyn Lavicount Harris, land-owner, Tumut Plains, sworn, and examined:—

2333. *Mr. Dick.*] What is the acreage of your holding? The original acreage of the property was 25,000 acres. H. L. Harris.
2334. Will you tell us how much of that land is alluvial land, how much is forest land capable of cultivation, and how much is grazing land? There are about 3,000 acres of alluvial land, about 10,000 acres of forest land capable of cultivation, and about 8,000 acres of grazing land. 6 Dec., 1899.
2335. At the present time, how much land have you under cultivation? I have tenants in occupation of a little over 1,100 acres.
2336. Then the whole of your alluvial land is not under cultivation? No.
2337. Can you tell us what rent you receive, and how your tenants get on? I receive from £1 to 3s. an acre for the alluvial land.
2338. What is the average size of the holdings? About 40 acres.
2339. Is that enough for a man to make a living upon? Yes. Some of them have only 20 acres, while others have as much as 60 and 70 acres.
2340. What is the main crop? Maize and wheat.
2341. And tobacco? Yes. In past years a great deal of tobacco was grown, but there has not been so much grown during the last two or three years.
2342. Where is the produce disposed of? Most of it locally; but the maize and the wheat go to Sydney.
2343. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you lease out the remainder of your alluvial land, or place it under cultivation yourself? Yes; the greater part of it.
2344. Do you think that you are handicapped now by the cost of cartage from your place to Gundagai? Yes.
2345. Have you been gradually extending the area under crop, or have you continued to cultivate the same area for a long time? I have cultivated the same area for some time, though during the last two or three years I have let small extra areas.
2346. Is any of your land let on the halves system? No.
2347. What land do you cultivate yourself? I only grow a few acres of hay for my own use.
2348. What stock do you run on your estate? I have about 1,200 head of cattle, and about 100 horses.
2349. Any sheep? No.
2350. Do you think that the development of your holding has manifestly been retarded by the want of railway communication to Tumut? I am sure it has.
2351. Is the 10,000 acres of forest land such that it could be easily cleared? Pretty easily. The timber is not very heavy.
2352. Has any of it been rung? Yes; about 5,000 acres of it.
2353. If the proposed railway were made, could that land profitably be put under cultivation? Yes; it is all wheat-growing land.
2354. How many acres of forest land would be required to give a man a decent living for his family? I think about 100 acres.
2355. What would it cost to clear that land in its present state? £1 an acre.
2356. On how little alluvial land could a man make a living—on 50 acres? A man could make a living upon a smaller area than that. Fifty acres would make rather a large farm. The oldest tenant on my place has 50 acres of land, for which he has paid £1 an acre during thirty-seven years. He has reared a family of sixteen children upon it, and he has obtained as much as 3,500 bushels of corn and 12 tons of potatoes a year from it. Not only has he reared a family, and brought up his children to be useful citizens, but he has also purchased a freehold of 536 acres between Tumut and Gundagai.
2357. On your statements, the alluvial and forest land would provide accommodation for 160 families? Yes.
2358. Do you think that the only thing that prevents an increase of settlement is the long road carriage to Gundagai? Yes.
2359. Is your land supposed to be rich land? I think that it is; but the land on the Gilmore is also very rich.
2360. Do you know of many other patches of land of a fair size of equal richness? Yes, a good many.

- H. L. Harris. 2361. At the present time is it under cultivation or out of cultivation? A good deal of it is under cultivation. Up the river for 20 miles from Tumut there is similar land, and a good deal of it is under cultivation.
- 6 Dec., 1899. 2362. What is the average width of the alluvial flats up the river? I think about a mile.
2363. And in each case is there rising forest land before you come to the hilly country? Yes.
2364. Land fit for agriculture? Yes, undulating ridges.
2365. What would that make the total average width of arable land up the river? About 3 miles.
2366. Is there any other information which you can supply to the Committee? The district is very suitable for fruit-growing.
2367. Is the alluvial land, the forest land, or the high land most suitable for fruit-growing? I think the high ridges are the best.
2368. Do the fruit-trees frequently suffer from frosts? Not frequently.
2369. Has the frost during the present year been exceptional? I do not remember such a frost having occurred before, and I have been here thirty-seven years.
2370. Which route do you think would serve the district best? I think the route *via* Adelong. Adelong is an important mining centre, and I think the population along that route is larger than on the other route.
2371. Is there a larger area of land to be served there? I think so.

Rowland Mansfield Shelley, grazier, Tumut Plains, sworn, and examined:—

- R. M. Shelley. 2372. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been long in the district? I was born in the district, within half a mile of where I am now living.
- 6 Dec., 1899. 2373. It has been suggested that a line from Coolac, coming along the Tumut Valley, would give a better connection with Tumut than the proposed extension from Gundagai;—what do you think of the proposal? That line would suit a great many better than the proposed line, but if we are to consider the whole population to be benefited, I would say, "Take the railway *via* Adelong," and I have already voted for that proposal.
2374. You think that that is the line which is most likely to give a return for the money invested? I do, looking at other facts which will back it up in the future.
2375. Do you think that the construction of the proposed line will lead to the cultivation of a much larger area of land than is now being cultivated? Yes, a considerably larger area. The population will increase considerably, and more land will be cultivated.
2376. In what portion of the district do you think the increase of population will be most noticeable? Well, to the south there are large areas of country which are now leased by the Government as snow leases; but if the railway came to Tumut, and sheep could be brought more quickly to that land, its value would be considerably enhanced, and it would be cut up, and would support a large population. Then all over the eastern and southern hills adjacent to Tumut the population would increase, because the soil is suitable for growing anything.
2377. Would the land now let out in snow leases be suitable for agriculture? It would be suitable for dairying and for the growing of hay.
2378. Will they be able to grow enough hay there to support cattle during the winter months? Yes, quite sufficient.
2379. You are aware that the bringing of sheep by rail into the district to obtain summer pasture was quite a new experience last year? No; the railway to Gundagai was used for that purpose before last year.
2380. Mr. Harper told us that last year was the first in which any number of starving sheep worth speaking of were carried by the railways? Yes; it was the first year that any large number was brought.
2381. The probability is that in ordinary seasons stock coming from the lower levels to the mountainous country would be travelled along the stock routes? If the railway were extended to Tumut, a larger number of stock would come here, because their lives could be preserved with more certainty. At the present time the sheep come here in November or December, but instead of being able to stay up in the mountains until the first fall of snow takes place, they have to rush away before their time is really up.
2382. But would it pay to send sheep by railway if there were grass on the stock routes? The grass on the stock routes is eaten down by the first few flocks.
2383. The evidence of the Railway Commissioners points to the fact that owners prefer to use the stock routes? That was before they had experience of the railway.
2384. The experience is that sheep-owners prefer to travel store and breeding sheep along the stock routes rather than send them by train;—why should things be different in this district? The squatters down Riverina, anticipating the fall of rain, wait until their sheep get very weak before sending them away. Grass will grow in Riverina in twenty-four hours, if there is a fall of rain; and therefore the squatters there keep their sheep back till the last minute, and by that time they have become too weak to travel, and must use the railway.
2385. Would you regard Humula as within the influence of the proposed railway? The upper portion. Up towards Bago the country would be within the influence of the proposed railway. The traffic from a large part of that country which now goes towards Germanton would come to the proposed railway at Adelong Crossing.
2386. Have you any information to give us with regard to the mining operations of the district? No, I have not had much experience of mining, though in this district we live in the midst of an immense number of mines, and, as population increases, men of experience will come here who will know the worth of them. I would point out that the Tumut district is never known to suffer from drought; we are always able to obtain enough water. Our rivers and our main back creeks are never known to be dry, and we have always had sufficient quantity of grass for our stock. If in a dry season one crop has not matured, other crops have made up for it, because we do not confine ourselves to one crop, and we can grow anything here. There is no better place in the Colony for fruit-growing. All round Batlow, the further you go up the hills the better the soil is for fruit-growing. All English fruits will grow in the district. This district is a sanitarium, and if it were brought within quick access of Sydney it would be a boon to the Colony generally.

2387. There is mountainous country nearer to Sydney than the Tumut district? Well, there can be no doubt that we are heavily handicapped in regard to the carriage of our produce. We have to pay exactly what the carriers charge us—from 4d. to 7d. a bushel for maize. About twelve years ago I had as fine a dairy as any man could have; but I discontinued it after three years, because I found that my produce would have to be taken to Gundagai at night, or the cheese would run all over the place in grease in hot weather.

R. M. Shelley.
6 Dec., 1899.

2388. You pay 16s. 8d. a ton to send your maize to Gundagai? Yes; but when the market is up in Sydney we cannot compete, because we cannot obtain a sufficient number of carriers to get our stuff away in time. The high prices only last for about a month, and in that time not more than a fourth or an eighth of our produce can be sent away, and then we have to hold the remainder until next year, or take a lower price. Any number of people round here would go in for pig-rearing if the proposed railway were made, because it would be possible to send away a few animals at a time. So with calves. I would often send calves away if I could get my neighbours to join me in making-up a truck-load; but it is not practicable when we have to send to Gundagai.

2389. Do you intend to store your maize here so as to be able to take advantage of any rise in the market, or will you allow it to take its chance? We would be ready to chance the market, because a railway would make a saving of 3d. or 4d. a bushel in the cost of carriage straight away.

2390. With regard to goods coming here, there would be no reduction upon the present rates;—under those circumstances do you think the carriers will compete with the railway? No; I am sure that they would not try to do so.

2391. The carriers get £1 a ton now, and the railway rates would be 19s. 3d. a ton;—why would not the carriers compete under those circumstances? A great many of the carriers are farmers, and they would farm more of their land if the proposed railway were made.

2392. And consequently would not have so much time for carrying? No.

2393. Is there not a period of the year when the farmers have no other occupation for their horses? A certain number of them would perhaps discontinue carrying altogether. Of course, they would have a certain amount of employment in bringing produce to the railway at Tumut. Round about Patlow, potatoes as good as those grown at Warrnambool can be grown, and they would be brought to the railway. Then, too, there would be a large timber trade.

2394. The Commissioners anticipate a loss of £1,271 a year upon the working of the proposed line;—do you think that the people here would be prepared to guarantee a portion of that loss? I do not think so.

2395. Would it not be worth their while to do so? I do not think there would be any loss.

2396. In that case it would be a safe thing to give the guarantee? I think the Works Committee have said that they hardly expect any line to pay at first.

2397. The question is, when the loss is a large one, will the people in the district be prepared to guarantee a portion of it? I would not undertake to answer your question until a public meeting had been held to consider the subject. If those present at such a meeting agreed to give a guarantee, probably I should do so.

2398. Mr. Harper estimates that 1,000 bales of wool would be carried on the proposed railway;—do you think that that is an under-estimate? Yes, it is considerably under the mark. People have not been going in for many sheep here until recently; but now they see that sheep will pay well, and they are going in more for sheep than formerly.

2399. *Mr. Levien.*] If you were within a short distance of the railway you could send away calves and pigs without loss or deterioration? Yes; and we should save three days' travelling.

2400. *Mr. Watson.*] What proportion of the country between Gundagai and Adelong is fit for agriculture? There is a large area of country between Adelong Creek and Mount Horeb which is fit for agriculture. A lot of the land through which the railway would pass is undulating country, and would be suitable for wheat. People are beginning to see now that the flat land is too strong for wheat, and that it grows better on the undulating land, and now they are clearing their higher land and are using their flat lands for crops other than wheat.

2401. Is much of the land you speak of more in the direction of Gundagai? All through the Mount Horeb country and the Gadara country there is good land.

2402. Where does that country commence? It extends from the Adelong Crossing-place right through to the Gilmore.

2403. A lot of the forest land you speak of is within 8 or 10 miles of the existing railway;—why, then, has it not been put under wheat? It makes a wonderful difference to a man if the railway runs right through his property instead of being 5 miles distant.

2404. But we have been led to understand that if the railway were brought to Tumut the land between 15 and 20 miles of Tumut would be cultivated, and yet we find the land within a few miles of Gundagai uncultivated? I think that is due to want of energy.

2405. If the country beyond Tumut is allowed to remain in the same state as the country between Gundagai and Tumut, we cannot hope for much increase in the railway traffic? The people about Tumut are more pushing than the people about Gundagai. Gundagai has always borne the name of Sleepy Hollow, and when the people there were trying to obtain the railway they referred to the existence of the rich valley of the Tumut in support of their application. I consider that in ten years the population here will be three times as much as it is now.

2406. *Mr. Levien.*] In that case a great deal of merchandise will be brought here? Yes.

2407. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that the fact that the rainfall south of Tumut is much greater than immediately south of Gundagai would give more encouragement to the prosecution of agriculture there? Yes.

2408. The rainfall increases rapidly as you go south? Yes; of course the rainfall south of Gundagai is very good. The rainfall throughout all this part of the country is good. Ten miles from here you get another 6 or 7 inches however.

2409. Of course, with a greater rainfall there would be greater production? Yes; if the proposed railway were made, part of the money now spent on existing roads could be spent in giving access to the fruit-growing country on the high lands. There is plenty of good land to the east of Tumut, although the country there is mountainous. In the valleys there is plenty of land which is fit for growing anything.

Arthur Bannerman-Graves, miner, Micalong, sworn, and examined:—

A.
Bannerman-
Graves.
6 Dec., 1899.

2410. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far are you from Tumut? About 22 miles east-north-east.

2411. I understand that you have a statement to make to the Committee? Yes. The areas of land in this district suitable for cultivation are too vast to admit of accurate estimate, but 20,000 acres would be somewhat near the mark. From that land the production of 20 bushels of wheat and 25 bushels of oats per acre might be looked for. There are thousands of acres of land which, if properly cultivated, would yield magnificent crops of almost every variety of English grasses—lucerne, clover, rye grasses, rib grass, trefoil, &c., or wheat, oats, barley, rye, and cereals generally. Potatoes, turnips, peas, beans, khol-rabi, rape, carrots, mangel-wurzel, &c., would also do well. All this ground is now unused for want of suitable means of transit to market. The soil, in a great measure, is of volcanic origin. There are also some 80,000 acres of grazing land, 2 of which will carry a sheep and 10 will carry a bullock. During the late drought the capabilities of the Alpin Ranges and slopes underwent a very severe test; with most gratifying results. Vast belts of valuable timber exist at Nottingham Forest, parish of Napier, on the Micalong Ranges, Cooleman, and for many miles south of the Micalong, abounding with splendid timber—mountain ash, messmate, and stringybark, most of which grows on excellent soil of volcanic origin. Fruit-trees grow luxuriantly in the district; apples, pears, plums, cherries, grapes, gooseberries, black and red currants, peaches, &c., all doing well. The fruit grown in the mountain regions is much superior to that grown on low lands—the latter is of too spongy a nature for transit, is easily bruised, and will not keep. Fruit of every description grown in the mountain ranges, or adjoining thereto, is much more solid, not so readily bruised, and will therefore bear more knocking about on transit. In fact, fruit grown in these regions bear a remarkable resemblance to English fruit. I know of no district so admirably suited for growing high-class fruit. Want of communication is the chief drawback. We have splendid soil for the purpose, and plenty of room. Minerals are abundant in the district, but are undeveloped, there being no suitable outlet; Gundagai, the nearest railway station, being too far away. I was extensively engaged in chrome-mining, but I could not make it pay because of the heavy cartage—14s. to 16s. a ton. Both hematite and magnetic iron are abundant, and gold, copper, lead, silver, and tin exist in large quantities, but the deposit has not been developed. The unalienated land in the district has been estimated at 100,000 acres.

2412. What experience have you had in fruit-growing? I have had a great deal of experience from time to time.

2413. In this locality? I have not grown much fruit in this locality, though I have seen it growing here.

2414. How is it that to-day, in Tumut, one cannot buy a pound of locally-grown fruit? I cannot say.

2415. Is the district of which you speak so superior to Tumut that fruit can be grown there when it cannot be grown here? It is in every sense equally good country, and for apple-growing probably superior country; but the fruit industry has not been developed there for want of an outlet.

2416. Tumut has been settled for a very long time, so that they must have had time to test the capabilities of the soil? In the neighbourhood of Tumut fruit is grown to a considerable extent.

2417. Is there any cultivation at all at Micalong? Yes.

2418. Is there much alienated land there? Not very much.

2419. What area of land is under cultivation at Micalong? There is not much land under cultivation there at the present time. What is cultivated is in small patches. There may be 300 or 400 acres under cultivation.

2420. Chiefly under wheat, I suppose? Yes.

2421. What area of land would be under fruit? Very little. At the present time the only orchards there are small orchards to provide fruit for home consumption.

2422. What area of land is there under cultivation at Bondo? There is very little land under fruit there. I have spoken of the capabilities of the country, not of its production. The orchards there are simply for home use, because at the present time it is useless to grow fruit for market there.

2423. Where have you had experience in fruit-growing? In the old country, and in the neighbourhood of Parramatta.

2424. And you have come to the conclusion that the districts you speak of are suitable for fruit-growing? Most decidedly.

2425. Do you feel satisfied that there is valuable mineral land in the area you have spoken of? Yes.

2426. Has any work been done there? Yes; I sent some chrome to the old country, and it was of the highest grade ever introduced there.

2427. Can you tell us what industry is likely to develop sufficiently to furnish traffic to the railway within two or three years of its opening? The construction of the railway would induce closer settlement, and the whole of the Argalong country is so suitable for agriculture that I think it would be taken up in small holdings, and people there would grow more produce. Then, too, the mineral production would be very much increased, even in the first year. I myself would endeavour to do something in that direction.

2428. Is there plenty of water there for mining purposes? A never failing supply.

2429. And plenty of timber? Yes, and every requisite. There is an immense quantity of valuable timber there, and it would be brought to market if there were a railway. The taking out of the timber would clear the land, and it would then come under cultivation.

2430. *Chairman.*] How far is Micalong from the Gundagai railway station at the present time? About 40 miles.

2431. Would the traffic from that district come to Tumut if the proposed railway were made? Yes, the whole of it.

2432. Because of the bad roads on the other route? Yes.

2433. *Mr. Watson.*] Is this the season for the kind of fruit that grows in the district you have mentioned? Yes; the fruit is just coming forward.

2434. Would it be on the market at the present time, or a little later? A little later. Cherries come in about Christmas time, gooseberries about the same time, and plums very much later.

2435. I suppose that is why the market is bare of local fruit at the present time? Yes; it is too early for fruit here now.

Daniel Lane Herlihy, miner and grazier, Argalong, sworn, and examined:—

2436. *Mr. Levien.*] How long have you been living in this district? All my life.
2437. Where is your holding? Fourteen miles due east of Tumut.
2438. How many acres have you there? I am working in conjunction with my brother, and we have some 15,000 acres altogether, including leased land.
2439. That is including annually leased land? Annual leases, C.L.'s, and C.P.'s.
2440. What stock do you run? During the last few years we have been leasing our land, and we have been running only about twenty-five head of horses and a hundred head of cattle.
2441. Have you any sheep of your own? Not now. We have been leasing our country to Riverina people.
2442. Does that pay you better? Not now, but when wool was very low it did.
2443. If you had known of a rise of the price of wool you would have been running sheep of your own? Yes; we are intending to stock this year.
2444. What do you get for your land when you lease it? From £75 to £100 for every 1,000 sheep carried; that is what we get for the frontage country.
2445. And what do you get for the back country? From £35 to £40 a thousand sheep.
2446. Did the Railway Commissioners or any other officials come to you for information when they were compiling their estimate of the probable traffic? I understand that the Railway Commissioners came here, but they made a very short visit. They did not go into details, because, if they had done so, they would have altogether a different tale to tell. They saw nothing of the district, except the country they passed through.
2447. Did you hear of any inquiries being made amongst your neighbours? No.
2448. An inquiry such as the Committee are now making would have been more conducive to the obtaining of proper information? Yes. I think that is what we are entitled to.
2449. You think that if the Commissioners had made proper inquiries their estimate of traffic would have been much larger, and the deficiency that they speak of would have been much less? I consider that if they had gone into the matter thoroughly they would have known that their estimate was quite an absurd one. They did not give any credit at all to the natural resources of the district.
2450. How many sheep to the acre does your frontage land carry? The improved frontage land would carry just a fraction over a sheep to the acre.
2451. And the back land? A sheep to 3 or 4 acres.
2452. What is your opinion as to the capabilities of the district? I think that this is one of the finest districts in New South Wales, as regards climate, and agricultural, pastoral, and mineral resources.
2453. Have you any land under cultivation? Only a small area.
2454. How much? Only for our own use. We have a very bad road, so that we cannot even get to Tumut very easily.
2455. I suppose you only grow enough to feed your own stock? We do not send away a pound of produce.
2456. Have you done anything in mining at your place? A good deal of gold and tin mining is being done in the immediate vicinity.
2457. Is there much tin there? Not a very great quantity.
2458. Are there many tin-mines open there? There has never been any prospecting to speak of there, except what is now going on. There is a good deal of tin associated with the alluvial gold on all the creeks.
2459. But not in payable quantities? Yes; payable from a miner's point of view.
2460. What about the gold? A number of reefs were sunk upon during the boom time, thirty-seven years ago, but the influx of water was so great that the miners were forced to withdraw. Of course, at that time it was more difficult than it is now to get proper pumping machinery.
2461. Are there any alluvial workings there? Yes.
2462. How do they pan out? The men have done very well, but the alluvial workings now are pretty well worked out, and require heavy pumping machinery. There is one firm which is negotiating for a dredge to work some of the alluvial ground immediately below the reefs, and a couple of companies intend to work the reefs down to a greater depth, and are obtaining machinery to enable them to contend with the difficulties that they will have to meet.
2463. Where does the stock that is placed upon your land come from? From Riverina.
2464. Does it come by train, or travel by road? About half the stock came by road, and the other half by train to Gundagai.
2465. Was the stock in bad condition when it came? Yes; we had a difficulty to get it on to the run, but the sheep went away very much better than they came. I got a very good reference from Mr. F. R. Clayton, who was thoroughly satisfied with the condition of his sheep, and considered that our country was equal to any of the hill country.
2466. What is the rainfall at your place? I think we have between 36 and 40 inches at this end, but, further back, at the top end of Argalong, there is a rainfall of about 56 inches.
2467. Have you ever been short of feed? Only through overstocking.
2468. Do you know anything about the capacity of that country for fruit-growing? We have a small orchard, and the trees there do very well. Our country seems to be admirably adapted for fruit, and those who have orchards there can grow fruit which is equal to, if not superior to, the fruit grown in any part of the Tumut district, or, in fact, in any part of New South Wales.
2469. What kind of timber is there? Mountain ash, stringybark, and messmate.
2470. Is it all good timber? Excellent timber.
2471. Is much of it used? There is one saw-mill at work there, but it is too far from market. In 1894 £12,336 worth of chrome was taken from the Gundagai district. Chrome is worth about £3 2s. a ton, so that it can only be worked within a certain radius of a railway station; but the same matrix of chrome exists right through to the Tumut River, Robb's Hole, and out that way. If the railway were extended to Tumut the chrome industry would be a very important one. Chrome is known to exist along the Little River in very large quantities.
2472. And what is the quality of it? The quality is pretty good. Our iron resources are also very important. On the table-land country near Yarrangobilly there is an enormous deposit of iron, and on the Cooleman Plain there are about 30 square miles of limestone country, and large ferruginous masses

D. L. Herlihy.
6 Dec., 1899.

D. L. Herlihy. all over that country. At one place I estimated that there were half a million tons available, practically within sight, while gold, silver, lead, and copper are to be found almost in the same vicinity.
 6 Dec., 1899. 2473. How far away is that district? It is equi-distant from Queanbeyan, Cooma, and Gundagai. The following statement gives the result of several assays which I have had made:—

No.	Assays of Ores.		
		oz.	dwt. grs.
1. Galena,	65 per cent. lead ; silver,	27	4 10
2. Carb. and silica,	10 „ ; „	9 16	5 ; trace of copper ; gold trace, under 2 dwt.
3. Silver lead	19½ „ ; „	5 8	20
4. „	20 „ ; „	10 19	19 ; slight trace of copper.
5. „	24 „ ; „	4 7	3
6. „	20 „ ; „	4 7	13
7. „	65 „ ; „	10 17	17
8. Sample taken from 9-ft. (wide) reef, 36½ per cent. lead ; silver, 11 oz. 19 dwt. 13 grs. ; strong trace of copper ; trace of gold.			
9A. Mudstone (not reef).			
9B. Silica and copper in it, taken from reef 35 ft. wide, 11 oz. 19 dwt. 13 grs. of silver.			
10. Sulphate of lime, indication of lead ; silver, 1 oz. 1 dwt. 9 grs.			
11. Iron gossan, slight indication of silver.			
12. Iron gossan, slight indication of silver.			

STEPHEN J. VALE.

The above is a true copy of Mr. Vale's assay.—D. L. HERLIHY.

No. 1 is good galena ; No. 2, carbonate of lead and gangue (silver) ; No. 3, carbonate of lead and gangue (silver).

I have also received the following information from the Department of Mines in regard to another sample:—

Sir, Department of Mines and Agriculture, Geological Survey Branch, Sydney, 21 August, 1896.
 I have the honor to inform you that the sample submitted by you, and stated to come from Cooleman, Tumut (D. Herlihy, junior), has been assayed with the following result:—3649—Crystallised galena with a very little siliceous gangue, yielding : silver, 21 oz. 15 dwt. 13 grs. per ton ; no gold ; metallic lead, 80·00 per cent.

I have, &c.,

D. C. McLACHLAN,

Under Secretary for Mines and Agriculture

(per E. F. PITTMAN).

T. Jones, Esq., M.P., Sydney.

2474. You send to Gundagai for your goods and get them *via* Tumut? Yes.
 2475. The draftsman of the Stock Branch speaks of the area of country likely to be affected by the proposed railway as bounded on the east by the range dividing the waters of the Tumut and the Baloo Arm;—you are considerably to the east of that country? Yes.
 2476. Do you think that this official has limited the area to be served by the railway too narrowly? I do not know how he could lay down such lines. Any goods that we get from Gundagai have to come within three-quarters of a mile of Tumut.
 2477. How far from the east of Tumut would it suit people to come to Tumut instead of to Cooma? Forty miles east from here—as far as Coodradigbee.
 2478. Is there much stock between the Peak River and that place? Yes; it is nearly all pastoral country.
 2479. Do they send their wool now by way of Tumut and Gundagai? Yes; though a portion of that wool goes through to Yass and a portion to Queanbeyan. Some of the settlers when they want to shear rent a place in the vicinity of the railway station at Yass or Queanbeyan, and take their sheep there to shear them.
 2480. Which do you think would be the best route for the proposed railway? Having regard to the number of people to be served, I favour the staked line. With regard to the opening up of the country for all future time, I would, perhaps, be inclined to favour the other route.
 2481. Has starving stock ever been sent to this district before last year? No.
 2482. How long have you been here? All my life—twenty-five years.
 2483. You admit that any revenue you would derive from the carriage of starving stock must be only occasional? Yes; if there were a railway to Tumut, however, that traffic would increase, because the road between Gundagai and Tumut is very droughty, and the lanes are narrow. That prevents people from sending stock here, though, if there were a railway, they would probably send it here by train. When you get here you are beyond the droughty country.
 2484. How many acres of your land are fit for cultivation? Somewhere about 7,000 acres would be fit for cultivation if the land were improved.
 2485. What would it cost per acre to take off the timber? From £1 to £5 per acre, according to the class of timber.
 2486. What crops would the land be suitable for? Wheat, oats, barley, rye, lucerne, and various fruits.
 2487. Is there much land which would be suitable for lucerne? Yes; lucerne seems to thrive splendidly there, and so do all kinds of English grasses. Some of the upland country beyond our place—the Yarrangobilly and the limestone country—seems to be magnificently adapted for growing grain. The greater part of the land is deep volcanic soil—more than 20 feet deep in some places.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

Joseph Lambert, grazier, East Blowering, sworn, and examined:—

2488. *Chairman.*] I understand that your holding is about 12 miles to the south-east of Tumut? Yes.

2489. Have you a statement to make? Yes. The following tabulated statement supplies information in regard to the character and extent of the land in my district, and the manner in which it is held:—

J. Lambert.
6 Dec., 1899.PARTICULARS for submission to the Public Works Committee in justification of the extension of a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut, *via* Adelong.

Owner.	Crown lands.	Area of land at present cultivated.			Area suited for cultivation.			Area suited for grazing.			Total area.	Production, and carrying capacity per acre.		
	acres.	ar.	r.	p.	a c.	r.	p.	ac.	r.	p.	ac.		r.	p.
Joseph Lambert .	13,000	250	0	0	2,500	0	0	4,500	0	0	20,000	0	0	Average production—maize, per acre, 50 bushels; wheat, per acre, 25 bushels; oats, per acre, 40 bushels; potatoes, per acre, 7 tons. The carrying capacity of the 13,000 acres of Crown lands for the year I estimate at 2½ acres per sheep, say 6,000, or 8 acres to each head of large stock. Regarding the fruits and vegetables that grow in abundance here are the following: Fruits—apples, pears, plums, peaches, grapes, walnuts, cherries, nectarines, mulberries, quinces, apricots, and gooseberries. Vegetables—cabbages, pumpkins, potatoes, tomatoes, cauliflower, flowers, peas, beans, radishes, turnips, squashes; in fact, all garden vegetables grow splendidly.
John E. Bridle	40	0	0	80	0	0	141	0	0	221	0	0	Average returns per acre—wheat, 20 bushels; maize, 60 bushels; oats, 40 bushels; potatoes, 8 tons (have had 16 tons). Carrying capacity, similar to above. Fruit, vegetables, &c., similar to above.
John Morris	16	0	0	40	0	0	130	0	0	170	0	0	Average returns per acre—wheat, 25 bushels; corn, 50 bushels. Carries 20 head horses, 40 cattle, or about 300 sheep all the year round.
Thomas Morris	40	0	0	150	0	0	350	0	0	500	0	0	Average returns per acre—wheat, 20 bushels; maize, 50 bushels. Carries about 150 head cattle all the year round, or about 1,000 sheep, 20 horses, and 20 pigs.
John Ryan.....	60	0	0	60	0	0	110	0	0	170	0	0	Average returns per acre—wheat, 20 bushels; maize, 35 bushels. Carries 15 horses, 15 cattle, and 3 pigs all the year round.

NOTE.—Any or all of the above holdings are eminently suited for the purposes of dairying or experimental farms, or the establishment of piggeries on a large scale. Timber.—Speaking of timber, our forests of gum, stringybark, and mountain ash cannot be excelled in quality, and will form a considerable item as a commodity for exportation. With reference to my own holding or that part of the conditional purchase improved land, it is capable of carrying from 1 to 1½ sheep to the acre all the year round, and 4 sheep per acre for six months.

2490. Is your land exceptionally good land? No; it is a fair sample of the land in the district.

2491. For a considerable distance round? Yes.

2492. For what area of country? For an area of country extending in some directions 18 miles, and in other directions 12 and 7 miles.

2493. I suppose your grazing land is highly improved? It is.

2494. Is it expensive land to clear? Yes, parts of it.

2495. Would it cost £3 an acre? Some of it would cost as much as £10 an acre. 16,000 sheep are there now for agistment.

2496. Is your holding at the present time stocked to its fullest extent? No.

2497. But it would not carry so much stock all the year round? I have had 2,800 cattle upon it all the year round.

2498. And any sheep? No; only cattle and horses.

2499. The sheep are there just for the summer? Yes, until the 1st of May; they go away then.

2500. Do those sheep come *via* Gundagai? No, they came *via* Wagga Wagga. Last year there were nearly 15,000, and they came *via* Gundagai; but this year the grass is a little better.

2501. This year they brought the sheep into the district before they were dead beat? Yes.

2502. Do any of the people to whom you have referred work on the halves system? No; but I have other tenants who work on that system.

2503. Is the system a satisfactory one to landlord and tenant? Yes. Some of my tenants have been with me for fifteen years.

2504. The evidence we had in Sydney was that the tenant farmers were an unsatisfactory class, and did not farm their land as well as the other farmers? That has not been my experience. They have done very well with me, as a rule.

2505. You seem to be located pretty close to a large tract of land held under occupation license, or untenanted;—what is the character of that land? Some of it is very good, but some of it is very rough. It is good land for grazing, and about one-third of it would be good for farming.

2506. As an old resident of the district, what is your opinion as to its future development;—is there much scope for agriculture here, or is the available land very limited in extent? The available land is very extensive.

2507. Does that remark apply to the land beyond Tumut, or to the land between Gundagai and Tumut? From Gundagai to Tumut, and then out towards Adelong and Wagga Wagga.

- J. Lambert. 2508. How is it that more farming has not been done between Gundagai and Tumut, seeing that that country is within a reasonable distance of a railway? Some of the land there is not of the best quality, and then, too, it is held by large land-holders.
- 6 Dec., 1899. 2509. Who hold it for pastoral purposes? Yes.
2510. When you get beyond Tumut are the conditions more favourable for settlement? Yes.
2511. There are not so many large land-holders? No; and there are more selectors and farmers.
2512. More people who have small holdings and who would increase their production if they had a ready market? That is my opinion.
2513. Is most of your arable land under cultivation at the present time? No only 300 acres are under cultivation at the present time.
2514. Why do you not put more land under cultivation? Because of the cattle I run. I do not farm any land myself.
2515. If there were a ready market, would it pay you better to let out your land in farms? Yes; if there were better transit to market.
2516. At the present time which pays you better—to lease your land for farming or to run sheep and cattle upon it? It pays better to lease the land.
2517. What rent do you get? In some instances I go halves, and in some cases I have got as much as £2 5s. an acre rent.
2518. Would that be flat land? It would not all be flat land.
2519. Have the men who are paying that rental been with you for any considerable length of time, and are they making comfortable livings? Yes. I am getting £1,150 for the land upon which the 16,000 sheep are running at the present time. That rent is for a period of six months.
2520. But that is an exceptional rent? I have received it frequently during the last eighteen years. I have received as much £1,260 for some of the paddocks.
2521. How many times have you leased your land for the use of starving sheep? Seven times.
2522. Are not the sheep generally driven into the district instead of being brought by rail? No; in many cases they come by rail to Gundagai. Last year nearly 15,000 sheep came to Gundagai by train, and stayed at my place for six months.
2523. That was an exceptional year? Yes. This year 16,000 sheep have come up. They came by rail to Wagga Wagga, and as they were only the third flock, and there was plenty grass on the roads, they were driven up from Wagga Wagga to my place.
2524. How many starving sheep have come to your place during the last eighteen years, and have been conveyed by rail to the nearest station to your run? Sheep have been brought twice to Gundagai, and once to Wagga Wagga. Of course, sheep used to come on to my run before the railway to Gundagai was made.
2525. If the railway were completed to Tumut would it convey a large number of starving stock? I think so.
2526. How do you get your stock to market? By way of Gundagai.
2527. Where do you get your goods from? I get them in Tumut. I support the local storekeeper.
2528. Which route do you favour—that by way of Adelong, or that from Coolac by way of the Tumut River? The Adelong route.
2529. Do you think that that route would benefit most people? Yes.
2530. Do you think the dairying industry is likely to increase here? Yes; the district generally is suitable for dairying. If I do not sell my cattle on the place, I send away from 200 to 500 head every year.
2531. They go to Gundagai? Yes.
2532. If the proposed railway were made, would you continue to drive them to Gundagai? No; I would truck them at Tumut, if they were not sold on the station.
2533. *Mr. Watson.*] You would not have to pay very much more to send stock from Tumut than from Gundagai—only £1 a truck,—so that it would pay you to truck at Tumut? Yes; if the railway were made to Tumut.
2534. *Chairman.*] We have been told that the people here “cannot extend the area under cultivation very much, and the area available for stock is not a very large one”? That is not in accordance with my knowledge of the district.
2535. The witness goes on to say,—“You may judge what kind of country it is from the fact that under normal conditions it produces 140 tons of wool; that is equal to 1,000 bales”? I think that is too small an estimate. Before I had cattle I used to send away 140 bales myself.
2536. *Mr. Levien.*] Did any of the Railway Commissioners or their officials interview you with reference to the capabilities of the district? No; and they made no inquiries that I heard of.
2537. How often do you truck stock to Sydney? I send away from 300 to 500 head of cattle every year.
2538. Do you know what steps the Railway Commissioners took to make themselves acquainted with the district? No.
2539. Was no notification given to anyone here that they were making an inquiry? No. I did not hear anything about them until they had gone.
2540. Did the Commissioners move about the district at all? No.

Arnold Hamilton Peter Watts, manager, West Blowering station, sworn, and examined:—

2541. *Mr. Dick.*] How far are you from Tumut? About 10 miles south of Tumut.

2542. What is the acreage of your holding? Between 15,000 and 16,000 acres.

2543. Have you prepared a statement for the information of the Committee? Yes. The following statement shows the area held by the owners of the run and the selectors upon it, and its capabilities for various kinds of production:—

A. H. P.
Watts.

6 Dec., 1899.

Owner.	Total area.	Cultivation.	Grazing.	Land available for cultivation.	Wheat.	Maize.	Hay.	Tobacco.	Potatoes.	Orchards.	Carrying capacity.
London Bank of Australia.	9,131	550	8,581	650	bushels 5,000	bushels 8,400	tons 15	tons 4	tons 9	a. r. p. 7 0 0	5,500 sheep, 200 head cattle, 40 horses.
W. H. Higgins . . .	100	31	69	20	350	280	2	...	5	0 2 0	15 head large stock.
J. Bowden, jun... .	90	52	38	25	540	400	3	...	8	.....	10 " "
E. & J. Higgins... .	330	100	230	150	1,300	750	6	...	3	0 2 0	40 " "
Beattie Bros.	340	70	270	80	1,250	800	20	...	5	0 2 0	60 " "
T. Eggleton	250	70	180	10	250	1,250	...	...	...	0 2 0	45 " "
M. Hunt.....	170	42	128	90	650	400	...	...	2	.....	25 " "
J. Stanfield	40	14	26	...	20	800	...	...	...	0 1 0	5 " "
C. Guy	130	36	94	50	400	.....	...	...	...	.....	25 " "
P. Denning	4,100	130	3,970	180	800	2,000	...	...	12	0 1 0	2,000 sheep, 50 head large stock.
	14,681	1,095	13,586	1,255	10,560	15,080	46	4	44	9 2 0	

2544. Is any land rented from you for farming purposes? Yes.

2545. How much of that land is cultivated? The area cultivated is included in the 550 acres mentioned in my return.

2546. That includes your own cultivation and the cultivation of the rented land? Yes. I cultivate some land myself, growing wheat chiefly.

2547. Can you tell us what number of acres of land there are not now cultivated and not selected? At least 650 acres of land on the holding would be suitable for cultivation, but are not cultivated now.

2548. If the proposed railway were constructed what would you do with that land? There is a lot of it which I would be prepared to open up.

2549. What rental do you get for your land? From 32s. to 37s. 6d. an acre.

2550. Do the tenants do well on it? Yes, very well.

2551. What is your average clip? About 6 lb. of wool to the sheep.

2552. How many bales do you get on the average? About 100. Last year I rented my country, and the year before I sold the sheep in the wool. Last winter I could only half stock, so that this year I only got forty-eight bales of wool.

2553. Then calculations as to the yield of wool made on the production of last year would not be reliable as showing the actual amount that the district could produce? Well, I could have produced from 100 to 130 bales.

2554. Did others beside yourself sell their sheep with the wool on? I could not tell you.

Charles Gilbert Long, farmer and grazier, Laemalac, sworn, and examined:—

2555. *Mr. Watson.*] You live 7½ miles to the east of Tumut? Yes.

2556. And I understand that your holding comprises 1,180 acres? Yes.

2557. Is it mostly agricultural or mostly pastoral land? I could put about 200 acres under cultivation.

2558. Is the land that is under cultivation mostly flat land or is it rising ground? It is forest land.

2559. What have you been getting from the cultivated portion of your land? Last year I got fully 25 bushels of wheat to the acre. I have not grown any corn during the last few years.

2560. There has not been the same market for it lately? No; I am growing corn again now, however. I sell some of my land sometimes.

2561. What can your grazing land carry? I am running 1,110 sheep now, and about eighty head of cattle.

2562. Do you usually carry that number of stock? Yes. When I have fewer sheep I have more cattle.

2563. Is your land pretty good? It is pretty good land. The scourer here offered to give me 1s. 2d. a pound for my wool in the grease.

2564. Is it merino or cross-bred wool? Merino.

2565. Does your land include any of the high ridges. Yes, that is where I run my sheep.

2566. For how long does that kind of country furnish grass? I can run my sheep well all the winter.

2567. Can the sheep find feed on the higher hills in the winter time? I generally find them on the highest ground I have. They camp there at night.

2568. I understand that further south from here the higher ground can be used only as summer country, but round your way the higher ridges will carry sheep in the winter time? Yes, splendidly. My country adjoins the country about which Mr. Graves was giving evidence, only I am on the frontage.

2569. Is there any considerable area of country near to where you are that is suitable for agriculture? Well, I am on the place highest up the Little River. There are small flats above me of 8 or 10 acres in extent, upon which a little hay or wheat could be grown.

2570. The greater part of your land is pastoral land? Yes, and it is good land.

2571. Is the pastoral land extensive? Yes, it is all selected land.

2572. If the proposed railway were made, could the land which is now devoted to sheep be turned to better account? The high ground could not be turned to better account, but the low ground could be. I consider that there are 1,000 acres of splendid forest land there which could be cultivated.

2573. Do you think that the proposed route is the best that could be obtained in the interests of the district? By far the best. Of course, a line coming through Brungle would run through finer properties, but the proposed line would serve more people.

2574.

C. G. Long.

6 Dec., 1899.

- C. G. Long. 2574. Have you anything to add to the evidence which you have heard already? I have heard it said that Tumut has gone back in regard to wheat growing, but that is because we have lost the market which we once used to have. Thirty-seven years ago I used to cart flour to Hay, but we do not do it now, and I even had to send to Granville for flour. We used to cart our maize to Bowning, but we have lost most of our old markets. Tumut, however, has gone ahead during the last few years. I might mention that there is any quantity of chrome in the country I speak of. Mr. Kelly, the manager at Coolac, told me that if I sank 6 feet more, and the deposit became bigger, he would put in a wire rope arrangement for drawing it out, but it did not become bigger, and the percentage is not high enough to make the cartage profitable.
2575. Do you think that there would be a large output if the railway came nearer? Yes; the lode runs right from Coolac.
2576. And what is the percentage of chrome? About 50 per cent. If the carriage were less, 40 per cent. would pay.
2577. Are there any other minerals up your way that you think would be developed if the railway were made? There is gold there in patches, though the deposit is not extensive. They talk of bringing a dredge there.

Harry Wharton Mason, medical practitioner, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

- H. W. Mason. 2578. *Mr. Levien.*] How long have you resided in this district? Nearly sixteen years.
2579. I suppose you have a thorough knowledge of the district? Yes; I think I know the district for 40 miles round.
2580. Have you any land under cultivation here? Yes; I have 170 or 180 acres under maize this year.
2581. Have you any land under wheat or oats? Only a small area.
2582. How long have you had this land under cultivation? About 50 acres of it have only been put under cultivation this year; but some of the land has been under cultivation for ten or twelve years.
2583. What is your average yield per acre? This year I shall get about 4,000 bushels of maize from about 100 acres of ground.
2584. What do you do with your maize? It goes to Sydney.
2585. What do you pay a ton to have it conveyed to Gundagai? One year I paid the teamsters £80 odd; but of late years I have generally sent it away by my own teams.
2586. How many tons do you send away at one time? The usual load is about sixty bags, which is equal to about 6 tons.
2587. How many acres do you hold altogether? I do not suppose that I have more than 600 or 700 acres. The rest of the land is used chiefly for dairying.
2588. If the railway were brought to Tumut, you would put more land under cultivation? Yes.
2589. What is your general impression of the district, so far as its agricultural and pastoral capabilities are concerned? I do not think you can beat it for agricultural and pastoral pursuits. A drought never affects this district to any great extent. During the sixteen years I have been here people have always been able to grow maize; but they have not always been able to grow it at Gundagai. My explanation of that is that, although the Gundagai flats are quite as rich as ours, the Murrumbidgee being a much deeper stream in dry weather drains the soil more thoroughly than does the Gilmore or the Tumut, the Murrumbidgee being about 30 or 40 feet deep, and our river only 4 or 5 feet.
2590. What proportion of your 700 or 800 acres is suitable for cultivation? That depends upon whether you want to cultivate maize or wheat. My land is used chiefly for maize growing. I suppose we could grow 300 or 400 acres of maize.
2591. Is there much land suitable for cultivation about here? Yes; there is a great deal of country about here which will grow wheat, though you would hardly think it was wheat country; and there is a great deal of country that you could use for maize-growing which has not yet been touched. During the last fifteen years several estates along the river have been broken up, and the land is being used for maize-growing; but there is still a certain limited area of ground that could be used for that purpose. Much of the hilly country could be put under crop, though it would not grow maize. It is timbered now, and is not being used as it would be used if there were a railway to Tumut. The soil is basaltic.
2592. You have heard it stated that this hilly ground was at one time not thought to be very good, but that it is now looked upon as good wheat-growing country? Yes, the soil is suitable for wheat growing. There are acres of such ground at Bago and Batlow. The soil is very good, but the land is heavily timbered.
2593. Suppose the railway were to be brought to Tumut? In that case, I think a great deal of the country I am speaking of would be improved and brought under cultivation.
2594. The country would be opened up, and population would increase? Yes. There are a great number of small holders in this district, and, as the families grow up, they will want places to go to, and the country I speak of is all suitable for settlement.
2595. Have you ever heard any of the tenant farmers complain that they are oppressed, or speak about the heavy rents they have to pay? No. You will find men prepared to give high rents for good ground. Of course, during the bank troubles the farmers could not get on well here, any more than anywhere else, and they all complained; but during the last two or three years those of them who are renting good ground are doing fairly well, and are quite contented.
2596. I suppose you would know if there were any complaints from them about being oppressed by the land-sharks? I do not think anyone is better able to judge, because when I talk with a farmer I talk as a farmer, and I know pretty well how matters are going.
2597. In your opinion, they seem to be satisfied with the rentals charged, and are fairly prosperous? If they were not satisfied they would not pay the rentals that they now have to pay. I think that they are fairly well off.
2598. We have been told that Messrs. Harper and Usher came here to make inquiries on behalf of the Railway Commissioners as to the probability of the proposed railway paying;—did you know of either of these gentlemen being in town? No; I did not hear anything about their visit.
2599. Were you not interviewed by either of them? No. All I know about Mr. Harper is what I read in the newspapers, and I understand that his opinion is unfavourable to the railway.
2600. I suppose you have not heard of Mr. Usher at all? No.
2601. Do you know anything of the mineral resources of the district? The mineral resources of this district are undeveloped, and from the opinions which I have heard expressed by mining experts who have travelled

travelled through the district it is a surprise to me that they have not been developed. To my own knowledge there are reefs which you can trace for 20 miles, but they are not worked, though it is not because the stone is not good enough. We have sent stone away from a place 30 miles from Adelong to Adelong, Granville, and other places, and from just over 50 tons we obtained 100 oz. of gold, or 2 oz. to the ton. I could take you to several places where there are reefs which will go from 1 oz. to 1½ oz. and 2 oz. to the ton. Mr. Howell saw some of the stone, and he was of the opinion that no appliances except those that they were then erecting at Dapto could treat it. He said that it was stone which required roasting and other treatment. That stone will give us 1½ oz. to the ton at Adelong or Granville; but, if the proposed railway were constructed, we could send the concentrates to Dapto, and have them properly treated. Tumut never has been a mining town, and the people here have taken very little interest in mining, but the district is pretty well surrounded with gold. The town is right in the centre of a gold-bearing district. Many of the miners know of reefs of payable stone, but they are too far away to be worked.

H. W. Mason.
6 Dec., 1899.

2602. *Mr. Watson.*] What would be the width of the reefs that went 1½ oz. to the ton? One of them is from 3 to 4 feet wide. The Government Inspector who was up here about three years ago said that it was a compact reef, and that others of the kind had been proved to go down thousands of feet.

2603. Has not that land been taken up? It has been taken up, but it has not been worked.

2604. *Mr. Levien.*] Why has it not been worked? I believe that more mining will be done later on. I am quite confident about the mineral wealth of these mountains.

2605. Which route do you approve of for the proposed railway—the Adelong route or the Brungle route? I have no hesitation in recording my opinion in favour of the Adelong route. There is a fair population all along that route, and a railway taken that way would benefit more people than a railway taken along the Brungle route. In the second place, I believe that the whole of the land on the Adelong Creek will grow maize, because the creek has the same source as the Gilmore Creek, the soil along which is very good, since the creek rises in the basaltic hills about Bago and Batlow. All along the Gilmore Creek there are about 4 feet of good soil, and you can grow excellent maize for a distance of 20 miles up. The original black soil on the Gilmore does not retain moisture so well as the red soil which has been deposited upon it, but on the red soil you can grow excellent crops. The intervening country, too, would grow very good wheat.

2606. *Chairman.*] How far is the land you speak of on the Adelong Creek from the Gundagai railway station? About 17 miles. From below the Gibraltar Mine downwards the flat land would grow maize.

2607. Why have they not grown maize there already, seeing that they are so close to a railway station. Why do not the big holders break up their estates? Very little agricultural settlement has taken place between Cootamundra and Gundagai, although the railway runs through that land; but I think it is because the land is in the hands of three or four men. I believe, however, that the tendency now is for large holders to break up their runs, and I think that if they do so they will have plenty of tenants.

2608. Will the railway make them do that? Civilization advances wherever a railway goes, and I think that the people will make progress in that as in other matters.

2609. Do you think that is why there has not been so much cultivation between Gundagai and Tumut? That is one reason. They have not the farming community that we have here. If the same soil had been in this district, a certain amount of it would have been cultivated.

2610. Mr. Harper has stated that if the proposed railway was made that teamsters could successfully compete against it. What do you think of that opinion? I think that if the railway was managed properly there would be no competition on the part of the teamsters. I have heard that 7s. 6d. a ton would be the freight charged upon the railway, but the teamsters have told me over and over again that they could not carry grain for less than 3d. a bushel.

2611. Is Adelong a distributing centre for goods? There is a fair amount of trade done with Adelong.

2612. The Commissioners seem to think that Adelong will remain a distributing centre, and that goods will be sent from there to Tumut, Adelong Crossing, and other places? I should not think so. I should like to add that the Tumut district is a good dairying district. Some years ago I sent some butter and cheese from this district to England, and I believe that that consignment of butter paid. At any rate, such an enterprise could be made to pay if there were proper facilities for getting the butter away from here. I do not think you will find a finer dairying district in the Colony than this. All along the flats you can grow the very best rye-grass. Cattle do well here, and the returns are good. I have a herd of about seventy cows, and they average about 6 lb. of butter per cow per week, although a great number of them are heifers with their first calves. I am positive that there is a great future for anyone who goes in for dairying here, but there is no market for small people at the present time, except the Tumut and Adelong market. If facilities were given for sending away produce, this would be a very large dairying district. Farmers have told me that if there were a railway they would produce great quantities of chaff to send away, but they cannot afford to cart it to Gundagai. Then, too, men have complained to me that, whereas if there were a railway to Tumut they could often send away a truck load of fat sheep, it does not pay them to send so small a number to Gundagai. The hilly country is as good as the flat country for sheep. At Red Hill they carry a sheep to the acre all the year round, and the clip is a good one, and generally tops the market for price. There is no reason why sheep should not be kept here during the whole twelve months, and, if the hilly country were improved, a great many more could be carried. Out of 70,000 sheep which Mr. McCaughey sent here last year, he only lost 5,200, and many of them had to be carried away from the railway trucks. If the sheep do so well in the summer time, and they can be carried right through the winter, it shows that this is a good sheep district.

2613. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are your cattle fed on natural or upon artificial grasses? Upon natural grasses at the present time; but in the winter time you must give dairy cattle artificial feed—pumpkins, chaff, ensilage, &c.

2614. Mr. Peterson expressed the opinion that dairying was likely to pay better than grain growing here? So far as I can see, the area of land in this district which will grow maize is limited; but I think that on the ground which will grow maize, maize-growing will pay better than dairying.

2615. Why is it that the production of corn in this district has gone down since 1896;—is that accounted for by the substitution of other crops? Maize came down about 1s. a bushel, and the farmers went in for wheat. That was a good thing for the land, because it was sick of the maize, and the wheat improved it. Many acres of old maize land was put under wheat, and good returns were obtained; but after the

second

H. W. Mason. second year the wheat crop deteriorated. Many crops this year have had to be cut for hay, partly because of the quantity of oats in them, and partly because the ground has got sick of wheat, and there fore the tendency is to go back to maize.

6 Dec., 1899. 2616. You say that there is no reason why the district should not become a big sheep raising district; is there only a small number of sheep here now? Yes, in proportion to the area of ground upon which sheep can be run. Last year large tracts of country were leased out to people who brought sheep from other places. I believe that the district is uniformly reliable for sheep-farming, dairying, and agriculture, if people go about their business in a proper way.

2617. During your long residence here have the farmers kept on at their work, or have they got tired of it and gone away? The farmers who were here fifteen years ago, or their descendants, are here to-day.

2618. They stick to the district because it is a good one? Yes, and the same class continues to go in for farming. This is not a shifting population by any means, because the same families continue to live in the district year after year.

Alexander Davis, farmer, Upper Gilmore, sworn, and examined:—

A. Davis. 2619. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is the Upper Gilmore from Gundagai? My place is 32½ miles from Gundagai.

6 Dec., 1899. 2620. What is the extent of your holding? 622 acres.

2621. Have you a statement to make to the Committee? Yes. This statement embraces an area of 5 miles along the valley of the Gilmore Creek, starting about 1½ miles north of the parish of Batlow, and running south. In that area there are sixteen holders cultivating this year 1,372 acres. On the sixteen holdings there are 1,205 acres of land suitable for cultivation, but not at present cultivated. Those holdings depasture 1,017 large stock and 5,250 sheep. The hills on each side of the valley are suitable for sheep, the western bank specially. One of my neighbours is at present depasturing 3,000 sheep on 2,000 acres of this land. The cultivated land in the valley is suited to grow anything which does not require a tropical climate. Although last season was one of the driest on record, I harvested 42 bushels 51lb. of good sound wheat to the acre. A bag of this wheat took first prize at the last Show in Sydney as best milling wheat, and an analysis made of the wheat by the Department's chemist gave 96 per cent. As to maize growing, I may tell you that I competed for the prize offered by the Department of Agriculture in 1892, or 1893, for the best cultivated maize in the Colony, the judge being Mr. Jas. Stevenson, secretary to the Board of Export, and the result I obtained was 112 bushels to the acre. This prize was competed for by twenty-nine farmers in all parts of the Colony, Mr. G. K. Green, of Tumut Plains, being third. With a railway, this valley would produce large quantities of hay, chaff, straw, melons, pumpkins, &c., which we cannot send at present. I have about 25 tons of hay in my shed now for which there is no demand. If I could have delivered it at, say, Tumut, or at a siding at Gilmore, it would have been sold long ere this. There is also a large marble quarry situated in this area which supplies this district with lime. Sugar beets grown here, when analysed, have been shown to contain 12½ per cent. I may add that I called upon all the holders I have referred to, and asked them how much land they had under cultivation at the present time, and how much of their land was suitable for cultivation, though not cultivated. I produce samples of maize, oats, and wheat.

2622. Was the grain from which these samples were taken grown upon your own land? Yes. A sample of the wheat was shown in Sydney, and took first prize for the best bag milling.

2623. Are the 622 acres you speak of fit for cultivation? No; only about 150 acres are suitable for cultivation.

2624. And the remainder of the land is suitable for grazing? Yes; they run sheep on the hills.

2625. So that you have nearly 500 acres of grazing land? Yes.

2626. How many sheep do you run on that land? Generally about 250 sheep on the hills. The hills on the other side of the valley are very much better grassed. On my land there are a number of stony ridges.

2627. I suppose you deliver your produce to Gundagai? I usually sell it locally, but it goes to Gundagai all the same.

2628. What is the cost of carriage per ton from the Upper Gilmore to Gundagai? From my place they charge from 5d. to 5½d. a bushel.

2629. That is 16s. 8d. a ton? About that.

2630. One of the witnesses this morning stated that it cost about 20s. a ton to send produce a distance of 16 miles? His road may be a bad one.

2631. Is there much Government land in your neighbourhood? Not until you get up to Batlow. Round here the land is pretty well all alienated.

2632. Are the holdings large? No, they are small.

2633. What do they generally average? My holding is 622 acres. Of the other holdings to which I have referred—No. 2 contains 420 acres; No. 3, 360 acres; No. 4, 420 acres; No. 5, 540 acres; No. 6, 320 acres; No. 7, 100 acres; No. 8, 1,010 acres; No. 9, 620 acres; No. 10, 515 acres; No. 11, 760 acres; No. 12, 320 acres; No. 13, 2,200 acres; No. 14, 200 acres; No. 15, 200 acres; and No. 16, 360 acres.

2634. Are those farmers all cultivating wheat or maize? They are cultivating both.

2635. What proportion of those holdings do you consider fit for cultivation? About half of them. Some of the farmers could extend their cultivation, but, as they combine stock-raising with farming, I suppose they find it necessary to keep their land to run stock upon.

2636. Do you consider farming more profitable than grazing? I do not think I could live on my farm by grazing alone.

2637. In the event of the proposed railway being constructed, what distance would you be from the nearest railway station? Five and a half miles.

2638. So that the construction of the line would be of tremendous advantage to you? Yes, of very great advantage.

2639. Do you think that its construction would induce many people to go in for more cultivation? I think so. It would induce me to extend my cultivation. There are many things which I could grow but which I do not grow now, because of the uncertainty of the market. I have a shed about half full of hay now, and I would certainly send it away if I could have sent it away quickly; but at the present time it is very difficult to obtain teams when you require them, particularly for bulky loading, such as chaff and hay.

2640. Would the freight on hay be about the same as the freight on maize, or would it be more? I fancy that it would be more. A. Davis.
2641. Would not 16s. 8d. a ton be rather too much to pay on hay? I think not. It is a market that we want. I could run down to a platform at the Gilmore and fill two trucks in a day. 6 Dec., 1899.
2642. Would you be willing to enter into a guarantee to pay half the loss upon the proposed line for a certain number of years, supposing there were a loss? I have not heard the question mooted before; but I can hardly see how there could be a loss.
2643. According to the Commissioners, the yearly cost of the line would be £8,150, and the return on special rates £3,900, or on through rates £1,700;—do you think that the additional production of the district would be likely to get rid of that loss within any reasonable time? I think so. There can be no doubt as to the extent of the increase which would take place in my district if a railway were constructed. We have energetic men here who will endeavour to increase their holdings and make the most of them.
2644. Do you think that the people through whose land the railway would run would give that land to the Government? I think that a great many of them would. The argument used against many lines is that they would pass through so much Crown land. Yesterday Mr. Chesterman was asked upon how small a holding could a man make a living. I know the Bago country pretty well, because I was there when quite a young man; and at one time I had the idea of settling there, because the land is really good; but my capital was too limited to enable me to take up land and to stock it. The railway was then at Goulburn. However, I rented a farm of 2½ acres, including a vineyard and orchard, for £60 a year, and I saved £100 a year upon it—sufficient in the long run to purchase my present holding. Four acres of that land were planted with fruit-trees, and at that time fruit was a fair price, and there were no pests.
2645. Do I understand that the margin of profit in your case is destroyed by the cost of carriage to a railway station? I contend that if the railway were constructed my profits would be increased, and I would therefore increase my cultivation.
2646. Do you approve of the proposed route? Yes, and I know both routes very well. I am a resident of forty-five years standing, and I know the district thoroughly. A line *via* Adelong would serve the greatest number of people.
2647. *Mr. Levien.*] I suppose you have come into contact with a great many of the tenants here? Yes.
2648. Have you heard many of them complain about being oppressed by their landlords? No; we have very few landlords in the district.
2649. The tenants are satisfied with the rents they pay? They seem to be.
2650. And they are fairly prosperous? Where a man is willing to work and is energetic he does very well. Some of them, of course, put their earnings down their throats.
2651. Do you know of any enquiries having been made by the Railway Commissioners of any of the farmers here as to the number of acres under cultivation in the district? No enquiry of the kind has been made. All I know of the visit of the Railway Commissioners was that I heard that they had passed through the district.

John O'Sullivan, farmer and grazier, Lower Gilmore, sworn, and examined:—

2652. *Chairman.*] I understand that you are prepared with statistics concerning the Parish of Gilmore, which commences about 3 miles from Tumut, and extends up the Gilmore Creek for a distance of about 12 miles? Yes. J. O'Sullivan.
2653. What is the average width of that valley? About a mile, a little more or a little less. The following statement gives particulars in respect of 31 holdings, comprising an area of 9,900 acres:— 6 Dec., 1899.

PARISH of Gilmore Returns for 1898-99.

Name of holder.	Area of holding.	Area suitable for cultivation.	Area of wheat.	Area of corn.	Bushels of wheat.	Bushels of corn.	Tons of hay.	Cattle and horses.	Sheep.	Probable increase of cultivation.
	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.						acres.
F. D. O'Sullivan	960	350	100	30	3,000	1,500	25	90	.....	220
F. E. O'Sullivan	200	60	40	.....	960	.....	10	10	.....	20
J. Claffey	507	250	80	30	2,400	1,600	7	70	.....	140
W. D. P. O'Brien	3,200	2,000	80	60	3,000	2,500	.....	700	.....	1,800
W. Butler	190	100	70	10	1,300	250	55	20	.....	20
J. Butler	710	120	60	25	1,000	600	60	30	.....	35
S. Williamson	310	310	70	.....	1,200	.....	25	50	.....	240
T. Sullivan	320	320	90	.....	1,800	.....	.....	65	.....	230
T. Campbell	321	160	60	20	1,200	600	35	50	150	80
A. Broughton	2,600	1,600	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	150	3,000	1,600
J. Deans	750	130	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	30	700	130
J. Summers	80	80	18	15	350	200	23	16	.....	47
R. Downing	200	200	25	.....	750	.....	5	35	.....	175
Rivers Bros.	900	250	80	10	1,600	300	10	20	2,000	160
D. M'Gilvery	198	198	42	10	800	400	20	20	.....	134
A. Davis	622	150	42	50	1,800	450	55	50	.....	58
Mrs. O'Regan	422	130	75	15	1,800	400	.....	55	.....	40
M'Inerney	360	110	40	30	1,200	600	.....	40	.....	30
J. Calloway	420	165	30	40	800	1,200	.....	120	.....	90
W. Carter	540	168	48	60	1,000	2,300	60	80	.....	60
J. Calloway, jun.	320	165	20	.....	600	.....	.....	250	.....	145
J. Back	100	30	30	.....	800	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Wilkinson Bros.	1,010	125	.....	30	.....	600	.....	.....	.....	95
G. Calloway	620	140	30	10	500	300	.....	200	.....	100
R. Marshall	760	375	60	25	2,000	800	.....	200	.....	200
P. Murray	320	300	120	30	4,200	1,200	.....	52	.....	150
R. Rivers, sen.	2,200	212	150	15	3,600	500	40	35	3,000	47
P. Naughton	200	122	55	25	1,000	500	8	30	.....	42
J. Naughton	200	155	50	25	1,300	450	5	35	.....	75
W. Sutton	360	160	65	40	1,600	1,500	10	40	.....	55
	9,900	8,635	1,630	605	41,560	18,750	453	2,543	8,850	6,308

The

- J. O'Sullivan. The previous witness and myself went round from house to house to make absolutely sure that the figures were correct.
- 6 Dec., 1899. 2654. Why is it that the area under cultivation is not increased? Because of the want of a market and the cost of transit at the present time. It costs us 5d. a bushel to send wheat or maize to Gundagai. That is equal to about 15s. 7d. a ton of wheat and about 16s. 8d. a ton for maize. From Gundagai to Sydney, however, a distance of 286 miles, the freight is only 12s. or 13s. a ton.
2655. Then the teamsters' rates are pretty well prohibitive? Yes.
2656. What do you do with your produce? We sell it locally. Of course the wheat goes away to Gundagai and on to Sydney.
2657. What do you get for your wheat? We got 2s. 2d. a bushel at the sheds for our last lot of wheat, and the purchaser had to take it away.
2658. That is about the minimum price? It is a very low price. There is very little in wheat-growing at that price. Last year we had a good crop, and, in fact, the year was a phenomenal one. On the Gilmore some of the farmers got as much as 40 and 50 bushels to the acre.
2659. Is the district a reliable one for crops? Undoubtedly.
2660. So that there would be every inducement for a man to enlarge his operations if there were better means of transit? Yes. Speaking for myself and my brothers, we could increase our cultivation area by 220 acres. We only grow 100 acres of wheat now, but we could put 200 acres under wheat.
2661. Do you think that farming pays better than dairying? I think so.
2662. Mr. Peterson indicated that dairying might be taken up very largely here because it would be more remunerative than farming? Well, I know so little about dairying that it would not be safe for me to speak about it.
2663. Dairying is a new enterprise in this district. Yes.
2664. Are all the holders mentioned in your statement fairly prosperous? Yes.
2665. Are they mostly tenant farmers, or are they owners? They are all owners. The largest holding is 3,200 acres, and one man holds as little as 40 acres.
2666. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you seen any weevil in the maize of this district? Yes.
2667. Can you account for the fact that the maize here is usually free from weevil? I attribute it to the fact that our maize is very hard. I have often noticed weevils in sacks that we have got up from Sydney, but they do not increase because the corn seems too hard for them.
2668. Have you reason to believe that 600 acres more would be brought under cultivation if the proposed railway were constructed? I have every reason to believe it. The proposed railway will come so close to the people I have named that every facility will be given to them. They would deliver their wheat or maize at the platform at the Gilmore. At the present time hundreds of tons of straw go to waste, although it is always a saleable commodity, but the cost of sending it to Gundagai would leave no profit.
2669. There are many acres of good ground close to the present railway that are not brought under cultivation;—why do you suppose that the particular area to which you have referred would be brought under cultivation? Because I think it would pay the farmers to bring it under cultivation. I am certain that it would pay me to put 200 acres instead of 100 acres under crop.
2670. Have you consulted with most of the people mentioned in your statement? Yes; and I have put questions to them upon the subject. I know one man who could put in about 1,600 acres, and he assured me that if the railway came to Tumut he would certainly put that area under crop. At the present time he uses the land for grazing,

Henry Francis Hayes, manager for Sanderson and Taylor, millers and grain merchants, Tumut and Gilmore, sworn, and examined:—

- H. F. Hayes. 2671. *Mr. Dick.*] Does your firm buy as well as mill all sorts of grain? Yes.
- 6 Dec., 1899. 2672. What amount of business do you do each year? This year we bought about 120,000 bushels of wheat, of which we ground 50,000 bushels, sending the balance away by team.
2673. Was that grain ground for local consumption? For local consumption here and at Gundagai; but some of it went to Sydney.
2674. How would you describe the quality of the grain which comes to your mill? We buy for a number of mills down the country, and in Sydney as well, and they tell us that our wheat is one of the best that they handle. It is fine mellow wheat, and makes good strong flour of a very good colour. On the average it takes 52 bushels of Riverina wheat to make a ton of flour, whereas it takes only 48½ bushels of Tumut wheat.
2675. Is that due to the absence of moisture in Riverina? No; but the local wheat has a fine deep plump grain with very little bran and pollard in it. Nevertheless we have had to cancel orders wholesale, for the simple reason that we cannot get produce away in time.
2676. In spite of the fact that you have practically a monopoly of the carrying trade? Yes. As for the carriers competing with a railway, it is all nonsense. I understand that the railway freight would be about 3s. 6d. a ton, whereas it costs the carriers at least 7s a ton for horse feed, shoeing, and the expense of living on the road.
2677. It is anticipated that the carriers would successfully compete for back loading, the local train rate for which would be 19s. 3d.? Even then they could not compete, unless they had loading down to Gundagai as well as the loading back.
2678. Could they do it for 11s. each way and make anything out of it? I think that at the end of 12 months they would be in debt.
2679. Then you do not anticipate any serious competition from the carriers? I anticipate no competition whatever.
2680. Do you think that the construction of a line to Tumut would by developing country south of Tumut give a new field for the operations of the carriers? Yes; that is where they will go.
2681. Are many of the carriers farmers? Yes.
2682. Would it pay them better to give up carrying and go in for farming entirely, supposing there were a railway? Yes. Now they only go carrying in order to fill up time. If they could get more ground, it would pay them to increase their cultivation.
2683. Even if they cultivated more ground, would they not still have an idle period in which they could go carrying? They would be pretty well occupied in carting their stuff to a railway at Tumut; they would not want to go carrying for anyone else.
- 2684.

2684. Could you offer any opinion to the Committee as to the reasons for the decrease in the maize yield of the district during the last two years? During the last couple of years we had had a bit of a drought, and they were getting 8s. 6d. and 4s. a bushel for wheat, so that a good many grew wheat instead of maize. Now, however, a good deal of ground has gone under maize again. One gentleman who is present here to-day has only 3,000 bushels of maize this year; but next year, with a good season, he will have from 12,000 to 15,000 bushels, and other farmers will be in a similar position. The crop this year will amount to about 200,000 bushels, but last year it was nothing like so much, so that things are improving again. The wheat crop was 250,000 bushels last year; I have not got the returns for the present year yet.
2685. Do you confirm the evidence of previous witnesses concerning the Bago and Batlow country? Yes. I think that the country is suitable for the Manitoba wheat, which is the best wheat grown in N.S.W., because the climate is similar to the climate in which the wheat was originally grown. The flour from Manitoba wheat brings £3 a ton more than other flour. A gentleman living up on the Yarrangobilly country expects to get about 30 bushels to the acre there.
2686. You speak of this country from personal knowledge? Yes.
2687. Which do you think is the best for the proposed railway? The Adelong route. It has been said that there is no cultivation along that route, but they have lately gone in for growing corn in the Adelong Valley. The other day one of the farmers there wanted to sell me 1,200 bushels; and I know that there are three or four who are trying to rent ground there to grow maize upon. For the last three years our production of grain has been increasing by leaps and bounds. About four years ago the production of wheat was only about 40,000 bushels; then it increased to 80,000 bushels; and then to 250,000 bushels; and next year the crop will be still larger.
2688. *Mr. Watson.*] The increase in the production of wheat may account for the decrease in the production of maize? It may a little; but they are clearing more land for wheat-growing.
2689. How many teams are there in Tumut and Adelong? About fifty in summer-time; but, on the average, right through the year, only about twenty. Our firm has kept as many as thirty-three or thirty-four teams going in a week. I am sure that the proposed railway would pay within five years, and that the Commissioners would then be able to reduce the rates.
2690. Have you seen the Commissioners' figures? Yes; but I do not think that there will be a deficiency. Gundagai is credited with a lot of the traffic that comes from Tumut. For instance, I never make out my consignment notes from Tumut; I make them out from Gundagai. Last year there was a great failure of the crops in Gundagai.
2691. Do you think that the Tumut trade has been keeping the Gundagai extension going? I am sure of it. Four years ago no wheat at all went away from Tumut, but this year between 4,000 and 5,000 tons will go away.
2692. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you know Mr. Usher? No.
2693. He did not call upon you? No.
2694. Did Mr. Harper call upon you? No. I think Mr. Shepherd wanted to know why the Tumut corn never gets weevily. There is an outer skin on it which the weevil cannot get its nose into. The frost puts this skin on the corn. I had a lot of maize stocked some time ago, and one of the bottom bags got very wet, so that the weevil got into the corn; but the bags that were higher up were not touched by the weevil.

William Henry Bridle, auctioneer, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

2695. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you resided long in the district? About forty-eight years. I was born here, and I know the district thoroughly.
2696. Can you give the Committee a general statement as to the character of the country, and as to its agricultural possibilities? I could do so, but having been through the electorate as a valuer in connection with the Land Tax assessments, I have compiled tabulated statements respecting the parishes of Wyangle, Mondongo, and Blowering, showing the owners of the various holdings, the area of land now under cultivation, the area of land suitable for cultivation, but not yet cultivated, the area of pastoral land, and the total area of each holding.
2697. You leave out of account in your statements the Gilmore part of the district? Yes.
2698. Your statements deal only with the immediate country north-east, east, and south of Tumut? Yes. The following are the particulars which I have collected:—

PARISH OF WYANGLE.

Owner's name.	Present cultivated.			Land capable of cultivation.			Pastoral land.			Total area.		
	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.
Dalgety & Co.				200	0	0	627	1	0	827	1	0
Henry French				100	0	0	1,115	2	0	1,215	2	0
Walter Frost	40	0	0	169	1	0	200	0	0	369	1	0
P. Geary	40	0	0	100	0	0	1,306	2	0	1,406	2	0
Thos. Keefe	60	0	0	800	0	0	2,986	2	0	3,786	2	0
P. Kiley	40	0	0	821	2	0	1,646	0	0	2,467	2	0
Thos. Conquit				50	0	0	350	0	0	400	0	0
Geo. Clout, junior	40	0	0	100	0	0	262	1	0	362	1	0
John Morris				50	0	0	81	1	0	131	1	0
E. C. Body				100	0	0	65	0	0	165	0	0
W. O'Manning				200	0	0	620	0	0	820	0	0
Thos. Keefe				100	0	0	220	0	0	320	0	0
Samuel Piper	15	0	0	50	0	0	282	1	0	332	1	0
G. W. Last				20	0	0	380	0	0	400	0	0
Abraham Kershaw	14	0	0	14	0	0	76	0	0	90	0	0
D. P. Moreton	5	0	0	50	0	0				50	0	0
H. Wilson							280	0	0	280	0	0
W. Lowther				10	0	0	80	0	0	90	0	0
(17 owners)	254	0	0	2,934	3	0	10,578	2	0	13,513	1	0

2,680 acres more land are available for the purposes of cultivation, but this land not having river frontage is more suited for the growth of wheat.

PARISH OF BLOWERING.

W. H. Bridle

6 Dec., 1890.

Owner or Holder.	Land now cultivated.			Land suited for cultivation.			Pastoral Land.			Total area Land.		
	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.
N. B. Johnson	20	0	0	20	0	0	30	0	0	50	0	0
Brown and Harris	800	0	0	1,100	0	0	5,622	0	39½	6,722	0	39½
Thomas Halloran	75	0	0	100	0	0	127	0	0	227	0	0
Mrs. Atkinson	50	0	0	70	0	0	26	0	0	96	0	0
Bridget Naughton	148	0	0	190	0	0	318	3	0	508	3	0
H. McLeary	56	0	0	56	0	0	5	0	0	61	0	0
M. McInerney	44	0	0	44	0	0	.....	.....	.....	44	0	0
R. Sturt	144	3	0	144	3	0	25	0	0	169	3	0
A. Martin .....	.....	.....	.....	50	0	0	144	3	0	194	3	0
W. Hargreaves (estate)	20	0	0	100	0	0	1,356	1	0	1,456	1	0
H. F. Hargreaves .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	140	0	0	140	0	0
H. T. Hargreaves .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	280	0	0	280	0	0
C. Graham	5	0	0	50	0	0	270	0	0	320	0	0
I. Tonkin	101	0	0	101	0	0	.....	.....	.....	101	0	0
G. K. Green	59	0	0	59	0	0	.....	.....	.....	59	0	0
Estate, J. Regent	10	0	0	50	0	0	91	2	0	141	2	0
M. McInerney	30	0	0	50	0	0	93	0	0	143	0	0
E. Vickery	35	0	0	35	0	0	14	0	0	49	0	0
R. M. Shelley	550	0	0	600	0	0	664	0	0	1,264	0	0
(19 holders.)	2,147	3	0	2,819	3	0	9,157	1	39½	11,977	0	39½

672 acres more land might be brought under cultivation.

- 20 bushels per acre, average yield of wheat.
- 65 " " " " " maize.
- 40 " " " " " oats.
- 2 tons per acre " " " hay.
- 8 " " " " " potatoes.
- 15 cwt. " " " " " tobacco.

The grazing capability of the pastoral land, as a whole, I would average as follows:—

Cattle.—One beast to every 4 acres, all the year.

Sheep.—Two and a half to every acre, all the year.

Fruits of all kinds (not purely tropical) flourish in abundance. Apples, pears, peaches, plums, nectarines, walnuts, oranges, lemons, apricots, grapes, currants, gooseberries, strawberries, &c. These fruits could be placed on the Sydney market to advantage, if we had cheap and easy means of transit, but, as at present situated, this opportunity cannot be availed of. There would be undoubtedly a big future for this district, if the country were opened up by railway communication, in the way of establishing jam factories and the conservation of fruit.

It has been argued that the bulk of our produce reaches Gundagai as matters stand at present, but this is entirely wrong; and were it true, our producers frequently meet a slump in the market through inability to get their stuff down in time. This latter is undoubtedly a big consideration.

Thousands of extra acres could and would be cultivated here to advantage if facilities of transport were granted. Tourists from every quarter would avail themselves of the salubrity of our mountain country, where the scenery is surpassingly wild and romantic. We have the far-famed Yarrangobilly Caves, unrivalled as yet in the Colony; and Kosciusko (the nearest point to heaven in New South Wales) rears its snow-capped summit to the sky. To the tourist in search of information, scenery sublime and enchanting, health so dear to all, climate unparalleled in the Colony—where can you find its equal? and this in the immediate background to our hitherto neglected town. Had we speedy means of access, thousands would avail themselves of the opportunity to recuperate from the sun-scorched plains of the west, to revel in our sylvan solitudes, and find life and energy invigorated by a dip in the hot spring at "Glory Hole."

Mining.—Tunut undoubtedly offers a large field for the enterprising miner, a fact till lately unknown, by reason of our isolation; still, reference to the books in our Warden's office will show as large a revenue, from August last, as that of any district in the Colony. We have gold, tin, silver, lead, iron, copper, chromes, in abundance, only awaiting future development, and the railway to this place is everywhere regarded as a prime factor in bringing about the same.

Dairies.—With a railway to our door, you will, on inspection of our country, say there is not a better field for the dairying industry in the Colony—a field where the land is extremely fertile, droughts unknown, rainfall average 35 inches per year, and any amount of pasture summer or winter; but, oh! the freight and the delay.

Timber.—With the advent of a railway our back country will be opened up, and our forests of mountain ash on Micalong, Gooharragandra, and Batlow will prove a source of supply to the builders below, to say nothing of our forests of gum and hardwood, so necessary for house and bridge building purposes.

Starving Stock.—For several years past our mountain country has fed about 500,000 sheep, to say nothing of cattle and horses; and a railway from Gundagai thither would greatly minimise the great loss yearly entailed in weak sheep untrucked at Gundagai, for, if landed here, they would be on grass straight away.

The Government Statistician's report (though every care is taken in the compilation of it) cannot in any sense be considered accurate. Tenant owners (and there are many here) are averse to giving their full returns, and for business purposes the information is withheld, though with a view to better prospects ahead.

Some of my friends have handed to me some returns, which I think I can vouch for as being accurate. The first return was furnished to me by Mr. John Wilkinson, of Werreboldera, and the next by Mr. S. F. Wilkinson:—

PARTICULARS OF PORTION OF PARISH OF WEREOLDERA.

Name of Owner.	Total area.	Cultivated land.	Grazing land.	Area of land suitable for cultivation, not cultivated.	Wheat.	Maize.	Hay.	Tobacco.	Potatoes.	Carrying capacity.
	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	bushels.	bushels.	tons.	tons.	tons.	
Wilkinson Bros.	1,100	400	700	450	1,400	17,000	9	15	4	2 sheep to 1 acre ; 3 acres to one beast.
R. Blomley	242	90	152	10	960	3,000	6	...	6	
N. B. Johnson	78	50	28	...	1,800	200	20	...	...	1 sheep to acre.
T. Quilty	190	50	140	20	...	3,000	...	...	3	1 " "
C. McAlister	330	100	230	...	1,250	900	50	...	5	1½ " "
	1,940	690	1,250	480	5,410	24,100	85	15	18	

W. H. Bridle.

6 Dec., 1899.

PARTICULARS OF YELLOWIN ESTATE, PARISH OF YELLOWIN.

Name of Owner.	Total area.	Cultivated land.	Grazing land	Area of land suitable for cultivation, not cultivated.	Wheat.—Yield at present.	Maize.—Yield at present.	Hay.—Yield at present.	Tobacco.—Yield at present.	Potatoes.—Yield at present.	Carrying capacity of grazing land.
	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	bushels.	bushels.	tons.	cwts.	tons.	
Wilkinson Bros.	25,000	450	24,550	6,000	1,300	7,500	40	5	15	1 sheep to the acre ; 5 acres to one head large stock.

Remarks.—The timber on the above holding is as follows :—Mountain ash, stringybark, blue gum, red gum, white gum, and peppermint, all of which grow in large quantities, and with the aid of a railway, timber-cutting would become a great industry, for the stringybark and mountain ash is almost inexhaustible.

All kinds of fruit grow luxuriantly, and large areas could be cultivated with every success.

Payable gold is found along the valley of Tumut River.

It has been said that the agricultural land in this district only extends for a distance of a few miles south of Tumut; but the following replies to certain questions sent out to various people throughout the district by the Secretary for our Railway Committee will show that the agricultural country is much more extensive than that. The information was furnished by Mr. H. F. Lampe, of Talbingo :—

1. The amount of land suitable for cultivation, not now used for that purpose,—1,000 acres.
2. The approximate yield of grain and other produce per acre, on land cultivated for the past few years,—hay, 2 tons per acre; potatoes, 12 tons; wheat, 30 bushels.
3. 50,000 acres suitable for pastoral pursuits; and when ringbarked and properly killed will carry 1 sheep per acre, or 1 beast for 6 acres.
4. Mountain ash, stringybark, blue gum, urabbie, peppermint, and other kinds of timber grow in great quantities; and with the aid of a railway timber-cutting would become a great industry.
5. All kinds of fruit grow luxuriantly, and large areas could be cultivated with every success.
6. Quantities of gold exist along the Tumut River.

2699. *Mr. Levien.*] The statements which you have handed in are the statements of reliable men and could be supported upon oath? Yes. So many Riverina sheep have come into this district that our own people have found it more advantageous to lease their land than to run their own sheep upon it.

2700. *Mr. Watson.*] So that a large proportion of the wool grown here is not shorn here? That is so. The wool output from this district is, therefore, comparatively small.

2701. From the statements which you have read it would appear that there is a fair area of agricultural land in the district which the construction of the proposed railway might bring under cultivation;—do you think that if the line were constructed that land would be brought under cultivation? I feel satisfied of it. I have been engaged in farming for the greater part of my life, and I know that the farmers here only want a slight incentive to increase their production. At the present time we are handicapped. This was a prosperous district before the line was brought to Cootamundra. At the present time we pay about 4d. a bushel for cartage, so that the tenant farmer here pays about 6s. 8d. an acre more than a man in Gundagai would pay.

2702. But the man in Gundagai would probably pay a higher rental? I think that the rents are about the same in each place.

2703. At Gundagai they have a lighter rainfall than you have here? Well, I can endorse what Dr. Mason said in regard to the flat land in the two places. The original soil on the flat land is black soil, and under it is sand, and under the sand gravel, and where the flats are deeply drained, as they are by the Murrumbidgee, there is much less moisture left for the crops than in places like this where the river channel is not so deep. The people here have gone into figures, and have tried to properly estimate the probably traffic on a railway; but we cannot reconcile the statements of the Railway Commissioners with our ideas upon the subject. At the present time the Government have to keep in repair the roads between Tumut and Gundagai *via* Brungle, between Tumut and Gundagai by the marked tree line, and between Tumut and Gundagai *via* Adelong, in all a distance of about 80 miles, representing an expenditure of about £50 a mile, or a total expenditure of about £4,000 a year. To look after these roads two maintenance men are required, and about £240 a year could be put down for them.

2704. The roads would still be required even if there were a railway? I think there would be some saving. It would not cost anything like so much to maintain the roads if we had a railway.

2705. The Under Secretary has repeatedly said that the construction of a railway means the increasing of the road expenditure of a district? Well, that shows that railways open up the country. In an easterly direction from here there are thousands of acres of Crown lands which could be worked to advantage if we had facilities for transport.

2706. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are mountain ash, peppermint, and stringybark considered good timbers? Yes; very good timbers. Mountain ash is a light timber.

2707. There are two ashes, one with a bark very similar to ironbark, and smooth at the top, and the other with a bark more like box, but darker in colour; which is the tree you have here? Our mountain ash is more like peppermint, but at the top it is like white gum.

2708. Smooth? Yes.

2709. Does it attain any size? On the table-land I have seen trees 150 feet in height.

2710. Does the peppermint attain to a great size here? Yes; it is almost as large as the mountain ash.

2711. Is it used for sawing, or for splitting? For both. It is not as good a timber for sawing purposes as is the ash. You will not find the ash at a lower altitude than 3,000 feet.

2712. You have the white stringybark here? Yes.

2713. What it is used for? For fencing, building purposes, and that sort of thing.

2714. Do you use it for posts? In 1896 I saw some posts which had been in the ground ever since I was about 3 years old, and many of them are sound at the present day. Stringybark is largely used for boards and battens, and also for rails.

2715. I suppose blue gum is a most valuable timber? Yes.

2716. There is no ironbark here? There is a bastard ironbark, but it is not used.
2717. *Chairman.*] What do you consider the value per acre of the best land that the proposed route runs through? Its improved value?
2718. Yes? I should say it would be worth from £7 to £8 an acre.
2719. That would be about the dearest of the land? Yes.
2720. The land in the hilly country at Gundagai would not be nearly so valuable? No. There is some very poor land on parts of the line.

W. H. Bridle.
6 Dec., 1899.

William Bridle, farmer and fruit-grower, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

2721. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What area of ground do you occupy? About 230 acres. I was one of the first settlers in Tumut.
2722. You have heard most of the evidence that has been given? Yes, and so much has been said upon the subject upon which I was prepared to speak that the wind has been taken out of my sails altogether.
2723. Will you give the Committee any information you have at your command upon any point which you think may not have been sufficiently explained? Yes. When Mr. Graves was giving evidence he was asked why it is, if this district is so suitable for fruit-growing, that no fruit is obtainable here now, and he replied that the season is too early for fruit, whereas, as a matter of fact, the cherry season is about over now, and this year we had a very severe frost which destroyed a great deal of the fruit. Mr. Priza, of Young, estimated that he lost about £500 by reason of the late frosts, and, although I have been here for fifty years, I do not remember a frost which was so destructive. I have lost the whole of my cherries, peaches, grapes, figs, walnuts, and fruit of all kinds. The frost came two or three nights, and extended all over the district, even as far as Albury and Corowa, and even to Camden. Then, last winter, we had a snowstorm, a thing which we have not had before for forty-six years. There is not a district in the Colony to be compared with the Tumut district for fruit-growing, both in respect of the quality and the quantity of the fruit raised, and I can speak with some authority upon the subject, because I have been growing fruit ever since I was a boy. I had the honor to represent Tumut at the Fruit Conference of 1890 and 1891, and I took a sample of fruit from this district, and I was proud to find that our fruit was the best exhibited there. We have land here 900 feet above the sea-level, which in good seasons will grow apples and pears up to 3 lb. in weight. At Batlow the climate is a cool one, and the cooler the climate the firmer the fruit, and the longer it will keep. The ripening season there is two months later than the Tumut season, although the district is only 20 miles away, and consequently we can have fruit right through the year. Mr. Timmis up there kept his apples right through from last season. It has been said that no hay is grown in the Tumut district. The hay will grow, but the cost of taking it to Gundagai would take away all the profit of growing it, though, so far as our capabilities are concerned, we could grow enough hay here to supply the whole of Riverina in droughty seasons, supposing that we were in a better position to compete against the Sydney market. The fertility of the soil of the Tumut district is inexhaustible. However heavily cropped the alluvial lands may be, one overflowing of the muddy water of the river renovates them, and restores them almost to their original richness. There are places on my farm where maize has been growing continuously for twenty-five years without any apparent diminution in the yield.
2724. Do the inundations you speak of occur periodically? We have not had an overflow for five years, but, ordinarily, we have one or two every year, or every other year.
2725. Do the floods ever destroy the crops? No. The water may take a little of the fencing away sometimes, but the improvement to the soil more than compensates for that.
2726. Is there any particular season of the year in which these inundations occur most frequently? Generally, if heavy rain comes when there is snow on the Alps, the water spreads all over the alluvial plains here.
2727. That would usually be in the spring? Yes. The highest flood that we ever had was on the 18th August, 1853. It was caused by a heavy fall of rain following a great fall of snow.
2728. Did the frost destroy the whole of your fruit-crop? It did not destroy the apples, but it destroyed a great number of the pears; they did not seem to stand it so well. I never knew frost to destroy the fruit before as it has done this year. A severe frost coming when the bloom is on will nip even the wheat.
2729. You attribute the failure of the fruit-crops entirely to the frost? Yes.
2730. When did the heavy fall of snow that you have referred to occur? A month or two before the frost.
2731. Are you of opinion that the fruit industry would largely increase there if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes; but the codlin moth is troublesome in this district, and until legislation compels every one who has fruit-trees to prevent it from spreading, it will do a great deal of harm.
2732. Is it long since it made its appearance here? Eight or ten years. The pest could be destroyed if everyone took to bandaging his trees and killing the grubs.
2733. Have you treated your trees in that way? Yes, I have bandaged them every year. Spraying was tried here, but it did not seem to answer, and I have heard that it has not answered in Tasmania.

W. Bridle.
6 Dec., 1899.

Charles Silvester Byrne, auctioneer, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

2734. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have been here for the last fourteen years? Yes.
2735. Can you tell us the names of the principal sheep stations in the district? I have compiled an estimate of the wool grown within an average distance of 15 miles of the proposed railway, with a list of the owners of the various stations, the names of the holdings, and the number of bales of wool that they send away.
2736. What area of country does your return embrace? I commence at the Adelong Crossing, and from there, commencing at Adelong Crossing, thence to Mundarlo, thence *via* Hillas Creek, Mount Adrah, to Nacka Nacka Creek, 4 miles from Adelong. Thence I go *via* Ellerslie to Middle Adelong, south-east, to a point 6 or 7 miles from Adelong, and then on to the Gilmore, a distance of about 4 miles. From there

C. S. Byrne.
6 Dec., 1899.

C. S. Byrne. there I go to a point south of Tumut; then up the Tumut River to Talbingo, 22 miles from here; then to the Gobragandra, to a point 10 miles east of Tumut; then to the head of the Bombowlee Creek, about 8 miles north-east of Tumut, and back to the Adelong Crossing. The following is my return:—

6 Dec., 1899.

Owners.	Name of holding.	No. of bales.	Owners.	Name of holding.	No. of bales.
R. Whittaker	Jellingrove	170	Mrs. R. Dowing, senior	Gadara	50
W. Bootes	Mundarlo and Bangus	200	Geo. Hayes	"	9
W. Bootes, junior	Adelong Crossing	35	Barrett Bros.	"	9
R. F. Hirsley	Yabtree	250	Thos. Campbell	Gilmore	4
G. Turner	Adelong Crossing	30	Brennan Bros.	Eurobin	70
W. Richardson	Billabillap and Deltroit	200	E. Hogan	Gocup	15
— Derriek	Hillus Creek	65	H. F. Lampe	Talbingo	125
— Dennis	"	48	P. H. and S. Wilkinson	Yellowin & Upper Gilmore	50
A. W. Crain	Mount Horeb	130	London Chartered Bank,	West Blowering	100
Crain Bros.	Mount Adrah	130	manager, Alf. Watts.		
Prowse Bros.	Nacka Creek, 4 miles from Adelong	65	Wilkinson Bros.	Springfield	8
Mitchell Bros.	Clear Hills	18	Jas. M'Alister	"	2
J. Hassell	Mount Adrah	9	F. and C. Buckley	Gobragandra	15
— Melrose	Bang-a-dang	35	D. Patton	"	12
Peterson and Sargood	Fillerslie	200	C. Long	Lacmalac	12
Roche and Arragon	Condongblonga	125	Francis Halloran	"	50
Chas. Purcell	Wondalga	70	H. Wilson	Upper Bombowlee Creek	30
H. Butler	Green Hills	33	Thos. Piper	"	6
M. Devling	Middle Adelong	7	Thos. Keoffe	Wyangle	150
C. Richards	Windowie	5	P. Geary	"	30
R. Cottam	Bago	55	Dalgety & Co., Ltd.	Bombowlee Estate	180
Jas. Broughton	"	10	*P. Kiley	Red Hill	400
H. Richardson	Courabyra	55			
Rivers and Son	Oxley, Gilmore	55			
			Total, holdings		3,627

Farmers' Lots.

Jas. Kell	Lacmalac	2	J. Milay	Gocup	6
Wm. Denson	Bombowlee	2	— Harris	Yarrangobilly	10
— Snoden	Batlow	15	W. Hoad	"	1
R. Christian	"	7	H. French	Bombowlee Creek	60
H. Quamby	"	20	R. M. Shelley	Tumut Plains	2
G. Johnson	Middle Adelong	20	W. Whatman	Gadara	1
J. Hurlnell	Bago	2	Mrs. Moore	"	1
J. T. Callaway	Gilmore	1			
Jno. Auckland	Little River	2			
C. Oraham	"	2			
H. Rogers	Middle Adelong	2			
A. Shaw	Gilmore	2			
			Total, Farmers' Lots		158
			Total, Holdings		3,627
			Grand Total		3,785

* This holding on the map shows to be much nearer Gundagai than Tumut; but the road to Gundagai direct is not practicable. The wool has to be carted 8 miles on the Tumut-road—as a matter of fact within 12 miles of Tumut—before turning off to Gundagai via road down Brungle Creek. I am assured by the manager of the Bank of New South Wales here (who are in reality owners of the station) that the whole of the wool would come to Tumut if railway constructed.

2737. What weight of wool is there in a bale? I allow about 400 lbs. to the bale. The Commissioners made a very hurried visit here six or seven years ago. It was raining heavily at the time, and they just drove down the street and over the bridge and went away again. There are one or two large estates here which it is intended to open up shortly, though I am not at liberty to give you the names of them. The land is good frontage land, and will be either sold or let. When that is done there will be still more room for population.

2738. Will that pay better than running sheep? Yes, if the land sells well.

2739. Supposing they lease it? Yes, the frontage land will. They have rented some of it; but they have not made any improvements on it.

2740. Do you think that the district is capable of great expansion in the way of agriculture? Yes. South of Tumut there is a lot of country suitable for agriculture to be opened up.

2741. We have heard that there is ridgy land in the neighbourhood of Batlow which is very suitable for agriculture; do you think that that land is suitable? Yes. There is good red land there which, if cleared, will return good crops of potatoes and of fruit, and it will also grow oats and wheat, though I have not heard of corn being grown there. I think that the Bondo country, which is east of Tumut, is the best country for oats and wheat.

Syver John Rootes, senior sergeant of police, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

S. J. Rootes. 2742. *Chairman.* How long have you been living here? I came to the district twenty-one years ago last month. I was then stationed at Adelong for seven years.

6 Dec., 1899.

2743. Have you the usual statistical information collected by the police for the Tumut district? Yes; and I have, in addition to the returns collected by the Tumut police, the returns collected by the Batlow and Adelong police. There has been an alteration in the boundaries of the districts of Adelong and Tumut during the last two or three years, and therefore the area of alienated land appearing in the returns for the Tumut district for the year 1899 is not so large as it was for the year 1897. My returns are as follows:—

AGRICULTURAL Statistics collected by Tumut Police in January, 1897, 1898, 1899.

Year.	No. of holdings.	Alienated land.	Crown lands.	Area under cultivation.	Area under wheat.	Yield wheat.	Population.
1897	485	186,710	223,942	9,630	3,167	54,373	3,996
1898	512	185,726	271,375	11,384	4,649	82,527	4,057
1899	505	177,739	286,245	12,890	6,627	140,509	4,081

TUMUT

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT.

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TUMUT Agricultural Statistics collected January, 1899.

S. J. Rootes.
6 Dec., 1899.

County.	No. of holdings.	Alienated land.	Crown lands.	Area under cultivation.	Area under wheat.	Yield of wheat.	Population.
		acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	bushels.	
Wynyard ...	106	40,396	16,654	4,741	2,575	56,231	Europeans— Town..... 1,346 Country 2,569
Buccleuch ...	291	128,808	201,457	7,514	3,765	78,542	Chinese— Town..... 32 Country 124
Selwyn	18	8,535	68,184	635	287	5,736	Other alicus ... 10
Totals.....	505	177,739	286,245	12,890	6,627	140,509	4,081

RETURN of Agricultural Statistics for the Police District of Batlow for year ending 31st December, 1898.

Alienated land.		Crown lands.	Total area under cultivation.	Area under wheat for grain.	Total yield of wheat.
Freehold.	Rented.				
acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	bushels.
156,685	30,337	15,677½	1,370½	540	11,715

POPULATION for year 1898—Europeans, 825; Chinese, 12; Aliens, 15.

ADELONG Agricultural Statistics collected January, 1899.

Alienated land.	Crown lands.	Area cultivated.	Area under wheat.	Yield.	Population.
acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	bushels.	
56,544	53,240	2,658	1,314	22,112	2,842

These returns are all collected in January, but that is too early for this district, because by that time the crops have not been gathered, and sometimes I have been told that the actual crop was a little more than was anticipated.

2744. What is the total population that would be served by the construction of the proposed railway? I have not got those figures. Of course, the traffic from Brungle Creek and other places beyond Killinickat would go to Gundagai.

2745. Then the whole of the district to which you refer would not be served by the proposed railway? No, but on the other hand, there are people living outside the Adelong district who would be served by it.

2746. Mr. Hall has estimated that 8000 people would be served by the construction of the proposed line? According to my figures there are 7,775 people in the district. I may have omitted a few, but not many. I can corroborate the evidence of Mr. Byrne, because I assisted him to make up his list. We allowed for 70 fleeces to each bale; but if the sheep were heavy you could not put in so many fleeces.

2747. You do not consider Mr. Byrne's estimate an exaggerated one? No; if anything, it is otherwise than exaggerated. All the people mentioned in his statement would be benefited by the proposed railway.

2748. Do you consider the district a progressive one? Undoubtedly.

2749. In what direction do you consider it bound to go ahead? I think that it will improve in every way. I do not say that there will be a great increase in the production of maize, but there is a great deal of forest land which is now almost in its natural state, and which is suitable for growing wheat and oats.

2750. Why do you not think that the production of maize will increase? Because the greater part of the maize land is already under cultivation. There is land which might be placed under corn, but it is not of any extent. The area of land under corn has increased gradually each year.

2751. Has wheat growing gone on more or less during the whole of the time that you have been in the district? It has increased gradually until this year. A number of people put their maize land under wheat when the price of wheat became high. Country which, when I came here eight years ago, was wild forest is now ringbarked and is carrying stock.

2752. Has farming, according to your observation, been a marked success in this district? Yes.

2753. Are there regular seasons, a good rainfall, good soil, and all natural advantages? Yes. No district that I know of can equal it. We are favoured with a good rainfall, and a climate under which we can grow first class crops. I could show you oats going 50 bushels to the acre growing on apparently poor land. Similar land would produce two and a half tons of hay and from 18 to 20 bushels of wheat to the acre. Dairying is an industry which could be largely developed here. It has increased to some extent during the last two years, and there are thousands of acres well adapted for it.

2754. What do you think about the river-flat land; is it good for dairying? I think it pays better to grow maize upon that land. I consider this district well adapted for mixed farming, the cultivation of crops, dairying, and the running of a few sheep. You can produce almost anything here.

2755. What is your explanation of the fact that very little farming has been done between Adelong and Gundagai? They have not had an outlet for their produce, though they can grow it right enough.

2756. How is it that more land has not been put under crop between Gundagai and Adelong? I think that the farmers down that way are fairly comfortable, and when a man has enough he does not produce any more.

2757.

- S. J. Rootes. 2757. But if it pays the large land owners better to crop their land or to lease it out in farms, it is strange that they do not do so. Mr. Crain, for instance, has a fair quantity of good land? Yes, but I understand that last year he grew a certain quantity of maize. No doubt his land is well adapted for cultivation, and he has a good deal of forest country which would be suitable for wheat.
- 6 Dec., 1899. 2758. We were told in Sydney that the agricultural land here is held by large owners, so that farmers have no chance of getting it, except by paying extravagant rentals. Apart from that land, is there a large area of farming land available? Yes, for mixed farming.
2759. We have heard that the alluvial flats here are very narrow; do you look to that land to support a large agricultural population, or to the land on the hills? There is land on the hills which, although it would not grow maize, would grow oats, wheat, and fruit well.
2760. Have you ever talked to the settlers in the district in which Mr. O'Sullivan lives in regard to the proposed railway? Yes. His statements were quite correct. At his own residence I have seen tons of straw thrown out to rot.
2761. Do you think that the want of better communication is a great check upon the production of the district? Yes. I think that with a railway many things would be produced which it will not now pay to produce. We never suffered from drought here, and we are never flooded out. We have a regular rainfall, and get a fair crop every year, though, of course, the seasons vary somewhat. They had a far better yield last year than the year before.
2762. *Mr. Shepherd.*] A great many witnesses have spoken of land 20 miles from Tumut which they say would be brought into cultivation if the proposed railway were made. What should induce them to cultivate their land, when the farmers round Tumut are not cultivating as much as they might do? That is a very hard thing to explain; but there are farmers up the river who are increasing their cultivation every year.
2763. *Mr. Dick.*] Are they more than 20 miles from Gundagai? Some of them are 40 miles from Gundagai. The district is capable of carrying a much larger population, and, as the population increases, more land will be cultivated.
2764. *Chairman.*] Is the population increasing or decreasing? It is increasing at the rate of about sixty or seventy a year.

THURSDAY, 7 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at the "Commercial" Hotel, Tumut, at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a Line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Charles Richards, farmer, Windowie, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Richards. 2765. *Chairman.*] How far are you from Tumut? Eight and a half miles.
- 7 Dec., 1899. 2766. In what direction? South-west from here. My father and I have a farm there between us. I have been there ever since I was born.
2767. What kind of crops do you grow? Wheat, tobacco, maize, and other crops.
2768. Are there many farmers out there? There are nine, going down our creek for a distance of about 4 miles. The following are the particulars about their holdings:—

Name.	Acres.	Fit for cultivation.	Fit for wheat.	Fit for corn.
— Richards	700	240	160	80
Mrs. Kleino	424	130	110	20
J. Bawn	270	15	8	7
G. Williams	120	35	24	11
C. Crouch	100	42	22	20
— Beatie	200	108	90	18
— Quilty	250	170	130	40
W. Purcell	1,100	300	260	40
S. Williams	250	207	190	17
	3,414			

2769. How many acres have you under crop this year? One hundred and thirty.
2770. How many acres has Mrs. Kleino under crop? Forty acres under wheat and 12 acres under corn.
2771. Mr. Bawn? His is all pastoral land.
2772. Mr. Williams? He has nearly the whole of his arable land planted.
2773. Has Mr. Crouch the whole of his 42 acres of arable land under cultivation? No; there are 4 acres not planted.
2774. How much land does Mr. Beatie cultivate? He has 50 acres under wheat and 15 under corn.
2775. Mr. Quilty? He has the biggest part of his 170 acres of arable land under cultivation, but I could not tell you exactly how much.
2776. Mr. Purcell? He has about half of his arable land under cultivation.
2777. Mr. S. Williams? He has about 60 acres under cultivation.
2778. How do you send your wool and produce to market now? By team to Gundagai or to Tumut.
2779. What does it cost you to send it to Gundagai? Fivepence a bushel for grain.
2780. How much a ton? We pay about £1 from our place.
2781. *Mr. Levien.*] What is the yield per acre this year? Last year we had 90 acres under wheat, and our return was 615 bags. 2782.

2782. *Chairman.*] Is there anything else you can tell us in regard to your own locality, or the district generally? There is some good country out at Califat, about which, I understand, the Committee have had no evidence. That is all good country—level country, whereas the country where we are is confined between hills. C. Richards.
7 Dec., 1899.
2783. Is the land suitable for cultivation? It is suitable for wheat. The soil is pretty well the same as ours.
2784. What is the extent of that country? About 6,000 or 7,000 acres. The area I speak of is this side of Mr. Crain's, Mr. Downie's, and Mr. Barrett's. Mr. Barrett told me yesterday that he had about 130 acres under cultivation. He has a splendid crop of wheat this year.
2785. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How is the country which you have been speaking of supplied with water? There is plenty of water all through it.
2786. Are any of the farmers you have mentioned growing fruit? They have their own orchards, and the trees do very well. We have about an acre of fruit trees.
2787. What kind of fruit do the people there grow chiefly? Apples, pears, peaches, plums, cherries, and fruit of that kind.
2788. Do gooseberries and raspberries grow well there? Fairly well; but not so well as they grow at Batlow, where they grow splendidly. I lived there for a couple of years, and I know that it is very good fruit country.
2789. *Chairman.*] What crops is the Batlow country suited for? Potatoes and oats chiefly.
2790. Is there any large area suitable for those crops? Yes; but the land requires a lot of clearing. There is a great deal of timber upon it.
2791. What does it cost per acre to clear? About £5.
2792. How do farmers like tackling that sort of country? It is not suitable for large farmers; but it is suitable for men who take up only 20 or 40 acres, and go in for growing potatoes and fruit. They can get water on to their land there.
2793. Do you think a large number of farmers are likely to settle there? Yes; small farmers and fruit-growers.
2794. What do they do with their fruit? A jam factory started up there; but I do not know how they will get on.
2795. Is the land up there Crown land? Most of the land round the township is taken up; but there is a large forest reserve there.
2796. If a farmer took up 30 acres of land there he would have to spend £200 in clearing it? Yes, if he wanted to have it all cleared at once.
2797. What timbers are there there? Messmate, white-gum, and mountain ash.
2798. Are they saleable timbers? Yes.
2799. So that something could be made out of the timber on the land? Yes. Towards Bago there is any quantity of good country.
2800. How far beyond Tumut would that be? About 32 miles, I suppose.
2801. That would be rather a long distance for a man to bring his produce? It would be rather far; but, if the proposed railway were made, the people there would be better off than they are now.
2802. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is £5 an acre the price of clearing live timber? That is the price for ringing and then clearing the timber off the land.
2803. It would cost more than that to clear live timber? I suppose it would.
2804. *Chairman.*] I suppose that land is not as good as the land about Tumut? Not for maize. It is too cold there for maize; but it is splendid land for other crops.

John Weedon, storekeeper, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

2805. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in Tumut? Forty years. I am trading as Mandelson & Co. J. Weedon.
7 Dec., 1899.
2806. I suppose you get all your goods from Sydney by way of Gundagai? Yes.
2807. What amount of freight do you pay from Gundagai to Tumut? 20s. a ton for third-class goods, 15s. a ton for second-class goods, and 10s. a ton for first-class goods—heavy material, such as sugar, salt, or iron.
2808. What amount of tonnage is conveyed for your firm from Tumut to Gundagai, per annum? During the year 1898 we despatched to Gundagai about 1,000 tons.
2809. How many general storekeepers are there in Tumut besides yourself? Four others.
2810. Do you think they would import as much as you? Mr. Newman might do so, but I should not think the others would import anything like as much.
2811. The others are in a smaller way? Yes.
2812. Is your store a general store—do you sell groceries, drapery, wines and spirits, and so on? Yes—ironmongery and everything else.
2813. Besides the goods that come from Gundagai to Tumut to the business firms here, does any large quantity of goods come to Tumut from Gundagai? A certain amount goes to the different stations without going through the local stores—special lines, such as wire. I have known of several instances in which people have got up wire netting for themselves in 5-ton or 6-ton lots.
2814. With regard to goods coming up by train, do you charter a truck for yourself, or do you combine with the other storekeepers? The sugar comes by the truck rate, and so does iron and kerosene; but I have never chartered a truck solely on my own account. My goods come through Wright, Heaton, & Co.
2815. If the railway came to Tumut would you bring your goods to Tumut by train? Certainly.
2816. A Government official has stated that if the line were constructed Gundagai would still remain the place of consignment for store goods? So far as I am concerned it would not, because such an arrangement would mean delay and loss. It would be absurd for me to think of it.
2817. It would pay you better to use the railway than to bring goods from Gundagai by team? Yes; because, other things being equal, the handling and loss of time in bringing goods by team would put that means of transit out of the question.
2818. Do you send anything from Tumut to Gundagai? Yes, grain.

- J. Weedon. 2819. You are a buyer of grain, and you send it to Gundagai? Yes.
- 7 Dec., 1899. 2820. What freight do you pay? Fourpence a bushel, at the present time.
2821. How much would that be a ton? Over 10s. a ton.
2822. That rate would be charged if there were back loading? It was charged independently of back loading. Last year I sent away a lot of maize at 10s. a ton. This year we are paying 4d. a bushel.
2823. If the proposed railway were constructed, you would use it for the conveyance of grain, because the rates of produce are so low? Most decidedly. It would be foolish for me to do anything else.
2824. Are you able to give us an opinion as to the probable development of the district, supposing a railway were made? I think that if the railway were extended to Tumut agriculture would develop, and other industries would spring up. There is no better place in the colony for market gardening than this is, and cauliflowers, turnips, and other vegetables would be largely grown if people could get a market for them. At the present time they do not attempt anything new in the way of production, because of the want of a market.
2825. Some of the witnesses have told us that there is very little additional land in the district which could be cropped. Do you think that the fertile valleys here are at the present time cultivated to their fullest extent, or are you of opinion that there is still a considerable area of land suitable for cultivation? I think that many portions of the upland would be cultivated if the people had easier access to market.
2826. Are the lowlands fully cultivated? I do not think they are. I think that, with a railway, cultivation such as we have now would be wiped out, and that people would go in for closer settlement, and a different class of cultivation, so that the face of the district would be altogether changed, and there would be more produce to send to market.
2827. Is the wheat and flour which is sent to market from this district of good character? Yes; I have never had any trouble with it.
2828. It always fetches a fair price? Yes. Of course the wheat market has been very low for the last year or two.
2829. Between Adelong and Gundagai there has not been as much agricultural development as one might reasonably look for, seeing that that district is within reasonable distance of a railway? I cannot account for that at all.
2830. *Mr. Levien.*] I understand that the wheat and other produce sent from this district and elsewhere by train is booked from Gundagai? Yes, because Gundagai is the railway station from which it is sent.
2831. Then the railway authorities have no means of knowing whether it comes from Tumut or from Gundagai? Our weigh-bills are made out with the heading, "Gundagai, from L. Mandelson and Co., Tumut, to So-and-so," so that the Railway people would have an opportunity of knowing where the produce came from. No doubt Gundagai is credited with all the produce and goods that go through the Railway books.
2832. You do not think you get sufficient credit for the produce that is sent on to Tumut? I do not think we do.
2833. When you spoke about the lowlands being used for other purposes, I suppose you were thinking of market gardening? Yes, and fruit-growing.
2834. The land is well adapted for cauliflowers, cabbages, and other vegetables? They could be grown here to perfection.
2835. And if there were a railway they could be sent to market within a few hours? Yes.
2836. Do you think you could produce potatoes equal to those which are grown in Warrnambool? Yes.
2837. Which route do you favour for the proposed railway? I think the line *via* Adelong is the only line likely to be adopted.
2838. Would that route serve a greater number of people than either of the other routes? Yes, and it would serve two towns; the other routes would only serve one town.
2839. We have heard that some of the tenant-farmers here have paid as much as 37s. 6d. an acre rent; have you ever heard any of them complain that their rental was too high? Some of them grumble about the rents. The tobacco-growing industry boomed up the rents here; but when the farmers began to grow wheat and maize on the land it was found that rents were too high.
2840. But the farmers still keep on paying them? Some of them do; but in many cases the rents have been reduced.
2841. What is the financial condition of the farmers as a whole? Taking them right through, I think they are as good as any men in New South Wales.
2842. You look upon them as stable men whom you could thoroughly trust? Yes.
2843. They are energetic and industrious? Yes, and they are all solvent, too. I do not think there are three or four men on the Gilmore who are in any way hard up.
2844. As a large merchant, you think that if the proposed railway were constructed things would be better here than they are now? Yes, probably.
2845. But the railway will give the farmers a chance of getting their produce to market independently of the storekeepers? Yes.
2846. So that you are not speaking from selfish motives? No, I am not speaking from personal motives.
2847. If you were considering yourself personally you would say let things remain as they are? I do not know that I would say that; but, at any rate, I have no axe to grind in this matter. If the railway came to Tumut I think the district would advance considerably. Dozens of my friends in Sydney would be only too glad to come up here in the summer time; but they will not come while they know that there are 20 miles to be travelled by coach. I think, too, that the proposed railway would open up traffic from Victoria by way of the Yarrangobilly Caves. The Government now run all the traffic to the caves down through Cooma; but, if the railway came to Tumut, this would be the shortest road, and I think there would be a considerable amount of traffic in the summer time.
2848. If the train were brought to Tumut, tourists would have a shorter road journey to Yarrangobilly than they have now from Cooma, and a good road? Yes.
2849. From Tumut to Yarrangobilly is a distance of 44 miles, and from Cooma to Yarrangobilly a distance of 72 or 73 miles? Yes; and I have been told that the road is a very difficult one.
2850. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you send your goods direct to Sydney, or do you employ an agent at Gundagai? Wright, Heaton, & Co. are our agents at Gundagai for traffic coming from Sydney, but all the grain goes direct.

2851. Mr. Harper told us that for the general merchandise for which the teamsters get £1 a ton, the railway would charge 19s. 6d. per ton, and we have heard that it would pay people to continue to employ the teamsters;—do you think that the teamsters could reduce their rates so low as to induce you to bring your goods from Gundagai by road instead of by the train? I do not think they could; at any rate, they could not carry grain at the rates for which the railway would carry it.
2852. Then you think that they could not carry on their business profitably if they only got loading one way? I do.
2853. We were told by a practical man yesterday they would find themselves going backwards, financially speaking? Yes; they could not live by doing it.

J. Weedon.
7 Dec., 1899.

Robert Albert Newman, storekeeper, Tumut, sworn, and examined:—

2854. *Chairman.*] How long have you been carrying on business in Tumut? Thirty years.
2855. You are one of the principal storekeepers of Tumut? Yes.
2856. And there are four others besides yourself? Yes.
2857. What freight do you pay upon goods between Gundagai and Tumut? £1 a ton.
2858. And what is the annual amount of freight paid by you?—*
2859. Do you buy produce? Yes.
2860. And you consign it to Gundagai? Yes.
2861. I suppose you pay about the same rate as the last witness—10s. a ton? More than that. Fourpence a bushel is about 14s. 8d. a ton.
2862. And for goods brought from Gundagai to Tumut you pay 10s. a ton for first-class goods, 15s. a ton for second-class goods, and £1 a ton for third-class goods? Yes.
2863. Would you not be better off if you could consign your third-class goods right through from Sydney to Tumut by train, even if it cost you as much as it now costs you to consign them to Gundagai and to bring them from there by road? Yes, because of the saving in time and handling. Every business man will tell you that he would rather pay more to get his goods brought direct to him by train.
2864. The railway freight upon third-class goods from Gundagai to Tumut would be very close upon £1 a ton; would it suit you to pay that? Yes. Nowadays we frequently have goods lying at Gundagai for nine or ten days, because we cannot get teams to bring them on here.
2865. Wheat or grain of any kind would be conveyed from Tumut to Gundagai at lower rates than you pay to the teamsters? Yes. I estimate that the freight upon grain would be about 1d. a bushel, and we should be able to get it away much more quickly than we can now. Under present conditions, if I were to get an order for 20,000 bushels of maize, and I was asked when I could deliver it, I should have to reply, "I cannot bind myself to make delivery within a given time. All I can do is to guarantee that it will go as soon as possible." The carriage of 20,000 bushels would necessitate the employment of eighty teams, and it would take three months to get the produce away. Before we could complete the order, therefore, a cargo might come in from America—that happened only last week—and the market would go down. At the present time we have to buy two or three months in advance, and the undertaking is altogether speculative, but if we had a railway to Tumut we should know what the prices were and when we could deliver. It would suit us to pay the present rates if we could get our produce taken away more quickly. At the present time the business people of Tumut practically monopolise the teams, because we can say to the teamsters, "We will give you back-loading," whereas the growers cannot do that, and they are therefore worse off than we are.
2866. If the growers had not so far to get to a railway station they could cart their wheat and maize there themselves? Yes, and no doubt they would do that.
2867. I suppose Tumut is a big distributing centre? Yes.
2868. Are most of the goods used by the residents of the district obtained from the local storekeepers? Yes.
2869. The people do not import much on their own account? No.
2870. I suppose some of the large runs do? We have no very large runs here.
2871. I suppose the large landholders would import their own fencing wire, iron, salt, and things of that kind? Yes.
2872. Have you any general statement to make? I have listened to most of the evidence which the Committee have taken during the last three days, and I have come to the conclusion that you are convinced that there are quite 30,000 acres of land in this district which could be placed under cultivation.
2873. Do you mean within a distance likely to be affected by the construction of the proposed railway? Yes. If 30,000 acres were put under cultivation, 10,000 acres being put under maize, 10,000 under wheat, 5,000 under hay, and 5,000 under potatoes, and the produce upon that land sent by rail, the total freight at 1d. a bushel for the wheat and maize and 3s. a ton for the hay and potatoes would amount to £9,000.
2874. Do you mean through to Sydney? No, from Tumut to Gundagai. That freight would be quite apart from the freight upon tobacco, wool, live stock, fruit, and passenger fares, and the back freight from Gundagai to Tumut, which would considerably increase with the natural increase in population. If we are getting so many tons of goods up now for a population of 6,000 people, and the population increased to three times the present number, we should want three times as much goods as we require now. I am under the impression that this would be one of the best paying lines in the Colony, because the facilities for production in this district are so great. The mining population is increasing here, and a great deal more gold was obtained during the last twelve months than during many previous years. If the railway were brought to Tumut, you would, within a short time, find the country 15 miles south from here studded with furnished cottages, to which people would come to spend two or three of the hot months of the year. Of course, these people would want supplies, and it would all bring traffic to the railway. Then, too, we should be given some credit for the trainage from Gundagai to Sydney. If the freight from Tumut to Gundagai amounted to £9,000 at 1d. a bushel, at 4d. a bushel to Sydney it would amount to £36,000.

2875.

* NOTE (on revision):—Mr. S. Groves has collected from the business people in Tumut the amount of trainage paid annually by them, and has sent particulars—[*Vide Appendix*]

- R. A. Newman.
7 Dec., 1899.
2875. Of course your figures are somewhat extreme, but if only one half were realised the traffic would be considerable? Yes; though I do not think my figures are extreme.
2876. How is it that there is not more cultivation between Gundagai and Tumut at the present time? Because many of the holders there are large holders, and they are doing remarkably well out of the land as it is, so that they do not care to bother with tenants. Mr. Gordon has a few Chinese growing maize, but the others have done very well with their land without leasing it. It is acknowledged that that land is not so good for agricultural purposes as is the land south and east of Tumut. There is a lot of land out towards the east of Tumut which is still open for selection, and which would be taken up if the railway were brought here—splendid wheat-growing land. Bombowice is a large property quite near to Tumut which is about to be cut up into farms, and that will bring a large population to the district.
2877. Then you endorse the statement that has been made to us over and over again by the farmers in the Gilmore Valley, and in the other places, to the effect that if they had a better and more reliable means of communication they would till every acre of their arable land? Yes. If they were sure of their market they would put more land under cultivation, but their difficulties are now so many that they do not trouble about it. This place has always been kept back for the want of a market. All those who purchase grain here have to do so in the dark at the present time, because we do not know what we shall get for it. If wheat were to take a jump from 2s. 8d. to 3s. 6d. a bushel to-morrow, we could not get our wheat away in time to take advantage of the rise. I believe that when federation is an accomplished fact, and a duty of 1s. a bushel is placed upon maize and Californian flour, and upon New Zealand oats and flour, farming will pay very well in New South Wales.

James Daniel Walker, C.P.S., Mining Warden and Crown Lands Agent, Tumut, sworn, and examined—

- J. D. Walker, C.P.S.
7 Dec., 1899.
2878. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have prepared some statistics for the information of the Committee? I have here a return showing the area of the gold leases applied for in the district, and the amount of the deposits and survey fees paid. The area of gold leases applied for from the 1st January to the 30th November of the present year was 1241 acres, and the amount of the deposits and survey fees paid £1340 8s. These figures do not include the Adelong district. The mining revenue last year amounted to £84 10s., and the increase is to be accounted for by the large number of dredging leases applied for this year. The total revenue of the office during 1898 from land, mining, and other sources was £13,418 10s. A large number of applications have been lodged under the 28th section of the Act, but, instead of being lodged with the warden, they are sent to the Department of Mines. The Red Hill reserve, in the parish of Wyangle, has been pegged out for miles.
2879. Is land sought after in this district for selection purposes? Yes, and a lot of selections have been taken up this year by people who in other years would not have looked at the land because of the dry seasons.
2880. Are these selections taken up by practical men, who will go to work to improve their properties? I should say so. In my opinion this is one of the soundest districts in the colony. Very few people here have availed themselves of the provisions of the Conditional Purchasers Relief Act—I think not more than twenty; and very few conditional purchasers—I should say not more than about forty—are in arrears. I do not think that any district in the colony has greater mineral resources than this district possesses; but it needs capital to develop them.

Spencer Groves, proprietor, *Tumut and Adelong Times*, sworn, and examined:—

- S. Groves.
7 Dec., 1899.
2881. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in this district? Twenty-eight years.
2882. I understand that you have been the proprietor of the *Tumut and Adelong Times* for twenty-six years? Yes.
2883. You are also secretary to the District Improvement League? Yes.
2884. You have heard the greater part of the evidence which has been taken by the Committee? I think that I have heard the whole of it.
2885. Do you agree generally with the purport of that evidence and the facts and figures which have been given? Yes. A part of the district from which we have got no witnesses is the Yarrangobilly Caves. I have ascertained from the caretaker there that the average number of people visiting those caves during the last few years is 800. There are three routes to the Caves—from Gundagai, a distance of 65 miles; from Cooma, a distance of 75 miles; and from Wagga, *via* Tumbarumba, about 85 miles. If the railway were brought to Tumut it would come within 45 miles of the Caves. At the present time, there is a constant agitation for the keeping of each of these roads in order; but if a railway were brought to Tumut it would settle all contention as to which road should be kept in order, as the road to the Caves, in favour of the Tumut-road, and the other roads would then require much less attention. Thousands of pounds have been spent upon the road from Tumut to the Caves, for the purpose of opening up the Caves district, and those who have travelled over both the Cooma and the Tumut roads say that the Tumut-road is undoubtedly the better, and that this district contains better scenery. The question has been asked, why is it that more cultivation has not taken place in toward Gundagai. I think that may be explained in this way:—For the first 7 or 8 miles from Gundagai most of the land through which the railway passes is comprised within the South Gundagai Common and ridgy country until you get to Big Ben Creek and the Adelong Crossing. There is cultivation there, and that land was cultivated even before the train came to Gundagai, and the area of cultivation has been kept up very fairly. Leaving Adelong Crossing, you get into the large estates held by Mr. Crain, Mr. Broughton, and Mr. Bardwell. Those people own pretty well the whole of that country. Then you get on to the Tumut Common. So far as I can learn, Mr. Crain has received no inducement to give up the pastoral industry, and to lease out his land in small farms, up to the present time; but if the railway came through the country, it would be opened up, and there would be no difficulty in getting tenants. The country is all first-class wheat country, and I think it would be taken up very readily by the farming population. It has been mentioned that in the Young electorate farmers can afford to grow grain 50 miles from a railway, while we, who are only

only 20 miles from a railway, grumble about the distance; but I should think 30 miles would be the extreme outside limit in the Young electorate, whereas in our district the outside limit would be 50 miles; most of our good country being within 15 or 20 miles of Tumut. The roads over which the people in this district have to travel are hilly roads, so that the teams cannot take more than 5 or 6 tons at a time, but in flatter country, I dare say they would take 10 tons. There are three roads from Gundagai to Tumut, aggregating 80 miles in length, and all these roads have now to be kept in repair, at a cost of £50 a mile; but, of course, when the railway is constructed, the heavy traffic will be taken off them, and the expenditure for maintenance will be very much decreased. I do not think there is any other part of the country in which, by the construction of a railway, expenditure could be saved upon three main roads.

S. Groves.
7 Dec., 1899.

2886. But would not the people require cross-roads to enable them to get to the railway? I do not think more would have to be spent upon the cross-roads than is spent at the present time. Money is voted each year for expenditure on these roads, and that money would, I think, suffice to keep them in order, because, with the construction of a railway, the farmers would use lighter teams. I understand that the annual expenses of a railway to Tumut have been estimated at about £8,000; but I should like to point out that the same rolling-stock that is now used between Cootamundra and Gundagai could be used for the whole length from Cootamundra to Tumut, and nearly the same staff. Perhaps a shunter or two would be required at Gundagai to help with the station work there; but I suppose the staff of the train would come on to Tumut. The demand for residences in this town is, at the present time, greater than the supply. I know of three families who are now living at boarding-houses because they are unable to get houses of their own; and, no doubt, many other people would come here if better inducements were given them. There is a lot of vacant land in the town, and if the railway came here it would be utilised, because building materials are as cheap here as in any other part of the Colony. At the present time contracts for buildings are let up to the value of over £6,000.

2887. Have you considered the question as to what will have to be paid for compensation for land? I think that in many cases the people through whose land the railway would pass would agree to give their land to the Government. In some cases the railway comes close to the road, and it is possible that part of the road might be taken for railway purposes. That would make the strip of private land to be resumed much narrower, and therefore less costly.

2888. Are the sheep which are brought into this district for agistment paid for by the thousand, or are the paddocks into which they go rented? I think that the sheep are paid for by the thousand.

2889. Do you know what is paid for them? No. A question was asked as to what guarantee there is that land 20 miles from here can be brought under cultivation if the proposed railway is made, seeing that land within 20 miles of Gundagai had not been cultivated. At the present time, people here cultivate such land as will produce 20 bushels to the acre; because, unless they have as high yields as that, they cannot afford to pay the cartage to Gundagai; but, if the railway were brought to Tumut, they would cultivate land yielding only 15 bushels an acre. The Batlow district, which is capable of producing even better yields than we get here, would be on the same footing, as far as railway communication is concerned, as Tumut. Mr. Weeden was asked if he could account for the decrease in the maize-production of the district. I think it can be accounted for by the substitution of wheat for maize; but, if the railway were brought to Tumut, a great deal of the land now being used for wheat would be used for maize, and the wheat-growing would extend to the hilly country. On the Bombowlee estate there are large areas of land under wheat which could produce splendid crops of maize, and I think that if the railway came here they would grow maize upon that land, and wheat upon the higher country.

FRIDAY, 8 DECEMBER, 1899.

[The Committee met at Brungle, at 1 p.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Alexander McGruer, grazier, Brungle, sworn, and examined:—

2890. *Chairman.*] How many years have you lived here? Thirty-nine years and nine months.

A. McGruer.

2891. Are you well acquainted with the country from Gundagai to Tumut, and the district generally? Yes.

8 Dec., 1899.

2892. Are there any townships between Tumut and Gundagai, on the Brungle route? No, none whatever.

2893. Brungle is a village in name only? Yes.

2894. Between Brungle and Gundagai what towns are there? None.

2895. Between Brungle and Coolac is there any concentration of population? No; there are only a few farms there.

2896. As an old resident of the district have you formed an opinion as to which of the three proposed routes would be the best for a line to take? I have formed a very strong opinion upon the subject, and I think the railway should be taken along the Tumut Valley, because by going that way it would serve 20 miles of good country on the Tumut River, in addition to the country round about Tumut itself, and further out. The produce grown upon the Adelong route amounts to very little until you get to the Gilmore Creek; though, of course, there is more population upon that route. The population of Adelong, however, is a mining population, and is supplied with produce chiefly from Tumut, aided by a little locally-grown produce.

2897.

- A. McGruer. 2897. Between Gundagai and Tumut *via* the Tumut River what extent of cultivation is there? It is all cultivation. Just opposite this house, on the river flat, there are 400 or 500 acres under maize. The Tarrabandra traffic would come in to the line you speak of at the Brungle bridge. A railway going *via* Adelong would lose the traffic from the Tumut valley district until you get beyond Killimicat Hill.
- 8 Dec., 1899. 2898. I suppose you are aware that if a railway were brought along the Tumut Valley it would have to start from Coolac? Yes.
2899. That is looked upon by the Department as a very serious objection to the route? There is some force in the objection; but, to my mind, the proper route to adopt would be one crossing the river near Coolac. A few years ago I showed Mr. Burge a place where the Murrumbidgee could be crossed by a bridge not a quarter as long as any bridge that would be required at Gundagai.
2900. Where do the people on the Tumut valley send their produce to now? There is not such a great lot of produce grown on this side of the Tumut valley now, though it has been grown, and it will be grown again. There is a big plain between here and Gundagai, and I have seen every acre of it ploughed. I might also mention that one season I owned one of four threshing machines, which were employed on the Brungle Creek; and, though my machine was the smallest there, it put through 10,000 bushels. I threshed for Mr. Clout that season.
2901. Then are we to understand that agriculture has fallen off very much here? Yes.
2902. Why is that? There are eleven or twelve fewer families on the creek now than there were then. Mr. P. Kiley holds land which used to belong to four, five, or six men; Henry French has land which other people used to be in possession of; and Messrs. Robert and William French have land which was at one time owned by others.
2903. That indicates retrogression rather than progression in respect to agriculture? Yes; but I think that what has to be studied in regard to a railway proposal is rather the capabilities of the soil than the manner in which the land is held. In years to come the land will be put to its proper use again.
2904. Between Gundagai and Tumut, *via* the Tumut valley, how many acres are there on the flats suitable for agricultural purposes? I could not give you any direct reply, because I have not gone into the matter.
2905. Is it not the general experience that when land gets into the hands of the large holder he uses it for pastoral rather than for agricultural purposes? Yes; but when families increase it has to be divided again amongst them.
2906. Do you go in for farming at all? Very little.
2907. You used to do so? Yes.
2908. I suppose you find it easier and more pleasant to let the cattle and sheep earn your living for you? Yes.
2909. On the other route the people have the local market and all the advantages which arise from close settlement, and which you have not got. Do you not think, therefore, that the future of that district as a farming district will be realised more rapidly than the future of this district, supposing the railway is brought this way? My opinion is that once you get past the Gilmore on the other route you will get traffic to the railway; but between Gundagai and Gilmore the prospects of traffic are very poor.
2910. It is said that agriculture is not largely engaged in in that part of the country, because large holders keep the land for other purposes? I do not think that the land is there. You can see the extent of good land from the road.
2911. On the Gilmore, and round about Tumut for a distance of five or six miles, is there not a large extent of country suitable for agriculture? Undoubtedly; and therefore I say that Tumut should get a railway. I think that the producers should be helped, because they have to work very hard.
2912. Your contention is that the country between Tumut and Gundagai on the Tumut Valley, will support a larger population than the country on the Adelong route? It would give more traffic to a railway.
2913. Traffic in agricultural produce? Yes, and perhaps in copper and chrome ore. It does not matter to me which way the line goes, because I am pretty handy to the railway now. I am only about 12 miles from Gundagai.
2914. Have you a fairly good road? Yes. If the railway were being promoted by a private company I would rather take shares in a line going along the Tumut Valley than in a line going along the Adelong Creek Valley. I should like to see the line start from Coolac. The country down there is wonderful.
2915. But are not the people down there fairly well served at the present time? Yes, fairly well.
2916. Do the people on the eastern route take much interest in this matter? I do not think so. Even in Tumut they do not seem to trouble much about it. I was there at one meeting, and only one farmer spoke.
2917. If the railway were brought along the Tumut Valley would you use it? Yes, if there were a station close at hand, unless I wanted to take anything into Gundagai.
2918. How far would you be from such a line? If it came on this side of the river it would go through my land.
2919. We have it in evidence that if the line were taken *via* Adelong Crossing the people out almost as far as the Crossing would still continue to cart their produce into Gundagai? I do not think they would cart produce that they intended to send through to Sydney, or any long distance, into Gundagai.
2920. Is the land on the Tumut Valley as fertile as the land on the Gilmore? Yes. There is a piece of land in front of my door from which I have received 35 or 36 bushels of wheat to the acre. Last year I only got 25 bushels from it; but the wheat was quite pinched, and by its colour I think that it will be pinched this year. The land here and on the Brungle Creek is splendid wheat-growing land, though a lot of it is lying idle.
2921. There is no Government land here? No, I think not, unless in the travelling stock reserves.
2922. Do you know what that land is worth an acre? I do not know what it would be worth all through.
2923. Is it any of it leased to farmers? Yes.
2924. What do they pay for it? I do not know.
2925. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you ever tried fruit-growing here? Yes, on a small scale.
2926. What kind of fruits have you grown? Grapes, apples, pears, and apricots.
2927. Do they all do well? Fairly well.
2928. How much land have you under cultivation? About 7 acres this year.

2929. Is that land chiefly under wheat? Yes.

2930. What kind of wheat do you grow? At one time my fancy was for White Lamb wheat; but now I do not care what I grow, as I use it merely for hay.

2931. I suppose the grazing country about here is not considered very good? It is not too bad.

2932. What is the average carrying capacity of the hilly country? A sheep to the acre, or a little more. In conjunction with my brother, I hold not quite 5,000 acres, and this year I shored over 5,000 sheep. In addition to those sheep we fatten from 150 to 200 head of cattle.

2933. Do you think that the construction of a railway through this district would induce people to go in for agriculture more? I think so.

2934. I suppose that between here and Gundagai the people are well served already? Yes.

2935. Are you acquainted with the country south of Tumut? Not very well, though I have been through it all. It is good country. Tumut is the spring-head from which the present traffic on the Gundagai line comes. Gundagai would be nowhere if it were not for Tumut.

A. McGruer.
8 Dec., 1898.

WEDNESDAY, 10 JANUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

William John Hanna, Principal Assistant Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

2936. *Chairman.*] Since you were last before the Committee you have prepared a statement, showing the expenditure upon the roads in the Tumut district during a certain period? I have particulars of the expenditure for the past four years. The return is perhaps fuller than the Committee actually require. It contains some roads which are not directly affected by the railway. It is as follows:—

RETURN of Expenditure on Roads likely to be affected by construction of proposed Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

Schedule No. 93-9.	Name of Road.	1895-96.	1896-97.	1897-98.	1898-99.	Total.
		£	£	£	£	£
1,323	Tumut to Gundagai.....	1,388	1,093	915	657	4,053
1,324	Tumut, <i>via</i> Brungle, to Gundagai	1,453	498	598	423	2,977
1,325	Tumut to Lacomalac.....	244	278	150	85	757
1,326	Tumut to Kiandra	906	598	805	978	3,287
1,327	Tumut to Adelong	464	253	231	289	1,237
1,328	Tumut, <i>via</i> The Plains, to Jones' Bridge	167	124	150	141	582
1,329	Tumut to Tomorrana.....	223	314	93	175	805
1,330	Tumut, <i>via</i> Piper's, up Bombowiee Creek.....	152	58	75	56	341
1,331	Adelong Crossing to Bago	601	448	331	505	1,885
1,332	Adelong to Hillas Creek	225	127	205	229	786
1,335	Gilmore to Reilly's Crossing	133	104	126	118	481
1,338	Jones' Bridge to West Blowering	153	144	156	133	636
1,339	Reilly's Crossing, <i>via</i> Batlow, to Bago	148	94	159	191	592
1,340	Tarrabandra to Gocup	68	.....	56	63	191
1,341	Windowie School, up West Bank, Gilmore Creek	39	52	77	34	202
1,342	Windowie, up East Bank, Gilmore Creek	126	84	118	84	412
		£ 6,495	4,269	4,244	4,221	19,229
—	Main Southern Road (S. Gundagai to Tarcutta Creek)	536	326	327	507	1,696
		£ 7,031	4,595	4,571	4,728	20,925

2937. Will you mention the main roads, and state what amount has been expended upon them? There are only three roads which would be much affected, and only one of those three to a large extent, and that would be the main road from Gundagai to Tumut *via* Minjary. Upon that road during the past four years we have expended £4,053. The next road is that from Gundagai to Adelong, which embraces two roads—part of the Great Southern Road, and the scheduled road from Adelong Crossing to Adelong. Upon the Tumut to Adelong portion the expenditure has been £1,237 during the last four years. Upon the portion lying between Adelong Crossing and Adelong, on the road from Adelong Crossing to Bago, the approximate expenditure has been £1,300 during the same period. Upon the main southern road the expenditure has been £1,690; the other roads are feeders; I do not think they will be affected. We cannot count upon any appreciable reduction in the cost of maintenance.

2938. The cost of maintaining them will go on whether there is a railway or not? Yes; it would be increased rather than reduced. There will be a considerable saving effected upon the direct road from Gundagai to Tumut, but that saving will be all required to open up fresh roads as feeders to the railway. Taking the additions and reductions, I think the expenditure will remain about the same as at present.

2939. That is owing to the hilly and difficult character of the country? And the necessity for opening up fresh roads owing to the opening of the railway; even with the present settlement fresh outlets will be wanted.

2940.

- W. J. Hanna. 2940. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there plenty of good road-metal in that district? It is a very good district for metal.
- 10 Jan., 1900. 2941. There is no trouble whatever in making good roads? No.
2942. The road from Gundagai to Adelong is a good road? Yes. It is in good order and is metalled throughout, excepting about half a mile.
2943. It meets all the requirements of the Adelong mining population? So far as I know.
2944. There is no difficulty in carting machinery along the road? I should not think so.
2945. You have not had any complaints? Not that I am aware of.
2946. You have not heard of mining being kept in abeyance through the want of a good road to Gundagai? I do not recollect any complaint of the kind.
2947. Is that road as good on to Tumut as it is to Adelong? I think the direct road is, perhaps, rather better. I do not think there is much difference; they are both good roads for traffic.
2948. Have the farmers of Tumut as good an outlet for their produce as have the mining people at Adelong? I should think so.
2949. They do not complain of the badness of the road? There has been no serious complaint.
2950. Carriage is as cheap there as it is anywhere? I should think it would be. The direct road from Gundagai to Tumut is all metalled, excepting about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
2951. Is the unmetalled part a good natural road? Fairly good.
2952. In dry weather, certainly? Yes.
2953. Does it get soft in wet weather? Yes; but not to a serious extent.
2954. I suppose that year by year you will gradually metal it? Yes, we are continuing to improve it.
2955. Is the whole district fairly well served by main roads? Yes.
2956. Are the branch roads off to the farms in fairly good condition? The branch roads are, many of them, bad in wet weather, especially in some places. They are attended to from time to time, as the funds at our disposal admit.
2957. *Mr. Watson.*] Although the road between Tumut and Gundagai is well made, it has a very heavy grade has it not? Yes, there are some hills.
2958. It is more hilly than the road between Adelong and Gundagai? Yes.
2959. *Mr. Dick.*] You mentioned the road from Adelong to Bago; is that a direct road from Bago? Yes.
2960. That road would not be much affected by the railway? Not beyond Adelong.
2961. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the length of the direct road from Gundagai to Tumut? Speaking from memory, about 23 miles.
2962. It is metalled all the way, with the exception of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles? Yes.
2963. Have you any idea of the rate of carriage? No.

FRIDAY, 12 JANUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

William John Allen, Fruit Expert, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

- W. J. Allen. 2964. *Chairman.*] You are a fruit expert in the Department of Mines and Agriculture? Yes.
- 12 Jan., 1900. 2965. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the nature of your duties? My duties are principally in connection with the fruit industry. I have charge of the orchards belonging to the Department of Agriculture, and I also travel round the country giving instruction when requested to do so.
2966. I suppose you have a good general knowledge of the fruit-growing districts of the Colony? I have a fairly good insight into them.
2967. Do you know the Tumut district? I have driven through the district to Batlow from Gundagai.
2968. How long ago? Last April or May.
2969. What is your opinion of the district? Judging from the fruit I saw at the show at Batlow, and from the orchards I saw there, I consider that there is in the district some of the best fruit-growing land for cold climate fruits I have seen. It is specially adapted to the growth of apples, pears, currants, and different kinds of berries, also to the growth of vegetables. I saw some exceptionally fine potatoes and onions there—as good as I have seen at any show, and I have attended some of the best shows in the Colony.
2970. It is also a great maize-growing district? I believe maize is grown there; but I did not see much in the part I visited. I was mostly looking through orchards.
2971. What part of the district did you visit? In going to Batlow I went *via* Adelong and back by Tumut. I was driven from Batlow to Tumut, and I was shown some very good country; but I saw no country better than that which I saw round Batlow for fruit-growing purposes.
2972. Is there a large area of that fruit-growing country? There are some good-sized patches. I will not say that the whole of the land is good; but the red soil is at places deep, and it is better for fruit-growing purposes than is some of the clayey soil. In some cases you come to the clay at a depth of a foot or 15 inches. Although that land will grow good fruit, it will not grow as good fruit as will the red soil.
2973. Apart from the flats along the river, the bulk of the country is hilly? Yes.
2974. What is the area of land there which you consider well adapted for the growth of fruit? There is a great deal of good land suited to the growth of fruit in the hilly country, where it is not too steep. I could not give you the area; but some of the best land I saw was on the hillside between Tumut and Batlow.
- 2975.

2975. Is it similar country to that in the immediate vicinity of Tumut;—is it similar to the hilly country there? I apprehend so. I could not see much difference in the soil. W. J. Allen.
2976. Is there a large production of fruit in the district at the present time? At the present time it is not particularly large; but I think there is a good future for the industry if the country is opened up so that the fruit may be easily got to market. It is rather expensive to get the fruit down from Batlow to Tumut, especially summer fruit; vegetables are also difficult to get down. 12 Jan., 1900.
2977. At present there is not a very large area of land under fruit? Ten acres would be a good orchard there at the present time. I did not see any very large orchards.
2978. You think, as an expert in fruit, that if the people in the district had better facilities for getting their produce to market, their fruit-growing operations would be largely increased? I think so. It is as good country as any I have seen in New South Wales for cold-climate fruit.
2979. Would the proposed railway offer the necessary facilities for a large fruit-growing industry? I think it would greatly help the fruit-growing. I do not think that so far as fruit-growing is concerned the proposed line goes quite far enough. There is a lot of good country at the back of Tumut which would not be touched by the railway.
2980. In what direction? Round the hills at Batlow.
2981. I suppose you have had some experience of the results derived from the carriage of fruit? Yes.
2982. Where fruit is conveyed by teams it gets knocked about a good deal? Yes; a great proportion of the producers have not proper conveyances. Fruit requires to be conveyed by spring waggons, and most of the producers have only drays, which cannot take any very great quantity at a time.
2983. With their present facilities the producers are not likely to extend their operations of fruit-growing? They could not do so very well.
2984. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you ever resided in the district between Tumut and Adelong? No; I have made only one trip to that district; I was there only three or four days.
2985. So that you have only a superficial knowledge of that part of the country? While I was there I had a look at some of the orchards and the land generally. I went there to learn as much as I could and I gained considerable information while I was there.
2986. I suppose the main reason why fruit-growing has not been more largely carried on lies in the difficulty of getting fruit to market? Quite so. Fruit is greatly bruised in being sent to the railway station. I am told that although the fruit is good when it is sent away, when it reaches Sydney it is greatly bruised and would not be of any use for export.
2987. You said, I think, that apples, and pears, and cherries were the principal fruits grown? Apples, cherries and pears, and the different berries and currants.
2988. Do you know whether the seasons are sometimes so severe as to destroy the fruit? I have not heard it.
2989. When the Committee were there some time ago it was impossible to get fruit of any kind locally grown, and we were informed that the snow and frosts had completely destroyed the crops? This year has been an exceptional year all over the Colony. Last year I was shown in this district as fine fruit as I have seen grown anywhere in the Colony.
2990. This season, then, is quite exceptional? It has been in most parts of New South Wales.
2991. Did you have much conversation with the fruit-growers of the district? I conversed with those I met.
2992. Do you think there is a general desire among the residents to enter largely into the fruit-growing industry? I do not think there is at the present time. We now import a great quantity of apples and pears, but if it can be shown that fruit-growing can be made to pay in the district—as no doubt it can—the industry will soon thrive, and in place of our being importers of fruit we might easily become exporters.
2993. What was the real object of your visit to the district? I was judging at the Batlow Show.
2994. You did not make any inquiry to ascertain what traffic would be likely to result to a railway from fruit-growing? No; I did not think about the railway at that time, but the fruit-growers told me that their fruit got damaged a great deal in travelling to Gundagai, and I can quite understand that that would be the case.
2995. What is your opinion of the land generally in the district for fruit-growing purposes? The best of the land for fruit-growing is on the hill-side.
2996. Would it be nearer Tumut or Gundagai? Beyond Tumut, towards Batlow.
2997. The area suitable for cultivation there, I suppose, is rather limited? I should say that a very big area of country suitable for fruit-growing could be opened up. It is certainly rough country, but from what I could see, some of it is as good for fruit-growing purposes as you could get anywhere.
2998. The hills, as a rule, would be too steep for fruit-growing? Round about the hills where the ground is not very steep, some of the best fruit-growing land exists.
2999. What portion of the district do you consider most suitable for fruit-growing? Most of the land I saw was around Batlow. I could not say whether the land at Tumut was better or worse than the Batlow land. I saw the land round about Batlow for a radius of a few miles, and it struck me as being exceptionally good fruit-growing country.
3000. What is the character of the country between Tumut and Batlow? It is rather rough country. It is similar to the country round about Batlow. It is a little more open than the country at Batlow.
3001. I suppose there are patches suitable for fruit-growing? Yes.
3002. And it is your opinion that fruit-growing would be largely gone into there if there were railway facilities? I think it would be an industry which could be very profitably opened up there.
3003. Did you take any notice of the agriculture in the district? No; but I noticed that particularly good onions and potatoes were grown.
3004. Have you seen much of the Tumut fruit in Sydney? Yes.
3005. Do you know the variety of apples which are chiefly grown there? I believe the five-crown pippin is the variety chiefly grown.
3006. They grow chiefly the better-keeping varieties, I suppose? Yes; and that is where they would be able to make their money.
3007. *Mr. Dick.*] How would you describe the soil in the Batlow and Bago districts? It is a changeable soil. Some of it is a nice loamy soil, with an open subsoil, while some is very shallow, with a white, clayey subsoil.

- W. J. Allen. 3008. Although the land out there is fairly rough, by far the greater part of it is suitable for orchards? I should say about half of it would be.
- 12 Jan., 1900. 3009. Is water plentiful there? The water is certainly plentiful at Batlow; it is a mining place, where they can get water at any time.
3010. In what way do they get the water? I saw it running in small channels.
3011. It is brought down in races from the tops of the hills? Yes.
3012. Did you see any instances of irrigation at Batlow? I saw some crude methods of irrigation, but they have not taken it up extensively. They use the water when it is necessary, but I do not know how they apply it to the land.
3013. Taking the district altogether with its climate, rainfall, and soil, do you think it offers exceptional advantages for fruit culture? Yes; not only that, but for farming. I was raised on a farm in Canada, and I know something of it. I think there is very good land in the district for farming purposes.
3014. I suppose the construction of a line to Tumut would be of great advantage to the people at Batlow? I suppose it would make a difference of 20 miles in their carriage. It would certainly be a great advantage to the people of Tumut.
3015. Do you know where their principal market is at the present time? I should say in the western districts.
3016. What sized allotment would be sufficient to enable a man to earn a decent living? I should say about 20 acres.
3017. The Committee were informed that one man there kept himself and his own family, and his son and son's wife, on 4 acres? I should not have thought that. If a man got on to the best land there he would do very well, but I could not say that he would get a good living off 4 acres. He might make £200 perhaps, at the most.
3018. Is there anything exceptional in the character of the fruit grown there? From what I could see it is very good. It is a good keeping quality of fruit, and it attains a good marketable size.
3019. Did you see much country fit for the growth of potatoes and onions? Any of the land fit for orchard cultivation would grow splendid potatoes and onions. The potatoes grown there would be, I should think, a good keeping quality.
3020. Do you know of any other form of agriculture besides those you have mentioned for which the district is suited? A large proportion of the land would be well adapted to general agriculture.
3021. As a rule it is fairly expensive to clear? Yes. Some of the heavily timbered country would be very expensive. There are some very large trees, and if you tried to clear the land right away it would be very expensive to get the stumps out.
3022. The clearing of a small area sufficient in that district to enable a man to earn a living would not be so serious an item as the clearing of an area sufficient to enable him to make a living in any other district? That is a very strong advantage; a small area would be enough to keep a man and his family.
3023. You did not go over the country to an extent sufficient to give you a rough idea of the cultivable land? No.
3024. *Chairman.*] Did you make any observations of the country between Tumut and Gundagai? I cannot say that I did.
3025. You cannot say whether it will be suitable for fruit-growing? I could not say. I do not remember that part of the country. I just drove through it.
3026. Would the fruit grown at Batlow be for selling in its natural state or for preserves? The apples and pears would be sold as they are, but I think a large trade could be opened up in raspberry pulp and black currants.
3027. Which do you consider the best climate for fruit-growing—a dry climate, such as that of the western district, or a climate such as that of the Tumut, where there is a regular rainfall? It would depend upon the description of fruit you grew. If you were growing apples you would go to Tumut and Orange, but if you wished to grow citrus fruits you would go to drier and warmer country.
3028. The Tumut district is particularly suitable for what you have described as cold-climate fruits? Yes.
3029. Would it be very expensive to clear the land which you observed at Batlow as being so suitable for fruit culture? Some of it would be expensive in clearing.
3030. How much per acre would it cost? I should say some of it would cost £5 per acre, if you wished to clear it right away.
3031. You think there is a market in Sydney, and the Colony generally, for the class of fruit which could be grown in this district? Yes; and I think that in the future there will be a good export market for that fruit.
3032. What quantity of fruit is imported into the Colony of a character similar to that which could be grown in the Batlow district? I could not give you the exact figures, but in the season from 10,000 to 15,000 cases of apples and pears come into the Colony weekly from Tasmania and Victoria. We are importing apples and pears from Tasmania as long as they can keep them.
3033. Has that been the case for a number of years, or is it attributable at all to the disease which we are informed has affected our apples and pears? We have never yet grown enough for the local market.
3034. At the present time Batlow is from 40 to 45 miles from the railway? Yes.
3035. Do you think that is a prohibitive distance for the cartage of fruit in its natural state? I think that if people there were thoroughly alive to the requirements of the trade they could make it pay to cart that distance, but of course the people would do much better if they could get within a few miles of the railway.
3036. If they had the proper conveyances? The men who made a business of fruit-growing would get the best appliances for conveying the fruit to market.
3037. He would pack properly and have proper vehicles? Yes; but even then 40 miles is a great distance to cart fruit.
3038. Could you say whether the class of soil in that district would grow fruit by natural moisture, or would it be necessary to irrigate? It would not be necessary to irrigate with thorough cultivation. I think you could always conserve enough moisture in the soil to grow the best fruits there.
3039. Could you procure for us figures showing the annual importations of cold-climate fruits into the Colony? 506,078 cases of fruit were imported into Sydney by steamers in 1899.

THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LUNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVLEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- 3040. *Chairman.*] Since you were last under examination the Committee have visited Gundagai, Adelong, Tumut, and the district generally which would be affected by the construction of the proposed railway, and they there took a great deal of evidence; but, as the estimates of traffic given by the local witnesses largely exceed the Departmental estimates, we have thought it well to recall you to hear what you have to say further on the subject; in the first place, the local witnesses appeared to think that your estimate of the receipts from goods, stock, and wool—£2,489—was too low; that estimate, I suppose, includes the receipts from the carriage of wheat and other produce? Yes. J. Harper.
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- 3041. In making your calculations, what did you take as the area of land likely to be put under cultivation to give traffic to the railway? Allowance was made for the traffic produced by 17,000 acres.
- 3042. *Dr. Garran.*] 17,000 acres is the total drainage area you allowed? Yes.
- 3043. *Chairman.*] Have you read the local evidence upon the point? I have not; but I may say that the police statistics give the area now under cultivation as only 12,890 acres.
- 3044. A summary of the evidence given at Tumut by Mr. Chesterman, the local Staff Surveyor; Mr. E. Brennan, of Gocup; Mr. Margules, of Tomorroma; Mr. P. Halloran, of Blowering; Mr. H. L. Harris, of Tumut Plains; Mr. A. B. Graves, of Micalong; Mr. J. Lambert, of East Blowering; Mr. Watts, of West Blowering; Mr. O'Sullivan, of Lower Gilmore; and Mr. W. H. Bridle, of Tumut, in regard to the district lying within 20 miles north-east of Tumut, and within 10 or 15 miles on either side of the proposed railway line, shows the area under cultivation to be 10,984 acres, while they put down the area suitable for cultivation as 131,000 acres; would you be prepared to call that an exaggerated estimate? The matter is one upon which I should not like to express an opinion. As the Committee are aware, the proposal to extend the railway to Tumut was very exhaustively examined a few years ago by Mr. Gilliat, who was then examiner of public works proposals, and he put down the total cultivatable area in the district at 17,000 acres. The amount of traffic actually brought from the district has been ascertained by an examination of our books at Wagga and at Gundagai to be only 5,000 tons; but in my estimate of the probable traffic of the proposed railway I have allowed for 7,000 tons. I may add that the total tonnage, inwards and outwards, of general traffic on the whole length of line from Gundagai to Cootamundra is only 18,000 tons, and of that I have credited 10,706 tons to the proposed extension. Those are absolutely ascertained figures, gathered over a period of three years.
- 3045. They indicate that the bulk of the present traffic on the line really comes from the Tumut district? No; that is not so. The actual ascertained figures for Tumut are only 5,000 tons of outward produce, but in my estimate I have increased them to 7,000 tons. I only quoted the above figures to show the capacity of the whole district.
- 3046. Is not the best cultivated portion of the district that in and around Tumut? That is so.
- 3047. Between Gundagai and Tumut there does not appear to be very much cultivation? Not so much relatively as at Tumut; but, between Gundagai and Cootamundra, the railway deals with ore, wool, and other traffic, in addition to produce.
- 3048. Do you think that the land between Gundagai and Tumut is as suitable for agriculture as the land in and around Tumut? No. I think that the best land in the district is the land on the Tumut River and its tributaries.
- 3049. Therefore, with better railway communication, we might reasonably look for an extension of the agricultural output of the country around Tumut? Yes; and in my estimate of the traffic I have allowed for 5,000 acres of additional cultivation.
- 3050. Do you think, then, that we should pay no attention to the local evidence, which is strongly to the effect that the increase of cultivation would be much larger? Of course, I am not going to characterise the people of Tumut as untruthful; but my experience in these matters, which extends over thirty years, leads me to very largely discount such evidence. Promises have been made all through the Colony under circumstances like these, and they have never been redeemed.
- 3051. In making up your estimate of the wheat traffic, did you allow a certain return per acre? Yes; I allowed a ton to 3 acres. That would be equal to about 12 bushels an acre.
- 3052. We have been told that the tendency is to grow wheat rather than corn in the district, because wheat is the more reliable crop? Yes. Maize would give more than 36 bushels to the acre, but the information I have obtained is to the effect that the tendency is to grow wheat rather than maize, and it seems to be only a matter of time when the cultivation of maize will be abandoned in favour of the cultivation of wheat.
- 3053. In estimating the probable wool traffic, do you think you stretched the figures as far as they would go? I have allowed for every bale of wool that would come from the district. My estimate is that 140 tons of wool would be delivered at Adelong, and 166 tons at Tumut, or, approximately, 1,800 bales in all. That accounts for every bale of wool grown in the district, and those figures are very easily obtained.
- 3054. Mr. Byrne, when giving evidence at Tumut, furnished a tabulated statement, showing the names of the holdings which he thought would send wool to the proposed railway, and the number of bales each would contribute;—do you think that that information is accurate? I could not tell you off-hand; but there is no doubt about the accuracy of my information in regard to the wool coming from the district, because four or five days were spent in exhaustively taking out the details given in the Gundagai railway books for the last three years. The total number of bales of wool carried on the Gundagai line, from Gundagai and Coolac, last year was only 6,194, and there is a good deal of sheep country between Gundagai and Cootamundra. However, I will have Mr. Byrne's return checked with the actual figures in the possession of the Department, and will submit the result to the Committee. 3055.

- J. Harper. 3055. *Dr. Garran.*] How far would the wool be drawn from each side of the railway line? I suppose wool would be drawn to the Gundagai line from a distance of 15 or 16 miles on each side.
- 1 Feb., 1900. 3056. *Chairman.*] But if the railway were continued to Tumut, would it not draw more wool than we get now? I do not know where it would be drawn from. The whole of the wool grown in the district now comes to Gundagai, or to some point on the line between Gundagai and Cootamundra. The Tumberumba wool would not come to the proposed railway. It would continue to go either to Wagga, and, from the southern part of the district, to Melbourne, as it does now.
3057. The extension of the railway to Tumut would not draw any of that wool? No.
3058. An important feature of the evidence given at Tumut was what was said in regard to the probable effect of the proposed extension to Tumut in leading to the cultivation of a large area of hilly country in the direction of Batlow for fruit-growing;—have you made any estimate of that traffic? I have allowed a liberal margin for traffic of that kind. Of course, it would require a very large output for the fruit traffic to make any great difference.
3059. But you took the subject into consideration? Yes; it is allowed for amongst the general items of traffic. I should think about 400 tons have been allowed for.
3060. That would be over a ton per day,—is that a liberal allowance? Yes, an exceedingly liberal allowance. There is not much profit to be obtained from the conveyance of fruit. We should only get about 4d. a ton for it.
3061. What have you allowed for the inward tonnage to Tumut? I have allowed 3,400 tons for the inward tonnage to Tumut and Adelong, which is considerably in excess of the tonnage now sent through Gundagai.
3062. What would be the freight on that from Gundagai to Tumut? £687 10s. on local rates. Total tonnage of produce of all kinds allowed for is 7,000 tons.
3063. Is that exclusive of wool, hides, and tallow? It is exclusive of wool.
3064. Are your figures based upon information obtained from local storekeepers and others? No; upon the figures obtained from the railway books. Our books show the tonnage to be 5,000 tons, and my estimate allows for 7,000 tons. A considerable margin for development is also given in the estimate of the inward tonnage. The figures I have given are in excess of the quantity actually passing through our hands, though, during the years upon which they are based, a considerable quantity of timber and mining machinery was being brought into the district.
3065. A letter received by the Committee from the Secretary to the District Improvement League says that "One merchant here can prove that he pays to the Government in trainage and taxes £4,000 a year"? He would get his goods through from Sydney. I do not know what taxes he pays.
3066. On consignments, the railway charges for which from Sydney to Gundagai amounted to £4,000 a year, what would be the freight from Gundagai to Tumut? It is pretty hard to know how many tons would go to make up such a consignment. With high-class traffic it would not require very many tons. The Committee may rest assured that the figures which I have given have been very carefully extracted from the books. No less than fourteen different lines were taken out by the officer who obtained the information.
3067. *Mr. Watson.*] The proposed extension to Tumut is estimated to cost £4,686 per mile, inclusive of the bridge;—if the Cootamundra to Gundagai line had been constructed at the same rates, the saving in interest charges, at 3½ per cent., would amount to £4,410 per annum, and the returns for 1898 would have shown a slight profit? Yes; but it must be borne in mind that a light line, such as the proposed extension would be, costs a good deal more to maintain than a line like the Cootamundra to Gundagai line would cost.
3068. So that the saving would be, to some extent, rather apparent than real? Yes.
3069. The cost of the Gundagai line was £9,800 per mile? I take it that that includes compensation for land resumed. The other figures are exclusive of compensation.
3070. When we were at Tumut we were informed that traffic from Tumorrroma and the surrounding district would, if the proposed extension were made, come into Tumut instead of to Gundagai, because the country between there and Gundagai was very hilly? Tumut has been credited with all the traffic coming to Gundagai through Tumut; but I should imagine that if local rates were charged on the proposed extension the trend of the traffic you speak of would be to Gundagai.
3071. We were informed that the country north-east of Tumut, about Tumorrroma and Goobarragandra, was, at the present time, undeveloped, because of its distance from a railway, but that if it were brought within 20 miles of a railway it would be developed? I know the local people generally make those statements; but, in my opinion, the traffic from that part of the country would continue to go to Gundagai after the railway was extended to Tumut.
3072. Have you or any of your officers ever been over any part of that country? No. I understand that at the present time that country is not being used.
3073. Going south from Tumut, in the direction of Batlow and Bago, there is some very good basaltic country, a fair quantity of which seems suitable for settlement;—have you made any inquiries as to the probable agricultural development of that district? No. We have to deal with hard solid facts, not with the theories of local people. My estimates are based upon the actual traffic returns, a liberal allowance being made for development. That is all I can give the Committee in the way of reliable information.
3074. It has been urged by local witnesses that a railway to Tumut would be advantageous to the country in bringing the Yarrangobilly Caves and the surrounding tourist district nearer to the centres of population;—would that traffic amount to much from a railway point of view? Well, when I was at the Jenolan Caves, two or three months ago, I ascertained that only 2,000 people from all parts of the world had visited the place within the preceding twelve months, and it must be remembered that those caves are within 100 miles of Sydney. I leave you to guess, therefore, the number of people who would visit the Yarrangobilly Caves, which would be much more difficult of access.
3075. *Mr. Levin.*] I suppose you merely went from Gundagai to Tumut;—you did not go round the district? No.
3076. Nor did the Commissioners? No.
3077. Did Mr. Usher? He spent two or three hours driving round; but you could not say that he made an inspection of the district.

3078. How can an officer of your Department report on the district after only a casual visit like that? The Railway Commissioners and their officers only undertake to furnish the Committee with an estimate of the probable traffic upon any proposed line, that estimate being based upon what is known of the existing traffic. J. Harper.
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3079. They know nothing of the district beyond what they see in driving along the main roads? And beyond the returns which they obtain.

3080. At Tumut the Committee examined a most intelligent body of witnesses, who furnished them with a large number of statistics;—do you not think that their information is to be relied upon? I would rather rely upon the actual returns shown in the railway books.

3081. Do you not think that the people of the district would have a larger knowledge of the capabilities of the land than either yourself, or Mr. Usher, or the Railway Commissioners? Decidedly they have. All we can go upon is what we know of the actual production.

3082. You are not prepared to deny what they say as to the area of land capable of cultivation? No; I am not in a position to do so. It is for the Committee to judge of the value of that evidence.

3083. Mr. Byrne must have taken a great deal of trouble in preparing his statement of the wool production of the district;—do you undertake to say that his figures are wrong? I have promised to have them checked; when that has been done I can tell you whether they are wrong. I can trace every bale of wool that comes from the district.

3084. It is not stated that all this wool is sent to the railway? Then I do not know how it is disposed of.

3085. Does not a large quantity of wool come to Morpeth from the northern districts by road? Yes; but we know every bale that comes. We know every bale that is carted on every road in New South Wales, whether it goes to Victoria, to Morpeth, to Grafton, or elsewhere.

3086. How can you do that? We have agents who give us the information.

3087. How many bales of wool come from the northern districts by road? I could not tell you off-hand, but I should think about 3,000 bales.

3088. What places do they come from? Some of the wool comes from as far north as Quirindi, and it has come by road from Tamworth.

3089. It comes by road because of the high railway charges? No; I think it is sent by road in the interests of the storekeepers. In a great many cases the same freight is paid to the carriers as would be charged by the Railway Commissioners.

3090. Can you name any storekeepers up north who are interested in teams? Yes; Mr. Campbell, of Muswellbrook, is one. I know that many teamsters do the work under an arrangement with the storekeepers that they shall be paid the railway rates. Wool has been carried by road from Narrabri, but not this year.

3091. *Mr. Watson.*] What objects have the storekeepers in making such an arrangement? They get back loading up, and they make a profit out of the teamsters, because in many cases the teamsters take out the freight in kind.

3092. *Mr. Levien.*] I suppose that is a mere surmise of yours? No; the facts have been admitted to me by some of the storekeepers.

3093. Is it the storekeepers or the graziers who send the wool down? Sometimes the storekeepers and sometimes the graziers.

3094. How many storekeepers in Tamworth send wool down in that way? I do not know; but I know at least one who does so.

3095. How much does he send? I cannot tell you off-hand.

3096. The people mentioned in Mr. Byrne's return have, I take it, no interest in stores? I may say that not a single bale of wool has been brought from the Gundagai district to Sydney by team, or indeed from any southern district, since the railway was built.

3097. Did you get any report from Mr. Usher upon his visit to the district? He furnished the figures which I have already given to the Committee.

3098. I suppose you know that the land about Tumut is of very great value. They get tremendous rentals for land which will carry starving stock—in some cases from £75 to £100 for every 1,000 sheep? They got nearly as much as that in the Wellington and Dubbo districts this year. Graziers will pay anything for good country in a bad season.

3099. *Mr. Shepherd.*] When you are obtaining information upon which to make your estimates, is any evidence taken? It is usual to meet the local people and to hear what they have to say upon the subject, and to gather such information as they may tender; but we are not in a position to obtain sworn evidence, and the statements which are made have to be largely discounted.

3100. The Commissioners invite information from the local residents? Yes; and the information which is tendered is checked with the actual returns given in the station books, and with such statistical information as can be obtained from the police and other local authorities.

3101. Has the Department found that its estimates are generally pretty correct? That has been our experience, though there have been instances, as in the case of the Cobar line, when the estimate of the Department has been largely exceeded.

3102. I suppose you always allow for a probable increase? Yes, a margin is always allowed for such development as an ordinary business man might foresee; but, of course, not for all possible developments.

3103. I suppose that it is impossible to determine exactly how much of the railway traffic comes from Tumut? No; the average traffic during the last three years has been 5,000 tons.

3104. Does it not often occur that people living at a distance have agents at Gundagai? Yes; and when we cannot get what information we require in any other way learn what we want to know from these agents.

3105. The local opinion seems to be that there will be an enormous increase in the production of wheat in the district, if the railway is extended to Tumut;—has the Department formed that opinion? We cannot do more than allow a fair margin in a case like this. Our experience is that similar predictions have not been fulfilled in other parts of the country.

3106. You have found the local witnesses liable to give too favourable an opinion of the possibilities of a district? Yes; that has been my experience, and it is only natural that they should do so. If I were a local witness I should be inclined to do the same thing myself.

- J. Harper. 3107. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the general system adopted in arriving at an estimate as to the area of land available for cultivation in a district? We are absolutely dependent upon the local officer of the Lands Department for that information, because, of course, the officers of the Railway Department are not experts on the subject. We obtain figures showing the absolute traffic of the district, and we leave it to the Committee to ascertain its possibilities of development.
- 1 Feb., 1900. 3108. The Railway Commissioners have no personal knowledge of the agricultural capabilities of any particular district? No; they only know its actual productiveness.
3109. You have stated that a margin is allowed to cover any increase, but what that increase is likely to be must depend very much upon the fertility of the district;—it would not do to apply a general rule to each district? That is so; but in this case a very exhaustive report has been made upon the capabilities of the district, and its productive agricultural area has been stated at about 17,000 acres, or about 5,000 acres more than the area actually under cultivation to-day.
3110. Would not a very large additional area be put under cultivation if the railway were extended to Tumut? 5,000 acres has been allowed as the probable increase of the cultivated land, but I am not in a position to speak as to the correctness of that estimate.
3111. The maize grown in the district is grown chiefly on the rich flats near the river? Yes.
3112. There has been a decrease in the maize production of the district of late years? Yes.
3113. Have you any idea as to the cause of that decrease? I imagine that wheat has been found to pay better than maize, because of the competition of the maize-growing districts on the coast.
3114. If the proposed railway were made, and they could get their grain to market at a cheap rate, would not the people in the district put their land under maize again? They might, but I do not know that it would affect my estimate very much if they did.
3115. Have you a personal knowledge of the district? I have been into the district twice, but not for the purpose of inquiring into the proposal before the Committee.
3116. A fruit expert informed the Committee that there was a very large area of land in the district admirably adapted to the cultivation of fruit-trees? Yes; I have seen some of the best apples in that district that I have ever seen in the Colony.
3117. Do you think that the area suitable for the cultivation of fruit-trees is very large? I cannot speak as to that.
3118. It is not likely that much fruit will be produced unless the railway is extended, because of the difficulties of transit? No; but there are a great many districts in the Colony which are almost if not quite as well suited to fruit-growing already served by the railway, and yet fruit is not grown there. However, as I have already said, the rates for fruit are very low, so that the fruit production of the district would not materially increase the revenue of the line.
3119. But if settlement were encouraged there, the fruit-growers would indirectly do a great deal to increase the traffic of the railway? Quite so.
3120. *Dr. Garran.*] You say that local witnesses are apt to be very sanguine as to railway prospects—are you able to compare the local estimates with the actual results obtained in any case? I could not make any comparison offhand.
3121. Your general experience leads you to take a very large discount from the local estimates? Yes.
3122. You say that in the Tumut district there is a general tendency to grow maize rather than wheat;—would the growing of wheat instead of maize increase the railway traffic? No; we should get more tonnage per acre from maize land than from wheat land.
3123. The Tumut district is pretty well occupied at the present time, so that if its output is to be increased that must be done by stimulating its productiveness; in what way do you think the extension of the railway to Tumut will stimulate the productiveness of the district? I am at a loss to know, unless it be in the direction indicated by Mr. McFarlane; but it is impossible for me to say to what extent the growing of fruit would develop.
3124. Would the fruit grown in the district be sent all the way to Sydney to compete with the water-borne fruit which comes to this market? It will have to come to Sydney, because there is no intermediate market. Goulburn, the chief centre of population on the line, is itself situated in a fruit-producing district.
3125. Is the carriage of fruit as profitable to the Railway Department as the carriage of wheat? It is a little more profitable than the carriage of wheat.
3126. But it will not go very far in producing revenue? No.
3127. If the line, instead of being extended to Tumut, were to stop at the nearest point which would give access to Adelong, that would decrease the capital expenditure, and would draw trade from both Adelong and Tumut? It would draw part of the Adelong traffic.
3128. But even on a reduced capital expenditure you do not think the line would pay interest? No.

Edward Johnston Sievers, Government Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

- E. J. Sievers. 3129. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I understand that you have recently paid a visit to the Tumut district? I was asked to do so, but, as I have recently broken my ankle, I sent up my assistant, and I have since gone through the plans with him, and made myself thoroughly acquainted with the particulars of every property affected by the proposal which is under the consideration of the Committee.
- 1 Feb., 1900. 3130. You are prepared to give us information as to the value of the land through which the proposed line would pass? Yes; and as to the compensation which would have to be paid for the damage caused by severance. The first part of the line goes through a number of township allotments situated in South Gundagai, and onward from there most of the land affected is second-class agricultural land. I have put down the probable total cost of the South Gundagai land at £3,000, and of the agricultural land—about 338 acres—at about £5,000. These figures include compensation for severance. Under the 24th section of the Act we are entitled to apply the betterment principle to land situated as this land will be situated, and I think, therefore, that these figures may be materially reduced if the land has to be resumed. I might mention that in the case of the Culcairn to Corowa extension, and of the Tamworth to Manilla extension, the land required for railway purposes was obtained practically for nothing, through the application of the betterment principle. The total cost of the resumptions in this case I have estimated at £8,000, and I think that that may be reduced when the line comes to be resumed.

John James Miller, manager, Farmers and Settlers' Co-operative Association, sworn, and further examined :—

3131. *Chairman.*] Is there anything you wish to add to your former evidence? I should like to point out that there is a very strong probability that the Federal capital will be built somewhere on the Southern line between Sydney and Melbourne, and that in that case the Tumut district will find there a market for its vegetables, fruit, and other produce. That traffic will go to increase the present estimated traffic on the proposed line. J. J. Miller.
1 Feb., 1900.
3132. *Mrs. Watson.*] When the Committee were at Tumut, they were informed that if the proposed railway were constructed, the district would be considerably developed to the eastward, in the direction of Bundo and Goobarragandra, and to the southwards towards Batlow and Bago? Yes; I know all that country. The Batlow country is especially good, but there is similar rich volcanic soil out towards Nottingham Forest, Micalong, and Goobarragandra. That country is heavily timbered, with an undergrowth of wild hop-bush.
3133. For what purposes would that country be most suitable? It would be more suitable for dairying than for anything else. The climate is too moist for cereals, and in some parts of the year snow falls there. The land would do very well for dairying, pig-raising, and the growing of English fruits. I have seen grown there some of the best potatoes I have ever seen. I have had sheep there on several occasions, and the men camping with them could grow potatoes anywhere.
3134. How far does the basaltic country in the direction of Bago extend;—it commences at a point about 16 or 17 miles from Tumut? It extends to within 10 miles of Tumbarumba, on a tableland, and then you get rough hilly country down to Tumbarumba.
3135. What distance would it extend? I suppose 30 miles.
3136. And is all that country similar to the country about Batlow? It is much the same. You get here and there a stony hill; but, generally, there is rich volcanic soil throughout.
3137. How soon do you reach the good country towards the Goobarragandra? At a point about 12 miles from Tumut.
3138. And how far does it extend? Right on to Brindabella, in towards Queanbeyan—a distance of 25 or 30 miles.
3139. Are the two tablelands connected at all? No; they are separated by the valley of the Tumut.
3140. I understand that on both tablelands there is a considerable area of Crown land? It is pretty well all Crown land. Here and there you meet with a selector.
3141. Do you think that that land could be occupied in small areas, supposing the railway were brought to Tumut? I think that it could. I know several people who have made a living upon very small areas at Batlow. Cootamundra has for many years been largely supplied with fruit from Batlow. The fruit-growers go down there regularly with their vans.
3142. Where do the supplies of potatoes and similar produce used in the south-western districts come from? The Crookwell and Goulburn districts have for years been supplying the south-western districts with potatoes.
3143. Do you think that the Crookwell and Goulburn districts can produce the same classes of fruit as can be grown at Batlow? Yes; the country about Crookwell is very similar to that about Batlow.
3144. Is the elevation about the same? I do not know what the difference in elevation is.
3145. We were informed by the people of Batlow that the climate there is more suitable for English fruits than for any other fruits? Yes; raspberries, gooseberries, and English fruits do splendidly there.
3146. From what you have said, it would seem that we have a right to expect that if the proposed railway is made, that land, which is now very sparsely settled, will be brought into profitable use? Well, the people there are too far away to do much at the present time. The farmers who are able to take their own produce to market can do pretty well; but they cannot afford to employ teamsters.
3147. Will it be practicable to extend the line beyond Tumut? No, except towards Yarrangobilly.
3148. Would that be practicable? I think you could get up the river, though there would be some engineering difficulties. At one time it was said that you could not get up Talbingo with vehicles, but now there is a good road there, and you can trot all the way up.
3149. *Dr. Garra.*] Can good fruit be grown at Gundagai? Yes; though, of course, the climate there is much drier than on the tablelands.
3150. Is any large quantity of fruit grown there? No.
3151. There is no market for it? No.
3152. Would the fruit grown on the tableland command a market in virtue of its superiority? Fruit could be grown on the tableland without irrigation. The climate and soil make it easier to grow fruit there.
3153. What is the elevation of the tableland above Gundagai? I should think about 1,500 or 1,800 feet.
3154. Is it reasonable to expect a great development of the fruit industry on this tableland if the railway is brought to Tumut, when there is no market for the fruitgrowers of Gundagai? I think that if the railway is brought to Tumut there will be a lot of small settlement in the district as well as large settlement, and the higher land will be worked in conjunction with holdings in the drier districts.
3155. The tableland you speak of is at some distance from Tumut? Yes, from 12 to 30 miles.
3156. Is not that a longer distance than it would pay to cart fruit? So long as orchardists can get to the station and back on the same day, they can afford to cart their fruit.
3157. Could they do 30 miles and back in one day? That would be rather far; but they could go to Tumut and back, in a day from Batlow and Nottingham Forest.
3158. What is the elevation of the tableland above Tumut? In some places 1,000 feet.
3159. That would be rather uphill going back? Yes; but they go back empty.
3160. *Chairman.*] I suppose you have not made an estimate as to the quantity of fruit which would be taken by the railway, supposing this district were opened? I had not gone into details; but it would come in from all directions. Then, too, the railway would be useful in taking stock to the summer pastures, and especially in bringing back the ewes. Sheep-owners are bound to keep their stock away at least four months, and they like to keep them on the highlands until the end of the summer. When the sheep are sent out to the district the rams and ewes are allowed to run together, and consequently the ewes come back with lamb, and it is better that they should be returned to their home pastures in a day than have to knock about on the roads for a month or five weeks. I would also impress upon the Committee
the

J. J. Miller. the importance of the timber industry in the district. There is very fine timber in the mountains there and if the railway were extended into Tumut a large quantity of palings, and all kinds of sawn and split timber, would be sent away.
 1 Feb., 1900. 3161. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What kind of timber is grown in the district? Stringybark, black-butt, and the usual mountain timbers.

FRIDAY, 2 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, J.L.D.
 WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

J. Harper. 3162. *Chairman.*] You promised yesterday to look through the schedule handed in by Mr. Byrne, when under examination at Tumut, and to check the statements therein contained; have you done so? I have looked into the statement made by Mr. C. S. Byrne, on page 110 of the Minutes of Evidence in connection with the above proposal, and find that there is an error in addition of 300 bales of wool. His total should read 3,485 instead of 3,785 bales. In the next place I find that this gentleman has claimed the following clips which I consider are more likely to still truck at Gundagai, and in this opinion I am supported by the sworn evidence of Mr. Yeo, of the Stock Department, whose estimate, based on a three years' return, is 280 to 300 tons of wool per annum (*see page 43*), whilst my estimate is 303 tons:—

Name of owner.	Name of holding.	No. of bales.	Remarks.
Whittaker	Jellingrove	170	*125 claimed. 50 allowed according to Stock Returns.
W. Bootes	Mundarloo and Bangus.....	200	
Horsley	Yaltree	250	
A. W. Crain	Mount Horeb	130	
Crain Bros.	Mount Adrah	130	
Roach and Arragon	Condongblouga	75*	
Keefe and Geary	Wyangle	180	
Kiley	Red Hill	400	
	Error in addition previously referred to	300	
	Total	1,835	

After deducting 1,835 bales from Mr. Byrne's figures it leaves a total of 1,950 bales, which would represent about 325 tons. As previously stated, my estimate is 303 tons, and that of the Stock Branch is 280 to 300 tons. Even if we allowed credit for the whole of the wool claimed by Mr. Byrne the estimate would only be increased by £19 17s., as shown below:—

100 tons more at 2s. 6d.	£ s. d.
147 tons more at 1s.	12 10 0
	7 7 0
247 tons	£19 17 0

I produce a map which indicates approximately the positions of the clips named.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Gundagai to Tumut.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction]

SURVEYORS' REPORTS ON RAILWAY EXTENSION TO TUMUT.

Minute Paper.—Subject: Proposed Extension, Coolac to Tumut.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,
Sydney, 22 November, 1889.

I HAVE had this proposed route investigated by Mr. Burge, one of the engineers of this Branch, and have the honor to append his report.

At the point where the alternative routes examined by Mr. Burge cross the Murrumbidgee, that river is confined to a much narrower channel than exists at Gundagai, on the staked line, and would cost considerably less to bridge.

An examination of the estimate of the Gundagai to Tumut extension shows that the bridge over the Murrumbidgee at Gundagai has been put down at £113,148. I consider this amount excessive; in fact, by adopting an economical method of construction, I am of opinion that it need not cost more than £64,000, and a saving would thus be effected of £49,148, which would reduce the estimate of the whole line, which now stands at £387,300, to £338,152.

The bridging of the river near Coolac would probably cost £29,000, or £35,000 less than the Gundagai bridge.

In deciding between the advantages of the staked line and one or other of the alternative routes up the Tumut River, the question of the differential rates, adverted to by Mr. Burge, may well be put on one side, as they do not properly form part of the engineering question, nor are they necessarily permanently established facts.

I find that the arguments in favour of the routes may be summed up as follows:—

Coolac to Tumut.—Saving in cost of bridge to the extent of £35,000, the interest on which, at 3½ per cent., would amount to £1,225 per annum.

Gundagai to Tumut.—Serves Adelong, and has the advantage of being a continuation of the present line, and offering no inconvenience in working the traffic.

The annual cost of working the short section from Coolac to Gundagai would probably amount to as much as the interest on the saving in the cost of the bridge.

I am, therefore, of opinion that the present staked route is preferable.

I have left the earthworks on the competing routes out of consideration, although Mr. Burge's report asserts the probability of their being heavier on the Coolac to Tumut line; and, if this is so, it is a further argument against the adoption of this route.

H. DEANE.

Memorandum to the Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Department.—Coolac to Tumut, Adelong and Tumbarumba Extension.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,

Sydney, 8 November, 1889.

IN accordance with instructions, I have examined the country in reference to above, having specially in view the question of a cheaper crossing of the Murrumbidgee River than that necessary on the present survey of the Gundagai and Tumut railway.

I have found two crossings having this advantage in a large degree, and they are the only two from which there is any practicable "get away" for the connection of the present Gundagai branch and Tumut.

One of these being above, and the other below, the junction of the Tumut River with the river Murrumbidgee, there are involved two alternative lines to Tumut on east and west side of the former river, respectively.

There are two matters in connection with the proposal now being investigated which must influence the decision between these two routes, more, perhaps, than their relative cost, viz:—

1st. Any junction on the existing Gundagai railway will convert the portion between such junction and Gundagai into a minor branch line from the then main branch from Cootamundra to Tumut, &c.

Either, therefore, a separate train, with its staff of driver, fireman, and guard, will have to be maintained for the minor branch, a few miles long, with certainly not more than one short train daily each way, and possibly less, thus causing a very heavy train mileage expenditure; or, the main branch passenger trains will have to be run, as is done sometimes in these cases, down the small branch and back again, which, of course, involves so many miles of non-paid-for work, and so much delay to the main branch traffic.

2nd. The other matter is also in reference to the traffic. It appears that, owing to the system of differential rates, the goods rates from Wagga to Sydney (Wagga being about 60 to 70 miles from the district served by any Tumut extension) are 13s. 6d. less per ton (wool) than those from Gundagai to Sydney. It is evident, therefore, that as long as this system prevails, the greater part of the traffic from the west side of any such extension would still, as it largely does now, go to Wagga, and the main and branch lines would be, to some extent, competing ones.

Of the two lines investigated, that on the eastern side of Tumut River would leave the Gundagai line at about 277 miles, beyond Coolac Station—see tracing accompanying this report—and rising by a sharp grade to the lowest saddle of ridge at 1 mile 60 chains, descend by another sharp grade to the Murrumbidgee. This descent will have to be carefully laid out and lengthened as much as the width of the valley will allow, in order to get down. The river crossing is highly favourable, 15 chains in length, with one or two flood-openings only being necessary, I believe, the present plans showing over 41 chains at Gundagai. There are also indications of a rocky bed.

From the river the line would follow, generally, the Tumut River valley, with, however, a sharp and short rise over a spur at 10 miles, having generally, however, easy grades. The tributary creeks—Adjungbilly, Brungle, Killimeat, and Bombowlee would have to be bridged, and finally the Tumut River itself, at Tumut; but of course if the Adelong and Tumbarumba extension were to be deferred, the latter bridge might be dispensed with for the present. This would amount, roughly, including the Tumut, to about 330 lineal feet of creek-bridging, exclusive of the Murrumbidgee.

There is an alternative line on a portion of this route, shown in broken line, over the Killimicat Range; but it would involve two tunnels, and the river valley line is, in my opinion, the best, both as to gradients and work. Generally, the works are not heavy, being scarping along sides of hills; but I should say, as far as one can judge by a mere inspection, that mile for mile, with the important exception of the Murrumbidgee crossing, the line under consideration would be rather heavier than the permanently-staked one it is proposed to replace. The length of the former to the junction with the surveyed line at Tumut is 32½ miles.

This line would have the advantage of tapping the rich valley drained by the creeks above mentioned, and is better situated than the western route, as regards the differential rate question, but is inferior to it as leaving the Gundagai branch longer and incurring more unnecessary traffic mileage should the trains be worked in and out from that place. This latter branch, as it would certainly be worked from the existing Coolac station, would be practically 10 miles long, or 20 miles to run over with the through working.

There being a high ridge between Coolac village and the confluence of the Tumut and Murrumbidgee Rivers, no more southern junction can be obtained for the eastern route.

The western route starts from 23½ miles, reducing the Gundagai branch to about 4½ miles, and would cross the Murrumbidgee just below the junction of the Tumut River. The bridge would be about the same length as that on the other route, and here also are indications of a rocky bed. A sharp grade would then be encountered to get over a spur, when the line would follow the river valley, on west side, to Tumut. The line would be generally of the same character as that on the other side, and, similarly, two alternative lines present themselves opposite those on the other side. The surmounting of the range here would involve some heavy work, including a tunnel and grading, and I would suggest that a river-bank line be tried as well. This latter, as shown by broken lines, is less closely to be followed than the others on the tracing, as I only saw the ground on the other side of the river—having followed, on the western route, only the mountain line, or hard line, throughout;—but it is possible that a line, following generally the dotted line, might be an improvement on the heavy grade of the mountain route. The scarping would appear, however, to be very heavy.

The only creek of any size on this western route would be the Gilmore, say, 220 feet of creek bridging. The length of the western route would be about 30½ miles to Tumut.

Generally, the earthwork on this line would be heavier and the bridging lighter. It would have the advantage of a better junction as regards the non-paying branch to Gundagai; but, as regards local traffic, that from the eastern side, which, as pointed out in reference to the differential rate question, is chiefly to be relied on, could only reach this line at one point, viz., Brungle Bridge, which is the only crossing-place over the river below Tumut.

In both lines short lengths of steep grade cannot be avoided. The country passed through by each is generally good and well populated, the alluvial flats of the river and creeks being exceptionally rich.

Beyond Tumut the surveyed route to the neighbourhood of Adelong is the best one; but the difficulty of approaching the town, or of connecting with the projected extension therefrom to Tambarumba, is considerable. Mr. Hotson's report regarding the latter, which has been placed in my hands, and is returned herewith (85-1,416), regards, of course, the extension as necessary from the existing surveyed line from Gundagai, and his junction at 303 miles would be unsuitable as an extension of the project under report, as it would involve an unjustifiable detour in the general route. His alternative junction, shown by a blue dotted line on his map, which would obviate this, appears to me, if it is correctly shown thereon, to be altogether impracticable. It passes under one of the high peaks of the range on east of Adelong Creek, and drops suddenly down to the valley in which the township is placed.

In my opinion this would involve a tunnel and viaduct of most gigantic dimensions, and is practically impossible.

A detour, at least as long as is shown on my tracing, is necessary to get down to the Adelong River valley, up which Mr. Hotson's line follows towards Tambarumba, and if even, as his is here an ascending line, the junction of mine with his were prolonged southward as far as possible, there would still be heavy works and grading to be encountered, while the difficulty in getting down would necessitate the line being kept round on the side of the range at a considerable distance from the township, and gradient difficulties in the construction of a station would be unavoidable.

The present survey—Gundagai to opposite Adelong—is 20 miles long.

The western Tumut River line, near Coolac to Tumut, is 30½ miles long. The eastern line is 32½ miles to Tumut; while the surveyed line from opposite Adelong to Tumut, which is common to the three, is 10½ miles long. But, if Tumut alone is sought to be reached (Adelong being of much less importance), the mileage of construction would be in favour of the new project on the west of the Tumut River, to a slight extent.

There would be heavy grades on both of the Tumut River lines, but they are short, whereas there is a long length of them on the existing survey and on the new line, if extended beyond Tumut to Adelong.

I think there can be no doubt on account of the latter, and what has already been said that the extension of the Tumut River line to Adelong ought not to be adopted, unless it is intended to go on to Tambarumba.

There is an aspect of the general question of the extension to Tumut which might possibly be worth consideration, having in view that the great objection to the present surveyed line is the great expense of the Murrumbidgee bridge.

The present road bridge at Gundagai consists of three 80-foot (about) spans of pin-connected iron girders, and a long timber approach over flooding. I am informed that the latter part will require renewal before very few years, and at present costs a large annual amount for maintenance. When it is renewed, I do not see myself why it should not be made available for road and railway, where there is only one mixed train a day, as is not uncommon in India, and, I believe, elsewhere. The iron part might be strengthened, if necessary, and the road traffic might easily be protected by interlocking-signals and gates, being also close to the existing station. The present permanent survey, which could easily be made to suit this idea as regards alignment, would thus be carried out, and the Railway Department should only be debited with the cost of making the bridge available for railway traffic and a proportion of the maintenance.

This proposal would continue Gundagai on the main branch, and the objectionable working of its small traffic on a small branch would disappear.

This is a matter involving the consideration of a considerable departure from ordinary usage in this Colony, and is therefore merely mentioned as a suggestion.

As I had seventeen working days, nearly all fine, and a generally clear country, I had a good chance of locating the lines shown on the map, consisting of about 86 miles; and, with the small exception already referred to, they may be followed in any trial survey—subject, of course, to minor improvements in detail.

C. O. BURGE,
District Engineer.

Minute Paper.—Gundagai to Tumut.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Sydney, 23 December, 1892.

I HAVE the honor to forward herewith Mr. Burge's report on the above line.

It is quite evident, as indeed has already been pointed out, that a reduction of distance to anything like 19 or 20 miles with easy works is quite impracticable.

The Tumut valley route, even with the winding suggested to reduce earthworks, would probably be more costly than the present surveyed route.

The present surveyed route is capable of revision, and the estimated cost may be much reduced by using sharper curves, adhering in parts more closely to the surface of the ground, by reconsideration of the Gundagai bridge and waterways generally, and also in the item of station accommodation.

I am not an advocate for a combined railway and road traffic bridge at Gundagai. I believe there are in this particular case exceptionally great objections; but a great saving can otherwise be effected by cheapening the construction over the flat.

I recommend that this survey and estimate be revised in the same way as the Minister has lately given his approval in the case of other lines.

H. DEANE,
Engineer-in-Chief.

Memorandum to the Engineer-in-Chief.—Gundagai to Tumut.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
Sydney, 13 December, 1892.

I BEG to report that, as instructed, I have inspected the suggested Tarrahandra connection between South Gundagai and Tumut, more especially with reference to the portion between the latter township and 14½ miles on the western Tumut River valley line, on which I reported in 1889 (89-3,481, page 5). (See map accompanying that report attached.)

This is the connection alluded to in my minute, 15/12/92, on paper 92-6,642.

I also took the opportunity of riding round and examining the alternative route on the latter line, from 14½ miles to 20½ miles, to avoid the tunnel at 17½ miles, adverted to as "the river bank line," in page 6 of my report as above.

Returning from Tumut to Gundagai *via* Adelong, I thoroughly examined, as far as an exploration can do it, the permanent survey on that route, with the view to its improvement as regards cost.

In these investigations I was well assisted throughout by guides recommended by the Tumut people.

As regards the first: The country enclosed between the Tumut River valley and the Adelong Creek is very high, and a spur from this extends northward to the confluence of the Tumut and the Murrumbidgee Rivers. This spur has to be crossed by the connection now in question at a conveniently low point, which is marked X on the map before referred to, on which I have added the line explaining this report.

To go straight through this spur, which would be necessary for the only line which would even approximate within 3 or 4 miles of the 19 miles expected in Mr. Gilliat's report, would, according to aneroid heights, which are corroborated by Mr. Melrose's previous ones, involve a tunnel of from $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 mile long, costing alone probably as much as one-third of the whole permanently surveyed line *via* Adelong, excluding the Murrumbidgee bridge.

This being clearly out of the question, a line was investigated approaching the summit by skirting the amphitheatre of hills indicated by the dotted red line on the map, as amended by this inspection to the dotted purple line. This would probably give the distance necessary to rise over the range without a tunnel; but it would be over exceedingly rough ground, the gullies running in deeply and the spurs being too sharp to be contoured by practicable curves. To some extent this character would be maintained right back to South Gundagai, and, moreover, the start at the latter place could not connect with any Murrumbidgee bridge as a continuation of the existing railway, unless by curving into the hill behind South Gundagai with another formidable tunnel, as shown by the dotted purple line now added to the map.

The descent from the spur X towards Tumut would be hardly less rough and circuitous than the ascent, and is shown in the same way. A grade of 1 in 40 is assumed in this description.

The river bank deviation next examined, between $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles and $20\frac{1}{2}$ miles, on the western bank, Tumut River line, would be comparatively easy for about half its length. Beyond this the ground is very steep laterally, about 10 feet to 15 feet per chain, dipping in sharp spurs straight into the flooded flats of the Tumut River. The line here would have to keep on the toe of the slope as far as its curves would allow, and, for about half a mile, entirely in the siding, as, for that distance, the main channel of the river washes closely the hill side. Except for grades, therefore, the improvement on the line over the hill, explored before, is not very conspicuous, though it is probable that it would, on trial, turn out to be the cheaper.

The mileage of the line by this route from Gundagai station to Tumut would be, approximately, 29 miles, the excess of this over the crow's flight line from point to point, being chiefly accounted for by the climbing to get round and over hills, a necessity apparently overlooked by Mr. Gilliat in his report.

This further acquaintance with the Tumut valley route more than confirms me in the opinion that, mile for mile, it would be more expensive than the permanently surveyed line, excluding, of course, the bridge; and also that the trial of the Tumut River valley line, east or west, is only justifiable on the grounds of the cheaper bridge over the Murrumbidgee, which was included in the former project, but which sole advantage, in an engineering point of view, disappears in the proposal now under investigation.

As regards the permanent survey *via* Adelong, and taking it from Tumut towards Gundagai, the leading feature of this line is the rise over the neck which connects the high country before mentioned (page 2) with the lofty ranges south of Tumut. After surmounting this, from the Tumut side, the line falls to the bottom of the Adelong Creek valley, which it follows to Gundagai.

This neck appears not to have been crossed at its lowest point, and with the view of taking the lowest crossing, and thus saving unnecessary lift in the traffic working, a deviation extending from near Tumut to the Adelong valley occurred to me as possibly an improvement, crossing the neck more to the eastward at about 100 feet lower level. This is approximately shown by the purple dotted line on the map. On the Tumut side the improvement is very marked, as the approach to the saddle is along a gentle side slope, the total grade from Gilmore Creek being about 1 in 80, divisible into almost any gradations according to the ground selected, and the works much easier than on the present line. Descending to Adelong Creek the works and maximum grade would probably be no better than on the present line, and the advantage would be only in the reduction of the height surmounted. The length would be about the same. Before any regular survey of this is undertaken, it would be necessary to run a flying traverse over it, as, with regard to the descent just referred to, an exploration is not sufficient to determine whether the superiority in the ascent, and in the reduction of the summit level, might not be counterbalanced by heavier works in the descent. This diversion would increase the distance of the line from Adelong from 3 miles to 4 miles; but when at Adelong, the local Progress Committee called on me, and, while expressing much indifference to any railway at all, said that, if not constructed right through the township, which is practically a physical impossibility, they would rather have no line at all than one at such a distance, with a steep approach thereto, and leading possibly to the formation of a rival township at the station. The same views were expressed to Mr. Gilliat. (See his report paragraph 40.)

Under these circumstances it would seem that the site of the station on the summit is a matter of indifference to the existing township, the probability being that, taking road grades into consideration, their practically most accessible point in the line would be where the line joins the Adelong valley, to which there is an easy road.

Taking the permanent survey as it stands, I find that, except through South Gundagai township, the minimum radius of curves is 15 chains, and this is used only three times, 20-chain curves being more generally used in the several rougher places. The tunnel at 290 miles may be either avoided or considerably shortened by this means, though a double ground. A considerable reduction in earthwork and culverts, &c., might be made by the free use of 10-chain curves in crossing of the main road, and a considerable lengthening of the line would be a set-off. A diversion of the line to avoid a double crossing of the main road near Tumut is also advisable.

To estimate the amount of saving in these matters, an extension of the present cross-levels and additions to them would be necessary.

Reduction might also be made by freer use of the ruling grade.

In reference to the matter alluded to in my former report—89/3,481—of utilising the present road bridge over the Murrumbidgee as a joint road and railway bridge, I find that the main spans have pin-connected diagonals, with top boom and struts built, and bottom boom and ties of links. The strengthening could, therefore, be best carried out by substituting longer pins, and adding to the above numbers. The cross-girders would be more difficult to deal with, but no doubt they can be dealt with.

The question of a low-level bridge, such as has been, I believe, used with success in Queensland, might be considered. The flooded flats would be crossed on the level, and merely the main channel bridged, the whole in high flood being submerged, and traffic suspended temporarily. In the present case, on account of the high ground on the south side traversed by the present centre line, the lowering of the bridge level would entail unduly heavy cutting on that side, and to bring the crossing lower down west of the road bridge, so as to be opposite lower ground, the main channel would have to be crossed where it is 2 chains wider than at the present crossing. At the north side of the river the present line terminates close to, and at a considerable height above, the level of the river flats; hence, even with a grade of 1 in 40, with a suitable vertical curve intervening from station yard, 14 chains of the flat would have to be crossed before their level would be reached. This portion would have to be bridged. The amount of the saving by adopting a low-level bridge could not be accurately estimated without resurvey, additional borings, &c., but the circumstances described above show that it would not be so large as might be otherwise expected.

I may be allowed to call attention to the fact that, since my previous report was written, the Cootamundra and Temora line has been authorised and begun. Should the Tumut line therefore be made, there would exist the means of a local train service from Temora, across the main line and connecting therewith to Tumut, of over 100 miles, which would probably have an effect on the running expenses, as compared with those of the present short branch to Gundagai alone. This consideration can hardly be left out in coming to a decision as to whether the probability of this line being ultimately sanctioned justifies the surveying operations necessary to enable the estimate to be revised.

C. O. BURGE.

B.

[To Evidence of W. H. Hall, Sub-Editor, Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Office.]

TOBACCO CULTIVATION AT ADELONG, TARCUTTA, AND TUMUT.

Sir,

Government Statistician's Office, Sydney, 10 November, 1899.

I have the honor, in compliance with the verbal request of the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, to forward herewith a statement showing the area under cultivation for tobacco, and the yield therefrom, for the years 1896 to 1899, within the Adelong, Tarcutta, and Tumut districts, that will be served by the construction of the proposed line from Gundagai to Tumut.

I have, &c.,

J. R. MARTIN,

Assistant Statistician.

The Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Proposed Railway, Gundagai to Tumut.

AREA under cultivation for Tobacco, and yield therefrom, for years ended 31st March, 1896-9.

District.	Year ended 31st March—	Area under cultivation.	Yield.
		acres.	cwt.
Adelong	1896	143	1,060
	1897	275	2,310
	1898	253	2,520
	1899	78	740
Tarcutta	1896	173	656
	1897	177	1,369
	1898	64	650
	1899	131	854½
Tumut	1896	298	3,015
	1897	703	6,685
	1898	567½	4,831
	1899	435	4,195

C.

[To Evidence of Joseph Clarke, Inland Mail Clerk, Postal and Electric Telegraph Department.]

POSTAL, TELEGRAPH, AND MONEY ORDER RECEIPTS IN GUNDAGAI-TUMUT DISTRICT, FROM 1895 TO 1898.

RETURN of four years' Revenue from the principal offices affected by proposed Railway service.

Office.	Revenue.															
	1895.				1896.				1897.				1898.			
	Postal.	Telegraph.	Money Order.	Total.	Postal.	Telegraph.	Money Order.	Total.	Postal.	Telegraph.	Money Order.	Total.	Postal.	Telegraph.	Money Order.	Total.
Gundagai	£ 954	£ 394	£ 81	£ 1,429	£ 1,250	£ 420	£ 86	£ 1,756	£ 1,360	£ 468	£ 96	£ 1,924	£ 1,437	£ 551	£ 108	£ 2,096
Adelong	585	134	54	773	658	182	71	911	727	286	81	1,094	806	341	76	1,223
Tumut	1,030	319	65	1,414	1,085	316	73	1,474	1,093	335	69	1,497	1,126	410	72	1,608
Gocup	37	...	...	37	35	...	...	35	30	...	...	30	30	...	...	30
Brungle	22	...	...	22	17	...	...	17	18	...	...	18	32	...	...	32
Gilmore	11	...	...	11	6	...	...	6	4	...	...	4	22	...	...	22
Upper Gilmore .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	5	5	...	...	5
Batlow	121	21	8	150	133	20	8	161	128	21	9	158	136	27	7	170
Courabyra	5	...	...	5	5	...	...	5	11	...	...	11	29	...	...	29
Tumbarumba	550	132	38	720	574	166	39	779	483	133	63	669	526	156	57	739

D.

[To Evidence of Spencer Groves.]

TRADE STATISTICS OF TUMUT DISTRICT.

Dear Sir,

Tumut, New South Wales, 18 December, 1899.

I have taken all pains possible in compiling accurate figures for the guidance of the Works Committee as to the tonnage of goods despatched and received by principal business people of the district, and am quite content, from investigations made, that the particulars now furnished should be added to my sworn statement given before the Works Committee when on their visit to Tumut lately.

The tonnage of goods received by the firms approached by me, in the town of Tumut only, was 1,050 (one thousand and eighty) tons; and the output in produce alone was 7,460 (seven thousand four hundred and sixty) tons; this is exclusive of wool, hides, tallow, &c., sent away, but includes the tonnage of Sanderson and Taylor, as given in evidence here by H. T. Hayes.

These figures, excepting as regards 250 tons, taken as an annual average output of tobacco, taking same for several years past, refer to the year 1890.

By comparisons made with particulars furnished by the different trading firms, I can candidly affirm it as my opinion that large errors, in the way of under-estimates, have been made in the figures supplied.

One merchant here can prove that he pays to the Government, in trainage and taxes, £4,000 a year.

Previous to last year very large consignments of fruit were annually despatched by rail.

Yours, &c.,

S. GROVES,

Secretary,

District Improvement League.

The Secretary, Public Works Committee.

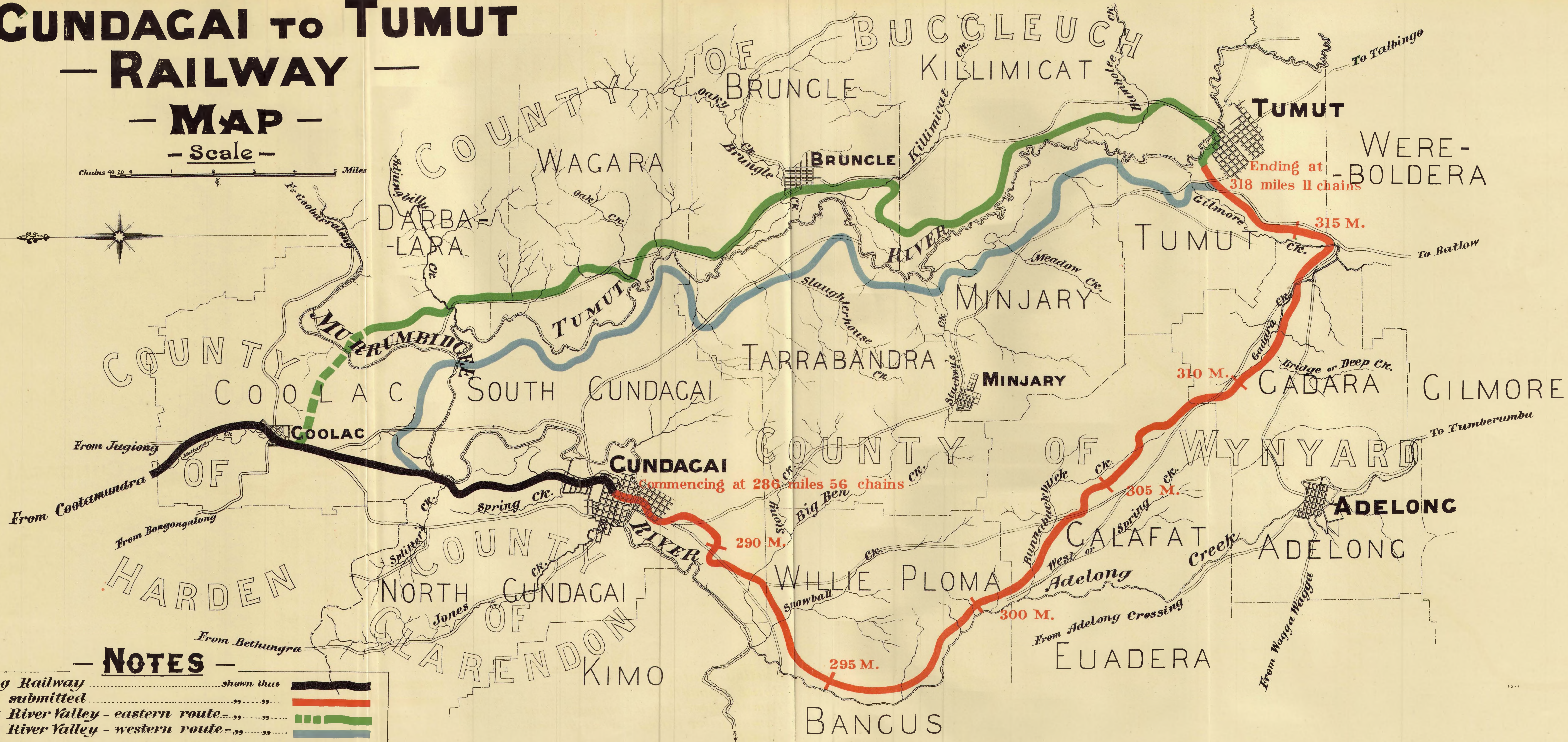
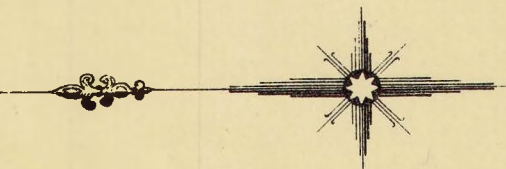
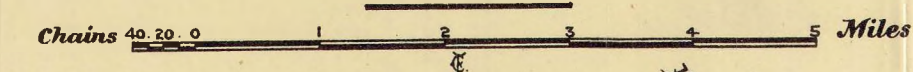
[One Plan.]

GUNDAGAI TO TUMUT

RAILWAY

MAP

Scale



NOTES

Existing Railway	shown thus	
Route submitted	" "	
Tumut River Valley - eastern route	" "	
Tumut River Valley - western route	" "	
Roads	" "	

Photo-lithographed by W. A. Gullick, Government Printer.

1900.

—
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDIX, AND PLAN,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON
TO CASINO.

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

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

- * The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
- * The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
- * The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

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JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

- * The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, Chairman.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esquire.

[* On 14th June, 1900, the Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, having accepted the office of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, retired from the position of Chairman and a Member of the Committee. Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Vice-Chairman, was elected Chairman in the place of Mr. TRICKETT, and the Honorable ANDREW GARRAN was chosen as Vice-Chairman. On 4th July, the Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM was elected to the vacancy on the Committee caused by the resignation of Mr. TRICKETT.]

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Grafton to Casino Railway.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO CASINO.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred, for consideration and report, the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino, have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed railway be constructed, provided that the cost of construction does not exceed £4,000 per mile, and that an adequate portion of the revenue from unalienated lands benefited shall be conveyed to the Railway Commissioners towards covering any loss; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

PREVIOUS REFERENCES.

1. The present is the third occasion on which the proposed railway has been under the consideration of the Public Works Committee, and on this as on previous occasions it is submitted as a section of the North Coast Railway. When first referred, in 1889–1890, it was included in a proposal for the construction of a line from Grafton to the Tweed, which the Committee recommended should be modified to the extent of constructing a section from Lismore to the Tweed, a work that has since been carried out. The second reference was in 1892, when the proposal submitted was a line from Grafton to Lismore, and on that occasion the Committee recommended, subject to certain specified conditions, the construction of the section between Lismore and Casino. The present proposal is the third section of the scheme referred to the Committee in 1889–1890.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

2. The proposed railway, 64 miles 20 chains in length, would begin at the west side of Turf-street, between Irene and Pound Streets, Grafton, and, following the north bank of the Clarence River for about 6 miles, bear away north to the Richmond Range which would be crossed at 29 miles from Grafton. The direction would then be more westerly, following the eastern side of the main road from Grafton to Casino, up to 42 miles, where the road would be crossed, and thence it would be maintained to the junction of Mongogarie and Shannon Brook or Deep Creek, where the latter would be crossed. From that point the route would be more or less direct to the crossing of the Richmond River, at about 63½ miles, and thence it would continue north-easterly and east to the northern side of the Township of Casino, where it would end on the western side of West-street.

The

The country through which the route runs is largely of an undulating character; several moderate sized creeks, beside the Richmond River, would have to be bridged; and about 7 miles of the route is through country liable to flood in motion. Provision is made for extensive terminal accommodation at Grafton.

ESTIMATED COST.

3. The estimated total cost of the line was, at £5 5s. per ton for rails, £485,700 or £7,559 10s. per mile, but with rails at £7 10s., the present maker's price, per ton the cost would be £501,375 or £7,803 10s. per mile, exclusive of land and compensation, which is £200 per mile less than the estimate put before the Committee when the line was last under consideration. Included in this amount are £91,419 for earthworks; £80,462 for culverts and timber bridges; £25,833 for large bridges; £21,601 for level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions; £40,015 for permanent-way material, calculating the rails at £5 5s. per ton, and £55,690 at £7 10s. per ton; £63,419 for platelaying, ballasting, and sleepers; and £70,000 for the Grafton station, including all works, buildings, and wharfs. Engineering and contingencies, calculated at nearly 15 per cent., are estimated at £63,352.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

4. The Railway Commissioners state in their report upon the proposal that there is no present prospect of the line paying working expenses, nor any reason for assuming that, if constructed, it will materially increase the traffic. Except in passenger traffic, which is on the decrease, there is, they say, practically no interchange between the Clarence and the Richmond, and the country between Grafton and Casino is generally of such a poor nature that it will not carry a large population, and does not, in their opinion, justify the construction of the railway. The annual cost they estimate at £21,429, which comprises interest on capital cost at 3 per cent., £15,041, and cost of maintenance and traffic and locomotive expenses, £6,388; and the annual revenue at £4,844, made up of £2,824 for the carrying of live-stock and merchandise, and £2,020 representing passengers, parcels, mails, &c.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

5. Having examined the Under Secretary for Public Works and the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, in Sydney, a Sectional Committee visited the district through which the proposed line would go, and, in addition to inspecting the route of the line, took evidence at Grafton, Myrtle Creek, Casino, and Lismore. On their return, further official evidence was taken in Sydney, which included information from the Engineer-in-Chief for Public Works as to the present navigable condition of the Clarence River, and the results expected from the works in progress at the river entrance.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

6. In their report the Sectional Committee state that, in their opinion, the best route for the railway has been selected, including a deviation at the Casino end, adopted originally as providing a better junction for a Tenterfield-Casino line, and since retained as an improvement upon the first survey. The land along and on either side of the route they found to be not nearly so good as that on and near the river banks and surrounding Grafton and Casino, which is of exceptionally good quality. It has upon it only a small amount of settlement, and that of a scattered nature, and dairying is practically the only industry that would have to be depended upon for railway revenue. Large areas of the land inspected were carrying a heavy crop of grass, which would be materially improved by ringbarking the timber, and the carrying capacity of the country would be still further increased by introducing artificial grasses, a practice now generally followed on the richer lands of the North Coast. In its natural state the land, it is stated, would carry about one beast to 10 or 12 acres, and, when improved, probably a beast to 5 or 6 acres, 640 acres being sufficient to support a family. The Sectional Committee found that there is very little passenger or goods traffic between Grafton and Casino, and to them it appeared difficult to see how there could be any considerable interchange of products between the two towns. The evidence of some of the witnesses examined, however,

however, pointed to a substantial revenue being obtainable from the carriage of timber, a very large quantity of which, of a marketable character, was said to be within a reasonable distance of the line.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

7. The traffic prospects in connection with the railway are encouraging, as there is every reason to believe that the construction of the line would be followed by a considerable increase of settlement and expansion of the dairying industry. Though the land which would be served is not as rich as that on the river flats, it is undoubtedly well suited for dairy purposes, and the extent to which the dairying industry has already developed in the Clarence and Richmond districts goes far to show that, with the facilities which the railway would afford, the industry would be largely followed in the district between Grafton and Casino.

The Chief Railway Traffic Manager, in his report upon the traffic prospects, does not speak very favourably; but he admits that there is, at intervals along the route, a good area of land suitable for dairying, and says that dairying on a limited scale has been carried on during the last three years by a few old settlers at Myrtle Creek. This, he states, is, as far as he could ascertain, the only new feature of development worth recording along the route. As far as intermediate traffic is concerned the line presents to him a complete blank, and as there is no exchange of products between the Richmond and Clarence Rivers there can be, he says, no through goods or stock traffic. Under these circumstances he finds it very difficult to estimate, with any degree of accuracy, what the earnings of the proposed line would be, especially as the country to be served is not, in his opinion, likely to be sought after until the large areas of excellent land on the Upper Richmond and around Lismore have been brought into profitable use. Allowing for trade that, he believes, would continue to pass through the Clarence and Richmond River ports, he considers that the railway could not rely upon carrying any goods or stock traffic a further distance than 40 miles, midway between Grafton and Lismore, and upon that basis he gives the following estimate:—

Goods...	...	...	...	...	£2,566
Passengers, &c.	...	...	...	...	776
Mails ...	...	...	...	...	744

Total £4,086, which amount has been increased by the Railway Commissioners in their report to £4,844.

In contrast with this report, however, there may be placed the evidence given before the Sectional Committee, by the District Surveyor at Grafton. He states that the progress of the district in settlement and production, to an extent highly satisfactory from a railway traffic point of view, is assured if the line be constructed. Hitherto land taken up along the route has been devoted to cattle-breeding, as, from want of facilities to encourage any other industry, that has been the only pursuit possible. In view of the success which has attended dairying in other localities, the occupiers of the land are now becoming dairymen; they are changing from cattle-raisers to dairy-farmers. In his opinion the unalienated land along the route is well suited for dairy purposes, and with the railway running through it would be taken up readily. Lands on the Clarence River, which, in the past, have been used for the cultivation of sugar-cane and maize are now devoted to dairy purposes, and the fact that the river flats are now fully stocked with dairy cattle is an indication that the time has arrived when, for the extension of the industry, resort must be had to other classes of land. Leaving out small areas along the route, and treating the whole of the land as dairy country, the District Surveyor estimates that a block of 500 to 640 acres would be sufficient for a family, and that, when ringbarked, the grazing capacity of the land, under dairy conditions, would be 5 acres to a cow. This, with the dairy system of small paddocks and winter-fodder crops growing, would enable a man to keep 100 cows on 500 acres, his earnings from the cows being added to by what he could obtain from the sale of calves and pigs. With families settled upon blocks of 500 acres, the railway traffic, he explains, would come chiefly from the carriage of cream and passengers,
and

and of goods and stores in return. He admits that there would be little or no interchange of commodities between Grafton and Casino, but the railway, he points out, would open up the country for settlement, and be a feeder to the rivers.

The Chief Traffic Manager anticipates that there would be some timber traffic, but not much, as a great deal of the timber along the line would, he states, go down the Richmond River. There is at present, he explains, a cheap and easy means of transit by water to Coraki—as many as 150 large logs having been rafted down the river at one time.

The District Surveyor and the Conditional Purchase Inspector, at Grafton, both anticipate a considerable revenue to the State from the timber in the neighbourhood of the railway. In the forest reserves, the timber is said to be very valuable, and when land is thrown open for settlement, will be so dealt with that the Government will receive a large amount of royalty from it.

TIMBER ALONG THE ROUTE.

8. With regard to the timber question, the Conditional Purchase Inspector and Forester at Grafton is of opinion that timber, for about 8 miles east of the railway, would be drawn to the line; and to the west, it is anticipated, he states, that the railway would carry timber cut on the Richmond Range over a length of 60 miles of that range, by a width of 4 miles. The forest on the Richmond Range he describes as one of the finest and densest on the North Coast, consisting of spotted gum, ironbark, blackbutt, tallowwood, red mahogany, grey gum, stringy bark, and bloodwood. There are also patches along the range of pine, beech, teak, black bean, silky oak, and a little cedar, of marketable sizes. He estimates the possible yield in royalty to the State from the marketable timber within the area that would furnish traffic to the railway at £76,800; and the production after the present marketable timber has been removed as equal to an annual royalty, if a demand on the area to its full capacity were made, of £25,600. Other forest reserves of a temporary character would also, he says, provide traffic for the railway.

THE LAND ALONG THE ROUTE.

9. Within an area of 20 miles on each side of the railway, and within 20 miles of Grafton as a centre at one end of the route, there are, according to evidence given by the Chief Draftsman of the Department of Lands, 624,500 acres of alienated land, 515,200 acres of reserves, and 742,500 acres of Crown lands, exclusive of reserves. Of the Crown lands, 545,700 acres are held under occupation license, and 196,800 acres are untenanted. The alienated land is chiefly along the course of the two rivers, and if excluded from the traffic area of the line (which it may very fairly be, it being admitted that the railway would draw little or no traffic from the country south of Grafton, and north of Casino the traffic question will be affected by a line from Casino to Lismore) would leave only Crown lands as a source of traffic. Some of the reserves are forest reserves.

POPULATION AND PRODUCTION.

10. The estimated population within the area likely to be affected by the railway, including that of Casino, but excluding that of Grafton, is given by an officer from the Government Statistician's Department as 6,700. Cultivation, apart from that at either end of the line, is very limited, and production small, nearly all the land, in the absence of railway facilities, being devoted to pastoral pursuits.

EFFORTS TO CHEAPEN THE RAILWAY.

11. It appeared to the Sectional Committee that, as for a considerable time there was no likelihood of other than light traffic resulting from the construction of the railway, it might be possible to regard the line from a standpoint different from that of one to be connected with the general railway system of the Colony, and make it a light line pure and simple, which, of course, should materially reduce its cost. The Full Committee were also, during the course of the inquiry, impressed with the conviction that the line might be cheapened, and the Engineer-in-Chief was asked to look into the matter and see what could be done. This he did, and though strongly

strongly opposing any cheapening of construction, he explained that a certain reduction in cost could be effected by steepening the grade—making the line in that respect more like a tramway—sharpening the curves, lessening the estimate in relation to station and wharfage requirements at Grafton, and in some other respects altering the original plans. By steepening the grades, sharpening the curves, cutting out a portion of the ballast, reducing the station accommodation to what is necessary for first requirements, lessening the cost of sleepers, and cutting off a portion of the allowance for contingencies, the cost could be reduced from £7,803 per mile, the present estimate, to £4,800 per mile.

The station accommodation at Grafton was originally estimated to cost £70,000, but the Engineer-in-Chief admits this can be brought down to £6,000. This original estimate appears to the Committee to be most excessive, and it brings under notice the practice, apparent in all proposals of this nature, of making the station arrangements much more elaborate than is necessary. The Committee are of opinion that a considerable saving might be effected, in all cases relating to proposed railways, if the station accommodation provided were not more than is absolutely requisite for immediate requirements.

An officer of the Railway Construction Department was sent to Grafton and Casino to see what arrangements could be made in respect to the land required for the railway, but, though a report from him on his visit appears in the evidence, information indicating what the claims for land and compensation are likely to be was not available up to the time the inquiry closed.

THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION.

12. The Committee recommend the construction of the line, provided the cost can be reduced to £4,000 per mile, and an adequate portion of the revenue from unalienated Crown lands along the route benefited by the railway be conveyed to the Railway Commissioners towards covering any loss.

The difficulties in the way of an unconditional approval of the railway are the excessive cost of construction, and the period that must elapse before the traffic returns are satisfactory. The line must be worked at a loss for a time; but there is every indication that within a reasonable period it will pay, if the increment in the value of the Crown land affected is, as recommended in the Committee's resolution, credited to the railway. It is important to notice that the line between Lismore and the Tweed is improving in its return of revenue, and the fact must not be overlooked, as mentioned by the Chief Railway Traffic Manager, that this railway was the means of developing the dairying industry in the Tweed and Lismore districts, and inducing companies to open up factories at Casino and elsewhere for the treatment of cream. The possibilities in connection with the dairying industry, which were not apparent when the line from Grafton to Casino was previously under inquiry, are a new and important feature in connection with the present proposal, for if the proposed railway should have an effect similar to what has resulted from the Lismore-Tweed line—and there is good reason to believe it would—the large area of Crown lands between Grafton and Casino now unoccupied would be taken up by settlers in blocks of 600 or 700 acres, and be the means of providing a livelihood for many families as well as considerable railway traffic. Then it is clear to the Committee that the construction of the railway should be carried out on a much cheaper scale than that submitted. They have been able to elicit the information that the cost can be reduced at once to £4,800 per mile, though the Engineer-in-Chief does not recommend it; and they are of opinion that it is possible to still further reduce it. They think the line could be constructed, in the first instance, for £4,000 per mile, and if this were done, the capital cost would thereby be reduced from £501,325 to £257,000, and the interest on the cost of construction from £15,041 to £7,710. This would bring down the annual cost, including maintenance and traffic and locomotive expenses, to £14,098, instead of £21,429, the estimate based on the original figures, and the estimated loss to £9,254, instead of £16,545. The further provision in the Committee's recommendation should materially reduce this smaller loss if it should not quickly cause it to disappear. The average value per acre of the Crown lands within the traffic area of the line is estimated at 15s., and it is thought that the

the railway would increase this to 25s. If the Railway Commissioners receive a fair proportion of the amount realised from the sale of these lands at their increased value, it should prove a satisfactory set-off against present loss, and it would be in accordance with a recommendation made by them in 1889, in their report upon the proposal, then under consideration by the Public Works Committee, for the construction of a railway from Grafton to the Tweed, which included the section from Grafton to Casino.

THE COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION.

13. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from their Minutes of Proceedings :—

Mr. Shepherd moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Grafton to Casino, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, provided that the cost of construction does not exceed £4,000 per mile; provided also that some satisfactory arrangement be made whereby the district benefited shall contribute to the Railway Commissioners a sum sufficient, together with the earnings, to cover working expenses and interest on capital expenditure at the rate of 1½ per cent. per annum.”

Dr. Garran moved,—“That the motion be amended by the insertion of the word ‘not’ before the word ‘expedient.’”

The amendment was negatived on the following division upon the question,—“That the word proposed to be inserted be so inserted” :—

Ayes, 1.
Dr. Garran.

Noes, 6.
Mr. Dick,
Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Watson,
Mr. Levien,
Mr. McFarlane.

Mr. Levien moved,—“That the motion be amended by the omission of the words ‘provided also.’”

The amendment was passed on the following division, upon the question,—“That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the motion” :—

Ayes, 3.
Mr. Shepherd,
Dr. Garran,
Mr. Watson.

Noes, 4.
Mr. Dick,
Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Levien,
Mr. McFarlane.

Mr. Levien moved,—“That the motion be further amended by the omission of all the words after the words ‘£4,000 per mile.’”

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Watson moved,—“That the motion be further amended by the addition of the following words—‘and that an adequate portion of the revenue from unalienated lands benefited shall be conveyed to the Railway Commissioners towards covering any loss.’”

The amendment was agreed to, and the motion, as amended, was passed.

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 17 September, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO CASINO.

THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Robert R. P. Hickson, Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Have you prepared a statement giving some particulars of the proposed railway? Yes.
2. Will you read the statement? It reads as follows:—

R. R. P.
Hickson.

22 Feb., 1900.

GRAFTON TO CASINO RAILWAY.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration, on 22nd December, 1899, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Grafton to Casino."

The present is the third occasion on which Parliament has seen fit to refer this railway line to the Public Works Committee, and on this, as on previous occasions, the proposal is submitted as a section of a great North Coast Railway.

Its first reference was made in 1889-1890, when the proposal to construct a line from Grafton to the Tweed was, after an exhaustive inquiry, cut down by the Committee to the construction of the section from Lismore to the Tweed, a length of 63 miles 57 chains. This sectional line was constructed in due course, and has been in operation for the last five years. It still remains, however, in the category of non-paying lines.

In 1892 the remaining portion of the original proposal was again submitted to the Public Works Committee, who, after a second lengthy inquiry, recommended the construction of the section between Lismore and Casino, a distance of 18 miles 8 chains, provided that the cost did not exceed £6,000 per mile, and that the "betterment" principle could be applied to the land to be served by the proposed line.

No steps have as yet been taken to carry out the Committee's recommendation.

With regard to the proposal under review, namely, the construction of a line of railway from Grafton to Casino, a distance of 64 miles 20 chains, being the third and final section of the scheme as originally referred to the Committee in 1889, there is nothing to be brought forward that may be called new. It may, however, be pointed out that during the interval since that date, in the Richmond and Clarence River districts, and more particularly in the areas served by the Lismore to Tweed railway, there has been a striking development and increase in the dairying industry, and, consequently, the population is steadily growing in numbers.

The proposed line of railway has been so fully considered and reported on by the Committee on the two previous occasions above referred to, that I can add nothing to the information already given in the Committee's reports of 1890 and 1892.

The following is the report of the Railway Commissioners upon the proposed railway from Grafton to Casino, together with a memorandum regarding the district between Lismore and Casino:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 19 December, 1899.

Proposed Line of Railway from Grafton to Casino—64 miles 20 chains.

In accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act of 1888, we beg to report as follows:—

<i>Cost of Construction—</i>	
Engineer-in-Chief's estimate (exclusive of land and compensation)	£501,375
<i>Annual Cost—</i>	
Interest on capital cost at 3 per cent.	£15,941
Estimated cost of maintenance, and for traffic and locomotive expenses	6,388
Total annual cost	£21,420
<i>Revenue Estimate—</i>	
Life stock and merchandise	£2,824
Passengers, parcels, mails, &c.	2,020
Total estimated revenue	£4,844

The estimated annual cost is based upon a tri-weekly train service.

In our report of the 7th December, 1897, we stated that there was no present prospect of the line paying working expenses, nor was there any reason for assuming that the railway, if constructed, would materially increase the traffic. We are still of this opinion.

Except in passenger traffic, which is on the decrease, there is practically no interchange of traffic between the Clarence and the Richmond: and the country between Grafton and Casino is generally of such a poor character that it will not carry a large population, and does not, in our opinion, justify the construction of a railway.

B. E. P.
Hickson.

The Railway Commissioners' memorandum respecting the Lismore to Casino line is as follows:—

22 Feb., 1900.

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO LISMORE.

With reference to the report asked for in connection with a proposal to construct a line of railway from "Grafton to Lismore," the Commissioners now note, as intimated on the 12th instant, that the Minister only wishes a report from "Grafton to Casino," and we have confined our remarks in the report submitted under the terms of the Public Works Act to that section.

We had, however, gone over the district between Lismore to Casino, and as it may assist the Minister, take the opportunity of expressing our views on the section in question.

The country in the district of Casino, and between Casino and Lismore, is of a rich character, and during the last few years has been, and is still being, so extensively developed by agricultural and dairy farming that we consider the construction of a line between those points deserving of favourable consideration, particularly if it can be carried out at a reasonable cost.

The following is a description of the line now submitted to the Committee:—

Length, 64 miles 20 chains; estimated cost £501,375, or £7,804 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.

This line begins at the west side of Turf-street, between Irene and Pound streets, in the City of Grafton, and follows the north bank of the Clarence River for about 6 miles, from whence the bearing is generally north to the Richmond Range, which is crossed on the 29th mile. The direction then becomes more westerly, following the eastern side of the main road, Grafton to Casino, crossing it about 42 miles, the same direction being maintained close to the junction of Mongogarie and Shannon Brook or Deep Creek, where the latter is crossed. From here the line is more or less direct to the crossing of the Richmond River at about 63½ miles; thence north-easterly and east to the northern side of the township of Casino, where it ends at the western side of West-street at 64 miles 20 chains from Grafton.

This railway is largely through undulating country, the Richmond Range being crossed; there are also, besides the Richmond River, several moderate sized creeks to be bridged, and about 7 miles of the line is through country liable to flood in motion. Extensive terminal accommodation at Grafton is provided.

The steepest gradient is 1 in 50. The amount of land alienated is not large.

I beg leave to submit the two reports made by the Public Works Committee, on 15th April, 1890, and 28th September, 1892, as portion of, and supplementary to, this present statement.

3. Is there anything which you could add to the statement? I do not think there is anything I could say which would be of any value. The proposed railway keeps pretty close to the road nearly all the way until you get near to Casino, when it goes to the west of the main road.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works,
sworn, and examined:—

H. Deane.

22 Feb., 1900.

4. *Chairman.*] Mr. Hickson, the Under Secretary, has read a statement which is really a description of the route of the proposed line;—the Committee desire to be furnished with a more detailed description of the character of the line, of the country through which it passes, and as to whether there are many bridges and viaducts to be made? I can hand in an estimate of the cost of the line and a section of the line.

5. Have you been over the surveyed line? Yes; but not lately. I have not been over the surveyed line since the previous inquiry. I know the country fairly well, as well as one can see it without going very far to the right and the left of the line. The first part of the line for about 3 miles passes through the town of Grafton, and the outside allotments, and at about 3½ miles it rises slightly on to a ridge near the Clarence River. From there for some miles the works are fairly easy, though not of the same easy character as those on the lines which have lately been considered. The cuttings vary, say, from 5 feet to 19 feet in depth. The line altogether is of a rougher and costlier character than anything that has been considered for some time by the Committee. The country is somewhat undulating, and you have to rise and fall when passing over the low ridges. The ruling grade is 1 in 60 going south, and 1 in 50 going north. The line with which it connects—Casino to Lismore—has a ruling grade of 1 in 50, and on the line from Lismore to the Tweed the ruling grade is 1 in 50. There is nothing particular to remark about the first part of the line until you get to the Richmond Range. It will be seen on the plan that when you get to mileage 21, the line begins to wind about a good deal. That is done with the object of getting across the range with as little earthwork as possible. The deepest cutting on that section is about 35 feet, and there are a good number of cuttings varying from 15 feet to 20 feet, or a little more.

6. From the 21-mile peg till you get over the range, is it a continuous cutting? No, it is a series of cuttings and banks. The line begins at Grafton at a level of about 25 feet above high-water; the highest point on the line is near 24 miles 30 chains, and that is 344 feet above high-water at spring tide.

7. *Dr. Garran.*] Will there be a good deal of rock-cutting in that range? Yes; from what I remember it is sandstone and hard shale. At about 32 miles 15 chains you cross Myall Creek. There is a creek called Two-mile Creek at about 42 miles 20 chains, but it is not important. Myrtle Creek is the next most important creek, and it is crossed at about 44 miles 60 chains.

8. *Chairman.*] From the Richmond Range to Myrtle Creek is it all comparatively level country? It is all pretty level. There are some rises in the ground to go over—low spurs, but nothing difficult at all.

9. Easy grades? Yes. At 47½ miles there is a cutting 27 feet deep; but, generally speaking, the country is not very hilly. Just beyond 57-mile peg we cross Deep Creek, and after that there is nothing to speak of till we get to the Richmond River, which is crossed near Casino. On this map, which is a compilation of parish maps, there are two lines shown.

10. In the general description of the line there is a paragraph which says that "about 7 miles of the line is through country liable to flood";—is that a continuous stretch of 7 miles? No, that is a summation of the bridges over different creeks and swamps which we have to cross.

11. Where does that occur chiefly? There is a good deal at the Casino end, and especially at the crossing of the creeks like Myrtle Creek and Deep Creek. The flooded country will have to be crossed on timber viaducts.

12. Is it proposed to construct the line above ordinary flood-level? Yes; above the highest flood-level which we have information about. I have included that in that estimate.

13. How high is it—a couple of feet? It varies very much. On the banks of a creek there may be depression other than the main channel to pass over, as at Deep Creek, which is nearly equal to the depth of the creek itself. There is a flood-channel at Deep Creek, which is 16 feet, the main channel being 20 feet. Then beyond that point on the Casino side there is a swampy place where the line will be 7 feet above the surface. I think that gives as good an idea of the kind of country to be crossed as I can furnish.

14. You were about to explain, when I interrupted you, that near Sandy Creek there is an alternative route? From about 48 miles two lines have been laid out. The blue or eastern line is the original survey which crossed the Richmond River to the east of the town of Casino. When I was up there some years ago, I examined the line very carefully, and I came to the conclusion that an adequate station ground could not be made on the northern side of the river. When that line was laid out it was proposed to bring the Tenterfield-Casino line, as shown in green on this plan, following the Richmond River on the south side, and connecting with this blue line, also on the south side of the line, and then following to a common station on the north side of the river. But when the line came to be permanently staked, and the question of the proper location of the Tenterfield-Casino line was being fixed, it was suggested that a more westerly route would be more suitable, on account of its shortening the distance of the line from Tenterfield, making no material difference in the length of the line from Grafton to Casino, and giving a better station ground in Casino itself. The crossing of the river involved by the adoption of that more westerly line is not so favourable as the crossing to the east of Casino, where the rock is almost at the surface of the river-bed. For other reasons, however, that westerly line seems to be the best, and has been adopted. It was adopted at first on account of its giving a better junction for the Tenterfield-Casino line, and it is still adopted, although that particular reason no longer holds good, because the newer survey of the Tenterfield-Casino line comes in at a more northerly point, as shown on this plan. On the whole, the location of the line seems to be better and more suitable on that western route, and it has, of course, the one great advantage of giving a very good station ground on the northern side of the town of Casino. In my evidence at the last inquiry that point is referred to. On page 5 of the report on the Grafton-Lismore railway, the Committee will see that I gave the following evidence on the 14th June, 1892:—

H. Denne.
22 Feb., 1900.

27. What are you reasons for this deviation at the 50-mile peg from Grafton? The original line at this part is shown as a dotted red line, and it crossed the Richmond River below Casino; that is, what is sometimes called the South Arm.

28. That crossed the Richmond to the east of Casino? Yes, and the survey made to Tenterfield junctioned with that line on the southern side of the river, and went almost in a due westerly direction. When we were prosecuting the revision of the survey between Tenterfield and Casino, I found that it was a very awkward line, with severe grades, and I instructed the surveyors to examine another line. Mr. Lloyd is the surveyor who found this line, and we got a crossing on the Richmond Range (running west for some distance, and then running north, dividing the catchment basins of the Richmond and the Clarence) at a lower elevation, and with very much better grades. Seeing that we were coming in the direction shown by the green line on the plan into Casino, it struck me that it would be better to junction there, as otherwise we should have a duplication of 12 miles out of Casino, which is unnecessary. As it did not lengthen this line very much, I thought it was a better one to adopt.

29. If there were to be no connection with Tenterfield, would you take the more direct course shown by the dotted line? Yes; supposing it was decided for all time that there should be no connection with Tenterfield, I think that would be the case. At the same time, I must say that there is good country at the proposed junction. There is a butter-factory and more settlement there, which the new line serves better than the dotted line. Even on its own merits I think, on reconsideration, the red line is a better one than the dotted line.

30. Will it serve more population? There is not much population on either line, but it is better country, and there are better grades.

31. If the Tenterfield line were out of the question, would you still recommend this deviation? Yes; I should in any case recommend this as the best line to adopt, for this reason: Even supposing the original survey to Tenterfield were adopted, that would be the proper point of departure—that is, west of Casino.

I see no reason to alter my opinion upon that point. The length of the eastern line is 16½ miles, and the length of the western line is 19 miles. The cost of the eastern line is about £117,716, and the cost of the western line is £124,716. The difference in cost, £7,000, is not represented by the difference in distance, as the westerly line seems to be the cheaper line per mile.

15. From that you indicate that the westerly line is the easier line? Yes.

16. I think you have some figures to give to the Committee? Yes; I have an estimate which was made in December, 1899, and which was marked "Grafton to Lismore, Part 1." It was not quite certain then whether the whole line would have to be submitted from Grafton to Lismore, and so I separated the two, Grafton to Casino being part 1, and Casino to Lismore part 2. I will now read the estimate for the first part:—

GRAFTON TO CASINO.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 64 miles 20 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grades, 1 in 60 going south, and 1 in 50 going north. Sharpest curve, 12 chains radius.

Description of Work.	Estimated Cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	
Earthworks	91,419	7	6	1,423
Culverts and timber bridges	89,462	17	6	1,252
Large bridges	25,333	15	0	402
Overbridges	580	0	0	14
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	21,601	0	0	336
Permanent-way material (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton)	40,015	2	6	623
Freight	6,783	0	0	106
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £6,596 6s. 8d.	63,419	0	8	957
Ballasting at 5s. 6d. = £31,097				
Sleepers at 3s. 3d. = £25,723 14s.				
Station works	8,872	0	0	138
Station buildings, passenger stations, £576; waiting sheds, £345; platforms, £678; loading banks, £450; goods sheds and platforms, £690; 20-ton weighbridges, £482; 5-ton cranes, £414; station-master's cottages, £564; trucking yards, £1,242	5,441	0	0	85
Grafton station, including all works, buildings, and wharfs	70,000	0	0	1,089
Water supplies	4,500	0	0	70
Gradient and mileage posts	1,060	2	6	17
Telegraph	1,060	2	6	17
Miscellaneous	1,000	0	0	16
	422,347	8	2	.. ..
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	63,332	11	10	986
	£485,700	0	0	7,560
Add for extra cost of rails at £7 10s. per ton	£15,675	0	0	.....
Total cost	£501,375	0	0	7,803

- H. Deane.
22 Feb., 1900.
17. In the statement which the Under Secretary read the estimated cost is put down at £501,375? That estimate takes the cost of the rails at £5 5s. a ton, which is a convenient price for a standard, but the price of rails now is very much higher than it was. A rise or a fall of 5s. a ton in the price of rails makes a difference of £30 per mile. Taking the price of rails at £7 10s. per ton, the extra cost would make the total £501,375, or £7,803 10s. per mile.
18. *Mr. Watson.*] In the case of that contract which was let the other day for a little over £7 10s. per ton, were the rails of a heavier class? No; they were also 60-lb. rails. I think the price of rails was about £7 8s. per ton, and the freight is very high at this time—16s.
19. *Dr. Garran*] At what do you estimate the average cost per mile in this calculation? £7,803 10s.
20. If you add to the standard price of iron it will come to a little more? I think it will.
21. Do you recollect what you estimated the cost of this section at in 1890—at the first inquiry? I do not think it was my estimate at all; but it was a very rough estimate made before the surveys were complete. I stated that, I remember, in my evidence.
22. In answer to Question No. 68, by Mr. Trickett, it is stated that there is an estimate of £12,256 per mile, but whether that was for the whole of the line or for this portion only I do not quite see;—this will be a little cheaper than some of the other parts of the line, will it not? This is really the cheapest part of the whole line between Grafton and the Tweed.
23. Therefore, to take the average of the whole line will be to put too high a price on this section? Yes.
24. So that there is a great reduction on the estimate of 1890;—what was your estimate in 1892? The estimate was £8,000.
25. And you brought it down about £200 per mile? Yes.
26. In what way has it principally been cheapened? Everything has undergone revision since then. I have cheapened the waterway designs very much since then. Stations also have undergone revision. Then prices, although they are going up again now, are lower than they were then.
27. When you say that you have cheapened the waterways you do not mean that you have diminished the area of the waterways? No; I have cheapened the design of the bridges and the culverts.
28. A cheaper style? Yes.
29. Have you left them sufficiently good and durable? They are quite as good; many of them are very much better than they used to be.
30. You have not increased the gradients? No; the gradients are the same. I have improved the gradients where possible. I have now grades of 1 in 60 where we previously had grades of 1 in 50.
31. Then, substantially, during the course of these years which have passed the general route of the line remains much as it was? Very much the same.
32. And the general construction very much the same? Yes. Even in 1890 I anticipated that we should have to pass over a great deal of flood-country.
33. What is the latest date at which any competent engineer has been over the line to reinspect it? I think Mr. Burge's inspection was the last.
34. When was that made? It was a good many years ago. It must have been before the last inquiry.
35. There has been no thorough inspection since then? No, except at that part where the deviation is made.
36. What engineer has suggested that deviation? I think that was suggested in my office when I was discussing the matter with the surveyors. As I explained, Mr. Lloyd suggested a new and better route between Tenterfield and Casino—a more southerly route; and then I thought it was better to deviate the whole line so as to meet it.
37. I understand from you that you are going to keep above flood-level in all the floodable parts of the line? Yes.
38. So that when the floods are up the traffic will not be interrupted on this line? Yes.
39. As the object of this line is to connect the Richmond River with the Grafton River, and, as if this line is made, and the line to Tenterfield is made also, the section between Lismore and Casino will have to be made;—do you know enough of the country to say whether a straighter line from Lismore to Casino might be made—more to the east on that plan submitted? From my own knowledge, I could not say. I think probably a straighter line could be made. I do not suppose, there are, any impediments as regards ranges. You would have more water to cross, but a straighter line could be made, though it would leave out Casino. One of the points it was desired to accommodate in all these proposals was Casino.
40. But if there is a line from Casino to Tenterfield, I suppose Casino will be accommodated then? Yes.
41. I only wanted to know whether we could get a straighter and a cheaper connection between Lismore and Grafton than this one? I do not think it would make any difference. I should think that a line from Grafton to Lismore would cost about the same as a line from Grafton to Casino, and you would still have to complete the Casino-Lismore line ultimately.
42. I suppose all the ranges you cross dip towards the Clarence River? Yes.
43. That Richmond Range, for instance? It runs out easterly.
44. You would cross it at a low level? I should not like to say whether it does not rise again, but it eventually runs out to the east.
45. Suppose the connection is only meant to be between the two rivers, could you drop this line down on Lawrence, and save anything in the cost of going to Grafton? So as to start from Lawrence?
46. As soon as you cross the Richmond Range, could you not hit Lawrence very much more cheaply than you could hit Grafton? Yes.
47. And the line from Lawrence to Grafton would follow the bank of the river pretty well? Yes.
48. And fairly level country? There will be a good deal of flooded country.
49. Unless you get back from the river? Yes. And then you would not be very far from the present line for a good portion of the way. I do not think you would gain anything. I do not think you would get a very nice line.
50. So far as you know, there has been no regular survey made between Lismore and Lawrence? I do not think there has. We never had instructions to do it.
51. Therefore, no one is in a position to say anything about it? No. This line has been looked upon as part of the North Coast line, and of course Grafton has been looked upon as the proper place to meet the line from the south and the line from the north.

H. Deane.

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52. It is the capital of the district at present? Yes.
53. Will the station at Grafton be well above flood-level? Yes. Where the line starts there is a strip of country, which is above the level of the highest flood known. The floods have gone over most of the town of Grafton, but there is a strip where the railway starts which is above the floods.
54. Supposing there is a railway made from the south to come up to Grafton, where will the bridge cross to connect the railway systems? I think the bridge ought to cross a few miles above Grafton.
55. Where dotted blue line is shown on the wall map? That is the idea.
56. That will hit it at about 6 miles above Grafton, I suppose? On the other plan it is shown at about $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
57. Will that have to be a bridge with an opening to let vessels go through? Not there.
58. How far over Grafton is the river navigable for coasting steamers? I do not think that steamers of any size go above Grafton.
59. It is practically the head of navigation? It is.
60. And there will be no objection to blocking the river with a bridge there? A bridge would have to be built high enough so as to admit of droghers and small craft going under.
61. The people in the district have never made any objection to a railway bridge going over there? I do not think it has been seriously proposed. I have never seen any objection which has been made.
62. Suppose we ever have a railway made from Armidale or the Mother-of-Ducks down through the Don Dorrigo country:—when we get opposite to Grafton we will have to make this detour round and go back 6 miles into Grafton station? I should say that passengers coming from the south or from Guyra would be taken across the river by ferry. The trains could be run round if necessary, or it could be arranged to run the railway carriages on to a punt and punt them across, but that would be better.
63. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the difficulty about building a bridge right across? It would be a very expensive bridge, as the river is very wide, and it would block navigation.
64. *Mr. McFarlane.*] The ocean steamers never go above the proposed railway terminus at Grafton? I do not see why passengers coming from the south, or Glen Innes, or Guyra should not be satisfied with a nice ferry steamer to get on at once and go right across.
65. *Mr. Watson.*] The block to navigation would not be sufficient to prevent a bridge being put up if the vessels did not go above Grafton to any extent? A fairly high bridge would be a very expensive thing. It would also mean that the main line could not be joined for some considerable distance back, because, being up at such a height, some distance would be necessary to get down again.
66. Would a swing be too expensive? No; but it is a most objectionable thing for a railway, and for what would eventually become a main line of railway.
67. *Dr. Garran.*] Would a bascule bridge be suitable? It would do, but still it is open, more or less, to the same objection.
68. Is it really necessary for surveyors to have gone as far above Grafton as that before they cross the river if there is no traffic above Grafton? That is the most suitable point.
69. Is that due to low land? No, to high land. The land begins to rise there.
70. Why not go nearer to Grafton? Because the land is so low.
71. Low land on the east side or the west side? Low land on both sides.
72. Very bad for a bridge? The dotted blue line on the wall map and the black line on the plan get away from the river in order to avoid the flooded country.
73. You go over the first good sound ground you get? Yes.
74. You cannot do it in less than $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles? No.
75. You were going to give us a little information on a point which seemed to strike the Committee a good deal. The estimate of £70,000 for the Grafton railway station looks rather large; I suppose it includes all the terminal expenses of water supply, turn-tables, sheds, and so on? Sheds, railway offices, workshops, and wharfs. The requirements of Grafton have not been worked out. That a considerable sum of money is necessary I think there is very little doubt, but what the amount would be is still indeterminate. I think the item of wharfs should really not be charged to the railway, because the wharfs, to a certain extent, are revenue-producing works and the Railway Commissioners get no benefit from them. There are charges for wharfage.
76. *Mr. Dick.*] They collect revenues from all the wharfs along which a railway runs? I know of a lot of wharfage dues which goes into the Treasury, and the railways are not credited with the money.
77. *Dr. Garran.*] With regard to this wharf, has the railway a water-frontage of its own to make a special railway wharf? No. The terminus of the line is on the top of the bank—on the high ground above flood-level.
78. How much above the usual wharf-level? It is considerable.
79. How much is this station-level above the level of the steamer's wharf? I think it is about 20 feet.
80. Are you going to have a little railway down to the bank? I have not worked out anything, but that is what would be necessary, and that is why I kept the station well back. The first proposal which was made was to bring the rails considerably further east into Grafton, but I kept them back there so as to admit of the rails descending along the river-bank at some suitable spot to the wharfs.
81. Why do you want to make a wharf—will not the other wharfs do which are in existence? I think very much more commodious wharfs than the present ones are required; they might do for a start.
82. Do you anticipate any very great increase in the water-side traffic? I have not gone into the traffic question at all.
83. Generally, in providing wharfs, you look at the probable traffic? Yes.
84. You have made no estimate of that? No.
85. You get your estimate of that from other Departments? Yes; but I am not aware of any estimate having been made at all; so that this sum which is put down, and which includes the cost of wharfs, is not intended to approach accuracy.
86. How much of this item of £70,000 do you think will go for a wharf? I think about half of it.
87. You could build us a new wharf 600 feet long in Woolloomooloo Bay for £24,000? I was desirous of including enough for the purpose; that is all I can say about it.
88. You have gone on the safe side? Yes. I would very much rather that that item were deducted, because I think wharfs should be constructed independent of the railway.
89. *Mr. Watson.*] In the evidence taken at the inquiry in 1892, an item of £44,000 was put forward for wharfage? My predecessor, Mr. Whitton, put down £44,000.

- H. Deans. 22 Feb, 1900. 90. I see, on referring to page 7, that the statement was made by yourself; Mr. Collins asked, "Does this estimate include all the railway station buildings?" and your reply was, "Yes; it also includes the sum put down by Mr. Whitton in the original estimate for wharfs and various works at Grafton—namely, £44,000"? I do not remember any detail ever having been worked out to make up that item of £44,000. It did not include the station yard at Grafton, I believe, but was intended to include wharfs, workshops, branch administration offices, and traffic offices.
91. *Dr. Garran.*] Of course, if this line is made, and Grafton is not connected with the other part of the railway system, you will want some place for repairing engines? Yes.
92. I suppose that will be at Grafton? Yes.
93. Will there be room for that in your station yard? Yes; but repairing shops need not necessarily be right at the terminus; they might be placed further back on higher ground.
94. You could have a little local Eveleigh? Yes.
95. You have not taken land for that purpose? No; the question of resumption of land has not been dealt with.
96. If you leave out the wharf, could you do all your other station requirements for £35,000? Yes; I should think that the Grafton station works and workshops, and so on, would run to between £30,000 and £40,000; but that will cover the necessary expenditure for a considerable time to come.
97. That would cover a repairing shed and a locomotive shed? Yes, for the North Coast system.
98. If there was a new wharf built, I suppose that would be a township wharf generally;—it would not be confined to the railway? I do not think it would.
99. Would it be quite fair to the Railway Commissioners to charge the whole cost of that wharf to the railway capital? No; I think it would be right to deduct it.
100. We might leave the wharf alone until we can prove that it is wanted? Yes; I fancy something will have to be done straight away. Perhaps it might only be a small expense of a few thousand pounds; but the lines would have to be taken down to the river, and cranes and so on would have to be provided, and sheds to suit the railway traffic specially.
101. Would the contractor want to get access to the water to load and unload material and other things for making the line? Yes, he would be very glad to have it; he would have to make some provision himself.
102. Supposing the line were made by day labour, would the Government have to make such a line down to the wharf? Yes; it would be better to do so.
103. It would save you a great deal of expense in dragging up the stuff? Yes, if the trucks could be run right down to the water and the goods taken up without double handling.
104. If this line were made, could we begin at both ends conveniently and work along? Yes; there would be the gap between Casino and Lismore, but I believe the Government intend to introduce a Bill to authorise the construction of that section.
105. To act upon the decision of the last Committee? Yes; and on the latest report of the Railway Commissioners.
106. But the recommendation of the last Committee was conditioned by a betterment proposal? Yes.
107. There is no recommendation from the Committee to make a railway apart from that betterment scheme? I have no doubt the Government will be guided by the Committee's conditions.
108. The Commissioners in this last report do not positively recommend the Lismore-Casino line; they speak favourably of the district; they say "We consider the construction of a line between those points (Casino and Grafton) deserving of favourable consideration";—do you think that line could be made for less than £6,000 a mile? I do not think it could.
109. Because that was one of the conditions which the Committee put down, too? Yes; at the present price of rails the estimate comes out at £6,800 per mile.
110. What did the Murwillumbah-Lismore line cost per mile? Between £12,000 and £14,000 per mile—a very expensive line. None of this district is easy country for making railways, on account of the sharp ridges which occur at intervals, causing the expensive cuttings. As it is mostly hard ground—sandstone, schist, hard shale, or even basalt—you cannot make a line cheaply.
111. It is impossible to make one of your cheap lines here? Quite impossible.
112. If ever there is a line made from Tenterfield or Glen Innes, this will become a quasi-trunk line? Yes.
113. So that it would not do to have it flimsy? No; I have estimated for a full amount of ballast on this line.
114. You have a pretty heavy rainfall in this district, and you cannot have the ballast soft? No; it would not do to leave out ballast.
115. You must have the permanent-way well drained? Yes.
116. All that means expense, and that puts a cheap line out of the question? Quite. The contour of the country is against cheapness. On this line from Grafton to Casino the culverts and timber bridges, not to speak of the large bridges, come to £1,252 per mile. In some of the cheap lines the culverts and openings for water have come to little more than a tenth of that sum.
117. *Chairman.*] What did the bridge across the Richmond River cost? Over £20,000.
118. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you know what sort of timber there is on the line between these two points? Not very far from the line there is iron-bark, blue-gum, and turpentine. All the good timbers of the coast are represented in that district.
119. It would not have to be taken any very great distance? No.
120. Does not 3s. 3d. each seem a very high figure for sleepers when the timber is so easily got? I do not think so. In places there will be a good deal of carriage, and I have estimated for a stronger and better sleeper than we have on the light lines.
121. I think the great expense of these sleepers is due to the cost of squaring them;—all the sleepers have to be squared according to the present regulations, would it not be possible to have only one surface squared? You must have them even in width; three sides must be squared, even if the top be left, but I do not think it would be desirable to leave the top round as is done in the west. As broad a surface as possible is required for the rail to sit upon. All the white, soft, outside sap-wood must be got rid of, and the rail allowed to rest on the hardwood proper; and when that is insisted on, and when it is remembered that, although good patches of country are passed, near or through, there would still be a good deal of carriage on the average, and I do not think 3s. 3d. each is too high a price to reckon to have to pay for sleepers laid on the road. That price includes adzing.

H. Dónne.
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122. In America, some of the lines are constructed at a very cheap rate;—what kind of sleepers have they, as a rule? They have ordinary soft pine sleepers. In California, they use redwood to a very large extent, and in dry country it is a very durable timber; further east they largely use white oak. With the soft pine sleepers, some preservative process is often made use of, which very much lengthens their life.

123. Are you aware of the cost of sleepers there? Yes; on the whole they are very much cheaper than ours. I suppose they run from 1s. 6d. to 2s.; but then the American forests are worked in quite a different way from that in which we work ours. They work them in the face, and they put a saw-mill and saw up everything as they come to it. When ironbark sleepers are required, the trees, which are scattered through the bush and do not grow close together, have to be picked out; a face cannot be worked.

124. The American timber is very much softer and very much more easily worked? Yes.

125. Have you ever tried to see if it is possible to reduce the cost of sleepers at all? Yes. I have been in office nearly eleven years, and during that time I have been trying to reduce the cost of sleepers and every other item. I think I have been fairly successful; but there is a limit below which you cannot go.

126. I thought where you had timber contiguous to a line the cost of the sleepers would be reduced;—I have noticed that where they had to cart sleepers a very long distance they seemed to do it for about the same price as you pay where you get them close to the line? I do not think you get any timber which is quite suitable actually close to the line, or at least you pass through very little of it. On this Richmond Range, where the line goes through, there are some large trees, but there are not many of them, and it is very likely that we may have to cart the sleepers some little distance—certainly you would over some parts of the line where there is no suitable timber at all.

127. You said that the deepest cutting is 35 feet; I suppose that occurs in crossing the Richmond Range? Yes.

128. I suppose you have endeavoured to get the line as level as it is possible to be got under the circumstances? Yes.

129. I have always been a great advocate of making a line almost level? If you want to make the line quite level you will have to tunnel.

130. Do you not think that where a railway line is being constructed for all time, it will pay to go to great expense in the first instance to get the road comparatively level? Yes; but if you went too far in that direction, the cost might be too prohibitive.

131. Much smaller trains can only be taken where the gradient is great, and the wear and tear on rolling stock is much greater on a steep gradient than on a level? I think that in a line of this character, and in country partially undeveloped, it is as well to provide for a line that will not cost too much, so as to avoid having too large an amount to pay for interest; but afterwards if the country became thickly populated, and the traffic grew to be very large, it would then pay to reconstruct the line in parts.

132. *Mr. Dick.*] Has the Grafton end of the line been set out entirely on its own, or with a view to a possible connection either with Glen Innes or with the North Coast railway? It was worked out originally as a section of the North Coast railway.

133. And no alteration has been made in the original surveys for that purpose at the Grafton end? Yes, there have been. I remember seeing the first survey which was made, and that went right through the middle of the town.

134. That was with a view to a southern extension? Yes; with a view to crossing the river at Grafton and going south.

135. What led to the alteration of the position of the present proposed terminus? The object of the alteration has been to reduce the cost, and to get on high ground, which is not subject to floods.

136. Do you know whether the suburban allotments which the present proposed terminus occupy are of a valuable nature, or is it comparatively cheap land? Not where we go through. All the land about Grafton is good. The Grafton area is a very large one, and the population at present is comparatively small, so that there is a very small proportion of the town really occupied.

137. It would not cost much, then, for the resumption of the suburban allotments? I should not think the cost of the resumptions would be much, because the supply of land for business purposes is very much greater than the demand for town allotments.

138. I suppose at Lismore they have repairing sheds? The traffic at present is so very small that there is very little repairing to do. What repairing has to be done is done there.

139. At about what distance are repairing sheds usually placed on our lines? Judging by the existing system—there are shops at Goulburn, Bathurst, Newcastle, and, I think, Junee; that would make the distance at about 150 miles.

140. *Chairman.*] Having regard to the character of the country through which this line is proposed to be carried, do you think an average cost of £7,504 per mile is the lowest price at which it could be constructed, consistent with safety? I think this line, when it comes to be constructed, will cost probably less than that. This estimate is intended to cover all contingencies.

141. Seeing that the amount is so large that the line apparently is not going to be a profitable one, is there any means by which we could make a cheaper railway? I do not think there is. I do not see how you can make it of a much cheaper class than that estimated for. My estimate may possibly be high in some directions, and it may be low in others, but I am quite sure that the class of line for which I have made the estimate is the right one, and that it would not be desirable to cut out anything. I have proposed to make it as cheaply as circumstances will permit. Unfortunately the undulations in the country, and the amount of flood country that one has to pass through, and the crossings of the creeks and the Richmond River do not permit of a cheap line being made.

142. All these features prevent possibility of its being a cheap line or a surface line? Yes. It might be objected that the line proper should not include workshops, traffic offices, and wharfs, and that these things should either be found somewhere else or should be spread over the whole northern system. If you take out these items, and leave merely the Grafton station proper, I think you would cut out about £60,000, or say £55,000. Then again I put down an item for engineering and contingencies, and I hope that when we construct the line we shall not have to draw upon the contingencies. Engineering design and supervision must be paid for.

143. Then there is a possibility that the item of £63,352 put down for engineering and contingencies may not be absorbed? It may not be absorbed.

144. It may possibly be considerably reduced? Yes.

145.

- H. Deane. 22 Feb., 1900. 145. You may not want more than £40,000? I have always found it very unsafe to assume that the sum put down for contingencies will not be drawn upon, because we nearly always have to do it. You lay out a line with the best of intentions, and after the most careful thought, and study of the traffic requirements, assisted by the Railway Commissioners' officers, decide what is to be provided for; but no sooner do you begin to start the line than you find that something more is required. I think it is far better, therefore, to allow such items in the estimate to stand. That remark also applies to contingencies.
146. I suppose in a country such as that to be traversed here it is rather likely to occur than otherwise? I think it would.
147. Would this be a line of railway on which a train could be run at full speed? Yes.
148. No limitation to the rate of speed? No. I have put down 60lb. rails, and, with the close sleepers and the ballast, I think one will be able to run safely at that speed all locomotives but the heaviest. If I had to provide for the heaviest locomotives, I should say, put down a heavier class of rail. If we had a standard rail now of 70 lb. per yard. I should put in 70 lb. rails; but 70 lb. rails have not been used for some time, and our only standards at present are 60 lb. and 80 lb. rails.
149. The statement which the Under Secretary read, says that a large portion of the country to be traversed is alienated land. Can you state the distance of alienated land to be traversed? The length of alienated land traversed is 18 miles 55 chains; the length of roads traversed is 1 mile 10 chains, and the length of unalienated land traversed is 43 miles 10 chains. I have provided for good fences all the way along, because it is a cattle country and wire fences are not suitable.
150. The statement which the Under Secretary read refers to the work being carried out on the betterment principle. Seeing that such a large length of the line goes through Crown land, would not that very much reduce any return in that direction? I do not know that it would, because there is a very large amount of alienated land contiguous to the line. We go through a lot of reserves which are surrounded by private lands.
151. I suppose the land that is not alienated could be treated as a railway reserve, and be sold on special terms? If the selling would reduce the capital cost, that would be a very good thing.
152. Mr. Watson.] The last Committee that inquired into a proposal of which this line was a part drew attention to the fact that Mr. Lloyd, District Railway Surveyor in the Railway Construction Branch, had at first estimated the cost of the Grafton-Lismore line at £6,000, and then thought that it could be reduced to £5,000, although he admitted that that was exclusive of bridges.
153. Did you, after he gave that evidence, get Mr. Lloyd to give you any details of his estimate? I had some conversation with Mr. Lloyd about that. If he had been engineer-in-chief he would not have made that estimate; he did not know all the circumstances. You see, a field officer judges things partially only; he does not know all the items that have to be included. It is very probable that he would under-estimate a line, and he might be a very intelligent man and know something of the matter. You can do a good deal for £5,000. You can make a good line for £5,000, excluding bridges, stations, and a number of other things; but we have to include bridges and stations. I have to include all office and survey expenses; you must not forget those things. The man who volunteers the opinion that the line should be made for a certain sum forgets to include them.
154. Mr. Lloyd admitted in his examination that he had left out the bridges, and he seemed to take as a criterion the cost of a line between Cootamundra and Gundagai;—that would be no proper guide, I suppose, as to the cost of a line on the North Coast? No.
155. Notwithstanding your conversations with Mr. Lloyd on the subject and any information which he may have been able to afford you, you have no reason to think that it could be done for anything like what he said? No.*

FRIDAY, 23 FEBRUARY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
	JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane. 23 Feb., 1900. 156. Chairman.] I think you have one or two items to supply to the Committee? The price of steel rails, according to the recent tender, came out at about £7 10s. a ton, delivered in the stores at Eveleigh, so that that makes my estimate right. The extra length of deviation on these two lines—the blue and the red—at the Casino end is 2¼ miles, and the extra cost is £7,000.
157. Mr. McFarlane.] In your evidence yesterday you stated that the traffic would be considerably more by adopting the original scheme—that is, the westerly line? There is more settlement on the westerly line.
158. Do you think it will be more desirable, in the interests of the country, to carry out that scheme, notwithstanding the slightly-increased cost owing to the increased settlement and possible traffic on the line? Yes.
159. Has the estimate which has been made in connection with the construction of this line been based on actual survey? Yes.
160. When did this actual survey take place? Before the last inquiry—about 1891. A few small deviations have been proposed which would not materially alter the cost of the line. There is no necessity for a further revision of the survey, except, probably, with regard to these deviations.
161. In estimating the cost, the survey which you had to guide you was a survey which had been made nine or ten years ago? Yes. 162.

* NOTE (on revision):—If to Mr. Lloyd's estimate of £5,000 per mile be added the cost of bridging, station works, and supervision, an amount exceeding my estimate will be arrived at, viz., £8,636 per mile.

162. From your knowledge of the Department, do you think that the information which was supplied in that old survey was accurate enough to submit in figures the probable cost of the line now proposed? Yes; of course the prices and the requirements have been revised very recently. H. Deane:
23 Feb., 1900.
163. What do you mean by revision? I mean that the grading of the line has been looked into—the question of waterways and prices to be placed in the estimate for all classes of work has been looked into.
164. Have all these prices been reconsidered? They have all been reconsidered since that date.
165. A number of years ago there was a proposal made to construct a railway from Glen Innes to Grafton, and the expenditure in connection with that proposal was estimated to be about £2,000,000, but on recent surveys that estimate has been reduced to less than £500,000;—what I want to know is whether, in view of the survey which was made on that particular line nine or ten years ago, if an additional survey was to be made that amount could not to an equal extent be reduced? No. I will tell you the circumstances connected with the Glen Innes to Grafton railway. The first estimate was made in 1884.
166. I am speaking of the time when the first trial survey was made of a line between Grafton and Glen Innes, which from my personal knowledge was fully twenty-five years ago. I remember the time distinctly when it was submitted to Parliament, but I am speaking of the time when the first trial survey was made? The time when that estimate of £2,000,000 was submitted to Parliament was in 1884, the year in which a vote was taken for the Glen Innes-Grafton railway, and Mr. Whitten stated, if I remember aright, at the time that it was an estimate which was made without a complete survey—without sufficient data—and that he could not guarantee it. He therefore in no way backed up the estimate. After that data the survey which was called the permanent staking of the line was completed. Other surveys have been made, and that estimate, which was placed roughly at £2,000,000, was brought down to, I think, about £1,250,000.* That was for a line of ordinary construction. Now, some time ago there was a suggestion made by Mr. Thomas Kennedy, of my branch, to adopt another route, to run out near the Gibraltar Range to a point over the Manning River, to run down the declivity to the Manning River by means of some special arrangement, such as a rack railway, then to cross the river, and get into Grafton. He went over that line, and his report shows that he estimated that the line would cost under £500,000. That line is not a line of ordinary construction; it involves a portion of several miles of rack railway.
167. Will you explain what a rack railway is? A central rack is laid between the rails with teeth, and there is a special locomotive used, with a spur wheel underneath, which fits into this rack, and so, by the adhesion which is gained by means of this rack, pulls the train up the steep incline, whatever it may be, of 1 in 10, or 1 in 15. It is used for going up inclines and making use of the full power of the engine, without depending on the mere adhesion to the rails.
168. This rack minimises the cost of construction? Steeper grades are possible in certain places. That, you see, introduces a principle which has not been used in this Colony hitherto; it, of course, is perfectly practicable, but it makes a break in the railway system.
169. Has this rack principle been tried in any other extension in this Colony;—will this proposal of Mr. Kennedy's be an experiment of this rack principle? No, it would not be an experiment, because there are plenty of examples of the same system in different parts of the world. As regards this Colony it would be new.
170. Would not that be an experiment? No. I should not call it an experiment, because I am quite satisfied that it could be successfully carried out.
171. If it has not been carried out before in this Colony, would it not be practically an experiment here if tried? No; I do not agree with you. It would be a novelty; it is a practicable design.
172. Are you, as Engineer for Railway Construction, satisfied that in steep grades, on light lines, where there is not a very large amount of traffic, this system could be carried out successfully? Do you mean with a view to reducing the cost?
173. Yes? I believe it could in some circumstances, but the circumstances would have to be particularly fitted for it.
174. As far as Mr. Kennedy's report is concerned, would you agree to that suggestion? I believe it is quite applicable to that particular line.
175. In view of that, and of the estimate he made, this enormous estimate of about £2,000,000, which was made years ago, has been reduced to considerably under £500,000? Yes; but you are not estimating for the same thing. You are estimating for a substitute for the original proposal.
176. If that substitute will answer the requirements, would it not be taken for granted that that should be acceptable? Yes, it should; but, of course, that has still to be inquired into. First of all a survey has to be made.
177. I understand that a survey had been made? A survey has been made in part; but the plans are not ready, and then the advisability or not of adopting such a system has to be considered.
178. *Mr. Watson.*] How would the cost of the work compare;—it would not be increased by the central rail? Yes.
179. They have one in New Zealand, and the cost of working it is very expensive? Yes; the cost of working is very much greater.
180. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You have stated already that the Department have approved of the rack system being applicable to such lines of railway as are now surveyed between Glen Innes and Grafton;—you admit that it is suitable for that line? If the physical features are suitable.
181. You are well acquainted with the physical features? Yes.
182. With your knowledge of the physical features between Glen Innes and Grafton, do you think the rack system would be applicable to that part? I believe it would.
183. It would be a cheaper line to construct? Yes.
184. Would it make any material difference in the cost of construction? Yes; it would make a lot of difference.
185. About how much per mile? I do not think you could reckon it at per mile, as it shortens the line very considerably. On the whole estimate it might save about three-quarters of a million. 186.

* NOTE (on revision):—This amount was stated from memory, but the real amount of the estimate is, I find on looking it up, £1,600,000.

- H. Deane.
23 Feb., 1900.
186. On a railway, say 100 miles long, between Glen Innes and Grafton, you would save £750,000 in construction? Yes.
187. Could you give any idea of what it would save annually? No, I have not gone into the matter.
188. I should like to know very much the amount of the increased annual cost of maintaining a railway 100 miles long in such country as we have between those two points;—could you not give us roughly an estimate of the increased cost? No. At the present moment I could not give you any information which would be of any service. But a system of that kind is utterly inapplicable to the Grafton-Casino line.
189. I was just going to ask whether you do not think it possible, according to the physical conditions, that such another scheme would be possible? No.
190. For what reason? Because you have not the same circumstances to deal with.
191. In what way? What you have in the Glen Innes-Grafton line is a great drop in altitude. There is a great difference of level between Glen Innes and Grafton. If you drop down with suitable grades to work ordinary locomotives, you have to work round spurs, and down river and steep valleys all the way. That involves tunnels and bridges, and heavy cuttings, which are very costly, between Glen Innes and Grafton. But, if you can find any system like this rack railway by which you can drop down a slope—a comparatively even slope—rapidly, you may be able to save a lot of money. You may be able to run it at a high level along the top of a ridge which is part of the table-land at very little cost. It does not cost much, you understand, to run along the top of the table-land, but when you begin to descend, and work round the contours to come down into the valleys, you then introduce questions of serious cost. With this line of Mr. Kennedy's you run out on the top of this spur of the table-land at a comparatively low cost, and then you drop down and you put a large portion of your descent or ascent, as the case may be, into that short length of line, about 5 or 6 miles. You have a costly bit of line for 5 or 6 miles on the valley below, and then you go along the valley instead of contouring round as you do to get an ordinary locomotive over the country. Where the end points are very different in latitude you run out on the level on the top for a distance, and you have another piece a comparative level at the bottom, and you put a steep piece of expensive line in the middle which has to be worked by special appliances. That is the difference. In the Grafton-Casino line you have nothing of the sort.
192. Have you a good knowledge of the country between Grafton and Glen Innes? Yes; I have been over it.
193. Do you think that this rack system can be advantageously worked there? Yes.
194. You believe that this estimate which has been made by Mr. Kennedy is practicable, and that the line could be carried for something over this estimate? No; I will not go so far as to say that. I undertake no responsibility whatever for Mr. Kennedy's estimate. As soon as the quantities have been worked out—and we have the required levels in the office now; I think it is all complete—and as soon as I have an opportunity of going into the estimate myself, then I shall take the responsibility of it, but not until then.
195. You would not care at the present time to form an opinion? I can form an opinion. I am quite sure that there must necessarily be a very large saving, but I will not say how much.
196. You will not say, for instance, that Mr. Kennedy's estimate is either excessive or not sufficient? I am quite sure it is not excessive.
197. He is a very old officer in the Department, and from the position you occupy, would you not place some very large regard on any estimate which he made in this connection? Yes; but I do not consider him infallible. I appreciate Mr. Kennedy's services. I think he is an able officer, but, at the same time, I do not think I am called upon to in any way take the responsibility of his estimates.
198. You could not endorse his estimate without the actual details being given, and gone over in the usual official way, making a calculation of what each mile must cost? I must have all the details.
199. The first estimate did not purport to be an actual estimate;—although he confined himself to two or three different mile sections it was not an actual survey? No; he only looked at the country, and said he thought that a line might be made for a certain sum.
200. Would not that apply equally to the proposed line between Grafton and Casino? No, because you have no point where you have a considerable difference of elevation to treat.
201. That is all the better for the report? Not at all. The gain made by introducing the rack system is one due to the class of country you go through, to the difference of levels.
202. In the present estimate the grade is 1 in 50 going north, and 1 in 60 going south; that is not a steep grade? It is not very bad.
203. It is not considered a bad grade? It might be worse.
204. Could not the line be constructed at a much less cost than the proposed estimate? No.
205. Could not the proposed expenditure of £70,000 or £80,000 on wharfs and station at Grafton be dispensed with? In my evidence I explained what I thought about that.
206. The reduction of the estimate by that amount would mean that the line would cost about £1,000 less per mile for the whole distance between the two points? Yes.
207. That would be a considerable saving? Yes; only that it would have to be done at some other time. The expenditure would have to be incurred, but would not be charged to the particular line.
208. Some other time might come along when perhaps the railway would be more profitably worked? Yes; I have nothing to object to that.
209. In view of the small amount of revenue which the Railway Commissioners say will be taken in the event of that line being carried out, do you not think that that item is very greatly excessive? I think that sum might be left out of this estimate at present.
210. In view of the fact that it is so long since an actual survey has been made, and also in view of the fact that railways are being constructed now for much less than the cost estimated seven or eight years ago, would not that apply to this particular line? No.
211. Without wishing in any way to depreciate your estimate, has it not invariably resulted that estimates which have been made even five years before, have been very greatly minimised when tenders have been called, and that the work has been carried out at a much less cost? I do not think so. In some cases the estimates have been slightly exceeded; in other cases, where a saving has been made, it has not been a very large one—not sufficiently large to show that the estimates were wrong.
212. I am not wishing to show that at all; where an estimate has been made ten or fifteen years ago, and no fresh survey has been made in the interval, and tenders have been called for ten or fifteen years after the survey was made, and the estimate given, has it not been invariably the rule that the work has been carried

- carried out at a much less cost than the actual survey? Not by the survey. The original estimate may have been excessive, but I have pointed out that I have revised the whole question of estimates. H. Deane.
23 Feb., 1900.
213. When did that revision take place, for we see that the report was dated in December last? That was when it was finished.
214. In arriving at that estimate, was it based on the survey which took place ten years previously? Yes, under my direction; so that I perfectly understand what was done.
215. Ten years ago there was not the same amount of knowledge of the country between even Grafton and Casino as there is now? I do not think there is any increase in knowledge of that part of the country.
216. Considering that in ten years there has been such a material difference between the surveyors who have explored the line from Glen Innes to Grafton that we found this substantial decrease in the proposed expenditure, would not that also exist in the case of the line between Grafton and Casino? No; the cases are not parallel—the conditions are entirely different. I know of nothing that has occurred within the last eight years to show that the latter survey is not a right one; in fact, the ground has been gone over two or three times, and there is not the slightest doubt that in the main the survey is the right one. It may be possible here and there for a few chains, or for half a mile, to make a deviation which will save a little, or be better in other respects; but I am quite sure that no survey that could be made at present would so materially alter that line as to bring down the estimate, or alter the class of line, to make it much cheaper than what has been proposed.
217. Do you not think the circumstances generally have altered during that period; I am speaking now, not with regard to the difficulties of the country as to construction, but more particularly with regard to the class of country; in that period, as in every new country, when settlement takes place the people are the best judges of the quality of the land, and they only take up from the Government the best portions of land in the locality;—do you not think there will be a very material difference, looking at it from that aspect now and ten years ago? I do not think there has been such a large amount of settlement in that district. There has been a large amount of settlement between the Richmond and the Tweed, but I do not think there has been much settlement along the Grafton-Casino line.
218. Do you not think there has been a large amount of settlement about Myrtle Creek? There may have been, but as you see from the map there was a considerable amount of settlement there when the survey was made.
219. I am speaking of country which I know perfectly well; with regard to Myrtle Creek, are you acquainted with that particular locality? I passed through Myrtle Creek.
220. To any extent? I have driven through there.
221. Yes; but that is along the main road; there is a large area of rich agricultural land on that creek? I know there is dairying done.
222. There is also rich land along Sandy Creek? Yes.
223. And on Deep Creek and a number of other creeks? Yes.
224. All these localities are capable of carrying a large population? Yes.
225. Ten years ago these localities were only sparsely populated; as the dairy industry grew the country was being developed, and what was a sparsely populated district ten years ago, is, you might say, a densely populated one now? Yes; I think that is very likely in certain portions.
226. Would not that interfere to a very large extent with the estimate which the Railway Commissioners have made of the traffic on this proposed line? I do not know anything about the traffic estimates.
227. But would not that be probable? No doubt it would. That would bring increased traffic to the railway.
228. It appears that the Railway Commissioners have really not considered the amount of revenue to be derived from the district, but have only considered the estimate which was made a considerable time ago; that estimate, I think, would be materially altered in view of the developments which have taken place since then? I may point out that the Committee will have an opportunity of examining the Railway Commissioners' officers—Mr. Harper, for instance.
229. If it were merely a matter of connecting the most important part of the Clarence River district with the most important part of the Richmond River district, from your knowledge of the districts would you adopt the proposed scheme? Yes; I think it is the best practicable line.
230. I wish you distinctly to understand that I am not speaking of the line as a section of the North Coast railway, I am speaking now as if it was a proposal to connect the most important part of the Richmond River district with the most important part of the Clarence district, and if it was, would the proposed line be the one which you would suggest? Yes; I think the line would have to go round by the way which has been laid out.
231. Would not that be more expensive than any other proposal? I do not think so. I know of no other proposal which would be cheaper.
232. For instance, a line from Casino to Lawrence could be carried out at a much less cost than a line from Casino to Grafton? Yes, it could; but it would leave Grafton out.
233. I am speaking now of a line to connect the two districts, and not the two important centres;—a Casino-Lawrence line would be cheaper than a Casino-Grafton line? I think it would be, by a very large amount, cheaper.
234. Would not also the cost of a line from Woodburn to Chatsworth be even much less? Yes, probably there will be a difference of about 14 miles in starting from Lawrence instead of Grafton.
235. There will be a saving of 14 miles, and it is over comparatively speaking level country between Lawrence and Casino? It is slightly undulating country.
236. Equally as good as we leave between Casino and Grafton, and you would escape the flooded area near Grafton; but this line before the Committee is to be considered only as a part of a North Coast railway? Yes.
237. And I presume that this survey has been made between Grafton and Casino with a view to the line extending southward in the event of the North Coast railway being approved of? It has never been suggested that Grafton should be left out in any case.
238. Not in any case, and I am not suggesting that it should be left out in any case; I am looking to the fact that this portion between Casino and Grafton is to be a non-paying portion, according to the estimate which has been submitted here; even if it will not be a paying portion of this section, in view of future extension as part of the North Coast line, would it not be justifiable in the interests of the Colony to carry out a portion of the North Coast line? I think so; I think it would be a pity to go to Lawrence and make that the terminus when, at some future date, you must carry it on to Grafton. 239.

- H. Deane.
23 Feb., 1900.
239. That is exactly what I look upon as the crucial point; if it were merely a matter of connecting the two districts, another route might be adopted at a less cost, and perhaps in a more profitable way; but in view of its being a section of the North Coast railway, this, in your opinion, is the most practicable route and the best route in the interests of the Colony to adopt? Yes.
240. Supposing a line of railway were proposed between Lismore and Maclean or Lawrence, that might be more profitable and less expensive as regards the two districts;—but would it answer the purpose of being a portion of the North Coast line? I think you would find that it would be much more expensive. You would have a lot of water trouble to deal with.
241. Where? Between Lismore and Lawrence.
242. No, very little? I have not been through that district; but I have been talking to Mr. Hickson, who knows. You have all these rivers and creeks to deal with further east, where the country is flat and the water spreads out.
243. As regards Lawrence you will have high land, and it comes abruptly into the town? Yes; but Lawrence is not everything.
244. I do not wish to imply that; if it was only a question of connecting the two districts, you think that a better route might be adopted; but that, in view of a North Coast extension, the Grafton to Casino route would be the better route to adopt? I am sure that, in view of the North Coast extension, it is the best route.
245. There might be other parts of the Clarence River district and the Richmond River district which it might be desirable to connect, that is if we were only considering the local requirements of the two districts; but when we come to consider the line from a national standpoint, as a portion of the North Coast railway, this would not answer that purpose, and the proposed route from Grafton to Casino is the best available for a North Coast railway? I have no doubt on that score—that the Grafton-Casino line is the best line.
246. With regard to crossing the river at Grafton, it is proposed to have a railway station at Turf-street, in Grafton, almost on the bank of the river? Yes.
247. In view of the small traffic which the Railway Commissioners estimate to get between Grafton and Casino, will it be desirable to carry out this large expenditure of £70,000 or £80,000 on wharfs and a railway station at Grafton;—could not these works be postponed for a number of years to come, when the traffic will warrant the expenditure? I could not say how much would be necessary at the present time.
248. But is this amount necessary? At the present time I do not think it is.
249. Could it not well be postponed for four or five years, until the traffic warrants the carrying out of the work? I think the proper way would be to settle the question of the railway, leaving these items of expenditure out for the present.
250. I quite fall in with your views; but at the same time the Committee are in the unfortunate position that they are not able to decide that question? I think the Committee could recommend the leaving out of certain expenditure.
251. For wharf purposes? I consider that out of about £70,000 put down in the estimate, £15,000 may be considered as absolutely necessary, and the rest left out for a future date. I would recommend that, say, £55,000 be left out.
252. That saving of £55,000 would be almost £1,000 per mile? Nearly.
253. A question was asked you, yesterday, by Mr. Shepherd, with regard to railway sleepers; I happen to have some knowledge of this subject;—do you not think that in the locality where ironbark timber is plentiful railway sleepers could be got for less than the rate paid by the Commissioners,—3s. 3d. or 3s. 4d. per sleeper? We give the timber-getters and others every opportunity to tender.
254. But what are the conditions;—Mr. Shepherd broached the subject yesterday without going fully into it;—you stated yesterday that there is a large quantity of ironbark in this locality, which is a fact; I suppose it is about the best ironbark district in the Colony, and it is well adapted for getting railway sleepers at a cheap rate;—do you not think the conditions which the Commissioners have in regard to getting sleepers somewhat out of date—for they invariably insist on getting hewn timber? I do not think the Commissioners themselves impose any conditions as regards my work.
255. In regard to contracts let for railway sleepers, either for renewals or for originals, is it not sawn timber as a rule which has to be supplied? Ironbark is invariably hewn.
256. Why should it be invariably hewn? Well, the men prefer to do it.
257. That is another question. I maintain, as one having a perfect knowledge of that question, that the Commissioners could get this ironbark timber at a much less rate and in larger quantities, and at more profit to the timber-getters if they made another condition—that instead of having hewn timber all straight-grained trees would be allowed to be sawn? I think there is a little misunderstanding about this. For new lines it is I who have to determine the kind of material, and in my specifications I always say “sawn or hewn.” I have no objection to a sawn ironbark sleeper, but I never get it.
258. There is a great misunderstanding in that respect? Oh, but the timber-getters never do it.
259. The timber-getters and the saw-mill owners are quite separate people, and the saw-mill owners would have been glad to supply timber at a much less rate if they had known that sawn sleepers would be accepted by the Commissioners? I will take sawn ironbark if it is straight in the grain.
260. And the saw-mill owners could supply it at a cheaper rate? If you want to saw timber at a saw-mill you have to bring in the whole log, whereas the sleeper-getter cuts out what he wants and the carting is confined to that particular portion which is useful.
261. To that particular sleeper? He gets a lot of sleepers out of a good log.
262. Would not the saw-mill owner get far more? He might, but I suppose it has been thought out. I give every opportunity to saw-mill owners.
263. I am in communication with a number of the largest saw-mill owners in the Colony, and they are quite ignorant of the fact that the Railway Commissioners will accept sawn sleepers? I will accept them.
264. And I think it would be wise on the part of the Commissioners if they only accepted sound sleepers out of straight-grained trees? I am very much surprised to hear that the saw-mill proprietors would be willing to supply sawn sleepers. I know that they do not care about sawing iron-bark because it is very hard. The different timbers that you get in the mill are blue-gum, grey-gum, mahogany, black-butt, and tallow-wood. These timbers are very much easier to saw than iron-bark. My experience shows that the ironbark is used solely for piles and girders, which have not to be sawn—the timber is simply hewn, shaped in the bush and brought in—or if sleepers, split out of the log.

265. You will find that if the Commissioners invite tenders for railway sleepers out of straight-grained trees sawn they will get them at a much less rate than they get hewn sleepers, and they will be just as good? Well, I will take them. H. Deane.
23 Feb., 1900.
266. In view of the large amount of ironbark in the locality where it is proposed to build this railway—and I think you have a sufficient knowledge of the amount of ironbark there, and of its easy accessibility to the railway—I venture to say that these sleepers could be got at a very much less rate than the estimate made by the Commissioners? This is my estimate. I will take care to let them know. I am doubtful now as to whether they can be obtained any cheaper. I know that when we pay for sawn timber we pay a higher price per cubic foot than we do for sleepers.
267. With regard to crossing the river at Grafton, you stated yesterday that it would not interfere with navigation. Susan Island is the nearest point to the railway terminus at Turf-street? Yes.
268. Do you think it would be possible to construct a railway across there? Yes; but you could not start from the station ground in Grafton; you would have to start from a long way back in order to get sufficient height above the river to admit any small craft passing underneath.
269. On what side of the river would you have to start from a long way back? From the northern side.
270. But it is high land to the water's edge at Turf-street? Yes; it is high land—it is about 25 feet above high water.
271. It is above flood level;—would it not do to start the railway bridge from that level? I do not think it would.
272. Would you have to go considerably above that? I think you would.
273. For what reason? I do not know much about the navigation of the river above Grafton, but if there are any small craft at all, I suppose they would want a headway of 30 or 35 feet.
274. But all the small craft could go under that;—are you not aware of this fact, that lower down the river, where the existing bridge is, the people have been agitating for a number of years to have a high-level bridge there? I do not know what they have done.
275. They would be perfectly satisfied if they could get what they have been agitating for for years, a bridge to connect South Grafton and North Grafton, at flood level? Then it would want to have an opening.
276. There is no navigation above that point except by droghers and small launches? You would have to provide for that.
277. They could go under the bridge? I do not think so.
278. A drogher only has a funnel, and it is the largest steamer which goes above that point? I think you would have to give a headway of 30 or 35 feet. You would have to provide not merely for high water without floods, but also for the time when freshes are coming down.
279. There is no traffic when there is a flood in the river? No; but when a fresh is coming down.
280. A rise of 3 or 4 feet in Grafton means up the river at Copmanhurst a rise of 25 feet, so that there is no travelling done in that case? In a flood, there is a difference in level of 20 feet at Grafton.
281. When there is a rise of 80 feet or 90 feet at Copmanhurst, there is only a rise of 20 feet at Grafton? Yes.
282. You think that, notwithstanding the different surveys which have taken place and the various estimates which have been made of the cost of constructing this line, and notwithstanding the deviation which has been mentioned, the original survey marked on the map is the best practicable route and the best one to adopt in the interests of the country in view of its being a portion of the North Coast railway? I look upon this line as a section of the North Coast railway, and I believe the location of the line to be right in accordance with that view.
283. As a portion of a North Coast line, you think it is the best available route which has been submitted yet? I do.
284. *Dr. Garraun.*] Could you not fit in a Lismore-Lawrence line to a North Coast railway? I think you would have a great deal of trouble with water if you tried to cross the flooded country from Lismore.
285. That is a local difficulty;—I asked whether it would not fit in with a North Coast line? You could fit it in, but I do not think it would be as good a line.
286. *Chairman.*] Would not that make a difficulty between Lawrence and Grafton? This map shows Lawrence, and all this country is flooded. If you get into Lawrence, I think you would find some difficulty in getting out again without a lot of expense to keep clear of floods.
287. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Can you give us an idea of the difference in cost between a slow line—that is, a line on which the trains run at 10 miles an hour—and the ordinary line? I would not make any difference between a slow-going line and this line. It is a question really of climate and proper foundations. If this line were out in the west, where there is so little rain, I might cut out a good deal, but a substantial line must be built in a climate like this. Apart from that, whether you have slow-going trains or whether you have quick-going trains, you must have proper grades, and those grades, even 1 in 50 and 1 in 60, involve a great deal of cutting.
288. On very level country, such as we have in the west generally, the line could be cheapened a good deal? Yes; I have carried out a good number of very cheap lines in the west. That is very largely because the country is suitable and level. There is a good deal of difference in the estimates of the different lines on the western side of the "divide." Some of them have only cost about £2,000 a mile. The Parkes-Condobolin line cost barely £2,000 a mile. There are others which have cost £2,500 a mile and over on account of the country not being quite so favourable; but the same attention has been devoted to economical laying out, the same care has been devoted to the subject as where I have been able to make the lines cheaply.
289. *Mr. Watson.*] Is the country on the Tweed-Lismore line supplied with ironbark? There is a good deal of ironbark. There are some ironbark patches, I believe, down the river, not very far from Lismore, and there is ironbark near Mullumbimby, not very far from the Brunswick.
290. Did you follow your usual practice of advertising locally for sleepers for that line? No, we did not advertise for sleepers separately, they were included in the railway contract.
291. What was the estimate in the railway contract, or do you know what the contractors got them for? I will tell you presently when I get the contract schedule.
292. If the timber was fairly abundant there, it ought to be a guide as to what you can get sleepers for here? I do not think we have ever paid much less than 3s. 6d. or 3s. 8d.

- H. Deane.
28 Feb., 1900.
293. I think you have paid less than that inland for squared sleepers? I do not think we have, but I will see presently. We have paid less than that rate for the round topped sleepers.
294. *Dr. Garran.*] On this Grafton-Casino line, what proportion of the line is 1 in 50 grade, and what proportion 1 in 60 grade? I can tell you what lengths there are; there are not long stretches as a rule. There is a quarter of a mile of 1 in 60 grade at 9¼ miles; there is another of about the same length—about 25 chains—at 10½ miles; then there is a stretch of about three-quarters of a mile of 1 in 60 grade at 13 miles, that is going north. The longest stretch of 1 in 60 grade going north is nearly 2 miles; but still 1 in 50 going north is the ruling grade, so that it does not so much matter. In the other direction it is about half a mile,—just over the range.
295. The stiff grades are comparatively short as compared with the length of the line? Yes; and there are not very many of them.
296. Are they compensating grades to any extent as to curvature and so on? Yes.
297. *Mr. Watson.*] I take it that your answers to Mr. McFarlane's question about the propriety of using a rack rail on the Glen Innes-Grafton line would not apply to the Grafton-Casino line? No.
298. If you did apply the rack rail to the Grafton-Casino line,—that is, avoiding, perhaps, the necessity for the Richmond Range of curve,—would it make any material difference in the cost of construction? I do not suppose it would in this case, and it would be very awkward to run the traffic with it.
299. As a matter of fact, in other parts of the world the rack rail is only used in extremely difficult country? Yes.
300. Is it not also a fact that the cost of working that system is very excessive as compared with the ordinary system? Yes, it must be. I have not any particulars here, but before these lines go before the Committee, as I imagine they will go sooner or later, I intend, if possible, to get all information, so that the Committee can judge.
301. There is a rack railway, I understand, in Queensland and another in New Zealand? There is one in New Zealand, one in Queensland, and there is also one in Tasmania, on the west coast.
302. As a rule, railway companies and Governments in charge of railways prefer to spend a larger sum, and avoid what is necessarily, to some degree, a break? It is true that you would have the same gauge as the other parts of the line, and you would be able to get your trucks and carriages over it, but still it is a break in the sense that you have to change your locomotives, and you have to break up your trains so as to alter the loads.
303. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Could not a railway between Casino and Grafton be constructed at a much less rate than that which is now proposed? No.
304. Would not a light line answer the requirements of the Clarence district and the Richmond district? No, you could not make a lighter line with safety than the one I am proposing.
305. Are you aware that in Queensland they make light lines of narrow-gauge railway over difficult country? You would not save anything by doing so here.
306. I mean in construction and working expenses;—could not these districts be connected by rail at a much less rate than that now proposed, were it not for the fact that this line is considered to be a portion of the North Coast line? No, I do not agree with that at all.
307. Would not a narrow-gauge line suit here? You could use it.
308. Would not that be done at less cost? I do not think it would. I would sooner make a standard line with stiffer grades or sharper curves.
309. But as a matter of policy? No; the only advantage which the 3 feet 6 inch gauge line in Queensland has over ours is in being able to negotiate sharper curves. If we introduced that system we should have to get a lot of special rolling stock. Our rolling stock can go round these sharp curves with the exception of the locomotives.
310. Now, as a means of connecting these two districts, could not the narrow-gauge system be found to work suitably, and could not the line be built at a much less cost than that now proposed? I do not think so. You must remember that you have a piece of standard gauge from Lismore to The Tweed.
311. Apart from the construction of this line as part of the North Coast railway, if it were merely a matter of connecting these two districts, could not a cheaper and more profitable system of railway connection be carried out? No doubt you could cheapen the first construction by reducing the gauge; but you would not make a more profitable line.
312. It is pointed out that the smallness of the traffic between the two districts may not warrant the connection of them by rail; but the fact is lost sight of that this proposed line is only a portion of a North Coast railway scheme; I wish to bring out that in connecting the two districts it must not be lost sight of that this line is a part of that scheme, and that if it was merely a matter of connecting the two districts, it could be done at a much less cost? I do not think the reduction of cost would be worth anything.
313. Do you not think the cost of a narrow-gauge line would be much less? I do not think you would save very much.
314. Do you not think you would save in this way: that there are better places than Casino and Lismore and Grafton to connect for trade purposes? You have the same difficulty, the same ridges, the same waterways, to go over.
315. I do not think so; if you study the district you will find that you can get better parts of the Richmond River district to connect with better parts of the Clarence River district than Grafton, with a less number of creeks and rivers to cross than you get on the proposed line from Casino to Grafton? Of course, the Committee would be able to get information as to that; but I am informed that you would not.
316. From your reports you would not like to say to the contrary? From the information I have got outside the reports, I should say that the difficulties would be very much greater.
317. Do you not remember about some proposal being made for the construction of a railway from Lismore to Maclean, *via* Coraki, on the Richmond River? Yes.
318. If that line were carried out—well, I admit it would not answer the purpose of being part of a North Coast railway—from the district standpoint, would it not be more cheaply constructed than a railway from Lismore to Grafton? I have not data with me to judge.
319. You would have no creeks to cross, and you would only cross the Richmond River in one place, and go over, comparatively speaking, level country, and fairly good country the whole way? I should like to see a section and to see what I have to get before I give an estimate.
- 320.

320. With regard to that part of the line between Lismore and Murwillumbah, that project was put before the Committee as an expensive line;—are you aware of the engineering difficulties between Murwillumbah and Lismore? My officers laid out the line under my supervision.
321. It is very difficult country? It is very difficult.
322. Not very hard grades, but hard country? We did the very best, I believe that could be done. I do not believe anybody could do better.
323. It was a very expensive route? Yes; there were a lot of tunnels on the line.
324. Has the traffic on the line been equal to the estimate made by the Commissioners, or has it exceeded that estimate? I would like to refer to the Commissioners' report before I answered the question. I know that the traffic receipts have increased during the last few years. I think, as a rule, the Commissioners have been very careful in their estimates, and the lapse of a few years has shown that their traffic estimates have been exceeded.
325. Can you state, now, the price of the sleepers for the Lismore-Tweed line? Yes. There were four contracts let on that line. One consisted of Leicester Creek and Wilson's Creek bridges; Nos. 2, 3, and 4 were contracts for the construction of that line apart from those bridges. On No. 2 contract the prices for sleepers were 3s. 4d. and 3s. 6d. for ironbark. On No. 4 contract, that is, at the Murwillumbah end, the sleepers cost 3s. and 2s. 10d. Assuming that the ease of getting sleepers was about the same on both lines, I think you will see that my estimate is about right. I do not think that on an average you would get them for less than 3s. 3d.
326. If you make it generally known that the Railway Commissioners will accept sawn ironbark sleepers on the same conditions as hewn sleepers they will get them at a much less rate? I shall be very glad to try it.
327. You could even stipulate that only straight-grained timber should be sawn, so as to be a safeguard to them;—but the saw-mill proprietors understand that the Commissioners will not accept sawn timber at all? This is my specification—a specification which I had at this time, and the present one does not materially vary from it—"The sleepers shall be of iron-bark or approved hardwood, sawn or hewn from large trees." The contractor has every opportunity to supply sawn timber if he likes; but I do not think a half per cent. of the sleepers supplied have been sawn—only in fact where red gum from the rivers of the interior has been offered—and that timber you cannot split.
328. I have had inquiries from saw-mill proprietors, and made inquiry of the Railway Commissioners, as to whether sawn timber would be taken for railway sleepers, and they said, "No, it must be hewn;" so that the sawmill owners are under the impression that they cannot saw the timber? I should be very glad to take them, and I am quite sure that the Commissioners will not refuse to take over the line.

H. Deane.
23 Feb., 1900.

William Colquhoun, Acting Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

329. *Chairman.*] You are the Acting Secretary to the Railway Commissioners in the absence of Mr. McLachlan, who is absent on leave? Yes.
330. Have you brought a statement showing the expenditure and the earnings on the Lismore-Murwillumbah line since it was opened? Yes. It reads as follows:—

W.
Colquhoun.
23 Feb., 1900.

EXPENDITURE AND EARNINGS—Lismore to Murwillumbah.

Year ending 31st December.	Length.	Capital Cost.	Interest on Capital	Working Expenses.	Earnings.	Loss after providing for Working Expenses and Interest.
	m. chs.	£	£	£	£	£
1894*	63 57	842,735	11,040	2,630	1,975	11,695
1895	63 57	916,034	32,172	5,765	5,919	32,018
1896	63 57	918,512	32,187	5,179	9,214	28,152
1897	63 57	920,717	32,274	6,831	10,707	28,398
1898	63 57	920,919	32,254	7,369	11,515	28,138
1899	63 57	921,111	32,290	8,380	11,400	29,270
						157,671

* 1st section, Lismore to Mullumbimbah 58 57 opened 15th May, 1894.
2nd section, Mullumbimbah to Murwillumbah 25 opened 24th December, 1894.

331. Did the Railway Commissioners make an estimate of the traffic which they expected to get on this line? According to the printed report on the proposed railway from Grafton to the Tweed, the usual estimate of working expenses and traffic was not furnished.
332. Will you be good enough to read from the report the passage to which you refer? It is contained in the evidence which Mr. Barling, the late Under Secretary, read before the Committee on the 12th November, 1889, as follows:—

We have not given the usual statement of estimated working expenses and traffic, as the figures cannot be laid down with any degree of certainty. We, therefore, ask to be relieved from giving this information, as we feel the figures would be to a very great extent speculative, and the subject is one requiring to be dealt with on broad principles of State.

TUESDAY, 19 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVLEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Hugh McLauchlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

H.
McLauchlan.
19 June, 1900.

333. *Mr. McFarlane.*] The estimated cost of this proposed railway is £501,000? Yes.
334. Is that for a recent survey? We had the information from Mr. Deane recently. I could not say when he made the survey on which he founded the estimate.
335. If this estimate and survey were made some nine or ten years ago, do you think there would be a material difference in the estimate of a survey that might be brought up to date? I could not say. I should think not; but that would be purely a matter for Mr. Deane.
336. Has it not been the experience that the old surveys and estimates have been considerably reduced by up-to-date surveys and estimates? Yes, there has been that tendency; but I am not sure whether raising the minimum wage would not rather increase them again.
337. What about the cost of material? Material, too, has gone up. I should hardly think that you would find a reduction, wages and material having gone up.
338. Is it your opinion that there would be no material difference between the cost as estimated then and as estimated now? I am not in a position to express an opinion on that point; that is a matter for the engineers to deal with.
339. Do you think that the route selected for the proposed railway is the best route available? That is a matter which the Commissioners would not like to go into. They take the general direction of the line, leaving the Public Works Department to select the detailed route. The Commissioners take the two points and the general business in between.
340. Have you any estimate to furnish in connection with the traffic that there is likely to be in the event of this railway being constructed? The Commissioners estimate the interest and working expenses to amount to £21,429—that is, providing for a tri-weekly service—and the returns from the traffic would only amount to £4,844.
341. Showing a considerable loss? Showing a very heavy loss.
342. Can you give us any information as to how that estimate of the traffic has been arrived at? The estimate was arrived at from a report submitted by the Chief Traffic Manager. I can only give the information which he has supplied to us.
343. Do the Commissioners view the proposal to construct this line favourably? No, very unfavourably.
344. Can you give us the reasons for that? The principal reasons are that the line would result in an absolute loss to the country, and there is no prospect of development ahead to warrant them in recommending it, and, as a matter of fact, though I know the Grafton people are anxious to have it, at Casino the people are not anxious to have this railway. Therefore, it is not a line that is to meet a general public want, and it would be an unremunerative work.
345. Is it not considered by the Commissioners as part of the North Coast line? The North Coast line is so far ahead that the Commissioners would not recommend the construction of it at present. The North Coast line will have to start from its southern boundary, say, at Maitland; but the Public Works Committee has reported against even the first step being taken, and the Railway Commissioners think it would be unwise even to construct the section as part of a national line.
346. Is not that one of the principal arguments for constructing the proposed line between Lismore and the Tweed, that in the future it will be part of the North Coast line? That was one of the arguments that was raised; the country between Lismore and the Tweed is largely settled, and is also some of the best country in New South Wales. This line, as the Commissioners say, is not capable of producing any large development—it will go through comparatively poor country. If the Commissioners recommended the other line there were certain conditions under which they recommended it.
347. Nearly the whole of that line between Lismore and the Tweed passes through private property, does it not? A great deal of it; but there were some extensive reserves, I understand, in the vicinity which were Crown lands. The Commissioners pointed that out in their original report, I think, in the year 1889.
348. Could you give us the extent of those reserves? The Commissioners, in their report dated 3rd May, 1889, on the Grafton to Tweed line, say:—

Along the route of the railway, and within 10 miles on either side, there are Crown lands to the extent of 622,000 acres, at present valued at £761,000, and undoubtedly if the line is made those lands if sold judiciously would realise to the State quite if not more than double this amount.

That was one reason they had for recommending the construction of the line, that the cost would be really defrayed out of the enhanced value of Crown lands.

349. What result has followed the estimate of the area of Crown lands, and the price that it would realise? That I am not in a position to say. We were not credited with any of the enhanced value.
350. Could you give us the result of the construction of the Lismore to the Tweed railway with regard to traffic generally? The line is 63½ miles in length. The cost has been £921,000. The traffic on the line last year was equal to £11,400; expenses and interest came to £40,674, leaving a loss of £29,273. That was for the year ending 31st December, 1899.
351. Comparing that year with previous years, how does it stand;—does it show an increase in gains and decrease in losses? Compared with the previous year there is a slight increase in the loss, and to some extent that was due, I think, to people going in more largely for dairy-farming in that district, as against sugar-cane and maize growing. One thousand acres under crop would give a great deal more traffic than 1,000 acres producing only grass and butter.

352. I understand that the railway is used to a large extent for the conveyance of sugar-cane to different mills? Yes; and a great deal of dairying is going on in the district.
353. Have the Commissioners formed an opinion as to the likelihood of that railway in the near future being a paying line? It looks as if it would be a long time before it is a paying line.
354. It has been rather an expensive line to construct? It has.
355. As compared with the proposed line from Grafton to Casino, is there any difference in the cost of that line? Although the distances are nearly the same, there is yet £400,000 difference in the estimate of the cost of construction.
356. That country is less difficult for railway construction? The country is easier for railway construction, as there are not the same number of waterways and the same cuttings to be made.
357. Do you not think it would materially help to make the Lismore to the Tweed line a paying one if we made this extension further north? To the Queensland Border.
358. No, further southward? No; you would add to the working expenses, considered as a whole, and there is no interchange of business there which would warrant the construction of a railway.
359. Is it not probable that the Tweed will be connected with the Queensland railway system in the near future? That is a matter, of course, for the Government to determine. We notice that there is a proposal at the present time with that in view.
360. In the event of that being carried out there will only be a short mileage to connect the two systems;—would it not be advisable to connect the northern rivers with the Queensland system, in view of federation being close at hand, and the abolition of the Border duties, so that our farmers would have a market in Queensland? I do not think that that would happen. I do not believe there would be sufficient business to pay for this railway.
361. Would it materially assist? No; there would not be anything like sufficient business. Suppose you had a railway from Brisbane to Grafton, the people at Grafton would still deal with Sydney. The freights by sea to Sydney would be lower than by railway from Grafton to Brisbane, and Sydney is a larger centre.
362. I am speaking with regard to merchandise? If you take the products of the Clarence River you will find that Queensland is producing them even better than the Clarence does to-day.
363. The Queensland market often draws largely on the Sydney market for maize;—in view of that, would it not be cheaper for the growers in the Clarence district to send their produce direct to Queensland instead of sending it to Sydney to be afterwards taken to Queensland? I should not think that there would be a great deal of the Clarence River maize sent to Brisbane.
364. It has been so? Not to any very great extent, I should think. That would not be business that would pay a railway; it is low-freight goods.
365. Does that apply to agricultural produce generally? Yes.
366. Could you give us the nature of the report which has been furnished to the Railway Commissioners with regard to the class of land that there is between Grafton and Casino? The Commissioners themselves went over it, and they consider that the land is inferior. As a matter of fact, I should say that that is indicated by the large areas which have not yet been taken up.

H.
McLachlan.
19 June, 1900.

WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and further examined:—

367. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You stated yesterday that the Commissioners do not look upon the proposed railway from Grafton to Casino as likely to form a part of the North Coast railway? I think I stated that they see no necessity for the line to be made. As a matter of fact, for the coast line you would want to have the first step; but that first step, the proposed line from Manildra to Taree, has been reported against by the Works Committee. The feeling of the Commissioners is that at present there is no necessity for a North Coast railway.
368. In view of that fact, would not a light line of railway do to connect Grafton with Casino? You can hardly have a light line of railway in difficult country, such as that in which it is proposed to make this line. Light lines of railway are made through flat country. The engineers might be able to cheapen the line.
369. Could you give us any idea of the difference in the cost of a line such as that now proposed and a light line? Light lines of railway are made through flat country at a cost of about £2,000 a mile. This line is estimated to cost about £7,000 a mile. It is an engineering question.
370. Is it difficult country through which this line is proposed to be made? Yes. You cannot make cheap light lines in the Coast district as you can in the interior, where the country is practically a dead level.
371. What is the difference? The country in the Coast district is very undulating, and there are many watercourses to be crossed. The line from Jerilderie to Berrigan and that from Narrabri to Moree, for instance, are railways made in flat country.
372. Would the grades be difficult on the line between Grafton and Casino? They would be much more difficult than on the line from Narrabri to Moree. Of course, I am not competent to speak on the subject from an engineering point of view.
373. Can you tell us what section has been pointed out as the most expensive section of the proposed railway? No; that is a matter that we know nothing about. We take the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief, and adopt that without question.

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374. I notice that, as regards the proposed Railway from Grafton to Glen Innes, a very material reduction has been made in the estimate given as compared with the estimate of some years ago? Yes, I noticed that. Years ago the cost was put down at over £1,000,000.

375. Now it is under £500,000, is it not? That is a matter for the engineers.

376. You stated yesterday that the Commissioners went over the line from Grafton to Casino;—did they explore the country to any extent, or did they merely follow the road? They followed the route as far as possible, and made inquiries intermediately as to the character of the country.

377. Could you give us any information as to how the estimated increased traffic, owing to the construction of the line, was arrived at? No. We had a report on the subject from the Chief Traffic Manager, and I would prefer that he should answer you himself. Yesterday we were speaking about the maize traffic. I find that the production of maize in Queensland last year was 2,250,000 bushels. The quantity imported into Queensland from New South Wales was 239,000 bushels in addition to that. But, even assuming that the Clarence district produces one-sixth of the total maize crop of the Colony, and that one-third of that maize that was imported into Queensland went from the Clarence district, and that it all went over the proposed line, it would only mean about £500 worth of traffic. That would not have a great bearing on the revenue of the line, though we are giving credit almost for the maximum.

378. You said yesterday that the Richmond people were not favourable to the construction of this line? The people at Casino are not.

379. Can you explain why that is so? The Casino people do not see any great necessity for the railway from what we can gather. I think that if the people at one end are not in favour of the line, it does not seem that there is any great necessity for it.

380. Would that arise from the fact that there is a contention between the Clarence River people and the Richmond River people in regard to connection with the table-land? I believe that, to some extent, does govern the question; but it shows that there is no unanimous desire for the railway, even on the part of the people in the district; they do not ask for it.

381. Is the report of the Commissioners concerning the character of the country between Grafton and Casino favourable to the extent that population is likely to settle between the two towns? No, they do not think that any great development will follow, even if the railway is made.

382. How do they class the country? They class the country as partly good for pastoral occupation and partly for dairying purposes. But dairy produce does not give a great deal of business to a railway. 100 acres under grass would not give much more than a ton of traffic in a year; but the same area under crop would give a very much bigger return, probably thirty times that amount.

383. Would it not cause a considerable increase in the passenger traffic, and also in merchandise, supplies being brought from Sydney? It would, to some extent, but the governing factor would be the butter industry, and 100 acres of dairy land would not give more than a ton of butter per annum.

384. Has any estimate been made of the area of country which the proposed line would serve? I think the Traffic Manager has the figures worked out.

385. *Mr. Watson.*] According to the evidence of some local people, and of the District Surveyor, it would seem that the greater portion of the country through which the proposed line would run would be suitable for dairying? Part of it would be, no doubt.

386. In the event of settlement taking place to the extent which the District Surveyor considers possible—one family to every 500 or 600 acres—do you think that from such a population as that you would get enough traffic to justify the construction of the line? The Commissioners think not. The country cannot be so very good, because at present we learn from the reports that there are hardly 100 people between Grafton and Casino, and the country is not extensively used for cattle. If it were going to be good for dairying there would be natural grasses there at the present time. I recollect that a previous Committee reported that some of the runs on the Upper Clarence had been abandoned.

387. It would seem that where the land has been improved by ringbarking and clearing, very fair grass is the result? The land in some parts—about Myall and Stony Creeks, and similar places—may be suitable for closer settlement, but certainly there is not enough of it to warrant the large expenditure that would be involved in the making and working of a railway.

388. Assuming that it was found possible to construct, what would practically be a tramway, at a very much lower cost, with the object of serving the dairying interest, could you say what expenditure per mile the Commissioners would think justifiable, in view of the large extent of Crown land there? At the present time, according to all the figures that we have, there is no likelihood of the line paying working expenses, so any capital expenditure you might have would be dead loss to the country.

389. You could not say what is the basis on which the traffic has been calculated? We have reports on the subject, but I prefer that the Chief Traffic Manager should give you the information.

390. *Dr. Garran.*] I gather from what you said yesterday that your first experiment in making railways in dairying country on the Richmond River has not been profitable? No; it covered working expenses, but the interest on the large capital expended has not been met.

391. Is it improving year by year? As far as the railway is concerned, we have not had much improvement. If we compare the year 1898 with 1899, we got better results in 1898. That may be due to the production of sugar-cane and maize going out and the settlers being occupied with dairy farming.

392. As railway people in search of income, you would rather see the Richmond farmers occupied in producing sugar than in dairying? Yes.

393. It brings in more produce? It gives the railway more business.

394. The dairy produce is compressed into a small space? Yes; and, of course, settlement is not nearly as close as it would be if the farms were under cultivation, which would involve the employment of labour.

395. Supposing that, under federation, the competition in sugar production became so severe in Queensland that sugar went out of cultivation on the Richmond, you would lose the sugar-cane business? Yes; and value of the railway traffic would still further diminish.

396. Then you do not think there is much hope of any rapid improvement in the returns if the line is made? No.

397. Do you know whether the produce they bring down is shipped at the Tweed River or at Lismore? I could not say.

398. Of course, Lismore is an immensely better port? Yes.

399. You are sure of getting your stuff away from there? Yes.

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400. You are not so sure of getting it away from the Tweed? No; and a better class of boats run to the Richmond.
401. Do you know where the Brunswick stuff goes to? I think it goes from the Tweed. There is a good deal of butter dealt with at Byron Bay.
402. That line at present has a mixed traffic in cane and dairy produce;—you have no dairying railway? Not pure and simple; the Illawarra line is to a large extent a dairying line.
403. Yes, but you have several towns on that line? Yes; it is also a tourist line, and there is the mineral interest in the Illawarra district, which makes a big difference.
404. This line is put before us as a dairying line;—there will be a little timber and maize to be carried, and a few other things, but we are to look to dairying for the principal traffic? Yes.
405. Well, taking 15 miles at each side of the line, and allowing 500 acres for each family, we should not settle such a large area as to give a considerable passenger traffic? No; it would not give a great deal of railway business.
406. And it will be some years before the land is taken up? I should think so.
407. Naturally the better land of the Richmond River would be occupied first? Yes.
408. Then, as people cannot get first-class land, they will fall back on second-class land? Yes.]
409. The general rule in regard to settlement has been that it is of supreme importance to get good land if you can? Yes; the rush in that district has been for the best land.
410. The man who takes up bad land has a hard time? Yes.
411. The man who settled on good land can pull through, even in bad seasons? I think so.
412. There are good patches on the line, but as a whole it is only second-class land? That is the opinion of the Commissioners.
413. Even now it is not a cattle-fattening country? No; the country is not at present altogether taken up for pastoral purposes.
414. A good deal of the fertility of the Richmond district is due to the dykes of basalt in that country? The Richmond River land is rich volcanic soil.
415. There is no volcanic soil of any extent between Grafton and Casino? Not to my knowledge.
416. Do you see any chance of developing any trade besides a dairy trade there? There may be a limited traffic in timber, but the Commissioners do not expect that it will reach large proportions.
417. The line is advocated on two grounds—first to connect the two rivers, and, secondly, as a section of the North Coast railway? Yes.
418. Take the connection of the two rivers, is this the best way to do it? That is a matter which the Commissioners have not looked at.
419. If we look at it as a section of the North Coast railway, is it wise to begin at the Northern end instead of at the Southern end? In the opinion of the Commissioners, there is no necessity at present, whatever there may be in the future, for a North Coast railway, and that opinion has been endorsed by a previous Public Works Committee.
420. Suppose it was decided in a few years time to make a railway from Glen Innes to Grafton, or from the Mother-of-Ducks down through the Don Dorrigo country,—would the making of that line give a stimulus to produce for this line? It might to some extent; but I should not think it would be sufficient to warrant the construction of the railway.
421. If we had this line, then we should have railway communication from Sydney to both the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers? But that would be of no use when you have communication by sea. Nobody would send goods by railway from Sydney to the Clarence River. We could not possibly compete.
422. Though it may be very important to reconsider the question when that railway is made, it may be better to defer it until then? The thing is absolutely premature.
423. It is a drawback to you having the Lismore to the Tweed section detached from the railway system? Yes; you have to maintain an independent staff, and to keep separate rolling stock.
424. And there is no through traffic of any kind, but only purely local traffic? It is all local business—nothing else.
425. That line may be better when it gets connected with your general system? It is such a distance away from the railway point of view. It might be that the conditions in regard to the distribution of rolling stock and management would be better, but that is a very small percentage of the cost of a railway.
426. This Richmond district is one of the finest in the country? Yes.
427. And it has the best rainfall? Yes.
428. Is it not discouraging that a railway through such country as that cannot pay? Yes; it is a guide which should indicate that the line now proposed is not likely to pay.
429. We have railways in other parts of the country which have not the qualities of this line, and yet they are doing better;—what is there specially in this that makes it less favourable? It is simply because it drains no back country. It is point-to-point traffic. Take a line that does pay—that from Narrabri to Moree; that drains the traffic of thousands of miles. In this case you simply do a local business.
430. Will not this line drain a territory 15 miles on either side of the line? It may do that; but it is very limited.
431. Has the land within reach of the line been all taken up? One of the Chief Traffic Manager's officers, in a report which he wrote six months ago on the subject, says:
- The country to be served would scarcely be sought after until the present large areas of excellent land on the Upper Richmond have been brought into profitable use. On the Upper Richmond alone there are about 180,000 acres of highly-improved freehold land on both sides of the river in the hands of six stations, and in this area there are but ten selectors, out of which number only four have any land on the river frontage. Then around Lismore, and within the influence of the existing line, chiefly at Bangalow, there is also a large tract of excellent country idle, and 9 miles of the best land between Lismore and Casino is in one holding. In the event of the large area being subdivided, it is a matter for consideration as to whether the Crown land (unimproved) between Grafton and Casino would be disposed of as readily as is represented would be the case.
432. Then up to the present time that railway has not succeeded in breaking up the large estates? No.
433. Nor in causing them to be worked on the halves system? No.
434. Then there is really a very large area of first-class land which awaits cultivation, the produce of which would come on to the railway? Yes; convenient to the existing line.
435. That traffic will benefit the line? Yes; still we have great leeway to make up.

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436. Still, not half the land that could feed that line is at present used? No; the present traffic is only equal to £11,000 a year on the existing line.
437. These dairying settlers do not travel often? No. Of course, travelling is always regulated by facilities and location. People living close to town will travel much more frequently than people in the country distant from a centre.
438. Different classes of settlement yield different classes of traffic? Yes; miners travel more than farmers do on railways.
439. Then, even assuming that all the available lands, the produce of which could be sent to this railway between Lismore and the Tweed, were occupied productively, you still do not think that the line would pay? Not unless there were close settlement; but I do not see any prospect of its being occupied closely enough to make the line pay.
440. Then, if that will not pay, what chance would a line between Grafton and Casino have? There is no prospect whatever of it paying.
441. *Mr. Watson.*] Of course the line from Lismore to the Tweed was constructed through land held by private individuals? There was a large area of Government land in the vicinity of the railway. There are some big Government reserves.
442. *Dr. Garran.*] Had the private land which was bought there to be paid for very extravagantly? I could not say from memory.
443. *Mr. Watson.*] On the line under consideration there is nearly a third of 1,000,000 acres of Crown land within 10 miles of the route? Yes.
444. *Dr. Garran.*] The surveyor values the average of this land between Grafton and Casino at 15s. an acre, and he says that if a railway were made it would be worth 10s. an acre more? Yes.
445. If the Commissioners could get that 10s. an acre, would that lighten their burden? Even if they did, the loss is so great that it would not be sufficient.
446. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Would the opening of this line in any way affect the line from Lismore to Murwillumbah? It might throw a little more business on to that line. Mr. McFarlane thinks that a certain quantity of maize would go from Grafton to Brisbane, and, if so, it would pass over the Lismore to Murwillumbah section; still I do not think there would be a great deal of business.
447. I see that there has been a very heavy loss on that line? Yes.
448. There has been an increase in the working expenses every year;—can you account for that? I do not think that the increase in the working expenses has been anything out of reason. The line is an expensive one to maintain. It is in soft country, which is subject to a heavy rainfall. The bridges require painting, and it is country that would necessitate a good deal of attention. Vegetation is very rank, the soil being rich, and the line requires a lot of clearing. That has been the causes of the extra expenditure.
449. I see that during the six years that the line has been working the expenditure has been increasing; the expenditure for 1894 was £2,620, but in 1899 it rose to £3,380? Some of those figures refer to the line before it was opened throughout.
450. I am taking the return which was furnished here in February? They do not deal with like circumstances.
451. They do not show the real facts of the case? No.
452. I suppose you have never been over the route of this proposed line? I know the rivers very well, but I have not been over the country.
453. I suppose the country is very rough, as the estimated cost of the line is £7,559 a mile? Yes; the cost of construction is comparatively heavy, because that country is undulating, and it is broken by watercourses.
454. In country like that it is impossible to make a cheap railway? Quite.
455. *Chairman.*] This line would not obtain any traffic from one terminal point to the other? We think not. Sydney is the big market for both rivers, and the freights from both places are practically the same.
456. And are not their conditions pretty well the same as regards fertility and production? Very much the same.
457. It is not like a line going from one country with one sort of climate and productions, and one going from a district with a different climate and different products? No.
458. Even taking the estimate of those witnesses who are in favour of the construction of the line, namely, that something like 640 acres per family would be sufficient, you could only settle within 15 miles of the proposed line 2,000 families; and if the whole river were settled, would that 2,000 families, under the conditions that would prevail there, produce enough traffic to lessen the difference between the annual cost and the annual revenue? Of course it would help the line a little; but the traffic would certainly not be sufficient to make it pay. You have one of the best examples in the Illawarra district. There you have a considerable population, but only a local business. The railway does not drain a big area of country, and on that line we lose many thousands of pounds a year; yet that district is far better developed, it has greater production, and a larger population than this line will have for many years to come.
459. Have you ever made any calculation as to the cost per family of railway facilities, with a view of finding some average at which a line would pay? No; because the circumstances differ in every case. There is the distance produce has to be sent to reach the terminal point, and the distance between your principal centres. You could not go on any hard-and-fast-rule.
460. Is there any great area to the south of Grafton that would be drained by the line? The river would act as a barrier to the south. Below Grafton the river has excellent ports.
461. So that each end the railway is practically shut out from draining any large area of country? Yes; that is really one of its limitations in regard to its being a payable line.
462. Do you think we should be justified in taking the experience of the Lismore to the Tweed line as a guide to what would happen in this case? It would be a guide; and you have this further consideration—that it passes through better country, with a larger population.
463. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand it has been decided to extend the railway south from Lismore to Casino? That is not a matter that the Commissioners are aware of. It would have to come before Parliament.

464. It has been practically recommended? It has not been finally decided upon as far as we know.

465. How would the country compare between Lismore and Casino with that between Grafton and Casino? We are advised that the country between Lismore and Casino is a far better class of country, carrying a larger population and more capable of development, and that it would give a good deal of traffic. A great deal of dairying is going on in that district.

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20 June, 1900.

466. Have you any idea as to what would be the cost per mile? I believe the estimated cost of the line from Casino to Lismore was £123,000 for 18 miles.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

467. *Chairman.*] Have you a statement of the probable traffic on this proposed line of railway? Yes; I will read it:—

J. Harper.
20 June, 1900.

PROPOSED RAILWAY, GRAFTON TO LISMORE, 80 MILES.

I beg to report having visited Grafton, Casino, and Lismore for the purpose of estimating the probable traffic to be carried by this proposed railway, which has been the subject of inquiry on three different occasions, the first section, viz., Lismore to Casino (18 miles) having been recommended by the Public Works Committee for construction as far back as September, 1892.

As you are aware, the country to be served by this project between Grafton to Casino is much inferior to that around Casino and between there and Lismore, yet it must be admitted that there is a good area of land suitable for dairying but only a small area for growing maize, &c., at intervals along the route. No increase in the settlement has, however, taken place between Grafton and Casino since this line was last reported upon in December, 1897, and the existing intermediate population does not exceed 100. Dairying on a very limited scale has been carried on by a few old settlers at Myrtle Creek (40 miles north of Grafton, and 20 miles south of Casino) during the last two years, and this is the only new feature of development worth recording between Grafton and Casino, 62 miles. This section of the line is a complete blank so far as intermediate traffic is concerned, and, as there is no exchange of products between the Richmond and Clarence Rivers, there can be no through goods or stock traffic from Casino (on the Richmond) to Grafton (on the Clarence) or *vice-versa*. Under these circumstances it is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy what the earnings of the proposed line would be for the first 62 miles—i.e., from Grafton to Casino—especially as the country to be served would scarcely be sought after until the present large areas of excellent land on the Upper Richmond and around Lismore have been brought into profitable use. On the Upper Richmond alone there are about 180,000 acres of highly improved freehold land on both sides of the river in the hands of six stations, and in this area there are but ten selectors, out of which number only four have any land on the river frontage. Then, around Lismore, and within the influence of the existing line, chiefly at Bangalow, there is also a large tract of excellent country idle, and 9 miles of the best land between Lismore and Casino is in one holding. In the event of these large areas being subdivided, it is a matter for consideration as to whether the Crown land (unimproved), between Grafton and Casino would be disposed of as readily as is represented would be the case with railway communication.

As regards the section Casino to Lismore, it may be stated that the line would practically only serve Casino township and the country to the north, there being little or no intermediate settlement to benefit. The present method of obtaining traffic for Casino and the Upper Richmond district is by ocean-going steamer to Coraki (21 miles from Casino), and thence by a drogher to a point within 3½ miles of the township, necessitating a road cartage costing 7s. 6d. per ton. Four years ago the road cartage did not exceed 1½ mile, for which a charge of 6s. per ton was made, but the distance has since been increased by 2 miles owing to the river silting up. Perishable traffic from Casino is conveyed to Lismore by road, 19 miles.

The charge for landing goods from Sydney at the point of delivery for Casino is the same as to Lismore; therefore, for estimating purposes, it has to be borne in mind that the present high rate of road carriage for 3½ miles will, in competition with a railway, be reduced to such an extent as to make it profitable to continue to receive inwards traffic of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes, *via* Coraki, in preference to rail from Lismore to Casino, notwithstanding the representations which have been made to the contrary by the Casino people, who look upon the present means of transit as uncertain and very unsatisfactory. The same number of handlings would be involved by either route, and a fair comparison of the cost would be as under:—

	1st class. s. d.	2nd class. s. d.	3rd class. s. d.
Lismore to Casino, by rail	7 7	8 11	11 4
Cost of handling traffic at both ends	2 6	2 6	2 6
Total cost <i>via</i> rail	10 1	11 5	13 10
Present road rate, 3½ miles	7 6	7 6	7 6
Probable road rate	5 0	5 0	5 0

There is, however, a want of proper communication between the storckeeper and the point where the traffic is now landed (which difficulty might probably be overcome by the introduction of telephones), and necessarily some inconvenience is caused in not knowing when to expect the boats in order to properly arrange for the cartage of the goods to destination. It is also represented that in consequence of the erratic arrivals of the ocean boats an accumulation of supplies is landed on one day, involving the employment of extra carts to bring the traffic to the stores on the same day as it is discharged from the drogher,—the accommodation at the landing-wharf being inadequate to permit of storage. It was also argued that with a railway at Casino, there would be no necessity to continue the dredging work now being carried on by the Government to keep the river navigable for the droghers from Coraki, and that it would be less expensive for the Steamship Company to land the Casino traffic at Lismore, instead of by drogher from Coraki. The fact, however, remains that settlers along the river would still have to be served, but fewer boats would of course be required. As to the expense of employing the droghers, it might be considered advisable to sound the Steamship Company's people in Sydney on the subject, as this has some bearing on the question.

It was further pointed out that the teams from Drake and Tenterfield obtain delivery of their goods at Lismore, in preference to the Casino wharf, although the latter is 15 miles nearer. The chief cause of this is the steep grade down the river-bank to the wharf—it being unsuitable for large teams, but quite safe for carts.

Estimate for traffic from Casino to Lismore, 18 miles.

Having fully considered the matter, I am of opinion that the following estimate is a fair one for the above section. The figures on the left show the extent of existing traffic as near as it is possible to estimate, and the figures on the right the estimate allowed for the line.

Existing Traffic.	Tons	Tons.	Estimate allowed for Line.
General goods	3,000	1,000 @ 4s. 1,000 @ 9s.	£200 450
Dairy produce	200	400 @ 3s. 6d.	£650 70
Maize, &c.	2,000	2,000 @ 2s.	200
Timber	5,000	2,000 @ 2s. 6d.	250
Figs (trucks)	75	150 @ 15s.	113
Tons.....	10,200	6,400	
Trucks.....	75	150	£1,253
Goods, stock, &c.			£1,283
Passengers			450
Other coaching			50
Mails			216
			£1,999

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It will be observed that I have allowed for double the existing traffic in dairy produce and pigs, whilst as regards the other lines of traffic I have made a liberal allowance, considering the nature of the competition. Agricultural produce for export will eventually be largely superseded by dairying, and a large quantity of the maize, hay, &c., now grown is for cows, pigs, &c., both for summer and winter use. In respect to timber, it is doubtful whether we would carry two-fifths of the present traffic, because of the cheap and easy means of transit by water to Coraki, as many as 150 large logs having been rafted down the river at one time by the owner of the material, and the appliances for lifting the logs from the water to the ocean-going boats, at Coraki, are said to be satisfactory. The rate from Coraki to Sydney is the same as from Lismore.

It is estimated that sixty teams are drawing timber from 7 to 50 miles to Casino, the bulk being obtained about 21 miles out.

Passenger traffic. There is, approximately, 4,500 people in Casino and district, and I estimate that about two-thirds will make one trip per year each at 3s.

Section, Casino to Grafton 62 miles.

I am at a loss to find a basis for preparing an estimate for this section, but assuming we doubled the Lismore-Casino estimate of £1,783 for goods and coaching (not mails) the total for the above section would be £3,566 for goods and coaching, which, if anything, is excessive. Although the through distance from Lismore to Grafton is 80 miles, we could not rely upon carrying any goods or stock traffic a further distance than 40 miles, midway, because the facilities for dealing with the traffic are the same at Lismore as at Grafton, and both ports would be used; hence my suggesting that the estimate for the section, Lismore to Casino (18 miles), be doubled to provide for traffic on the adjoining section to Grafton being carried about an average distance of 40 miles. On this basis, the two estimates would be as follows:—

	Miles.	Goods.	Passengers, &c.	Mails.	Total.
Lismore to Casino	18	£1,283	£500	£216	£1,999
Casino to Grafton	62	2,566	1,000	744	4,301
		£3,849	£1,500	£960	£6,309

I have, however, further increased the Casino-Grafton estimate by about 10 per cent.

Recent Developments.

The dairying industry has assumed large proportions on the Tweed and Richmond Rivers (maize and sugar-cane receded), and from information supplied me by the police I find that the production of butter increased from 1,500 tons in 1897-98 to 2,500 tons in 1898-99. This quantity is valued at £203,000, and it is estimated that for the year ending July next the value will be at least £250,000, which, under ordinary circumstances, would represent the value of 25,000 bales of wool.

In that portion of the Casino district which would be served by the proposed line, dairying only fairly started about two years ago, and 200 tons of butter are now produced yearly. In the first place a large quantity of the cream has to be carted a distance of 20 miles from Kyogle to the butter factory at Casino, which at contract price costs 20s. per ton, and the butter has to be taken by road to Lismore, 19 miles, for freezing purposes and export. This costs a further 17s. 6d. per ton. Allowing 2 lb. of cream to make 1 lb. of butter, the total cost of road transit from creamery in Casino district to Lismore (39 miles), would be £2 17s. 6d. per ton for butter as against a market value of £80 per ton average. A fast coach service is employed, and the cream and butter arrive in good condition. In that portion of the Lismore district not served by the proposed line the most distant road-cartage for cream is 15 miles before reaching the butter factory established at Lismore, whilst, as already stated, in the Casino district 39 miles have to be traversed to reach the export point, Lismore. There are 1,326 registered dairies, forty-seven creameries, and eight butter factories on the Tweed and the Richmond.

Probable Development.

It is estimated that a family of five persons would produce about 2½ tons of butter per annum from 200 acres of land. This will serve to indicate what extra traffic would result from increased dairying business. Off the same area of land we would get at least 70 tons of agricultural produce for transit by rail. The absence of rail communication between Casino and Lismore does not retard progress so far as dairying is concerned, and I feel satisfied that there will be a large development in this industry without a railway. The present rates and method of transit are by no means prohibitory to the production of butter, and the Casino district, although not served by the existing Lismore-Tweed line, has indirectly benefited by its construction inasmuch as it developed the dairying business in the Tweed and Lismore districts, and as a consequence sufficient business resulted to induce companies to open up factories at Casino and elsewhere for the treatment of cream.

468. You look upon this line as one which it can only be hoped will become reasonably successful, if it ever can be that, by reason of greatly increased settlement along the route? Yes.

469. There is nothing in the present character of the settlement to justify such a large expenditure? No.

470. Do you think it would be reasonable to hope that continuous close settlement along the line would make the railway pay? I do not think that most of that country is capable of close settlement; it is rather second-rate dairying country. Compared with the land on some of the more northerly rivers, it is only third or fourth-rate country.

471. You do not expect to get any other than dairying traffic? No, not much else; there would be some timber, but a great deal of the timber along the line would not be carried to Grafton or Lismore; it would go down the river.

472. The first 20 miles of the railway from Grafton, on account of its proximity to the river, would be practically unproductive? Yes, as regards traffic.

473. Is Grafton the centre of a circle from which any large amount of traffic might be expected to the railway south or west of the town? I cannot conceive of it going north of what, after all, represents their principal market. I cannot conceive that any traffic would go from Grafton along that line to Casino or Lismore.

474. Do you think the producers in that district would either send their produce to Grafton or down the river to Sydney, or some other market? Yes.

475. There is no likelihood of the people sending their products from Grafton to Casino? No.

476. Do the same conditions hold in the case of Casino as in that of the other terminus? No. Ten or 15 tons of butter a week are sent from Casino to Grafton. No doubt there is a difficulty in connection with the south arm of the river at Casino. I do not know whether that can be overcome. Casino has important trade relations with Lismore.

477. They are not likely to establish one with Grafton? No; at all events they said definitely enough when I was there that they would not, and I cannot conceive that they would, that is to say that they would send their produce 62 miles instead of 18 miles to the port of shipment.

478. It is an important fact that the two terminal points are in districts from which no traffic can be drawn? I do not know of any traffic that they could interchange between the two points. There may be some passenger traffic that I have indicated in the estimate, but it would be of a precarious character.

479. Dr. Garran.] This proposed line joins two river ports? Yes.

480. Casino at one end and Grafton the other? Yes.

481. Casino is such an inferior port to Lismore that Lismore will be the port? Yes, a great deal of the traffic will always go to Lismore.

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482. It would be absurd to make this line, and not to make the Casino to Lismore section? Decidedly.
483. If we consider this as made, we must consider the other as made too? Yes, the Casino to Lismore extension.
484. Practically we may wipe out Casino as a port, and the ports would be Grafton and Lismore? Yes.
485. And the distance between them would be, what? Eighty miles.
486. Then we have to consider the traffic on this 80 miles that would pay? Yes. I have endeavoured to give an estimate, but I have also pointed out the difficulty of giving an estimate where no traffic exists to-day. You can probably give an estimate of the traffic between Casino and the district towards Lismore. It is a settled district with a population of 4,500; but the other district has only a population of about 100.
487. Is the freight from Lismore to Sydney as low as that from Grafton to Sydney? I do not think there is any difference.
488. Then we might take midway, that is 40 miles as the dividing point of the trade? Yes.
489. So that everything to the south of that 40 miles intersection would go to Grafton, and everything to the north would go to Lismore? Yes.
490. So you would not have more than 40 miles freightage? No.
491. There would be an average of 20 miles for each section of the line? Yes. Between Casino and Lismore, I think, it would carry the traffic incidental to the district, and produce larger settlement and larger development there.
492. Is the good land on the Richmond sufficiently taken up to induce dairymen to go on the land north of Grafton? I consider that is so. There is a very large proportion of freehold land that has not been taken up which is far better than any between Grafton and Casino.
493. It is admitted that the Richmond district is as fine a dairying district as any in the Colony? Yes.
494. People will not give that the go-by to go to land south of it? No.
495. It appears that the principal difficulty in the way of getting the land there is that it is so largely held by speculative holders? I would not say by speculative holders. They are carrying stock on their land—some of them very good stock.
496. Does it pay as well to carry stock as to carry on dairying? I should think not.
497. Have you any notion what the land is worth to the other for carrying stock? No; circumstances vary very much there.
498. If it be worth more to use the land for dairying purposes, will not self-interest lead them to do it? Manifestly it will.
499. Then the return from the railway in years to come ought to be better than they are now? That is where the land is better, in the immediate vicinity of Casino; but there is very little land of the same quality as that between Casino and Grafton.
500. The Lismore-Murwillumbah line that you are working now is a line connecting two river points? Yes.
501. Do you find about half-way that the traffic is divided, some going south and some going north? The bulk of the traffic comes to Lismore. Beyond Byron Bay there has not been very much development as far as dairying is concerned.
502. Then your principal trade lies between Byron Bay and Lismore? Yes.
503. That line is only about 30 miles in length? It is about 30 miles from Byron Bay to Lismore. The railway is about 60 miles in length.
504. Are the roads good there? It all depends on the condition of the season. At a time like this they would not be good.
505. Then people 15 miles from Byron Bay could not send their butter in in wet weather? No.
506. How far does the dairying trade go from Byron Bay inland? About 20 miles.
507. Did it go that distance before the railway was made? Before the railway was made there were no factories there; the industry was of a most primitive character.
508. It is quite a new business? Yes.
509. Then you are not able to say exactly how far the railway has led to its development? I should say unhesitatingly that it is entirely due to the railway.
510. Though we are losing so much money on that railway, it has stimulated the occupation of the district? Yes.
511. That is the only consolation we have? Yes.
512. Do you think the same effect would follow as regards this proposed railway between Casino and Grafton? No.
513. Because of the inferiority of the land on this line? Yes.
514. If a line from Lismore to the Tweed running through the very best land and the best watered district in the Colony loses £29,000 a year, what will happen as regards a line between Casino and Grafton through worse territory? It must inevitably mean greater loss. It is practically the same distance, and will be practically the same cost per mile.
515. You do not see any ray of hope for this line? I do not.
516. Is a line wanted between Richmond and the Clarence to connect the two rivers? I do not think so; I cannot see where it would come in, or what interest would be served. The Casino people say they do not want it. The Grafton people want it, but for what purpose I cannot imagine. There is no doubt that some land would probably be thrown open in the neighbourhood, but it is an open question whether a sufficient quantity would be benefited by it, and sufficient revenue obtained to warrant its construction.
517. Looked at as a section of the North Coast railway, is it better to begin at the north end or the south end? I should unhesitatingly say that it would be better to commence at the other end by a connection with the Northern line at Maitland or thereabouts.
518. To go from Maitland to the Manning first? Yes; assuming that it was desirable to make a railway at all.
519. You cannot find anything encouraging to say about this line? No; I cannot.
520. You are not prejudiced against it? Absolutely not.
521. You look at it from the point of view of a traffic manager? Yes.
522. *Mr. Watson.* We have had it in evidence from local residents, and from the District Surveyor that there was a considerable area of Crown land to the extent of between 300,000 and 400,000 acres within reasonable distance of this projected line? It would be useful to have a map showing its location.

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523. Mr. Ebsworth, the District Surveyor, produced a map showing that that area of Crown lands existed within what he thought would be the influence of the railway? Yes, we discussed that, and I showed him the improbability of a large portion of it being influenced by the railway.

524. At any rate, it is pretty safe to say that there is a very large area of Crown land? Yes; a very great deal of it is not much good.

525. It is asserted that about 600 acres would be sufficient to maintain a family. Assuming that for 15 miles on each side of the line the land was settled to that extent—say, for 50 miles of the 64 miles of railway—that would mean about 1,500 families settled there;—should we be likely to get sufficient traffic from that number of families to justify the making of the line? Certainly not.

526. In the evidence of Mr. Varley, who is president of the Dairymen's Association at Grafton, there are estimates given showing the amount of traffic that he anticipates from the settlement of less than 500 families, and his total estimate works out at nearly £16,000 a year? Is he going to get that out of butter? Assuming that 500 families each produced a ton of butter per annum, that would give 500 tons.

527. He speaks of cream going to the factories? That would make the traffic less.

528. Is there not more bulk in cream than in butter? I do not know how many tons of butter they expect to produce. I notice that that gentleman's estimate exceeds very largely all that we are earning in the 63 miles of settled country between Murwillumbah and Lismore, with a population of between 20,000 and 30,000. That is a complete answer at once.

529. There is one item which seems a very large one—that is the estimate that there will be 9,470 adult fares, giving a total revenue of £6,000? I will give an idea of what the total earnings have been on the Lismore to the Tweed line. On the Lismore line we carried last year 28,178 passengers, and the total earnings from passenger traffic amounted to £5,420. That includes the whole of that district, which is immeasurably richer than the one in which the proposed line is to be made, and carries a population of between 20,000 and 30,000, as against 100 on the other line. The returns from goods and stock traffic amount to £5,978, giving a total revenue on that line of £11,398. Mr. Varley tells us that we are going to make £4,000 or £5,000 more on this line than we are making on the Lismore line. That answers itself.

530. What traffic, leaving dairy produce out of the question, do you think it would be fair to anticipate in the way of goods from Grafton or from Lismore; supplies for the people settled on the river—1,000 families? It would depend on where they were settled.

531. Take an average of 20 miles? Say 5,000 people. I should say that under favourable circumstances we might get a revenue of between £2,000 and £3,000 a year.

532. Have you any data on which you can form a rough opinion as to the traffic which the dairy trades would give you under similar circumstances? Nothing beyond the valuable evidence that we have of the traffic on an existing line over a similar distance, in infinitely better and more thickly populated country.

533. You have two ports in that district—one at Byron Bay? All that is shipped from there is infinitesimal.

534. They have a very important factory there, have they not? Butter runs into very little in the way of freight. The average freight is about 5s. a ton.

535. So you have to rely on what you can make out of carrying supplies and from fares? Yes. The fares on the Lismore to the Tweed line represent more than the goods traffic. Generally speaking, it is the other way, the goods traffic being the greater earning power; but in that district, owing to most of the traffic being low-class produce, such as logs, cream and butter, there are very small earnings from what is fairly big work, and that includes sugar-cane too—8,000 or 9,000 tons of sugar-cane.

536. Would that be carried at a very low rate? The average rate is about 2s. a ton.

537. What basis have you taken for your estimate—the existing population or the prospective increase? I have more than doubled the estimate for Casino traffic, as there was no other means of getting at it.

538. What basis have you taken for your working expenses—a daily service? No; a tri-weekly service.

539. Assuming that this line was constructed, with a view of giving increased value to and settling the Crown lands in the vicinity, do you think that, with the settlement of 1,000 families, you would be able to earn more than working expenses? No. First of all, you would want to catch the families.

540. Assuming that they were there? No, that would not pay working expenses.

541. So that even a reduction of the capital cost would not be sufficient to compensate if it were possible to make the line much cheaper? No. The actual working expenses on the Lismore to the Tweed line during 1899 were £7,369.

542. Is that a daily service? A daily, and in some cases a tri-weekly service.

543. Has there been any large increase of population along the line, as well as at each end? Yes; in the Richmond River district.

544. That population has been settled for the most part upon land which was previously held by large owners? No; a great deal of it is original selections which, until the line came along, were virgin forests.

545. I am thinking of the additional population—was that upon Government land, or upon private land?

I think most of that land had been taken up by selectors in 640-acre blocks before the line was made.

546. So that the increase has been in privately-owned land? No; I think most of the land has been acquired from those who originally took it up.

547. The increase of settlement has not been by means of the selection of Government land, but by acquiring it from private hands? Yes; there has been some private land taken up.

548. Was there much Crown land available after the line was constructed? I do not think there was.

549. You expressed the opinion that the people would be more likely to be attracted by a chance of leasing or buying the richer lands held privately on the Upper Richmond? Yes.

550. Than by the chance to take up second-class land between Grafton and Casino? Yes.

551. Have you any idea what they pay usually as rental for those richer lands? No, I could not say; I think there are only ten selectors on them.

552. There is a great deal of land in the district which is rented;—we were told locally that the rent paid for privately-owned land for dairy purposes ran from 5s. to 7s. 6d. an acre;—do you think people would prefer to pay that rent for land on the Upper Richmond to paying, say, 7½d. an acre, which is 2½ per cent. on the 25 per cent. valuation of the district surveyor? I think they would take up the best-improved land. The disposition would be to go for the better class of land.

553. There is a very big difference in the rent? Yes; and a big difference in the land.

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554. Have you been along the route of the proposed railway? Yes.
555. Did you notice any of that second-class land after it had been cleared? Yes; it was specially pointed out to me.
556. There seems to be a vast improvement there as compared with the virgin forest? Yes, there is in all land when it is cleared; but I do not know much about the quality of the herbage.
557. It would appear that land up there with a good rainfall and a warm climate would not require to be intrinsically so good as other land to feed stock on? No.
558. Did I understand you to say that you did not think much of the timber traffic which might be expected on the line? I think that a great proportion of it would find its way either down to the Richmond or into the river. Some of the timber from the north would come to the line; but it is questionable how far it would pay them to have it carried by rail.
559. Local evidence went to show that the greater part of the timber would be tapped by the railway where it crosses the Richmond Range? The greater part of the timber is north of that point.
560. It would come to the railway about there? I do not think so.
561. Where would you say it would come to the railway? I question whether it would pay to carry it at all from that direction.
562. We were told that the line, where it crossed the Richmond Range, would be 10 or 12 miles from the good timber;—do you think that that would be too far? No; but I am thinking of a large volume of timber draining the whole of the Richmond Range. It is no use talking of a supply that would give out in three or four years.
563. The range, after it is crossed by the line, curves to the northward, and runs parallel to the line some little distance? Yes.
564. What makes you think that the timber, say, south of midway between Casino and Grafton would go to Lawrence rather than to Grafton for shipment? I mean timber south of the line, not north of the line.
565. The local forester states that the timber land is mainly unsuitable for farming? Yes.
566. He estimates that if the timber were cut within a reasonable distance of the line, it would yield £80,000 in royalties, in addition to the railway revenue? Well, we want to go to the experience of the more northern rivers, where they have more timber.
567. What has been the experience there? It is all included in the tonnage I have given you.
568. Does that Lismore to the Tweed railway tap good timber land? Yes; there is magnificent timber down there.
569. What sort? Pine, tallow-wood, and iron-bark.
570. And the railway does not seem to attract it? The railway attracts it, but there is not much value in it.
571. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You have been over the route of this line? Yes.
572. Do you think the country is of such a nature that the railway would be likely to cause a large population to settle for the purpose of cultivation? No; certainly not for the purposes of cultivation. It might by-and-bye, when the people are crowded out of the better dairying districts, become a good dairying district.
573. What proportion of that country do you think would be suitable for agriculture? I should imagine a very small proportion—only land on the creeks; that is, for such high-class agriculture as you would expect in that district.
574. Is it good grazing country? Yes.
575. As grazing country alone it would not be likely to support a railway? No.
576. And timber, as a rule, is not sufficient to support a railway? No; it is a constantly disappearing quantity.
577. What is the nature of that country? It is ridgy forest country.
578. Is it pretty rough all the way along the line, or is a large portion of it comparatively level? There is not much of it level till you get within 3 miles of the Richmond.
579. The ridgy country is not considered fit for cultivation? No, it would be very poor agricultural land.
580. Have you any idea what area of land on that line would be likely to support a family? I should think that it would be land that would carry a cow to 4 or 5 acres.
581. I think you are opposed altogether to the construction of this line? My feeling is this: That it is a line which is not of pressing urgency, not nearly so pressing as a lot of other lines which are required for the development of the country. The people of that district have got their waterways on either side of them at reasonable distances, and there are excellent roads communicating with the waterways. There is very little prospective traffic for a railway.
582. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Does not the estimated cost of this railway from Grafton to Casino appear rather high—over £7,000 a mile? I do not know the details of that; it is Mr. Deane's estimate.
583. The estimate of the proposed line from Casino to Lismore is about the same? Yes.
584. Can you tell whether there were two separate estimates? No. I think, in the first place, the estimate was prepared of a line projected from Lismore through to the Tweed as part of one whole; but I fancy that Mr. Deane has revised it recently.
585. You have in your hand a map showing the disposition of the timber on the proposed line? Yes.
586. Could you give the Committee an idea of how the traffic would be affected on this line? I am under the impression that to the north of the 29th parallel the timber would go to the sea. The greater proportion of the timber south of the line would fall into the Richmond and the Clarence, and would not be attracted to the railway. On the western side of the line, south of the 29th parallel, the timber would probably be attracted to the line.

THURSDAY, 21 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Cecil West Darley, Engineer-in-Chief for Public Works, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

C. W. Darley.
21 June, 1900.

587. *Mr. Watson.*] In connection with this proposed railway from Grafton to Casino, it is thought advisable to get some information from you as to the present state of the Clarence River from a navigation standpoint, and also as to the works which you are carrying out in connection with the river;— could you give the Committee a short statement on the subject? The improvements at the entrance to the Clarence River, as originally proposed by Sir John Coode, were estimated to cost £615,182. Parliament has approved of a certain portion of the scheme being carried out involving an expenditure of £254,300. What is known as the middle training-wall has been completed, and so far has been very satisfactory. We have deep water all along the wall.

588. Has the construction of that middle training-wall meant the abandonment of an earlier scheme, which was partly carried out by Mr. Moriarty, for a training-wall further south? Mr. Moriarty's scheme is not under consideration. It is Sir John Coode's scheme that we are carrying out.

589. Mr. Moriarty's first idea was anterior to that? Yes; that was based on only a small sum of money being expended there. It was not thought that the Government would enter on costly works. The training-wall has, so far, been such a success that it has got rid entirely of the inner crossing, and we have permanent deep water inside the entrance now, and the bar has certainly kept better and more uniformly good than it used to do. I think the direct scour on the bar has been benefited. The portion of the scheme that was authorised was the removal of the north reef; but it was pointed out at the time the matter was under consideration that that might be impossible, and it was found impossible to remove that reef until we could get still water under the shelter of a southern breakwater. So the work of removing the reef, which has been authorised by Parliament, has not been entered on, and cannot be entered upon yet.

590. Not until you get the southern breakwater? We must have the shelter of the southern breakwater.

591. *Dr. Garran.*] How much of it? We require nearly the whole of it.

592. *Mr. Watson.*] You have a certain portion of the southern breakwater already done, have you not? Yes.

593. What would remain to be constructed before you would get sufficient shelter to enable you to take away the middle reef? I think that by the time we got half the length we could do it. We require to construct 1,200 feet.

594. Is that in addition to what is now constructed? Yes. It has only just been started. Very little has been done since Sir John Coode reported on the scheme. We have simply been tipping stone there to replace some washed away.

595. Could you give a rough idea of the cost of completing sufficient of the southern breakwater to give the desired shelter? The southern breakwater is estimated to cost £146,459 altogether.

596. So that an expenditure of about £70,000 would be necessary to complete half of it? Yes, an expenditure of £60,000 or £70,000 to give sufficient shelter to get at the reef.

597. Do you think the removal of the middle reef would, apart from its allowing sufficient water for vessels, assist the general scour on the bar? I think it would. At present it scatters the current, sending it north and south. But if we could get the southern half removed we should improve the passage between the reef and the end of the training-wall, and concentrate a larger scour straight out eastward.

598. Can you say what is the depth that you can fairly rely upon as the result of the work you have been so far engaged in on the bar, and then inwards for some distance? Of course the bar varies much with the wind. At present there is about 16 feet of water on the bar. That is in what is known as the southern channel. It is a good channel, but it is a crooked one. The eastern channel is the best—that is the straighter channel. It shoaled up after long-continued north-east winds. Last year we did a little dredging on it, and it kept deeper for some time. If the westerly winds set in again I expect the current will move back to the eastern channel. The southern channel turns round the breakwater and goes down the coast. It is a good channel, but not a nice one for strangers. The regular traders know it. If we had the breakwater it would tend to concentrate the current and keep it towards the eastern channel, and shut up the southern channel.

599. Would the construction of the breakwater ensure a good depth, beyond the probability of alteration, by the prevailing winds? The bar is one that will vary with the wind. There is no doubt that if the northern breakwater had been constructed also it would tend to make the bar more permanent. The southern breakwater would do all that is necessary to maintain a good entrance to the river.

600. Do you know whether the sand on the bar is of great depth? Yes, there is a great depth of sand there.

601. So if you can get sufficient scour there is no doubt of its being able to remove the sand from the bar? It would if we could get one good flood. We have had no flood since the inside works were carried out. A flood would open it for a long time. It has not had a good wash out since the works were constructed.

602. You said the construction of that southern wall had had a good effect on the channel? Yes, a very good effect.

603. And what was formerly known as the inner crossing has now disappeared? Yes, it has quite gone. The inner crossing was an opening down from the eastern end of Freoburn Island towards Yamba.

604. The crossing that one time blocked up the channel has disappeared? Yes, It is quite gone. Once C. W. Darley. you get over the bar it is all deep water up into the entrance. Where the deepest water is now was dry land with timber growing on it at the time when Mr. Moriarty dealt with the matter. 21 June, 1900.

605. Have the inner works been fairly completed now? What is known as the Goodwood Island training-wall has been completed, and the next work authorised is known as the Iluka training-wall. That training-wall was designed by Sir John Coode to follow round the foreshore from the southern portion of the North Spit. I have been watching the action of the current in the bay for some years past, and I find that we cannot draw the current out of that bay. The Goodwood Island training-wall is not sufficient. The current still turns into the bay, and then goes southward along the North Spit, and strikes the south training-wall nearly at right angles, causing an eddy there and deep water. There is about 55 feet of water where the currents meet. I came to the conclusion that as long as that continued the entrance would never be very satisfactory. The current always tends, in passing down from Iluka, to fall out towards the training-wall, making the channel between the point of the Spit and the south training-wall very narrow indeed. It is not more than 250 feet wide at present. I got out a scheme which the Minister authorised for a training-wall to cut out the bight altogether, going in a curve from Iluka inside Goodwood Island training-wall, and turning round nearly parallel with the south training-wall to meet the inner north training-wall. We are now engaged in the construction of that work, and I think it will have a beneficial effect.

606. These currents from the North Arm have to follow the old training-wall along the foreshore of Iluka or get through before that? It will work round in front of that wall; it starts from the western corner of the Iluka shore.

607. Was a wall round the Iluka foreshore constructed? No, no money was spent there; but we are moving it out into the bay. Instead of a concave curve we are making a convex curve.

608. Do you anticipate that in the further concentration of the current by means of the training-wall you will be able to keep the scour sufficiently strong to have a fair depth on your bar? It will tend to widen the channel at the North Spit, to keep a better channel along the training-wall, and concentrate a better scour on the bar.

609. Do you think the depth you are now able to maintain on the bar will be sufficient, without the breakwater to ensure navigation for steamers of reasonable size? We cannot maintain a permanent channel under present conditions. Since we have carried on the work of the south training-wall, there has been no actual block to navigation. There has always been a south or an east channel, though at times not very good. We have a dredge now specially fitted for bar work; last year we sent it up there, and in a few days she took enough off the top of the bar to again draw the current on to it, and it has gone on deepening. We can keep the navigation sufficiently good there for the present trade without outside expenditure. If they want to bring bigger steamers that can not be done without more works being carried out, but the present steamers have not been obstructed.

610. It would seem from what you say as to the character of the bottom of the bay outside, that there would always be some danger of its shoaling up? The name of the bay in the old days was "Shoal Bay." I think the name was given to the place by Captain Cook. The shoals prevented the Clarence River from being found for many years after this country was occupied. People did not like going in there. There is a vast amount of sand there which will always keep on the move, and the bar must fluctuate.

611. But with the dredge that you have now it would seem to be a comparatively easy matter to get a sufficient depth of water for steamers now trading there? We keep a special dredge for bar work. Whenever we hear of any bar being in a bad state that dredge is immediately ordered away to the place. The day that we got information that this bar was shoaled up the dredge was sent there, and in a few days she did so much work that she greatly improved the bar, and it went on improving afterwards.

612. Assuming it was a moot point whether it was worth while extending both breakwaters in order to get an increased depth of water, would you still think it necessary to spend this extra £70,000 on the southern breakwater to assist in the removal of that middle reef? I think it would be desirable. There is another reason that may be given, and that is, that for the inner work we want chiefly small stone, but for the breakwater we want only large stone. At present we are working the quarry, and we have to break the stone small for the training-wall. If we have to complete the inside work and then make the breakwater, we shall have to waste an enormous quantity of small stone that we cannot put into the breakwater. If it is to be done at all it would be better to face it before we have done all the inside work. The country would save a large sum of money by having it done now, instead of postponing it until the inside work is finished.

613. What do you estimate the cost of the removal of that inner reef would be? It is estimated to cost £28,500.

614. That would be, roughly, to remove that reef and to put a sheltering breakwater to the extent necessary would cost another £100,000? Yes.

615. Going up towards Grafton, can you tell us if there are any obstructions, and what is the nature of them? There is a shoal near Elizabeth Island carrying from 10 to 12 feet of water. We dredge it occasionally, but after a fresh it shoals up again. I think there would be no difficulty in deepening it to 15 feet if necessary. The bottom is only sand and shingle.

616. Does that extend to any great length along the course of the channel? No; it is a short shoal. Then, at the Elbow, near Lawrence, there is a short patch with 12 feet of water. At that place the river has a very sharp bend, and to enable large vessels to go up it would be necessary to carry out the construction of a training-wall and do some dredging to straighten the river at that place.

617. Would that be a half-tide wall, so as not to interfere with the floods? The river is too wide there, and I would carry the wall up to high-water mark. Immediately below Lawrence there is a very narrow place, and there there is 60 feet of water, because the river is too narrow. The next shoal is at the Ulmarra Crossing—it is rather a long one. We deepened that to 14 feet a few years ago, and since it was deepened it is keeping very good.

618. Could you give any estimate of what it would be necessary to spend to equalise the depth? We do that out of revenue votes. It is really part of the maintenance of the river.

619. The training-wall would not come into that? I have not prepared an estimate of that.

620. It would not amount to a very great deal? It would not.

621. Then, from what you say, it seems that even with the work so far completed, the navigation can be fairly relied upon for steamers of the size of those at present used? Yes; there would be no difficulty in opening the navigation up to Grafton with a depth of 15 feet. 622.

C. W. Darley. 622. You think that can be fairly relied upon now? Not now, but there would be no difficulty in obtaining that depth.

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623. Taking the present condition of the river, what could you guarantee for vessels without a further vote from Parliament? Vessels drawing 12 feet of water can navigate the river easily enough.

624. If this line is constructed it is possible that another length from Casino to Lismore will be constructed, as there is a probability of a certain amount of traffic going towards the Richmond at Lismore;—what is the present condition of the navigation of that river? The Richmond bar is now very fair, and it is maintaining its depth. We can always count on having 13 feet of water on the Richmond bar at present. The inner crossing of the Richmond bar is not yet established; it is in a transition stage. The middle training-wall is being constructed there, and I think it will have a very beneficial effect. We are moving the channel now from its southern course to a more direct northern course towards the bar. I think in a very short time that will be a good channel. It is improving every day.

625. As the result of the construction of that middle training wall? Yes.

626. Is that in addition to the plans of Sir John Coode? Yes. We had the same trouble at the Clarence. I fancy the mistake in both cases was in having the entrance so wide inside. The current made down to the south shore, then ran up along the southern breakwater, and crossed and struck the northern breakwater at right angles. There was no direct run to the bar. Experience shows that we must direct the current for as great a distance inside the harbour as possible on to the bar, without any turning. That training-wall is having the effect of directing and strengthening the current. There is a patch of hard sand in front of Ballina which we are removing. More current is passing through the north channel every day, and when we get a little more of that sand removed, we can bring the whole current into the north channel and shut up the other altogether.

627. Does that mean that some of the expenditure previously incurred under Sir John Coode's scheme will be wasted? No, because we are only carrying this wall up to high-water, so that the floods can cross it. Sir John Coode's work will prevent any big flood from bursting out behind our works, they will give free vent to the floods, and when a portion of the southern breakwater is carried 12 feet over high-water, that will prevent any break-out where the river has broken out before. But for that it might break out south of the entrance.

628. It will prevent the flood-water from breaking out south of the southern breakwater? Yes. If it broke through there the channel might be changed and taken away from the present entrance altogether. If the southern wall had been made originally to its full height, the other works would not have been necessary. But taking everything into consideration it is best as it is.

629. It affords a greater escape in case of flood? Yes, a greater relief for big floods, and we concentrate the whole of the normal current of the river in the north channel.

630. Will the removal of that indurated sand crossing near Ballina be expensive? One channel has been cut through, and we are widening it. The work is not expensive, the sand being easily dredged. We have a dredge ready to go up there with special cutting gear, which will dredge and pump the sand away without any blasting.

631. Could you say what has been spent at this entrance, taking the breakwater and two training-walls? The total expenditure has been £260,244.

632. What will be necessary in addition to what has been done for the completion of the two breakwaters? We have £96,000 still available of the amount authorised. There are certain sums which have been spent, which must be re-credited to the vote. The original estimate will complete the work. We spent money on the North Creek canal, but that expenditure was forced upon us. It is really not included in the original estimate, though it was absolutely necessary to do the work.

633. Will that £90,000 be sufficient to complete both breakwaters? I think it will nearly finish both breakwaters. If we take the other 10 per cent., which we are entitled to under the Act, the other £30,000 will complete the whole work.

634. At present you are proceeding with the southern breakwater? Yes; I am pushing on with the southern breakwater, employing double shifts, which are working day and night.

635. Then do you intend to take up the work on the northern side when you have completed the southern breakwater? In a few month's time we shall go on with the northern breakwater. We wanted to get the southern breakwater more advanced before doing so.

636. Vessels going out of the Richmond River have to steer pretty well a north-easterly course from the bar to avoid the shoaling outside? The current, after running down the north breakwater, turns north-easterly, but I think that as we concentrate the current more into the north channel, it will tend to straighten out.

637. I understand that further up the river you have some works in progress, and that you are asking for votes to enable you to remove the obstructions? There are several shoals up the river that want improving, apart from places where there is rock extending into the river, which I recommended should be removed to improve the river generally. I may mention the chief obstructions. The first is at the upper end of Pimlico Island, where there is about 10 feet of water, which wants deepening a little. It is silt which can easily be removed. Then there are the Blackwall Flats immediately above Wardell. There are about 8 feet 6 inches on the Blackwall Flats at low-water. That wants deepening. It is rather a long shoal, about 1,000 feet in length.

638. That is indurated sand? Yes, a hard sand. Part of it, I believe, is soft; but there are bands of indurated sand in it. The next obstruction is at Goat Island, there is about 10 feet of water there which requires deepening, it is silt, and could easily be removed. The floods broke out a little above there twice, and, I think, that caused the Goat Island shoal. Then there is another shoal about a mile below Woodburn with 10 feet of water on it. Then about a mile below the Elbow there is another, Swan Reach, with from 9 to 10 feet on it, and which should be deepened. That also consists of soft material. There is a shoal a little above the Elbow, also consisting of silt with 9 or 10 feet of water on it. The ruling depth from Coraki to Lismore is about 10 feet.

639. The removal of the obstruction below Coraki to a greater depth than 10 feet would only permit of navigation to that point, or do you anticipate the deepening of the river further up? We could deepen the river all the way.

640. Could you say what you will require outside your ordinary annual expenditure in the way of special votes to remove those obstructions in the river, apart altogether from the works at the entrance? I think

think that to put the navigation of the Richmond River in good order it would require an expenditure of £50,000 or £60,000 on the inner river. There are many places where we could remove rocks which are diverting the current. At present there are rocks at Woodburn. They are rocks overlying soft material, and it would not be difficult to remove them. If Parliament voted the money we should get some special plant for the work, such as we have at Newcastle for breaking up the rocks, and doing the work on a larger scale than we can at present.

641. Have you the figures of the total amount spent and authorised on the Clarence and Richmond Rivers for the purposes of comparison? Yes. The total expenditure authorised on the Richmond is £356,350. The actual expenditure has been £260,244.

642. That is independent of your estimate of another £50,000 or £60,000 that would be necessary to complete the work? That amount was for entrance works only. There has only been very small amounts spent in improving the river. There have been no special votes for the river at all.

643. What amount has been authorised and spent on the Clarence River? The expenditure authorised on the Clarence is only £251,300.

644. Has that all been spent? No, we have only expended £144,000.

645. That is independent of what was originally spent by Mr. Moriarty? Quite independent of it.

646. I think you said that for the partial extension of the southern breakwater, and the removal of the middle reef, you would require another £100,000? Yes.

647. That would bring the expenditure on the Clarence up to about the amount authorised for the Richmond River? Yes.

648. *Mr. McParlane*] The estimated cost of constructing the south training-wall on the Clarence River is £77,700? Yes; we have completed it within that amount. It did not cost within £30,000 of the amount of the estimate.

649. What was the actual cost? It was something like £30,000 under the amount you have mentioned.

650. It did not cost within £30,000 of the estimate? No. The works so far constructed have cost about £37,400 less than the original estimate. The greater part of that saving was on the south training-wall.

651. Do you think there would be a corresponding reduction in the expenditure on the breakwater? No. I think we can do the work for the amount estimated, but I do not think there can be a corresponding reduction. It so happens that the channel kept straight out all the time that we were doing the work. But had the sand filled in again, as it did in the old days, then we might have had a very large expenditure. Fortunately, some years before a big flood had straightened out the channel, and we were able to extend the wall without having to fight the current, and the work was cheapened in that way.

652. You remember where the trouble used to arise at the crossing? Yes.

653. The south training-wall practically cuts the crossing through? Yes; it is really north where the trouble always was.

654. What depth of water was there usually on that crossing before the training-wall was constructed? Nine or 10 feet. It has shoaled up to 6 feet.

655. What depth of water is there along the training-wall? From 18 to 24 feet.

656. So you look upon the construction of this training-wall as a success? Yes.

657. How far does the influence of that scour caused by the training-wall extend seaward? I think it extends pretty well to the bar.

658. How far would that be? About 3,000 feet out.

659. It has an influence out that distance? It has; but the strong north-east winds would overcome that influence and cause the sand to train round. As soon as the winds cease the channel straightens out.

660. How far is the shallowest part of the bar from the end of the training-wall? About 3,000 feet out.

661. That will be immediately beyond where you say the training-wall goes? Yes; it begins to deepen very quickly there.

662. Outward? Yes.

663. Once you cross the bar it deepens quickly? Yes.

664. Do you not think if the southern breakwater was carried out 1,000 or 1,200 feet further it would send the scour considerably over where the bar is now? Of course it would.

665. Would not that leave continuous deep water right out to sea? It would certainly improve the depth of the water.

666. I understand, from the captains of boats, that it is only a ridge where the bar is, and that the water is very deep outside? Yes; it deepens very quickly outside.

667. If the scour removed that ridge, it would leave deep water, would it not? It would certainly increase the depth.

668. Do you think there would be any danger of any shoaling beyond that again? I do not think so. But I should always expect, after a long continuance of north-east winds, to see the sand from the north shore going across the bar; but it will be only a temporary inconvenience.

669. Have you any data showing what depth of water there was on the bar after the heavy flood you have spoken of? I have a record, but not with me.

670. Could you give us any idea? I could not say how long it kept up.

671. I understand that Sir John Coode's idea, when he prepared the plans, was to carry out the breakwaters first;—was that so? Yes, he suggested that.

672. And to have the ridge removed? Yes.

673. And if necessary to make a training-wall? Yes.

674. Is there any particular reason why that proposal was departed from? I cannot say.

675. Do you think that was a wise departure? I do not think it was a mistake. I think it was best to see what the effect would be before a large expenditure was entered upon.

676. I understand that the idea was that in carrying out the breakwater, that portion of the training-wall could be carried out at the same time, so that the small stone could be used for the training-wall, and the larger stone for the outer works? Sir John Coode did not say so. He simply proposed the construction of the south breakwater first. He did not give that as a reason. There is no doubt in my mind that we have adopted a wise course in constructing the south training-wall. It has been contended that we might not have done it for the amount estimated, and that it would have caused a great deal of inconvenience to the shipping, and perhaps have temporarily blocked shipping if the channel had gone southward of the wall. We should have been fighting against the current all the time whilst the wall was being constructed.

But

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- C. W. Darley. But it so happened that Sir John Coode came after the big flood that swept out the channel. As I explained to the Committee, Mr. Moriarty never could have proposed such a scheme as that, for one thing no large sum was ever voted in those days for such works, and he never could have counted on the north channel sweeping out. He had to try as well as he could to form the best possible channel where Nature had put it. He had to follow round the old channel. Before Sir John Coode's arrival, the large flood came, and cut off the North Spit, and he said, "Now we must fix a channel where it is by a new training-wall." If we had waited, and had not constructed the wall until we made the breakwater, the channel might have come south again. Had it done so, and forced the channel down to the south again, we might have found very serious difficulty in constructing the south training-wall, and we might have had to block navigation until we forced the current into the northern channel again. It so happened, however, that the channel kept to its new course as long as we were constructing the wall.
677. How long has the present channel along the training-wall been opened up? About thirteen years.
678. Do you think there is no danger of it shifting? It cannot shift now for the wall.
679. What class of stone would be required for constructing the outer breakwater? Large blocks.
680. About what weight? I should like to get them from 15 to 18 tons in weight.
681. Do you think there would be a considerable waste in quarrying stone of that kind? It can only be advantageously quarried when you have work to do with the small stone. We cannot put small stone in with the large.
682. If the whole of the training-walls were completed before starting the breakwaters, would it mean a material increase in the cost of the breakwaters if it was found necessary eventually to carry them out? It would.
683. Is there plenty of valuable stone in the new quarry? Yes.
684. Can that be obtained cheaper than stone from the old quarry? The old quarry is worked out completely. We can get stone much cheaper from the new quarry.
685. Does it give satisfaction as to quality? I think it will do just as well as the stone out of the old quarry.
686. How were the harbour works at the Richmond River commenced in the first instance—by carrying out training-walls or commencing the breakwater? We commenced with the north breakwater first. Sir John Coode recommended that the southern breakwater should be made first, but I took a different view. Sir John Coode, for some reason, laid great stress on the matter of the southern breakwater. I examined into the question, however, and recommended that the northern breakwater should be made first, and in support of my views I wrote home to Sir John Coode, and he entirely agreed with me, because certain changes had taken place after he visited the Colony which rendered that course necessary. The channel had worked far north into the bay, and was passing inside the Beacon Rock; so it was imperative that it should be moved out to that position as quickly as possible. It was a position causing navigation to be attended with the greatest possible difficulty and danger. We commenced with the northern breakwater, and pushed that out, closing the channel between Pilot Point and Beacon Rock, and then we continued with the northern breakwater, and then went on with the southern breakwater.
687. What is the length of each? I could not give the exact figures.*
688. Is the work of extending them discontinued at present? The southern breakwater is being extended; but not the northern breakwater.
689. Is the northern breakwater complete? No; the northern breakwater was well in advance of the southern, and I saw that it was necessary to go on with the southern, so I made a recommendation to the Minister, and we arranged to stop the construction of the northern breakwater temporarily, and we set double shifts to work on the south side. We use the electric light, and employ the men day and night.
690. Has any good result followed the construction of the northern breakwater? Yes; it straightened out the entrance.
691. The object in carrying out the southern breakwater is that it will still further improve it? Yes.
692. How far have the training-walls been extended on each side of the channel? There is only one training-wall on the Richmond, and that is the middle training-wall.
693. Comparing the entrances of the two rivers before any improvements took place in the shape of breakwaters or training-walls, which river carried the greatest depth of water? The Clarence.
694. With reference to the shoal on the bar, can you give some estimate of the distance of it from the entrance to the river;—which of the bars was the farthest out to the sea from the actual entrance? The Clarence. The Richmond bar was a varying quantity—sometimes it was northwards, and sometimes it was about a mile south. The Clarence bar is further out from what we may call the centre of the entrance than the Richmond bar.
695. If the works were carried out in a similar way on the Richmond to what they are on the Clarence by the construction of training-walls only, and not the carrying out of the breakwater, what would the effect be? The two cases are so different that you cannot compare them.
696. You think that training-walls would not have a good effect? Extensive training-walls were necessary on the Clarence to fix the channel on the inside.
697. If the two breakwaters were carried out, would not that have the effect of creating a channel on the Clarence sufficient to deepen the bar? Yes.
698. I mean independently of the training-wall? Then I say no, because the trouble on the Clarence was always inside. If we had not gone on with the whole of that training-wall, the channel would have gone back round by Yamba.
699. With regard to the navigation of the Richmond River bar up towards Lismore, would it cost any very large amount to make the river navigable for steamers drawing 14 or 15 feet of water, assuming that it would be so improved as to admit steamers drawing 15 feet of water;—would it cost a large amount to dredge the river to enable steamers to go to Lismore? It would not cost a very large amount to deepen the river for navigation. Two or three dredges working there for a couple of years would nearly do it. That is merely to open the navigation; but I want to see something more—I want to see the river improved to carry off the floods.
700. Has the erosion of the banks something to do with the silting up? Not in the lower river.
701. Have they not had very heavy washaways? Not so much on the Richmond as on the Clarence.
702. Have you any remedy for that? On the Clarence, of course, the remedy would be stone facings, which will have to be used sooner or later.

703.

* NOTE (on revision):—The northern breakwater is now completed for a distance of 2,938 feet, and the southern breakwater is completed for a distance of 7,012 feet from starting-point.

703. Would that be cheaper than dredging? You would want to do that and dredge too. On some portions of the Clarence it will have to be done very soon. It would do away with the necessity for constant dredging. C. W. Darley.
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704. With regard to the southern breakwater at Clarence Heads, you said that, in your opinion, if you carried out the southern breakwater it would afford protection to enable you to remove the reefs;—is that so? That is one of the objects of it. We cannot remove the reef until the breakwater is there.

705. Sir John Coode makes a strong point of the removal of the reef? Yes.

706. Do you think the reef could be removed by carrying out the southern breakwater only? Yes; I think the southern breakwater will give us the shelter which is necessary.

707. You think the southern breakwater would create such a scour as would deepen the water further out? It would direct the scour; it would keep it from wandering away to the south, and keep it on in a straight course to the eastward.

708. *Chairman.*] There has been, at the entrance of each of these rivers, an amount of money either spent or authorised amounting to a little over £300,000? Yes.

709. That, of course, was designed mainly for the purpose of allowing the settlers in each of the two districts served by the river to get their produce to market and get their supplies up by the river? Yes.

710. Do you think, taking a rough view of public expenditure over the Colony, the amount spent on each of those places is commensurate with their importance? I do. I think it is justified.

711. When this total amount of £350,000 in each case is spent, what will practically be the effect on the river, as far as navigation is concerned;—what depth will vessels be able to draw on either of these rivers? That money has only been expended on the entrances. More dredging will be necessary in the rivers, and when these works are completed I think vessels will be able to navigate the Richmond drawing 15 feet of water.

712. Could a steamer of 1,000 tons burden go up the river? No.

713. It would be a fair-sized coastal steamer that would draw 14 or 15 feet? Yes.

714. Do you think the settlers on the river would then have easy and uninterrupted means of getting their goods away and of obtaining their supplies? Yes; with those improvements, coupled with the dredging of the river. There might be a good deal of dredging done; there would be no difficulty in dredging to a depth of 15 feet in the Clarence.

715. We are engaged in considering the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Grafton to Casino; judging from the map and the evidence, the bulk of the settlers in each case are concentrated along the river, whereas the district where the proposed line goes is very sparsely populated;—do you think that those people, with the expenditure of that sum of money on each of the rivers, and a little more for dredging, would be fairly well provided with means of communication? If the rivers are opened up they will be very well supplied with means of communication. They want to get their produce to Sydney—not from one river to the other.

716. Even if the connecting link Mr. Watson indicated from Casino to Lismore were constructed, and the proposed line were made from Grafton to Casino, do you think then there would be any large inter-river traffic, or traffic from one river to the other? I do not think so. There might be a traffic from Casino to Lismore; that is good country, and there is good navigation at the river to Lismore, which would give an outlet for traffic; but as for the line between Casino and Grafton, I cannot say much about it.

717. *Dr. Garran.*] In an inquiry as to the works at the mouth of the Clarence about ten years ago, the evidence given was that then the difficulty of entering the Clarence was the sharp turn that had to be made after passing between the two reefs to avoid the sand-spit in front? Yes; to get round to Yamba.

718. I gather from you that since you made the inner training-wall you got the flood down between those two reefs? Between the training-wall and the reef.

719. Your channel is a different one from what there was then? Yes.

720. So that steamers in going in now do not turn sharp to the left, but go straight on? Yes.

721. So that the whole design of the work has been modified? No; the design is being carried out.

722. The Committee was told that the object was to blast away a great deal of the southern reef to avoid that sharp turn to the left? No; because the southern training-wall in the case of the Clarence was part of the design, it was to widen the channel instead of scattering the current.

723. To ease off that sharp turn? No; it was to concentrate the current in one channel.

724. Was the design of this inner training-wall to get rid of that channel near Yamba? Yes.

725. And to get a straight run? Yes.

726. Was that Sir John Coode's idea? Yes; to shut up the channel at Yamba.

727. Steamers do not go near Yamba? No.

728. So that the entrance to the river now is pretty straight? Yes.

729. All you want is to widen the channel and keep it open? Yes.

730. And to widen that channel you must blast away the north reef? A portion of it—not all.

731. Is the removal of that reef the most urgent thing that is now wanted at Clarence Heads? It is decidedly wanted. I do not say it is the most urgent thing.

732. What is there that is more urgent? Well, perhaps we might say that it is the most urgent of works not yet undertaken. The most urgent work now is the work we are doing—the new Iluka wall.

733. How much do you say it will cost to remove this north reef altogether? About £23,500.

734. Can you do that better in winter, when the westerly winds are blowing, than in summer? At present we could not do it at all, in either winter or summer.

735. The view that you put before us now is that you want to remove that north reef, but that you cannot do it until you have quiet water, and that there will not be quiet water until the southern breakwater has been extended? Yes.

736. So the southern breakwater must precede the removal of that reef? Yes.

737. And it is necessary to remove the current? Yes.

738. That is how the matter stands at present? Yes.

739. The northern breakwater you do not consider to be so immediately urgent? I do not.

740. Does the water cling to the inner training-wall as it comes down now? At present it is divided. A portion follows the Iluka shore, and a portion goes along the training-wall; then the portion that comes along the Iluka shore meets the north bank on the western side of the north point, and running along it takes an easterly course, and reaches the current along the wall at almost right angles, causing a great eddy;

- C. W. Darley. eddy; it then flows along the wall to the entrance. It is with the view of getting rid of that cross action that I recommended the Minister to move the Huka wall out into the bay.
- 21 June, 1900. 741. Does that central training-wall rest on the sand, or has it gone down to the rock? It is on sand.
742. Does the working of the water round it undermine it? No; it has kept slipping down to the bottom, and we make it up from time to time.
743. It is working its way through the sand towards the solid bottom? It runs down and checks the scour. At the bottom of the wall on the river side the stones have gone right down to the bottom, and the water is deep on one side, being about 50 feet.
744. You have to keep on topping it up? We had to keep topping it up when constructing it; but it is remaining steady now.
745. From what you see now, you have no doubt that the works you are recommending will be effective? No.
746. You have got the channel under control? Yes.

Charles Edward Rennie, Chief Draftsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

- C. E. Rennie. 747. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a map showing the character of the various holdings along the proposed railway? Yes; within 20 miles of each side of the proposed line.
- 21 June, 1900. 748. And within 20 miles around Grafton as a centre at one end? Yes.
749. Will you give the details? In the area just described there are 624,500 acres of alienated land; 515,200 acres of reserves; 742,500 acres of Crown lands—that is, exclusive of the reserves. The area of Crown lands held under occupation license is 545,700 acres; the area of untenanted land is 106,800 acres. The alienated land is shown on the map by blue tint, the reserves by green tint, and the Crown lands by brown tint.
750. Could you indicate what is the character of the reserves comprised within that area? There are a great many reserves. The large green patches on the map represent in every case forest reserves. There are other reserves for a variety of purposes.
751. I notice that there is a string of reserves practically following the route of the line;—are they forest reserves? Not all of them.
752. *Mr. Watson.*] Part of them are railway reserves, are they not? Yes.
753. Have you any details as to the rents of the Crown lands held under lease? The occupation licenses, which embrace pretty well the whole of that brown tint, range from three-fortieths of a penny to 1½d. per acre.
754. *Chairman.*] Coming to the Grafton end of the line, the bulk of the alienated area seems to have followed very closely along the course of the river? Yes, it has.
755. Is it the same at the Casino end? Yes. The alienations follow the river at the Casino end.
756. *Mr. Watson.*] That land under occupation license, tinted brown on the map, has been open for selection since 1884, I presume;—when did the leases run out in the Eastern Division? I think it was in 1890. At any rate, they have all expired long ago.
757. Since the lands comprised in the original leases were not selected, it has been held under occupation license? The greater part of it.
758. And has been open for selection? Yes; the area tinted brown on the map is practically all open for selection.
759. The presumption is, then, that either the terms have not been sufficiently good to encourage settlement on that area, or the land is not sufficiently good? Yes; or both.
760. Do you know whether there has been any large area formerly included in the leaseholds for which occupation licenses have not been obtained? Practically, the larger part is held on occupation license. As against upwards of 500,000 acres of land under occupation lease, there are 200,000 acres not so held.
761. *Chairman.*] If you shut the Grafton end off in the same manner as you do the Casino end, it is practically admitted that the line will draw very little traffic south of Grafton;—suppose you cut it off at the Grafton end, would the proportion of alienated land then be larger or smaller than the area you put before the Committee? The larger part of the alienated land would be shut out. The Grafton end would include considerably more alienated land in proportion than the other.

THURSDAY, 28 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	}	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.		ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
		JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor of Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Department, sworn, and examined:—

- W. H. Hall. 762. *Chairman.*] Will you furnish the Committee with statistics, showing the area under cultivation within the area likely to be affected by the proposed railway from Grafton to Casino? Yes, as far as it is possible to get them.
- 28 June, 1900. 763. Is there any difficulty in this instance? There is a paucity of information. The estimated population within the area likely to be affected by the proposed railway is 6,700. The estimated population of the municipality of Casino—2,050—is included in this number.
764. *Dr. Garran.*] Do the figures include the population of Grafton? No.
765. What area does the return, which you are about to put in, show in the cultivation include? It includes north of Grafton and away to the range.
766. How near to Grafton? Ten or 12 miles out.

767. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you take in Lawrence? No; I do not take in any part which is likely to be affected by the sea carriage. W. H. Hall.
 768. *Dr. Garran.*] How far on each side of the proposed line do you go? Twenty miles from the coast side, and extending to the range on the other side. I put in the following return:—

RETURN showing the Area under cultivation within the Area likely to be affected by the proposed Railway from Grafton to Casino.

District.	Year.	Cultivation.														Live Stock.					Dairy Produce.					
		Wheat.		Maize.		Other Grains.	Hay.		Green Food.	Area under—						Cattle.					Butter made.	Cheese made.				
		Total Area cultivated.	Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.	Area.	Wheat, Oats, and Barley.	Lucerne.	Area cut.	Vegetables.	Area.	Yield.	Grape vines.	Oranges.	Other Fruit Orchards.	All other Crops.	Horses.	Milk Cows.	Ordinary Cows, including Calves.			Sheep (including Lambs).	Swine.		
		ac.	ac.	bus.	ac.	bus.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	ac.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	lb.	lb.			
Copmanhurst	1897	83	..	..	73	5,840	..	6	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	199	20	6,980	70	30	..	..
	1898	83	..	..	71	3,185	..	9	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	163	40	6,460	80	20	..	200	
	1899	126	..	..	106	2,900	..	12	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	763	248	17,761	415	88	..	400	
	1900	111	..	..	91	3,185	..	17	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	616	52	10,224	420	139	..	404	
Casino	1897	5,842	33	720	4,060	105,150	12	224	18	177	40	1,202	17,703	924	8,257	4	6	9	62	8,855	3,233	91,646	74	2,411
	1898	5,821	..	..	4,312	105,245	6	212	44	200	37	924	8,257	4	2	..	18	57	7,188	4,837	93,717	130	3,531	30,268	8,000
	1899	5,202	..	..	4,070	99,010	5	204	83	163	54	629	7,893	4	..	..	6	43	5,814	4,536	91,809	123	3,365	325,061	..
	1900	5,692	..	..	4,638	133,503	160	3	249	77	501	772	3,629	3	..	..	23	62	6,490	6,765	97,487	3,173	3,508	477,750	..
Drake	1897	107	..	..	89	3,115	..	..	10	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	932	139	22,317	601	130	..	..
	1898	116	..	..	97	3,958	..	..	10	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	380	27	10,422	..	107	..	500
	1899	108	..	..	94	2,520	..	7	..	..	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	350	..	10,687	..	187	..	..
	1900	108	..	..	90	3,600	..	3	8	..	4	24	..	..	..	..	..	..	373	..	10,883	..	110	..	..

769. *Chairman.*] Can you tell us the total area under cultivation for the last year, leaving out the Casino end, and the total amount of butter manufactured, leaving out the Casino end, and compare it with the total including Casino? 219 acres, excluding Casino. In Casino there would be a small portion south of the river, but, so far as I could gather in my research, the only settlement along the line is about Myall and Myrtle Creeks, and very little there. Whenever there has been cultivation, it has not been on more than from 5 to 10 acres on any selection.

770. What are the figures with regard to butter, excluding the Casino end? 404 lb.

771. And what are the figures including Casino? 478,154 lb.

772. Taking a general view of the settlement along the line, including Casino, has the progress of the district been fairly rapid? It seems to me that the character of the district has changed. If you examine the figures you will notice that the producers have, apparently, given up the growth of cane to go in for dairying. The yield of cane has dropped from 17,703 tons in 1897 to 3,629 tons in 1900, so that apparently they are giving up one industry for another.

773. What is the population of Grafton? It is stated in the following return:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO CASINO.
ESTIMATE of Population.

Locality.	Estimated Population.
Municipality of Grafton	5,020
Within the Population Area of Grafton on the north side of the Clarence River, exclusive of the Municipality of Grafton	500
Within that portion of the 10-mile radius around Grafton proclaimed under the Orders in Council of 9th March, 1847, and 8th February, 1855, on the north side of the Clarence River, and inclusive of the Municipality of Grafton	6,000

774. *Mr. Watson.*] Is there any population between the boundary of the municipality, going northward, and the 10-mile radius which you speak of? I think you will find, in the majority of country towns, that the municipality extends out from 5 to 10 miles.

775. *Chairman.*] From how far south are your figures drawn? Twenty miles.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

776. *Mr. Watson.*] Since you were last examined on this question, the Sectional Committee has inspected the route, and taken local evidence, and it appeared to that Committee that there was no likelihood, for a considerable time, at any rate, of other than very light traffic resulting from the construction of the line; it has occurred to some members of the Committee that it might be possible to look at this particular piece of railway from a different standpoint from that of a line to be connected with the general railway system of the Colony, and that it might be possible to get a light line, pure and simple—more in the nature of a tramway—sufficient to carry the small anticipated traffic which would result;—can you offer any opinion as to the possibilities in that direction? I would point out that, if we did that, whatever might be decided upon, the line would have to be built so as to carry the rolling stock now running over the Lismore to the Tweed line. The two lines would, no doubt, be connected. The Secretary for Public Works has already given notice of a resolution to introduce the question of the Casino to Lismore construction. The Government would never leave a small gap. It might be a system detached from the main system of the Colony, but it would form one system between Grafton and the Tweed. The same rolling stock would have to run throughout. I should not recommend any lightening of the permanent way. The adoption of lighter rails would seriously hinder the use of the rolling stock at present running on the Lismore to the Tweed section. After all the saving would not be such a very great one. I believe it makes a difference of about £130 per mile if you knock off 10 lb. per yard in the weight of the rails. The difference in cost between 40 and 60-lb. rails would

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would thus be about £260 per mile. When I was last before the Committee, I was asked to consider the question of cheap construction. I have gone into that matter. At the same time I would strongly recommend that no cheapening be carried out; but a certain amount of cheapening could certainly be effected by steepening the railway grade—making it in that respect more like a tramway, and also in sharpening the curves. At the request of the Committee I have revised the estimate, assuming that the ruling grade should be 1 in 25, and the sharp curves 6 chains radius, and I have tried also what could be done in the way of cheapening by other means, such as cutting out a portion of the ballast, reducing the station accommodation and cutting off a portion of the allowance for contingencies. I find that by so doing the cost per mile would be brought down from £7,803, at which it now stands, to £4,800—that is, a reduction of £3,000 per mile. I have in my estimate considerably reduced the earthworks by putting in steeper grades and sharper curves. The culverts and timber bridges are slightly reduced. The ballasting I have cut down considerably. No doubt a line could be made and worked with less ballast than is shown, although I do not consider it an economical arrangement—it would mean more maintenance; and I think the price of sleepers perhaps could be cut down. The station works could be designed so as to meet first requirements, leaving the future to provide for the rest. I have also cut down the large item of £70,000 for Grafton station and works to £6,000. As I have stated, I have also cut off a certain amount of the contingencies. I have assumed that, with proper care, such a large amount for contingencies would not be necessary. I have, therefore, reduced the contingency item by £10,000. All these savings amount together to about £3,000 per mile. I do not, however, recommend them. The only saving which, in my opinion, would be really justifiable would be the reduction of the large item in connection with Grafton station, which I think I agreed to in my former evidence. I might say that, with regard to making a steeper ruling grade and sharper curves, if those grades and curves were adopted, then at some future time, when the traffic increases, they would have to be altered. The grades, of course, could be cut down later on, so as to bring them in conformity with the ruling grade beyond; and the line would have to be altered in location so as to suit the larger radius. In a line of this character, through a district of this kind—that is to say, looking at it as a coast district and a country which is largely subject to floods—there are certain items of expenditure which it is almost impossible to reduce very much. For instance, there are the culverts and timber bridges, the larger bridge at Casino, and the level crossings and fencing. You must, in a cattle country, have strong, substantial fences. You cannot put a cheap wire fence there, and you must provide level crossings, and in some cases road diversions. Mr. Stuart, of my Department, has recently been over the line. I was asked by the Colonial Secretary, Mr. See, to let some one go over it. I told Mr. See I did not think it at all necessary, and that not much good would result from it. Still I wished the line to have every chance, and the residents to be perfectly satisfied. Therefore, I arranged for Mr. Stuart to go, having first submitted the matter to Mr. O'Sullivan, the Secretary for Public Works, who approved, and this is Mr. Stuart's report:—

GRAFTON TO CASINO.

Memorandum to the Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,

Sydney, 27 June, 1900.

Sir,

In accordance with the accompanying instructions, namely, to see what arrangements could be made to obtain land for railway purposes in the event of this line passing, I proceeded to Grafton, and interviewed Mr. G. H. Varley, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Munroe, auctioneer and land agent, the District Surveyor, and one or two other leading men interested in the welfare of the district, and in forwarding the construction of the above proposed railway. After going into the matter we came to the conclusion that, as far as the resumption of the properties within the municipal area of the city was concerned, the best plan would be to supply Mr. Varley with a map showing the areas required, and to leave the matter in his hands, namely, to get the people whose properties are affected to sell their land at a reasonable figure, or to accept the Government valuation. I also informed him that all land outside the municipal area would probably have to be given free of cost.

Leaving Grafton, I went over the route of the proposed line, with a further view of seeing if anything could be done towards reducing the cost of construction; but with the exception of the small deviations at 4 and 16 miles respectively, suggested by Mr. Burge, and another at 21 miles (this latter owing to the ruling grade having been altered since Mr. Burge's inspection from 1 in 50 to 1 in 60) nothing material could be effected except by greatly increased curvature or steepening the grades; neither of which I should recommend, seeing that this line will ultimately be portion of the North Coast system.

When at Casino I examined portion of a deviation suggested by Mr. Pyers, the Member for The Richmond, which he considered would considerably shorten the line. This deviation would leave the present survey between Myall and Myrtle Creeks, and, steering approximately straight, would cross the main Grafton-Casino road near where the Ellangowan road joins it, thence skirting round the foot of the low ridges on which the main road runs, and keeping to the left of this road it would cross the Richmond River, and gradually bearing round, join the adopted survey at the western end of the proposed station-ground. This deviation would go through better land, and shorten the line by 3 or 4 miles; but against this you have an increased area of flooded country, probably more earthworks in crossing the range between Myrtle and Sandy Creeks, and the hills on the southern side of Deep Creek, and it would not suit the new junction of the Tenterfield line quite so well. This deviation, although not too promising, might be further looked into when the line comes to be permanently staked.

CHAS. McD. STUART.

That last proposal of deviation is a straightening of the line very much as shown on the map by the blue line, except that it comes a little further to the west, so as to join in on the western side of Casino. I think evidence was given to the effect that any straightening of the line there would be rather more costly than the line laid out.

777. Mr. Stuart, having recently gone over the line, is of the same opinion as previous surveyors who have gone over it, namely, that it cannot be materially cheapened without increasing the grades and curves? Yes.

778. The savings which you say are possible amount to about £192,000? Yes.

779. Can you say what would be the speed at which the line could be worked with a grade of 1 in 25, and using the class of engine now used on the Lismore to Tweed line? I suppose the engines would go safely round the 6-chain curve, but I am sure the Locomotive Engineer would not like to have them put to that test on account of wear and tear. I imagine they would have to proceed pretty slowly. I should not like to see anything faster than 15 miles an hour attempted when going round those curves. The bad curves, of course, would be confined only to a portion of the route. There would still be a considerable run of straight line without excessive curvature.

780. I believe the worst curves would be where the Richmond Range is crossed? Yes.

781. Following the spurs which run up to the divide? That would be the worst place. Then there is a place further on—nearer Myrtle Creek.

782.

782. If there were any doubt about being able to use the engines now in use on the Lismore to the Tweed line with this altered Grafton to Casino line, would your objection still hold good about the using of lighter rails. If the shortening of the curves precludes the use of the engines now in use on the Lismore to the Tweed line, would not it be just as well to take the whole matter in hand and say, "We will adopt new engines, and have lighter rails for the Grafton to Casino line"? Even then I would not recommend that, because, sooner or later, as traffic increases, that line would have to be put on the same footing as the other, and then the 40 lb. rails would not suit. You would have to renew the road by putting down 60-lb. or 70-lb. rails, and you would have a lot of material on hand which you could not use for any other purpose, because we do not use 40-lb. rails anywhere else, and we are not likely to do so.
783. What would be the life of a 40-lb. rail with traffic such as you would get on a line of this description, using it three or four times a week? The traffic would be so small that steel rails would last from twenty to thirty years.
784. So that if there were any probability of the traffic increasing to any great extent before that period expired, it would not be wise to put down 40-lb. rails if other things were equal? I do not think it would. It would be a great pity to make a saving in that way.
785. You say that, in going round the curve, it would not be advisable to exceed a speed of from 10 to 15 miles an hour? Yes.
786. Could the class of engine now in use on the Lismore to the Tweed line take a train up a grade of 1 in 25 at that speed? In using steeper grades you would, of course, have to reduce your loads. It is assumed, of course, that the traffic would be very small. Only on the assumption that the train loads would be very light would it be really advisable to put in such steep grades, or anything like that—working it, in fact, like a tramway. I could find out for the Committee how much those engines would take up a grade of 1 in 25.
787. Say at a speed of from 20 to 25 miles? I will obtain the information and send it in.*
788. Would 40-lb. rails carry the trucks now in use on the Lismore to the Tweed line if they were loaded? Yes, I should think so.
789. Is there any great objection, from the point of view of railway working, and keeping in view the probability of only light traffic, to the use of such an engine as is now working on the Camden tramway? For this particular section.
790. Yes, in conjunction with the Lismore to the Tweed line? I should think there would not be for that particular section; but I am sure the Commissioners would not approve of using one class of engine on one part of the line, and another class of engine on another part.
791. But if you have two different classes of traffic to deal with, surely it would be permissible to arrange your hauling power and other details in conformity with the difference? That is a traffic question, which I have not gone into carefully. Perhaps some of the traffic officers would give better evidence than I.
792. Do you think you have included all the items in which it is possible to make any reduction consistent with safety? Yes; I have included all the items where one can make any material reduction. I have not made any reduction in the cost of the bridges or timber openings. I do not consider that desirable, because, before those bridges are worn out or decayed, the line would have to be put on the same footing as the other. It would have to be made to carry the same rolling-stock.
793. I do not suppose, in any case, the building of a bridge to carry slightly lighter rolling-stock would be very much cheaper than the ordinary bridge you construct? No, not in proportion.
794. The large bridges—I include Myrtle Creek—come to £25,000; culverts and timber bridges crossing all creeks, £80,000; so that there is a total of £105,000 for bridges and culverts, and of course covering that 7 miles of flooded country? You cannot build a light bridge and then strengthen it conveniently. You would have to pull it down and build up a stronger one, so that there would be a great waste of money when the character of the traffic came to be altered, and you had to use the heavier rolling-stock.
795. Assume a difference of 30 tons in an engine, would the reduction in the case of a bridge, built to carry a 30-ton engine, be proportionate to the cost of one built to carry a 60-ton engine, or would it be greater in proportion? The main girders would be, approximately, in proportion, always allowing that there would be a certain amount of expense in each case, which is common to the two, and could not be reduced. Then the platform of the bridge would not be reduced in proportion. The piers and the abutments would be probably very much the same.
796. Then there would not be a great difference between the two classes of bridge? No, not at all in proportion to the load to be carried.
797. Assuming that the line were constructed, as suggested, with grades of 1 in 25, and curves of 6 chains radius, would it then, say ten or twenty years afterwards, be very expensive to make the line up to the standard at which it is now proposed? Of course, it would mean a considerable alteration in the location, and there would be a cutting down of the grades. It might be done, perhaps, by altering the location altogether without cutting down. In some few places, probably, it would be cheaper to cut down the grades where curves are not involved, than to alter the location. I think the additional expenditure would, probably, be a good deal more than the difference of first cost.
798. In the meantime you would be saving the interest on the reduction? Yes.
799. Assuming that a lighter line were sufficient to carry whatever traffic there would be, do you think the saving in interest for ten years would make good the extra expenditure which would be necessitated by not constructing it in the first instance according to the original design? I suppose it would be a question of additional earthworks only. Anything else which is saved could simply be supplemented; but the earthworks would mean an alteration. A great deal of the work in the way of banking and cutting would be absolutely thrown away; so it would, perhaps, in some of the smaller culverts. You might be in a position to save, in the first instance, about £70,000 in earthworks and small culverts. The other savings really do not affect the load to be carried, but these do.
800. The other savings above the £70,000 are in respect of the station buildings and matters of that kind? Yes, and ballast and all the rest of it.
801. What you would save, then, would be the interest on the capital cost of £70,000? Yes. That at 3 per cent. would be £2,100 per annum, or £21,000 in ten years. It would be difficult to say, at the present moment, whether it would not cost later on £90,000 instead of £70,000. Of course there might be

* NOTE (on revision):—The gross loads that would be drawn by A class engine (6-wheel coupled) might be taken at 100 tons, and the C class (4-wheel coupled and bogie) 70 tons.

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be a greater difference; it might cost more than £90,000—that is more than £70,000, plus the interest for ten years; but it is difficult to say. I am afraid I could not give a reliable opinion upon it.

802. *Dr. Garran*] As a general rule, in railway construction, does it cost more to make a cheap line first, and convert it into a good line afterwards than it does to make a good line first? It depends on what you want to add afterwards. If, as is suggested, you altered the location later on. I think it would be better to have the right location at first; but if it is merely strengthening the ballast, or cutting down grades, it is better, perhaps, to make the cheaper line first, and improve it afterwards.

803. Supposing, in this instance, we make a cheap line, and in ten years find it necessary to convert it into a good line, would it cost as much to convert it into a good line, as the saving which would be effected by constructing it as a cheap line? My difficulty is to know how much of the line would have to be renewed and altered in location, and built afresh. The comparison would depend upon how much of the old work would be absolutely thrown away, and how much would have to be new.

804. Would not the working expenses be very much increased on the cheap line over the dear line, taking into consideration the slowness with which the trains would have to be run, and the smaller haulage power of the engines? No; I do not think the working expenses would be increased, if you had small loads and only one train to carry them. Of course, if you had to multiply the number of trains, because you could not carry sufficient in one train, it would be a different thing; but if you only had small loads to carry, and could do all that was required with small trains, I do not think the working expenses would be greater with the cheaper line. I do not think the permanent-way expenses would be greater. Some portions of the permanent-way expenses—the maintenance of the line—would be dearer, and others cheaper. You would have shallower cuttings, and maintenance would be cheaper on that account. On the other hand, some of the work, being light ballast, would not be so substantial, and it might on that account be dearer. I think the two things would about balance.

805. Considering that there is a good rainfall in this district, would it be safe to make a light ballasted line? I should not recommend it.

806. I suppose there is a great difference between a dry and a moist climate in that respect? Yes. We could not do without ballast altogether, as we do on some of the western lines; I do not think the full amount of ballast is too much for a line of this character. At the same time, there is no doubt it could be worked with just enough ballast to do the packing up of the sleepers, when they show a tendency to subside.

807. Do you think that, under those circumstances, it would stand one of the heavy easterly gales which break on that coast? It would stand it right enough, but I think maintenance would be more costly, on account of the smaller amount of ballast.

808. I believe the line you have in the Richmond district at present is a thoroughly good one? Yes; it is well ballasted with blue metal.

809. There is no cheapness about that? No.

810. You have nothing there to guide you? No.

811. *Mr. Watson*] That line cost about £18,000 per mile? That was largely due to the heavy nature of the cuttings, the tunnels, and the bridges.

812. *Dr. Garran*] But it is a thoroughly good line? Yes, it is a very good line—a first-class line.

813. You have no cheap line at all on the coast? No; they are all first-class lines.

814. *Chairman*] The reductions you outline, leaving out the station at Grafton, amount to about £2,000 per mile? Yes.

815. At 3 per cent, that means £60 per mile in the annual savings;—could you make any comparison between that saving and the increased cost per mile for maintenance, and the increased cost, if any, per mile, in carriage—that is the working expenses? I think the working expenses would amount to about the same on both lines.

816. Would stiffer grades mean larger consumption of coal? Yes; but if you only have to carry small loads, I do not know that that would come into consideration very much.

817. Would not the decreased speed also mean higher cost of working, or would the amount be negligible? I think it would be negligible.

818. Would the increased cost for maintenance be a large item as against the £60 per mile in the annual saving? I do not think so. With regard to the maintenance of way, I may state that in consequence of the cuttings being less deep there would be less cost. As a rule, shallow cuttings are easier to maintain than deep cuttings. On the other hand, in consequence of the small amount of ballast there would be more maintenance. I think they would just about balance. It is very difficult to estimate the difference.

819. At any rate you do not recommend that the changes which have been suggested should be made? No.

820. Do you care to offer an opinion as to the advisability of constructing the line at all, apart altogether from the engineering question? It does not seem to me that there is much call for the line. A good deal of the first part of the line would be close to the water. A large portion of it would be more or less parallel with the river. When you get out a distance of from 15 to 20 miles you are within a few miles of Lawrence. The further end would be pretty well served by the Casino line.

821. And the intermediate part of the line does not go through country which is thickly populated? No. The country at the northern end of the line seems to be the best. There is more settlement on Myall Creek, and on some of the other creeks than there is at the Grafton end except on the river flats.

822. *Mr. McFarlane*] I suppose the proposed line could not be used as a North Coast line until the whole of the line is completed from Morpeth? No.

823. I understand the Railway Commissioners are opposed to the construction of a North Coast line? They opposed the construction of the first section of it—from Maitland to the Manning—which is the only portion which has been submitted up to the present.

824. I suppose we could not have a North Coast line without that? No.

825. The Public Works Committee, I believe, would not recommend its construction? That is so.

826. In view of that fact, I suppose, it is probable that it will be a good many years before there can be a North Coast line? Yes.

827. So that the proposed line would be merely a connection between Grafton and Casino for many years to come? Yes. I do not think the fact that it would have to form a part of the North Coast line would be a sound reason for making a very substantial line, because the solidification of the line might, very

very well, be left to the future. When the North Coast line became an actual fact would be time enough to consider the improvement of the line.

828. Even if the first section of the North Coast line were sanctioned, would it not take a very considerable time to construct the whole length of it as far as Grafton? Yes. I think the first section would be about 100 miles—that is from Maitland to the Manning; and, roughly speaking, it would be about 200 miles from the Manning to the Clarence.

829. Has there been any exploration of any country connecting the Richmond with any other point than Casino and the Clarence, with view of getting a cheaper line? Yes. I think the country has been explored; but it is always considered that any line further to the east would be more expensive on account of the amount of water which would be met with.

830. Should the item for constructing a bridge over the Richmond River, at Casino, be charged to a line between Grafton and Casino? I think so.

831. A good portion of Casino is on the same side of the river as Grafton? Not very much. There is a good road bridge across the river there.

832. So far as connecting Grafton and Casino is concerned, a railway bridge would not be necessary,—it would only be necessary when connecting the Grafton-Casino line with some other railway from Lismore? Yes, but still it would be involved.

833. In view of that, is it fair to charge it all to Grafton and Casino? I think so, because it would become a necessity to connect it.

834. Should not some of it be chargeable to the Lismore-Casino line, as well as to the proposed line? No; unless, of course, Grafton is the point to be aimed at. If you want to get to Grafton from Lismore, perhaps the bridge ought to be charged as much to that section as to any other; but if the traffic is to be the other way about—northward—I think it is a fair thing to charge the bridge to the Grafton-Casino section. That is, however, a question of opinion. One thing, which it is necessary to point out to the Committee, is this: Members of the Committee have noticed the fact that out of the £3,000 of saving per mile, £1,000 is due to the reduction of the Grafton station and works there, leaving £2,000 due to the cheapening of the line per mile. I would point out that out of that £2,000 something over £1,000 only is due to the grades and curves, and a little under £1,000 to the lessening of works which can be supplemented afterwards. That is to say, that you spoil the line really by effecting a saving of something over £1,000 per mile. You can save a lot of expense without hurting the line at all, by simply reducing the accommodation, and afterwards supplementing it when traffic increases, and the requirements are greater. All you do by this saving is to spoil the line, with grades of 1 in 25 and curves of 6 chains radius, and you only effect a saving of £1,100 per mile. It does not appear at all desirable to cheapen in that way.

835. *Chairman.*] Do you know why such a pretentious station is set out at Grafton? Sooner or later the item would have to be drawn upon. It includes a lot of wharfs, offices, repairing shops, and a lot of work which, when the system becomes a large one, would be required, but at the present time it is not actually necessary.

836. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I understand you to say that the working expenses on a cheap line are about the same as those on one of our ordinary lines? I did not make any general statement of that character. I think the working expenses in this case would, probably, be about the same; but where there is a lot of traffic the working expenses on a cheap line would be very much greater than they would be on an expensive line.

837. I suppose that the same number of men would be employed in either case? I do not know that they would. In this particular case I suppose they would; but I did not make that as a general statement, applicable to all cases.

838. Would not the consumption of coal per hour be about the same? Yes; with the same load carried, you would have to get over the same summits; the same amount of work would really be done.

839. Supposing you had to travel 100 miles; a train, travelling at 20 miles an hour, would cover that distance in five hours, whereas a train travelling 10 miles an hour would cover it in ten hours;—that would mean ten hours as against five hours' consumption, and it would also mean ten hours' wages as against five hours? There would be less fuel consumed with the slower rate of speed.

840. *Dr. Garran.*] You would have to pay more wages if you kept the engine-drivers and guards twice as long? Yes; if you kept them overtime; but if the traffic were small, you might not have to do that.

841. Would the consumption of coal be increased by the stiffness of the gradients? Yes, over those gradients; but you would get the corresponding runs down, and would effect a saving in that way. I do not think there would be much difference if you went at a correspondingly lower speed. Of course, if you tried to get the same speed out, you would spend a good deal more in proportion on the steeper grades.

THURSDAY, 5 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
	JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Thomas Herbert Wilshire, Conditional Purchase Inspector, and Forester, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

842. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the route along which the proposed line is to be constructed? Yes.

843. Can you furnish any particulars regarding the occurrence of timber along the route? Yes. I have a report, which I will read:—

1. One of the finest and densest hardwood forests on the north coast of New South Wales exists along the Richmond Range, in the county of Richmond. The timber referred to covers an average width of 2 miles on both sides of the summit line of the range.

H. Deane.

28 June, 1900.

T. H. Wilshire.

5 July, 1900.

T. H.
Wilshire.
5 July, 1900.

2. The Richmond Range runs nearly parallel to the proposed railway from Mongogarie Creek, in the parish of Busby, to Mount Marsh, in the parish of Marsh, county of Richmond, being 13 miles from the surveyed line of railway at the former, and 12 miles at Mount Marsh, and the distance varies up to 15 miles from the line. From Mount Marsh the range turns easterly and crosses the surveyed route; thence it continues easterly. For about 8 miles east of the proposed railway timber would be drawn to the line; but any further east along the Richmond Range it would be taken direct by teams to the North Arm of the Clarence River. It is anticipated that the railway would carry timber cut on the Richmond Range over a length of 60 miles of that range, by 4 miles wide, comprising 200 square miles.

3. The hardwood timbers within this limit are spotted-gum, ironbark, blackbutt, tallow-wood, red mahogany, grey-gum, stringybark, and bloodwood. The following soft woods also exist in patches within the same area along the range:—Pine, beech, teak, black bean, silky oak, and a little cedar, all of which are of marketable sizes.

4. At the present time this forest for 30 miles between Mongogarie Creek and Mount Marsh is nearly virgin. Ironbark piles 60 feet long, and squared girders 16 inches by 14 inches and over 40 feet long, have been recently taken out of the part just referred to, for special orders; but its distance by road to shipment on the Clarence and Richmond Rivers—from 30 to 40 miles at present—precludes a general trade. The railway, however, if constructed, would open this extensive, valuable forest, it being from 12 to 15 miles only from the surveyed line.

5. The general rates for cutting and carriage of timber to the Clarence and Richmond Rivers from the counties of Clarence and Richmond, are, for—

Girders—12d. to 13d. per cubic foot, of which the carriage is reckoned at 6d. to 7d., the total payment being distributed between the cutter and drawer. A load by bullock trolley contains from 120 to 150 cubic feet.

Logs for sawing—The prevailing rates for cutting and carriage of logs for the saw-mills from the above areas are 2s. 6d. to 3s. per 100 superficial feet.

Piles—For cutting and drawing piles to navigable water from the areas referred to, 6d. to 10d. per lineal foot is paid, of which up to 2s. 6d. per pile goes for cutting it. The lengths of the piles vary from the about 30 feet to 55 feet, and the 10d. rate prevails for the largest sizes.

6. The estimated quantity of marketable timber at present within the area of 50 miles by 4 miles along the Richmond Range is three trees of 800 superficial feet to each acre, which, at the ruling rate of royalty, would yield in revenue to the State 4s. per tree, or £76,800. This forest area along the Richmond Range will be permanently retained for the preservation and growth of timber. A low estimate of its continual production, after the present marketable timber is removed, would be one tree of 800 superficial feet per acre per annum, giving an annual royalty, if demand on the area to its full capacity were made, of £25,600.

7. Independent of this permanent forest area, there are 139,463 acres of temporary forest reserves adjacent to, and up to 15 miles from, the proposed railway, in which large quantities of ironbark and spotted-gum are the prevailing timbers, which will afford marketable supplies for some years.

8. Ironbark is also growing scattered over the unreserved and vacant Crown lands along the general route of the line. These lands are at present only returning small rentals as occupation licenses. Sufficient sleepers to build the line can be obtained growing within the limits of the railway reserve along the original trial survey line.

844. Which of the areas along the route would be available for drawing traffic to the railway? The bulk of the traffic in the shape of timber would be drawn from the western side of the railway line.

845. At what point on the proposed line would you first get timber for traffic purposes? Going from Grafton you would get it first about Myall Creek and Camira.

846. That is from 28 to 30 miles? Yes.

847. For how far along the line, going towards Casino, would you continue to get timber traffic? To within about 16 miles of Casino. Of course, I am speaking now of good timber.

848. Along miles of the line there would be a probable timber traffic? From 20 to 25 miles.

849. What timbers are included in the area which would be likely to give traffic to the line? Ironbark, blackbutt, teak, pine, a little cedar, tallow-wood, and mahogany.

850. Do you think there would be any traffic in spotted-gum? Yes; I think the spotted-gum is one of our best timbers. It is splendid timber on the range. It is thoroughly sound, and of great length.

851. *Mr. Hyam.*] My experience is that the northern spotted-gum is poorer than the southern spotted-gum? They use a lot in the sawmills up there.

852. *Mr. Watson.*] What do they principally use it for? For buildings. One of the sawmills turned out about 1,000,000 feet of spotted-gum which was grown in different parts of the Grafton district. I think the bulk of it came from the south side of the Clarence.

853. Would the line tap a considerable area of pine? Not a great area.

854. In what direction would the timber go when put on the line? Towards Grafton. There would be a great probability of direct shipment there.

855. Would it pay the timber-growers to drag the timber from the range, a distance of 12 or 14 miles, and load it on the trucks for Grafton? I think so.

856. Is there any possibility of their leaving the railway on one side and taking the timber to Lawrence? No; if they did that they would do it now, but it does not pay. It has never paid to draw mill-timber to Lawrence.

857. Unless a railway is constructed somewhere in that direction, the timber on the main range is likely to remain untouched? I think so, unless a mill is erected somewhere on the road.

858. You seem to think that the range will yield a good deal in the way of royalty? I am certain it will.

859. Is your estimate made up on the basis of the old royalties charge? No; on the proposed new royalties.

860. There seems to be a little objection to them coming into force? It looks like it. We used to charge 9d. per 100 feet on the reserves and 6d. for other hardwoods. Sixpence is a moderate royalty, but it is passed on. The saw-mill proprietor does not pay.

861. What class of timber is most in demand for export to outside markets? Ironbark. Very little other timber goes out of the Clarence River.

862. The demand for other timber is local? Yes.

863. Is a considerable quantity of ironbark shipped from there now? Yes; the trade is active just now, and has been for the last two years.

864. What is paid for road carriage at the present time? For girders, 1s. to 1s. 1d. per cubic foot—that is, for hewn timber.

865. Is that irrespective of distance? They are drawing 50-foot lengths to Lawrence, a distance of 32 miles.

866. Is the bulk of the timber obtained in the district, and which is sent to Lawrence, drawn that distance? No; the bulk of the timber is drawn from 15 to 20 miles.

867. And do they get an equivalent to that price? Yes. For hewn timber the charge for drawing and cutting is 11d. to 1s. 1d. per cubic foot. The cutter and drawer generally divide between them.

868. Have you a knowledge of the land through which the proposed railway will pass? Yes; up to Myrtle Creek.

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869. What is your opinion of the land from Grafton to Myrtle Creek? It is only second-class, and not too good second-class.
870. Assuming that the railway were constructed, what area would be necessary to support a family? 640 acres, at the very least.
871. To what would it be possible to devote the land? Chiefly to dairying. The agricultural land is very limited. It only fringes on the creeks.
- 872-3. Do you think that the land is such that, with improvement in the way of ringbarking and the planting of artificial grasses, 640 acres would maintain a family? Yes. With artificial grasses, dairying ought to do very well on 640 acres.
874. Has it been shown that artificial grasses will thrive up there? Yes. Some of the selectors at Myall Creek are growing paspalum. It is growing luxuriantly.
875. Have any of them tried it on the higher or more ridgy lands? I do not think so. I have, however, seen it growing at Smith's Creek on very raw sand.
876. Does it thrive? Yes; it appears to be a hardy grass.
877. From what you have seen of the land beyond Myrtle Creek, would you say it is as good as, or worse than, that from Grafton to Myrtle Creek? It does not vary very much until you get into Casino. I have made a rough estimate, and I think that 1,500,000 superficial feet of timber ought to be removed per year by rail.
878. How long do you think it would take to exhaust the forests? In view of the young growth, I do not think it would be possible to exhaust them if we had careful supervision and proper working. Of course the indiscriminate cutting which has been taking place should not be continued.
879. Do they put the beech and similar woods to any useful purpose, locally? It is used for building purposes; but there is not great demand for it, locally.
880. Is there any export demand for it? No; it is very limited.
881. *Chairman.*] Is it because the soft woods are not valuable enough to allow heavy road-carriage to be paid that there has been no outside market for them? I think there is no demand for them. Of course there is a great demand for pine.
882. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think the country from Grafton to Casino is, as a whole, fit for either agriculture or grazing? At present it is chiefly used for grazing.
883. What is its carrying capacity for sheep? Sheep would not do there. It requires 20 acres for a beast. Of course it could be much improved by ringbarking and the planting of grasses, so as to bring it down to 6 or 7 acres to a beast.
884. Do you think the country would be likely to be taken up for closer settlement in the event of the railway being constructed? I think so.
885. Do you think a considerable portion of the country would be suitable for mixed farming? I think so—that is, for straw crops. There is not much of it suitable for the growth of maize.
886. I suppose the timber-carriage would be scarcely sufficient of itself to support a railway? I scarcely think it would.
887. At what distance from the line would it pay to cut the timber? Any amount can be obtained within 15 or 16 miles.
888. The country generally is of a hilly character? It is undulating and level.
889. Are the roads fairly good? The roads are tiptop, and there is plenty of grass.
890. Then 20 miles would not be an excessive distance to draw for ordinary farm work? No.
891. Is much cultivation being carried on? It is very limited, except on Myall and Myrtle Creeks.
892. Is the silky oak growing plentifully? No; but there is a fair amount of it.
893. To what size does it attain? The growth will not be more than from 3 feet to 4 feet 6 inches.
894. Is it a suitable timber for casks? Yes.
895. *Mr. McParlane.*] What is the annual output of timber from the Clarence for export? I cannot say exactly, but I should think that it is about 2,000,000 feet of iron-bark, exclusive of piles.
896. Is that for piles and girders? Yes.
897. Where is it principally sent to? New Zealand.
898. Do any of the Northern rivers ship direct to New Zealand or foreign ports? I do not think so.
899. Do you think the whole of the ironbark timber on the reserves, or on the range, would be cut for export by way of the Clarence? I think so. I do not think a stick of it would go to Casino. It could be shipped direct from Grafton or Lawrence.
900. Is the export trade likely to increase? I think so. There is another mill in commission now for the export trade.
901. Do some of the saw-mills use tramways for conveying timbers to the mills? Yes. One of the mill-owners has 12 or 13 miles of tramway running.
902. Is that method cheaper than carrying by team? It has the advantage that they can work it in almost any weather.
903. If the proposed railway were constructed, do you think the timber that is now carried considerable distances would be carried by train instead of by team? I think it would, from the western side of the proposed railway.
904. You have stated that the country between Grafton and Casino is second-class country;—do you mean second-class grazing or agricultural country? It is second-class grazing country.
905. Do you know the land on the Camira homestead? Yes.
906. How would you class that land? With the exception of the agricultural portion of it, I would not call it first-class land.
907. It has been stated in evidence that some portions there have been placed under cultivation with good results? That would be beyond the creek only. The fringes along the creek are fairly good, but the forest country is only second-class.
908. What class of country is it when cleared for grazing purposes? Cattle do very well upon it.
909. Is it suitable for dairying? Yes; with improved conditions, such as good grasses.
910. Is the grass sour? It is rank, and I suppose it is sour too. The country wants well eating out. In the paddock country, of course, a good number of cattle are fattened.
911. How long have you occupied the position of Inspector of Conditional Purchases in the Clarence district? Fourteen years.
912. What district were you in previously? The Hunter River district.

T. H.
Wilshire,
July, 1900.

913. Do you think the whole of the Crown lands along the proposed route, within a reasonable distance of the route, will be taken up in the event of the line being constructed? I think a very large area of it will be taken up. I have not the slightest doubt that eventually the whole of it will be taken up.
914. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you both varieties of spotted gum—red and white—in the district? Yes.
915. Which class of spotted gum predominates? The white.
916. That, of course, is the best timber? Yes.
917. Is there a large export trade in spotted gum? No; not an export trade.
918. Is there likely to be an export trade in it? I do not see why it should not be exported.
919. Is there not some objection to it for wood-blocking? Yes; I do not think it stands well in the ground.
920. Is it used for bridges? Not as a general rule; but it ought to do well for decking. It is a splendid timber.
921. Is the country through which the railway will pass heavily timbered? Yes.
922. Would it be difficult and expensive to clear? You could ringbark it for about 1s. an acre. The ruling rates there vary from 6d. to 1s. per acre. We consider that the land should be heavily timbered if we pay 1s. an acre.
923. Do you think artificial grasses will grow well in the district? I am quite certain that paspalum will grow well. I have seen it tried on much inferior land—on almost raw sand.
924. It will grow in sandy country if there is any moisture, but a good deal of the country through which the proposed line will pass consists of heavy, raw, clayey soil? There is a lot of it which is very sandy.

TUESDAY, 10 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

The Honorable John See, M.P., Colonial Secretary, sworn, and examined:—

Hon.
J. See, M.P.
10 July, 1900.

925. *Chairman.*] Would you prefer to make a statement of your views, first, on this question? Perhaps it may assist the Committee to some extent if I give a brief *resume* of the development which has taken place on the Clarence, the Richmond, and the Tweed, since 1871. Of course the Clarence was occupied for some years before 1871; but it will hardly be necessary to go back to that period. In 1871, the Clarence, the Richmond, and the Tweed, in fact, the whole of the Northern district from the border to the Clarence, was called the Clarence electorate. I have had some figures taken out for the convenience of the Committee to show the development of these districts during the period I have mentioned, and for the purposes of comparison I have had the figures taken out in decades. In 1871, the Clarence River district, the Richmond River district (which is now divided into three electorates, namely, Ballina, Lismore, and the Richmond), and the Tweed River district, which is now a separate electorate, formed one electorate. At the present time this country comprises six electorates, namely, Grafton, the Clarence, the Tweed, the Richmond, Ballina, and Lismore. The total population of the whole of these districts in 1871 was 13,760; in 1881, it was 23,762; in 1891, it was 40,394; and in 1900 it is 48,500; so that the increase in the population has been most phenomenal. I will now state the number of holdings exceeding 1 acre, and the area included therein. In 1871, the number of holdings was 1,528, with an area of 162,809 acres; in 1881, the number of holdings was 2,219, with an area of 562,533 acres; in 1891 the number of holdings was 4,064, with an area of 1,188,513 acres; and in 1900, the number of holdings is 5,054, with an area of 1,208,542 acres. The total area cultivated was 27,934 acres in 1871, 38,324 acres in 1881, 69,012 acres in 1891, and 81,543 acres in 1900. Maize was the principal product in the early years of the settlements. In 1871, the area under maize was 24,635 acres, yielding 1,044,632 bushels. In 1881, the area under maize had gone down, because in the interim sugar-growing had been introduced. In that year the area under maize was 22,523 acres, yielding 1,022,890 bushels; in 1891, the area under maize was 41,321 acres, yielding 1,486,977 bushels. So that between 1881 and 1891 the acreage under maize was nearly doubled. Of course the outlying districts had become more populated and occupied as the result, and the agricultural development took place. In 1900, the area under maize is 49,402 acres, yielding 1,611,822 bushels. Now, I come to the area under sugar-cane. In 1871 there was comparatively little land under cultivation for sugar-cane, and the statistics in reference to that yield are not available. In 1881, in the whole of these districts, the area under cultivation for sugar-cane was 11,990 acres, yielding 119,300 tons of cane. In 1891, the area under cultivation was 22,045 acres, yielding 183,455 tons of cane. In 1900, the area under cultivation is 22,479 acres, yielding 169,949 tons of cane. I may add that when dairying became popular, and it was proved that it was a paying product, some portion of the land which had hitherto been devoted to growing cane was used for the purpose of dairying. That is accounted for to a very large extent by the fact that a large quantity of the back land, or what is called forest land, had not formerly been used. It was not utilised to the extent it is now being utilised before the advent of the dairying industry. When the dairying industry developed and was proved to be a payable one, some of the land hitherto used for cane-growing was incorporated with the forest land in connection with dairying. That accounts for the little diminution there has been in the yield of sugar-cane. Then, of course, the seasons would also affect the yield to some extent; and there were other causes. I do not want to say anything about the tariff conditions, but one of the reasons for the diminution was the proposal to abolish the duty on sugar, and, as the Committee, of course, know, it was reduced from £5 to £3 a ton. I will now give the figures in regard to live stock. In the whole of these districts there were 14,136 horses in 1871; 18,534 horses in 1881; 32,297 horses in 1891; and 33,646 horses in 1900. Of cattle, in 1871, there were 172,327 head. What are

Hon.
J. See, M.P.
10 July, 1900.

are called the dairying districts of the northern portion of the Colony—away from the river banks—particularly the Richmond and the Clarence, and some portions of the Tweed, were primarily used for squatting purposes, and it has always been, perhaps, one of the most famous districts in the Colony for the breeding of cattle. Therefore, the number of cattle in the districts, as the Committee will observe, is very considerable. In 1871, the number of cattle was 172,327 head; in 1881 it had increased to 217,552 head; in 1891 to 219,708 head; and in 1900 to 288,516 head. There are a few sheep in these districts, but not many. The sheep have diminished in number. In 1871 the sheep numbered 26,630; and in 1900, only 5,054. Swine have increased from 7,333 in 1871 to 34,302 in 1900. Perhaps the most phenomenal development in production has been in connection with dairying. In 1871 there was very little dairying. The difficulties in getting produce to market were very much greater in regard to carriage by sea. At that time they did not get the advantage of cold storage. The butter, if sent, would reach the market in a very bad condition. Not only in connection with the Clarence and the Northern districts, but in connection with the whole world, the matter of cold storage has largely contributed to the enormous development which has taken place. There was very little butter made in 1881; but in 1891, 1,218,580 lb. were made, and in 1900, 7,720,884 lb. made, so that the development in the decade has been more than six times as much as it was at the beginning. In the production of ham and bacon there has been a very large increase. Latterly there has been, perhaps, as great a development and improvement in the manufacture of bacon as there has been in connection with dairying; but the dairy business has brought, side by side with it, this development of the production of swine, and the enormous production of bacon. These figures come from the Statistician, and, therefore, are absolutely correct. In 1891, the ham and bacon cured in the district weighed 145,558 lb., and in 1900 the bacon and ham cured weighed 1,583,782 lb. I had these figures prepared to show the Committee the enormous development which has taken place there during those years, more particularly during the last ten years, in regard to what we call the dairying industry. I have very much pleasure, Sir, in handing in these figures to be appended to my evidence [*Vide Appendix*], in view of the fact that I wish to emphasise particularly the importance of these districts as to their past, their present, and their future probabilities. I shall be very glad to answer now any questions which may be put to me.

926. *Dr. Garran.*] You have given us a very interesting account of the very rapid development of these northern rivers during the last ten years;—I suppose there has been no parallel to it in any other district of the Colony? I do not know of any.

927. I gather that it has been principally due, first, to the growth of sugar-cane, and, secondly, to the dairying industry, which has been made possible by the better steam transit and the cold storage? Primarily, and to the advantage of the railway between Murwillumbah and the Tweed.

928. Sugar-cane was grown considerably on the Clarence before it was attempted on the Richmond? I really cannot say that. Of course, the Clarence is an older settled district than the Richmond.

929. And there was more development on the Clarence before there was ever a mill erected on the Richmond? I think the first sugar-growing was attempted on the coast or on the Macleay.

930. It is correct that there was a great deal more sugar grown on the Clarence than on the Richmond? I think they attempted to grow sugar on the coast, down the rivers, till they found that they could not grow it to advantage on account of the frosts. In 1871 the Richmond was comparatively unoccupied, except by timber-getters. Therefore, any development which has taken place has happened since that year.

931. The navigation of the Clarence was better than the navigation of any of the northern rivers at that time? Very much better.

932. And the flats on the Clarence was where, principally, the sugar-cane was grown? Yes.

933. It does not grow on the rising ground? It does not grow well on the forest lands. It grows well on alluvial lands.

934. In the Richmond, you have a country out of flood-reach, which is also good sugar-growing country, because it is trap-rock country? It is very good.

935. So that the character of the two rivers differs very much in that respect? Not in the rivers themselves. The alluvial land on the bank of the Richmond is almost on all-fours with the alluvial land on the bank of the Clarence.

936. I mean that you can grow on higher and drier land on the Richmond than you can on the Clarence? Yes; but it is scarcely river land—it is adjacent to the Richmond. It is alluvial in a sense, but it is not formed by deposits.

937. It is the detritus of volcanic rock which makes it so rich? Yes.

938. Are the original growers on the Clarence—the men who took up land in the first instance, and brought that land under cultivation—are they mostly the growers there now? A great number of them are. Of course, a great number of them have disappeared altogether from the scene; a great many of them are dead.

939. Are the growers now a tenant class or freeholders? Mostly freeholders.

940. There are more tenants, I suppose, than freeholders? I suppose so.

941. The great bulk of land on the Clarence was taken up by free selectors? Originally; and a good many of the farms have changed hands by the ordinary processes which have come about.

942. So far as dairying is concerned, I presume the development has been greater on the Tweed, the Brunswick, and the Richmond, than on the Clarence? Yes; it has. In 1891 the production of butter on the Richmond was 1,025,934 lb.; on the Clarence it was only 52,636 lb.; and at Grafton it was only 140,010 lb. At that time there were only three electorates. But in 1900 Lismore produced 2,866,760 lb.; the Richmond, 546,540 lb.; the Tweed, 2,594,720 lb.; and at Grafton it had gone up from 140,010 lb. in 1891 to 1,157,623 lb. in 1900. And the Clarence, which in 1891 produced only 52,636 lb., had gone up to 537,671 lb. in 1900. So that the ratio of increase would be almost the same for the decade.

943. Of late years has not the dairying industry developed much more rapidly on the Richmond than on the Clarence? I do not think so from the figures I have given. There was a great area of land on the Clarence—what we call forest land—which was not used except for the ordinary purpose of breeding cattle. With the advent of the Fresh Food and Ice Company, who put up a very large factory—perhaps one of the very best in the Colony—the farmers got an opportunity of using their waste lands, and the result of that action has been this enormous increase in the Clarence and Grafton electorates, which are practically the same district, for they are only divided by an imaginary line. The production of butter has grown from 1,218,580 lb. in 1891 to 7,720,884 lb. in 1900. The industry is only in its infancy yet.

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944. You owe that result to the enterprise of a private company? We owe that to the fact that facilities were afforded to farmers who had cattle to put their milk to the use which the factory enabled them to do.

945. It was the enterprise of a private company which gave the stimulus to the district? Quite so. Of course, dairying would be possible on the rich river flats even more than on forest land.

946. Has it superseded the sugar-cane much now? Not very much. I pointed out the total decrease in acreage under sugar-cane. According to this return the maximum area under crop was in 1891, when it was 22,045 acres, which includes the whole of the rivers. In 1891 the area under sugar-cane in the Richmond was 13,549 acres, in the Clarence, 8,171 acres, and in Grafton, 325 acres. These three electorates were split up afterwards into the Lismore, the Richmond, the Tweed, Ballina, Grafton, and the Clarence electorates. But the total area under sugar-cane in the whole of the rivers was 22,479 acres in 1900, as against 22,045 acres in 1891; so that there has been an increase of about 450 acres, notwithstanding the advent of dairying and other causes.

947. Do you know of any riverside farmers on the Clarence who are experimenting in both industries—dairying and cane-growing—at the same time? Some of them are.

948. Do you happen to know which they find the more profitable? It depends entirely on the character of the land. A man who has rich alluvial land—

949. I am speaking of the alluvial banks? There is no doubt that they can make more money from growing sugar-cane on alluvial land than they can make from dairy-farming; but, in connection with the alluvial flats, there is a considerable area of forest land which they can utilise for dairy cattle, and they can work the two things combined. There are a great many persons who formerly did nothing but take up land and try experimental crops—did a little odd farming, timber-getting, and miscellaneous work. They now devote themselves almost exclusively to dairying, notwithstanding that many of them have to take their milk for a considerable distance, and they do not get very good prices.

950. Taking the alluvial land only, is there a tendency on the part of farmers to give up cane-growing in favour of dairying? No.

951. The old crop pays the better on that rich land? Yes.

952. In the Richmond River district, where some men have been growing sugar-cane before dairying became fashionable, is there any tendency to give up growing sugar-cane on that land? Not on the alluvial land; but in what they call the big scrub there is—in the neighbourhood of Byron Bay. Moreover, a great number of these smaller factories or creameries have been started; in fact, a great many of the farmers themselves have their own separators. A separator enables the farmers to convert their milk into cream, and the bulk is reduced, and they can reach the factory very much better than they could under the old conditions; and the roads are made also.

953. Can a man who has his own separator afford to live further off from a factory than a man who has to send his men into the factory? Undoubtedly.

954. That is one great advantage? Unquestionably. I will give one case in point. I do not know the number of acres which the man holds; I know he is a very enterprising man; I do not know a better type of farmer. He lives at a place called Stockyard Creek, and his case is a notable one. In spite of his industry, he could not make his land pay, although it was fairly good land. He was a considerable distance away from a factory at which his milk could be treated, so he obtained a separator for himself. At that time he was considerably in debt, but now I think he is almost out of debt, and he is in a very prosperous condition so far as his prospects are concerned. He is not only treating his own milk, but he is treating the milk of a number of his neighbours.

955. How far is he from the factory? Ten miles. If he had to take his milk 10 miles it would not have paid him, but he can take his cream that distance. One cart can take the cream from the milk of a great many cows, whereas one cart cannot take the milk of many cows.

956. What is the proportion of the diminution in the bulk? I could not tell you, but it is very considerable; and then the skim milk, after it is denuded of butter properties, is used for the feeding of pigs.

957. I gather from your answer that, so far as new farms are concerned—I mean new ground being taken up and brought into cultivation—the tendency is to go into dairying rather than sugar-cane growing? There is not very much land on the Clarence—that is, what we should call alluvial land—within reach of the river.

958. I am speaking of the alluvial land on the Richmond? And even on the Richmond, too. There is not so much of that land which is suitable for growing sugar-cane, except in the big scrub, and they find it pays them better there to use the land for dairying.

959. How far from a mill can you grow sugar-cane—that is, with land carriage and no water carriage? It would not pay to grow sugar-cane very far away from the railway or the shipping port. If they had to cart their cane 4 or 5 miles it would hardly pay them. On the Tweed railway itself the price for drawing the cane with the sugar is not very high. Still it is high when you consider that they have to pay for the carriage of the bulk, not the manufactured article. If they have to pay 3s. a ton for the carriage of their cane, and it takes 10 tons of cane to make a ton of sugar, that would be 30s. If they had a ton of manufactured sugar they could get it taken for 4s. or 5s.

960. It is very important to get the cane taken to the mill as soon as it is cut? Yes, because there is a weepage.

961. So that there is a natural limit from the mill in which you can grow cane for land transit? Yes.

962. Unless you have cheap railways to run along into the back country? Certainly.

963. There is not the same difficulty in regard to the cream? No; but there is some difficulty.

964. There is more temptation, if you are going to take up new farms, to go in for dairying than to go in for cane-growing? Undoubtedly.

965. The future of the big scrub on the Richmond looks more towards dairying than cane-growing, at present? Yes; but then you know dairying in the big scrub, and dairying in what we call the forest country, are two very different things. To make the scrub land available for dairying, you have to spend a good many pounds per acre. I suppose you may reasonably estimate that it would cost you £5 or £6 an acre to clear the scrub, whereas in ordinary forest land a little ringbarking here and there, and fencing, would be all that was required.

966. Is the herbage on the forest land as succulent and good as it is on the Richmond? I do not think it is, per acre.

967. It would not carry so many cows per acre, or yield so much milk? No; but they can keep a great many more cows. Hon.
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968. Now, taking these rivers, the produce of the Tweed is mostly sea-borne to Sydney, I suppose? A good deal of the heavy stuff is. A 10 July, 1900.
969. There is no other way to get it to Sydney? They could get it to Lismore and Byron Bay.
970. By going outside the Heads and going into the other river? A good deal of the dairy produce which is produced on the Tweed finds its way to Byron Bay, where they have a very large co-operative factory; and then it is shipped. The cream is taken by train to Byron Bay, and is brought on to Sydney by steamer.
971. Suppose the Grafton and Casino railway were made, would that in any way affect the quantity of shipping at Byron Bay? Not a bit.
972. What goes there now would go there then? I think so.
973. Would the produce of the Brunswick be in any way affected by making a railway from Grafton to Casino? I do not think so.
974. It would still take the same road to market? I think so.
975. Do you think the produce of the Richmond would still find its outlet at the Richmond Heads, or would it go to Grafton? I think it would still go by the river.
976. We must not look upon this line from Grafton to Casino as a line which is likely to rob other ports of their trade, but as a line to develop its own trade? Yes; it will largely add to the interchange of trade between the two great districts.
977. Does the man who makes butter want to change with another man who makes butter? There is a great deal of other trading. There are the passenger trade, the cattle trade, and the timber trade, and a number of other trades which grow up by reason of better communication being provided. A man who buys cattle on the Richmond or the Clarence, and wishes to convey them promptly to their destination, instead of driving them 60 or 100 miles, would put them in a railway truck, and get them delivered at their destination in a few hours, thereby effecting an enormous saving in their condition.
978. Is Grafton a good market for cattle? It is a very good market, because the population of Grafton and the Clarence combined is 20,500.
979. But the Clarence is a very good cattle-growing district itself? It does not pay them to kill cattle which are useful for dairying, and therefore they go to the Richmond very often for cattle.
980. They are not all cows;—there are some bullocks, as well as cows? They have an enormous meat-preserving establishment at Ramornie, which buys a great many of the surplus cattle on the Richmond. If, instead of driving these cattle, as they do now, from the different outlying stations, they could put their cattle into a railway-truck at night, and take them to their destination in the morning, the cattle would save enormously in condition. At the present time there is enormous waste in condition. I have had a good deal of experience with cattle. I used to buy a very large number of cattle for the purpose of freight. We used to reckon that from the time we bought a bullock on the station it would take us, at the earliest, a week to get it to market, and a bullock which weighed 900 lb. on the station would be reduced to 800 lb., besides deteriorating in other respects.
981. Does it not depend partly on the feed on the road? It is not always available; and if there is plenty of feed it belongs to other people very often.
982. How far is Ramornie from Grafton? It is 9 miles above Grafton. It is on the junction of the Orara Creek and the Clarence; but there is abundance of good land between Grafton and Ramornie.
983. Is it navigable to there for steamers? Yes.
984. Do they get many cattle from the Richmond district? An enormous number in the season. Of course it depends entirely on the price. When cattle are high, as they have been during this season, consequent on droughts elsewhere, there has been a big demand. Queensland has suffered, perhaps, more than we have from drought; therefore, the cattle supply has been diminished. I reckon they kill from 15,000 to 20,000 head of cattle every year, and in some years they kill more than that number.
985. Do you think that many of the Richmond cattle would take the trucks at Casino? I am sure they would, because this railway would go right through the cattle country.
986. Through it or to it? It would go through a great deal of the cattle country.
987. Do you mean to say that the land on either side of this proposed line is occupied for fattening cattle? Some of it, adjacent to the head of the river, round Casino and that way.
988. At the end of the line? Suppose it is 5 or 6 miles from the proposed railway to Kyogle, Dyrabba, and other stations; it would not take them very long to get to the depôt where cattle are shipped. They would have abundance of food, and the cattle could be put on the trucks and sent along.
989. It does not pay to put cattle in a truck for a short journey, because the knocking about they get in putting them in is very considerable? At times it does. A 100-mile run would take a lot out of cattle. Moreover, there is the question of despatch to be considered. If they could draft their cattle from the station by rail, and supply the requirements exactly as they arise every day, it would save a lot of wear and tear on the cattle which are usually brought over 400 or 500 in a drove, put in a paddock, where they wait to be killed.
990. You look on the cattle trade as a material element in the earnings of this line? I do. In the settlements which are taken place on the Richmond, and the various parts of the district, including the Clarence and Grafton, the interchange in the breeds of cattle is great. A farmer, for instance, who wants to stock a farm goes to another part of the country. If he wants cattle he goes to the Clarence or some other place. He knows the place where he can get them on the best terms, and get them delivered in the best condition. There must of necessity, be an enormous development of the trade, consequent on the two districts being connected, notwithstanding that they produce to a very large extent similar products.
991. This line has been put before us in a double aspect, partly as a section on the North Coast line, and partly as a local line;—have you any idea in which capacity it is of the more importance? I think they are both important.
992. You do not think one more important than the other? No; I think they are almost inseparable. From my experience in the northern districts, I do not think there is any question whatever but that there must be a North Coast line made sooner or later, and the sooner it is made the better, because I think the North Coast districts are capable of carrying a larger population than any other portion of the Colony, from

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from the agricultural and industrial point of view. Of course, I omit Newcastle and Sydney, which are not parallel. I do not think there is any other place in the Colony to be compared with the North Coast districts, not even the South—and I have been a good deal over the South—as regards the area of good land available and the magnificent character of the rainfall, to say nothing of its timber and its minerals. 993. But would the timber and the minerals be an interchangeable trade, or a trade mostly for Sydney? It would be an intermediate trade. For instance, take the timber industry between any of these ports—between the Clarence and the Richmond—it would not pay to haul the timber by team. If they could put it on a truck and bring it alongside the vessel, which is prepared to take it away to Sydney or elsewhere, the handling would be very much less. At present it has to be hauled over bad roads, and timber lorries make bad roads, because their loads are much heavier. The less handling you have for any kind of article the cheaper you can put it on board, and the cheaper you can sell it to a person desiring to buy.

994. Is there not a good deal of timber left in the Clarence River district still? Yes.

995. Enough for its own support? There should be more than that.

996. You will not want to import timber to the Richmond for many years to come? I do not think so. I know that within a comparatively short distance from Grafton—within 40 or 50 miles, and in what they call the Don Dorrigo country—there is, perhaps, the finest pine forest in Australia.

997. That would not want to be sent north to the Richmond? Some of it might. They are very rapidly denuding the Richmond of some of its best timber. It is a pity that it is going on, although it is necessary for it to be done for the clearing of the land. In some cases there has been a larger destruction in property and in value, in the shape of timber to make the land available for farming purposes, than the farms are worth when cleared.

998. Is not the timber worth as much as the crops? Yes; but it does not suit a man who wants to grow cattle or cane to have a pine forest. He has either to let the forest remain and wait, or to cut down the trees—which would be worth a great deal of money if kept—and make his land available for grazing or farming.

999. According to the evidence put before us, there has been very little purchase of land, and settlement, on this line, between Grafton and Casino, because of the want of transit? That is right. It is of no use taking up land if you cannot get your produce to market.

1000. Is it your opinion that if the line were made, the whole of the land would, in a few years, be taken up for dairying? I suppose the whole of it would be taken up; they would have to take the good and the bad, and therefore the bad would go with the good.

1001. From a traffic point of view, would a line running through a dairying district, and settling the country for, say, 15 miles on either side, give a profitable return? No; and I do not think any line in the Colony would. I think if you take the line between Wagga Wagga and Narrandera, or between Goulburn and any other point on the main line, the local trade of itself would not pay the interest on the cost of construction of the line.

1002. Not even what it drew to itself? No. I do not think that the line for the purpose of Sydney proper—the suburban line—would pay the interest on the outlay.

1003. Now the Moree line has paid with what it has carried and drawn to itself, rather being an exception to most of our lines? I think that in the construction of railways we should look at the local aspect of the line. The local aspect, no doubt, is a big factor as a reason why a line should pay, because it enables the people to take up land which otherwise they would not take up. If we wish to induce people to go into the bush and settle, we must give them facilities to get their produce to market.

1004. *Mr. Levien.*] It is the trade out beyond Moree which makes the Moree line pay? Of course it is. The trade beyond Moree is a great deal more in bulk than the trade between Moree and Narrabri.

1005. *Dr. Garran.*] It is not the trade alongside the line so much as what it concentrates at the ends? Yes.

1006. Looking at dairying produce, cream is a very portable commodity, and the quantity you get off a large dairying district does not give very much revenue to the railway? Not the actual product itself; but then side by side with that product you get an increase of population, and you get other industries growing up. You want the wheelwright, the shoemaker, the blacksmith, and the thousand and one things which mean settlement.

1007. Even then, we are told that this land would have to be put into 500-acre blocks? Perhaps so.

1008. You would only have one family to every 500 acres, so that you would not get a very dense population? Let me put this point to the Committee: Anyone who knows the Richmond River district—notwithstanding the fact that the railway does not give anything like a revenue to pay the interest on the cost of construction—anybody who knows that district, would not hesitate to say that the construction of the railway between Murwillumbah and Lismore was a good thing for that district and the Colony, because the figures I have given here prove that but for something of that sort being done, this enormous production of butter would not have taken place, because they could not get it to market. The advantage of being able to sell the Crown lands, and giving people facilities to settle on the land, has been consequent upon the railway being made, and although the direct loss on the railway has been very considerable, we must take into consideration the indirect advantages, which are very numerous, and which have resulted from its construction.

1009. Apart altogether from your own interest in the district, do you think the gain to the nation is more than the £29,000 a year loss on the line? I have no doubt whatever but that it is. I have not an acre of land which will be benefited, and, so far as I know, it would not put one shilling in my pocket; therefore, I am not speaking from any personal standpoint. I have no doubt, whatever the railway may cost, the indirect advantages would largely overbalance the loss which would be sustained, from the interest point of view, by its construction.

1010. Putting it in the money point of view which you, as an ex-Treasurer would appreciate, do you think that indirectly the State gets £29,000? Yes; because in the first place the State can sell the Crown lands which otherwise it could not sell. I am quite sure that the land would bring a very much better price, and largely cover the cost of the line.

1011. If we allow the land to be taken up by free selectors we should not get a better price? You give people a better opportunity to settle on the land. Under present conditions if a man took up land, he could not live on it.

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1012. Was the land on the Lismore-Murwillumbah line in private ownership before it was made? It might have been just adjacent to the line. There has been an enormous quantity of land taken up since the railway was made, and there is an enormous area yet to be taken up. If they had little spurs running out from that line into the dense bush, it would give an enormous stimulus to settlement over and above that which they have at present.

1013. As a practical man, you think the loss to the Treasury is practically made good in invisible and indirect ways? I think, immeasurably so.

1014. We have had it stated in official evidence that a family of five persons would produce $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of butter off 200 acres of land, and that from the same area there might be got 70 tons of agricultural produce for transit by railway;—do you see what a very small quantity of tonnage there is between the railway? It would be a great deal more sensible to consider the value of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of butter.

1015. It would if you paid freight by value? In one case, you can produce an article of value, by reason of doing something, which would not have been produced if the State had not done that thing. The $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of butter at £100 per ton would be worth £250; but the 70 tons of agricultural produce, especially if potatoes, might not be worth more than £2 a ton.

1016. I am looking at it from the revenue point of view;—if we had an *ad valorem* freight charge on all our produce that would tell very strongly? On the other hand, you have to consider that if the stuff is produced it means money, and the man who gets the money spends it by making improvements, which means labour, and a variety of other things. It is an advantage to the community to have this increased spending power. It goes to swell this enormous production of butter, which means so many million pounds of weight, as well as a million pounds of money.

1017. I merely ask you whether we should gain indirectly by making a railway through this very productive country? I have no doubt whatever but that we should.

1018. Even though we make a heavy loss on the revenue side? I have no doubt whatever. Taking it as a local line, and, consequently, as a portion of the North Coast line, which must inevitably come, I do not think there could be any doubt whatever about it.

1019. There is another point to consider—the Railway Commissioners are always trying to make a profit, and when they do make a clear profit they give the country the benefit of cheaper rates. The more we load them with unprofitable lines the more impossible we make it for them to reduce the rates? Then you may take this argument: Suppose the Commissioners could dominate the construction of railways, there are a great many lines made which would not have been made at all, and the settlement which has followed from their construction has been of great advantage to the country generally, and the end of it has been that, although they do not perceive the advantage which the railways derive, yet there is a very considerable advantage, we will say, to the trunk line by reason of the construction of lines which do not directly pay—for instance, the Mudgee line, and many other lines which I have before me here. Looking at it simply from a business point of view, if it were your money or mine, probably, we should not do it, but the State undertakes to construct these railways, and, as the State owns the Crown lands, the more quickly you can dispose of those lands, not for the sake of the money which they bring, but for the sake of the settlement which they induce, the larger the volume of trade we encourage on our railways. That is exactly how the Americans look at this question. They used to make the railways first, and the population used to follow the lines. We have turned it round the other way. We want the population to settle on the land first, but they cannot live on the land unless you give them facilities in the shape of railways, and because we cannot see to-day that a line is going to pay we almost shut our eyes against the probable development that will take place. This return unmistakably proves, I think, what I have said. If this enormous development has taken place during the last thirty years we can reasonably infer that there is going to be a very much larger development during the next thirty years.

1020. The question is simply one of financial obligations on the State—how far we can afford to go in losing money which is not directly recouped? Taking it from the selfish point of view it means that the more railways you have the better it is for the people, and then it means certainly an advantage to the city as well as the country. If there were a reasonable prospect of a railway line paying I have never yet once given my vote against its construction, no matter to what part of the country it was to go.

1021. I am speaking of cases where there is a reasonable prospect of its non-paying for a very long term of years;—how long do you think it will be before the Lismore line pays? It goes through auriferous country, and there might be a gold-field discovered.

1022. But taking the country as it is? There is a probability of the line paying. There is the timber industry. Those forests of timber in the intervening country, and in parts of the district, are almost beyond reckoning.

1023. Do you think the Lismore line by itself would pay for twenty years to come? No.

1024. Not directly? I do not think any bit of line will pay. I think the more you add on to that line the better it will pay.

1025. The more money you will lose directly? Well, it is only taking it out of one pocket and putting it in another.

1026. The difficulty is to trace it into the State treasury from the other sources? Our settlers are producing an enormous quantity of goods which are required for our consumption, and but for that production we should have to import them. If we did import them we should have to pay, but if we produce them we pay the settlers for producing.

1027. In the case of the butter which we make, we are sending it away? Some of it.

1028. Most of it? We are getting money for it, and that helps to pay the English creditor the interest on the capital.

1029. You think it pays the nation to make a non-paying railway, where it would not pay a private company to do so? I do. If an enterprising individual had a product of the same character as the State has, then his shrewdness would cause him to take up some ground, because he would anticipate that a man would come along and make a railway. There are a lot of things in business that men sell which do not pay, but which they are obliged to keep.

1030. The Americans have made a great many lines by land endowments; they got the land as a free grant or at a very small price, and they sold it with the railway increment added to it? They do not value the land a bit till it is put to use.

1031. They did sell it to the settlers at a very much bigger price than they had to pay for it? Yes; they got the ground, and there the settlement follows the construction of the line.

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1032. We do the other thing, and what we want we buy back for five times what it was sold for? There is a good deal of this land which has not been sold.

1033. Most of the line from Murwillumbah to Lismore went through private property? A good deal of it did. That was more or less speculative. The land was so rich that people took it up in anticipation of something happening, and it did happen.

1034. *Mr. Watson.*] The railway happened? It was inevitable that it should happen. I have here a map which particularly describes the different electorates I have been speaking of.

1035. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you look on this proposed line as a section of the North Coast line? Yes.

1036. What is your opinion as to the North Coast line being eventually a paying line? I think it will be sure to pay. I think it will open up better country than any country yet opened up by a railway.

1037. Have you a knowledge of the character of the country between the different coastal rivers—say, between the Hunter and the Tweed? Yes; I have been all along the coast, from Point Danger to Cape Howe, and I have a good knowledge of the character of the country at the head of the navigation of the different rivers, and between there and the table-lands.

1038. Is it a class of country which will be settled upon in the event of a railway being constructed? I have no doubt whatever about it. I might give one instance. I look upon the Don Dorrigo country as quite equal to the big scrub, and in some respects it is better, because it is better adapted for the growth of roots—potatoes and turnips—and grain and barley, and things of that sort. I do not think there is any part of the world where the land is richer than it is in the Don Dorrigo scrub.

1039. Would the extension of a line south from Grafton touch this country? Yes; it would go very adjacent to it. It would make it possible for them to reach a profitable market with their different products.

1040. Which would be their nearest port in the event of that North Coast line being made? It depends upon which direction it went. If it went in the direction of Don Dorrigo, or from there inland from the coast, Grafton would be.

1041. Is there any available port south? There are two places which they call harbours—namely, Woolgoolga—where there is a jetty, which, I think, I was instrumental in getting—and Coff's Harbour; but they are only open places. Coff's Harbour is sheltered by an island in some weathers, and in others it is not. They are natural inlets, but not harbours in the sense in which we understand harbours—they are something like Byron Bay.

1042. Which is looked upon as the best port between the Hunter and the Queensland border? The Clarence, I should think.

1043. How do freights from the Clarence to Sydney compare generally with the freights from other coastal rivers? They are low at the Clarence, because the depth of water is greater. Of late years the Richmond has been improved very considerably. The harbour improvements which are going on have considerably helped the navigation. I may say the same of all the northern rivers where harbour improvements are going on. Perhaps there is the same ratio of improvement as on the Clarence, but still the Clarence really carries the greatest depth of water.

1044. Are freights cheaper at present on the Clarence than on the Richmond? Yes.

1045. In the event of a railway being constructed from Grafton to Casino, seeing that the freights are low between the Clarence and Sydney, would not that induce traffic from the Richmond River too? I think the tendency would be that it would go to Grafton. By far the larger portion of the trade which would be created, or the produce which would be raised between the two rivers, would go to Grafton.

1046. There have been some conflicting statements made in regard to the possible carriage of traffic between Grafton and Casino;—in your opinion, would the railway induce a greater amount of traffic than there is at present? There is no doubt whatever about it. Wherever railways are made, there is a considerable amount of traffic which springs up, and people do not seem to know where it comes from. There is a considerable amount of traffic between the Clarence and the Richmond even now.

1047. How does it go? Most of it goes from Woodburn to Chatsworth. Some of it goes direct to Casino and Grafton; other portions go from Lawrence.

1048. Would that traffic go by rail if the proposed line were made? I should think so. If a man could get from Grafton to Casino or Lismore in two or three hours, where it now takes him twenty-four hours to go by coach, I think it goes without saying that he would go by rail.

1049. What is your opinion of the character of the Crown lands between Grafton and Casino? I should describe them as good grazing lands, with some portions adapted for agriculture. It is a great deal better class of grazing land than the land which we ordinarily understand as grazing land in many parts of the country.

1050. Given railway facilities, do you think it would increase the value of the Crown lands between the two places? I am sure it would. At any rate, people would take up the land, and live on it, whereas now they will not touch it, because they cannot live upon it.

1051. What has been the common practice in regard to railway reserves;—are they usually thrown open for free selection, or are they sold by auction? I do not know.

1052. There are a number of railway reserves along the route of the proposed line? I do not know what the custom is in that case.

1053. But a railway reserve really means that the land is reserved in anticipation of a line coming that way, and if it went by that way the land would be made available for selection, I should think? It would depend largely on administration, I suppose. The Government would have the power to dedicate these reserves for any purpose it thought proper.

1054. *Mr. Watson.*] These reserves have been kept back from selection with a view to railway construction? With a view to preserving the land.

1055. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What I want to know is, what is usually done by the Crown with these reserves, after the line is constructed? I should think they would be thrown open for selection. There is an area, of about 500,000 acres of land on this route, unalienated.

1056. You made some mention of the meat trade between the Richmond and the Clarence;—do you know where the local butchers mostly get their fat cattle? The great bulk of the cattle consumed on the Clarence comes from the Richmond.

1057. I am speaking of the cattle consumed, apart from the meat-preserving works? Yes. I do not know what the percentage is, but I know that the butchers of Grafton go and buy their cattle from Kyogle, Dyrabba, and other stations about the Richmond.

1058. When you were purchasing cattle, where did you mostly get fat stock? At what we call the head of the Richmond.

1059. How would you get them to market—by the Richmond, or by driving them to the Clarence? They have to drive them to the Clarence now; but, if they had a railway, I should think they would use the line. They bring the stock over in mobs of fifty or 100.

1060. *Mr. Levien.*] So far as that railway goes, it seems to be against your personal interests;—you are largely interested in the shipping trade, and this railway would be against your interests, would it not? I do not think so. I do not look upon the proposal in that way. I think the enormous increase in production would rather, if anything, benefit me.

1061. It is in your favour the way you are giving your evidence;—I regard your evidence as absolutely fair in every way, because I thought this line was somewhat against your own personal interests in the shipping trade? In giving evidence on a proposal of this sort it is really a national matter with me, and not a personal matter. I have always advocated the construction of, not only this line, but a line to connect with the table-land, and whatever might be the result of its construction to me personally, it would not enter into my thoughts to prevent it or hinder it from being done if I believed that it ought to be done.

1062. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the timber trade in the Clarence district? Yes.

1063. Is it on the increase? Very considerably. I may say that there is an enormous company projected now for the purpose of exporting timber. They propose to deal with a great deal of this timber—pine and other stuff—for export, more upon the lines which America adopts in regard to the timber trade. They propose to have the very best powerful machinery for handling great logs, and bringing them to the coast in the cheapest possible manner, and cutting them up with the best facilities.

1064. Is the port sufficiently good to enable shipping to take timber to other colonies? Yes; there is a constant trade going on with sailing vessels to New Zealand. A good deal, if not most, of the timber which has been used in constructing the various harbour works in New Zealand has, I think, gone from the Clarence. There are two or three vessels of 400 and 500 tons trading backwards and forwards now.

1065. Do they meet with any delay at the bar? Only that delay which would cause them not to get into Sydney or Newcastle when it is very rough.

1066. In bad weather? No; they have a tug-boat. In a heavy easterly sea they could not get in any more than they could get into Sydney. I do not think the steamers are bar-bound on the Clarence more than twice a year. They go over the bar. I have been over the bar when I did not like it, but the captain said that there was no danger, and he knew better than I did whether there was.

1067. Do you think that that trade would be likely to increase in the event of the line being constructed? It must enormously increase.

1068. Have you any knowledge of any large forest reserves on the proposed line, containing ironbark? Yes; there are hundreds of millions of feet of timber between the border of Queensland and right down along the North Coast to Port Stephens. I do not think it is possible to estimate the value of these forests—whether they are what we call scrub forests or the ordinary forests. I have been bewildered sometimes in going along the North Coast line from the Manning to Port Macquarie, and thence right on to the Clarence, to see the magnificent timber that is there. And if you get further back, in what we call the spurs of the mountains, where the creeks take their rise, and go to make these rivers, there are pine and cedar trees in abundance, and some of the finest trees in the world. This pine forest I spoke of a little time ago is astounding—nobody could believe it, if he did not see it—as regards the enormous number of trees that it contains. In taking out these trees, there is no doubt that they could preserve the forest by letting the young trees grow. They do it in other countries, but we have been rather getting rid of our forests for the purpose of carrying on farming operations, and in a great many cases we have been destroying a very much more valuable asset than we have created. Down about Woolgoolga, for instance, and all the way up to Orara, the country is capable of carrying an enormous population, if they only had the means of getting their stuff to market. They have to depend now on the ordinary bullock teams; but the roads are very bad, because the country is rotten. The better the country, the more rotten it is for traffic. In wet weather they cannot get across the country at all, unless the roads are made; and making roads means spending a lot of money.

1069. *Chairman.*] And they do not last long when they are made? No; because they have to carry big loads of timber or produce, to pay. As soon as roads are made, if very bad weather come, they are dug up. It cannot be helped, but still there it is. It looks like making a road to be destroyed almost immediately by the heavy traffic.

1070. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Mr. Deane, the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, has made an estimate of the cost of a light line between Grafton and Casino;—do you think a light line would suit the requirements until such time as the North Coast line was built? If they could work it on the grades, certainly.

1071. It could be constructed at a much less cost? Any railway would be better than none at all. A light line, if it could be made, would serve the purpose for the time being; but, ultimately, it would be converted into a more substantial line if it were proved, as I feel sure it would be, that the trade would warrant its being done. Wherever it may come from or to, there must be a connection between the coast and the table-land. That enormous tract of country between Queensland and Newcastle, that no railway touches at all, and which would not interfere with any railway which at present exists, must be considered. There is one-eighth of the whole Colony not touched by railway construction in any shape or form.

1072. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you well acquainted with the country between Grafton and Casino? I have been over about a third of it. I have been to Casino, and I know that end well; and I have been a considerable distance along the road from Grafton to Casino; but I have never been upon the route there. I know from those who have been on the route, and from my knowledge of that part which I have seen, that it is good country generally.

1073. Is it not a fact that it is not, by any means, an agricultural country between the two points? It depends on the kind of agriculture. For maize-growing, generally, no, although it would grow good maize; but I am told by those who have taken up bits of land here and there that it grows the succulent grasses splendidly.

1074. Grafton and Casino are already well served, are they not, by water communication with Sydney? Fairly well.

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1075. So that this line would really have to support itself by the trade between the two points, say, from 20 miles on either side? The intermediate country, of course, would be opened out.

1076. Do you think the country is of such a nature that it would be capable of supporting the railway? Yes; that and the trade which would follow as the result of making the railway would, I think; but, as I said before, I do not think any railway in the country would pay between any particular town and town—that is, from the carriage of the intermediate trade. I do not think, for instance, that the trade between Quirindi and Singleton would pay of itself. It is the trade which the line brings from beyond, and also the accumulation of the intermediate trade, which pays.

1077. There is a discrepancy of £16,000 estimated, between the revenue and the expenditure on this line;—do you think it is likely that that amount could be made up? I am sure it will be made up. It is very much like any other enterprise. It is very much like Sydney was in its early days. Sydney has developed until it is now one of the most prosperous cities in the world. At its inception it was a poor place, because there was no trade. The trade has developed, and now it is one of the finest towns in the world, and it will be finer still when the improvement scheme is carried out. So it is with a railway. It is the trade on a railway which makes the railway, and unless you get the railway you cannot say what trade you will have. The electric trams, for instance, created a trade for themselves. There are hundreds of people—thousands of people—tens of thousands of people—riding in the electric trams who either walked or who used some other means of conveyance. So it is with a railway; give people facilities and they will not go on to assume that only the same volume of trade will be carried on between two points with all the difficulties which surround the trade at the present time. To say that only will be continued when there is a railway is rather putting a damper on the progress of the Colony.

1078. The two extreme points on this line are already well served, and the question is, will the country to be served by the railway be likely to make up this great deficiency which is estimated;—there is only a very small income estimated from the line, viz., £4,844, while the estimated annual cost is £21,429; it does seem an immense amount to make up? I will tell you honestly what I think. I think if you wait for railway construction until it can be proved that each line will pay you will not have any railways made for a great many years to come.

1079. This country has been described to us as being not by any means rich country, and it is a country where cheap railways would hardly come in, because there are a good many steep gradients in the line, and that sort of thing? By comparison with the best alluvial land on the Clarence, it is not what we would call rich; but, by comparison with what you call forest land in many other parts of the Colony, it is very rich. That is my opinion about it.

1080. I think the estimated capacity of the country is about one beast to 7 acres? That is in its natural condition; but when you have proper paddocks formed, and when the best of the land is put under crop for the growth of green fodder, and a variety of things which can be produced by the thrifty husbandman, the production would be largely increased. To make a bald calculation, as the grass is now, with all its disabilities and difficulties, of what we may believe will be the result, is not, I think, a fair way of putting it, because nothing is left to development or incentive. I think there is going to be an enormous increase in both respects. What we call forest lands on the Clarence, before the introduction of the dairying system, were looked upon as worthless. The people tried cattle-raising, but when they got the cattle raised they could get scarcely anything for them. A poddie they would sell for 2s. or 3s., and in some cases they could not sell them at all. These forest lands are now all valuable, and the cattle which they could hardly sell before—the yearlings and others—are worth from 30s. to 40s., and in some cases more than that, according to their breed. It would be very difficult to estimate the increase, but I should certainly think there has been quite an increase of £2 a head all round on the cattle in the district. There is an increase in value of £500,000. I showed that the cattle had increased from 219,708 in 1891 to 238,516 in 1900. What I particularly had these statistics prepared for was to show the enormous developments which have taken place in each decade from 1871 to 1900, which is only a fair testimony as to what might be expected to take place in the years that are to come. The increase in the decade succeeding this one I take it will be very much greater than the increase in the decade preceding it, and you, gentlemen, who are called upon to decide this question would reasonably take this return into account when I vouch for its authenticity. I have not prepared the return myself. It was prepared, under my instructions, by the Government Statistician, who really did not know what I wanted it for. I look upon that return as most interesting from the progressive point of view, apart altogether from its bearing on this question, as showing the enormous progress which the country, in that particular district, has made.

1081. Is it your opinion then that, within a reasonable time, this line would become self-supporting? I honestly think it will pay the interest on the capital cost before the line between Murwillumbah and Lismore will, but I do not think that it can possibly stop at Grafton. I think there must be a North Coast line.

1082. *Mr. Levien.*] Supposing there was a light line made, which, Mr. Deane says would cost £500,000, then there would be only half the loss and more chance of its paying;—I suppose you think it is better land between Grafton and Casino than between Newcastle and Sydney when that line was constructed? The land between Newcastle and Sydney, I suppose, you will put down as poor land so far as the surface is concerned. What it contains underneath I do not know—coal, I suppose. You could not find country as bad up there.

1083. The surface would not be much good for anything? No; except for residences.

1084. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think a tramway would be sufficient to open up this country between Grafton and Casino? Unless they could utilise the present rolling-stock they have on the Tweed—no.

1085. A very much lighter line than that on the Tweed would carry all the rolling-stock other than the engines now used on that line? Yes.

1086. Do you think a line that would carry the rolling-stock that is on the Tweed line now, at a slow rate of speed, would be sufficient for the opening up of this land? I am not in a position to give an opinion in a practical way; but if the rolling-stock which they have on the Tweed line can be used in conjunction with the projected line between Casino and Grafton—if they can get a light line and cannot get the other—I should say it is better to have a light line than no line at all, which would really mean, I suppose, largely a question of this description—whether the light line could be ultimately converted into a heavy line without any very serious loss in doing so, or whether a light line would mean a loss if it were proved that a permanent line would have to be constructed. That is really a question for the practical men

men—the engineers—to deal with. They have a Railway depôt at Lismore with sheds, and all the appliances for cleaning, repairing, and so on. That would not be necessary to the same extent at Grafton. That expense has already been incurred which forms a very considerable portion of the expense of working a line. If you have ever such a short distance of line, you must have certain appliances for working that line, and the isolation adds to the expenditure per mile. The extension would reduce, according to its length, the *pro rata* expenditure on a mileage system. In other words, if it cost £10,000 to maintain the engines, &c., in connection with 50 miles of line, you reduce the expenditure proportionately by extending the line.

1087. The trouble is, that we are confronted with a very heavy expenditure—nearly £8,000 per mile;—taking the present price of rails—and the prospect of a through traffic does not seem to be very great—I take it from your evidence that you are convinced that what pays best is the through traffic? Partly.

1088. No railway gets a great amount of return from the traffic along its route; it is nearly all through traffic? The combination of the traffic is the best.

1089. In this case there does not seem any very large prospect of a through traffic, and whatever justification there is for the line seems to rest on the probable opening up of a large area of Crown land? I will give you this case. Suppose there are 20,000 persons on the Clarence, and they want to come to Sydney by rail, if they have to go to Glen Innes it is a journey of 100 miles or so, whereas if the railway went to Grafton, they could simply step into the train and go right over to the Tweed, and they have not very far to go then to catch the Brisbane train. It seems to me that before very long there will be a connection between the two systems.

1090. I do not think there would be many people who would care to go by that way when they can come down in your boat for £2? I know some people who would rather forfeit £20 than come down by boat. There is bound to be a tremendous change of trade, which is necessary between all these rivers—between the Macleay and the Clarence there is the exchange of cattle. Men go to the different districts and buy cattle, and they trade. The things they consume they get direct; but still there is that necessary trade, and the development of it does add more or less to the earnings of the railway.

1091. *Mr. Hyam.*] When the Clarence and the Richmond districts are very nearly fully developed, what population do you think they will carry? The Clarence is more developed than the Richmond, although there is a great deal to be done yet. On the Clarence there is an enormous area of land which is not taken up or utilised in the way it ought to be. I do not exaggerate when I say that it will carry three or four times its present population.

1092. I go a little further than that? Of course, in years to come it will be a great deal more than that. To occupy the lands which are now unoccupied would absorb three times the population we have on these rivers.

1093. I have had an opportunity of seeing more of this country than you have had? I would be very sorry to exaggerate, because I have seen a great deal of it. I do not want to mislead the Committee. I am only stating what I believe to be the case.

1094. *Chairman.*] This very gratifying increase in settlement and production in the northern district has mainly taken place along the lines of the rivers? Mostly.

1095. And the intermediate spaces between the rivers have not, as a rule, been very thickly settled? Only on the Richmond. There has been a great deal more of internal development on the Richmond; that is between the two rivers. There is no doubt that the railway has done that.

1096. *Mr. Harper,* speaking of the section between Casino and Grafton, made this statement when he was giving his evidence before the Committee:—

This section of the line is a complete blank, so far as intermediate traffic is concerned, and, as there is no exchange of products between the Richmond and Clarence Rivers, there can be no through goods or stock traffic from Casino on the Richmond, or to Grafton on the Clarence, or *vice versa*."

From your previous remarks, I think you are inclined to challenge that statement? Absolutely. I say, with all due respect to Mr. Harper, that he does not know what he is talking about in that respect. The present method of communication is primarily between Chatsworth on the Clarence, and Woodburn on the Richmond, a distance of 26 miles. It is only a narrow strip. That is how the passenger trade has developed. The people who want to go from the Clarence to the Richmond to catch the steamer, and do their trade, go by that way, or *vice versa*. As regards the mail route, the original trade from Sydney to Tenterfield was through Lawrence. There is a main road from Lawrence to Tenterfield, that is *via* Drake and Tabulam. There was a road between Casino and Tenterfield also. Then the main road between the table-land and Grafton was along the Glen Innes route. There was one also from South Grafton to Armidale. It is not reasonable to suppose that people who want to go to the Richmond would undertake a 60 miles odd journey when they could get along the other way. The river steamers are very handy. The people can get into a river steamer at Grafton in the morning, and go to Chatsworth, whence they go by coach to Woodburn, and there get the river steamer to take them up to Lismore. The cattle which come down by that road, come across the country from the Richmond to the Clarence. If there were a railway, instead of wasting the cattle as they do now, the probability is that they would be trucked.

1097. Have you considered this proposal in view of any future connection with Glen Innes or Tenterfield? Necessarily.

1098. What would be the general effect on the development of the country between Grafton and Murwillumbah, of a further connection between Grafton and Glen Innes? As the products on the coast are so different from what they are on the table-land, there would be an enormous exchange of products. For instance, they cannot grow wheat on the coast, and they can grow it on the table-land. They cannot grow sugar on the table-land, and they can grow it on the coast; it is semi-tropical. Then, I am sure that, in the summer time, there will be an enormous number of persons living on the coast who will be glad to go to the cooler climate on the table-land, just as people go from Sydney to the Mountains. I may say that in the future, we are going to have the same development of mountain ranges between the coast and the table-land as has taken place between Sydney and the Blue Mountains, or Bowral. Of course the population will have to increase in proportion before it is done, but the quality of the mountain country is on all fours with that of the country I have mentioned, and it is adapted for fruit growing. It is unimproved country between the coast and the table-land, containing minerals and timber, and in addition it is a sanatorium.

1099. Do you know of any report on the mineral character of the land between Grafton and Casino? No. There is a good deal of gold-mining going on at a place called Yulgilbar, which is some distance from

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from the line of road. There has been a considerable quantity of gold found, from time to time, between the rivers, at a place called Limesville.

1100. Could you indicate, either in a general or in a particular way, how the construction of this railway would still further stimulate the progress of either the Grafton end or the Casino end—would it make the progress of either of these districts more rapid than it has been? By inducing the occupation of the land between the two districts, which cannot be used now for dairying even. I am satisfied that, if there were a railway made, and a reasonable chance of reaching a factory, or factories, that land if thrown open for selection, would all be taken up.

1101. How do you view the line in general—as a developmental line, or as one for giving facilities for interchange between the two rivers? As both. I look upon the North Coast line as a national line, and I look upon this section as a line which will largely facilitate the development of the intermediate country, and give facilities for communication between the two great districts.

1102. Is there anything further which you can add? No, thank you, unless you desire to ask further questions.

FRIDAY, 13 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Edwin Joseph Statham, late Supervising Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

E. J.
Statham.
13 July, 1900.

1103. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you a resident in the Clarence district? Not at present. I resided there for nineteen years. It is nearly ten years since I left the district.

1104. Do you know the whole country between Grafton and Casino? Yes.

1105. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What position did you hold in the district? I was Supervising Engineer in the Roads and Bridges Department.

1106. I suppose you have a good general knowledge of the Clarence district? I know the district thoroughly.

1107. Have you a knowledge of the Richmond River end of the proposed railway? Yes.

1108. How would you class the country along the route of the line from Grafton to Casino? I should say it would be second-class grazing land, with agricultural land along the course of the creeks.

1109. Would there be any considerable extent of agricultural land? I should say there would be a considerable extent along the different creeks—Saltwater Creek, Sportsman's Creek, Myall Creek, Myrtle Creek, Sandy Creek, and Deep Creek.

1110. What class of land is it on Camira Station? There is some fair grazing land and some agricultural land on Camira—that is, along the course of Myall Creek there would be some very good land.

1111. Would it be along the banks of the creeks you mentioned that the agricultural area would be found? Yes; and right away up to the heads of them.

1112. Would there be any depth of this agricultural land? You might get 40 and 60 acre patches.

1113. When I asked you about your knowledge of the country on the route from Grafton to Casino, I did not mean the country along the road, but the belt of country which the railway would influence? There is very little good land to be seen along the road. To go along the road would give a rather unfavourable impression of the country. You would see the worst of the land from the road.

1114. What class of country is it generally—timbered country? It is lightly timbered, as a rule; but on the ridges it carries good iron-bark timber and box—some very good iron-bark.

1115. When you speak of the country as being second-class grazing land, do you mean in its present condition? In its present unimproved condition.

1116. Can you improve its quality for grazing purposes? Yes, very considerably, by clearing and ring-barking.

1117. Has that been tried in many places along the route of the proposed railway? Yes; in small patches, and there has been a good deal of ringbarking done about Camira.

1118. And that had a beneficial effect on the country? Yes; it improves the grass.

1119. Is it what you call fattening country? I would not call it fattening country. It is not equal to Dyrabba or the Upper Richmond.

1120. Could you give any information respecting the marketable timber within reach of the railway, if constructed? There is a considerable quantity of timber all over those ridges.

1121. Is there an export trade in iron-bark? There is a great deal of iron-bark taken out of it.

1122. Is there much traffic between Grafton and Casino by road? Very little.

1123. Is there much settlement at present? Not a great deal.

1124. Can you account for the land not being settled? It is mostly held as grazing country by squatters.

1125. I understand that there is a considerable area of Crown land available for settlement between Grafton and Casino;—is that within your knowledge? Yes; there are settlers up these creeks, and at the head of Whiteman Creek.

1126. As regards the settlement you speak of, is the land taken up for grazing purposes, for dairying, or for agriculture? For mixed agriculture and stock-rearing.

1127. In your opinion, if this railway be constructed, would the Crown land be taken up for settlement purposes along the route? I think it would all be taken up.

1128. In what sized holdings do you think the land should be cut up? Along the line I do not think it should be cut up in blocks larger than 200 acres, certainly not larger than 320 acres.

1129. Would that be sufficient to enable a man to keep himself and family, and make a fair living out of it?

- it? That would be sufficient for a homestead—for headquarters. Anybody that would take up one of these blocks would go in more land in the back country.
1130. Where would the back country be? Extending right back to the Clarence.
1131. Would the back country be at some considerable distance from the railway? From 15 to 20 and up to 25 miles.
1132. Would the railway influence or assist the settlement of the country for a distance of 25 miles on each side? On the west side of the line it would—that is, towards the table-land.
1133. Towards the Clarence River? Towards the head of the Clarence.
1134. No; the Clarence runs parallel with the line? For a short distance it runs parallel.
1135. Do you think that those on the Upper Clarence, high up the river, would be sufficiently near the proposed railway, and that it would be a benefit to the settlers to convey produce in that way? It would be necessary to make one or more branch lines. You see it runs a long way back—30 or 40 miles. Starting from Myall Creek (the road to Tenterfield comes in at Myall Creek) the road goes through Wyon and Tabulam, and on to Tenterfield.
1136. Can you state the approximate distance from this proposed railway and the different parts of the Clarence which you state are parallel to the river, and to which, in your opinion, a branch line should be run? From Myall Creek to Wyon and Deep Creek at Jordan's, possibly on to Tabulam. I should think the distance would be 35 miles.
1137. Would that branch line open up good country? There is very good country about Wyon, and excellent country at Deep Creek, at Jordan's; it is basaltic country.
1138. Is there a large area of this country? A considerable area.
1139. Sufficient to justify the construction of branch lines? Yes; cheap light lines.
1140. Would that materially increase the traffic on the railway from Grafton to Casino? It would make a considerable addition to the traffic; they would be actual feeders.
1141. From what direction would the traffic come by these branch lines? The traffic at present goes to Lawrence.
1142. Would the traffic on these branch lines, if constructed, go towards Grafton or towards Lismore? It is a matter of balance as to which would be the shorter. I should say it would be the shorter to the Clarence, especially if you tapped it at Broadwater. You see a short branch line from Casino main line leading down to Broadwater would take you at once to navigable water in the Clarence.
1143. Are the shipping facilities on the Richmond equal to those on the Clarence? Not by any means.
1144. Where is timber exported to from there? To all the colonies; a great deal has gone from the Clarence to the harbour works in Melbourne, and some has gone direct to New Zealand.
1145. Would the Richmond admit of the shipping of timber to other colonies? You could not get as large boats in there as you can get into the Clarence.
1146. Is there any timber being shipped within your knowledge direct to the other colonies? I cannot speak for the present time, because it is four years, at least, since I visited the district.
1147. What class of country is it between Grafton and Casino for railway construction? It is very easy country.
1148. You have had some large experience in superintending the maintenance of different roads? Yes.
1149. Would you consider this a difficult country from an engineering standpoint? There are no engineering difficulties at all. The creeks are not large, and there would be no heavy cuttings and no heavy gradients. I do not think you need have any gradient over 1 in 60.
1150. Is the iron-bark timber you speak of suitable for railway construction and for the bridges that would be required on the line? Yes, you would get a large quantity of sleepers there; I think enough for all the lines to the Tweed and the Clarence, and even for other lines.
1151. Would there be much carriage in bringing sleepers or girders to the railway? A great deal of the timber would be very close to the line—say, 10 miles.
1152. Would the different creeks which the line crosses be expensive ones to bridge? No; none of them are very large.
1153. Is much of the country flooded, or subject to flood? Yes; the creeks are all liable to be flooded.
1154. Of course the creeks are, but is much of the country for any length along this railway subject to flood? No. After you leave the Clarence it is flooded up to the junction; that is 3 miles out from Grafton.
1155. From Casino towards Grafton, is there any flooded country? There is flooded country between Deep Creek and Casino; that is, for a distance of 6 miles.
1156. Would it be deeply flooded? No; I have seen it covered with 12 or 13 inches of water.
1157. Would there be any run of water in flood-time which would interfere with any viaduct or embankment on the railway? No; it is still water.
1158. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I think you said that you consider the country between Grafton and Casino second-class grazing land? As second-class grazing land I should class it.
1159. The distance from point to point is only 64 miles; there are already two ports, one at each end, and from the central point on the route it would be only 32 miles to either Grafton or Casino;—do you consider that an excessive distance to take stock? It is a great consideration for fat stock to be trained.
1160. Do you think that a very long distance to drive fat stock? It is not a long distance, but it may do them a great deal of harm in hot weather, for it is very hot there at times.
1161. You see that 32 miles would be the extreme distance, and each station would be shortening the distance between that point and the port? The cattle which would be shipped by that line would be very fat cattle from the rich land on Dyrabba, Kyogle, Sanderlands, and Wyangarie.
1162. What distance would those stations be from Grafton or Casino? Kyogle would be about 15 miles from the line at Casino; Dyrabba probably 12 miles, and Sanderlands about 25 miles.
1163. Would you not consider anything within 21 miles of a port or a railway as fairly well served already? Yes.
1164. As the total length of the line is 64 miles, if you deduct 20 miles from each end, it only leaves 24 miles of country in the centre to be served by the railway? But then you have the rich lands where they fatten fat stock, at right angles to the line. For instance, Yulgilbar and Gordonbrook would come in on to this line. Approximately, Yulgilbar would be about 30 miles from the line, and Gordonbrook, I suppose, would be about 40 miles.

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- E. J. Statham, 1165. Where do you consider the branch lines ought to start from? I have already spoken of one branch line from Myall Creek. I think a second branch line would go from somewhere about Deep Creek.
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1167. Do you suggest that one should start on one side of the line and one on the other? No; both on the west side of the line.
1168. That would make three lines within a distance of 64 miles? They would be two feeders to this line, and would be opening up agricultural country.
1169. Do you think the country is sufficiently rich to support two branch lines? It is very rich land along Dyrabba and Sanderlands and the head of Deep Creek. It is very superior land there to the land along the proposed line.
1170. Is there any cultivation going on at either of the places you have mentioned? Yes, to a small extent. They mostly grow maize.
1171. At what port do they deliver their maize now? I think it is mostly used locally. There is not much more grown than can be disposed of locally.
1172. I suppose it is too far to carry it for commercial purposes? Yes; the carriage is a heavy item.
1173. I think you say that the country is not first-class fattening country? Along the line, no.
1174. How do you propose to feed the railway, for if it is not a good fattening country there would be no fat stock to take from there, I should think? Fat stock would come from the heads of the Clarence and the heads of the Richmond.
1175. You would consider, then, that the probable feeding of that railway would be from the branch lines, and not from the country along its route? I think, mile for mile, the line is justifiable.
1176. You think that the line would be payable within a reasonable time? Yes.
1177. Are you aware of the estimated difference between the income and the expenditure on this railway? No.
1178. It is estimated to be £16,000? I would not pay much attention to that.
1179. *Mr. Hyam.*] There are a great many cattle sent from Dyrabba, Sanderlands, and Wyangarie to the Ramornie Meat Works? Yes.
1180. These cattle would have to be trucked at Casino, which, I think, would be the nearest port? No. I think they would truck the cattle at about Deep Creek, which is 6 or 7 miles from Casino.
1181. Suppose the length of this railway were 64 miles, do you think the owners of these stations would truck their cattle to Grafton or Ramornie in preference to driving them along the road? As they would have to tranship the cattle at Grafton, it would be almost as well to drive them from the stations. They drive them across to the Clarence.
1182. Not from Dyrabba and Sanderlands, and the other stations? They do.
1183. Over by Tabulam? No, by Yulgilbar.
1184. That would be a very long route from Dyrabba to Yulgilbar? No; you cross at Copmanhurst.
1185. You do not think the stations I have mentioned would avail themselves of this railway to send their cattle to Ramornie? Not unless they were very fat.
1186. I am only speaking of fat cattle? It would pay them to truck fat cattle.
1187. I suppose the Ramornie Meat Works will only deal with fat cattle—butchers' cattle? Yes. You see the graziers ship cattle, and if this line were made they would ship their cattle at the Broadwater.
1188. How long would it take to drive—not to overdrive, mind—fat cattle from these stations, which are pretty well about the same distance from Ramornie to the Meat Works, or to the big steamers? From Kyogle or Dyrabba, or Sanderlands, I should say about six days.
1189. You think it would be to their advantage to send the cattle by train rather than by road? Decidedly. In hot weather, if they are very fat, they may die on the road.
1190. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is Casino a shipping-place at present? No.
1191. You cannot ship produce there? They have to take the produce down the river in small steamers.
1192. Then you do ship it there? Yes; but it has to be handled twice. Coraki is the shipping-place.
1193. From what distance all round does Casino drain produce into itself for shipment? I should think 40 miles, along the course of the river.
1194. How far along the course of this railway would the influence of Casino be felt as a port? Perhaps 10 miles.
1195. And how far from Grafton along the railway would the influence of the shipping place at Grafton be felt? I think that if there were facilities, they would prefer to ship on the Clarence district into ocean steamers.
1196. Are there settlers—I mean taking 15 and 20 miles back from Grafton—who now ship at Grafton? All as far as Tabulam I think, which is about 60 miles north-west from Lawrence.
1197. What sort of produce is it which comes down to Lawrence? Hides, tallow, and all that sort of thing.
1198. All pastoral produce? Yes.
1199. How far does agricultural produce come from Grafton to Lawrence? I do not think there is very much coming that way.
1200. Taking Casino as a centre and the circle round it which drains into Casino, would the drift of that trade be altered in any way if the line were made from Grafton to Casino—that is, would the trade which is now shipped at Casino go down the line and ship at Grafton? At Grafton or Broadwater.
1201. You think that there would be no occasion to go right into Grafton? For fat cattle, it would be better to ship them at Broadwater.
1202. Taking the agricultural produce and the dairy produce, would any of that trade which now goes to Casino take the railway and go to Grafton by preference? Yes.
1203. Because it is a better shipping-place? Yes; and because there is no transhipping.
1204. Suppose the line were extended from Casino to Lismore, as it certainly would be if this railway were made, would the dairy produce in Casino go to Grafton or Lismore? I think the dairy produce would, most likely, go to Lismore. That would be affected by the trainage.
1205. That would be the nearest good shipping-place? Yes.
1206. You do not think that the making of a line from Grafton would draw any portion of the dairy traffic from the Richmond down to the Grafton for shipment? It is more certain on the Clarence; the steamers trade more regularly.
- 1207.

1207. That is true;—but would the produce bear the handicap of a railway freight? It would depend upon what the difference in the freight would be. E. J. Statham.
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1208. Assuming that the freight from Lismore to Sydney is the same as the freight from Grafton to Sydney, do you think it would be? They would ship at Grafton in preference if there was no very great difference, because they would be more certain of getting it away.
1209. We are told that the steamers are not detained now at the head of the Richmond since the improvements have been made, and that freights have fallen since those improvements were made;—would there be such a preference, do you think, to Grafton as to bear the handicap of the railway freight? The two things being equal, there would be nothing to choose between them; they would take whichever route was the cheaper.
1210. It is just a question of cheapness? Yes.
1211. If going from Casino to Lismore would be cheaper than going from Casino to Grafton, or as cheap, Lismore would get the advantage? Yes.
1212. You know where the line crosses the Richmond Range? Yes.
1213. It is nearer to Grafton than Casino? Yes.
1214. How does the produce from the Richmond Range farms get to the Clarence River now? I am afraid that there is very little produce to go.
1215. Would the people settled there make the nearest track to the river, or would they take the railway to Grafton? I think all south of the Richmond River would be likely to go to Grafton.
1216. North of it would go, where? To Lismore they would be likely to go.
1217. We are told that there is not enough settlement on this route at present to pay for a railway, and that it must rely upon the settlement it would create, and that the industry they would establish would probably be the dairying industry;—throwing out of the account the trading centres of Casino and Grafton, which is already served, do you think that the dairy traffic on the intermediate portion of that line would pay a fair interest on the cost of construction? If it were thoroughly developed. It might not, perhaps, for eight or ten years.
1218. How far back, on each side of the railway, do you think the railway influence would go in stimulating settlement and production? There are sixty-two parishes, I think, which it would affect.
1219. How far back from the line is the furthest parish? Forty miles.
1220. You think the influence of the railway would be felt 40 miles for dairy produce? Not for dairy produce.
1221. For agricultural produce? You see there would be stock rearing, and rearing dairy cattle.
1222. That would be more pastoral than agricultural? Yes.
1223. *Mr. Levien.*] Did you see a letter written by Mr. G. N. Griffiths in to-day's *Sydney Morning Herald*? No.
1224. Did you read Mr. See's evidence on this proposal? No.
1225. Mr. Griffiths says in his letter: "Mr. See's vivid imagination carries him a long way when he speaks of the Casino-Grafton railway carrying live stock from the Richmond and Tweed for Ramornie Meat Works." In your opinion would they carry fat stock there for killing at the Meat Works? I hardly think they would, under present circumstances.
1226. Do you think they would carry any fat stock along there? The Ramornie Meat Works are about 10 miles from Grafton, and as the line is to terminate at Grafton, they would have to tranship the stock at Grafton, and take them across the river. I do not see very well how they could do it unless the railway crossed the river.
1227. Mr. Griffiths also says in his letter, "I can assert that not a fat beast ever has gone, or is likely to go, from the Tweed to Ramornie, and from the Richmond River districts all stock for Ramornie are likely to continue to travel over on the hoof." If they wanted to send fat stock very quickly to Ramornie, would not they use the train? You see the train will stop on the north side of the river, and Ramornie is on the south side.
1228. But Mr. See gave his evidence on the assumption that this line would be a section of a North Coast line, and would cross the river? If it would cross the river it would be quite close to Ramornie.
1229. On the assumption, as Mr. See implied in his evidence, that it would cross the river, you think they certainly would use the railway for that purpose? Yes.
1230. Then you do not agree with these observations by Mr. Neville Griffiths? No.
1231. Mr. Griffiths also says, in his letter, "Mr. See forgets that the water communications of the Richmond and Tweed Rivers are as good as those of the Clarence, and that there is not the remotest possibility of a payable goods traffic between Casino and Grafton. As to a passenger traffic (except it were on through lines from Sydney, *via* Glen Innes and Grafton), I guarantee it would not require one car a week to carry";—what do you say to that statement? The line is necessary for the opening up of the country. There are sixty-two parishes almost undeveloped.
1232. Then you do not agree with that observation of Mr. Neville Griffiths? Certainly not.
1233. Mr. Griffiths also says,—“Mr. See forgets that what he says of the probable timber traffic is about the worst card in his pack, for there can be no comparison drawn between his Clarence River trade and the enormous timber traffic which must come from the great pine and cedar scrubs on the Upper Richmond as soon as the Casino-Tenterfield railway opens them to cheap carriage”;—what do you think of that statement? The timber traffic of the Richmond is an entirely different traffic. This would be a traffic in hardwood.
1234. You mean a different timber from what Mr. Griffiths refers to? Yes.
1235. So that you absolutely differ from his opinion there, too? Yes; they cannot be compared at all.
1236. From what you know of Mr. See's evidence, as indicated in that statement by Mr. Griffiths, you agree with Mr. See? Yes. Mr. See knows the country as well as I do. There is a lot of pine country in the Upper Clarence, and that would be tapped by this branch line by Deep Creek. That would all come down to Broadwater to be shipped. You see there is a big shipment of timber from Broadwater sprung up quite lately.
1237. After hearing the statements which I have just read from this letter, you absolutely disagree with Mr. Griffiths, and you support Mr. See's theory? Yes.
1238. You know Mr. Griffiths? Yes.
1239. He lives at Casino? He has a station there called Woorooloolgan.

- E. J. Statham. 1240. *Mr. McFarlane.*] In answer to Mr. Shepherd, I understood you to say that you consider grazing country to be well served if within 20 miles of a railway;—did you mean country used for stock-raising—that is, for pastoral purposes? For pastoral purposes.
1241. There is a large amount of dairying carried on on the Clarence and Richmond Rivers? I believe so.
1242. With regard to the grazing land which you say will be taken up in the event of a railway being constructed, would that land be used for pastoral purposes, or dairying purposes and agricultural purposes, within easy reach of the line? I should think that would be taken up for headquarters—of dairying and mixed farming.
1243. Do you consider 20 miles too far for a dairy farmer to send his milk-cans to a factory? Yes; it would not pay to send more than 5 miles.
1244. So that a railway 20 miles away would be of no use whatever to a farmer? No.
1245. Would 10 miles be too far away? I should think 5 miles would be the limit.
1246. So that when you said that 20 miles would be near enough to fairly serve the country, you meant for pastoral purposes? Simply for pastoral purposes.
1247. And it did not apply to dairy purposes, for which you would consider this district would be used in the event of the railway being made? Immediately along the line the land would be used for dairying.
1248. Is there anything else you would care to say? Only as regards the road material. The whole of the Clarence River is very badly supplied with road material. There is no basalt. The nearest basalt would be at Jordan's, Deep Creek. There is a large formation of basalt there, and that would supply a very large item of traffic to the railway.
1249. How far would it be from the line? It would be 25 miles—it would be on the course of the first branch line I mentioned.
1250. That would be taken to the proposed railway by a branch line? Yes.
1251. You think that would be a considerable traffic? A very considerable traffic.
1252. Is that the nearest point from the Clarence district where that superior stone could be got? Yes.
1253. *Mr. Hyam.*] That basalt country you speak of is west of the Richmond Range? Yes, at what is known as Jordan's, Deep Creek.

William Albert Braylesford Greaves, grazier, sworn, and examined:—

- W. A. B. Greaves. 1254. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you a resident in the Clarence River district? Not now. I have been a resident there. I have been connected with the Clarence since 1856.
1255. In connection with the pastoral industry? And otherwise.
1256. Sugar-growing? No. My first occupation was as a Government surveyor for about ten years in charge of the district. I lived in Armidale afterwards, but I never ceased to have an interest on the Clarence, and I have visited it every year, and I have the same interest now.
1257. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you know the country on this line from Casino to Grafton? Yes; very well.
1258. I suppose you have known it since 1856? I have.
1259. What is your opinion about constructing a line of railway from Grafton to Casino? I think it is very desirable that a line of railway should be constructed. It will open up a piece of country that has been locked up for fifteen years, in which there is no settlement, nor any likelihood of any settlement so long as it is locked up—that is to say, reserved from sale. The only lands which have been sold of late years have been at some considerable distance away from the proposed railway. Grafton was located first, and then the Richmond began to take a start. So soon as the Richmond began to take a start, the lands on the Clarence being all locked up, pending the construction of three lines of railway—one to the north, another to the south, and one to the west—the country of the Richmond River had the full benefit of the population desirous of settling. Hence the large amount of settlement which has taken place on the Richmond within the last few years.
1260. What is the quality of the land between Grafton and Casino, taking it all through? It is a varied piece of country, highly productive so far as producing grass. It is arable in most places; a great deal of it is arable. It is a light, loamy, sandy soil—grey and red. It is capable of being converted into dairy farms and used for mixed farming, I think, very successfully. I have known the country for many years, and I have noticed the improvement which has taken place in the grasses. Stocking has worked quite a wonder. Some years ago it would not carry a beast on 8 or 10 acres, and now it will carry a beast on about half that area. Stocking has made that improvement. When the country is ringbarked it becomes as good as any land in the Clarence or Richmond district of a grazing character. It is land which is very much benefited by showers; where land in other localities, on ridges of a different kind, and perhaps richer soil—does not receive the same benefit. It is so well grassed, and it lies so nicely undulating, that it is about the very best piece of dairying country I know. Grass is always green, and in abundance, and it is a most excellent piece of country. On flats where you would be quite starved out in winter time, there is excellent feed on this country, and I consider it most excellent dairying country in winter; you may dairy all the year round.
1261. Do you think dairying would pay at so great a distance between point and point? Dairying has paid, dairying does pay, and the reason why there is no settlement on this land, or at the back of the land we are speaking of, or within a reasonable distance of Grafton, and the same distance of Casino—say 10 to 12 miles—although as rich as the land in the Big Scrub, is, because it is too far to convey produce to market. I can instance thousands of acres that the Government measured many years ago in the parishes of Hanging Rock, Tunstall, Jiggi, Vautin, and others. The Government thought the land was so valuable that they put it up at a high price per acre; I think it was £3. They reduced it to 30s.; afterwards bringing it down to £1, but could not sell it. It is only at the back of Casino, at the outside from 15 to 20 miles. It is red soil, quite as good as the land in the Big Scrub, and is heavily timbered, and the only persons who have ventured into it have been two or three timber-getters, and they are the only persons who occupy it at present.
1262. What kind of produce would it grow along there? I have a memorandum of the produce which can be grown on this country. It will produce lucerne and oaten hay, maize in localities, potatoes—it is splendid country for potatoes—millet broom, all fruits, citrus fruits and mangoes, which grow admirably. It produces cattle, pigs, poultry, ducks and geese, and bacon. Every farmer has a large number of pigs. It also produces the early tomatoes that come to Sydney in the month of September, coffee, and a very large amount of timber. The country is most wonderfully timbered

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1263. What is the particular timber growing there? Iron-bark, bloodwood, white-mahogany, red-mahogany, stringy-bark, two kinds of box, tallow-wood, mountain-ash, grey-gum, pine, and cedar; a great variety of brush trees—what are called soft woods (they are very valuable), spotted-gum, brush-box, turpentine, and swamp-oak.

1264. Is there any great quantity of these timbers there? There is any amount; it is a most wonderful piece of country for timber.

1265. How far would these timbers be from this railway line? Along the line and extending back 10 to 15 miles, and to 20 miles, all along the main Richmond Range. The range has been reserved for its magnificent timber.

1266. Do you think the proposed line would be any good for the travelling of fat stock from Ramornie? You must understand that Ramornie is 12 miles up from Grafton by water, and on a branch river called the Orara.

1267. Supposing the line was to cross to Ramornie, do you think there would be many fat stock taken by train to the meat-works? I listened to what was said when the previous witness was being examined. I have not seen Mr. See's evidence; I have seen an epitome of it in the *Herald*, but I did not notice what he said about travelling stock.

1268. Fat stock he spoke of? I am of opinion that all the fat stock from the Tweed and the Richmond for the meat-works, if the line were made, would go by rail? I am a producer of fat stock myself, and I know what I should do under the circumstances.

1269. Have you any properties down there? Yes, all over the district.

1270. Along the route of this line? Only in Grafton, along the line.

1271. You have station properties down there—where are they situated? Five or six miles above Ramornie meat-works.

1272. Do you think there would be a large passenger traffic along this line? I am quite sure there would. I will give you an instance of what I think there will be. I was on the railway between Lismore and Byron Bay the other day, and I saw almost what I may call a suburban traffic—local farmers and their wives and their children. The traffic seemed to me to be most wonderful at the present time, and within the last twelve months, I am assured, that 1,000 families—that is, 4,000 persons—have settled themselves along that line. I believe the very same thing would occur along this line, from Grafton to Casino, if constructed. It would be largely populated; every acre of land would be taken up within twelve months of the time it was notified that it was open for sale. I am quite sure that the whole of it would be rushed.

1273. How many acres do you think it will take to support a family on this land? It should be subdivided into portions of from 400 to 640 acres, and those areas would support a family of five or six. Mr. Coghlan's estimate is five to a family. I have a memorandum about that matter. On the west side of the road there are unalienated 45½ miles of frontage, and on the east side 44 miles of frontage, making a total of 89½ miles of unsold frontage to the railway line. On the west side of the road there are 17½ miles of frontage sold, and on the east side of the road 19½ miles of frontage sold. On the route of this railway line there are 140,000 acres of land reserved for timber, 200,000 acres alienated, 24,000 acres reserved for railways, 36,000 acres for water, village and other reserves; and outside these reserves there are 320,000 acres of Crown lands. If this area of 320,000 acres were sub-divided into 400-acre blocks, it would accommodate 800 families; and in 800 families, at Mr. Coghlan's estimate, there would be 4,000 persons. Four thousand persons would be settled on this line within a very reasonable time if constructed.

1274. Suppose you were starting now in life, apart from your own personal interest in the district, would you think of starting there with a small capital? I can tell you candidly that I have recommended people to wait on purpose to go out on this land. I know a person who went there the other day and took up 1,280 acres outside the limit of the railway, and at the back of everybody. And I know four young men in a family now who are waiting to go on that land if a railway be constructed. I may call it a virgin country. It is too far away from any settlement yet to be beneficially occupied, on account of the distance from market.

1275. I suppose you are frequently over this part of the country? I am not frequently over it, but I have been over it lately.

1276. Do you think it has improved much since you had been there? It has improved very much. I may tell you that for the last two years the Clarence and Richmond, and part of New England, have almost supplied Sydney with beef. I believe that as many as from 8,000 to 10,000 head of cattle have been sent to the district within the last two years for sustenance from drought-stricken districts. I know instances of poor sheep and cattle being unloaded on the railway line in New England, many being dead in the trucks, and a great number unable to travel after being unloaded, and to drive them 100 miles down to the Clarence was utterly impossible. While the Government are making railways into drought-stricken country to take poor stock away, I think it might make a railway to that country which is capable of maintaining them.

1277. In drought times in the west, would you call this good country to take starving stock to? It is the very best country you could take them to, because in winter it is warm, and in summer warmer.

1278. How is it watered? It is the best watered country anywhere; you cannot go wrong. The Clarence and Richmond are both splendidly watered. There is water in all directions.

1279. So that in drought times you think it would pay to take poverty-stricken stock to this part of the country? They are doing it now, and they have done it before. I will give you an instance of what a man named Small did with 1,000 acres of land on Myrtle Creek. He took from Goulburn 500 starving heifers and cows last year. He fed on his 1,000 acres of land 580 head of starving stock, and at the end of six months he sold some of them fat, and sent back to Goulburn the 500 head that came from there. He gave me this information when I was at Myrtle Creek lately.

1280. Then, even although they have got New England, they send starving stock down to this part for sustenance? It has been the means of saving thousands of stock, and it has been the means of making beef so cheap in Sydney that you have been permitted to buy it, otherwise it would have been so dear that you could not have bought it, and at the present time the Clarence and Richmond, and parts of New England, are again supplying Sydney with beef.

1281. Would you say that it is a more certain climate than New England, so far as starving stock goes? Starving stock will not live in New England in the winter, it is too severe a climate.

1282. It is warm on the Clarence, and there is plenty of food there all through the winter? Always.

1283. And almost as good in the summer, and well watered? Very well watered; you cannot go wrong for water. Stock were never known to be short of water on the Clarence. Again, the whole of this country

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country is magnificently timbered. On some of the flats there is not so much timber. There are some swampy areas near Casino, but near what is known as the Travellers' Rest and the junction of the roads to Lawrence, and nearer Grafton, there are gentle undulating ridges. They extend for miles and on to the main ranges, and the higher you get the better the land is, and the heavier the timber the richer the soil. That timber would pay admirably to cut before the land is sold. A royalty should be imposed, and the Government should give some of the money towards building the railway. The timber on the land is really worth more than the land, but if you turn settlers on to it they immediately begin to ringbark and destroy some of the best timber in the country. It pays them better to ringbark and leave it, and cut it down afterwards and taken away, because dairying is their object, and dairying is thriving with great strides at present. At Myrtle Creek, five suppliers of milk made £735 during last year, and another one, with 400 acres, made £325 out of his dairy farming. Another person on Myall Creek, named Buckland, on a quarter of an acre, grew a quarter of a ton of millet used for brooms. Millet is worth £6 5s. per quarter ton—that is, £25 a ton—and he can grow a ton to the acre. Where millet is grown largely on the Hunter, from 12 to 16 cwt. is considered a good crop per acre, and this country is particularly adapted for growing broom millet, and there would be a large industry in that way.

1284. Where are you living now? At Strathfield.

1285. You have lived in Armidale a number of years? For many years.

1286. Would you compare that New England country with this country in a drought-stricken season? You cannot compare it. This is far superior in a drought. New England is good sheep country—a very large portion of it. You cannot produce sheep on the Clarence or on the Richmond, because the grass is too long.

1287. You have been a large stockowner for a number of years? I always have been a stockowner.

1288. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Mr. Statham, the previous witness, described this country as second-class grazing country? It is second-class grazing country, because the very best grazing country is that which you have in the west, and that is first-class grazing country. The whole of the Clarence and the Richmond, the very best of it, is only second-class grazing country.

1289. At that rate, it is not good fattening country? When it is ringbarked it is; but it never produces fat cattle so well as the western country. On the coast you never can get the same good fat cattle, or cattle of the same size, as you can get from the west.

1290. Would this country not be suitable, then, for sending fat stock away from? It is only suitable for bringing store stock to fatten on ringbarked country, and the other area of the unimproved Crown estate is admirably suited for breeding purposes.

1291. But the country is of good quality without the ringbarking, although it requires to be ringbarked to produce the extra quantity of grass? It not only produces the extra quantity of grass, but it sweetens the grass to ringbark. Many years ago a gentleman said to me, "What are you doing—are you ringbarking?" I replied, "Yes." "Well," he said, "I have ringbarked a piece of my paddock, and there has never been any grass on it since." I said, "I cannot understand that. Have you got any stock in it?" "Yes," he said, "I have got stock there, and I never can get them off it." It improved it in that way—that this wiry coarse grass that stock will not eat, the very moment the land is ringbarked they eat it bare.

1292. I am aware of that; but when you are speaking of the quality of country you generally classify it irrespective of the timber that is growing on it;—of course, the grass-producing quality is improved by the ringbarking, while the country remains the same? Yes; it is very good grazing country, but only second-class.

1293. I think you described it as a light sandy loam? I do. It is very friable, and will receive all the benefit that climatic influence can give it, and very quickly, and in that way it is so sustaining.

1294. A light sandy loam as a rule does not produce heavy crops? It depends on what the crop is.

1295. Well, any kind of crop? It will not grow so heavy a crop as the rich maize land on the Clarence—land that is improved by the detritus from the hills.

1296. Sandy loam as a rule requires a great deal of manure to make it produce a heavy crop of anything? Yes, it does; but stocking and removing the timber improve it very largely. You know, for instance, the sandy and bad nature of the country all about Bondi; I have a 5-acre paddock there, and I believe it will keep a beast to the acre.

1297. From Casino to Grafton the distance is 64 miles;—what distance do you consider the available distance for pastoral country to a station or a port? The whole of the land within 10 miles on either side would be benefited by the railway, and a considerable distance beyond in another and indirect way. It is chiefly adapted for dairying and mixed farming. A dairy farmer has a number of dry cows always. He will keep his milking herd within 10 miles of the railway, and he will have a paddock outside that limit for his dry cows, and he will work them backwards and forwards. That is the way the land would be benefited by the line, and the whole of it would be brought within a marketable distance.

1298. What would you call a marketable distance? Ten miles off the railway.

1299. Not more than 10 miles? Hardy, for dairying; but the country behind that would be very much benefited by it, because it would be utilised in the way in which I have expressed myself.

1300. Do you consider the country now is only served within 10 miles of Grafton and 10 miles of Casino? That is what it is.

1301. Not more? No, and 10 miles off the river bank anywhere. It will not pay to grow maize and carry it more than 10 miles, although I believe it is done. It is done below Grafton, where it is proposed, I think, that this line will be ultimately extended south as a North Coast railway. Farmers have taken up that land years ago. The Government first of all asked £6 an acre, and farmers actually took it up at £6, and they have undergone several revisions of their purchases, and it has been very much reduced. I think some of it has been reduced to £1 and 30s. an acre, and all that land has been or is being abandoned pending the construction of a railway. It would be the most lively spot in New South Wales if this railway could be made, and this coast line, and to-day New South Wales is so much the poorer on account of this grand piece of country known as the Clarence and the Richmond not being connected with the railway system of the Colony. It is a magnificent piece of country, as large as all England and Wales, and every 40 acres of the good land is suitable for maintaining a family with sugar and maize, and all the coast country is suitable for sugar. At Coff's Harbour, the head of the Orara River, and all down to the Bellingen and to the Macleay Rivers, the whole of that country is capable of growing sugar, and maintaining a large population.

1302. The roads, I think, are very good? No; they are very bad in the district. For short title, I think the district ought to be called the "Neglected District."

1303.

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1303. What distance would it be from Lawrence to the proposed line? Ten miles.

1304. I suppose up to that point you would consider the country as fairly well served, because Lawrence is a shipping port? Exactly, and it would all have been sold, had it not been locked up as I have described, and it has been so locked up for the last fifteen years. There have been several inquiries into constructing this railway—and this is, I think, the third—only to repeat over and over again that there is no population, and not likely to be any; and if in another 100 years another inquiry should be held, under the same circumstances, there will be the same old story to tell.

1305. Do you know the estimated annual loss on this line? I do not know it, but I have heard it stated.

1306. It is estimated at about £16,000? I do not believe it will be anything like that. I will tell you what I think should be done. The railway would improve the value of this land which has been locked up. It has been waiting for an enhanced value on account of this railway. The Government should hand over a certain portion of the revenue derived from its sale to pay the interest on the cost of construction, and when the working expenses are taken off the profits, the Government should contribute so as to make the net revenue up to 3 or 3½ per cent. from the enhanced value of this land. The railway should be constructed on these principles. In Melbourne they have a system of that kind, and I believe there is in the hands of the Railway Commissioners an enormous sum of money which has been derived in that way from Crown lands through which railways have been carried. The same system should be inaugurated in this Colony, and it would be for the benefit of this railway, and there is enough timber on this part of the country to make this railway three times over.

1307. Would that timber be easily accessible to the proposed line? Very; because the country is very pleasant and undulating. There is no trouble whatever in drawing.

1308. So that it can be readily got? Yes. They are taking it now along the road some 15 miles to Lawrence. As you go along the road you can see where it has been taken from, but it is almost a flea-bite. You cannot miss it because there is so much of it.

1309. You think, within a reasonable time, the line will become self-supporting, even with this estimated discrepancy of £16,000 a year? First of all, I think the cost of construction is enormous. It is set down at £7,000 per mile. Does any man think it would be reasonable to build a bridge over that little babbling brook at Casino, called the Richmond River, at a cost of £40,000 with steel girders, a steel bridge over Myrtle Creek at a cost of £10,000, and another bridge over Sandy Creek at a cost of about £6,000, and wharfage at Grafton at a cost of £70,000? And does this estimate include the cost of resumptions? No.

1310. It does not include the cost of resumptions? I think it is outrageous. I get a little irritable when I think of it.

1311. *Mr. McFarlane.*] There has been an estimate made for a light line of railway, to cost about £3,000 per mile? That is too much for a light line of railway where there is all this magnificent timber which I have described. I think that, with a little stone or brickwork, and this magnificent timber, bridges could be built which would last a century for a small sum.

1312. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you any definite knowledge of the rainfall in this locality? No; I know the red soil on the Big Scrub, unless it gets a shower every day, does no good at all.

1313. Have you any idea of the annual rainfall on the route of this proposed railway? I do not know what it is, but I know it is very copious.

1314. It is equal to the rainfall on the Big Scrub, I think? Hardly so, but it is very copious on the whole of the Clarence and the Richmond.

1315. I suppose it is in consequence of that very large rainfall the grass is so sour? Yes; and timber.

1316. Sandy loam is a country which requires a great deal of rain, and naturally it gets it? Yes. It is very good country for ploughing; it is country that would grow magnificent crops of turnips, and it is very good for early potatoes. There would be a very large trade, I believe, from the Clarence in early potatoes grown on this very country. I know other localities where potatoes are grown on exactly the same kind of soil. It is well known in the Clarence district, and the Richmond district also, that the higher you are dairying on the ridges, the richer is your cream. It is very much better than it is on the low lands—on the flats.

1317. You stated that, in your opinion, 10 miles from a railway is about the limit to serve dairy farmers;—are you aware that 16, 18, and 20 miles from the Lismore railway, and from Lismore itself, dairying is carried on very successfully? Is it near water carriage, then.

1318. No? I am not aware of it, and I did not think it was so; but I know that there are nineteen or twenty creameries between Lismore and Byron Bay, and that they are 10 miles apart.

1319. I suppose when the dairying industry is well established between Grafton and Casino it will be carried on under the same conditions as it is being carried on at present in the Big Scrub district? I think it would.

1320. If people went there and established dairy farms, there would be no difficulty in getting these companies to extend their operations to that particular district? Not the slightest; I know they are only waiting to do it.

1321. *Vice-Chairman.*] I suppose, in common with others, you look upon this line as part of the Coast line? As part of the North Coast line.

1322. Looking at the policy of that line, would it be better to begin at the north end or south end? I think myself the present isolated apology for a railway up in the north, and its position there and maintenance, can only be justified by its being extended further south; and the further south it is extended the better it will pay.

1323. Which do you think would be more to the advantage of this Clarence district—to make a line from Armidale or Guyra, down the Don Dorrego country, to Grafton, or to make a Coast line? The line, when it shall have been made to the tableland, will go from Grafton to Glen Innes, I am quite sure. I know the country so well. I have advocated that line for many years, and it is the only line which will serve the largest number and be the best for the State. The Clarence River is capable of accommodating over-sea vessels of large tonnage. The harbour is very good, and it is being improved. It has been somewhat neglected; but as improvements are now going on, and as Sir John Coode's scheme is being carried out, it will be a port not second to Newcastle, but quite equal to it; and I think it is by nature designed for a large commercial system.

1324. And a line going from Glen Innes to Grafton would be better than a line going from Guyra to Grafton? That is going all round the moon. I do not think that could be made less than 150 miles,

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and a line from Grafton to Glen Innes would be about 96 miles; and when that railway to Glen Innes shall have been made, we shall send from the Clarence up to New England fish, bacon, cheese, sugar, early potatoes, beef, maize—a short time ago maize was 5s. 6d. a bushel at Inverell—tomatoes, millet broom, early fruits, pumpkins, melons, &c. We shall send soft-wood timbers, such as cedar, and all merchandise from over-sea, and farming implements which will be made at Grafton; and in return we shall receive from New England and the west, sheep in the form of mutton, wheat, wool, hides, tallow, flour, all English fruits which we cannot grow on the Clarence, tin ores and other minerals, ores, bark for tanning, lime, and hardwood in very large quantities; for the whole of the slope of the tableland falling towards the Clarence is one enormous forest extending from Camden Haven, on the south, to Mount Lindsay, on the north; and it is the most magnificent forest that any man can look upon.

1325. All that awaits a North Coast railway? That awaits a railway.

James Burt, Inspector, Survey Branch, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

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1326. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you any statement ready to make? No; I was up in that district a month or so ago, and when I met a member of the Chamber of Commerce, he said he would send my name down as a witness.

1327. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What part of the district were you in? I was in the Grafton Survey Office for eight years. I was draftsman in charge, and during that time I had relations who were settled on the route of this line. I used to go over there occasionally, and within the last month I was up there spending a holiday, and went all through that country to a great extent.

1328. Is that right through from Grafton to Casino? Yes; and I went off the road at Myrtle Creek down to the east about 5 miles.

1329. That would be off the main road and the route of the proposed line? Yes.

1330. Have you had much experience in other districts in regard to land and its character? I was in the Goulburn district for a time. I have seen what can be done to country there in the way of improvement. I have seen the country in its natural state, and what it can be brought to after ring-barking, and stocking, and making other improvements, and I have also seen the same up in the Grafton-Casino district.

1331. What is the character of the country through which this line will pass? From what I have seen about Myrtle Creek, and what has been done by my brother-in-law there within the last ten years, I am certain that the country is capable of great improvement. My brother-in-law went there, I think, in 1888, and shortly afterwards he had a severe illness, and he had to neglect the place entirely. He was in Sydney nearly twelve months under doctors, and when he got back he was pecuniarily embarrassed. At that time he had only 1,200 or 1,300 acres. Since then, simply by fattening cattle, he has managed to get together a property of about 4,000 acres, and last year alone I believe his profits were about £1,000.

1332. Is that owing to the dairying industry? No; simply to fattening cattle. When I was there last month, I saw 100 fat cattle taken away in prime condition which had been sold to the butchers, and I dare say he has 100 head of cattle fat now, although it is winter, and is not the best time for fattening. He has highly improved the country by ringbarking. The ringbarking has sweetened the country, and it is able to carry a beast to 6 or 7 acres easily. His place is down Myrtle Creek, about 5 miles on the east side of the proposed line.

1333. *Mr. Watson.*] A local witness told the Committee that he had to throw up his holding in that locality—to his brother, as it turned out? My brother-in-law, within the last twelve months, bought two selections which had practically been abandoned, and he has done remarkably well with them.

1334. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is there much settlement on Myrtle Creek? There is a fair amount of settlement, but most of it is on the western side of the road, up near Small's place, and Buckland's place. Of course, there is not a great deal at present.

1335. Are there any attempts made at cultivation? No; there is very little in the way of cultivation. I noticed some land on Myrtle Creek, just near the main road—at the Accommodation House—where very good crops of hay, vegetables, and potatoes, are grown. The soil looks very good indeed. My brother-in-law had just fenced in a paddock for the purpose of cultivation, but he had only got as far as ploughing it up, and it all turned out pretty much as Mr. Greaves said—a nice loamy soil, which I believe would readily grow fair crops of hay and potatoes.

1336. Is dairying carried on to any great extent? No; but I believe it would be. Ringbarking sweetens the grass so much that I am sure if the land were devoted to dairying it would be a success.

1337. Do you think the country between Myrtle Creek and Grafton would be suitable for dairying purposes? I think so. There was a selection about 10 miles out from Grafton—Duggan's—and judging by what he has done there, I should say that the whole of the country is equally capable of improvement. That selection has been improved, I understand.

1338. Would that, in its unimproved condition, be similar to the bush lands which are there now unoccupied? I certainly think so.

1339. You think the same results would follow from the improvement of the Crown lands now available for settlement? I think so.

1340. Is there much of it which you would consider fattening country for stock? I believe nearly all of it can be made fattening country, but it must be ringbarked and improved. That is what my brother-in-law does solely. He buys stores and fattens them. A piece of country alongside his holding which was vacant has been taken up by his brother a couple of weeks ago, and his intention is to ringbark and improve it, and go in for fattening. He says he is confident that he will do well, judging by what he has seen on the adjoining land. The improvement in the country is most marked. On one side of a fence you will see the ringbarked country, and on the other side the unringbarked country. In some cases the unringbarked country scarcely shows grass at all, whereas on the ringbarked country the grass is plentiful.

1341. The land on the banks of the different creeks, I suppose, would be of superior quality to that of the intervening country? Yes. There are always nice little patches of cultivation on the flats—that is, on the creek banks.

1342. Do you know Camira Station—at the homestead? No. I have been past by road, and while we were going through I had my attention called to the fact that the country thereabouts was considered sour, but even then there was a splendid growth of kangaroo grass which could be sweetened by ringbarking. That is just on the road going through from Casino to Grafton.

1343.

1343. Do you think the available Crown land within easy reach of this railway, if constructed, would be taken up by selectors? I am almost sure it would.

1344. In your opinion, what holding would be of sufficient size to maintain a family? I think if it were for dairying, they would want 600 or 700 acres at least, because you want a run for dry cattle as well as for milkers. If that suggestion of Mr. Greaves were adopted, I think it would very materially assist the railway, because he estimated that the country would carry 800 families with 640 acres each. The present rentals we get for conditional leases, even away from the line, is about 5d. an acre. The Government land is worth, we will say, £1 an acre. If this railway were constructed, we could readily ask £2 10s. per acre.

1345. Do you think it would increase in value to that extent? I believe it would. The present rentals are as high as 5d. an acre. For a homestead selection at £1 an acre the rental would be 3d. an acre, and at £2 10s. an acre the rental would be 7½d. an acre. If a man can pay 5d. an acre now for fattening cattle, surely he would not object to pay 7½d. an acre for dairying, when he would have the convenience of the railway right at his door. You could readily expect that, I think.

1346. Do you think there would be much passenger traffic between Grafton and Casino and Lismore? I do not suppose there would be a great deal to start with, but it would develop, I think. At the present time commercial travellers and others, travelling from Grafton down the river, cross at Harwood, and go over to Woodburn and thence up the Richmond River, and a great many of them coming to Sydney from the Richmond travel *via* the Clarence.

1347. Would they do that if this railway were made? I do not think so; I believe they would go to Grafton and do their business, and then on by rail to Casino and Lismore.

1348. Is there anything else which you would like to mention? Only that when I was in the Grafton office, Wooroolgan and Camira runs along the route of this railway were abandoned. We subdivided them, and I think nearly every one of these occupation licenses has now been taken up. There is very little of what we call unoccupied country now, although ten years ago, when I was in Grafton, I suppose nearly all that country was actually abandoned. I know it is nearly all taken up by occupation licenses since. The holdings were made smaller. There used to be one or two very large runs like Wooroolgan, and the lessees abandoned them, and we subsequently cut them up into occupation licenses in area ranging from 5,000 to 30,000-acre, and I believe nearly all of them have been let.

1349. Has there been many inquiries for land by free selectors with the view of taking up any of the country between the two rivers? I cannot say that there has been. I think the reservation blocks that you see a mile on each side of the line has been reserved for fifteen years; that would debar men from going there. If they knew that they could build their houses alongside the road and start straight away it might be an inducement to them to select; but when they have to go at least a mile back from the road, and to a place where there are no roads constructed, I think that is a drawback, and prevents people from taking up land.

1350. How would you compare the country between Grafton and Casino with the country at Goulburn that you were referring to? Of course, the country in Goulburn is mostly devoted to sheep, and the country between Casino and Grafton is devoted to cattle growing. Both my brothers-in-law come from Goulburn, and they think it is far superior to much of the land which has been taken up in the Goulburn district. You can get a return more rapidly out of it.

1351. There has been a considerable amount of evidence given as to the importance of the forests of timber in the district;—do you think that would develop into a large trade, given railway facilities? I think it would, for there is some magnificent timber there. I know that some of the mill-owners at Lawrence have offered as much as 10s. a tree at Myrtle Creek for iron-barks, and they have to cut it down and cart it 3 miles to Lawrence.

1352. Would this timber be sent by the railway if made? I certainly think it would.

1353. Is the timber mostly used locally, or is it exported? It is exported mostly to New Zealand. It is shipped direct.

MONDAY, 16 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Patrick Riddle Donaldson, late District Surveyor, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

1354. *Chairman.*] You are a surveyor by profession? I am. I was employed by the Government for thirty-five years in the Grafton and Casino districts—I might say for the Clarence and Richmond districts—for the first three years as a licensed surveyor, and for the other thirty-three years as a staff surveyor in the same districts, and for the last twenty years as district surveyor. My district embraced the whole of the Grafton Land Board district, including the Tweed, Lismore, Casino, Grafton, Bellingen, Kempsey, and Port Macquarie districts.

1355. In your professional capacity, I suppose, you have had ample opportunity of examining all the country between Grafton and Casino? I have. I selected the necessary reserves, and all that sort of thing years ago for timber, water supply, and everything which was necessary for the future welfare of the district and its beneficial occupation.

1356. You know the proposal before the Committee? I do.

1357. It is to construct, at a cost of £501,375, a railway connecting Grafton and Casino. The annual expenditure

J. Burt.
13 July, 1900.

P. R.
Donaldson.
16 July, 1900.

P. R.
Donaldson,
16 July, 1900.

expenditure is estimated at £21,429, and the annual income at only £1,844, giving a net annual deficiency of £16,000;—will you kindly give us some information, based on your personal acquaintance with the district, as to the probability of this line getting sufficient traffic to put the estimated revenue closer to the estimated expenditure? For some years to come it is not likely to pay anything like an equivalent to the amount you mentioned, but year by year, as the settlement which it would induce takes place, the deficiency would be gradually lessened, and I think eventually it would be overcome, or, if not overcome, the margin would be so small that the revenue from the land which was taken up, caused by the making of the railway, would amply compensate for the deficiency.

1358. What do you think the land along the route is best suited for? It is best suited for dairying, generally speaking. On the banks of the creeks there are patches suitable for cultivation, and a number of the ridges themselves are suitable for the growth of cereal crops such as oats, but not for maize, which is the product on the banks of the rivers Clarence, Tweed, and Richmond; it is quite suitable for the growth of such crops as oats, but, of course, compared to the land on the banks of the river, it is poor, and it has been looked upon as so poor by comparison that no one would look at it. That and the want of the facility to get anything they grow to a market, have entirely prevented this land from being taken up. In view of the construction of a railway, years ago I had reserved a mile on each side of what was supposed to be the best route for the railway, and that has also locked up a great quantity of land. I think about 45,000 acres were locked up by the railway reserve, about 60,000 acres also for timber reserves within 10 miles on each side of the route, and 10,000 acres were reserved for water supply and other public purposes within 10 miles of each side of the route. Of course, beyond the 10-mile limit there is more good land, but I give you the estimate of about the quantity which is not available within 10 miles of the line. There are also very large timber reserves beyond the 10-mile limit.

1359. Even making allowance for these reserves, is there not still a good deal of country not far distant from either Grafton at one end or Casino at the other which has been open for settlement, and which has not yet been taken up? There was not within 15 or 20 miles of Casino on the one hand, and probably about the same distance from Grafton there was scarcely any left in 1896, when I resigned my position as district surveyor.

1360. In 1896, within 15 miles from Grafton, and within from 15 to 20 miles from Casino, all the available land had been taken up? Quite so.

1361. Had it been put to its best use or was it simply held for the purpose of speculation? I think it has all been put to a use of some kind or the other, especially latterly, for the dairying industry at each end.

1362. *Mr. Watson.*] You stated just now that the land which was open within 10 or 12 miles of Grafton had all been taken up before you left the district? Practically.

1363. On this map here you will notice a piece of land known locally as Clifden—part of the old Clifden station, I suppose—about 11 miles out of Grafton, on the west side of the proposed railway, which is not reserved, and which, being open for a considerable time, has not been taken up;—can you give a reason for its not being taken up? That is rather broken country—sandstone; but still there are patches of good land in that piece, and I do not think it will be long before it is taken up if it be opened under homestead selection. I do not know whether it is so; but it was not open when I left the district.

1364. A few miles from Lawrence there is another piece of land, which would lie about east of the proposed railway, at a point about 16 miles from Grafton;—how would you describe that land which, also, has been open for some time? That land is not as good as the major part of the land on the route; but still, I believe, that would be taken up readily for homestead selection if available. I do not know whether it is so or not; but there is much worse land being taken up.

1365. Did you say that these two blocks which are now vacant are not as good as the general run of land through which this railway will pass? Not as good.

1366. *Chairman.*] Taking the land through which the proposed railway runs generally, how many acres do you think will be sufficient to provide a family with a decent living by dairying? Assuming that they had a railway, I think from 500 to 600 acres, according to the quality of the country. In some cases it would require not nearly so much, and in other cases more, according to the character of the country.

1367. Have you considered what the nature of the traffic will be along this line, apart from dairy products? I do not think there will be very much traffic except from the settlement of the country itself. I look upon it that as it is now, there are 300,000 or 400,000 acres there which are almost valueless to the State; and I believe that with a railway there it would carry a population of 400 or 500 people. That would give probably about 500 or 600 acres to each family. It would carry 400 or 500 homes, and I suppose each home would average four persons at least. I look upon it that this country would be of no more use, without a railway, than it is at present. It is turning in very little to the State now.

1368. Settlement is in these districts has usually followed the course of the rivers? Quite so; but within a reasonable distance it is all taken up on all the rivers.

1369. And has that land, within what you call a reasonable distance of the rivers, been put to its highest use? I think so. The Fresh Food and Ice Company have spent about £20,000, I think, on their works at Grafton and on creameries in the district. They have over a dozen creameries in different parts of the river, and their return of butter for last June on the Clarence alone was 48,000 lb. weight, according to the reports in the Press. Of course, on the Richmond pretty well the same sort of thing is being carried on. June is a winter month too. There is this to be considered in that country, that the frosts are very mild. You can graze all the year round. Not far from Grafton, on 16 acres, I had seven or eight head of cattle and ten horses all the year round. Some of the horses would get a feed of oats or maize, now and then, but the cattle certainly never got anything. Of course, that was on the alluvial flats near Grafton. The average return is over 40 bushels of corn to the acre right through the Grafton district.

1370. The nature of the soil, and the character of the operations carried on on each of these rivers are pretty well the same? Almost exactly the same.

1371. A railway joining the two rivers is not likely to create any interchange of traffic from one district to the other? It will a little, because the Clarence River is a better river, and the passengers not so liable to be stopped at times, because the company employ a better class of vessels. Travellers, and those who have business with the Richmond, make use of the Clarence River as far as Harwood, and cross over to the Richmond, and of course a lot of that traffic would go to this railway.

1372. Grafton would be the centre to which the greater amount of the passenger traffic would be attracted? Quite so.

1373. I suppose you do not regard that as sufficient justification for the expenditure of £500,000? Not interchange of passenger traffic.

1374. Then, in your opinion, this line must depend mainly on the local traffic, which its own construction will develop? That is my opinion.

1375. You think the land is better suited for dairying than for anything else? It is.

1376. I suppose you also admit that dairying as dairying, although the value of the product is high, produced very little railway revenue? Very little compared to other products. Of course there would be other products, because a lot of the land would grow oats, as I have said, and that could be got to a market. It is utterly impossible now to do that sort of thing. The distance to the water is too far to enable a man to grow crops of that kind.

1377. Do you consider the development of the timber areas along that district as being of some importance, from a railway point of view? I do. I think daily the carriage is getting too far for the timber-getters to profitably get out the timber. There was an immense traffic done before I left with New Zealand. They supplied piles and girders of enormous length for the public works of New Zealand, and even for the Lismore-Tweed line a great lot of the sleepers were got in the Clarence district and shipped to Byron Bay. I do not say that they were all got from that quarter, but I have seen steamers loaded with them for Byron Bay.

1378. Would you say that the district between the two rivers is now languishing for the want of some railway or road facility? It is utterly stopped.

1379. And is all the available land along the course of the river and the course of the tributaries being taken up and developed? Yes.

1380. And is the expansion of that district restricted by reason of the want of some communication of this kind? It is.

1381. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How many years did you live in the district? Thirty-five years. When I went up the banks of the Clarence were lined with dense brush, and up to within a few miles of Grafton. I personally surveyed the first two years all along the banks of the Clarence, and for some distance back, the land that was likely to be taken up.

1382. You were district surveyor for a number of years? I was licensed surveyor for three years, and I was put on the staff and given charge of the district. I was promoted gradually from second class to first-class surveyor, and still in charge of the district, acted as a district surveyor, and then when a district surveyor was appointed for that particular district I was appointed. When the Land Act of 1884 was passed, and the decentralisation took place, I was appointed district surveyor for the Grafton Land Board district, which embraced the Macleay as well as other northern rivers, and at a later stage the Port Macquarie district was added to me, so that I had all the districts from Port Macquarie up to the Queensland border.

1383. Have you an intimate general knowledge of the country—not along the road itself, but along the route of this proposed railway from Grafton to Casino? I have; I have been in and out, backwards and forwards, through the greater part of it.

1384. How would you class the country generally? Fair grazing country.

1385. Is much of the land occupied? It is nearly all occupied in leasehold areas, annual licenses, or occupation licenses for pastoral purposes.

1386. Are there many settlers, farming and dairying, within a reasonable distance, say, 10 miles, from the river at Grafton, and the same distance from the river at Casino—that is, in the intervening country between the two 10-mile points? About Myrtle Creek, which is 20 miles from Casino, there is a great number of settlers.

1387. Between that and, say, 10 miles from the Clarence at Grafton? There is very little settlement between those parts.

1388. What is the reason of that? The reason, I presume, is partly on account of the land not being A1, being only fair, and, of course, the distance to cart produce. The principal factor against that back land being taken up is, and always has been, the very rich land on the bank of the river. Now, after they have been working that land for thirty-five or forty years without manure of any kind, a few years ago the average on the Clarence was 40 bushels of maize to the acre.

1389. It is exceptionally rich land in the valley of the river and its tributaries? It is; that being the case the people would not look at anything outside such rich land, and yet all this land I am speaking of is quite as good as you would see out in the southward, or out in any of the other directions. I have been in all the other directions, and what I see from the railway the land is not to be compared, on the whole, to the land we are speaking about.

1390. In the Richmond River district itself, how would you describe the land? It is very good, but a great portion of it is heavily timbered, and requires a great deal of money to clear it.

1391. How would the land between Myrtle Creek and 10 miles from Grafton compare with the valley of the Clarence and the valley of the Richmond for dairying or agricultural purposes? Not so good.

1392. But if you were comparing the land I am now referring to with the average districts throughout the Colony, how would you describe it? It would compare very favourably.

1393. Is it heavily timbered country? It is lightly timbered generally. There are patches, of course, heavily timbered with good timber—iron-bark, grey-gum, and all the good hardwood timbers. But it is astonishing to see the grass that grows on the gum ridges when ringbarked by the settlers.

1394. Do you know any of the settled parts between Grafton and Casino, which have been free-selected and improved? There are some which are directly on the line of route. For instance at the cross roads, where the Grafton Road joins the Lawrence Road, there is a place which shows what the grass is after the trees have been felled. It is on an old place, and it is certainly thirty-five years since it was first taken up. Beyond the Flying Horse some of the paddocks—at Riley's, two miles away—which have been run show signs of what improvement has been made.

1395. Do you know Duggan's selection, some few miles from Grafton? Yes; I think I personally surveyed it.

1396. What class of land was it in its original condition? It was a fair sample of the land between the 10 miles we were speaking about, say, between a little beyond the Flying Horse and Myrtle Creek.

1397. Have you seen it since it has been improved? Yes; I have passed it scores and scores of times. It has doubled its carrying capacity in my opinion.

1398. Is it land suitable for dairying purposes? It is quite suitable in every respect, and parts of that land would grow oats and light crops of that kind.

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1399. Do you put that forward as a fair sample of the whole of the country between Grafton and Casino? It would be a fair sample of the land between Myrtle Creek, and not quite so near this way as the Flying Horse.

1400. The railway would cross a number of creeks;—is any of the land on these creeks superior to the flat country between the different watercourses? There are little patches of alluvial land on all the creeks, and the same in the valleys running back from the creek into the ridges, and all those flats are suitable for cultivation. For instance, at Myall Creek and at Camira Station the crops of maize which have been raised were surprising, yielding far above the average of 40 bushels to the acre.

1401. Would the extent of agricultural land be considerable, putting the whole of these watercourses together, within the influence of the railways? Not really good agricultural land—not like the flats I have just been speaking of.

1402. That land is of extra quality? Yes; but, as I say, there are a great number of ridges which are fit for lighter crops than maize. What I spoke of before as showing such results were good crops, particularly maize.

1403. Has any cultivation taken place up to the present time in these places you refer to? I do not think there has been much done. They depend more on the cattle.

1404. What agricultural produce is grown or would be grown for home requirements? They only grow just sufficient for their own wants.

1405. Do you think the construction of a railway would tend to develop the agricultural resources of the different areas along the watercourses? I think so. It would give them a market for any patch of good land they had. They would make the best possible use of it; if it was more advantageous to them to put into a crop, they would do that with it rather than keep it for dairying, although, even on the banks of the river, they are not growing so much maize as they used to. They are using the land for dairying, which seems to have become a favourite industry. The fact of the matter is, that a cheque every month is a very desirable thing, very much more so than having to chance getting a very low price for their maize, and getting it spoilt, as I have seen it spoilt, on the wharfs many a time. I have seen it lying there rotting with tarpaulins partly over it, and the wet spoiling it.

1406. Do you think the dairying is more likely to increase on the upper portions of the river—that is, above navigation, where it is not so convenient to ship agricultural produce? On the Clarence they have about 35 miles of water-carriage above Grafton, and there are creameries all up that way. They put the cream on to the steamer, and it comes down to the principal factory. But where there is no watercourse they cannot go any great distance. The land-carriage in a vehicle would debar them from doing anything of that kind with the cream.

1407. How far do you think it would pay a dairy farmer to send his milk to a factory? I think it would pay to send 6 or 7 miles—some of them, I have been told, even bring it from a greater distance. Of course, a great deal would depend on the road. If they have anything like reasonable access they could bring it probably 10 miles more easily from some places than they could bring it 5 miles from others.

1408. Speaking of the land along the banks of the navigable portion of the river, would it pay them to send their milk for conveyance by drogher some considerable distance to the factory? Yes, either the milk or the cream. A number of them separate the cream now with their own separators.

1409. Where they have separators, I understand that it pays them to send cream a far greater distance than it could possibly pay them to send milk? Just so; but I see by recent reports they will have to improve their method, else they will bring discredit on the butter market.

1410. Do you think this railway, if made, would have the effect of settling dairy farmers and agricultural farmers along the route between Grafton and Casino? I have not the slightest doubt about it.

1411. How far on each side do you think the railway would serve the country? I think from 6 to 7 miles easily.

1412. That would be for dairying and agricultural farms? Yes. I am putting a very inside limit to them, because I think they could go more than 6 or 7 miles, perhaps you might say 10 miles. I estimate that it will improve the value of the land to a distance of 10 miles from the railway. I think the land within the immediate vicinity of the railway would be doubled in price. It has a nominal value at present; I do not believe that it is worth more than 12s. or 15s. an acre. I think the whole of that land would be doubled in value by making a railway through it.

1413. You have a good knowledge of land values in the district? Yes. I fixed the upset prices of all Government lands throughout the district, from Port Macquarie up to the Tweed. I used to make that my business. Of course, I had to keep myself *au fait* of the prices that land realised.

1414. During your long residence in the district have you observed that there is much through traffic between the Richmond and the Clarence? Not a great deal. The through traffic is confined to coaches—I think two a week—from Casino to Lawrence, and two coaches, sometimes two or three a day, from Harwood, on the Clarence, to Woodburn, on the Richmond.

1415. Do you think that if this railway were constructed the traffic that now goes by Harwood and Chatsworth, and to the Lower Richmond, would go by train? Not the whole of it. I think that those who had business on the lower parts of the Richmond, going down the Richmond from Woodburn towards Ballina, would go that way still, but anyone having business on the upper part of the Richmond would take the train.

1416. Do you think that that passenger traffic would be large if given railway facilities? I do not think it would be very large. I do not anticipate any great amount of through traffic.

1417. Do you think there will be much produce sent to the Clarence for shipment to some other port, not only from the Richmond River district, but from the Richmond River end of the proposed railway, if made? I think there would be some from above Casino, but not from many miles below, and if the Casino-Lismore railway, which I see is being pushed through the House, is constructed, I do not know that there would be any sent from Casino towards Grafton. I think it would go down towards Lismore, and be shipped at that point.

1418. Do you think it would induce traffic to the Clarence by reason of the fact that the freights from Lismore are higher than the freights from Grafton to Sydney? Yes; I overlooked that part of the business. I find that I would have to put on a railway freight from Casino in addition to a higher freight from the Richmond than from the Clarence, in consequence of the fact that they cannot get the same class of steamers there to use. I think there would be some. It would depend, of course, on the tariff a great deal.

1419.

1419. Do you think this railway, if made, would have the effect of inducing a considerable amount of traffic, not only an interchange of traffic between the two districts, but an intermediate traffic? I think there would be a great deal of intermediate traffic. I think the settlement along and within a reasonable distance of the route would be one of the principal factors in that respect. Another reason why it should be built is that it forms part of a North Coast railway, which will probably be constructed some day.

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James Inglis, merchant, Sydney, sworn, and examined.—

1420. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been through the district between Grafton and Casino? I know it pretty well. Within the last twenty years I have been all over it a good many times.

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1421. How do you regard the proposal to run a railway from Grafton to Casino from the standpoint of the general public? My main idea is dependent entirely upon whether it would be a piecemeal thing or part of a great plan. To my mind it should be part of a comprehensive plan of a North Coast railway. I have always been in favour of that idea, and now that the proposition is to bring the railway over from Nerang or Southport, on the Brisbane side, and that part of the intermediate stage has already been made, I look upon it as part of the broad, comprehensive plan of linking the whole of the river districts together, with Brisbane, Newcastle, and the metropolis. As a mere piecemeal line, I think it might be a little premature; but if the Government intend to carry out this comprehensive scheme of a coast railway, then, of course, the sooner we set about it the better.

1422. Are there any reasons which might be advanced for the present construction of a plan such as you speak of, having in view the steamer competition which exists to-day? Without saying anything derogatory to the steamer competition, it must always, to a certain extent, be dependent on somewhat adverse natural conditions. To some extent, what generally presents itself to any reasoning man's view is, that you are opening up new country; you are inducing settlement; you are giving further facilities for travelling and the transit of produce. In this particular district there is a point which it does not seem to me has been sufficiently urged, and which, perhaps, has not been present to your minds. It possesses a very equable temperature—no great excess of heat or cold. It has a very abundant rainfall. The soil is just suitable for the class of sub-tropical crops which are grown by planters in India. I think the whole of this tract between the two rivers would be very useful for quite a new class of cultivation altogether. And, as our Government are very liberally and very wisely advancing the cause of agriculture by means of model farms and efforts of that sort—I was one of the first to suggest them in one of my published books—here is an opportunity, I think, such as is scarcely enjoyed by any other part of the Colony with which I am acquainted—and I have been all over it—for the production of oil crops, such as rape, mustard, sesamum, and castor. On all these various oils, as it is evident to you, there will be some sort of federal tariff required, and that I think may give our farmers a better opportunity to supply our own immediate wants. I feel perfectly certain that rape, mustard, sesamum, turmeric, ginger, indigo, coffee, and tea can be grown on all the slopes within this tract of country. I feel sure that with sub-tropical cultivation quite a new era of prosperity would attend on this district if you give them ready means of access to market. I think also the value of the timber industry has not been sufficiently recognised. When I was at Home—I went Home as President of the Chamber of Commerce—I had the honor of addressing no less than thirty-three different chambers in different parts of the United Kingdom. I think I was the first public man in Australia who pointed out that in our forests alone, unalienated, we had an asset which would more than pay off our national debt three times. I am still of that opinion. We have an enormous asset in our unexploited timbers. I am at present engaged in trying to get £150,000 capital to exploit the district, south of Grafton, on the Bobo and Nymboida Rivers. I went up with Mr. Kethel and spent more than a week in going over this country. We took it acre by acre, made a very exhaustive survey, and, upon my word, it astonished me. I do not know any other part of the surface of this globe where you have richer natural resources than in the forests up there. You only want to employ different methods. The old day of the lumbering bullock-dray is done with. You have to get steam capstans that can work for 2 miles on each side of the line with a wire rope, and skid roads, and you can bring your logs in over hill and dale, through slush and quagmire, and everything else. The weather does not stop you, and you do not want any feed, for you have the food on the ground for your machinery. One such modern mill as we project would employ from 300 to 500 workmen. You would have villages springing up. Our proposal also is to have a scheme of reforestation. For every tree we cut down we plant two or three. On some such scientific scale as that, I think you could start industries there which would astonish you. My idea would be not to have a very expensive line at the first. If you made your permanent way, which, after all, is the most expensive thing, I would say the lightest plant suitable to a rather sparse passenger traffic at first would be the best to have. By that means I think you could bring it well within practical scope. If you are going to spend £12,000 or £15,000 per mile as we have done before, I do not think the thing at present is altogether practical, although, as part of a great comprehensive scheme, it to my mind suggests infinite possibilities. Of course, I am a sanguine man; I am simply giving you my own opinions. I have thought out the subject pretty well. I have travelled over the district, and comparing it with other districts, with the Central Cumberland district, and with the districts round about Bathurst and Goulburn, although this is a light sandy soil—it is not like the rich alluvial bottoms you get along the main rivers—still, with its climate and rainfall it has splendid capabilities. The thing you get your money returned more quickly from, is a dairying country—a grazing country. But then, as settlement increased, you would have these little patches of sub-tropical cultivation which, I think, would pay remarkably well. Take capsicums. There is an immense demand for capsicums. All these little industries are neglected here. We all go in for a big thing—butter, beef, wool, mutton—and we neglect thousands of these little subsidiary industries on which a selector's family could always find a pleasant and profitable occupation. I am perfectly certain that a whole lot of these things can be cultivated here easily and remuneratively. I am not speaking without the book, because I have made exhaustive experiments. I have grown all these things in this country. At the first Sydney Exhibition I had a very large exhibit of thirty-eight kinds of sub-tropical products, from the seed right up to the finished article. I showed the products, and I have been preaching that sermon ever since. But I have been like one of those "crying in the wilderness."

1423. Would you say that the land between Casino and Grafton, which is admitted to be intrinsically rather poor, is suitable for the cultivation of these products you mention? It is the very thing for oil crops.

1424.

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1424. Do you know where New Italy is, between Woodburn and Chatsworth? Yes; I have shot quail over that country.
1425. Do you know whether the people at New Italy have gone in for growing any of these sub-tropical crops? No: I think they have gone in principally for the ordinary crops. They cannot get very well to a market either, for they are a good distance from either river.
1426. It is timbered and very poor country? It is poorish country. Mulberries grow very well there. I think coffee, too, would grow remarkably well. It is not as good land as this land we are speaking about. Then you have—what is a very important thing in all cultivation—you have a good under-tillth; in other words, the subsoil is good, and it is retentive of moisture, which is a most important thing for Australian cultivation. I know that, as an old practical planter, I make it my business whenever I am travelling to get a good grip of the country and see what the capabilities are likely to be. I have fourteen travellers always employed, and I have one traveller who does that trip six times a year. I have been with him over all the country, and I have gone down from Guyra, from Hillgrove, from Glen Innes, and from Tenterfield. I think you are simply mixing up two propositions when you begin to talk about the probable route to connect with the table-land. That has nothing to do with the merits of this case. I look at it as a broad general comprehensive scheme, and whatever parochial or local difference of opinion may be, I do not think that should be present to the mind of a practical politician. He has to look at it from the point of view of the whole country.
1427. We have not gone into that aspect? I am speaking now about some letters I saw in the newspapers. I give you credit for having a bigger view of your functions and duties than that. But that is where a lot of this opposition comes from—purely from local and parochial suppositions as to whether it will take a little trade from this town or from that town. The way I have to look at it is, whether it will be good for the whole Colony or not.
1428. The point which seems to be most vital to the present inquiry is, whether the all-round advantages from railway construction will be beneficial to the State;—within a reasonable time, do you think there will be a fairly large population settled along the route of this railway? I certainly think so. From what I have seen of the land, I think it would be the quickest and best means of promoting settlement and of giving a value to the land for settling purposes which it does not now possess.
1429. You would not say that the timber along the route would be either as valuable or as plentiful as that in the region you are speaking of—a little south of Grafton? Certainly not. The timber on both sides here, for miles and right away up to the flanks of the ridges, is timber of a rather valueless character and not much use for mercantile purposes, but as soon as you begin to tap the ridges and get away into the valleys there, you have magnificent timber—pine and hardwood of all kinds, and a great many sorts suitable for cabinet-making.
1430. But down south of Grafton the country you spoke of a few minutes ago is more basalt than sandstone? Yes; and it is very much better timber there.
1431. Would you think the timber along the Richmond Range, and within a reasonable distance of the suggested line, would be worth something from a mercantile standpoint? Undoubtedly, if you could get it readily away. It is of no use just now, because you have so far to carry and cart it. Although not nearly so good as the timber in the Don Dorriggo country and round about there, still there is a very large amount of good timber there, and I think it would be a very favourable place for the trial of reforestation. I think you could grow a great many kinds of valuable timbers there. There should be a little timber reserve here and there all up and down that coast country, which should not be allowed to be touched unless under a proper contract to reforestate—as you cut to replant—because a lot of it, however good the soil, would take a long time—perhaps a couple of generations—before it would become fit for the plough. I am quite sure that every valuable tree we know, from teak upwards, could be planted on these slopes. I believe it would be a splendid place for a teak forest. I have lived among the teak. I have been through all northern India, where forestry is regularly practised. I had charge of very large estates up there, belonging to the Agra Bank, and a very large part of our revenue came from forestry operations. In fact, if people knew the value of bamboo as a crop here they would start plantations. It is the very place for bamboos. Right round the foot of the ranges you could have bamboo plantations. It would grow like grass with no trouble, and for scaffold operations there is nothing finer on the face of the earth. You could always get from 15s. to 20s. a hundred for bamboos in any large town from builders for scaffolding purposes. They are tough and pliable; they have only to be bound together and the whole fabric gives like a basket. You cannot break it. It is better than squared timber, it is better than hardwood for scaffold purposes. Bamboo-planting should be carried out on a proper scientific scale. Always cutting from the inside, letting the air into the inside, and letting your bamboos grow from the outside, they grow like grass. That is the whole secret of bamboo-planting. It would be as good as many of the crops which farmers grow there. Bundles of bamboos could be floated down the river or sent down to large centres, and builders would give a very high price for them. It is a very valuable plant. The people do not half know the use of it here. Even when the bamboos get a little worn they can be cut up and made into dunnage. Shipmasters will buy them to put between the shell of the ship and the cargo they are putting in. From wool ships you would get any demand for bamboo batons. That is only one of the indications, and a very slight one, I give you of how many sub-tropical products are neglected here by farmers from the want of knowledge.
1432. You indicated a little while ago that you would not be an enthusiastic supporter of this railway unless it was to be considered as part of a through line along the coast? That, to my mind, is its main justification at present.
1433. Do you know sufficient of the land south of Grafton and right down to Newcastle to be able to say whether it is good land? I have been all over the land, and I consider that it is even better than this.
1434. Do you think we would be justified, from the point of view of settlement, and probably of returns, either direct or indirect, within a reasonable time, in going on with a line right along the coast? I do; I would advocate it strongly, from a broad point of view—of good to the State. I do not take a district view of it at all. I look upon it as part of a great comprehensive scheme—a network of railways. You would save money on your roads; you would give access to little valleys and patches of ground which are now absolutely worthless; you would be settling happy families upon the soil, who would all make a reasonable living; you would be introducing fresh industries, and that naturally gives a stimulus to trade. I being a trader, naturally take the commercial view; I think there would be half a dozen industries
very

very soon started, and my traveller would not have such a large distance to go from one town to another without getting some orders; and whatever benefits the commercial traveller means a benefit to the State, for these are all dutiable articles that we deal with.

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1435. Our South Coast line has not been very encouraging in that respect? I do not think it has had such broad hinterland; it is closer to the sea, and there is not so much room for settlement. In the north the hinterland is broader, with a great many little valleys, where families could settle and make a very good livelihood indeed. You can keep cattle and sheep even on the ridges here, because, although there is that worthless blady grass, it can be very easily eradicated. If it were rough-harrowed, and couch put in, it would eradicate the blady grass. Wherever you can grow blady grass, you can grow couch. The way we got quit of the thatch grass in India was to dig out a clump, make a compost of fresh cow-dung and clay, and put in some couch chopped up. In less than two weeks the couch begins to grow, and in one year you will have couch all over the place. In New Zealand, thirty years ago, I saw the couch grass beat the bracken. Couch is one of the most valuable grasses we have for fodder, because it will stand through the winter and the summer.

1436. Taking this line, in conjunction with the Casino-Lismore-Tweed line, and a possible connection north, to what extent would you expect through traffic? At first that would be rather inconsiderable, I think. As you give opportunities to travel, so travelling develops, but I would not like to give a very glowing account. I think the passenger traffic at first might be inconsiderable, but it would be bound to grow.

1437. What class of goods do you think would be carried other than those which are carried to the rivers at either end of the suggested line? If this system of cultivation I spoke of were gone in for, there would be oils, oil seeds, and oil-cake.

1438. Suppose you had your through line to Sydney, or suppose you only had a line to Grafton, would you expect the people sending these products to use the railway, or to ship at the nearest river port? I think it would be from river port to river port. I think they would be really feeders. Unless where the bar forms a supreme barrier, I have no doubt that river carriage is cheaper than rail.

1439. It has been pointed out in this inquiry that at the Clarence Heads very considerable improvements at large expenditure have been undertaken by the Government, and, so far as the evidence of the engineers goes, it would seem that very good results in keeping the bars open have followed; the point is whether, in the present stage of the Colony's development, the people are not fairly well served by having free water communication kept open? It is just a case of larding the fat sow. Those who have the best lands and live on the easiest conditions have access to natural means of traffic, whereas the hurrying crowds who have stepped on their heels find that they have to go further back. But they are a very valuable class of settlers to encourage, and you are forcing them into conditions which are almost heart-breaking. They can see no good out of all the labours they do under the sun, and a hot sun too. I really think, if at a slight loss, it would be a statesmanlike thing to encourage the settlement of the very class of men we want to take up the land, make it valuable, and settle happy homes.

1440. It is for the latter class you think the railway is required? Yes.

1441. As a man whose business and ideas take him all over New South Wales, you must recognise that we have only a certain amount of interest-paying ability in the community each year. Unless public works are reproductive—that is, if losses are to be extensive on many lines or works—a limit must be reached, so far as the community are concerned for a time. Looking at this question all round, and comparing this district with other districts, would you say that this is one of those cases in which you would first undertake the construction of a railway, seeing that we have only a few millions each year that we can spend in this way? I would sooner have the main Northern Coast line gone on with, with a considerable amount of vigour, than some of the other projected lines, which it would be very invidious for me to mention. I really think that where you have great main-reaching lines through pastoral districts, you have done all that the State, considering its present capacity for paying interest, might possibly be expected to do. But where you have land fit for this class of settlement, where you can get 300 or 400 acres to a family, I really think it will be a very statesmanlike thing to make a railway. Of course I would put the burden on posterity as far as I could, and I would make the lines themselves earn their interest as far as possible; but what loss there was on them I think might fairly be borne, to a certain extent, by those who have to come after us, and who will reap the benefits. I quite agree with you that there is a limit beyond which no wise man would commit himself. All the same, I think this is one of the most deserving of the propositions which have been put before your Committee—that is, always taking it as a whole comprehensive scheme.

1442. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You have mentioned that some portions of the country between Grafton and Casino are suitable for growing coffee and tea? I think so, in some of the sheltered valleys and on the higher slopes. I am quite sure that indigo would grow well.

1443. How far do you think it would pay a farmer to carry such products to a port or to a railway? All these products are grown and made on the farms. If you grow coffee you pulp it on the farm, and the pulp is useful for food. With indigo you have a couple of little vats, and you make your indigo, and you put the product of 2 or 3 acres of indigo into one 80 or 100 lb. chest. With your oil-seeds, you would have more scope for profitable carriage.

1444. But at what distance from railway or port would it pay a man to grow many of these products? Thirty or 40 miles.

1445. As this line is only 6½ miles long, it would absorb nearly the whole, either one or the other port? No; your middle distance would be about 30 miles from water-carriage, so that you could give access to a steamer by the railway to any farmer almost on your line.

1446. But taking the whole distance, if it would pay to manufacture these products, say, 30 miles from a port, you see 30 miles from Casino on the one hand and 30 miles from Grafton on the other would absorb nearly the whole line? But then you have 30 miles back from the railway to think of.

1447. This line is running north and south, and you would have east and west to a distance of 20 or 30 miles as well? I am not thinking of those who are only 30 miles from a port, I am thinking of those who would be 30 miles from a railway, and then 36 miles from a port. I would like to give these men an equal show with those closer to a port.

1448. Do you think the nooks and valleys in this country are sufficiently extensive to justify the construction of the railway? There are a great many of them. There is a lot of fine land in there.

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1440. You have described this land as a light sandy soil? It is a very open sandy loam; there is good loam underneath, and with plenty of moisture.
1450. Considering that this railway is estimated to cost a little over £500,000, and that the annual deficiency is estimated at £16,000, do you think it is likely that that piece of country would produce sufficient to justify the construction of the line under these circumstances? Well, consider how long that loss of £16,000 would be likely to last. Would it not be diminishing year by year.
1451. Undoubtedly? Well, then it comes to be a practical question as to when you may expect the line to be self-supporting. I quite agree with those who say that at first this line would not be self-supporting. It would take some time for settlement to advance. It would take some time even for the introduction of such products as I have mentioned. I think for the first few years you might expect a loss on the line; but then again, if it were part of a main northern line, I believe the line as a whole would pay—parts of it would pay better than others. Therefore, I think, we should look at the problem as one comprehensive scheme, not as a piecemeal thing. If you are going to make that bit of line, and stop there, then I certainly would be against it.
1452. You see both Casino and Grafton are already fairly well served? The towns are, and the immediate vicinities.
1453. We should look at this line as necessarily feeding itself between those two points? Yes.
1454. If you deduct 20 miles from each end, it only leaves 24 miles in the middle to feed the whole railway? And the back country which it would tap on both sides, that increases your area a good bit.
1455. You think that, under the circumstances, the country would be justified in constructing the line? I do. I would be in favour of it, although I would not for a moment be so sanguine as to think it would pay its way from the jump. I think it would very soon be made remunerative. Of course, at present maize is considered the principal product in that district. They would not grow much maize on that sandy loam. You know that rape and sesamum, which is very largely cultivated in Europe and Upper India, and which, as you know is very largely used as an adulterant for olive—in fact you can scarcely tell the difference between them—fetch a very high price. The beauty about all this produce is that there is no waste. Your refuse is the finest food you can have for cattle, especially dairy cows. I would like to see every small farm in these districts have its own little oil mill, and its own little tobacco drying plant. You could grow tobacco there beautifully. It does not want that rich chocolate soil some people think it does. If you have a good subsoil it will grow quite well. The best tobacco is not grown on the richest soil. The golden tobacco is grown on light soil.
1456. What area do you think would be a fair thing for an ordinary farmer to make a living off, taking into consideration the cultivation of many of these products you have mentioned? I think he ought to do very well on 300 acres. If he had 100 acres in good cultivation, he could have 200 acres under couch and other grasses, and he could supplement his income by dairy products.
1457. A sort of mixed farming? Yes. We have been so accustomed to have huge slices of land here exclusively for beef, mutton, or wool, that people turn up their noses, and do not see the possibilities contained in 200 or 300 acres. If they would go to where the population is more dense, where land is harder to get, and see what farmers in Scotland can do out of 60, 80, or 160 acres—if they would go down to Sussex or any of the English counties and see the size of the farms there, they would alter their views.
1458. Is it your opinion that sugar can be grown satisfactorily there? I should not think so, as it requires a richer soil. You might grow the light Nepauli or Upper India sugar there as fodder and get a great many tons per acre, but I do not think it would be much good for sugar.
1459. One or two witnesses have stated that sugar can be grown there? I doubt it.
1460. It requires a soil more suitable for grass? Yes.
1461. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think these Indian products could be grown successfully without cheap labour? I am sure of it. You see, ginger, coffee, and a great many other things would grow there—what I call family industries—where the children would come in very handily; and rape, sesamum, mustard, and flax, it is splendid country for flax, could be just as well grown there as in the north of Ireland.
1462. You have had considerable experience in regard to these products? I have been a practical planter nearly all my life.
1463. Suppose this railway was only done in a piecemeal way, still you would be an advocate of its being done in that way? So long as the main finish of the thing is kept in view.
1464. You would advocate the construction of this line, even if it were only a piece of a North Coast line? Well! “If ye bid for a silk goon, ye’ll mebbe get a sleeve o’ t.” I think a Great Northern Coast railway would shorten the route to the Tweed by nearly 200 miles. It would be a very important link, I think.
1465. Do you not think this coast line would divert nearly the whole of the traffic going to Queensland? I do not think so. The through traffic between the two capitals now is very inconsiderable. The main traffic is from town to town.
1466. You expect to see a great accession to that traffic in the near future? It is just like giving postal facilities or anything else. The traffic grows with the facilities you give it.
1467. You think that if this line is constructed between Grafton and Casino the traffic would come? It would go largely to make its own traffic. Give them easy facilities for travelling, and the traffic would come. I think it has become a matter of almost mathematical precision to say what amount of traffic a railway or road will bring. Those who are accustomed to statistics of that sort will be able to tell you in how many years you may expect to get so much traffic.
1468. You think this line would be the means of settling a large population between Grafton and Casino and to the east and west of the route? I do think so. I know lots of fathers with lads and lassies growing up, getting married, and going out, who are looking out for some such tract of country as this I am speaking of, where their children might go and settle. The old folks would start the young folks with a few cows and a little capital, and the young folks would go and start a homestead by themselves.
1469. *Mr. McFarlane.*] The annual deficiency of £16,000 a year on this railway is based on the calculation that it will cost £7,000 a mile to construct;—but an estimate has since been made for laying a light railway between the two points at a cost of £3,000 per mile? I should think that could be very easily done to satisfy all requirements for the next fifteen or twenty years. I do not speak as an engineer; but I feel sure that to put down a line at a cost of £7,000 or £5,000 a mile over country like that would be a waste of money.

1470. Even looking at it as a section of the North Coast railway? Even so.

1471. It must necessarily be a considerable number of years before a North Coast line could be built, supposing it were undertaken now? Yes.

1472. Do you think it would be wise to lay down a light line between Grafton and Casino pending the completion of the North Coast line? Just in the same way as it was considered a wise thing to put a line over the Blue Mountains, and now the time has come when they have spent a lot of money in taking out curves and making new tunnels; so your first object, I think, should be to promote settlement and to give access to your lands as cheaply as possible, always with the view to having it made into a great permanent-way hereafter. I should think £3,000 a mile would be ample. There are no engineering difficulties to overcome, except with regard to some of the creeks.

1473. Do you think a light line would answer the purposes of settlement equally well as an ordinary main line? I do.

1474. That would reduce the annual loss on the Departmental estimate from £16,000 to about £7,000? That is a very material difference. I think the country would get that, and more, in the increased value of lands, in a larger consumption of dutiable articles, in better settlement and more contentment, and in the introduction of new products.

1475. Are you not aware that both coffee and ginger are now grown in the Clarence district? I know they are grown both on the Clarence and on the Richmond.

1476. Have you seen the results? I have seen the things growing. I do not know what the mercantile results are yet. It is not so very long ago since they were started. Twenty years ago I sent out thousands of bags of all sorts of seeds, which I got down from the Government of India. My wife and I made them up at night; I had them all initialled and sent out, and all I asked them to do was to send me a written report of the results. Old Mr. Colley, of Kangaroo Valley, and two others, were the only three out of hundreds to take the trouble to send me a report.

1477. Do you think the products you mention could be profitably grown there, given railway facilities? I do. A little rough mill could work the whole of these oil products. You would only want barrels to send the oil to market, and the oilcake is reserved for the use of the farm. With mixed farming, without dairying, a family could be exceedingly happy and comfortable. They could have butter and eggs and all sorts of farm produce to send to market.

1478. How will the Don Dorrigo country compare with the country between Grafton and Casino, as regards timber? It is a superior timbered country, but it certainly is not so useful for agriculture. It would take far too much money to open it out for the plough. It would take a generation to do it.

1479. The departmental estimate of the value of the timber in the Don Dorrigo country is £14 per acre on the royalty now paid? That is better than even £1 an acre.

1480. What class of marketable timbers are there between Grafton and Casino? There are swamp gum, a lot of maiden's blush, and a very large quantity of first-class wattle. I believe wattle farming would pay on all these low spurs. Mr. Moses tried growing wattle in New England, and would have made a good thing of the business, only that he gave it up when it was just coming into form. On that light sandy soil at the foot of the ridges you could grow wattle splendidly. It is the perfectly ideal home of the wattle. There are a lot of other timbers for dye stuffs which could be grown there. The gum is rather stunted and gnarled—very few straight barrels—from what I saw. I have not been back into these ridges myself. I am going now by hearsay.

1481. You do not know the forest reserves of iron-bark there? No; but I should think that there would be good iron-bark there.

1482. Of course, where you get iron-bark you do not get much of anything else? No.

1483. *Dr. Garran.*] If these sub-tropical products were grown on the Richmond River, would they find their way to the markets of the world by the Richmond, or would they go down this line? That question was asked me before. I think the river traffic would always be preferred to the railway traffic.

1484. We must not look for a large terminal business on this line? No; unless you make it a straight line right through.

1485. This line would create its own business? Yes.

TUESDAY, 17 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Henry Paterson, Manager, Fresh Food and Ice Company, sworn, and examined:—

1486. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you any personal knowledge of the district between Grafton and Casino? I have been several times right through from Grafton to Casino, and from Lismore to Grafton, going from Casino.

1487. Would you care, first of all, to state what you know about the district? I should say that there is a good lot of Government land which might be turned to fair account. I do not say, by any means, that it is extraordinary land. It is not chocolate soil or black soil to any great extent; but still it is ground which might be made useful for many purposes, especially dairying. I do not make that statement, because I am connected with dairying. I think it is specially adapted for dairying. I think you would get a lot of creameries up there, which would naturally help the line to pay, and there are other things which, no doubt, could be grown. I think you see the worst part of that country when you see just the top of it, that is, the land along the road.

1488. Have you been off the road in different places? Very little.

1489. In its present condition, is it suitable for stock purposes and for dairying? It is suitable for them. Of course, you want a good lot of land for a fair-sized family to live upon. I should say you want 500 or 600 acres to a family.

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- H. Pateson. 1490. Is that in its present condition or its improved condition? In its present condition, I should say. They could live upon that area. I do not think they could make an extraordinarily good living, but then a man would soon improve the land naturally.
- 17 July, 1900. 1491. Would it be suitable for producing artificial grasses? I should think so. I should think you would have to get beyond the top and go down to the subsoil, ploughing it well up.
1492. Is there much dairying between Grafton and Casino? Very little now.
1493. How does it extend out of each place along the proposed railway? At Casino it extends out from 8 or 10 miles, and from Grafton I do not think it extends at present more than 10 miles, and then there is not a great deal of it.
1494. How far would it pay a dairy farmer to send his milk to a factory or creamery? He should not send it over 8 miles, and it should be well cooled and aerated before he sends it so far. The idea would be, if you did run a railway from Grafton to Casino, to station creameries all over it; and the cream would be separated there, and pasteurised, and then it would travel 60 or 70 miles in real good order. Of course, it would not go to that distance, because it would naturally go to Lismore.
1495. How far would it pay to carry cream? You could not cart it more than 7 or 8 miles, and the same with milk, unless you pasteurised it. If you pasteurise it, you can carry it, perhaps, 15 miles; but still, land carriage does not pay for carrying cream.
1496. The reason why there is not more of the land used for dairying purposes between Grafton and Casino is through not having some means to convey the milk or cream? Without a doubt. They wanted to send cream from Myrtle Creek, which is 35 or 36 miles from Grafton.
1497. I think it is nearer 40 miles? It may be; for I am speaking without the book. They wanted to send their cream, but we would not take it. Under any circumstances, if you bring cream by road it would only make a rotten sort of stuff.
1498. Would it not be nearer for them to send it to Casino or Lismore? It would be nearer to send it to Casino.
1499. The line is 64 miles long? It would pay them better to send it to Casino; but, even then, they would not send it by road.
1500. You think that if this railway were constructed, the land would be taken up for dairying purposes? I can only answer that question by saying that since the dairying industry has got a good hold on the Clarence the land that is not saleable or usable is practically scarce now.
1501. Are there many inquiries for land for dairying purposes in the district? Many inquiries. When I went up there first, four or five years ago, you could get land almost at any price you wanted; but now all the dairying land is taken up. Of course, down the lower river, down at Copmanhurst, and on the other part of the river, you can find that land is being taken up. The best proof that it is being taken up is the fact that when I went there first I should say that they were not making more than 160 or 170 tons a year, whereas now, they are making about 800 tons.
1502. Is it likely to continue to increase if there is sufficient land available to be taken up for that purpose? Without a doubt. There is no district better adapted for dairying than the Clarence and the Richmond. They at present, I think, supply all Sydney wants—for nine months out of the year, anyhow.
1503. Is there any other industry that would be likely to be developed by the construction of this line other than dairying? Of course, there is a great deal connected with dairying—pigs, fowls, and poultry of all descriptions. What the subsoil is I could not say, but I should think you see the worst land at the top. In Grafton they can grow everything—tropical fruits of every kind, coffee, and all that sort of thing. I think I could enumerate the things they cannot grow better than the things they can grow.
1504. Do you think the majority along the railway would send their milk or cream—particularly cream—to Grafton rather than to Casino or Lismore? I take it that in any case they would have to send it by rail to either Grafton or Casino—it would not matter much.
1505. Would the same facilities be available at one place as at the other? It is simply a question of distance, as to whether it pays better to send to Casino than to Grafton.
1506. The reason why I asked that question was because it is stated that the dairy farmers of Myrtle Creek are making inquiries as to whether they could send their cream to Grafton, which is considerably further away than Casino? They applied to us time after time to put a factory or creamery up there. We would not do it, because we knew that it was too far.
1507. What depth of country do you think the railway would serve on either side? I am afraid I am not in a position to answer that question. There ought to be 800,000 or 900,000 acres there.
1508. Provided that the land was suitable for dairying purposes, what distance would it pay them to send their cream to a railway for conveyance to a factory? It would pay them to send it in 40 or 50 miles. We at present get cream from Queanbeyan and places like that; plenty of it comes down to our own place in Sydney. If you take care of your cream, and see that it is well looked after from the beginning, you can practically travel it any reasonable distance by train.
1509. Do you do much chilling in your establishment in Grafton? We did some meat for Mr. Greaves last year, but he is shipping down by the boats this year. We do a very large amount in bacon there.
1510. Is that increasing each year? It is with us. I will give the returns of our business for the last three years. The milk and butter business, £162,520; and the pig and bacon business, £17,588; making a total of £180,108 in that period. We spent on plant and buildings £17,400, and we pay an average wage of £65 per week. When we started up there we were doing about a fifth of that business.
1511. The first figures you read represent the moneys spent in purchasing these articles? Yes.
1512. Where do you mostly get the stock from for chilling; for instance, pigs? We buy them all over the river—down as far as Palmer's Island, and right down to Lower Copmanhurst.
1513. Do you get any from the direction of the Richmond River? We get some from there. We have been greater buyers of pigs, but the steamships do not treat us well. If we want pigs for Grafton, they do not put any facilities in our way for getting them; they will not let the droghers bring them down, because it pays the company better to carry a pig than to carry two sides of bacon.
1514. Do you think it will materially assist to develop that industry if this land were thrown open by means of this railway? I do, undoubtedly.
1515. And that the settlers would have communication with Grafton as a market for the stock they raised? Certainly.
1516. Do you think there would be much through traffic between Casino and Grafton, or between Lismore and

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and Grafton? I think there would be not only a great deal of traffic in the way of stock, but a good deal of passenger traffic. You see, people do not go to Grafton or the Richmond, because they have an unpleasant sea voyage to put up with, and if they have not that, they have a bad coach service to put up with.

1517. You think that if they got railway facilities there would be more inducement held out to them to travel? A great deal. I reckon the Clarence is one of the most beautiful spots in New South Wales. It is only the wretched way of getting to it, which keeps it back.

1518. Do you think the railway would be much used for conveying fat stock? I do, because, as a rule, they send them on foot to Glen Innes or Tenterfield. I always get mixed up, between the Richmond River and the Clarence River, as to whether they send their stock to Tenterfield or Glen Innes.

1519. Is there much fat stock coming from the Richmond River now to Grafton? There has been a good deal, and will be a good deal, because the Ramornie works take a lot of fat stock. I am satisfied that there would be a great deal more fat stock coming to Sydney. If you have a line from Lismore to Casino, and a line from Casino to Grafton, and you make a through line to the main line, then you will be able to truck your cattle at any part you choose.

1520. That is, provided that there was a connection with the table-land? There would be then a through connection from the water to the main line.

1521. Do you think that much of this land is suited for cultivation? I think a lot of it could be cultivated.

1522. Would that be to grow products for sale, or feeding stock? I should think it ought to pay to cultivate products for sale and feeding stock as well.

1523. Is the land sufficiently rich to grow maize? Only a portion of it from what I have seen.

1524. Do you know the country about Myrtle Creek? I have seen a good deal of that country.

1525. Do you think that is good dairying country? I think it could be made good dairying country. I reckon it would take a square mile to make a good homestead for a man and his wife and a good many children, and then, I think, he would have to cultivate from 100 to 150 acres, so that he could grow almost any produce he chose. I think if he went deep enough, he would get soil good enough to grow practically anything he wanted to grow. I do not think that much less than 640 acres would do for a man. Perhaps I am taking an exaggerated view of it, but that is my opinion.

1526. How does the land between Grafton and Casino compare with other dairying district;—I do not mean in the valleys of the rivers? It compares very well. It is not real loam, but there are many places where they dairy on land quite as bad. You must bear in mind that, in dairying, poor land turns out the better quality of butter—that is, better for keeping and better for exporting.

1527. Is there anything else which you would like to add? No; I believe that line would support a great many persons, particularly as it is Crown land. There must be 800,000 or 900,000 acres of Crown land.

1528. It all depends upon the distance you go back from the railway line? Yes; you can go back 7 or 8 miles on either side.

1529. I think that would mean about 400,000 acres in all? Well, I exaggerated the area, then; I thought you had from 700,000 to 800,000 acres.

1530. You would have to go a greater distance back to make up that area? I think it would be a good line. Of course, it would assist the main line, and if you want to assist the Murwillumbah line, if you want to do business with Queensland, you have a great assistance either way. You have the south, if you want to go there. Up to the present you have the Murwillumbah railway, which, I presume, would soon go into Queensland.

1531. Do you think there would be much traffic with Brisbane in the event of a railway connection right through? I am sorry to say I do think so.

1532. In farming products or dairy produce? Farm products, dairy products, and all kinds of things. They got a great deal of stuff from New South Wales; Of lucerne, they buy a tremendous quantity, and that can be grown on the upper part in any quantity. There is no doubt that it would assist greatly to make the Lismore-Murwillumbah railway pay. I should not think it pays at present. It always struck me as a line from nowhere to nowhere.

1533. Do you think it would be rendering that line a better paying line if the Queensland connection were made? I am sorry to say I think it will do New South Wales harm, because a lot of our exports would go into Queensland; but still I have not the slightest doubt but that Queensland will have to send a lot of her exports into New South Wales.

1534. That would make an interchange? Yes.

1535. That will also add to the traffic? Without a doubt.

1536. Do you think there is much maize exported from the northern rivers to Queensland? Sometimes a great lot; but then, as a rule, it comes by boat to Sydney. It is carted in from somewhere and brought to Sydney, whence it is sent to Brisbane.

1537. If there were a railway connection between Grafton and Brisbane the produce would go in that direction? Without a doubt, and a great deal of it. A great many firms which do their business now in Sydney would probably transfer themselves to Brisbane; at the same time, there would be an interchange, more especially of stock. Queensland has so many more cattle than we have, and Queensland, as we all know, is a good Colony.

1538. It has been stated that of the fat stock going to Ramornie meat-works, a large number come from the Richmond River;—do you think they would come by train? I feel sure they would.

1539. You notice from the map that the train would not go so far as Ramornie, but would stop at Grafton? You are such a little way from Ramornie, and you have such a good place to untruck at in Grafton, that there would not be very far to drive them. When they have to drive, they drive to Tenterfield and Glen Innes from the Richmond, and it does not want a man with any sense to know that the stock must lose a great deal on the trip. Mr. Greaves has been shipping all his cattle lately by the "City of Grafton." Once a drover gets his bullocks into a train he never takes them off if he can help it. There is no doubt that both the Clarence and the Richmond have plenty of fat stock; in fact, it is wonderful what the northern rivers, taking them right through, could supply. But I would not like to say that the railway is going to pay right off.

1540. You do not think it will pay at the start? I do not. It must take time to open up that country. You cannot open up that land in a day or a year. I should reckon that that railway would not pay under

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- under six or seven years. Still you get a sort of national line. You get from the seaboard—that is, the river to the main line, and by that main line you can go either way.
1541. Do you think, in view of all the circumstances you have stated, it is a line which should be constructed? I do, indeed. At any rate we show our faith in it; we have spent plenty of money in the district. Everybody laughed at us when we went up there. In the first year we could make about 3 tons a week, whereas last year I think we made nearer 20 tons a week. Grafton butter has a good name on the market; in fact, all the northern rivers have a good name for butter.
1542. It is all of equal quality? It is of good quality. I do not know any district in the Colony, taking it as a district, which turns out a better article than the northern rivers.
1543. *Mr. Watson.*] Assuming the railway to be constructed, for how far on each side, east and west, do you think it would pay to go in for dairy settlement, assuming that the land were good enough—that is, that a man would then have to cart his milk to a creamery, and that the creamery would have to take the cream to the railway for shipment to Grafton or Casino? I should think about 8 miles; perhaps it might be 10 miles.
1544. Assuming that the creamery was located 10 miles from the railway line, how far would the influence of that creamery radiate beyond that 10-mile point? Six miles round it.
1545. The railway would influence the land for 16 miles on each side for dairying purposes if the soil were good enough? That is so.
1546. *Dr. Garran.*] You are doing an increasing business on the Richmond River? No, the Clarence.
1547. Is the land on the Richmond richer for dairying purposes than this land would be? Some of it is. There is some of the finest land in the world on the Richmond River.
1548. Is it twice as good? Not for dairying.
1549. You could not carry twice the cattle on the same number of acres on the Richmond as you could on this land? I do not think you could. You do not want extraordinarily good land for dairying; you want only a moderate sort of land, and you will get more butter off that moderate sort of land than you will off very rich pastures.
1550. You want a sweet grass, and plenty of it? Yes. Where you get all this very rich soil that will grow sugar-cane; if you happen to fatten your beast too much she does not give as much milk as she should.
1551. Are there several factories on the Richmond? There are any quantity of factories on the Richmond. There are about five central factories, and, I should say, seventy or eighty creameries there.
1552. Do they produce as good milk and cream as you do on the Clarence? Equally. You could not say that one was any better than the other. They fetch the same price in London, which is what I go by.
1553. You say that from Casino, for 10 miles out, the farmers are pretty well served? I should think so. Of course, in Casino itself, and for 2 or 3 miles round, I do not reckon there is any good land. I think it is all sand there.
1554. From Grafton they are served for about 10 miles out? Yes.
1555. This line is only 64 miles long; if you deduct 20 miles of country that is already well served, it leaves 44 miles of railway to yield you the traffic, but you must make the whole 64 miles to go from end to end? Yes; I should say a large amount of it would go to Casino.
1556. A great many of our railways go from a port of some great town towards the interior, and the interior terminus sweeps a considerable distance; but here we have a railway proposed between two river ports, each river port already sweeping a certain area round itself? Yes. Whether that goes to Casino or whether it comes to Grafton, you at present have no opportunity to get either place, but then you will have an opportunity of pleasing yourself as to whether you go to Casino or Grafton.
1557. At present all the men within 10 miles of Casino, unless they happen to be exactly on the line, will take their milk and cream in by cart to Casino by the road as they do now? I do not think so.
1558. Would they go 4 miles to a railway station to do the other 10 miles on the railway? I think so. You have only to take the Murwillumbah railway to see an example of that. They will go 3 or 4 miles by road to get in about 8 miles further by train to the factory at Byron Bay, and the same with the Richmond factories at Lismore.
1559. When they get 6 miles from a railway, will they go to the line itself? Yes. You must bear in mind that if you have to go very far by road it shakes the stuff up so that you cannot make as good an article as you can if you get it down by train.
1560. And when it is coming by road it is not as bad for the cream as it is for the milk? It is very bad for the cream.
1561. Is it liable to ferment? It is liable to ferment, and you cannot make a good article.
1562. We are told that this land is good second-class grazing country, and that it will take about 500 acres to support a family? I said a mile square, which is 640 acres.
1563. Suppose the land subdivided at that rate, and a family for every square mile, would that population be dense enough, do you think, to give a paying traffic to the line, for it will only take 2,000 families within 16 miles all along? I think so.
1564. Your commodity is rather a portable one; it is not a bulky one? It is very bulky in milk and cream.
1565. Cream is not very bulky? It will take 50 lb. of cream to make 20 lb. of butter, on an average.
1566. How much freight in cream do you think each square mile would give to the railway in the course of a year? If you have 2,000 families with a square mile of country each, and if it will take 4 acres to a cow, it leaves 160 acres to work on, you might say. Each cow ought to produce per annum 200 lb. of butter, which is a very low estimate; that would make 400,000 lb. of butter. But then I reckon that it would come in as cream to Casino or Grafton. If it was cream, it would mean about 1,000,000 lb. of cream, if you had 2,000 families on that country.
1567. *Chairman.*] That would be 500 tons? Of cream alone. I cannot state the passenger traffic. You would have just as good an idea of the passenger traffic as I would have, but I should say that it would be pretty heavy. Many people will not go from the Clarence to the Richmond, because they cannot go there in an easy manner. If I could jump into a train and go to Grafton, I would go every two months, whereas at present I do not go once a year.
1568. This line would not help you to go to Grafton much more easily than you can go now, unless you go right up to Brisbane and thence down to Grafton;—are you considering this line as part of a North coast scheme going all the way? I am afraid I was.
- 1569.

1569. There would not be much passenger traffic, then, between Grafton and Casino? If you carry this proposal out the railway will be running between Grafton and Lismore, and then you will have a lot of traffic. I take it that, in considering this scheme, you will consider the passenger traffic and the other traffic that would be between Grafton and Lismore, not between Grafton and Lismore as one part, and then from Casino to Lismore, as the other part. H. Pateson.
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1570. We have taken into consideration up to Lismore, and farther than that? The best way would be to go round by Brisbane, then.

1571. The estimated annual cost of this line is based on a tri-weekly train service;—would a tri-weekly train service be of much use to cream-producers? Yes; it could be made to do. You would have to use a little more scientific knowledge.

Francis Augustus Wright, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

1572. *Chairman.*] Will you be good enough to state your views concerning the construction of this proposed railway from Grafton to Casino? Some years ago I visited the northern districts, and went over, through what is called the Big Scrub, from Lismore to the Tweed. I have been over the country between Grafton and Casino three times. I have made three independent trips across the country. Once I went across and back, and the other time I went through. When I was Minister for Works, recognising what I thought was the correct thing then, and what I think is the correct thing still, namely, that Grafton should be the great port of the northern districts of this Colony, I proposed this railway from Grafton to the Tweed. Believing that no good port would ever be made at the Richmond, and that there was no possibility of making a good port at the Tweed, and recognising the value of the district, I thought it was desirable, in the interests of the country, that a railway should run from the northern boundary of the Colony to the Clarence. I have some knowledge of the country; I know the extreme richness of the Tweed, of the Big Scrub, and of the Richmond River. As regards the intervening country between Grafton and Casino, a large portion of that country I look upon as fair grazing land, and some of it as very indifferent country. There is a great deal of valuable timber growing on this ridge, which I think will be developed into a big trade eventually. When I did propose the railway I did so with the most perfect confidence, believing that that portion of the Colony deserved the expenditure of public money in it to facilitate the traffic of the people. I also proposed the line as a portion of what eventually I believe will be an accomplished fact—a North Coast railway from Sydney right through to the Tweed. I had no object to serve, I owned no ground in the north, and I own none now. But, as I said before, recognising the value of that fertile valley of the Richmond—I think the most valuable piece of Australian territory—and the great scrub, and the fact that the Tweed was a harbour which could never be frequented by vessels of any tonnage, that navigation would always be difficult, and freight consequently expensive, and believing then, as I do now, that it would be a most difficult matter to make the Richmond River anything like a decent port, and firmly believing that the Clarence will eventually be a good seaport, I felt fully justified in recommending the consideration of this line to my colleagues, and on my recommendation it was placed before Parliament. These are substantially the reasons which influenced me then, and I am still influenced by the same reasons. I think Grafton should be connected with the isolated portion of our railway system, running from Lismore to the Tweed. This Committee, I believe, recommended the extension of the line from Lismore to Casino. Casino cannot be in any sense of the word a port. The South Arm of the Richmond is a little peddling stream, some 4 or 5 miles from Casino, before they get to navigation, and even then it is difficult. Notwithstanding the recent improvements in the Richmond, notwithstanding the comparatively large expenditure of public money which has taken place in making the Richmond a good port, I believe it will never be anything but a very inferior port—will never be a port capable of accommodating vessels of any tonnage. The modern requirements of traffic, even for our coastal trade, require rather large vessels to enable them to carry freights at a low rate. Even the coastal vessels must be of considerable tonnage. I am quite satisfied that no vessel of any large tonnage will ever venture to enter the Richmond River. I am equally satisfied that the Clarence, which in itself is a magnificent river, barred by rather a bad entrance, will, eventually, be made a first-class port capable of accommodating large vessels. No doubt the bulk of the traffic from the northern districts of the Colony will always go by sea till the railway is constructed. But the people are very largely handicapped by the class of vessels they have to employ, being small vessels with a very light tonnage. Twenty years ago all the trade between Melbourne and Sydney was conducted by steamers of about the same size as those which now run to the north. The freights ran up to £3 a ton between Sydney and Melbourne, whereas now you can get freight taken for 5s. a ton either way, showing that vessels of large capacity are able very considerably to reduce the rate of freight, which is a very important feature to the northern people, who grow a great deal of weighty stuff. Maize and potatoes are not high-priced articles, and they can only pay a very small freight. I am quite sure that if the policy is carried out of making one great port in the north—that port being the most central one, with the best river—the freight both north and south of Grafton will largely gravitate towards Grafton, because they could employ larger vessels, charging a very much cheaper freight than it is possible for any other port to employ. I believe the possibilities of this railway are not bad. Of the intervening country, as I said, a portion is very inferior, and a great portion is really good grazing land. Of course, you cannot compare it with the rich flats on the Clarence or the Richmond. But from my observation, and my knowledge of that country, I believe it is country which will, eventually, be occupied, and utilised very considerably for dairying purposes. There is a portion of it suitable for agriculture, and, I think, nearly the whole of it will be then fairly suitable, and that a dairy farmer will find on 640 acres a sufficient area to cultivate what he wants for himself—sorghum, maize, and crops of that class. That is all I have to state. I shall be very pleased to answer any questions.

1573. *Dr. Garran.*] Has not the policy of the country now become sufficiently defined to make the Richmond a navigable river? Quite so; but not a navigable river capable of admitting large vessels.

1574. But vessels large enough for the trade of the river? I doubt it, because, as I have said, the vessels going to the north being so small in tonnage, necessitate a much higher freight than should be charged to those people if they had a good port.

1575. Is the freight to the Richmond very much higher now than the freight to the Clarence? I am not aware what it is. I am not in a position to give you information respecting the freights to the two ports.

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1576. The evidence before the Committee is that there is very little delay now at the Richmond Heads, that vessels can get in and out almost always? With the class of vessels trading there, I have no doubt but that they can.

1577. And that the freight is reduced by 2s. 6d. a ton since the improvements were made? I am not familiar with any details of the freights; I am speaking of general principles only.

1578. Your theory was that we should abandon any attempt to make a good job of the Richmond, and make Grafton the centre of the northern commerce? That was my belief.

1579. I am merely asking you whether we have not gone too far now to proceed with the line? I think not. We have improved the Richmond considerably so as to enable vessels to get in and out. It is not like it was thirty or forty years ago, when a vessel was bar-bound for weeks and weeks. The class of vessels which frequent the Richmond can generally get in and out in all moderate weather; but still the fact remains that, to make the Richmond a good port, would cost six or seven times as much as to make Grafton a first-class port. I am strongly of opinion that one good port—one port capable of admitting large sea-going vessels—is quite sufficient in the north, and that a great deal of the trade which now goes to the Richmond, and that a great deal of the trade which now goes to the Macleay and the Nambucca, if there was a coast railway constructed, and a good port at Grafton, would gravitate both north, south, and east to that port.

1580. But it would cost considerably more to take produce from Lismore to Grafton, and then ship it to Sydney than to send it from Lismore by sea? It depends on two things—the difference of freight between the Richmond and the Clarence, and the cost of the railway transport.

1581. You would have to bring the railway transit down very low to compete with water? Our railway transport for many things is very low. For instance, milk and all those things are carried at a ridiculously low rate. They bring, I think, a 10-gallon can of milk 50 or 60 miles for 1s.

1582. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You are thoroughly acquainted, I think, with the country between Grafton and Casino? I do not know the country off the road further than my view extended. I have been across the road three distinct times, and I know nothing of the country beyond what I could observe as a traveller. I have been long used to travelling about the Colony. I generally go about with my eyes open, seeing all I can see, but I cannot say that I am familiar with this country, except along the road.

1583. What portion of it between the two points would you be able to give an opinion about? So far as the country along the road is concerned, I should think three-fourths of it is fairly good land for dairying. There is a portion of it which is very inferior country.

1584. The chief crop that is grown in that neighbourhood is maize, I believe? There were no crops at all grown when I went across that country. It was practically uninhabited.

1585. The country between Grafton and Casino, I believe, is not suitable for the cultivation of maize? I daresay you could find flats and spots where you could grow maize; but I should not think it would be a good maize-growing country taking it generally. No doubt there are flats which would grow good crops, but only to a limited extent.

1586. It is described generally as a light sandy soil, or as a light sandy loam, which is not at all suitable for the growth of maize? It is only little alluvial flats which you could grow maize upon.

1587. It would be used largely for grazing? Yes. I think it would be taken up for its timber first, and for its grazing capabilities afterwards. I think in most cases a man could find 10 or 20 acres where he could grow a little crop, and dairy farmers, as a rule, do not cultivate very much. It is a big dairy farmer who cultivates more than 30 acres.

1588. For dairy farming alone, do you think it would be likely to support a railway? No; I do not think the intervening country would support a railway itself, but I think a considerable traffic will be drawn over it from other sources.

1589. What additional support do you suppose it would get other than the effect of opening the land? I think there would be a considerable passenger traffic developed. Grafton and Lismore are two big towns in the north, and, judging from what we see of other places, I should think there would be a considerable interchange of traffic between the two places in passengers alone, and possibly in commodities. All the North Coast would, to a certain extent, I think, use this line.

1590. What do you think would be the inducement to create a large traffic there? The inducement that people have in all parts of the world to move about, interchange of friendships, interchange for business purposes, and so forth. There are said to be about 35,000 people on the Richmond, the Tweed, and the Brunswick; and there are about 25,000 people on the Clarence. Both these populations are continually growing populations, but you cannot imagine 35,000 people 60 miles from one place, and 25,000 people 60 miles from another without realising the fact that there will be a considerable passenger traffic. You may say what supports our main lines now. There is an immense traffic on the main line of mere casual visitors—people going from Sydney to Bathurst and different towns in the west, and *vice versa*, for holidays and amusement and business purposes.

1591. You are aware that there is a very large annual loss estimated at the start—about £16,000? I have not seen the report, and, therefore, I do not know what is the estimated loss. I have seen that estimate made in other cases where a marvellous result has been produced. I have known—and I suppose you all know—of cases in New South Wales where the Railway Commissioners have estimated a loss, but where there has eventually been a large profit, notably the railways constructed over a country not at all populated between Narrabri and Moree. In that case there was a profit of £1,000 a year estimated, but there is a profit of £7,000 or £8,000 a year realised.

1592. *Mr. Watson.*] There was a big through trade there? There was a trade there, otherwise the profit would not have been realised. I only mention that case to show you how uncertain and unreliable these estimates of profit and loss very often are.

1593. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The total estimated cost of this line is £501,375; the annual working expenses are put down at £21,429; and the estimated annual revenue is only £4,844—leaving a loss of £16,000 a year? If I am allowed to express an opinion, I should say that the estimated working expenses are simply an atrocious misrepresentation of facts. I remember a case not long ago, of 92 miles between Moree and Inverell, where the working expenses were estimated at £4,000 a year.

1594. I suppose they have very good means of ascertaining the probable cost? My opinion of the estimates of the Railway Commissioners is, that when they are favourable to a line they put the best leg forward; but that, when they are unfavourable to a line, they will put the worst possible complexion upon it they can, and I think that is the experience of every gentleman on this Committee also.

1595. You are of opinion, then, that the line would be a success ultimately? I believe it would be a success ultimately—not immediately, possibly—but I believe it is a line which will be built, and which must be built in the future history of this country. Whether it is premature to build it now, I am not prepared to say, but my own impression is that it is not premature. I look upon this question of the actual profit and actual loss on the railway as one which should not altogether guide this Committee, and as one which should not altogether guide the Parliament of this Colony. The country wants opening in every direction. We want railways. We have built lines of railway lately which the Commissioners think will not pay for some time to come.

1596. *Chairman.*] Is there anything further which you would like to add? No.

FRIDAY, 20 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

1597. *Mr. Watson.*] Since you were last examined on this proposal you have had an opportunity to look through the estimate of probable traffic which Mr. Varley placed before the Committee at Grafton? Yes; and I thought it was best to prepare a report on his estimate, so that it would be handed in.

1598. Will you kindly read the report? It reads as follows:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY, GRAFTON TO CASINO.

THE total earnings of goods and coaching traffic over the Lismore-Tweed line (63 miles 57 chains) during the year ended 30th June, 1899, amounted to £11,398—£5,420 being for coaching and passengers, and £5,978 for all descriptions of goods and live stock.

The population served by this line for goods traffic is approximately 13,310, including Lismore; and for coaching traffic it would be fair to include a portion of Casino also.

The value in freight of the dairy produce traffic carried over the line during the last twelve months was £1,469. The quantity of butter, cheese, and bacon made in factories and on farms in the counties of Ross, Richmond, and Clarence, which include the area served by the Richmond and Tweed Rivers, for the year ended March last, was as follows:—

Butter	3,435 tons.
Cheese	6 "
Bacon	705 "
Total	4,146 "

In this area there is an estimated population of 47,000.

According to Mr. Varley's theory, the Grafton-Casino line will serve 437 families, or (say) 2,185 people (five for each family); and the revenue from all sources he estimates at £15,268. This is £3,870 more than received from the Lismore-Tweed line. He builds up his argument on cream traffic, which, according to his own showing, will only be carried an average distance of 21 miles per ton. He estimates that this small population will produce 26½ tons of cream alone per day, or 9,581 tons per annum. This is more than double the weight of the whole of the butter, cheese and bacon produced by an estimated population of 47,000 on the Clarence, Richmond, and Tweed Rivers.

In placing 437 families on the line, Mr. Varley admits that 280,000 acres of land would be absorbed, each family occupying 640 acres. According to the evidence of the District Surveyor at Grafton, the land available on both sides of the proposed line for a distance of 10 miles is held as follows:—

Classes.	Area.
Alienations	93,106
In course of alienation	100,263
Forest reserves	139,463
Railway reserves	23,885
Other reserves	36,404
Available Crown lands	320,132
Total	713,253

It would be most extraordinary development if 280,000 acres of this land were brought into profitable use in three years, as argued by Mr. Varley, especially in view of the large areas available on the Upper Richmond and in the Lismore district but privately owned. The most distant dairy farms 8 miles from Grafton towards Casino. Alienated land extends from Casino to Myrtle Creek, about 20 miles, yet only a few old settlers have gone in for dairying on Myrtle Creek.

For passenger and coaching traffic I allowed £1,276. This provides for 4,000 fares at 5s. each an average distance of 32 miles, which is half-way between Casino and Grafton. As Mr. Varley only estimates a population of 2,185 along the line, I think the credit I have allowed for passenger traffic is very fair.

Over the Lismore-Tweed line (63 miles 57 chains) we only earned £5,420 per annum for coaching and passenger traffic from a population of about 15,000 people, including the town of Casino. How Mr. Varley is able to show that the section, Grafton to Casino, with an intermediate population of 2,185, will yield £8,742 for passengers alone, I am at a loss to understand, especially as there is an alternative route to Sydney, *via* Chatsworth, by steamer, thence by road to Woodburn, and thence by steamer to Lismore, which might be availed of frequently. The present fare is 19s. return, but this would be reduced in competition with the railway.

I think in the report I have followed up the whole of the estimate.

1599. You say you do not think it is likely the land will be taken up;—is the land on the Upper Richmond, from Casino, Crown land or land privately owned? It is chiefly owned privately.

1600. As a rule, can you get privately-owned land on as reasonable terms as you can get Crown land if it is open to be taken up? Of course, I do not know what the terms would be. There is a lot of land there which is not turned to profitable use; but with the construction of the railway to Casino no doubt it would all be turned to dairying.

1601. Do you know whether all the land on the Lismore-Tweed railway has been brought into use? Not a fourth of it.

1602. The land on the Lismore-Tweed railway is privately owned? Yes; but that is simply owing to the fact of its not being cleared—to the expense of clearing it. There is no doubt that it will all be brought into cultivation.

- J. Harper. 1603. Assuming that a man could lease this land between Grafton and Casino on easy terms from the State, he would not require a great deal of capital to make a start, for the clearing would not cost much? I suppose not. The clearing and fencing would be the chief item.
- 20 July, 1800. 1604. Is it not forest land? Yes; it would not be expensive to clear. It is not like the heavy brush land.
1605. In attempting a comparison of the probable traffic on the Grafton-Casino line with that on the Casino-Tweed line, you count Casino as a factor in the passenger traffic on the Lismore-Tweed line? In creating the traffic which exists on the Lismore-Tweed line.
1606. Do you think there is any considerable portion of the people from the Casino district who use the line towards the Tweed? Yes; they use it in going to Byron Bay, to various shows in the district, and to business in the district.
1607. It would be a sort of holiday traffic more than otherwise? Holiday traffic, and there is also a regular traffic in the dairying district. People travel to acquire stock if they can. The indication on the road between Casino and Lismore shows that there is a considerable traffic passing between Casino and Lismore.
1608. I am curious to know what business they would have in a large way by the Tweed line? None; except what I have indicated. There is a population of 2,000 within 18 miles of the line.
1609. If that is so, surely you are justified, in considering the Grafton-Casino line, to take some note of the population at Lismore and of an interchange of traffic—assuming the connection to be made, of course? That is about the only traffic I can conceive of on the line. The existing population is 200, and the estimated population of Casino is about 2,500, and I have allowed for 4,000 fares.
1610. Mr. Paterson, manager of the Fresh Food and Ice Company, which has a branch factory at Grafton, thought that if the land within a reasonable distance of the suggested line were all settled, the probable produce in cream would amount to about 500 tons per annum, taking it to either one terminus or the other;—do you think that would be a larger item than you have calculated upon? No; I calculated upon a larger item than that.
1611. Will you tell us on what ground your estimate rests for the carriage of dairy produce? I think I explained the difficulties of arriving at any estimate at all. I took a section that we could pretty well estimate between Casino and Lismore, and applied it. Of course, it is all bush. You cannot assume that that is all going to be settled, and a lot of it is very inferior bush too.
1612. You really have allowed for half of the Lismore traffic? Yes. When you have an opportunity of going more carefully into my report on Mr. Varley's estimate, you will see how absolutely inconsistent it is, and also how little revenue comes from the carriage of cream and butter. £1,400 represents all the revenue from the carriage of cream, butter, bacon, eggs, and other dairy produce on the Lismore-Tweed line, and that from a district where every acre is better than any 4 acres between Grafton and Casino.
1613. And much more expensive land to clear, which means more capital invested? But still the capital is there, and I am showing how much revenue would be derived from the production of cream and butter from the railway point of view.
1614. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What did the Lismore-Tweed railway cost per mile? The total expenditure on the line up to the 30th June, as shown in the books of the Railway Construction Branch, has been £903,152, which is equal to £14,336 per mile.
1615. That would be by far the most expensive part of the original proposed line from Grafton to the Tweed? Yes.
1616. What were the difficulties in the construction of that line to make it so costly? It was very rough country indeed, compared to the country between Grafton and Casino.
1617. The section from Grafton to Casino could be constructed, according to the official estimate, for about one-half of that amount? I think that is the estimate.
1618. And a light line could be made at a cost of £4,000 a mile? I cannot conceive of a light line being built down there. Of course, the engineers may say that it can be built; but I cannot conceive that it can.
1619. Respecting the quantity of dairy produce which you say is produced in the Richmond and Tweed districts, is it not a fact that the bulk of the agricultural land is not used for dairying purposes? I do not know about that; but I can give you some information indicating how much land is used for dairying purposes. I know the bulk of the land in the Richmond district is not yet cleared. I will give the number of dairy cattle they are carrying in each district. In the Clarence district they have 19,400 head of dairy stock, in the Richmond district 39,885 dairy stock, and in the Tweed district 7,000 dairy stock. These, as I say, will only produce under 5,000 tons of butter, bacon, and other dairy produce.
1620. Can you give us the number of acres under cultivation in the Richmond River and Tweed districts which are not dairying at all? I do not for one moment mean to say that the whole of that land is employed for dairying purposes. But I want to point out that along the 63 miles of railway, between Lismore and the Tweed, the land is employed very largely for dairying purposes, carrying practically 40,000 dairy stock, and yet the total revenue from the carriage of dairy produce on that line is only £1,469. I do not know whether the district between Grafton and Casino will carry 40,000 dairy stock. Personally, I do not think it will.
1621. *Mr. Hyam.*] There is very little development between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah yet? None at all practically on the Tweed. I do not profess to be expert enough to say how many cows to the acre will be carried on the country between Grafton and Casino, but I think if it carries a cow to 5 acres it is as much as I expect of it.
1622. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is it not a fact that one of the reasons why the Lismore-Tweed railway does not produce as much revenue as it otherwise would, is that a large amount of the produce is shipped at Byron Bay? The whole of that cream is all carried along the line.
1623. Is not the country immediately surrounding Byron Bay producing any cream? No. In the neighbourhood of Byron Bay itself, it is poor country.
1624. If there was not a shipping port at Byron Bay the traffic would have to go either to Lismore or to the Tweed? Yes. That would not add very much, considering that the whole of the dairy produce in that district only yields a revenue of £1,400 a year to the railway.
1625. There are other products besides dairy products carried on the railway? Decidedly; and that is what goes to make up the total. I wish to emphasise how little railway revenue is derived from the carriage of dairy produce. Of course, the chief argument in favour of this line from Grafton to Casino,

as far as I have been able to trace Mr. Varley, has been in the direction of dairy produce. I mentioned to the Committee what our absolute experience is in money paid per annum for the carriage of dairy produce on a similar line with a population of 13,000 to-day, and with 40,000 dairy stock. It will show the Committee how little revenue is derived by the railway from the carriage of cream or butter. J. Harper.
20 July, 1900

1626. Would not the settlement of a population of 4,000 or 5,000 mean a considerable amount of traffic other than dairy produce, which they would have to send to market? Decidedly it would; but even Mr. Varley does not claim a settlement of that extent. He only claims a settlement of 2,500, including men, women, and children. I think his estimate is based on the occupation of 280,000 acres, with 640 acres to each holding.

1627. But in settling that number of families over, comparatively speaking, a small stretch of country, would it not mean an increase of other population as well? That, of course, I must leave to the Committee to draw their own conclusions upon.

1628. Is it not usually the case that in country which carries a somewhat dense population business people settle, and small townships spring up? It has not had that effect so far on the Richmond-Tweed line. As a matter of fact, with the exception of a very small settlement indeed at Mullimbimbi, and a little settlement at Bangalow, there is no close settlement springing up. Dairy farmers, as a matter of fact, do not, as a rule, create townships amongst them.

1629. Between Lismore and Byron Bay there are some townships? No.

1630. Have you made any allowance for the carriage of timber? Yes; there is a large forest of timber, and it is all allowed for.

1631. On what do you base your calculation;—on the present export trade? On our experience of the timber industry in the Richmond and Tweed districts. The railway has been built for five or six years, so that we have had some experience of the timber business in that district.

1632. The timber industry along the proposed railway from Grafton to Casino would be vastly different from the timber industry in the Richmond and Tweed districts? It would be different in character; but still there is plenty of good timber in the Richmond and Tweed districts. In any case, as far as timber is concerned, what is there after it is cut out. That represents even less than cream does from a railway point of view.

1633. It will be taken up for dairy purposes afterwards? I am speaking of the value of the timber to the railway revenue.

1634. *Dr. Garran.*] Is it not true that a very large part of the Richmond district that will be accessible from the railway is not yet brought under cultivation? Quite so.

1635. Therefore, your present traffic is no fair criterion of what the traffic on that railway is going to be? No.

1636. Is it quite fair to infer the traffic on this Grafton-Casino line from that, seeing that the country here is so much more open, and so much more readily brought into use? Yes; but it is very different in quality.

1637. That, I admit;—as soon as ever this line is opened, do you think that the land within 10 or 15 miles will be brought into dairy cultivation? It probably might be; I would not like to say it would; but I have shown what the revenue to a railway is from the production of 40,000 head of dairy stock.

1638. But have you thought what the dairy produce will be if the whole district within 15 miles of either side of this line is fairly occupied and utilised? I have given it a thought; but it is far too remote to conceive such a thing. I would not pledge any little reputation I have by giving an estimate on that.

1639. Because ultimately, I suppose, that will be what will happen? That is as it may be if people cannot get any better land. It is rather singular that in the best part of that district—at the Richmond end—with the exception of one small dairy there is nothing within 8 miles of Casino, where there is a factory. It does not appear to indicate that there is very much desire on the part of any one to take up land within 8 miles of an existing factory.

1640. You mean to say that there is hardly any dairying round the Casino district? Oh, yes; but it is all on the Upper Richmond—it is not on that line.

1641. It is not close to Casino? Not generally.

1642. Whatever there is round Casino, and that centres there at present would, I suppose, continue to centre there even if this line were made? That is my impression.

1643. And the same at the Grafton end? Yes.

1644. So that we should not get the traffic over the whole length of line;—taking off 10 or 15 miles at each end, the traffic did not come along that line at all, but went to the nearest port? Yes.

1645. We should have to take 20 miles off the 64 miles, and the traffic on the balance would have to pay the interest on the whole line? That is so.

1646. Of course, this line is a peculiar one, in connecting what we may call two shipping places together? Yes.

1647. Many of our extensions go from a township or a shipping place out into the interior, and the terminal point serves as a centre for a radius of country all round, but that is not so with either end here? No.

1648. We get no terminal traffic on this line at all? No; except at Lismore and Byron Bay.

1649. We will have to trust to the line itself to make its own traffic? It will simply be a question of rivalry in the intermediate districts, as between Grafton on one side and Lismore on the other.

1650. Two parts will give us no terminal traffic for the railway? No.

1651. It is the intermediate section of the district which will have to provide the profit? Yes.

1652. Is it your opinion that the line running through a dairying district would not give a freight traffic that would pay interest on the cost of construction? It would have to be a very cheaply constructed line, and it would have to be a very good dairying district.

1653. Do you think that, in that wet country, a cheap line would stand the heavy rains? That is rather an engineering question; but I should not think it would. All our pioneering light lines have been built in districts where the rainfall is very small.

1654. We have only experimented in the dry country? Yes.

1655. As far as we have seen those heavy rains have not hurt the line? We have occasional damage done, but nothing of any serious consequence.

1656. During the last two months we have been having heavy rains—for instance, in Riverina? We have had occasional washaways, but we have been able to repair them pretty quickly.

1657.

- J. Harper. 1657. The general ballasting of the line has not shown a weakness, and you have been able to carry the traffic? Yes.
- 20 July, 1900. 1658. We cannot speak positively yet as to how a cheap line of that style would answer in the Grafton climate? It is rather an engineering question, but from my experience of these lines I should not think so.
1659. The lightest of light lines will be more than enough to carry all the traffic you think there is likely to be on it? I should think so.
1660. And the heaviest test of that traffic will be the weight of the engine itself? Yes.
1661. In carrying loads of fat cattle down, would a very light line be equal to that traffic? Yes; we use light lines to-day. Of course, we limit the class of engine; but the lightest class of engine we can put on the road is heavier than a truck-load of cattle.
1662. Do you think it is heavier than two truck-loads? Yes.
1663. You might get the weight of two truck-loads on the same rail at the same time? Yes; you get the whole of the engine on one rail, practically.
1664. Looking at this line as a possible section of a North Coast railway, do you think there is an advantage in beginning at the north end, as we have done, or should we begin at the south end? I should think, if there is any advantage at all, it is in beginning at the south end.
1665. Do you think the construction of this line would help to make that non-paying line more productive? I think it would simply add to the burden of it.
1666. *Mr. Watson.*] If the Lismore-Tweed line had been constructed at the revised rate at which Mr. Deane says the line from Grafton to Casino could be constructed, the annual interest, instead of amounting to £32,000, would amount to only £9,000? Yes; but I think he would tell you, if you ask him, that he could not have built that line very much more cheaply than he did. I think there are five or six long tunnels on the line.
1667. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You stated, in reply to a question, that the proposed railway, for a distance of 10 to 12 miles from Grafton, would be non-productive? Practically on the eastern side.
1668. And also that for a similar distance from Casino it would be non-productive? Yes; that is as far as timber is concerned, and largely as far as dairy produce is concerned; but that, of course, is east of the line.
1669. What is the length of the railway from Lismore to the Tweed? About 64 miles.
1670. Would not the first 10 or 12 miles of that line from Lismore be non-productive for the same reason? No; it runs practically at right angles. Between Casino and Grafton it is not at right angles to the rivers.
1671. How far from Lismore, along the Lismore-Tweed line, would producers draw produce to Lismore instead of using the railway? About 6 or 8 miles.
1672. How far from the Tweed end? We do not get any cream traffic there; there is no dairying in that district yet.
1673. It is settled? Yes.
1674. Say, for agricultural farmers, how far out from the Tweed towards Lismore? We get more of the sugar-cane right alongside it; but that is for carriage to the Quondong mill. The bulk of the traffic from Murwillumbah goes by river. We get very little passenger business there at all.
1675. How far from Byron Bay would produce be carried other than by rail? As I pointed out before, practically from nowhere, because the neighbourhood of Byron Bay is not productive in any sense. It is all swamp.
1676. There must be a considerable part of the line to Byron Bay which is non-productive? Absolutely none.
1677. For what distance from Byron Bay would it be non-productive? Five or 6 miles, speaking from recollection.
1678. That, together with 8 miles at the Lismore end and a considerable distance at the Tweed end, would mean that a very considerable part of that line is non-productive also? I would not call it that, because we get more from the sugar-cane than we get from dairy produce in that district—that is, at the Tweed end.
1679. Is it not carried at a very low rate? It is carried at a very low rate; but we get plenty of it.

APPENDIX.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Grafton to Casino.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of The Hon. John See, M.P.]

The North Coast District. —Population, Agricultural, and Pastoral Statistics.

Electorate.	Population.	Number of Holdings exceeding 1 acre.		Cultivation.						Live Stock.					Dairy Produce.	
		Number.	Area included therein.	Total area cultivated	Maize.		Sugar-cane.		All other crops.	Horses.	Cattle.			Swine.	Butter made.	Ham and bacon cured.
					Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.			Milch cows.	Ordinary, including calves.	Sheep, including lambs.			
			acres.	acres.	acres.	bushels.	acres.	tons cane.	acres.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1871.																
Clarence	13,700	1,628	162,809	27,934	24,635	1,044,632	1,396	Not available.	1,408	14,136	172,827	26,030	7,333	None made.		
1881.																
The Richmond ..	9,260	1,006	406,906	12,334	5,454	230,392	4,124	52,180	2,756	7,806	137,552	1,218	4,170	.....	.....	.....
The Clarence ..	6,752	669	77,633	17,484	9,702	463,770	7,418	61,782	364	4,736	22,219	183	3,137	.....	.....	.....
Grafton	7,744	454	77,904	5,506	7,367	328,728	448	5,338	691	5,992	57,781	1,585	3,320	.....	.....	.....
Total	23,762	2,219	562,583	38,324	22,523	1,022,890	11,990	119,300	3,811	18,634	217,552	2,036	11,136	Very little made.		
1891.																
The Richmond ..	22,321	2,318	721,428	28,348	12,454	428,906	13,549	121,329	2,346	16,074	15,477	188,911	1,432	9,707	1,025,984	64,025
The Clarence ..	8,221	823	109,579	21,908	15,702	572,812	8,171	57,795	1,095	6,898	1,572	14,220	247	2,890	52,036	5,269
Grafton	8,852	923	287,506	15,696	13,165	485,169	325	4,331	2,206	9,355	4,312	44,716	1,456	6,016	140,910	75,673
Total	40,394	4,064	1,118,513	69,012	41,321	1,486,977	22,045	183,455	5,646	32,297	21,361	197,847	3,135	18,613	1,218,580	145,558
219,708																
1900.																
Lismore	8,400	1,023	185,939	13,251	3,505	255,041	2,180	18,096	2,566	5,400	18,396	25,594	60	3,237	2,366,760	668,816
The Richmond ..	7,000	663	381,285	8,191	6,238	188,888	1,048	6,439	855	7,905	10,037	103,170	3,173	4,800	546,540	3,726
The Tweed	5,600	601	134,037	5,651	3,031	91,380	4,700	44,861	870	2,230	8,764	8,010	35	4,874	2,694,720	646,254
Grafton	11,200	924	291,522	15,271	12,474	470,579	983	6,493	1,894	8,400	10,429	56,046	1,498	6,064	1,157,023	258,640
The Clarence ..	9,300	976	128,306	22,373	15,585	502,645	5,192	38,900	1,596	6,689	11,229	20,158	238	4,701	537,671	12,746
Ballina	7,000	764	87,453	13,806	3,469	102,698	3,426	53,160	1,911	2,972	10,658	6,645	.....	5,016	17,570	800
Total	48,500	5,054	1,203,542	81,543	49,402	1,611,822	22,479	169,049	9,662	33,646	68,913	219,603	5,054	34,302	7,720,884	1,563,782
288,516																

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO CASINO.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee, consisting of Mr. W. J. Trickett, M.L.C., and Messrs. Watson and MacFarlane, M's.P., appointed on Thursday, 22nd February, 1900, to inspect, take evidence, and report with reference to the proposed railway from Grafton to Casino, left Sydney on Saturday, 24th February, by the s.s. "Kallatina," and arrived at Clarence Heads on Monday, 26th February. They were met by Mr. H. A. Blomfield, District Engineer, Harbours and Rivers Department, and proceeded by Government launch to Yamba, where an inspection was made of the works for the improvement of the entrance to the Clarence River. Proceeding up the river, the Sectional Committee called at Palmer's Island, Maclean, and Ulmarra; they also visited the Government dock and the quarry from which stone was being obtained for the harbour works, arriving in Grafton at 6 p.m. On Tuesday, the 27th February, the Committee commenced its sittings in the Municipal Council Chamber at Grafton, and sat daily until Thursday, examining in all twenty-six witnesses. The evidence included statistical and other information as to the capabilities, progress, and prospects of the district; also testimony with regard to traffic, and the character of the country that would be affected by the proposed railway. On the latter point, the evidence of official and private surveyors, confirmed by that of practical farmers and others acquainted with the country, was to the effect that for about 10 miles on each side of the route of the proposed railway the country, comprising fairly good grazing land capable of carrying in its natural state one beast to 10 or 12 acres, and, when improved, one beast to 5 or 6 acres, would be suitable for dairy settlement in farms of about 500 or 600 acres. During the inquiry at Grafton much stress was laid upon the recent development of the dairying industry on the Clarence River, and those who were examined on the subject were of opinion that, if a railway were constructed, that industry would be successfully established on the lands along the line between Grafton and Casino. On Friday, 2nd March, the Sectional Committee left Grafton by special coach at 8 a.m., and proceeded along the Grafton-Casino road. They were accompanied by Mr. District Surveyor Ebsworth, who rendered valuable assistance to the Committee in their investigations. For the first few miles, level country was passed through with cultivations adjacent to the road, after which the land was partly cleared and well grassed, but with less cultivation. Approaching Duggan's farm, nearly 10 miles from Grafton, the soil was somewhat sandy in character, and, as indicated by the road-cuttings, not of great depth, though a good growth of grass prevailed. At Duggan's, the Sectional Committee were shown a paddock, consisting of grey sandy loam, which had just grown a hay crop of 2 tons to the acre, the land having been thoroughly cleared, ploughed, and treated with green manure. The beneficial result of clearing was evident on Mr. Duggan's holding, where there was ample grass. Ringbarked land, highly improved, was carrying a beast to about 5 acres, and where the land was entirely cleared of timber its carrying capacity was, of course, much greater. From Duggan's to Sportsman's Creek, a distance of about 7 miles, the country was of a more sandy nature, carrying thick scrub and some good timber. On the south side of the creek, at Zuill's station, a large paddock

paddock had been ringbarked and cleared, with the result that there was a considerable extent of fine grazing land. At Sportsman's Creek one of the Committee, Mr. Watson, under the guidance of Mr. District Surveyor Ebsworth, in a light vehicle, inspected the country for a considerable distance off the road, and found it to be excellent grazing land, with good waterholes on the flats. Resuming the journey, it was noticed that the country began to be hilly and thickly timbered, with somewhat sandy soil. After passing Traveller's Rest Creek, 25 miles from Grafton, the road traversed a number of spurs of the Richmond Range until reaching the highest point on the line, at 440 feet above sea-level. A little further on, at a point 27 miles from Grafton, the abandoned Tenterfield road, leading through Camira station, was followed, the character of the country being undulating forest land, thickly timbered, showing a good growth of grass. At Camira was seen some cultivation land on the flats which it was stated had given a yield of 80 bushels of maize to the acre. Descending to Camira Creek, the party followed the creek in an easterly direction, and struck the main road again near Myall Creek. By a gradual descent the Committee reached a long stretch of flat country, thickly timbered, which they traversed until arrival at the "Myrtle Creek Hotel" at 7.15 p.m. Parts of this last stretch of country are subject to flood. The same evening the Sectional Committee sat until 10.30 p.m., taking the evidence of several practical dairymen, who gave favourable testimony as to their dairying operations on holdings about Myrtle Creek. With one exception—a witness who said that in winter the country was too cold for working a milking herd—the evidence was favourable to the country between Myrtle Creek and Grafton being largely occupied by dairymen if a ready means of access to creameries and factories were provided. In this connection the evidence seemed unanimous, that about 5 miles was a sufficient distance for a farmer to cart his milk to a creamery, any greater distance than that involving rather heavy expense for road carriage, as well as the risk of the milk being spoilt. The Committee left Myrtle Creek at 9 a.m. on Saturday, 3rd March, crossing some ridgy country, until they arrived within about 7 miles of Casino, whence into that town a stretch of level country was passed. They arrived at Casino about a quarter past 12 p.m. In the afternoon the evidence of Captain P. G. Fanning, who had a good general knowledge of the country, was taken, and proved of value, as showing that the western deviation of the proposed line near Casino was higher and less liable to flood influence than the original route, or a more easterly one suggested by some of the Myrtle Creek witnesses. This evidence was confirmed later on by Mr. Wm. Kennedy, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, who accompanied the Committee throughout their inspection. On Sunday, the 4th instant, the country in the direction of Kyogle was inspected and found to consist of very rich agricultural flats with occasional ridges, the soil being chiefly volcanic, and excellent for dairy purposes, this industry being evidently on the increase in the locality. A sitting was held at the Casino Town Hall on the 5th instant, when seven witnesses were examined. While not opposing the proposed line, the local residents who gave evidence did not advocate its construction, and appeared generally indifferent with regard to it. They admitted that, though the land along the route of the proposed railway would not bear comparison with that immediately surrounding Casino and northwards towards Kyogle, if a railway were constructed, it would probably be taken up in blocks of 600 or 700 acres, but would have to be ringbarked and sown with artificial grasses. The Committee concluded its inquiry at Casino and left that place by special coach at 3.30 p.m. on Monday, 5th instant, arriving at Lismore at 6 p.m. on the same day. On Tuesday, the 6th instant, eight witnesses were examined in the Lismore Council Chamber. The evidence, in its general purport, was adverse to the proposed railway, both as regards probable traffic and the prospect of settlement along the line. Two more witnesses were examined on the following day, which concluded the taking of evidence.

In view of the fact that the local evidence is very conflicting, and that further evidence, including that of the Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, is to be adduced, the Sectional Committee refrain from making any direct recommendation as to the desirableness or otherwise of constructing a railway, but beg to report as follows:—

- (1) The importance, fertility, and productiveness of the large tracts of country, of which both the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers are the arteries, are too well known to need any detailed description in this report.

(2)

- (2) The improvement of the entrances to those rivers, caused by the construction of training-walls and the commencement of breakwaters, is manifest, and has tended largely to increase the trade of both the Clarence and Richmond River districts.
- (3) Dredging and other works must continue for some time longer on both rivers, seeing that they are waterways which will always form the chief means of collecting and transporting the products of the large and fertile areas surrounding them.
- (4) In considering the question of the proposed railway from Grafton to Casino many side issues present themselves, such as the claims to superiority of the rival entrances to the Clarence and the Richmond Rivers; the conflicting claims as to suggested connection by rail between the north coastal districts and the tableland; the extension of the existing line of railway between Murwillumbah and Lismore from the latter town to Casino; the national view of the present proposed line as forming portion of the long-talked-of North Coast railway; whether such a railway should, or should not, be commenced at this particular part of the route, &c. To have inquired into these matters in all their various bearings, and made necessary inspections, would have occupied a very long time, and the evidence taken by the Committee was, therefore, confined chiefly to the question referred to them, namely, the proposed line between Grafton and Casino.
- (5) Regarding the country on the proposed route, it must be admitted that the land along and on either side of it is not nearly as good as that on and near the river-banks and surrounding both Grafton and Casino.
- (6) Only a small amount of settlement, and that of a scattered nature, exists along the proposed line.
- (7) There is very little passenger or goods traffic between Grafton and Casino.
- (8) While some of the witnesses at Grafton predicted an interchange of products between that town and Casino, other evidence was of a totally different character, and it is difficult to see how such could take place to any considerable extent.
- (9) There is no doubt that the construction of the line could only be justified on the basis of future settlement, as, at present, there is apparently no settlement between Duggan's, 10 miles from Grafton, and Myrtle Creek, 30 miles from Casino.
- (10) In the event of the railway being constructed, most of the witnesses agree that its revenue would largely depend upon the existence of a dairying population.
- (11) Large quantities of the land inspected by the Committee, along and near the route, carried thick grass, but the opinion prevailed that, in order to improve and make the grass sweet, the country would have to be ring-barked, and some witnesses stated that artificial grasses would have to be introduced,—a practice now generally followed in respect of the richer lands on both rivers. Most of those who were examined, including opponents of the railway, admitted, however, that the land in its natural state would carry about one beast to 10 or 12 acres, and, when improved, probably a beast to 5 or 6 acres, and that about 640 acres would be sufficient to support a family.
- (12) Considerable revenue, it was stated by some witnesses, would be obtained from the carriage of timber, of which there is a very large quantity of a marketable character within a reasonable distance of the proposed line, and in this connection special attention is drawn to the evidence of Mr. Ebsworth, District Surveyor.
- (13) The best route seems to have been selected, including the western deviation at the Casino end of the line.

In conclusion, after inspecting the route and some of the adjoining country, as before described, the Sectional Committee are of opinion that a railway between Grafton and Casino would in all probability induce considerable settlement on the large areas of Crown lands available.

W. J. TRICKETT,
Chairman.

19th March, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM GRAFTON TO CASINO.

[TAKEN BEFORE THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

TUESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Grafton, at 10 30 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Alexander Lobban, District Inspector of Schools, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you occupied your present position in this district? Twelve years. A. Lobban.
2. Have you a good knowledge of the district? Yes. 27 Feb., 1900.
3. And more particularly with regard to the country between Casino and Grafton? I have been over it.
4. What is your opinion of the character of the country? From here to Myrtle Creek it is chiefly open forest country with grassy flats, and gullies, and creeks. Altogether I look upon it as fair grazing country—that is, from here to Myrtle Creek.
5. And are you acquainted with the country between Myrtle Creek and Casino? Yes; that is rich grazing land.
6. At Myrtle Creek are there any areas of cultivation land? There are some; but the land is chiefly used for grazing.
7. Is most of the land occupied? Yes; a large quantity is occupied.
8. What is the occupation of the people along the proposed line? There are some timber-getters, some graziers, and some farmers.
9. Is it hilly country;—in your opinion, would it be difficult for railway construction? On the contrary, it is comparatively level country.
10. Have you a general knowledge of the country between Grafton and Casino, say, for 10 or 12 miles on either side of the proposed railway route? I have not been much off the roads, except where there are settlement and schools.
11. Where you have been off the roads, is the country similar to that near the roads? Yes; and it is often better country than that close to the roads.
12. Country that would carry a fair population? Yes; I should think so.
13. Has there been any increase in population? In order to be absolutely accurate, I had a list of the schools on the Clarence and its tributaries prepared from my own records. I have left out the upper part of the Clarence above Yulgilbar, as that is included in the Richmond River district. In 1889 there were 60 schools in operation on the Clarence and its tributaries. At the end of 1899 the number of schools had increased to 81. In 1899 there were 3,487 pupils on the rolls, and in 1899 the number of pupils was 3,941. These figures show an increase, during the ten years, of 21 schools and 454 pupils. I have the same information with regard to the whole of the North Coast, including the Manning, and from Cape Hawke to Point Danger. There is a general increase throughout the district.
14. Speaking generally of the coastal rivers, is there a similar increase? Every quarter there is an increase, every year there is an increase. In the last ten years that I have been in this district the number of schools has risen from 256 in 1889 to 335 in 1899. In the year 1889 myself and two other inspectors examined 8,960 pupils, and in 1899 we examined 12,479. That gives a fair indication of the increase throughout the whole district. I can tell you the number of school children actually inspected by myself and the other two inspectors in each section of the district. I may say there are three sections of the district. The Port Macquarie section includes the Woollamba River, the Manning River, the Hastings River, and the southern side of the Nambucca River. The Grafton section—which I have specially under my own oversight—includes the northern side of the Nambucca River, the Bellinger River, and the Clarence River, up to Yulgilbar, and its tributaries. The Lismore section includes the Clarence River above Yulgilbar, the Richmond River, Byron Bay, the Brunswick River, and the Tweed River. In the Port Macquarie section, in 1899, there were 120 schools, and 3,939 children were examined. In the Grafton section there were 110 schools inspected and 4,209 children examined. In the Lismore section there were 105 schools and 4,331 children examined. That gives a total of 335 schools and 12,479 children examined. In the ten years there was an increase in schools for the whole district of 38 per cent. That is the whole of the North Coast. The increase in the attendance at public schools during the same period was 39 per cent.
15. The nature of your office necessitates a considerable amount of travelling in the district, does it not? Yes.
16. Have you any knowledge of the traffic between the Clarence and the Richmond? When I have been staying at Chatsworth I have noticed a constant run of traffic. A considerable number of people travel from Chatsworth to the Richmond River.

- A. Lobban. 17. And in the opposite direction? Yes; there is traffic also from Lawrence to Casino, but at present it is not nearly so great as that on the shorter route.
- 27 Feb., 1900. 18. Have you noticed whether, between Grafton and Casino, there is a considerable amount of traffic? There is a fair amount of traffic from Grafton to Casino. It is really only a day's journey from here.
19. In the event of a railway being constructed as proposed, how do you think that volume of traffic would go? I have always thought that the great river Clarence, with its free access to the ocean and to the metropolis, would always attract a large portion of the travelling public. It is always a safe outlet, and during the twelve years I have been here I do not think there has been half a dozen delays at the Heads. I have noticed that when all harbours have been stopped, and vessels could not enter, vessels have been able to come into the Clarence. I have been much struck by that.
20. Then, in your opinion, the passenger traffic between this district and the Richmond, including the routes you have referred to, would, in the event of railway construction, go by railway? That is my opinion—that there would be considerable increase of traffic if the railway were constructed.
21. That is generally the outcome of railway communication—increased traffic? Yes. I have noticed further, that since the railway has been opened from the Richmond to the Tweed the population has almost doubled itself along the railway-line. Our schools have been almost doubled in number. Where we could, formerly, hardly get an average attendance the schools have grown up rapidly.
22. That you would take to be a reliable indication of increased settlement? Yes. I also think that if this railway were constructed there would be excellent dairying land all along the line.
23. And an increase of population? Yes, increased settlement, the settlement of families on the land.
24. That, of course, would mean additional traffic for any railway that might be constructed? Yes.
25. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know how far towards Casino settlement goes at the present time? There is settlement all along the road.
26. Of what class? There are two or three stations on the road, important stations, grazing properties.
27. Is there any other settlement? There are houses along the road where people are engaged on small farms, and grazing on a small scale, also timber-getting and work of that kind.
28. Are there any engaged in agriculture in that direction? Not largely, after you get some miles out of the town.
29. How far out does the agriculture go towards Casino? Not more than 10 or 12 miles from here. After that there is not much agricultural settlement along the road.
30. How do you account for that;—do you think the land between 10 and 20 miles from here is unsuitable for agriculture? You must consider the excellent land along the river. It is only of late years that dairying has had any show here. While sugar-cane was the sole product, all the rich land was taken up. Now that dairying has taken root in the place, I notice that this second-class land, as you might call it, is becoming very valuable. As I am travelling I notice fences being put up all round where they had formerly been pulled down. My impression, travelling through the country, is that everything is reviving, and the district at present shows great prosperity.
31. Has that revival you speak of led to any of this land, say, between 10 and 20 miles out, being taken up for agricultural purposes? I can hardly say how it is taken up.
32. *Chairman.*] How far does your district extend in the direction of Casino? I am District Inspector. I have general supervision of the whole of the Northern district.
33. And your observation extends to Casino? From Point Danger to Cape Hawke.
34. How do you travel generally? I drive my own horses.

Samuel See, Mayor of Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- S. See. 35. *Chairman.*] How long have you been here? I have been a resident of Grafton for twenty years, and have been on the river for nearly thirty years. I came here in 1870.
- 27 Feb., 1900. 36. Would you like to make a general statement to the Committee? I might first supplement the evidence of Mr. Lobban as regards the increase in population and schools by saying that his evidence related to the public schools during a period of ten years. During that period of ten years there have been established in this district, embracing the area mentioned, a considerable number of Convent schools and some private schools. I am not in a position to give the number of pupils attending these establishments, but I know they form a large edition to those on the roll of the public schools, and that during the ten years mentioned a large number of them were taken from the public schools. There are some hundreds of pupils attending Convent schools to-day who, within the period to which Mr. Lobban's figures apply, were attending public schools. There is one of these schools at Yamba, one at Maclean, one at Grafton, one at South Grafton, one at Palmer Island, and one at Ulmarra. As regards school attendance, the establishment of these denominational schools has materially affected the public schools, and this fact has to be taken into consideration in any figures given with regard to the increase of scholars in the public schools. My knowledge goes back to 1870, and from that time there has been such an increase of population as necessarily follows the opening up of a new district. In 1870 there were not nearly so many settlements on the river as now exist, owing to the land not having been cleared. Going back for, say, a period of fifteen years, there has been a considerable increase in the population on the Clarence River. The population seemed to remain stationary for some years in consequence of the financial crisis that overtook the Colony, and which reached the Clarence River as well as other parts of the Colony, and previous to that we had serious floods, and blight in our cane and maize. But, during the last four or five years, there has been a marked improvement. As one who knows something about the commercial position of the district, having dealt very largely with the people, and from my position as manager of the North Coast Steam Navigation Company, and as a townsman of Grafton, I am in a position to say that the prosperity of the Clarence district has been most pronounced—more so than in any former period of five years during my recollection. I attribute the increased prosperity very largely to the advent of the dairying industry. Previous to the introduction of the dairying industry on the Clarence River there was a large quantity of land along the river which was not considered suitable for cultivation, and was only used for raising crops that might be useful for local purposes. This land was not worked up to its full capability, as it has been during the last five years. Having been a farmer for a number of years, and having had large commercial experience, I think I am safe in saying that, so far as the Clarence River proper is concerned, it is only
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on the eve of its prosperity. Though the farmers have gained a great deal of information, and, in consequence, a great deal of wealth, we are now only on the eve of the possibilities of this district. Lands that are outside what is known as the Clarence River valley are being sought after very freely by persons who are entering into the dairying industry. Until the advent here of the Fresh Food and Ice Company the manufacture of butter was an unknown thing. I know of hundreds of instances where land which had been abandoned has been re-fenced and stocked, and has become of considerable value. I am speaking now of land fairly near the river. Having a knowledge of the country between here and Casino, I am of opinion that if communication were opened up between Grafton and Casino, the unoccupied and unalienated land along the line, of which there must be some hundreds of thousands of acres, would be taken up for the purposes of dairying. Besides the grass, a great deal of that land would grow maize, and other grain suitable for fowl food, poultry farming being an important factor on the Clarence River, though up to the present it has not been carried on as a special industry. Regarding the production and growth of poultry in this district, I may mention incidentally that the value of this export alone last year amounted to £52,000. If better means of access to a market were provided this amount would be considerably increased, and the industry would become a source of wealth to those settled on the land I am speaking of. They might, in addition, grow oats and oaten hay. Oaten hay can be grown very much better, and quite as profitably, upon land of that kind, as it can upon rich land like that in the valley of the Clarence, for the reason that, though you get a smaller result, as far as tonnage is concerned, you get an article that is valuable and saleable anywhere. On the banks of the Clarence this particular class of hay grows too strongly. The reason this land is not cultivated now is that growing oaten hay would not be a profitable industry. To put any quantity of land under cultivation for the growth of hay or wheat in a district like ours, with the absence of communication, would not be profitable, and a man could not possibly make a living. In regard to the production of butter, if a man has to extend his operations for 10 or 12 miles in any direction from a creamery, that distance makes the industry almost impossible, because too long a time would be occupied in delivering the cream or milk. With knowledge and observation of what has taken place in this district, and with a general knowledge of the Hunter River district, where I resided as a boy, and which I visited again during the last couple of years, I may say that the transformation caused by the dairying industry has been most marked. Lands that were considered absolutely useless in the early days are now being taken up and fenced, though there, of course, the area of country being limited, they are very much nearer a railway system than we here are near to water carriage. With regard to the capabilities of the dairy land in this district, we call it inferior land, but in doing so we have in our mind's eye the very best land on the Clarence River, which is better than that of any other district. In comparison with these rich lands, the outlying lands have been considered by the farmers of the Clarence River as inferior, but their value is now becoming realised through the establishment of the butter industry. In the event of communication being opened up by railway, I believe the whole of the land along the route would be taken up for pasturage purposes, and with ringbarking and grubbing out the undergrowth, which means the ultimate clearing of the land, the dairy-farms which would be established would carry on an average one beast to 5 or 6 acres.

37. Has all the available land, all the very rich land, the river flat land—has all that been taken up? All land that was possible to be taken up. There is a tremendous quantity of rich land on the upper river which, though it might not be immediately affected by this railway, would, if a railway were constructed, be brought so many miles nearer communication than it is now, because the head of navigation is only 30 miles beyond Grafton. Then, again, besides the utilising of the land along the proposed line for dairying and poultry-raising, we must consider the value of the timber on the land. Between here and Casino there is an immense quantity of hardwood which is every day becoming more valuable. Within a certain number of miles of the Clarence River proper the timber has all been felled and used for girders and sleepers, and cut up into spokes for the export trade. It is becoming a matter for the consideration of those engaged in the timber trade as to how far they are going to continue their operations. I am not aware what would be the scale of charges on the railway, but if they were not prohibitive there would be a large quantity of timber carried along the line. Even if we increased the output by 100 per cent. yearly there would still be sufficient timber to meet the requirements of the export trade of the Clarence River for many years to come. There is abundance of the best hardwood timber, including kinds not used for the ordinary purpose of fencing and splitting. There are tallow-wood, black-butt, ironbark, and spotted-gum. These timbers are of considerable commercial value, but at present are not worth anything, as it is not possible to get them to a market. Settlement would, of course, soon follow the construction of a railway, because the occupation of a block of 500 acres of land would mean probably 100 cows, and that would entail a considerable amount of work. It would mean that between here and Casino there would be an enormous population which could not be brought about except by the construction of a railway. There is another argument: We have in our midst hundreds of young men growing up, and their desire is naturally to remain at home. They will have in the near future to seek homes elsewhere if an opportunity is not given to them to settle upon this land by the opening up of communication. There is not, generally speaking, in this district an absence of labour for what are known as the working classes; but I feel confident that the labour of the community would be absorbed, and with profit to the state if a line of this kind were constructed. I may add that the rainfall of this district is abundant and fairly regular. I do not apprehend any danger of a drought as regards the dairying industry, or the growth of wheat or barley, or anything of the kind required for fowl food. There will also be a marked increase in the horses and other stock in the district. With the advent of dairying the raising of horses has again become a valuable industry. Though we had numbers of horses here, they were always sold out to a great extent, and the establishment of the dairying industry has led to a great demand. You cannot raise horses as profitably on a large station as you can upon a small holding where the animals have daily attention. In regard to the passenger trade between here and the Richmond River, it has greatly increased. At present the route taken is from Chatsworth, on the Clarence, to Woodburn, and thence up the Richmond River by steamer. This involves a considerable distance—perhaps nearly 200 miles—at a cost of more than double that which would be charged by rail from here to Casino or Lismore. There is a good deal of trade between here and the Richmond River, and I am satisfied there would be a great increase in that trade in the event of railway communication, by reason of the cheapening of carriage. It would cost about 12s. 6d. per passenger to go by rail from Grafton to Casino, and 13s. 6d. from Grafton to Lismore—that is first class—and it would cost £1 13s. 6d. to go from

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from Grafton to Lismore by coach and steamer. Then again there is the saving that would be effected in point of time, the railway journey only occupying six hours as compared with one and a half day at the present time. Another advantage would be that the people of Grafton would be placed in comparatively easy communication with Brisbane, which, at present, is not the case.

38. Speaking about the passenger traffic between Grafton and Lismore, what do you think of this paragraph in the report of the Railway Commissioners, dated 19th December, 1899: "Excepting passenger traffic, which is on the decrease, there is practically no interchange of traffic between the Clarence and the Richmond"? That is not correct. The people of the Clarence and the Richmond are associated by relationship, and every day people of this district are visiting their friends on the Richmond River, and people on the Richmond are visiting their friends here. Then, again, if the people of this district were afforded an opportunity of reaching Brisbane, they would very often travel to that place. A few months ago I was approached by a number of residents of the Clarence River asking if steam communication could not be established between here and Brisbane, so that they might visit that city during their holidays. That is a frequent occurrence, so far as the people of Grafton are concerned. In the event of a railway being constructed, the whole of the Casino passenger traffic would come this way, and a large proportion of the Richmond River trade would come this way to be carried to Sydney. My reason for the latter statement is that, at any rate for some years to come, the steamers running between the Clarence and Sydney must of necessity be of a higher class than those trading between the Richmond River and Sydney. I do not wish to detract from the Richmond River, and the company I represent are as much interested in the one river as in the other, but I am only stating facts. A steamer can be brought to Grafton if necessary with a draught of 14 or 15 feet, while a steamer cannot be taken to Lismore with a draught of more than 10 feet 6 inches, and nothing but a little flat-bottomed steamer can be taken to Casino. Facility of transport to market is, of course, very important in the case of perishable goods, and there would be a large trade of that kind. Around Casino the manufacture of butter is only in its infancy. I believe that traffic would come to Grafton. I believe it could be carried from Casino by the railway to Grafton, and thence to Sydney, as cheaply as it could be conveyed from Casino to Coraki or Lismore, and carried thence to Sydney.

39. *Mr. Watson.*] Is butter now carried on the steamers in freezing chambers? Yes; from the Clarence and also from the Richmond.

40. Then you would want cool trucks to carry on the railway? That would not be very difficult; the company could easily make arrangements to have cooling appliances. I feel certain that the whole of the trade from Casino would come to the Clarence River by means of the railway.

41. *Chairman.*] We may take it, then, that, apart from the passenger traffic, the dairy produce would be the chief factor in the railway revenue? A great deal of it. Then there would be timber, and the wood supplied to Grafton and to the mills. That is in itself only a small item; but, added to the other traffic, it would be a great feeder to the railway.

42. There is no coal in the district? I think there is a deposit of coal along the line. There is a seam of coal at Coaldale, which place the proposed railway would cross.

43. Is wool-growing carried on in this part of the country? No. Sheep will fatten here, and wool will grow, but there are other things more profitable. Cattle, for instance, are much more profitable than sheep, for the reason that the grass is so dense that the sheep get foot-rot, and all sorts of things.

44. What would be the rate per ton between Casino and Grafton for dairy produce? I think in my last evidence I gave it at 5s. 2d.

45. There must be some portion of this country between Grafton and Casino—that nearest to Grafton, for instance—from which it would pay a farmer to cart his produce to Grafton;—is there any indication of settlement of that kind. If a railway were constructed, a man 5 or 6 miles out of Grafton would hardly put his stuff on to the railway, but would cart it in;—is there any indication of settlement of the character you indicate actually taking place within such a distance as that? Yes, there is now, in consequence of the dairying industry. As I have said, beyond a certain radius dairying operations must cease owing to the cost of carriage.

46. But take an area of about 10 miles? All the land within a reasonable distance is under dairy occupation at the present moment. That is, between Grafton and Casino, along the Casino road.

47. Is that a recent development? Since the dairying industry came, within the last five or six years, a number of the bolder spirits started, while others hesitated. So that we might say that we are now only starting the dairying industry in the Clarence. There is always the man who prefers to wait and watch developments, and then again companies have to get experience as to what is the right thing to do; but we may say now that the dairying industry is fairly launched, and has proved successful.

48. You said, "Within the area that would be profitable";—how far would that be? About 10 miles I think. I do not think you could go much beyond that. If you have to cart milk further than that, it becomes expensive.

49. When you were examined before, you seemed to think there would be a limitation to the distance on either side of the railway, within which this industry could be carried on—say 10 or 12 miles;—do you still believe that? I should say it would not extend much beyond that distance. If you have a good road, you do not measure your distance by miles, but by time. The same distance, which on a good road could be done in only a few minutes, might with a bad road take two hours.

50. What areas do these people occupy? 300 or 400 acres. I should consider 500 acres on the land in question a good holding.

51. What would it pay a farmer to give an acre for that land? If land were available now at the State price, £1 an acre; but I do not consider that would be the value of it to the farmer, with the improvements. If the land would carry a beast to 5 or 6 acres, it would give a return of much greater value than £5 or £6 an acre. The land would be worth £1 an acre undoubtedly.

52. Would that land be suitable for the growth of crops as well? Some portions of the land all along the route would grow maize, but that would only be cultivated for home consumption, for the production of eggs and fowls, and not for the purpose of export. I omitted to mention the pig industry, which is a very important one. In this district there is a daily increasing demand for this class of product. The supply is not nearly equal to the demand, though the export is very large indeed. You can fatten a pig on this land with milk and ordinary grain, just as well as you can on much better land. On this land you would be able to give a pig 10 or 12 acres, which you could not afford to do on more valuable land.

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land. This is an industry worth many hundreds of pounds to the people on this river, and the extent of its future growth it is almost impossible to forecast. Its progress would keep pace with that of the butter industry. Up to a certain stage, pigs can be reared on milk alone, and all along the route there are patches of ground which will grow good maize.

53. But we cannot look to maize as a big item of freight for the railway? I do not say that the maize grown would be brought along the railway to Grafton; but if the line were constructed considerable quantities of maize would go from the Clarence to the Richmond River.

54. Does not maize grow well on the Richmond? It does not grow so well there as it does here. They import maize to the Richmond River from Sydney. There is one part of the Richmond district—the south arm of the Richmond River—where attention is directed chiefly to maize-growing. On the lower and other portions of the river attention is directed to the cultivation of sugar-cane, while on the higher, or what are known as the "Big Scrub" portions, the land is chiefly devoted to dairying. It is unprofitable to attempt to grow maize on the high land of the Richmond. In the event of communication being established between the Clarence and the Richmond, a great deal of maize would go from here to the Richmond; and at some portions of the year we should send maize to Brisbane. I do not say we should send much, because the price might be prohibitive; but there would be times in the history of the two colonies when we would send maize from here to Brisbane. Then, again, there would be times when we would send potatoes from here to Brisbane. That is a product we can raise very extensively on the Clarence River. There is scarcely a limit to its cultivation.

55. If a railway were constructed between Grafton and Casino, where should you expect to get the population from—from the sons of the people locally, or from outside? From outside. I think you will get evidence from gentlemen competent to speak on that subject that numbers of inquiries are made here daily from persons in various parts of the colonies for land suitable for dairying purposes. I know as a fact that people have come from the Richmond River and have taken up land at Grafton. Almost daily people are looking for land suitable for dairying purposes. Apart from the young men of the district, whose claims I think should have first consideration, there are hundreds of people coming to the Northern rivers who would go upon the land if they could get it; but they will not do so in the absence of communication.

56. Do you think the tendency nowadays is for the farmer to go in for dairying in preference to cropping? It depends entirely upon the character of the land. The best farmers on the Clarence River, with few exceptions, are doing some dairying, and they are also growing some maize. Mixed farming is coming into operation more freely every day, as men get enlightened and understand the thing. In regard to labour, the butter industry is one in which the small boy can be employed before and after school, while in the case of cane-growing, that is an occupation in which the boy cannot be engaged.

57. Do you regard this proposed railway as a line to be constructed on its own account, or as part of what is known as the North Coast railway scheme? I regard it from a twofold aspect. First I consider it necessary as a connection between Grafton and Lismore, for the trade I have spoken of, and as such it will be a good investment for the State, because it will provide a livelihood for a number of families, and afford employment for the labouring classes. But I feel it has a greater destiny as portion of the North Coast line, which must ultimately reach the metropolis. The latter reason alone should justify its construction. I know the coast from the Tweed to Maitland, and I can say without hesitation that the opening of a coastal line would be beneficial to the State, and would also benefit the localities. There is land lying between these rivers that cannot be opened except by railway communication.

58. Suppose a railway were extended from here right away to Newcastle, and further south, the main produce of the district would still go by steamer? Heavy produce would, but the butter would not, and the passengers would not.

59. I suppose the old axiom that land carriage cannot compete with water carriage, from a money point of view, still obtains? Yes, that holds good. But with the increase of population you would get considerable passenger traffic, and also traffic in perishable goods, including vegetables and fruits such as grow in a semi-tropical climate. Fruits grown in a climate like this, though more luscious, do not last as long as those grown in colder climates. In this semi-tropical climate a class of fruits would be produced that would be very acceptable to people in the metropolis. At present they cannot be sent to Sydney because of the twenty-eight hours' passage by sea. Evidence can be given by gentlemen who grow these fruits that want of access to a market prevents anything being done in that respect. If the North Coast railway were constructed all this trade would reach Sydney by rail. A large passenger traffic would go to Sydney by rail, and all the butter and all the eggs would go by the same means. At present there is a difference of 1d. between the price of southern eggs and northern eggs, owing to the long sea voyage. This 1d. a dozen means a great deal of money in twelve months. It means a twelfth part of the total production amounting to £50,000. Then, again, a very large trade could be done between here and Sydney in fish. Fish, in my opinion, would go by rail and not by steamer. The value of fish exported from the Clarence River at the present time is very considerable.

60. In the estimate of cost, a sum of £70,000 is put down for station and wharfage accommodation at Grafton,—do you think such a large amount would be necessary at the present time? Certainly not. I should think £15,000 would cover everything necessary, and provide most elaborate buildings. The height from the top of the wall to the top of the bank of the river would not be more than 12 feet.

61. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you say how far the land which you think is suitable for dairying extends along the proposed line towards Casino;—would it be similar land a little distance out of Grafton right up to the Richmond Range? Yes.

62. How much of a break would there be in the suitable land, or would it all be good? I consider that the whole of the land is suitable for grazing.

63. Inclusive of the Richmond Range? Well, there is a portion of the Richmond Range which is a little bit gravelly, but it will grow grass. The Richmond Range is not a very formidable matter at all. I do not think its altitude is above 50 feet at the most.

64. Beyond that again, towards Casino, does the land alter at all? The land improves; it is better land there. From Myrtle Creek to Casino the land is better.

65. Then, practically, the whole of that land for 10 miles on either side would be taken up if the line were constructed? Yes, I think so.

66. *Mr. McFarlane.*] With regard to the paragraph in the report of the Railway Commissioners, about an

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- an alleged decrease in the passenger traffic between the Richmond and the Clarence, do you consider that to be correct? No.
67. Has the population of the Clarence increased steadily during the past few years? It has.
68. And that of the Richmond also? Yes, very considerably.
69. What would you imagine to be the natural outcome of this increase of population—would it tend to a decrease in the traffic between the two places? Certainly not.
70. In your opinion, is a railway from Casino to Grafton desirable, in view of its being a portion of the North Coast line? Most desirable.
71. Have you any particular reason for that opinion? I have already, in answer to the Chairman, referred to the opening up of the intermediate lands, which would certainly be profitable. This portion of the railway would be profitable, like the other portions. I believe that the lands intervening between the other rivers are even of a better character than the lands between Grafton and Casino; so that, as a portion of the North Coast line which would connect those other lands, the railway would be highly profitable. Another thing that would have to be considered in connection with the North Coast railway is the facility that would be afforded for military organisation. The line would be a great factor in our national defence.
72. Some consideration would have to be given later on to the necessity of crossing the river—that is, in the event of a further extension south? Yes.
73. That could not be easily done lower down the river? No. In the North Coast railway system the bridges would of necessity have to be constructed beyond the point of navigation by large steamers. In the case of this river the railway crossing would have to be above navigation, and that would be at some point beyond the town of Grafton.
74. If it were merely a question of connecting the Clarence and the Richmond by rail a cheaper line could be made? Yes; very much cheaper. You could have a railway with a narrower gauge, which would suit as far as the trade between the two rivers is concerned. You could have a lighter line.
75. Then you favour this proposal as being a section of the North Coast scheme? Yes.
76. Similar to the Lismore-Tweed line? Yes.
77. You think that connecting it with that line would be the means of securing increased traffic? I think that, in consequence of its being connected with that line, there would be an increased traffic.
78. On the larger section, connecting Grafton with the Tweed? Yes.
79. And with regard to the settlement that would take place between Grafton and Casino, there would naturally be a considerable increase in traffic? Yes, a very large increase.
80. Have you a fair knowledge of the district between Grafton and Casino? I have.
81. I do not mean along the proposed railway route only, but for some distance on either side? Yes, I know the country off the road.
82. Is it similar country to that along the road? The country off the road is better.
83. With regard to the timber industry, would that mean a considerable increase in traffic? Very considerable.
84. In your opinion, most of the timber would come by rail in the event of a railway being constructed? I think large quantities of it would come by rail. I expressed that opinion before, but I have become even more convinced since the construction of the railway to Lismore; because on that line rates have been charged which enable the farmers to bring their cane to the mills. A great deal of the cane grown on the Richmond, along the line of railway—in fact, the whole of it—is placed upon trucks and brought to the mill. Well, if cane can be brought profitably to the mill by rail certainly timber can be brought profitably by rail to the place of consumption or export.
85. Is the timber industry in this district an important one? It is a very important one, and is growing daily.
86. Is that increase of supply for local requirements or for export? For both. Some figures will be given to the Committee on this point by another witness, but I may mention that it is estimated that during last year 4,000,000 feet of timber were sawn for export and home purposes.
87. The timber most conveniently situated would be taken first? Yes, owing to the cost of haulage.
88. And every year as the timber gets, so to speak, further away, timber-getters will have to go further inland? Yes; in fact it is daily getting further away.
89. At present mill-owners haul their timber by teams? Yes. One firm have improvised a steam tramway with wooden rails; but even in that case much of the timber has to be hauled by team.
90. You are of opinion that large quantities of timber would come by rail from the country referred to? Yes.
91. You stated that in view of the long water carriage a considerable quantity of produce would go by rail from the Clarence River to Sydney, if a line were constructed? Yes.
92. Going a little further south, say to the Bellinger and Nambucca rivers, where the entrances are not good, the freights by steamer are considerably higher than from the Clarence? Yes; they are as much again on the Bellinger.
93. Do you not think, in view of the high freights by steamer, that those districts would use the railway? I think that, in regard to the Bellinger and the Nambucca, the whole of the produce from those rivers would go by rail.
94. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the freight at present paid by steamer? One shilling and sixpence a bag down there, and 8d. here.
95. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you any idea how much per bag the freight would be by train at the ruling rates? A trifle over 1s. a bag.
96. In view of that, do you not think the growers of maize and other products would be induced to send their goods by train? I believe they would. Not only would it be cheaper as regards freights; but they would be able to take advantage of a favourable market. On the other rivers referred to, the people are at a great disadvantage as compared with the Clarence. Here, the producer can reach the market at a few days' notice.
97. Going further south, to the Macleay, the Hastings, and the Manning Rivers, where the cost of freight to Sydney would be greater, in your opinion would not the people use the train instead of the steamer, and would not the bulk of the produce go by train? I am certain it would.
98. That would be a strong argument in favour of the North Coast line? Yes.
99. What is your opinion with regard to the North Coast line;—do you think favourably of the scheme? I do, in the interests of the country.
100. Would it also have the effect of opening up land for settlement between the different rivers? There

is a considerable quantity of land between each of these rivers that can never be settled and worked up to its capabilities until railway communication is established.

101. And for the same reason you favour the present proposal—the section under consideration? I do; and the fact just mentioned is a great argument in its favour.

102. You stated that a considerable quantity of produce from the Casino district would come this way in the event of a railway being constructed? Yes.

103. Have you any particular argument in support of that assertion? Casino is situated on what is known as the south branch of the Richmond River. The only method of getting goods from Coraki to Casino is by small steamer, which necessarily involves considerable delay. Whether you take goods from Sydney to Casino, *via* Coraki, or produce from Casino to Sydney by the same way, there must be considerable delay. There is either delay at Casino before taking the produce away, or delay at Coraki before putting it on the steamer. Then, as regards the inward goods, there is delay at Coraki before taking them to Casino. The only way of overcoming this difficulty, so far as the Casino people are concerned, would be by the construction of a tram line from Coraki to Casino. That is the only way by which that route could be made to compete at all with a line of railway from Casino to Grafton.

104. Is the river navigable up to Casino? Only by small boats, and then there is a good deal of cartage to be done—about 2 miles.

105. How many steamers have the North Coast Steam Navigation Company trading to the Richmond River? Three.

106. Regularly? Yes.

107. And to the Clarence? Three.

108. I understand that those trading to the Clarence are the larger steamers? Yes; they are larger in tonnage. We can load the largest of our steamers at Grafton, but on the Richmond River, nowhere above Broadwater can we load the steamers to their fullest capacity.

109. How do you find the Clarence entrance with regard to your trade? We consider the Clarence entrance very much improved.

110. Do you meet with much delay? Not very much.

111. Do you meet with any delay on the Richmond River? Yes; considerable.

112. In the event of the breakwater at the Clarence Heads being carried out as proposed by Sir John Coode, would that, in your opinion, give better facilities for shipping at this port? Yes.

113. It would admit larger steamers? Yes.

114. What depth of water do you think it would give? We have had over 22 feet of water on the bar. Some patches of it were 30 feet at high tide. It is the opinion of our captains trading to the port that when the proposed works are completed—that is, when the southern breakwater is extended, and the reef removed, and the training-wall completed—we shall have from 20 to 22 feet of water on the bar.

115. Assuming that improvement to take place, you would then probably have larger steamers trading here? Yes. As a matter of fact the company have now under consideration the construction of a very much larger steamer. The plans are all ready now. Everything is in readiness for the construction of a faster and larger steamer for the trade.

116. Is it not a natural result from an improved entrance, and larger and better steamers, that there will be a reduction in fares and freights? Yes; that is the natural result. With larger bottoms you can do the trade 25 per cent. cheaper, and with a greater hope of profit than you can with smaller ships.

117. With a better entrance and better shipping facilities, would there not be a strong probability of the Casino produce coming to the Clarence? I believe so.

118. That is to say, with better shipping facilities than now exist, there would be a greater probability of getting trade than is the case under present circumstances? Yes, undoubtedly.

119. If the bar were improved to a depth of from 20 to 22 feet, would there be any difficulty in getting the steamers up the river? No. You would not require to load a boat up to 22 feet at Grafton, because you load her along the river. But to-day we can load a boat at Grafton up to 14 feet 6 inches, and that means 600 or 700 tons.

120. You do not anticipate any difficulty whatever in regard to boats coming up the river? None. As a matter of fact, we loaded a 400-ton ship 14 miles above Grafton a few years ago.

121. Do you remember that some years ago what is known as the crossing at the Clarence Heads was more trouble even than the bar? Yes.

122. After negotiating the bar, vessels could not always get over the crossing? Yes.

123. Since the training walls have been carried out, have you noticed any marked improvement in this respect? Yes; the obstacle at the crossing has been entirely removed.

124. What is the depth of water there now? It is reported that there are from 30 to 35 feet of water.

125. Where the original crossing was? Yes; there is one point there where there is a depth of 50 feet. There is abundance of water—about 30 feet on the average—all down the training-wall.

126. Previous to the training-walls being carried out, particularly the south training-wall, what depth of water was there on the crossing? Where the training-wall is now was a sand-bank, and there has been as low a depth as 5 feet of water on the crossing, and for many months there was never more than 8 feet 6 inches. I remember that very well, because before the construction of the training-walls, and at the time I am speaking of, produce had to be conveyed to the steamer by droghers.

127. That trouble has been done away with by the partial construction of the training-wall? Yes; the whole of that difficulty has gone.

128. In view of that improvement to the crossing, is it your opinion that the extension of the south breakwater will have a similar effect with regard to the bar? I feel satisfied it will.

129. And will allow of the removal of the reef, as proposed by Sir John Coode? Yes.

130. Do you think there will be any difficulty in the shape of a rocky bottom that will prevent the scour? No. I am satisfied there is no rocky bottom at the Clarence Heads, because in 1887, the time of the flood, a dredge broke away and was driven out to sea, and it is supposed that this had some influence in scouring out the channel, for after that flood there was a depth of 22 feet, and in some places 30 feet. I take that as a fair indication that there is no rock at the bottom.

131. *Chairman.*] Do you know the line between Lismore and Murwillumbah? I do.

132. How does the country between those two places compare with the country between Grafton and Casino? That is better land than this.

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S. Sec. 133. That railway has not been exactly a success from a traffic point of view? No; but it is bettering its position every day. There is a loss every year, I know; but until it was constructed there was a very much more serious loss to the man who invested in the land. The land was absolutely useless. I know of instances where men spent hundreds of pounds on the land, and not only lost that money, but became bankrupt. That land has since become valuable;—in fact within a radius of a great number of miles of the line you cannot obtain land except at £7 or £8 an acre. I know land there that has been sold at £8 an acre uncleared, and before it was not worth 8d. an acre. I attribute that increase in value solely to the construction of the railway.

134. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Did it lead to increased settlement along the line? Yes, to a considerable extent.

135. *Chairman.*] Do you look upon the position of Lismore and Murwillumbah as analogous to that of Grafton and Casino;—having regard to the two rivers and the two ports, admitting that there is a better tract of country between Lismore and Murwillumbah, do you think that the superior condition of the river at Grafton would improve the position, and attract a big traffic from the direction of Casino, if a railway ran there? Yes, I think so, though I am ready to admit that the land between Lismore and the Tweed is better.

136. Seeing that there is better land between those two places, I want you to explain why you think there would be better results from railway construction between Casino and Grafton? The land between Lismore and The Tweed is better land, and in consequence of that fact was selected; but it was comparatively useless until the construction of the railway. Practically everything excepting pine was exhausted, and there was nothing else left to the owners of the land. Though the land could not be cultivated for maize, it could be utilised for cane; but that was of no use, because you could not get the cane to a mill. The land has gone up considerably in value owing to the starting of the dairying industry; but assuming that 1 acre of land there is worth 3 or 4 acres of land between Grafton and Casino, the country between the latter places carries a large quantity of hardwood timber, which experts have estimated to be worth from £3 to £4 an acre as it stands. That is an asset which the other land did not possess. Then, again, you have a larger number of acres with easier facilities for getting to it, because it is level land, while the other is rough. I consider that the land between Grafton and Casino stands in a better position, as regards the man who wants to take it up, than the land between Lismore and the Tweed, in view of the roughness of the latter and the absence of valuable timber. If it were open for selection to-morrow, the land here would be as readily taken up as that between Lismore and the Tweed.

137. And the Lismore to the Tweed line was a much more expensive one to construct? Infinitely more. The cuttings were very heavy indeed. That section cost within a few pounds of £1,000,000—a most expensive line. Between Grafton and Casino there is a good deal of Crown land.

138. *Mr. McFarlane.*] In the event of railway communication between the tableland and the coast, which, in your opinion, would be the best terminal point? I think Grafton would be.

139. I suppose you have good reason for assuming Grafton to be the best and most central point? Yes; it would be the best terminal point in consequence of the navigable condition of the river. On account of the better entrance to the Heads it is a better port. As a matter of fact, it is a port extending for 48 miles.

140. And in the event of connection with the tableland, would Grafton be a central locality—that is, in view of the other districts along the coast, such as the Bellinger and the Nambucca on the one hand and the Richmond and the Tweed on the other? Yes; it would be a central point.

141. The coast produces articles that cannot be grown on the tableland, and there are many products on the tableland that cannot be produced on the coast? Yes; a great number.

142. In view of that there would be a large interchange of products? Yes.

143. In the event of maize or potatoes being sent to the tableland, could districts other than the Clarence participate in sending these products by means of the railway from Grafton? Yes.

144. It would give the people in the districts on both sides of Grafton an opportunity of sending their produce to the tableland? All the coastal rivers would be in touch with the tableland if Grafton were made the terminal point.

145. And in your opinion Grafton would be the best centre for connection with the tableland, in view of the better facilities for shipping on the Clarence? Yes; that is the main reason. I consider that Grafton is a central position, but it is in consequence of the river affording such safety that it would be a better terminal point than any other place.

146. In the event of a railway being constructed from the tableland to Grafton, would that give additional traffic to the proposed line from Grafton to Casino, if it were constructed? Yes.

147. Take, for instance, the passenger traffic,—if the tableland were connected with Grafton by railway, would not that give additional passenger traffic between Grafton and Casino and Lismore and the Tweed River? Yes.

148. So that one line would help the other considerably? Yes.

149. And in view of the products that could be sent to the tableland greater traffic would on that account come to the proposed railway? Yes; that would be the case quite independently of the route to the tableland.

149½. Have you any evidence with regard to the outward tonnage from Grafton? The figures for 1899 are as follows:—"Kallatina," 650 tons gross, 52 trips; "City of Grafton," 800 tons gross, 52 trips; "Australian," 450 tons gross, 27 trips; "Oakland," 500 tons gross, 16 trips; "Wyoming," 250 tons gross, 2 trips; total, 2,650 tons gross, 149 trips. These figures represent an outward tonnage of 80,360 tons. They do not include sailing vessels, which have taken timber to the extent of fully 3,000,000 feet. Of that quantity 2,000,000 feet were exported to intercolonial ports, and the balance shipped to Sydney for consumption in New South Wales. With regard to the passenger trade, the number of passengers carried to and from Sydney in 1899 was as follows:—Saloon, 6,249; steerage, 2,015; total, 8,264.

Joseph Spencer, storekeeper, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

J. Spencer. 150. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in business? I have been in business on my own account in Grafton for a couple of years; but I was a traveller for one of the Sydney houses for about fifteen years.

151. I believe you have some figures with regard to traffic? I can give you an approximate idea of the traffic between here and the Richmond. I was on that particular line for the period mentioned.

152. Would you give us the character of the traffic and its fluctuations? I will first take the inter-relationship between the two rivers, so far as passenger traffic is concerned. When I heard it stated this morning before the Committee that there was no considerable volume of traffic I was rather surprised, because as a matter of fact there is a constant stream of traffic between the two rivers, as anyone constantly travelling about this district, as I have done, must recognise. I represented a large soft-goods house—Gardiner & Co.—for a number of years, and my cheque alone on the Chatsworth to Woodburn line was £60 a year for freight and carriage. I believe there are about sixty travellers on this road. Say there are ten handling as a great quantity of freight as I had, and you have at once traffic representing £600 a year. I do not know that they all paid the same as I did; but there are ten big houses, and they would pay at least an approximate amount to what I paid myself.

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153. Did you travel by coach? Yes. I hired special coaches, as we all do. Taking the ten just mentioned from the total number of sixty travellers, that would leave a balance of fifty, and putting their freight down at a minimum of £2 each, six times a year, that would be £12 per man, or a total of £600. This will give £1,200 a year paid for freight and carriage by one body of men.

154. But do not commercial travellers get an all-round ticket on the railways, and would not that apply to this kind of district? As far as the railways are concerned it does not apply to the Lismore-Tweed line. There the northern system of passes does not take effect. The Commissioners allowed that privilege on the Tweed line for some time, but they have now withdrawn it. An all-lines ticket would apply; but that would not affect the samples.

155. In the case of a commercial traveller doing business on these rivers, would it be worth his while to pay the £100? Certainly not, because there would only be a small proportion of his journey that would be covered by rail ticket. I have pointed out that there is an amount of £1,200 a year from one body of men alone, and, quite apart from that, there is the ordinary coach traffic. We will take the ordinary coach traffic between Chatsworth and Woodburn at three each way—that is, six per day—three going and three coming back. I do not know what the fare is now—it used to be 12s. 6d.; but say that 26 miles of coaching is worth 10s., that would be forty-two passengers, at 10s., equal to £1,000 a year. Then there are a number of people, of whom there is no record, who prefer to travel in their own vehicles. I suppose the greater number of persons who go over there from this immediate district drive themselves.

156. With railway facilities, I suppose the same character of business would still be kept up—with the supply of goods there would have to be travellers just the same? Yes; in fact, railway construction would very largely increase this class of travellers.

157. How do you get your goods from Sydney—by steamer? Yes.

158. It seems to be the opinion of one of the witnesses that a great number of the passengers would prefer to come from Casino to the Clarence, and take the steamer to Sydney, owing to the better class of steamers running from this river;—do you think that would be so? There is no doubt we are the safety-valve for the Richmond with our facilities for getting away. For instance, it used to be quite a common thing not to trust the Richmond if we wanted to go to Sydney by an early date, but to come to the Clarence, because we would be sure of getting out. In fact, as was remarked this morning, a tremendous lot of perishable cargo would come to the Clarence in preference to going out of the Richmond Heads. Besides, if a man wished to catch a favourable market, he would certainly take advantage of the Clarence, which would give him quick communication. I was in Lismore at the time the evidence was being given in regard to the Lismore-Tweed railway, and the traffic between the two rivers at that particular time was given at two persons per week. It was either one or two. I know only one coach used to run per week. It left Lismore on Monday, and returned on Friday. There was practically no traffic at all; in fact, it was quite an undertaking to go over there.

159. The traffic has, of course, considerably improved since they have had the railway? Undoubtedly.

160. Do you see any signs of improvement with regard to settlement and population between Grafton and Casino, on the proposed line of railway? Unquestionably. As was pointed out this morning, it is impossible for these men to embark on any sort of industry in the shape of dairying when they are 30 or 40 miles from a market, besides which a man could not think of going in for dairying at that distance.

George Henry Varley, newspaper proprietor, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

161. *Chairman.*] What are you? Chairman of the Clarence Dairymen's Association, also President of G. H. Varley, the local Chamber of Commerce, and proprietor of the *Clarence Examiner*.

162. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been long in the district? About nineteen years.

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163. You have therefore a pretty good knowledge of it? Fairly good, I think.

164. I understand you have some statistics which you desire to place before the Committee with reference to the output of products from the district? I have a number of figures taken from official sources. Commencing with maize, the oldest and the chief agricultural product, the export for the year 1899 was 540,720 bushels. Adding the local consumption, the total production for the year would be fully 700,000 bushels. This quantity, at an average price of 2s. 9d. per bushel, gives a return of £96,250. For the area under crop the yield was an average one, while the price was higher, taking the season right through, than has been usual of late seasons. About 24,300 bags of potatoes were exported, or 2,100 tons. The local consumption would bring the yield, probably, to 3,000 tons, and this, at an average price of £2 10s. per ton, would give a return of £7,500. This is far below the proceeds of 1898 year, when there was a high price and better crop. That year's income from potatoes was estimated at fully £25,000. Sugar-cane is an important item, the C.S.R. Co. having paid away during 1899 for cane and wages, £42,500. The smaller mills would swell this total to about £50,000. In 1898 the company paid £70,000, and during the coming season they expect to pay about £60,000. This, of course, does not represent the value of manufactured sugar, which is considerably greater than the amount stated. Allowing 10 tons of cane for a ton of sugar, and an average selling price of £15 per ton, the sugar product for 1899 would be worth approximately £68,600. The stock is another important item. Last year there were slaughtered in the district by those who held licenses, 12,151 fat cattle, and, in addition, about 900 were shipped to Sydney, while a number were sent overland. These three methods of disposal would represent 13,051 head, and these, at an all-round average of £5 per head, would yield £65,255. In this connection it may be stated that the average output from Ramornie Meat-works is £36,000 for tinned meat and extract, and £35,500 for tallow, hides, &c. The company also pays about £14,000 per annum in wages. It should, however, be mentioned that the whole of the cattle treated at Ramornie are not raised in the district; some are purchased

G. H. Varley, purchased from the northern part of the Colony and Queensland. On the other hand, however, there are a large number of milch cows bred in the district that represent a considerable sum. The returns sent to the Stock Inspector's office at Grafton, up to date, show that there were in the district 91,011 head of cattle (an increase of 4,094 on the previous year's returns); 17,432 horses (an increase of 952); 11,836 pigs (increase of 298); and 2,116 sheep (increase of 917). There were 8,209 pigs exported, and 4,219 returned as slaughtered in the district. The pig industry is worth about £15,000 to the farmers and others. The exports of eggs were 17,489 cases, and of fowls, 1,972 coops, estimated at the value of nearly £38,000. The local requirements would augment this to about £45,000. The butter industry has shown considerable expansion during four years. In 1896 there were 152½ tons manufactured; in 1897, about 476 tons; in 1898, 649 tons; and last year the output was 755½ tons, which, at £93 4s. per ton, gives a value of £70,536. It is estimated that fully 6½ million feet of timber were cut on the Clarence last year, representing a money value, at hardwood rates, of £37,682. Then there were exported 144,000 spokes, railway sleepers, girders, wattle-bark, &c, which would increase the year's revenue from our forests to at least £40,000. The total value of our products may be thus summarised:—Maize, £82,500; dairy produce, £70,536; potatoes, £7,500; sugar, £68,600; cattle, £66,755; timber, £40,000; pigs, £15,000; poultry and eggs, £45,000; hides (15,761), £12,500; vegetables, £5,100; fish, £5,200; horses (324 exported), £2,000; bark, £400. This gives a grand total of about £421,100. There are, in addition, some smaller industries, which would materially increase this amount. These figures will show the resources of the district and their rapid development.

165. That sum of £421,100 represents, I presume, the larger items of production—not so much of export, not solely of export? The exports could be easily separated; but that represents the total production.

166. The greater part would be exports? Yes. I have some information with reference to the proposed railway, as to which, as chairman of the Clarence River Dairymen's Association, I am, perhaps, competent to give an opinion on the probable output of dairy produce, &c. I do not know whether I am presuming too much in making an estimate of the cost of construction; but as one holding a public position, and knowing what has taken place in this district, I have prepared what I consider to be a fairly accurate estimate. In the first place I put the cost of construction down at £5,000 per mile, or a total for 64 miles of £321,000. The annual cost I put down at £16,018, of which £9,630 is interest on capital cost at 3 per cent., and £6,388, estimated cost of maintenance, and traffic and locomotive expenses. The probable income I estimate at £15,268 12s. 6d., made up as follows:—

<i>Revenue Estimate.</i>		£	s.	d.
525 cans of cream per day at tonnage rates, average £5 7s.		1,952	15	0
Pigs, calves, poultry, eggs, and general merchandise.		2,824	0	0
Sawn timber, spokes, firewood (say)		1,250	0	0
Mails, parcels (say)		500	0	0
9,470 adult fares—return—at 13s.		6,155	10	0
Excursion fares, 3,000 per annum		1,050	0	0
Passengers along the route, 1,000, estimated to make two trips per annum, an average of 32 miles (half the length of line), at 6s. 6d. return		650	0	0
1,500 estimated to make three trips per annum, an average of 16 miles (one-fourth length of line), at 3s. 3d. return		731	5	0
Through fares to Lismore and Tweed, one passenger per day, at 8s. 6d.		155	2	6
		<u>£15,268</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>

These figures leave an estimated shortage in revenue of £749 7s. 6d. Perhaps I may give the following explanation of my estimate just given:—

The estimate of cost is based on the evidence of Mr. Surveyor Lloyd, on the result of Mr. Surveyor Kennedy's explorations of more difficult country in the Clarence district, and the statement recently made by Mr. Chief Secretary John See.

Estimate of Revenue.

Believing that 437 families would settle within three years from the time a contract was accepted for constructing the line, on 279,680 acres (*e.g.* 640 acres for each family) and assuming the estimates of practical men to be correct (*i.e.*, 5 acres of improved land would keep a cow in full milk), there would be 525 cans of cream for daily freight, of which 285 might reasonably be credited to Grafton (from 35, 25, and 13 miles), and 240 to Casino (from distances of 19 and 9 miles). The freight charges are calculated on the "Special Class B." mileage rates for goods per ton.

For live stock, merchandise, &c., the estimate of the Railway Commissioners has been quoted.

With such large areas of splendid timber growing short distances on either side of the proposed line, it is generally believed that saw-mills will be established along the route, and considerable quantities of sawn timber freighted to the nearest port of shipment. The Fresh Food and Ice Company and the residents of Grafton use large quantities of firewood, which is mostly carted from the south side of the river. If the proposed line were constructed, no doubt firewood could be supplied at cheaper rates than are now paid.

With regard to the item of £6,155 10s. (fares), it is estimated that two-fifths of the population resident within an area of (say) 20 miles of the line, in the Grafton, Clarence, and Casino districts, and a like proportion of the increased population in these districts, would make one trip per annum.

In support of the estimate for excursion fares, it is claimed that the shows (two days at each town) at Grafton, Casino, and Maclean, races at Grafton (a number of days), Caledonian gatherings at Grafton, Casino, and Maclean, and other public sports, would attract at least 3,000 fares during the year.

The estimated revenue from passengers along the route will in all probability be realised, as dairying would admit of each occupant of 640 acres earning about £598 per annum, an average of 3d. per gallon for the milk of eighty cows, and returns for store pigs, baconers, poultry, and eggs.

The estimate of the passenger traffic between Grafton and the Lismore district could reasonably be increased, especially if the present mail contracts between these districts were abolished.

There is a greater probability of this line paying than the Tweed-Lismore line, owing to the fact that while the latter does not draw all the possible freight and traffic, this line, on the contrary, will go through the centre of a productive district. I have prepared an estimate of the probable revenue from the carriage of dairy produce, assuming that creameries would be established at intervals along the line. The first creamery I locate at a point on the line 13 miles from Grafton and beyond the area from which the Grafton factory is drawing milk. The following are the details of my estimate in regard to the transit of cream by the proposed railway:—

		£	s.	d.
13 miles.	45 cans per day, equal to 2½ tons, at 2s. 8d.	0	6	0
25 "	6 " " " 4s. 8d.	1	8	0
35 "	6 " " " 6s. 4d.	1	18	0
19 "	6 " " " 3s. 8d.	1	2	0
9 "	6 " " " 2s. 2d.	0	13	0
	<u>525</u>	<u>£5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>

Estimate 525 cans daily at tonnage rates. £5 7s., yielding £1,952 15s. per annum.

Starting

- Starting from Grafton, I have estimated that a creamery would be established at a point 13 miles away. Then, at a point 25 miles from Grafton I have estimated that two creameries would be established on the eastern side of the line and two on the western side, the area in either case extending 10 miles from the line. Freight of the cream from these creameries to Grafton I have estimated at 4s. 8d. per ton. Then at a point 35 miles from Grafton there would be two creameries on the western side of the line and two on the eastern side. These I estimate would send in 6 tons of cream to Grafton per day, and I put down the freight at 6s. 4d. Next I take a point 19 miles from Casino, and there would be two creameries on the east side of the line and two on the west side delivering their cream to the railway. The quantity I put down at 6 tons, and the freight to Casino at 2s. 8d. The next point would be 9 miles from Casino, and there would be the same number of creameries and the same quantity of cream, the freight being 2s. 2d. per ton. As shown by the return quoted just now, I estimate that there would be 525 cans of cream carried daily by the railway, yielding a freight of £5 7s., or a total of £1,952 15s. per annum. In making my estimate I have assumed that from beyond 40 miles from Grafton the cream would go towards Casino, if a connection were made between Casino and Lismore. I have taken as a basis for each creamery twenty-five families, each on a holding of 640 acres.
167. How many cows would they run? Eighty in full milk.
168. Do you think they could keep up that average for any length of time on that area? I think on that area they could milk eighty cows right through the year.
169. How many cows would that leave in reserve? That would allow about forty dry cows.
170. Do you think you could run 120 cows on 640 acres? That is a less number than has been mentioned to-day. On that point I cannot speak from practical knowledge. The evidence of dairymen of large experience, is that this land when improved would carry a beast to 4 or 5 acres.
171. As chairman of the Dairymen's Association, and from what you glean from those now settled in the district, you think that 640 acres of this land would carry 120 cows, eighty in milk and forty dry? Yes, all the year round; that is, in three years time after the country had been improved.
172. Do you, in your estimate, provide for the growth of fodder for the stock during the winter, or do you consider the natural grasses sufficient? I have allowed for 40 acres of cultivation on each of these 640 acres. If there were a greater extent of cultivation more cattle would be carried.
173. Would it be necessary to grow fodder for the winter here? Not when they get the grasses which it has been proved will grow on that land—*Paspalum dilatatum* and other artificial grasses that have been introduced here.
174. Is it found that these grasses are a success in feeding cattle? Yes.
175. Your estimate of receipts and expenditure in connection with the proposed line is not put forward as what is likely to occur at once? I have assumed that in three years from the time a contract was started, you would have those results. Judging from experience on the northern line when it was built, the construction of the railway as it progressed would create population, so that by the time the line was finished to Casino it would be found that a large number of families would be settled on the land. A family could settle down on this land and get a dairy into working order very soon.
176. Is it heavily timbered? Not very heavily.
177. How do they proceed with regard to clearing here—do they ring the timber first? There is plenty of country along the line on which you could start dairying straight away.
178. Is it land that has been rung for some time, or is it mostly in reserves, with green timber growing? The portion coloured green on the map shows a railway reserve 1 mile wide right through to Casino.
179. On each side of that reserve how is the land generally held—is it Crown land or partly alienated? It is nearly all Crown land. I believe there are 721,000 acres available between Casino and Grafton.
180. Of the land not reserved a portion, I believe, is alienated in squatters' holdings? Not much. There is one station, Cumira, and another at Wooroowoogan.
181. Has the first named been ringbarked? I have never been over it.
182. You would not expect the line to bring all that land under profitable occupation within two or three years;—would it not take several years? I have estimated that only 279,000 acres would be occupied within three years.
183. And you have not gone beyond 10 miles on either side of the railway? No. The advantage of a line going through country like that is that by putting a creamery about 5 miles from the line, say on the western side, you not only drain the country between the creamery and the railway, but also the country 5 miles beyond the creamery.
184. Then you would have the creameries, not at the railway station, but 5 miles away from it? That would depend on the country. If a creamery were placed (say) 5 miles on the western side of the line, by putting another creamery 5 miles further to the west, you would drain another 5 miles still further to the west, so that the railway would drain 15 miles of country. What would be done would be this: the cream from the outer creamery would be brought into the central one, and from there the whole of the cream would be taken 5 miles to the railway. I know that the Fresh Food and Ice Company, who have largely developed the butter industry on this river, would be quite prepared to build any number of creameries if there were a demand for them.
185. How far directly north, or slightly east or west of north, is the furthest dairy-farm from Grafton, at the present time, that is in the direction of Casino? About 8 miles.
186. That would not be far from the river flats? No; dairying is being carried on at Stockyard Creek and at Copmanhurst, about 20 and 27 miles away.
187. Some distance from the river? Yes.
188. Are there any indications, so far, of men being willing to take up grazing land, which is not held to be suitable for agriculture and for dairy purposes? I think so.
189. Are there any specific instances you could point to as evidence of that inclination, and as showing the anxiety of people to get hold of land such as this railway would go through? I have had numbers of inquiries, and I know the banks have had inquiries. The banks and the auctioneers have frequent inquiries from persons wanting to know if they could get farms anywhere about. They are not obtainable in this district to rent—not a good dairy-farm within a reasonable distance from a creamery. There is no doubt there is a demand for this character of land.
190. But just now you told us that if you erected two creameries, say, westerly from any point on the line, one beyond the other, they could serve an area of 15 miles? Yes, in some parts.

G. H. Varley. 191. Could not that be done now with your facilities in the way of factories at Grafton; could not you reasonably expect that there would be an extension northerly to the second-class land for 15 miles from Grafton? I do not think so, under present conditions.

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192. Why? Because you would have to bring the milk in 12 miles by cart to Grafton factory.

193. I mean with the creameries, say 5 miles apart; would they not influence an area 15 miles out from Grafton as you indicated might be done if the creameries were properly placed in respect of the railway? In answer to that I may mention that I know a case here where cream is being brought over 30 miles to Grafton from Nana Glen, but it is done at a cost of about 2s. a can for the carriage of the cream. That is right enough while the price is up, but that cannot last always.

194. I suppose that is rich land? Very good land, no doubt.

195. Or else it could not stand that big freight? No.

196. You estimated the cost of constructing this line at £5,000 per mile on the authority of Mr. Lloyd, surveyor. Mr. Deane, in Sydney, was asked whether he had any conversation with Mr. Lloyd with respect to the estimate he had given in 1892, and he said:

I had considerable conversations with Mr. Lloyd about that. If he had been engineer-in-chief he would not have made that estimate, because he did not know all the circumstances. You see, a field officer judges things partially only; he does not see all the items that have to be included. It is very probable that he would under-estimate a line, and a very intelligent man—a man who might know something of the matter—might say: "that line ought to be made for £5,000." You may make a good deal for £5,000. You may make a good portion for £5,000, excluding bridges, stations, and a number of other things, but we have to include bridges and stations. I have to include all office and survey expense; you must not forget those things.

Further on he was asked:

Notwithstanding your conversations with Mr. Lloyd on the subject, and any information which he may have been able to afford you, you have no reason to think that it could be done for anything like what he said? No.

If you turn to the evidence of Mr. Lloyd before the Sectional Committee in the 1892 inquiry you will find that he admitted that, in the first instance, he had not included construction plant, station buildings, and resumption of land, nor had he included the cost of the bridge across the Richmond, which he himself estimated at from £30,000 to £40,000. You see, the bridge alone would add about £750 per mile. He was asked:

Are you of opinion that this line can be constructed from Grafton to Lismore at a price not exceeding £7,000 per mile? Yes; excluding the cost of the bridge.

Are you aware that the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways has included in his estimate the cost of the bridge? I was not aware of that.

Would that not make his estimate pretty much the same as yours? I daresay it would.

Then he goes on to compare the cost with the Cootamundra to Gundagai line? I think you will find that Mr. Lloyd gave supplementary evidence at Casino after he had been over the line. It will be found on page 69 of the Committee's report, question 1781. He said he was still of opinion that the line could be constructed for £6,000 per mile; that the country, from an engineering point of view, was extremely easy, being nearly absolutely level.

197. It is not clear from that whether he still excludes the cost of the bridge and the terminal works at Grafton? I do not know whether I am justified in repeating a conversation I had with him when he stated that, in his opinion, the line could be made for £5,000 per mile right through.

198. In this case we have inquired very carefully into Mr. Deane's estimate, so far as we could get information from his own department, and Mr. Deane adheres to his statement that the line cannot be constructed for less than £7,803 10s. per mile, irrespective of any reduction that may be made in the item of station buildings and wharfs at Grafton; in answer to Mr. McFarlane, Mr. Deane admitted the other day that a sum of £55,000 included in the item of £70,000 for Grafton might be cut out, as a number of things included in the estimate would not perhaps be wanted for a considerable time;—assuming that that £55,000 were cut out, it would still leave a total of £6,600 per mile? I remember that Mr. Eddy, when discussing the matter, said it was nonsense to put up expensive buildings and sidings, and that an earth-work siding would be ample, with galvanised iron buildings right along the line. Look what occurred in this district: At one time we had a line estimated to cost £20,000, and it was brought down to £12,000 per mile, afterwards down to £8,000, and now it is estimated at £5,000; and in part of the country between here and Rumormie, which is quite as difficult a country as that on the Casino line, Mr. Kennedy, the surveyor, estimated that the cost would be something like £3,600 per mile. Mr. See, the Chief Secretary, when this line was before the House last December, said he had consulted an engineer, and believed it could be made for £5,000 per mile, or considerably less. When the line was being surveyed one surveyor insisted upon taking it through an important part of the town, and also through flooded country, and this was not remedied until there was a good deal of agitation. The route was subsequently improved. It was taken round through agricultural land, and, for most of the distance, out of flood reach. The cost of the resumption will be very much less than the original estimate.

199. *Chairman.*] Is that a long while ago? About twelve or thirteen years ago.

200. *Mr. Watson.*] Mr. Deane was also asked in Sydney whether it would not be possible to reduce the cost of construction by making this line more in the nature of a light line, such as has been made in the back country; but he said it would be impossible to do without ballasting and heavy sleepers owing to the heavy rainfall in the district;—do you think that would be so? I do not feel competent to give an opinion about that.

201. But there is a heavy rainfall, I believe? Yes, an average of about 32 inches. There is plenty of timber along the line to make the railway. That is where railway sleepers are coming from now.

202. Turning to the general question, as a pressman no doubt you have taken considerable interest in the working of our railway system, and you are, perhaps, aware that coastal lines, so far as experiments have been made up to the present, have not been a success? Yes.

203. What reason have you for thinking that there is a greater probability of success in this instance than in the case of the South Coast line or the Lismore to the Tweed line? In the first place, the South Coast line runs close to the coast, and, therefore, can only drain the country for so many miles on the landward side. It gets nothing from the seaward side. The proposed Grafton-Casino line would drain the traffic for 10 miles on either side.

204. But when the South Coast line gets below Wollongong it drains a greater area, does it not? Yes; but the earnings on that line have to be very large in order to pay the interest on the enormous cost of construction.

construction. There is a very great difference in the cost of construction of the South Coast line, and that now being inquired into. The same may be said with regard to the line from Lismore to the Tweed, which I believe cost about £13,000 or £14,000 a mile.

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205. The estimate in that case was Mr. Lloyd's estimate;—his estimate of £9,000 per mile was largely exceeded? There were misrepresentations about that proposal when it was before Parliament. When that estimate was given it was given as the cost from Grafton to the Tweed, and the line was spoken of in that general way. I remember Mr. Lloyd mentioning the contract price for the Tweed portion of the railway. This bears on his reliability in regard to making estimates. In the 1892 inquiry before the Sectional Committee he was asked, page 11, question 319:—

Does your estimate of £6,000 a mile for the proposed railway include a bridge over the Richmond? No; that estimate is exclusive of the bridge. I stated before the Public Works Committee with reference to the Tweed line, that I thought the first and second sections could be let for £9,000 a mile, and that this one could be let for £6,000 a mile. The contracts have been let for about £8,500 per mile, so that I was not far out.

206. The contract was let for £8,500 per mile, but the other cost brought the amount up to £14,000; so that Mr. Lloyd's estimate did not include the whole expense respecting the capital sum on which interest had to be earned? Quite so. When that estimate was made in the House, they were speaking of the whole line right through, and the House was, in my opinion, under the impression that it was sanctioning a line that was to cost £9,000, and not £14,000.

207. They were really sanctioning the expensive part of the line? Yes.

208. Would any resumptions be necessary on this line between Grafton and Casino—I mean outside of town allotments? The total amount for resumptions would be small, compared with the resumptions on the other lines mentioned.

209. *Mr. McFarlane.*] In your statement concerning the revenue likely to come from the proposed railway, did you make any allowance for the increased value that would be given to the Crown lands? No; there is not the slightest doubt that the value of the Crown lands would be increased. In my opinion, it would be safe to put the increase down at 10s. per acre. The then district surveyor, Mr. Donaldson, who had nearly thirty years' experience in the district, estimated (in the year 1892) the value of the land at £2 per acre, or an increase of £1.

210. Does that increase apply to the whole of the unalienated lands? No. With the view of settling some part of the land first, I think the pioneers of the district should get it at some advantage. I think, the increase right along would average 10s. over an area of unalienated land, estimated to be about 721,000 acres.

211. How did you arrive at that area? I know it to be correct; I think you will get it officially.

212. How far from the present line does that embrace? Ten miles on each side of the line. All my calculations are based on that area.

213. Is it your opinion that 10 miles on either side of the line would be affected? Yes; I have not the slightest doubt about it.

214. And the line would open up settlement for 10 miles on each side? Yes. In some cases the distance would exceed that. At Busby's Flat, and places like that, settlement would extend beyond that.

215. Have you any knowledge of the passenger traffic which now exists between this district and the Richmond? Except this, that I remember some years ago it was very difficult to get from Chatsworth to Woodburn, because the coaches were not often running, but now there are three or four vehicles running from Chatsworth and Woodburn every day.

216. Does that include Sunday? I believe you can go on Sundays. There are coaches and other vehicles.

217. There is also a road from Lawrence to Casino—are there any coaches running on that line? There is a mail coach twice a week.

218. Do many passengers travel by that route? I could not say; I should not think there were many.

219. I do not mean so much by the coach, but by that road? There is a fairly good traffic, I think, by private vehicles. Most people who go from here prefer to drive their own traps, because they go by a different route, and save 7 or 8 miles.

220. Between Grafton and Casino, is there any considerable traffic? I would not say there was considerable traffic.

221. I mean from all sources? The cheaper journey, and probably the better one, and one which most people take now, is to go Chatsworth, then by road to Woodburn, and from there by steamer to Lismore.

222. Taking these routes together, would there not be a large amount of passenger traffic between here and the Richmond? I believe there would. I believe the estimate I have made to be fairly accurate. It has not been flippantly made, but I have given the matter a lot of thought.

223. If a railway were constructed would nearly the whole of these passengers go by rail rather than take the coach? Certainly. I think the fare is considerably more by coach than it would be by rail, and, of course, the time occupied in the journey would be shorter. The coach travelling along that road is not by any means too fast; the pace is not equal to that of Cobb & Co.

224. With regard to the traffic now existing between Chatsworth and Woodburn, does that go in the direction of Lismore and Casino, or down the river? The bulk of it no doubt goes to Lismore, but a good deal of it goes to Casino. I cannot speak on this point with any degree of accuracy.

225. If the railway were constructed, in view of the growing importance of both districts and the increase of population, is it not likely, when better facilities for travelling were given, that there would be a large increase of traffic between the two districts? Yes; I have no hesitation in saying it would be so.

226. That is generally the effect? Yes; I should say that a dairying community doing well would perhaps travel more than many other sections of the community, because of the monthly cheques paid for milk. The regular monthly payments have a tendency to increase travelling.

227. If residents on the Richmond River—say at Casino or Lismore—wanted to go to Sydney, would they be likely to use this line and come by Grafton? Some little time ago, when the entrance to the Richmond River was not quite as good as it is now, and the boats were perhaps not so large, the people used to travel rather largely over to Harwood to go to Sydney. They would go down the river by boat at night and travel until 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning to catch the boat leaving the Clarence on Saturday morning. If a resident of Lismore wanted to get to Sydney with any degree of certainty as to time he would come by way of the Clarence, where there are better steamers. Getting on to the steamer at Lismore, which is 75 miles from Ballina, means considerable delay to a passenger—the loss of nearly a day.

G. H. Varley. day. This, of course, can be avoided by going by coach to Ballina and catching the steamer there; but I think Lismore passengers would prefer to get into the train at Grafton—that is, if the steamers here were better, as I think they would be if a railway was constructed.

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228. Taking the ordinary railway fare, would it be less expensive or otherwise to come from Lismore or Casino to Grafton than to go by coach and river? Yes; the return railway fare would be about 13s., and I think it would cost at least 19s. to go the other way.

229. That is taking the river steamer and the coach? Yes.

230. *Chairman.*] In your position as proprietor of a local paper, and holding, as you do, an official position, I suppose you come in contact with a great many people? Yes.

231. Various railway routes have been proposed from time to time;—it has been suggested, for instance, that the line should go from Casino to Lawrence, which, I think it is conceded, would be a much cheaper line than the one now proposed;—would that be a suitable line? It certainly would not be a suitable line as a section of the North Coast railway, because at Lawrence you would have to cross the widest part of the river, and if the river were not crossed there it would be a most expensive thing to bring the line along the river bank up to Grafton.

232. So that, provided Grafton has to be touched, the route *via* Lawrence is out of the question? I consider that the Grafton-Casino proposal is a long way superior to any of the others.

233. With regard to the deviation to the west, at Myrtle Creek, in lieu of the line as originally surveyed from Myrtle Creek straight to Casino, which do you think is the better of those two lines? I am not sufficiently acquainted with the country to give an opinion; but unless there is some good engineering reason for making the deviation, I should say the line ought to go as originally proposed. Very likely, however, the latter route goes over flooded country.

234. You know the country pretty well between here and Casino? I do, from an ordinary layman's point of view; I have been over it frequently.

235. This statement has been put before us in evidence in Sydney: "The country between Grafton and Casino is generally of such a poor character that it will not carry a large population, and does not, in our opinion, justify the construction of the railway";—what do you think of that? I believe that is not correct. An occupier of land at Myrtle Creek will give evidence before this Committee to the effect that he is making a good living fattening cattle in country where he is running a beast to 5 or 7 acres. I refer to Mr. C. Henderson.

236. Is his an exceptionally good bit of land, or is it a fair specimen of the country along the proposed line of railway? It is fairly good country I should say.

237. From Grafton out about 15 miles there is some scattered population, but between there and Myrtle Creek there is very little population, as that country is out of the radius of settlement at the present time. This line of railway has been advocated from time to time mainly as forming portion of the Great North Coast line, but you seem to take the view that, apart from that altogether, it would be a paying concern? I do, for the reason, as I say, that the dairying industry here cannot expand much beyond its present limit, unless there are facilities for bringing the produce to these centres, and I believe the proposed line would do that better than any other means I know of, and there is a demand for dairy country. In illustration of what a railway will do, I might point out that along the Richmond, at Hanging Rock and Jiggi, there is some splendid rich country which I understand has been open for settlement for about six years, but it is just outside the influence of the dairy industry, and on that account, I do not think there is one selection on the whole of that land. This will explain to a certain extent why the country along the proposed line has not been taken up.

238. *Mr. Watson.*] Is the land to which you refer too far from the main river? It is too far away from the influence of a creamery.

239. Is it on the main river—the Richmond? No.

240. *Chairman.*] Both your evidence and that of Mr. See seem to point largely to the fact that the stretch of country between Grafton and Casino would be largely devoted to dairy-farming;—has the experience of people in the district who have gone in for dairy-farming for any length of time proved that it is a profitable and lasting industry? Yes.

241. Not a case of here to-day and gone to-morrow? No; I think if a practical farmer were here giving evidence—a man who has had experience in maize-growing, and who is now dairy-farming—he would say beyond all doubt that dairying was more certain and more profitable than maize-growing. That I believe to be the opinion of those who have had a good deal of experience in both kinds of farming. I do not rely upon the line only as a local line, but I consider it as a part of the North Coast railway, which should be built in sections.

David Baillie, grazier and dairyman, Stockyard Creek, near Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

D. Baillie.

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242. *Chairman.*] What are you? A grazier and dairyman, residing at Stockyard Creek, in the parish of Copmanhurst. That is about 15 miles north-west of Grafton by the road.

243. What extent of land do you occupy? 640 acres.

244. How long have you had it? Very nearly twenty years.

245. Will you describe the character of the land? I took it up at first principally for the few small flats around the creek, the grass land being very poor indeed, and of sandstone formation.

246. When you went there first what did you do;—did you plant the flat portion? Yes, for corn. I used it for maize-growing.

247. How long did you continue that? Until the dairying industry started, about four years ago.

248. And then, from the experience of others, did you go into dairying? Yes.

249. How many cows did you start with? That I could not say; we had a good many cattle. In October, two years and a half ago, we separated 26 gallons of milk a day, and last October we were putting through 80 gallons.

250. Then you have considerably increased your herd since you started? Yes.

251. How many cows have you at the present time? We are milking ninety. All told, there are about 150 head, including calves.

252. On the 640 acres? Yes.

D. Baillie.

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253. Have you given up the corn-growing? Yes, completely, except for the use of the house.
254. Do you know the country between Grafton and Casino, along and near the proposed line of railway? Yes, I know it fairly well. I travelled it thirty-two years ago, and I have travelled it frequently since.
255. How does that land compare with the land on which you are now living? It is superior land to the land I am living on, as grass land. The formation is different. It is basaltic, while mine is sandstone formation.
256. What is the formation of the land on the railway line? The soil is more of a clayey description—red soil. It is better grass land by far.
257. The grass will grow stronger and last longer? Yes; and it is much quicker in the spring. I have come from the Richmond in September, and there was a beautiful spring there, and on arriving on the uplands of the Clarence there was no spring whatever in the grass.
258. In regard to the land you last mentioned along the railway line, would it require much clearing to prepare it for cattle? No; a good portion of it is already prepared by Nature, though some of it is thickly timbered. It could be greatly improved.
259. The first expense of a settler taking up that land would be in fencing and paddocking? Yes; he would have to have small paddocks if he wanted to get the full benefit from the land. For instance, if you put thirty-three head of cattle on to 100 acres, you would divide that area into ten paddocks, and put the cattle in each of the paddocks for two days at a time. The cattle would then have fresh eating, and the grass would have the twenty days' growth before the cows would come back. In that way you would almost double the carrying capacity without any expense in improving the grass.
260. Where a settler took up a 640-acre block of that land what do you think he could afford to pay for it per acre so as to make his holding profitable? It is not so much the taking up of the land. When a man takes up land he must have a certain amount of capital. It is not the taking up of the land that is the difficulty; it is getting the capital required to go upon it.
261. What would the land be worth per acre to a man with enough money to fence and do a little paddocking? In some places it would be worth 30s., and in other places not so much. There is a difference along the line according to the character of the country. There are some beautiful black-soil flats on the creeks.
262. The great industry that seems likely to rise in this part of the country is dairying; would land for that purpose be worth from £1 to £1 10s. an acre? Yes; some of it is worth 30s.
263. Is any of it of less value than £1? Yes, there are portions that would not be worth £1; that is, for grazing; but then the timber would make up for that. Where it was heavily timbered it would take a man a long time before he would get grass.
264. Is it marketable timber? Yes; a good deal of it—iron-bark and spotted-gum.
265. As an old resident of the district, and one who is engaged in dairy-farming, do you think that with better communication this tract of country would be likely to be occupied by a dairy population? I do.
266. And you speak disinterestedly because your property is not situated on the line? Exactly; I have no interest whatever in the line.
267. Is the country fairly well watered? Yes.
268. By creeks, I suppose? Yes.
269. In regard to your experience of dairying, have you found it to be satisfactory? Very. I consider that by introducing proper grasses a family can make a living on almost any section of land in New South Wales unless it is barren rock.
270. Do you employ labour? No; my own family milk and separate, and we separate also for our neighbours who have since taken up land.
271. How far have you to cart your cream to a factory? Five miles, and then there is transit by water for 30 miles to the factory.
272. Is that an expensive item? I pay 6d. per can for the 30 miles.
273. What is the greatest distance that you think a dairy-farmer could cart his milk to a creamery, and his cream to a factory? Farmers do cart their milk 5 miles to a creamery; but to do that a man must have a good road, and not a bush track. The milk will carry right enough, but it is very hard upon the man who has to cart it.
274. With a good road you could go 5 miles? Yes.
275. And then to the factory? You could cart cream safely to a factory for 15 miles. I say that, from my experience on the Richmond. At Alstonville a large van lifts all the cream, and takes it into the central factory at Lismore, travelling a distance, I suppose, of nearly 20 miles. In reference to grasses, a new grass called *Paspalum dilatatum*, has been introduced on the Richmond, and I think it would succeed on the class of country between here and the Richmond. I have seen it growing on the model farm at Wollongbar. It does well on clay soil. It is a frost-resisting grass, being very rarely killed by the frost, and is a good winter grass. I have heard that the Government are now asking those who take up special areas of Crown lands to sow *Paspalum* seed. It is very much thought of by the Government. It is a good hardy grass, and will grow in any soil; but it does not do so well with us on sandy soil. On the low clayey flats, where I have sown it, it grows splendidly.
276. *Mr. Watson.*] Much better than the original grasses? Yes.
277. It grows more luxuriantly? Yes; it is splendid grass, and it should do well on the clay soil between here and the Richmond River. It will grow also on low lying-lands. I have seen it growing within a few feet of the bank of the river. There is another new grass called guinea grass. It is eminently suitable for our class of soil. It is the principal grass grown in the eastern portion of Jamaica, where there are 116,000 acres under it. We got some of it from the model farm at Wollongbar, and we have had it now for two years. It is a drought-resisting grass, and will grow on the poorest and the lightest soil. It will grow on the sea beach. I have it growing at my place as tall as myself. If a cow went into it for any distance you could not find it. I have only a small patch, and I am trying to save the seed in order to propagate the grass, and sow it largely on my holding. It grows 4 inches a day in favourable weather. The *Agricultural Gazette* says it grows 6 inches a day; but in my experience it grows 4 inches.
278. *Mr. McErlane.*] You said that the value of the land between Grafton and Casino was from £1 to 30s. per acre;—is that its present value? No; not as it now stands.
279. You are assuming that the railway would be constructed? Exactly. Without communication it is of no value to a settler.

- D. Baillie. 280. *Mr. Watson.*] On your showing we might expect to see dairy farms 20 miles from Grafton in the direction of Casino, even with the present facilities as regards transit. You say you can take the milk 5 miles to a creamery, and a maximum distance of 15 miles from the creamery to the factory. There being factories at Grafton, should we not see some evidence of the taking up of that second-class land within 20 miles of Grafton. Well, it amounts to this: I, as one man, might go and do that, but where am I to get my neighbours. If I were to settle down 20 miles away, my neighbours would only laugh at me. How am I to erect a creamery. The population is not there. There are no means of transit.
281. No one cares to chance it "on his own;" but if the railway were constructed there would, you think, be a gradual spread of population, which would result in the settlement of the country? Yes, for miles and miles. The cream is carted here now for 20 miles by enterprising men, who have their own separators.
282. That is on the richer land? They took the land up for cattle, and there may be a portion of good land on it.
283. Only a portion of good land? That is all.

WEDNESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers at Grafton, at 10'30 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. | JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Edward Ebsworth, District Surveyor, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- E. Ebsworth. 284. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What are you? District Surveyor for the Land Board District of Grafton.
285. How long have you occupied that position? Since October, 1895.
286. How far does your district extend? From Camden Haven, on the south, to the Queensland border, including the Tweed River. I hand in a map showing the Land Board District and the position of the proposed railway.
287. In what other parts of the Colony were you before coming to this district? I was Acting District Surveyor at Dubbo and at Forbes, and I have been engaged in a somewhat similar capacity in the Wagga district, besides which I had fifteen years' experience as a surveyor in the Metropolitan area.
288. From your long service and experience as a surveyor, I suppose you have a good knowledge of land values? I think so.
289. And are a competent judge of agricultural land and grazing land? Yes; my Department always look to me as an authority on land values in the district. I may mention I am also District Commissioner for Land Taxation, and, of course, have to deal with values right through the district.
290. You have done work in connection with the Land Taxation Department in regard to land values? Yes.
291. In your district? Yes; in the Land Board District, over the same area as I have to deal with for the Lands Department.
292. You are also connected with the Land Board? No, except that I furnish reports as required by the Land Act.
293. The Land Board are no doubt guided to a large extent by the nature of your report? A report is always furnished, and no doubt they are guided by the opinion of the District Surveyor, who is an expert officer.
294. If, for instance, they wished to know the value of land applied for under lease, they would take whatever valuation you should determine? They always look to me for a value in part evidence; but the Board fix the appraisement.
295. They would send to you for a valuation? Yes.
296. The proposed railway would for its whole length run through your district? Yes.
297. Have you a good knowledge of the country along the line? Yes. I have a very fair knowledge of it. My business has taken me over and about the whole of the land which would be affected by the proposed railway.
298. That, of course, means that you have a knowledge of it beyond merely travelling along the road? Yes, over the whole area that I expect will be affected. I propose to hand in a map showing the area which I consider will be affected. It shows by different colours the various classes of land with regard to tenure. The area coloured green is a reserve for the trial survey. The proposed route of the railway is shown by a broken red line from Casino to Grafton. The blueish-green colour all over the map represents reserves.
299. What class of reserve—reserves from sale owing to the railway? Yes, and for all other purposes. The lands coloured by a purple tint are alienated as freehold.
300. Free selections mostly, I suppose? No, freehold—principally, I think, auction sales in former times. The pink tint represents conditional purchases and conditional leases in process of alienation.
301. Is there any distinction between the conditional purchases and conditional leases? No; a distinction has not been made in that way, because we regard both as in process of alienation. A distinction has been made by a border of red, which represents homestead selection areas. The uncoloured parts of the map are Crown lands at present available for conditional purchase.
302. I see that some of these are along the route? There are a few; they were in existence before the reserve was proclaimed. For instance, the land at Camira station was alienated before the reserve was made. In connection with this map I will hand in a schedule giving the actual areas of these lands.
303. What distance from the line on either side? The distance varies from about 15 miles down to practically nothing at the Grafton end; and also at South Casino it tails off.
304. Does that apply to both sides? Yes; it embraces a distance of about 15 miles on both sides, except where approaching the terminal points.

305. Is that 15 miles continuous from a certain position at each end? It would be 15 miles back from Myrtle Creek on either side.

306. Between Myrtle Creek and Casino, what would be the average distance on each side of the line that would include these portions? I have made an estimate that it would apply right through the line to an average of about 10 miles on both sides. The figures are as follows:—

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SCHEDULE showing areas of different classes of country along proposed railway route, Casino to Grafton.

Classes.	Area	Remarks.
	acres.	
Alienations	93,106	Sold by auction, principally under the 1861 repealed Land Act; also by conversion of conditional purchases into freeholds.
In course of alienation	100,263	Consists of conditional purchases, conditional leases, and homestead selections.
Forest reserves	139,463	The forest reserves will be cancelled as they are cut out of marketable timber, and others be permanently substituted along the Richmond Range, where the finest growth of timber exists.
Railway reserves	23,885	Will be cancelled if railway is carried out, except area required for line and stations.
Other reserves	36,404	Will be largely reduced in the course of settlement, sufficient being retained for ultimate public requirements.
Available Crown lands ..	320,132	Not hitherto in demand except as pastoral holdings, owing to remoteness and want of market. A market has recently become available in the establishment of export butter and bacon factories in the towns.
Total	713,253	

307. With regard to the alienations referred to, of what class of country do they consist? The country alienated is undulating forest land generally, with water frontage and well grassed flats along the frontages.

308. Are most of these alienations at the Casino or Grafton end of the proposed line? At the Casino end.

309. Do they extend right across, in patches—I do not mean continuously? No; they only come out as far as Myrtle Creek from the Casino end—about 20 miles from Casino.

310. There is very little alienation between Myrtle Creek and Grafton? There is very little alienation and very little settlement until you get within 10 miles of Grafton.

311. Is there much settlement between that 10-mile point and, say, the boundary of the town? No, there is not much until you get within 5 miles of the river itself.

312. Have you noticed what these lands have been taken up for—whether for agricultural or for dairy purposes? The land in nearly all cases has been taken up for grazing purposes.

313. That means, of course, principally for dairying? No, not for dairying; they were taken up before any dairying came into the district.

314. I do not mean what they were taken up for in the first instance; but what is the present occupation of those on the holdings? They are now in the act of becoming dairymen; they are changing from cattle-raisers to dairy farmers.

315. Is there any cultivation land on the alienated portion? Yes; there is cultivation land all along the watercourses; but hitherto little of it has been used, because the holders have simply relied upon rearing cattle for sale. They do not at the present time grow much agricultural produce.

316. Not for the market? No, very little.

317. Though, in your opinion, the land in many cases is suitable for agriculture? It is eminently suitable along all the watercourses, and in many other parts, too.

318. Does that apply to the land you describe as in course of alienation? Yes, to both.

319. What class of country is comprised in the forest reserves? The forest reserves comprise generally pretty thickly-timbered country—iron-bark and spotted-gum, mainly.

320. Is it good timber country? Within the forest reserves it is.

321. Is the timber there in large quantities;—is there much iron-bark? Fairly large quantities. Of course, these reserves have been drawn upon for market purposes for very many years.

322. The Government getting no royalties, I suppose? Yes, royalties are paid. The timber is now getting thinned out nearest to access by water, and so forth; but with regard to the timber more remotely situated, the cost of carriage is too great to enable the timber to be profitably removed.

323. That saves the timber;—there is more timber, consequently, in those parts? Yes.

324. Is that land heavily timbered;—would there be any large quantity of marketable timber if there were proper facilities to convey it to the nearest port? Perhaps I might answer your question by pointing out the different main forest reserves. There is a large forest reserve in the parish of Richmond, south of the Richmond Range, and east of the line—reserve 1,101. That contains a large quantity of fine timber, including iron-bark and spotted-gum.

325. Is there much iron-bark? Yes, there is still a considerable quantity of iron-bark there suitable for market, for mill purposes, and for piles and girders.

326. That is the most valuable hardwood timber we have? It is in this particular district.

327. And the other principal variety is spotted gum? Yes. That is a marketable timber, and is largely used. There are a number of forest reserves partly included within the railway reserve about the parishes of Myrtle, Powerpa, and Dark. The forest reserves included within the railway reserve contain marketable timber, but not in any great quantity.

328. What is the reason of that;—has the timber been cut? No; but it grows more open and thinner. The best timber grows on the ridgy land, and it is flat where these reserves are. They have been reserved principally to afford the State royalty, and to prevent the timber from being exploited indiscriminately. These forest reserves within the railway reserve will be cut out and abolished.

329. After the removal of the timber, would the land in these reserves be of a character fit for settlement—fit for grazing? Yes; it would be fit for dairy settlement.

330. Do you know anything about the timber trade of the district? There is a considerable trade in timber done with the Clarence River, and much of the timber is gone from the timber reserves nearest to the river, within the area shown on the map.

- E. Ebsworth. 331. Was that timber cut for export? Yes; and also for local consumption. There are several mills constantly engaged on the river.
- 28 Feb., 1900. 332. In the event of railway construction, do you think the line will be utilised to any large extent for the purpose of conveying this timber to port, either at the Richmond River end or at Grafton? Yes; it would be the means of opening up a very large area of timber that we cannot now get at.
333. *Mr. Watson.*] Would that be mostly about the Richmond Range? Yes.
334. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You have referred to the character of the timber on the forest reserves;—I should like information about the timber on the unalienated land other than forest reserves? The unalienated land is generally what is called open forest land. The trees are not growing so thick that you would call it good forest land, as forest land. It is generally open forest land.
335. The timber is more scattered? Yes; and the grass, of course, is more plentiful. In dense forest country, such as that in these large timber reserves, you see no grass, because the timber is too dense, and there is not enough light.
336. Do the timber reserves include the best forests along the line? Yes.
337. Speaking generally of the unalienated land, could a large quantity of timber be taken for export purposes and local requirements? Yes; the timber, though scattered in open forest on the unalienated land, is frequently of excellent quality.
338. What description? Iron-bark and spotted-gum.
339. Would the unalienated land, speaking generally, be suitable for dairying purposes or agricultural purposes? In my opinion it would be well suited for dairy purposes. Except near Grafton and Casino, and a little at Myrtle Creek, it has not been tried for dairy purposes since the factories started.
340. What is the reason of that;—is it because there are no facilities for conveying the produce? It is partly on that account, because you must have creameries close at hand for dairy purposes—within 3 or 4, or, at the outside, about 5 miles. But hitherto there has been no demand for the land, because there has been no dairying here until quite recently, and there is no other purpose for which it was considered the land could be profitably used.
341. If facilities were given, in the shape of railway construction, is it your opinion that this land would be taken up for settlement? Yes; I am of opinion that it would then be taken up right through, and it would be all taken up.
342. What is the present value of the unalienated land? The present value of the land, in bulk right through, and apart from dairying, taking only the present use of rearing cattle, I should reckon, in its raw unimproved state, at about 15s. per acre over the whole area.
343. What do you think would be its value in the event of railway construction? I estimate an average value right through of about 22s. 6d. per acre.
344. That is an increased value of 7s. 6d. an acre. Yes. I may explain that in that average there will, of course, be portions near the railway, if constructed, that would go considerably higher.
345. You mean that, taking the unalienated land as a whole, there would be an increase of value to the extent of 7s. 6d. per acre? Yes.
346. Could you give us some indication of the quality of the land along different parts of the line? Hitherto there has been no demand, because dairying has only just got a hold here. The starting of the factory at Grafton, by supplying a permanent market, has altered the whole face of the industry, and it has been the same at Lismore and right down the coast to Port Macquarie. Factories are now established at all the main towns—Murwillumbah, Byron Bay, Lismore, Casino, Grafton, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, and Bellingen. It is only within the last four years that we have had these markets. At Lismore they were rather before the others, and have had a factory, I suppose, for six years. They are just getting into it here. The first use made of the factories on this river was by stocking-up the lands already occupied for cane-growing and maize-growing—that is, the portions of the farms lying fallow and not in use. It has taken about four years to fill up the river flats with dairy cattle, and the time has now arrived when, for the extension of the industry, resort must be made to other classes of land.
347. There is no more rich agricultural land available—that is, possessing any convenience? No. I would refer the Committee to a map of the county of Clarence, which shows the rich alienated land along the Clarence River, and, generally, where settlement along the Clarence River at present exists. The alienations, as a general rule, cover fertile alluvial lands. Since the establishment of the central factories on the Clarence it has taken up to the present time about four years to stock-up the river. People at first did not seem to care about dairying. They knew it was paying well at Lismore; but they had been cane-growing all their lives, and did not seem to care about going in for dairying.
348. They have changed their opinion now? They have. It has made an immense increase to the wealth of the district.
349. There is a strong tendency now to increase dairy properties? Yes; in fact it is a certainty that the whole of the coast districts, from the Manning right north to the border, will be dairy country.
350. You consider it suitable country? Yes, though different characters of soil are included.
351. Coming back more particularly to the route of the proposed railway, what area of land would there be, if any, unfit for grazing purposes? None whatever.
352. You think it would all be alienated shortly after the construction of the railway? It is all fit for alienation; but it would not be all alienated immediately, because we should have to deal with those forest reserves rather tenderly. The timber is too valuable to be sacrificed by being allowed to be merely cut down and ringbarked.
353. You think that timber is worth more than the 22s. 6d. per acre which you put down as the value of the land? Certainly.
354. So that some time would have to be allowed for the removal of the timber cut under royalty, and at the expiration of that time the land would be thrown open for settlement? Yes. The forest lands on the coast are so valuable to the whole Colony that they have to be treated with the greatest care. As these reserves become cut out, and parts of them are given up for settlement, we shall certainly substitute an equal, or, perhaps, a greater area of forest reserve elsewhere, and what we substitute will be a permanent forest reserve for all time. Where they will be substituted will be along the Richmond Range and in parts unfit for settlement.
355. How far would these proposed forest reserves be situated from the railway? From 15 miles to about 8 miles, following the range along. It will pay to cart hardwood timber up to a distance of about 15 miles, but it will not pay to take it 30 or 40 miles, except for special orders. 356.

356. These permanent reserves no doubt will be fully timbered? They are fully timbered, carrying some of the finest timber on the coast. E. Ebsworth.
357. And when the timber is removed from the existing forest reserves it will be, in your opinion, not too far to draw timber from the permanent reserves to some point on the proposed railway line? No; the proposed reserves would have been tapped now on account of the excellence of the timber were they not at present too far to haul from. 28 Feb., 1900.
358. That would add materially to the traffic on the railway in conveying this timber to market? Yes; it would be a permanent item of carriage to the railway. I presume the same thing would take effect here that has occurred on the Lismore-Tweed line. There mills have been established at various points along the line, and teams draw the timber in for the sawmills at the railway stations.
359. Does it seem to pay those engaged in the timber trade to use the railway for conveying the timber in that way? Yes, it appears to do so. The railway carries the logs, and also the planks and sawn timber, to the local market at Lismore and other places along the line, as well as to Byron Bay for shipment.
360. Taking the country between Grafton and Casino, embracing the area you have mentioned on each side of the line, how would it compare, in regard to timber, with a similar area on each side of the line between Lismore and the Tweed? On the Grafton to Casino line the timber is all hardwood, of an excellent quality, including spotted-gum and iron-bark. Some of the finest ironbark produced in New South Wales comes from the part of the Richmond Range at present accessible. On the Lismore-Tweed line, the country produces principally softwood timber, special trees that are picked out individually from the scrub, such as beech and teak.
361. Ironbark is principally used for railway sleepers? The ironbark from this district is used for a better purpose than that; it is used for the long bridge girders that are required all over the Colony, and also for export to New Zealand and other places.
362. But I wish particularly to know if the ironbark you speak of is not of the best quality, and if that timber is not principally used for railway sleepers? Yes; it is preferred for railway sleepers.
363. In connection with the construction of the proposed line, ironbark would be largely used for girders in any ordinary bridge work that might take place? I should think so, because there are no very large water-courses to cross. The streams are of small span, and it is a common practice to use iron-bark in bridge construction instead of iron for short spans.
364. In constructing the line, would it not be a consideration to have so much timber so close to the line? I should think so.
365. Would it not mean that the railway could be constructed at a cheaper rate compared with other districts where they have to carry the timber 300 miles? Certainly. There should be enough iron-bark within the railway reserve itself to make all the sleepers, and to provide all the girders—certainly as to quantity; but whether the quality of the timber within the actual reserves would be good enough for girders I would not like to say. The timber, however, could certainly be cut off the main forest reserves, quite handy and adjacent.
366. With regard to the railway reserves, comprising 23,885 acres, mentioned in the return you put in, could you give us some information concerning the character of that land? From Grafton to Myrtle Creek the land is generally of a sandy character, undulating forest ridges, partly openly timbered and partly thickly timbered with spotted-gum, iron-bark, and oak.
367. Is this land specially suitable for settlement? It is, for dairy-farming.
368. Were these reserves made for any special reason? They were made to protect the original survey of the railway line. Beyond the Myrtle Creek, on towards Casino, the land is more of a clayey nature, forest ridges; also partly open forest country, and partly dense forest. The country is well watered by flowing streams, chains of waterholes, and swamps. The water is of good quality. As you pass along the railway route you do not see the best land within the area that would be influenced by a railway.
369. Can you point out where the best land is? I can state pretty safely that the surveyed line passes through about the worst of the whole of the land.
370. How far would the best land be from the line? The best of the land lies on either side, and includes the alienated land, also the unalienated land on either side outside of the reserve; and near Grafton the same remark applies.
371. Can you give any reason for that;—would it be on account of the road taking the cap of the ridge? Partly that. When I say it is about the worst land, of course the worst is close to the actual main road or the railway line, which follow one another closely. I attribute it partly to the traffic along the road—to the soil being worn off the top, and so forth. Still there is a difference. You get a distinctly better class of country a mile or two away from the road on either side than you do along the main road.
372. Will you tell us the reason for making these railway reserves? It was in accordance with the 1884 Land Act, which provided that in trial surveys 1 mile on each side of the line was to be reserved with a view to giving the country the increment in value likely to arise from the construction of the railway.
373. Would you place the same value on this land as the value you placed on the land before, in regard to its present worth, and what it would be worth in the event of the railway being constructed? Along the railway line, my estimate of 22s. 6d. as the additional value would be largely increased, because we might expect that there would be several villages or townships along the road. As some suburban land would come in, I could not exactly say what the increased value would be. We sell no land in suburban areas under £2 10s. an acre, and anywhere near a railway station we might expect a smaller class of settlement. For instance, the men who have employment in the forests like to have small holdings within a convenient distance, and so forth. For such lands along the railways we can generally get from £3 to £4 an acre—that is, for picked pieces.
374. You think that putting all these reserves together the increased value would far exceed 7s. 6d. per acre? Yes; along the railway reserve itself. You can safely put the value of that land down at from 30s. to £2, though that is a rough estimate, because it is all prospective.
375. You told us just now that you had been in different districts of the Colony—Dubbo, Forbes, Wagga, and the Metropolitan area? Yes.
376. I suppose you have a fair knowledge of the country along the Western line? Yes; I have a fair knowledge of the country from Dubbo to Nyngan, and across from Warren to Coonamble. It is all pastoral country there.
377. How does the country along this proposed line compare with the country in the district you have just mentioned? As regards Crown lands there is no comparison. For instance, the land along the Castlereagh River and about Coonamble is very superior land. 378.

E. Ebsworth. 378. I am speaking generally with regard to the different districts along the Western line? It is a little difficult to make a close comparison, because you cannot grow wheat here, for instance, and that is the one thing they can grow there; the climate suits it. The soil along the proposed route, I should say, is equal to a great part of the land between Dubbo and Nyngan. Here we have no alluvial land; it is all undulating and hilly land.

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379. How would it do for fruit-growing? It would do very well indeed, but there is no market. The hilly lands, except the lower swampy parts, are suitable for fruit-growing.

380. At present you do not think it would be profitable to enter into the fruit industry to a very large extent, although the land is capable of fruit production? Yes, the land is eminently suited for fruit production. Wherever fruit-trees and vines have been grown around the homesteads they have done splendidly. But I put that out of the question, because we have no local market for anything of the kind. Under Federation it would be different, because we should have the two big markets of Sydney and Melbourne. I may say that I have not declared any of this Crown land to be agricultural land, but on a free selection of, say, 640 acres, there will always be a fair proportion of what even the Clarence farmers would call land fit for agriculture; and what a Clarence farmer says is fit for agriculture must be something very good—rich alluvial—or else, in his opinion, it will not grow anything.

381. Taking the general average of the land along this line, how many acres do you consider would be sufficient to keep the family of an ordinary settler? Taking it in the gross, and leaving out such things as small special areas along the railway line, and treating the whole area as dairy country, I estimate the area at from 500 to 640 acres. I should myself not hesitate to cut the land up into average blocks of 500 acres to a family.

382. You think that would be ample to maintain a family? Yes. I can give you proof of that I think. I estimate that when this land was ringbarked its grazing capacity, under dairy conditions, would be 5 acres to a cow, and it seems to me the whole thing hinges on that. That estimate, I have reason to believe, is a fair, and even liberal one. Of course I do not speak of the country in a raw state.

383. When you say a liberal estimate, I suppose you mean it might carry more cattle than a cow to 5 acres? Yes; if I put it from 4 to 4½ acres it would be nearer the proper average—that is, on ringbarked land. With the dairy system of small paddocks and winter fodder crop growing, on 500 acres, a man could keep 100 cows. If eighty of those are in milk, which is a frequent case, the produce is sufficient to keep a family in affluence. From a farm of that size the return from milk alone would be somewhere about £400 a year, besides the return from pigs and calves.

384. You said just now you could give some proof;—have you any figures? The best proof of all, I think, is given by the owner of Woorooloolgan, Mr. Griffiths. He has had to deal with this land for the last thirty years. His sworn evidence before a former Committee was that these lands in the gross or bulk, when ringbarked, would carry a beast to from 4 to 5 acres. That evidence will be found on page 18 of the Report.

385. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know whether the squatters who held the land prior to the areas being resumed under the Act of 1884 ringbarked prior to that date? They did on their purchased land. The whole of the Crown lands are in an unimproved state right through the district.

386. You referred to Mr. Griffiths; I notice from the evidence he gave in 1889 he said that the greater part of the land between Casino and Grafton was exceedingly poor? Yes; he did say so. It is poor, relatively, in his opinion, because he got hold of the very best land along the flats.

387. When giving evidence on the Grafton to the Tweed railway, before the Public Works Committee, in Sydney, in November, 1889, Mr. Griffiths said:—

Our experience of the Woorooloolgan estate, which has been owned by my father and his partners since it was first taken up, in 1842, has been that we have carefully analysed the quantity of stock carried on the run, and we find, including the good country, that it has taken nearly 40 acres per beast all through.

—? That is not on ringbarked, but raw country—dense timber, where little grass is eatable, from insufficient sunlight.

388. But it would appear from the map that Woorooloolgan is pretty close to the Richmond River? Yes; it goes right back to Myrtle Creek from the Richmond River.

389. Could that station be taken as a fair sample of the general run of country through which the line would go? Yes; the back part could.

390. The back part would be the dairy part? Yes.

391. Towards the river the station would improve? Yes; with rich black alluvial flats.

392. It would appear that Mr. Griffiths included the rich black flats in his estimated carrying capacity of the run? I think not.

393. He states that the rich flats will carry one head of cattle to 2 or 2½ acres, and he says, "and taking the gross and large areas, we can calculate upon running a piece of ringbarked country of 4 or 5 acres to the beast"? The land is only relatively poor. Such land as he calls poor corresponds with that in Central Cumberland. From Campbelltown to Mulgoa the country is exactly the same as the great bulk of this country.

394. Do you know of any instances where men have taken up for dairy purposes within a reasonable distance of the town areas of this second-class land, as we might term it? No, not taken it up; they happen to have it, and they have turned into dairymen. You had the evidence yesterday of Mr. Baillic, and his is a typical case.

395. He has, it appears, some good land which helps his poorer land? Yes; he has flats on the river, but they are very small, and enable him only to grow feed for his dairy cows.

396. In designing holdings along this line, would you be able to give each man a little cultivation land? Yes; we always do that.

397. So that there would not be one unvarying quality over a great area? No.

398. Where the land has a clayey soil, do you think that is good grass growing country? Yes; it is when ringbarked, and more particularly when grasses other than native ones are sown. There is a grass here which has come largely into vogue during the last two years known as *Paspalum dilatatum*. That is the best grass for planting on clayey land. There are other grasses suitable for sandy soil, which as a rule, are better than the native grasses.

399. Will *paspalum* hold right through the winter? Yes, in this climate. We have very little frost here.

400. And there is a good rainfall, which would have some influence? Yes; the rainfall is about 36 inches in Grafton, and about 40 in Casino.

401. Would the average be higher as you approach the Richmond range? Yes; I think it would be about 50 inches almost all round the range. This country when ringbarked grows grass prolifically; but a squatter like Mr. Griffiths, who has his rich river flats, is never able to stock the back country so as to keep the rank growth of grass down, and the native grasses that grow are only succulent and good while they are young. When they grow up a foot or 18 inches high no animal will eat them. So that the country requires to be kept fully stocked, so as to keep the grass within moderate limits, and get the real benefit out of it. A dairyman does that, whereas a squatter, on the scale of Mr. Griffiths, does not.
402. It would seem that there is some Crown lands of this second quality within a reasonable distance of the town of Grafton—in the parish of Clifton, for instance? Yes.
403. That is available at the present time, I suppose? Yes.
404. Can you say why that has not been taken up? Only that they have not got the stock yet to occupy it. It is only just along the river fringes that people have sufficient stock yet to occupy land with dairy cows. It takes some time to rear a dairy herd, and the factories have only been here a comparatively short time.
405. There is a portion of this land in the parish of Clifton that is within the 12-mile limit from Grafton? Yes.
406. It seems rather remarkable that, if land is fairly suitable for dairying, and if a number of people are coming to the district looking for land on which to start dairying, they have not taken advantage of that Crown land? We do not get people coming here to look for dairying Crown land—not at present. They have been attracted north, to Lismore, along the railway to the Tweed.
407. We were told yesterday that inquiries were made here for land by strangers? At the Lands Office we have inquiries frequently for pieces of land along the surveyed route—reserves and water-courses, and so on; but, of course, the land is reserved at present. The only thing I can say about that Crown land near Grafton is, that hitherto such land has not been in request, but it is just beginning to be so. As a matter of fact, you have to ringbark, and that takes a year or so before you can get it into use. If people coming here can rent farms on the river, and turn their cows on the land immediately, and get a return from the creamery at once, they prefer to do that, and there have not yet been, as far as I am aware, many inquiries here for Crown land.
408. With regard to the land in the parish of Clifton, within the 12 miles radius from Grafton, is that open forest, or heavily-timbered land? It is open forest.
409. In that case a man taking it up would, while the trees were dying after ringbarking, get a fair amount of grass from it, with a climate and rainfall like this? Yes; no doubt he would. This particular land you speak of, I know, is suitable for dairying. It is a very fair piece of grass land; but the people originally on the river have shown no inclination to go out, except just where they touch the fringe. Those who have actual frontage on the river show no disposition at all to leave their farms to acquire other lands by conditional purchase from the Crown.
410. In the parish of Lawrence, again, we find a large area of Crown lands; is that similar country to what we have been considering? Yes. It is rather more heavily timbered. In its natural state it is hardly grass country at all, because it is heavily timbered with spotted gum.
411. More capital, then, would be required to take it up? Yes, to get it into order. It would cost about £1 an acre to do the improvements—ringbarking, and suckering afterwards.
412. What is usually charged here for ringbarking land like that? About 1s. to 1s. 6d. an acre; but with the suckering afterwards the cost may run into 7s. or 8s.—probably about 10s. an acre before you got rid of your suckers.
413. But what would be the cost, say, in the open forest land in the parish of Clifton? I think 3s. 6d. or 4s. an acre would clear everything out of that.
414. *Chairman.*] So far the evidence has been with regard to what would happen if the railway were constructed;—can you give us some practical item which would show that a line between these two places would bring in a large revenue? My estimate being 500 acres to a family, the principal item of traffic in connection with settlement would be the carriage of cream and passengers, and also of goods and stores in return.
415. Do you think there would be an interchange of commodities between Grafton and Casino? I think there would be very little, because both produce the same thing; but the railway, I take it, would open up this country for settlement, and be a feeder to the rivers, as any railway along the North Coast would feed the different rivers.
416. Then what you look to mainly to support the railway is the future settlement of people along the line? Yes; I think the time is at hand now, because there are indications of land being taken up away from the river. A few men like Mr. Baillie have begun to find out that you can profitably use these lands; the generally conceived idea up to the present time has been that they could not be so. Of course, you know that a railway by giving access does give a large expansion to settlement. I can show you that in the case of the Lismore line.
417. Suppose a settler took up 640 acres of this land between Grafton and Casino, what would it cost him to start operations as a dairy farmer;—to begin with, what would be his deposit? Assuming that he were located where the value of the land would be £1 an acre—a little away from a railway station, for instance, and where the value would not be influenced by position—he would have to pay at the rate of 2s. per acre deposit. That would cover three years. Then there would be the survey fee, about £11, which would make a total of £75.
418. Then he has to put up his house, which would cost him, say, £25;—what would it cost him to fence? He would require about 5 miles of fencing, which would cost him about £250.
419. What capital would he want to make a start with? They often start with eight or ten cows; but a man capable of taking up 640 acres would probably start with twenty or twenty-five cows. Probably he would have to give £6 a head, and you can put this item down at £100 at a low estimate.
420. He would want to purchase some farming implements, and you might put that down at £10; these items tot up to about £160; in round figures, I suppose, a man to begin in a small way would want about £500? In a small way he would want some capital. If a man goes into dairy-farming on a considerable scale with 640 acres, at the beginning he must have about that amount in capital. The class of men coming up into this Land Board District from the south coast have capital—they bring their own cows, which are capital. They are able to earn an income at once. They get on to rented land, and as long as they have grass to give their cows they get a return from the creamery at the end of the month.

- E. Ebsworth. 421. Have the class of settlers who have started here, and who are now prospering, been men of large capital or small capital? They are men who have been located on the river and who have taken to dairying as an adjunct. But in the case of Lismore, where South Coast men have been coming up, they frequently come with a capital of £700 or £800, and perhaps twenty or thirty cows, and they rent land because there is no grass on country there in its natural state.
422. I suppose it will be admitted that to start dairying a man does require some amount of capital? But there is room for small men all the same. Working on the share system is a common practice in the dairying districts, where a man has no capital. The family of children do the milking, and the landlord, in some cases, provides both capital and land. They have other arrangements, but the usual practice is to share, half and half, so that a man without any capital can come in and get half the profits from a dairy by doing the labour. That is, where the land is all in order, with milking yards, house, and everything.
423. But that applies to places already settled;—we are looking forward to settlement coming on? Cheaper than the ordinary conditional purchase there is another method of alienation, and that is by homestead selection, which suits a man with small capital, because he has not to purchase the freehold or to make compulsory improvements. He puts on just what suits him as he gets along.
424. Do you know of many instances, either here or between Lismore and Murwillumbah, of places being taken up on the share system? It is adapted in places between Lismore and Byron Bay. Many Sydney people took up land when the line was laid out. Taking a block of 640 acres, at the lowest estimate of £6 an acre, it would require a capital of £3,840 to clear, grass, and fence the land. Instead of that being done, the land in many cases was let on clearing leases; and, now that those clearing leases have fallen in, the land is being re-let at 10s. an acre to ordinary tenants, or worked on the share system. Both systems are in common use there. About Casino the share system is in vogue, as elsewhere. They have started it away up in the squatting district, in the north of Casino, where the landlord finds both cattle and land. That enables a man to save money, and eventually to work into a place of his own.
425. Is there anything else that occurs to you? The map I produce shows Grafton and the route of the railway line through the town. The terminal point of the survey is on the river bank opposite the end of Susan Island. Although I believe it is above flood-level there, yet I wish to point out that if the line were raised by embankment, it would be an additional safeguard to the town, which at present is in danger of being entirely flooded. With regard to the Crown land in the parish of Lawrence, shown on the map, it is being subdivided for homestead selection at the present time in areas of from 100 up to about 320 acres.
426. What approximate capital value has been placed on it? From £1 up to £2 10s. an acre.
427. Have you every reason to believe it will be taken up? I am certain it will be taken up.
428. People would not take it up as ordinary conditional purchase land, apparently? No. The reason was because I had it specially reserved for homestead selections.
429. With regard to the Crown land in the parish of Clifton, which has been referred to, are there any roads of access provided through that land? No, it is open. I myself am astonished that that land has not yet gone off. I think the explanation is that people have not yet got their farms stocked up, and do not want any more land about there at the present time. There is very fair grass land on parts of it, quite capable of making dairy farms, and it will go, there is no doubt. Whether this railway is made now or not, it is my intention to do exactly the same as has been done at Lawrence, and set apart this land at Clifton for homestead selection, and all other vacant parishes right out, because dairying has got a hold at Myrtle Creek, nearly halfway out, or 20 miles out from Casino, in the direction of Grafton.
430. So that you think that, even if the line is not constructed, a certain proportion of this land will be taken up under the new form of settlement? Yes, it will go gradually. If it were known that a railway was to be constructed, in two or three years there would scarcely be an acre of that land left, judging from what occurred at Lismore in regard to the spread of dairying. My difficulty, hitherto, has been to get the railway reserve cancelled. I estimate that about 6,000 people would settle here on dairy farms within two or three years, if the railway were started.

Angus McSwan, farmer, Woodford Island, near Lawrence, sworn, and examined:—

- A. McSwan. 431. *Chairman.*] Are you acquainted with the character of the country between Grafton and Casino? I am.
432. Were you in the room when Mr. Ebsworth gave evidence? I heard part of his evidence.
- 28 Feb., 1900. 433. He described the country as far as the Richmond Range as being of a somewhat sandy character, and further on towards Casino as of a more clayey nature;—is that so? Yes, along the road; but away from the road it is of a superior character to that; there are some black, loamy flats.
434. But along the line of road for, say, a mile on either side, it is not very attractive in appearance? No, it is not.
435. Does it improve on either side? Yes; the worst of the land is just along the road.
436. Is it fairly good along the whole length of the line between here and Casino? Yes, parts of it.
437. What do you think it is suitable for? It is capable of growing maize in some parts, also wheat, oats, barley, beans, and potatoes—that is, on the flats.
438. But the flats are only small in area in proportion to the rest? There are some miles of flats between Gibberagee and Coraki. I have been through the whole of that country, and taken particular notice.
439. The class of cultivation which you have just described is what the whole of that country is most suitable for? Yes; I do not think it is suitable for sugar-cane.
440. Is it suitable for grazing stock? Yes, for dairy purposes.
441. Have you had any experience in dairying? I have.
442. On your own land? Yes, on my own land here; and I have properties on the Brunswick.
443. How does that land compare with this in regard to its suitability for dairying? Of course, the brush-land is superior to any other land, but there are good rich flats along the route I have mentioned. There are large tracts of such land well watered.
444. If you had not your own property at the present time, would you like to take up 500 or 600 acres here to get a living on it? Yes; I would, with the greatest of pleasure.
445. What would you do with it? I would go in for dairying on a small scale first, and farming combined. I would grow various kinds of crops.
446. What area do you think a family would want to live on there? It would all depend on the place you selected. With a very rich flat you would not require so much land; but a man might take up a portion of a flat and some ridges that would not be so rich.
- 447.

447. But take the average of the land? A man could live with his family on 320 acres.
448. How many cows could he keep on that area? I consider he could keep one cow to about 5 acres. If it were improved and ringbarked he could feed more stock on it. That is by putting it under artificial grasses.
449. When it was cleared and improved, what would it carry? I think 3 acres would carry a beast easily.
450. Is most of the land around Grafton alienated—I mean the river flats and the rich land? Yes.
451. Do you look upon this land to the north of Grafton as an outlet for a dairying population? Yes, I do; that is, providing they have the means of access to market. Under present conditions there would be some difficulty in the way. But the country between Lawrence and Coraki is hardly known. It is only a bye-track; at the same time there is a lot of valuable land on it.
452. Does it not seem rather surprising that more land has not been taken up, say, within 10 miles north of Grafton on the proposed line of railway? The whole of the land between Grafton and what is called the Cross Roads is taken up.
453. Is that being settled upon and improved? Yes; most of it.
454. Most of it for dairying? Well, dairying is only a new industry in this district, and it is only lately that it has come to be known as a profitable industry. It is extending by degrees away out to the north.
455. *Mr. McFurlane.*] How long have you been engaged in farming pursuits on the Clarence? I selected on this river in 1862.
456. Have you been farming ever since? Farming and grazing combined.
457. With that number of years experience you should be a fair judge of agricultural and grazing land? You would think so.
458. In your opinion, what is the character of the land along the proposed railway line as regards settlement;—is it land that would carry a fair population? It would not carry a very heavy population—not the same as the river banks; but it would carry a fair population.
459. Would most of the land along the line, of which you have a knowledge, be free-selected or leased, if railway facilities were provided? I believe a good living could be made on it.
460. You believe it would be taken up? Yes; I believe so.
461. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the land behind Lawrence? I do.
462. There are some Crown lands there;—of what class are those lands? When you get up past Telemorgan, the country chiefly consists of large open flats.
463. Do you think that would be suitable for dairying? I do.
464. Is it taken up? Very little of it.
465. How do you account for that? Chiefly by the fact that dairying is a new industry in this locality. Formerly people went in more for agriculture. Now they find that dairying is a payable industry, and a great many have taken up a lot of country for winter purposes, for which it is very suitable.
466. Do you think that the land near Lawrence is as good as the general run of land through which the railway would pass between Grafton and Casino? Yes; within 5 miles of Lawrence. The land improves all the way to Coraki.

A. McSwan
28 Feb., 1900.

Cornelius Duggan, butcher and grazier, near Clifton, sworn, and examined:—

467. *Chairman.*] Where is your holding? Parish of Clifton, about 10 miles to the north of Grafton and on the proposed line.
468. Of how many acres does it consist? 640 acres; it was taken up as a selection in 1884.
469. What is the character of the land? The land is only fair. It is a sandy, alluvial deposit with clay bottom.
470. Is it watered by creeks? There are some water-courses. It is heavily timbered with ironbark, bloodwood, mahogany, and blackbutt.
471. Have you cleared it much since you have had it? Yes; I have both rung and cleared it. There are about 160 acres pretty well cleared, and about 40 acres I have brought under cultivation.
472. Is the balance ringbarked? Yes. I do not say it is wholly ringbarked. I have not destroyed any of the valuable timber.
473. What do you grow on the portion you have cultivated? I am not a farmer, and what I have grown has been more for experimental purposes than for anything else, except hay which I have grown for my own consumption. I get 2 tons of hay per acre; that is the lowest. It is oaten hay. Of green crops such as rye-corn, I get a yield of from 2½ to 3 tons per acre. Tares grow very well. I have grown from 30 to 35 cwt. of corn per acre. Cow peas I grow for green manuring. I got a packet some years ago from the Agricultural Department, and out of that packet only two seeds germinated, and in the third year I had a yield of 48 bushels as the product of the two grains that germinated. The cow pea as a fertiliser is excellent.
474. Does it grow luxuriantly? Yes. The first year the yield was not very large. By turning over the land and sweetening it it improves, either for agricultural or grazing purposes, to a remarkable extent. I may say that clovers do fairly well, and in a moist season very well. Grapes do remarkably well, and especially the Isabella. Potatoes I have only tried on two occasions. On the first occasion the yield was not very profitable, the season being very dry; but on the second occasion, from about 1½ cwt. of seed I had a yield of about 1½ ton. All that were not considered marketable were put into a 70 lb. sugar bag. Certainly it was a very favourable year. I would recommend green manuring as a factor in improving the condition of the land. This class of land is deficient in humus, and the more green soil you put into it the more it is improved. Anything that comes off the land in the shape of weeds I usually have placed in a pit for manure, and refuse from slaughter-yards and stables is also used by me as a manuring agent. After three years, I found a remarkable improvement in the condition of the land, with regard to grazing, as the result of ringbarking. I think the land is capable of carrying a beast to 5 acres, and keeping the cattle in fairly good condition.
475. Is that what you actually carry? Yes; as nearly as I can possibly say. I have no necessity to have any more—only fat cattle and sheep.
476. How many cattle have you on that land? I have fifty or sixty to-day, including milkers and working horses, and spare horses.
477. Do you use the milkers for sending milk to the creamery? No; only for the use of the place. I am not living on it at present, but I lived on it for ten years until the last year and a half.
478. You work it in conjunction with your town business? Yes. I grow hay, principally.
479. You employ labour to till the land and plant it? Yes. I do not understand anything about cultivation myself.

C. Duggan.
28 Feb., 1900.

- C. Duggan. 480. Your property being along the proposed line of railway, how does it compare with other land in the direction? There is infinitely better land between my place and Casino. I simply took up this property as an acquisition to my business, and not as being a suitable property.
- 28 Feb., 1900. 481. There is any quantity of land as good as, and better than, yours, between here and Casino? Certainly; some considerably better. I have travelled a good deal over that country, bringing cattle and sheep from the Richmond. I have on three occasions brought sheep in that direction from Queensland. It is a long way to travel, and I think the trade would be increased by railway communication with Lismore—the trade in sheep, and probably the passenger traffic would be increased by butchers and others going over to purchase cattle, the Richmond being a large fattening country.
482. *Mr. Watson.*] Where do you get your sheep from now, principally? From Sydney by steamer.
483. Is that the usual condition of things—where do you generally get them from? From Inverell; but it is a long distance and a difficult road to travel stock.
484. *Chairman.*] What did it cost you to ring your land and clear it? The cost of ringbarking and brushing, I should say, was about 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. an acre. The land I cleared for cultivation cost me about £8 an acre.
485. That would be cleared when green—is not that rather expensive? Yes. I had to use Rackarock to burst the trees open.
486. Any settler without means would not adopt that plan, but would wait until the trees were dead? Not only that, but they do not usually go down as deep as I have done. I had some idea of perhaps turning it into a vineyard some day, and for that purpose I went down from 2 to 3 feet deep.
487. Have you any neighbours who have similar holdings? Yes; there is a person named Paine, about a mile on the eastern side of my place.
488. What does he do with the land? He keeps sheep on it and cultivates a portion.
489. He has not gone in for dairying? I could not say; I have not seen him for a couple of years. The dairying industry is of very recent introduction here, especially in that direction, and the farmers have not gone into it largely yet.
490. So far, the dairying industry has not extended to your locality? No; I feel quite confident that the dairying industry would do very well on that land, especially if the people had a little capital. From the experience I have had of the place I consider ploughing over the land improves its condition wonderfully.
491. *Mr. Watson.*] With regard to the land on which you have grown 2 tons of oaten hay to the acre, is that higher land, or is it a watercourse? It is not on a watercourse, but on the gradual slope of a ridge, with a north-east aspect.
492. It is not on the flat part of the holding? No.
493. The flats would probably be a little better than the higher land? Yes; I should say they would.
494. *Chairman.*] Continuing beyond you, along the line, is that all fairly well-watered country? Yes; there are Sandy Creek, then Saltwater Creek and other smaller creeks. There are several creeks. I think the country is fairly well watered.
495. Sufficient for dairying? I think so.
496. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the country between Grafton and Casino? Yes; on the proposed route. I have travelled it a number of times.
497. Is it a similar class of country to that on your holding? Some of it is very much better.
498. You think it capable of producing the class of products you say you raised on your property? Yes, except that probably the yields would not be so large in places, without going to the trouble that I have done by green manuring, and so forth.
499. With similar farming it could be made as productive as your holding? I think so, and a farmer doing the work himself could, of course, carry on operations at much less expense.
500. Do you consider it country that would be free-selected or leased in the event of a railway being constructed? A person from Tenterfield, whose name I cannot recollect, at the time the new Act came into force, was camping for a fortnight out on the land I selected, waiting for the land to be thrown open. I think some months elapsed after the passing of the Act, before it was thrown open for selection. He found out that a mile on each side of the proposed route was reserved from selection, and that prevented him from taking up the land. A neighbour of mine named James told me within the last three months that if the land had been available his sons would have taken up some of it.
501. That would indicate that the land would be taken up if proper facilities for transit were provided? I think so. If the line were constructed, I think there would be a traffic in sheep which would be taken to Lismore, and which at present have to be brought from Wallangarra.
502. But it would not become a sheep-breeding country? I had sheep there for about eight years, especially in flood time. I do not say they would fatten there.
503. This part of the country is not looked upon as good sheep country? I do not think so. Cross-breds would do very much better here than merinos. I keep a few cross-breds. Except in small areas of 30 or 50 acres, I do not think it would become a large sheep-breeding district.
504. It is more suitable for cattle? Yes.
505. *Mr. Watson.*] With regard to green manuring, how long does it take in this district to get a crop of cow-peas planted and ploughed in again after it has reached a fair height,—how long is the ground kept out of use while you are manuring? About five months.
506. So that the ground would be practically out of use for one year? Yes.
507. Having done it once you would not need to do it again for probably three or four years? No.
508. What do you reckon it would cost per acre for cow-pea seed, taking the market price? I think you can buy it now for about 4d. a lb., perhaps less.
509. How much do you sow to the acre? It is sown like maize, 3 feet apart, and 4 feet between the rows. In a favourable season the vines spread all over the place, and grow most luxuriantly. I do not think it would cost much per acre.
510. If a man were dairying he would only require to treat, in that way, sufficient land to grow hay for winter feed,—he would not attempt to treat all his holding in that way? No; he might do about 10, 15, or 20 acres.
511. Your land, about which you have been telling us, adjoins the unoccupied Crown lands in the Clifton parish, coloured white on the map, and situated west of the proposed line? Yes.

Frederick Vernon Hunter, licensed surveyor, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

512. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been long in the district? Four years in the Clarence district; previous F. V. Hunter. to that I was on the Richmond.
513. Are you fairly acquainted with the road from Grafton to Casino? Yes. 28 Feb, 1900.
514. How would you describe the land generally between here and Casino? I should describe it as consisting of low undulating forest ridges covered with spotted gum, ironbark, bloodwood, and oak timber.
515. And the land itself? Varying, of course; richer in the valleys and gullies than on the ridges generally.
516. Would the valleys differ essentially in their characteristics from the ridges? The land would be richer.
517. And as to the character of the soil? The valleys contain more alluvial soil—deposits washed from the ridges.
518. Which class of land preponderates? I should say they would be about equal in area. The flats and the low-lying country would about balance the undulating ridges. That is, speaking roughly.
519. With regard to the ridges or higher land;—of what class do you regard that? Fairly good grazing country. I may say parenthetically that it is a well-known fact in the district that no country improves so much under ringbarking as spotted gum country. That, I think, is admitted by all practical men in the district, and that class of country predominates on the ridges.
520. Do you think that the higher land is suitable for dairying? Undoubtedly, I do—improved, of course. It is good, hard, dry country; sound in every respect.
521. Do you think the distribution of low and higher country is such as would permit of a man getting a little of each in the designs for small holdings? Yes; that is just my idea. I think that by judicious subdivision it could be so arranged.
522. What sized holding do you think would be necessary? I should say from 500 to 600 acres; I should say 600 acres as a maximum area, and I should go even as low as 300 acres. But I should suggest that it be dealt with according to the conformation of the country, without any hard and fast rule. You might even have an area as low as 100 acres in extent, for we must consider the immense number of people who have to be provided for.
523. As to water, would a man require to make dams or tanks? I think it could be so arranged that there would be a natural supply of water in each block; but if not, water could be easily conserved, either by damming or by sinking. Excellent water could be obtained at very little expense. One of the most striking features of that country is its excellent water supply.
524. You have, no doubt, had experience in other parts of the colony? Yes; on the Richmond for eighteen years, and in the Illawarra district for three years.
- 524½. From your experience at Illawarra, more particularly, you would have some idea of dairying possibilities? Yes; including the Clarence, I have been over twenty-five years in dairying districts; in fact, I was a pioneer on the Richmond.
525. Is it your opinion that, properly handled, this would become a better, or as good, a dairying district as Illawarra? The country in Illawarra, as you are aware, was originally all brush land. It would come more under the same treatment as the dense brush land of the Richmond River, and we know that the initial expense of bringing that land under dairying is £6 or £7 an acre.
526. Taking the general run of the Illawarra country, how would it compare with the country between Grafton and Casino—I mean with regard to dairying? I think the conditions in this part of the country are better than at Illawarra, because here we have a much milder winter. In the Illawarra district they have a hard, long winter, and a most trying one. Then, again, the whole of the Illawarra district, as regards dairy country, could be put into one of our creeks. There, the country runs away into inaccessible gorges, while here we have miles and miles of accessible country.
527. You think the country between Grafton and Casino would compare favourably with that in the Illawarra district? More than favourably, because, as I say, there is little or no winter here.
528. I suppose, because of that, grass will grow here at times when in Illawarra it would not spring at all? You would not require half the winter feed.
529. Have your observations of this district, during the last four years, and your previous experience further north, given you an idea as to the regularity or otherwise of the rainfall, and whether it comes at suitable times for keeping the grass on the move? My experience on the Richmond River was that we had too much rain. It is quite a common thing, both here and on the Richmond, to hear people talk of three weeks dry weather as being a very serious thing.
530. Does the rain fall with that regularity that would ensure steady growth? During twenty-five years' experience of the northern rivers I have never seen what I would call a drought. I have never known what it is to be without a blade of grass of some sort or other. In fact, I may say that droughts are unknown.
531. Is there anything else you would like to mention? The Members of the Committee appear to be surprised that the dairying industry has not made greater strides outwards from Grafton. I may say that when I came to take up work here, four years ago, I was nearly idle. There was nothing to do; in fact, the district was bankrupt. The people in nearly all parts of the river were practically insolvent. Sugar went down in one fell swoop from £40 a ton to £20. Old settlers had to pledge their estates, and farmers became financially embarrassed. At such a crisis the dairying industry presented itself as the only outlet, and I need hardly say how the industry has prospered within the four years that have followed. The factory at Grafton, which was only then started, has made astonishing progress, and everywhere there is evidence that the people are picking up and fast becoming in a more solvent position, being able to stock the land to an extent they were unable to do previously. Personally, as a surveyor, I have been kept well employed. People who live in Sydney have no conception of the possibilities of the dairying industry in these districts.
532. What you say, then, accounts for the dairying industry not having extended to the lands much beyond Grafton? Yes; people had their hands full. But now the industry is beginning to expand, as evidenced by the greater quantity of land that is taken up.
533. Have you had any inquiries for land from people outside? I have been continuously employed, and land has been taken up almost as quickly as I have measured it. I have been busily engaged during the last four years in cutting up land—a great deal of it under conditional purchase.

John Henry Munro, stock and station agent, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

J. H. Munro. 534. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you resided in this district? I came here in the year 1873, and I have resided here permanently ever since. I started business here in my present occupation on the 1st
28 Feb., 1900. January, 1894.

535. Have you a good knowledge of the country between Grafton and Casino? A very intimate knowledge.

536. Extending back for how long? Twenty-five years.

537. What is your opinion of the general character of the country with regard to settlement? It is good, fair, grazing land.

538. Does that apply to the whole district? Yes; you might, of course, find a little spot not as good as the rest. The ridges are good, sound, grazing land, and the flats with the wash of the soil from the ridges contain fair alluvial land.

539. Is it well watered? Very well watered indeed.

540. For the whole distance? Yes; you have no occasion to carry a water-bag between Grafton and Casino.

541. In a season of what is termed drought, would there be plenty of water for stock purposes? The farmers here call it a drought if the dry weather extends over four weeks. My experience of a drought in the western country, where I spent twenty years, is that sometimes we had eighteen months without any rain. Judging of the two places, I do not think we know what a drought is here. There is certainly never any want of water for stock.

542. Not even in a dry season? We really never have what I call a dry season.

543. When you describe this as fair country does that apply to, say, 10 miles on either side of the survey? Yes, roughly.

544. It is similar country? Very similar country. In fact, the country off the road is better than the country actually along the road. You must understand that the road is taken over the tops of the ridges, and consequently it is harder country. As it dips down from the ridges it gets better; you get more on the creek flats.

545. Do you think the country would be well suited for dairying? I am certain it would.

546. And what is your opinion of it with regard to agriculture? It would be suitable for certain crops. One great reason why these lands were not taken up when they were thrown open was because the people who came to this river originally settled on the rich alluvial banks of the river, and they would not go and look at anything else.

547. They naturally took the best land first? Yes; and anything that was not almost as good as that they would scarcely look at. In travelling through this Colony and through Queensland and Victoria, I have seen land fully taken up which is not to be compared to the land between Grafton and Casino; but then they had not to put against it our rich river flats.

548. Is there a very large area along the proposed route that is not yet alienated? Yes; it has been reserved.

549. But beyond the 1-mile reserve on each side of the road there are large areas of land not alienated? Yes.

550. In the event of a railway being constructed, do you think that land would be likely to be free-selected or leased? I am certain it would. I may say that in my business I have two or three applications daily from people who want land, and where we had any amount of land for lease four or five years ago, before the dairying industry started, there is scarcely a lease to be got at all now. The people will not part with the land at almost any price.

551. In your business capacity as an agent you have frequent applications for land—is that for leasing land? Yes. I cannot fulfil them, because those who are already within any reasonable distance of Grafton are utilising their lands and will not give them up.

552. Have you a good knowledge of stock? I ought to have; I have been amongst them for fifty years.

553. What area of land along the road do you think it would take to form a complete holding, sufficient to maintain a family? I think 500 or 600 acres would be a fair thing.

554. In the Richmond River district, and particularly the upper part of it, there are a number of graziers? Yes.

555. Do any fat cattle come from that part? Yes; I have known that portion of the district—the northern side of the Richmond River—for twenty-five years. It is a very rich district.

556. Is there any traffic in fat cattle between the Clarence and the Richmond? Yes; most of the Lower Clarence, say, from Lawrence down, is pretty well supplied from the Richmond. The upper portion, nearer Grafton, is mostly supplied from Clarence River stations.

557. With your knowledge of this particular portion of the district, is there anything else you would like to say? I may state that my business for the last twenty-five years has taken me from here to the Tweed. Formerly, in the boom time, I had an office in Casino, and one in Lismore, and I used to make monthly trips from here to the Richmond, and two or three times, or three or four times, in the year, over to the Tweed, selling lands and valuing lands; and I think there is one thing that probably might not have been brought under your notice, and that is the difference between dairying land that will only cost you a capital value of so much, and other land which, when improved, may be of greater value, but which, with the cost of improvements to make it available, would be much dearer land to dairy on in comparison with the land between Grafton and Casino. For instance, take the scrub lands of the Richmond. I do not think you can put them under grass under something like £6 an acre. You certainly could not clear them and stump them ready for cultivation under £10, and in some instances £12 an acre. In regard to the country between Grafton and Casino, you could ringbark it for 1s. 6d. or 2s. an acre. I am not talking about clearing the brush, but simply ringbarking. There are contracts all over the place at that price, and I am certain, from my experience here, that ringbarking, after two or three years, doubles the carrying capacity of the land, and as time goes on more than doubles it. The longer it is ringbarked the heavier you can stock it.

558. Have you taken notice of the timber growing on the land between Grafton and Casino? Yes; there is a lot of very good timber there.

559. Is the land heavily timbered? It is in patches; but I would call it a fairly timbered country, as regards the land through which the road goes. There are patches of heavy timber, but it is not by any means

means an expensive country to ringbark, and, if ringbarked, it would, in two or three years, double its natural carrying capacity. J. H. Munro.

560. *Chairman.*] With your long knowledge of the different districts, do you think there would be any interchange of traffic or trade between Grafton and Casino? I do. 28 Feb., 1900.

561. In what respect? A question was asked just now as to the Upper Richmond—that is, the northern side of the river from Casino up to Kyogle. I know that country very intimately, and, in fact, I know every inch of the Richmond, and I know that freight from Sydney to Richmond is more expensive than freight coming here. When you come to Coraki, where the north and south branches of the Richmond meet, any goods for Casino have to come up the South Arm, and for this purpose have to be unloaded at Coraki and put into lighters, which bring them within 3 or 4 miles of Casino, from which point they have to be carted. It would be much cheaper for the people, both at Casino and on the Upper Richmond, to have their stores brought this way and taken straight by train. It is true that, on the Upper Richmond, the land is mostly in the hands of private individuals, still it is good land, and would settle a large population.

562. Then it would be chiefly goods consigned from Sydney to the Richmond that would feed the railway? Not exactly goods to Richmond, but to Casino, because the ocean steamers go right up to Lismore. It is a well-known fact that the Richmond is not a first-class maize-growing district. At certain times of the year maize from the Clarence, the Manning, and other places has been sold in Sydney, put on board the steamer, and taken to the Richmond River. If there were a railway that would all be obviated, because the maize would go direct from here.

563. Do you think that the line would pay in itself, irrespective of its being part of a national line? Probably it might not pay for a year or two, but I am positive it would do so eventually. With reference to that, I might say that a great many of the settlers on the Richmond went from the Clarence River, and yet these two districts—two of the most populous districts in the Colony—though they are only about 50 or 60 miles apart, might just as well be separated by 500 or 600 miles. I think that the interchange of visits that would take place would create a considerable passenger traffic on the railway.

564. *Mr. Watson.*] I think you stated that most of the fat cattle come from the Richmond? No; I said that the lower part of the river was mostly supplied from the Richmond and the upper part from the Clarence.

565. Does the land between Grafton and Casino supply any fat cattle to the local market? Only a few. I may say that it is almost totally unimproved.

566. How do you account for that;—how is it that there was no ringbarking done on the leased land between Grafton and Casino prior to the leases falling in? If the lessees had ringbarked the country, and made it available, it would have been selected, and they would have lost it.

567. And, unless ringbarked, it would not be a fattening country? No.

568. Would it if it were? Certainly. The Camira paddocks fatten stock.

569. You have had a good deal of experience in estimating land values;—what value would you place upon the land between Grafton and Casino, taking it in the rough, as it is? Certainly not less than £1 an acre.

570. If a railway were taken through, what do you think should be its value? I should say it would increase 50 per cent.

571. Do you think it would be worth while for a man going in for dairying to pay 30s. an acre for it on an average? I am quite certain he could do better in that way than by taking up scrub lands and paying £6 an acre to put it under grass, and it is not then under grass for about two years. I assessed all the Clarence River district for the Crown, under the Land Tax Act, and I am a valuator for the A.M.P. Society. I was also the first valuator in the northern districts, under Torrens Act. I may say that during severe droughts in the west we must have had 8,000 or 10,000 cattle sent here to save their lives. They came from Moree, and in that direction. They got through and went back again, otherwise they would have died. In reference to my evidence with regard to the carrying capacity of the country affected by the proposed railway, I may say that there is a run called Bungawalbyn, about 40 or 50 miles from Grafton, on the east side of the proposed line. It lies at the back of Coraki, but further towards the line. It contains a total area of 56,868 acres. Out of that only 50 acres are freehold, and 4,883 acres are conditional purchase land, the rest being under pastoral lease and occupation license. Only about 5,000 acres have been in any way improved—that is, the purchased land and the conditional purchase land. It carries 5,190 head of cattle, 85 horses, and I believe that within the last two or three months 400 head of store bullocks have been sold off it. This makes a total of 5,675 head of stock depasturing on 56,868 acres. This bears out the estimate I gave of a beast to 10 acres. Nearly all the land on the run is unimproved. The station has been placed in my hands for sale within the last month. A great portion of the proposed line goes through the Camira run. That country is not improved, and is held mostly under Government lease, and is used for breeding cattle. Those cattle when of sufficient age are shifted to Mr. Vickery's fattening station on the Hunter, and other places.

Duncan Beatson, ex-Mayor of Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

572. *Chairman.*] I believe you are ex-Mayor of Grafton, and have been carrying on business in this town as a butcher and auctioneer? Yes. D. Beatson.

573. For how long? Twenty-eight years. 28 Feb., 1900.

574. Then you have an extensive knowledge of Grafton and the surrounding country? Yes.

575. Are you prepared to make a statement? I can speak from a knowledge acquired in my occupation as a butcher and auctioneer. I have seen most of the country between Grafton and Casino, on horseback, mustering cattle, and I do not think there could be a better opportunity of seeing country than in that particular way, because you travel over the most part of it. Referring specially to dairying, I may mention that I was reared on a dairy-farm in the Illawarra district, and I can say, from my practical knowledge and from my observation and experience of both districts, that the country between Grafton and Casino is better, generally speaking, than that in the Illawarra district. Taken as a whole, it is better, for some portions of the Illawarra district are very poor indeed.

576. Especially for this purpose? Yes.

577. This country is well watered, easily cleared, and favourable to the growth of suitable grasses for dairy cattle? Yes. It is fairly good grazing country. I do not speak of it as alluvial brush land at all, but

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but as fairly good grazing country. The description which Mr. Hunter gave is, I think, a truthful one—undulating country, a great deal of it being spotted-gum ridges. As Mr. Hunter said, anyone who has had any experience about here of spotted-gum ridges knows that, of all other timber country in the district, that class of country improves most by ringbarking and clearing. These particular ridges which, under timber, grow absolutely nothing, become very fine grazing land when cleared.

578. Coming from the Illawarra district you might be able to tell us in what direction we are to expect the population to settle on this kind of country? In my opinion there will be no settlement, except a very slow and gradual one, without a railway. If a railway were even sanctioned between here and Casino, I am satisfied that people would commence to look about to see if they could acquire the land. That would occur even before the railway was started, if there were a certainty of its being carried out.

579. From your practical experience, can you tell us about the distance that a dairyman can afford to cart his milk to a creamery? I have known dairymen to cart milk as far as 1½ miles, but they get tired of that very soon. I think about 5 miles on a fairly good road is far enough to cart milk.

580. Does the milk suffer after that distance, or is it a matter of labour? I think the milk suffers, but the man's horses and carts and time suffer more.

581. In both respects it is a disadvantage to have to go a long distance? A very serious disadvantage.

582. Could you give us any reason explaining why we do not see any more settlement already outwards from Grafton along the line, seeing that some of the lands are within reasonable distance of the creameries? There is not a creamery within reasonable distance of the unoccupied country. With regard to the particular locality in the parish of Clifton, of which the Committee have spoken, that is at the extreme southern end of the range that divides the two waters, and anyone who is acquainted with it knows that up at Mountain View the poor class of country goes right to the river, and that that land is such a distance away that, though the edge of it might be within reach of the creamery, there are no roads. In addition to that piece of country, from a point near Mountain View, extending on both sides of the range up to Coaldale, there is perhaps the worst piece of country you could find in the whole Northern district, and there is only a comparatively small patch of that within 8 or 10 miles of the proposed railway line. It is infinitely worse country than anything between here and the Richmond.

583. You think the development of a dairying population would be gradual? It would be very rapid if the people had a railway, but without a railway it must be necessarily slow. Just now, the men who are dairying are doing so on the alluvial flats, and though there is an inquiry for the outside land, and a great deal has been sold quite recently, it is only for paddocks for surplus stock, and not strictly speaking for dairying. But if there were a railway line the people would know that creameries would be established, and the country would then be taken up. What would be the use, however, of a man going there if he had to cart his cream 15, 20, or 30 miles to Grafton.

584. The river flats, and the lands adjoining the river, have until lately been almost exclusively used for crops? Yes.

585. They are now developing into part dairy and part cropping lands? A great many of the farmers are using at least half of their land for dairying.

586. Do you think there is any fear of all that land being used for dairy purposes—it being so much richer and better than the land along the railway line—and the population there developing entirely into a dairy population, and not taking up what would appear to be the inferior land away from the river? I do not think you need fear that. There is a demand for land now. People are every day seeking to rent land, and it is not available—people who have not the means of purchasing.

587. Do you think that people are disposed to take up fresh land, country such as we are now considering? Some of them are not in a position to do so. One of the things that has prejudiced people against this particular country is the fact that men have taken it up who had not the means to utilise it. As you go along you may see some abandoned holdings, and that, I think, is mainly due to the fact that those who took them up had not the means to work them.

588. By that you mean that it is not exactly a poor man's country; but that a man would require to have some small means to start operations? It would not matter who acquired the land. If it cost them something they would have to let it to a tenant, if they did not work it themselves. I daresay a great deal of that land would be acquired by men who have capital, and who would subsequently let it on lease, or on the halves system, for dairying. A great number of men who are quite capable of running a dairy have not the means of doing so.

589. You think the halves system would come into operation? It would obtain in some cases, no doubt. Some men taking up country between here and Casino would make a failure of it, while others would succeed.

590. Have those people who have come here and engaged in dairying succeeded fairly well? Most of them have succeeded. It has made an extraordinary difference in this district.

591. Do you agree with Mr. Munro's opinion, that the land could be cleared for 1s. 6d. or 2s. an acre? I do; it is not difficult land to clear.

592. And do you think that the fact of clearing it would make it double its carrying capacity for stock? On the timbered country, to which reference has been made, the marketable timber would be a source of income to the man who had the land, while, at the same time, clearing would be effected. I may say that I have had fat cattle off the whole of the country between here and Casino. It is quite capable of fattening cattle. I remember an incident that happened to me at Myrtle Creek some years ago. A man induced me to go there to look at his cattle. When I saw the country I was passing through I said to him, "There is not much use taking me down here to look at your cattle." We were then passing through unimproved country. When I got to his home and went into his paddock, which he had ringbarked and improved, to my utter astonishment I selected eighty head of prime fat bullocks out of about 200. That is something which happened within my own experience on what they call absolutely poor country.

593. If a railway were constructed between Grafton and Casino, the main item of revenue would be dairy produce? I think the principal part of the business conducted by the people who would settle on the country would be dairying; but the country is capable of growing all the things that have been mentioned to the Committee, and no doubt these would be largely grown if there were a demand for them—such as hay for making chaff, and all the products already mentioned.

594. Do you think there would be any produce sent from the Richmond to Grafton? Perhaps not a great deal. I should not expect very much at first, at any rate. But I think the passenger traffic between the

the two places would exceed the average that might be taken, as a rule, in other places, owing to the close proximity of the rivers, and to the fact that many of the people are related to one another. For that reason, I think there would be a large interchange of traffic, especially on account of the convenience. Take my own case. I have not been on the Richmond for two years. If there had been a railway I would have been there three times within the last six weeks, for then I could have got there and back speedily. There are, no doubt, other cases of a similar kind.

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595. Is there a direct line of coaches between here and Casino on the line we shall travel? No; you have to go to Lawrence to get a coach to Casino. In my opinion a great many of the witnesses have not spoken as highly of the country between here and Casino as I think they might have done.

596. *Mr. McFarlane.*] It has been stated by a number of witnesses that if the proposed railway were constructed the whole of the unalienated land would most likely be free-selected or leased—is that your opinion also? Yes; I certainly think there would be a rush for the land.

597. It has also been stated that the reason why there is no more settlement along the route is because there are no means of getting the produce away? Yes; that is a fact.

598. Do you know any rich portions of this district that are not settled for the same reason? Yes; plenty. There is plenty of splendid brush land in this district where there is not a soul living.

599. Could you name any particular place? There is brush land out here to the south, and there is brush land up at the head of the river. Up about Yulgilbar there is plenty of good land. But a man would be mad to go there under existing circumstances. It is the same with the scrub land out here. The people locally know all about its existence, but they do not attempt to go there.

600. For the same reason—that there is no settlement between here and Casino? Yes. They know the land is there, and they are waiting for something to happen to enable them to get on to it. I should like to mention something which has just occurred to me with regard to the evidence of Mr. Baillie about his place at Copmanhurst. I have a personal knowledge of that place, and I can say unhesitatingly that the land is much inferior to that between here and Casino, and if Mr. Baillie can make a living there, then there is absolutely no doubt a man could make more than a living on the country between here and Casino if there were a railway.

601. And by all accounts Mr. Baillie is doing very well? So I understand.

Henry Jordan, piano and music dealer, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

602. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Can you give us any opinion with regard to the traffic between the Clarence and the Richmond? In regard to the traffic that would be created by the construction of a railway—the passenger traffic connected with various branches of sport would, I think, be very large. At present there are no facilities for cricket and football teams to exchange visits with the Richmond. A Grafton team going to Lismore has to go down the Clarence to Chatsworth, then across to Woodburn, and up the Richmond River. There has only been one visit of a football team to Lismore this year, and I do not think it is likely to be repeated, as the journey takes too long, and the men have to go without sleep. In the event of railway construction I believe there would be a big interchange of visits among the sporting sections of the community, and in connection with races, shows, and so forth. The shows being held on different days, the exhibits at Grafton, for instance, could be sent on direct to Lismore if there were a railway, and *vice versa*.

H. Jordan.
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603. Do many visitors usually come to the annual show here from the Richmond? Yes.

604. And do many go to the Richmond shows from Grafton? I do not think so many go from here.

605. Is it your opinion that this class of traffic would be considerably increased if there were railway communication? Certainly.

606. Is there anything else? Only in connection with my own business. Though perhaps it may be a small matter, it goes to show how traffic would be created on the line. For some years past I have several times engaged companies to come up here from Sydney and give concerts; but I had to discontinue doing so, because it did not pay, as the companies could only show at Grafton, and then they had to go back to Sydney. If a railway were in existence they could go on to Brisbane.

Thomas Page, accountant, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

607. *Mr. Watson.*] What is your occupation? I am an accountant. I have been a resident of Grafton for forty-five years. I am also Returning Officer for the Electorate of Grafton.

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608. I understand you have some figures in relation to the town and district? Yes. The following are the figures in regard to population:—

28 Feb., 1900.

Population of the Police District of Grafton.		Population of the City of Grafton.	
1895	19,514	1895	5,046
1896	19,526	1896	5,082
1897	19,733	1897	5,115
1898	20,595	1898	5,321
1899	21,245	1899	5,750
1900	21,357	1900	5,862
Increase in five years	1,843		

The district includes the electorates of Grafton and The Clarence, with the exception of Solferino; it includes all the towns between Grafton and the Heads, and extends up the river above Copmanhurst, and also includes Dalmorton, on the south side of the river. In the electorate of Grafton the number of electors on the roll is as follows:—1894-95, 2,111; 1895-96, 2,094; 1896-97, 2,074; 1897-98, 2,105; 1898-99, 2,222; 1899-1900, 2,321. I also give the following figures with regard to the Borough of Grafton:—

Income of the Borough, 1899	£2,119
Capital value of ratable property	£384,000
Number of homes	889
Electors on roll (municipal)	873
Buildings erected and in course of erection, 1899	£6,125
Amount expended on public buildings since 1892	£35,000

The

T. Page. The following are the figures relating to the Municipal District of South Grafton :—

28 Feb., 1900.	Income for 1899	£567
	Capital value of rateable property	£66,000
	Elector's on roll	168
	Value of buildings erected, 1899	£5,000

609. Can you tell us whether the income in each of these instances is independent of Government subsidy? Yes; the two municipalities are beyond the stage of endowment.

610. Are there any debts owing? There is an indebtedness of £4,700 by the Municipality of Grafton for drainage and special work. The last loan was raised for the purpose of improving the main street in the borough, and partly also for the renewal of a previous loan. The following are the figures relating to stock in the police district of Grafton :—

	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
1899	17,432	91,011	2,116	11,836
1898	16,480	86,917	1,199	11,538
Increase.....	952	4,094	917	298

The particulars in connection with the Grafton post-office are as follows :—

193 mails despatched weekly.
14 weekly to Richmond River.
262,900 letters posted at Grafton, 1899.
121,500 newspapers posted at Grafton, 1899.
£3,022 revenue from sale of stamps.
2,411 money orders issued for £3,886.
..... money orders paid, £1,450.
774 deposits made in Savings Bank to the amount of £6,270 in 1899.
384 accounts open on 31st December, 1899, with balances to credit of £13,153.
14,592 telegrams sent; £1,100 receipts from telegrams.
38 private boxes let.
5 subscribers to telephone service.

I also give the following extracts from abstracts published in the *Government Gazette*, giving information in regard to the Grafton Branch of the Savings Bank of New South Wales, for ten years ending 31st December, 1899 :—

On 31st December.	Number of Depositors.	Balance to Credit.
		£ s. d.
1890	748	27,303 6 1
1891	740	27,161 9 6
1892	765	27,180 3 5
1893	742	24,505 15 4
1894	776	28,932 3 4
1895	800	32,311 19 6
1896	805	33,108 16 8
1897	826	35,434 1 10
1898	870	40,449 18 4
1899	928	44,920 15 8

The following are statistics relating to the Grafton Hospital for a period of seven years :—

Year.	Indoor Patients.	Outdoor Patients.	Government Endowment	Local Revenue.
1893	159	40	£ 274	£ 343
1894	153	52	253	307
1895	153	68	253	400
1896	186	52	376	500
1897	218	122	328	303
1898	252	397	292	529
1899	247	439	453	633
Total	1,368	1,170	£2,229	3,015
	In Patients	1,368		
	Total Patients .	2,538		

Medical Staff, 4.—Nursing Staff: 1 Matron, 3 Trained Nurses, and 1 Probationer. Value of Buildings, £3,750.

I have prepared figures in reference to the Grafton Benevolent Asylum, which are as follows :—

	Local Revenue.	Government Endowment.	Indoor Patients.	Outdoor Relief
	£	£	£	£
1893	398	*1,066	13	893
1894	146	96	7	750
1895	162	376	9	776
1896	205	484	16	625
1897	174	133	15	455
1898	241	212	17	454
1899	216	380	18	407
	1,542	2,747	95	4,360

* Includes £750 special grant for food relief.

In regard to the registered Friendly Benefit Society, I also supply these figures :—

	Registered Members.	Total Funds.
1899	571	£5,300
1892	472	3,200
Increase	99	£2,100

Manchester Unity, the Ancient, and the Royal Order of Foresters—Three lodges.

The

The Grafton Lighting Company has a capital of £8,000 in £1 shares, with a reserve fund of £1,525. It declared a dividend in 1893 of 6 per cent., and since then the dividend has been 8 per cent. per annum. Shares quoted in 1895 at 16s. and 18s., are now quoted at 24s. 6d. The company's mains do not extend beyond the boundaries of the borough. I have obtained the following figures with regard to the Grafton ferry service:—

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RETURN of traffic between North and South Grafton from 1893 to 1899, inclusive.

Year.	Foot passengers.	Horses.	Vehicles.	Cattle.	Sheep, Pigs, &c.	Goods.	Cycles.	Revenue.
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	Cwt.	No.	£
1893	136,810	27,788	12,660	662	1,339	194	.....	1,047
1894	226,480	48,520	20,325	341	161	210	.....	1,098
1895	213,442	43,885	22,249	368	74	154	.....	987
1896	271,290	62,010	30,370	260	110	297	.....	1,075
1897	288,369	60,522	38,272	55	24	216	241	1,123
1898	318,477	94,003	53,840	232	138	259	2,489	1,196
1899	368,037	86,499	53,498	80	34	302	2,198	1,257

Passengers with vehicles are not included. Returning passengers and those travelling under weekly and monthly tickets are given approximately only. Non-paying traffic, viz., public officers travelling on duty, mail coach, school children, and persons travelling to church, are not included in the return.

The following is the rainfall for 1899, recorded in Grafton:—January, 4.12 inches; February, 8.27; March, 1.93; April, 3.42; May, 1.34; June, .96; July, 10.39; August, 4.64; September, 2.16; October, 2.11; November, 2.26; December, 5.14; total, 46.74 inches. I may mention that the town of Grafton is the centre of the Land Board District of Grafton, which embraces the whole of the eastern district from Camden Haven to the Queensland border. The head office of the Local Land Board is at Grafton, and the premises formerly occupied as the gaol, before the new gaol was erected, have been thoroughly renovated and enlarged at considerable expense, and are now the permanent offices for the whole of the North Coast district.

611. So that Grafton, you might say, is the administrative centre for the North Coast district? Yes; Grafton is also the assize town, the Supreme Court sittings being held here twice a year. The gaol, originally estimated to cost £17,000, but which ultimately cost over £24,000, has been completed, and is now the gaol for the reception of prisoners committed at all the various Criminal Courts in the North Coast district, and is occasionally occupied by consignments of prisoners to relieve the larger gaols in Sydney. In the matter of commerce, the Banks represented here, having buildings of their own, are the New South Wales, the Australian Joint Stock, and the Commercial. The English, Scottish, and Australian Bank has its offices in the building built by the Australian Mutual Provident Society, who have their central office for the Northern districts in Grafton. The erection of this building cost £7,000. The churches, which have all substantial structures, include the Church of England, the Roman Catholic, the Presbyterian Church Synod of Eastern Australia, the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, the Wesleyan Church, the Baptist Church, and the Lutheran Church. With the exception of the Lutheran Church, each of these denominations has a parsonage attached to its property. I may also mention that the Quarter Sessions are held twice a year in Grafton, and the District Court three times a year.

612. *Chairman.*] The figures you have quoted with regard to population show an increase in every instance? Yes; there has been a gradual increase in the population of the town since 1895. In 1893 and 1894 there was very little movement. That was after the disastrous flood and the Bank crisis, and there was not much development in those years: but since then there has been a gradual improvement in every respect.

613. Has there been a greater increase in the way of settlement and population in the Grafton district during the last few years than in the Richmond district? No; I do not think there has, proportionately. I think there has been a greater proportionate increase on the Richmond.

614. That would be owing to its being a newer settlement? Yes, and the place being boomed to a certain extent by railway construction, and the consequent opening up of the land.

615. When you were examined before, you gave your views as to the probable traffic between Grafton and Casino; could you tell us again what you think about that? I think that the estimates given of the traffic, and particularly of the passenger traffic, between here and the Richmond, are, if anything, under the mark. I do not look upon the traffic that would be carried on the line as a traffic between Grafton and Casino only. A large majority of the people who would use the line as passengers would go to places beyond Casino, and also to Lismore. When the line is constructed from here to Casino, and there is railway communication on to the Queensland border, Casino will not be in the position of a terminal town but that of a roadside township. I do not mean as regards importance, but it would only be a stopping place along the line. The two great centres would be Lismore and Grafton. A greater number of people would go to Lismore than to Casino. Taking into account the amount of money that would be derived from the passenger traffic, credit should be given for the amount of money the Railway Commissioners would be in receipt of, in respect of the distance from Casino on to the Queensland border, from people who would not travel if there were no line between Grafton and Casino. On the advent of Federation, when anything in the shape of restrictions on the border will be abolished, we might anticipate a large influx of visitors from these districts to the neighbouring colony of Queensland. At the present time, every year some 500 or 600 people leave the Clarence on holiday excursions to Sydney. If facilities were afforded by railway communication direct from Grafton to Brisbane, many of those persons would prefer to make their holiday trips to Queensland instead of repeating their visits to Sydney, and in that way a large amount of revenue would be derived on the whole length of the line from Grafton to the Queensland border.

616. *Mr. Watson.*] Is it not more likely that they would go south in holiday time, so as to get away from the heat, instead of going to where the heat is greater? It is not necessary that they should go in the summer time.

617. *Chairman.*] Do you think that goods going to the Richmond would be more likely to go by way of Grafton, and then by railway, than direct by steamer to the Richmond? I think the bulk of the traffic from

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- from Casino and around Casino would, from purely commercial considerations, go by way of the Clarence, because it could be landed there much more cheaply and more expeditiously than by any other route.
618. Have you the figures that would bear that out;—for instance, what is the freight to Grafton and then by railway to Casino, as against the freight direct from Sydney to Casino, on the Richmond? I have not made a comparison by actual figures, but the freights from Sydney to the Clarence are lower than those from Sydney to the Richmond. Then there would be the handling of the goods at Lismore to send them on to Casino, and there would be the railway rates still to be charged.
619. *Mr. Watson.*] Do not goods go up the south arm of the Richmond to Casino? But if the line were constructed to Lismore goods going up the Richmond River would have to be sent on from Lismore by rail to Casino, while, as against that, there would only be the railway carriage from Grafton to Casino. Bearing in mind the fact that larger steamers could trade to the Clarence than to the Richmond, as a matter of business the owners of those steamers would necessarily make their freights much lower, because it would pay them better to run full ships than ships only two-thirds full. As far as the passenger trade is concerned, if the railway were constructed to Casino, a business man, if he happened to be in Sydney, could leave there at 9 o'clock on Saturday night and be in Casino at 4 o'clock on Monday afternoon, taking the steamer to Grafton and the train to Casino. He could not do that by any other route, nor could he travel by any other route at as low a cost.
620. *Chairman.*] We are considering this line at present as a line by itself;—do you think it would pay, looked at from that point of view, irrespective of its being part of a North Coast railway, or irrespective of any junction with a line to the table-land? If the line stopped at Casino, and there were no further communication, and no further railway connection, I think it would be a mistake to construct it. But in view of the fact that there is to be railway communication from Casino through the Richmond and Tweed districts, on to Queensland, I say, having in view the traffic that would be brought to the other lines, this section would be a remunerative one within a reasonable time. A railway has to make its own trade, exactly as a line of steamers has to make trade for itself. Settlement would follow the railway, and traffic would necessarily increase in both passengers and goods. There is one other item that has not been sufficiently emphasized: A considerable amount of produce is shipped from the Clarence during the year. This is carried at comparatively low rates, because, when produce goes to the market, supplies come back in return, and, on these, higher freights are charged. The same rule is observed on the Railways. In particular lines produce is carried by the Commissioners at nominal rates, but they charge as much as they can when they are carrying return supplies. In our case, the amount of traffic in the shape of supplies would be very large indeed, because there would be so many new settlers on the land, who would have to take the whole of their belongings and household furniture, as well as stock and implements, to settle along the line of railway. The traffic given by Mr. Varley, in his evidence, is, if anything, under-estimated, especially in regard to passengers. I also think that, although the present inquiry is confined to this particular section of railway, consideration should be given to the amount of revenue that would be derived by, and credited to, other lines already constructed. Apart from the traffic along the route of the railway, I think that, in the interests of the people of these districts, it is advisable to connect two important centres such as Grafton and Lismore. They are both growing in importance every day, and it is desirable that they should be connected, on the same principle that the dense populations of Sydney and Newcastle are connected, for the convenience of the people at the extreme ends of the line; though, throughout the whole course of that line, there is not otherwise one ton of produce carried to contribute towards the working expenses of the railway.

THURSDAY, 1 MARCH, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Grafton, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

George Henry Varley, newspaper proprietor, Grafton, sworn, and further examined:—

- G. H. Varley.
1 Mar., 1900.
621. *Chairman.*] I understand you wish to give the Committee some further figures in regard to the dairying industry? Yes. In 1892 dairying under the factory system was first started at Ulmarra. The output that year was very small, there being only forty suppliers. In 1893 the quantity of butter manufactured was 64,800 lbs., giving an income of £3,312. There was a gradual increase up to 1899, when there were 150 suppliers at Ulmarra, showing a large increase, even in one centre. The factory in that year made 222 tons of butter, their income being about £20,000. There is now a central factory at Ulmarra and three creameries supply cream to it. The Co-operative Dairy Factory at Grafton started in 1895, in which year they made 55,898 lbs. of butter. There has been a gradual increase up to 1899, when the quantity made was 182,000 lbs. of butter. In 1892 the output of butter in the district amounted to £3,000, and in 1898 it increased approximately to £50,000, and in 1899 to £70,000. In the district at the present time there are two central factories, seven co-operative dairy companies, thirteen creameries, and from thirty-five to forty private separators.

George Smith Stening, Manager for the Fresh Food and Ice Company at Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- G. S. Stening.
1 Mar., 1900.
622. *Chairman.*] How long have you been here? Since the institution of the Company's business here, nearly four years ago.
623. Of what do the Company's operations consist? Butter-making and bacon-curing, and we have also done a little in meat-killing and chilling.
624. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you deal with poultry? Yes; poultry and game.
625. How do your operations compare now with your operations when you commenced four years ago? Exclusive of Ulmarra, which centre was supplying us when we first started, the dairying industry has about quadrupled itself, and the bacon-curing has increased five times.

626.

G. S. Sten ng.
1 Mar., 1901.

626. And with regard to meat? We have done only very little in that line.
627. Is that only as occasion offers? Yes; we are of course prepared to go in for it; but on account of the very high rates prevailing, we cannot get the stock.
628. It is only when a man has to sell that you are able to purchase? Yes.
629. Is the poultry and game business an increasing one? The business in game is increasing, but that in poultry has not increased very much. We only purchase a certain class of poultry; we only take cockerels 9 months old. At the farms they want to dispose of mixed lots, and we cannot take them.
630. How do you deal with the poultry and game sent to market? We send the game down frozen, but the poultry we send alive.
631. Will you explain how you deal with the producer;—say the milk producer? We have separating stations on different parts of the river, and the payment to the supplier is based on a standard test showing the amount of butter in his milk.
632. You pay for the milk practically according to the butter contents? Yes, the butter-fat.
633. *Chairman.*] Do you run the separator? Yes.
634. *Mr. Watson.*] How is the milk collected? The milk is taken to the creamery by the suppliers, and we convey the cream from the creamery, daily, to the central works at Grafton.
635. How many separating stations have you? Nine.
636. About what distance apart are they? We have one at the extreme end of the river, at Copmanhurst, and they are spread all over the river down to Chatsworth.
637. We want to know how far a man can conveniently send his milk to a separator? Up to about 5 miles. Each creamery commands a radius of about 5 miles.
638. Do you convey the cream from the separator to your works in Grafton? Yes.
639. How is that done? By carts, and by boats taking it up along the river.
640. What becomes of the skimmed milk? It is taken back by the supplier for feeding purposes.
641. Do you look upon the dairying industry as one likely to increase in the district? Yes, I think it is bound to increase.
642. Have you observed the class of country on which dairy farmers do best? Yes.
643. Will you tell us the result of your observations, comparing the river flats with the more hilly and elevated parts? The higher bush lands, on which very little cultivation is done, are, I think, most suitable for dairying on account of the better quality of the product; and with a little improvement and careful management, the farmer can make the industry pay on such land as well as on the rich river flats.
644. Do you know the country between Grafton and Casino on and near the proposed railway line? No; I have only a very vague idea of it.
645. I suppose you know it for a certain distance out? Yes.
646. What do you think of that part of the country for dairying operations? The improved land is shown to be very well suited.
647. Would your Company be prepared to enlarge their operations there if they got a larger quantity of milk to deal with? I have no hesitation in saying that the Company will expend unlimited capital if the inducement is there.
648. So far, have the operations of the Company have been successful and remunerative? They have.
649. Has dairying, so far as you have heard, been fairly remunerative to the dairymen? I am certain it has.
650. Since you have been here, have you noticed an inclination to go in more largely for dairying than cropping? Yes.
651. Do you look upon that result as coming from the fact that it pays better to dairy, or is the soil better, suited to it;—is it mainly because it pays a farmer better to carry on that kind of industry? One reason is that it brings into operation a system of mixed farming, which undoubtedly is the best system.
652. Could you carry on mixed farming, as you call it, on these elevated or timber lands? Yes; you could grow hay, poultry, and pigs.
653. Why is it that the poultry industry is not a larger one? I think it could be explained in this way: Most of the farmers sell their poultry to the dealers, who go around and take them; whereas we require them to deliver their poultry to the central works, where there is a chance of the poultry being refused and having to be carted back again.
654. They do business with the dealer, who sends the poultry in crates to Sydney? Yes, exactly.
655. And the dealers go round and select what is suitable for the market? Yes.
656. Whereas, if the poultry were brought to your establishment, there would be the risk of their not suiting you, and having to be taken back? Exactly.
657. And I suppose there is a good deal of barter between the poultry-dealer and the storekeeper in town? I believe there is.
658. So that would account for a good deal of trade going that way? Yes.
659. That would be in poultry and eggs, I suppose? Yes.
660. Do you buy many eggs? No; we have not gone in for eggs yet, but I believe we intend to do so.
661. Do you deal with fish? No.
662. How far northerly from Grafton do you gather in produce to your establishment? I think we only gather it from a distance of about 12 miles.
663. Could you name the place? We have a creamery at Lawrence, and that gathers in milk from 5 or 6 miles outside of Lawrence.
664. Have you, in your experience here, come across any people who have told you they would go in for dairying between Grafton and Casino if they had proper means of communication? The only evidence I have as to that is that about three years ago we received a big requisition from the vicinity of Myrtle Creek, in which it was stated that if facilities were given for the opening up of the country, and an outlet were provided for their produce, a great many of the settlers would go in for dairying, and they would ask the Company to erect creameries at Myrtle Creek and other places.
665. For the purpose of dairying, is it absolutely necessary to have speedy and easy communication, first to the separator, and then to the central factory? There is not the slightest doubt of it, and that is where the success of the industry is going to lie in the future—the speedy transit of the product from the cow to the central factory.
666. After the cow is milked, is there any limit of time within which the milk must be treated? No.
667. When the cream once gets to the factory you can freeze it and treat it when you like? Exactly.

- G. S. Stening. If we get it soon after it is separated, we are able to handle it in such a way that it will produce a superior article, compared with cream that has been allowed to stand, or has been delayed in transit.
- 1 Mar., 1900. 668. In the case of milk going to the separator, it is necessary that it should be treated quickly? Yes.
669. Within a few hours? Yes; it would be better if it were treated within a couple of hours of milking.
670. But that is not the practice under present circumstances? No.
671. How long after receiving the milk do they generally separate? In some of the creameries on the river they separate only once a day. That means that the night's milk has to stand over until the following morning. If it were done within two hours it would be better.
672. Supposing it could not be done for ten or twelve hours? As long as the milk remained in a sound condition it would be all right.
673. But you run the risk of the milk going off? Exactly.
674. Therefore it is necessary that the separator should be within easy access of the farmer? Exactly.
675. Do you regard it as likely that the Company's operations will extend in any other direction besides those you have named? Yes; the Company are willing to extend their operations in any direction as long as there are inducements and facilities for transit. We have had offers to start out in another direction, about 30 or 40 miles from here, but we cannot do so on account of the rough transit of the cream to Grafton. The places I refer to are Coramba and Kangaroo Creek, away down south.
676. Apart from the rich agricultural lands on the river flats, and which have for so many years, until recently, been used chiefly for agricultural purposes, do you think there is a coming population to absorb these other lands that we are inquiring into? Yes, I think so.
677. Do you think the dairy business is illimitable in its extent? I think so.
678. We do not look now to the colonies only for the consumption of dairy produce of every kind, but export large quantities to England? Yes.
679. And that, you think, is likely to go on? Yes.
680. Has that been the experience of the Fresh Food and Ice Company? Yes.
681. Are the farmers who are going in for dairying all fairly substantial men, doing a good business as far as you know? Yes.
682. The industry is likely to be successful and lasting? Yes. I may say that the figures relating to the dairying industry in this district, supplied by Mr. Varley, came through me, and are correct.
683. What is the Company's general expenditure? We expended locally about £65,000 last year.
684. What is the general yield of a milking cow in this district;—is there any average you could put forward? There is only the experience of a couple of farmers who have kept account of their cows. I think the average ran between 500 and 600 gallons per cow per year.
685. That would be the average of the herd, including milkers and non-milkers? They started with a certain number of cows. One man had twenty-one cows, and I think the average for those twenty-one cows was between 500 and 600 gallons per year.
686. How many gallons of milk does it usually take to produce a ton of cream? About 2,000 gallons.
687. That is in this district? Yes.
688. And from that how much butter do you get? Between 800 lb. and 900 lb.
689. Taking it for granted that a railway was constructed between Grafton and Casino, and dairying entered upon along the line, what would be the extreme freight that a man could afford to pay per ton on his cream sent in to the factory, say, at Grafton—when would the freight become prohibitive? I think he could go up to about 15s. a ton.
690. Beyond that you think it would be rather dearer than would pay? Yes.
691. What has been the destination of the Clarence River butter usually;—has it been mostly exported, or mostly sent to the Sydney market? In the winter months the butter is generally used locally, and in the summer months about half is exported.
692. I gather from one of your answers to a question by the Chairman that you have rather a high opinion of the milk-producing properties of the grass lands? Yes.
693. I might assume from that that you would get a better quality of butter from grass-fed cows—cows fed on natural grasses—than from cows fed specially on artificial fodder? You would not get such a big return, but you would get a sounder article—an article that would stand carriage.
694. I suppose that, notwithstanding improvements in the methods of carrying butter, such as freezing and so on, some butters will stand carriage better than others? Yes, much better.
695. And you think the best in that connection would be the feed from natural grasses? Yes.

Edward Chapman Lewington, Manager, Bank of New South Wales, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- E. C. Lewington. 696. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What are you? Manager of the Bank of New South Wales at Grafton. I have occupied my present position for twenty-five years.
- 1 Mar., 1900. 697. Would you mind stating what your experience has been, as a banker, during that period, and also give the Committee some information with regard to the general financial condition of the district? When I came to the Clarence it was a period of great prosperity. That was in 1875, and that prosperity went on by leaps and bounds up to 1887.
698. To what was it due? To the production of cane and maize, high prices and large yields. In the beginning of 1887 we had one of the most severe floods that ever visited the district, which swept away practically all the product of that year, particularly as regards maize. From 1887 to 1893 there was a succession of bad years, owing principally to floods. We had nine floods in those years, every one of which came into Grafton, which will give you an idea of the damage done to the district generally. Then there was gumming in the cane and blight in the maize, all of which tended to depreciate the general revenue of the district. In 1893 we had three floods, each of which did a certain amount of damage, though they were not so severe as the floods in 1887 or 1890. Then on top of that came the great financial crash, which, of course, intensified the depression resulting from our previous disasters. About 1893, or between 1890 and 1893, the dairying industry commenced to be a factor in this district. It was taken up first at Ulmarra, in a small way, and it was so successful that the farmers began to look upon it as an occupation that would produce satisfactory results. They consequently took it in hand, and it has developed very materially from that time up to the present. The circumstances here were of an exceptional character. This district was opened up and settled for agricultural purposes only. It was never contemplated when the

E. C.
Lewington,
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the land was subdivided, that dairying, which requires a larger area of land than agriculture, would form part of the operations of the farmer. Most of the subdivision farms on the river average from 40 to about 70 acres. That was always considered sufficient on which to work a farm, but it is not large enough, in a great many cases, for dairying, especially where a man has to take up a certain proportion of land for agricultural purposes. Therefore, with the spread of dairying came the demand for larger areas. Many a farmer, perhaps, has enough land to graze twenty or thirty cows, but he wants, besides, a paddock on which to feed his dry cows, and a place to which he can remove his cattle in time of flood. Most of the lands under dairying at the present time are subject to flood. Fortunately the district has been without floods for seven years, but we must look forward to the recurrence of floods such as we have had in the past. Therefore lands which offer security to the dairy farmer must have an increased value. My experience is that year by year the demand for these lands is growing. Some time ago the bank I represent, like other kindred institutions, made advances on lands, believing at the time that the round of prosperity was never going to stop; and some of these lands fell into our hands, and we found great difficulty in dealing with them. But within the last two or three years we have dealt with nearly all of them, and I have constant demands for dairy properties.

699. By that, I would take it that the land is increasing in value? Certainly. Land for which I could not get £5 10s. an acre can now be disposed of readily for from £7 to £8.

700. Can you mention any particular locality where land is inquired for? A man will come to me, and he will say, "I want to know if you have got a dairy farm." I say, "Where do you want to go?" He says, "I want to go somewhere where I can get my milk and cream to a factory." Some people go on the south side of the river, and some on the north; they are not particular so long as they can get suitable land. A man came to me last week to make particular inquiries about land on the north side of the river, and from my knowledge he has gone out to have a look at a place about 15 miles from here on the Casino-road, near Lawrence.

701. That would not be far away from the proposed railway? No. This property was in the market, though not in connection with the Bank of New South Wales, and he said, "I am going to have a look at that place; it might suit me." I think these lands are capable of considerable improvement.

702. In making inquiries, I suppose it is a consideration that the land shall be as near the river as possible? That is, of course, the general desire, because it means easy communication. It is no use a man going in for dairying unless he can get his milk or cream within a reasonable distance of a creamery or factory.

703. The demand for land for dairy purposes commenced you say about 1893? Somewhere about that time. I think the factory at Ulmarra commenced between 1890 and 1893, but it was then only in an experimental stage.

704. Is the demand for land increasing? Yes, decidedly; land for legitimate settlement.

705. Do you think that demand will continue? I think we must have an outlet for our labour. Take The Clarence, for instance. Our population is increasing substantially year by year. The youths growing up must find an outlet somewhere, and if they cannot settle upon the land, what are they to do. I do not say that the land in this district is all of the same quality. Some is poor and some rich; but it is sufficiently good to be worthy of settlement—and satisfactory settlement. There is another thing in regard to dairying. If the communication is sufficiently good to make it worth a man's while to settle on these lands he can get the fee simple, which is a great thing to a dairy farmer, at a comparatively small price. At present, if a man comes from the South Coast, or anywhere else, and wants to buy a dairy farm he has to pay for an agricultural farm, which is a very different thing from the settlement of the Richmond, where a man was able to take up land as a conditional purchase. Purchasing a farm in the way I have pointed out, a man has to sink a large amount of money upon his fee simple, which under other circumstances might be profitably employed in purchasing cows, improving the surface of the land by draining and by artificial grasses. That is the drawback that dairying has had in this district as compared with the wonderful success achieved on the Richmond. The land here was all settled, while over there most of it was virgin land.

706. What is the financial position of the residents at present as compared with a few years ago? It is very much improved.

707. Owing to the starting of dairying? I consider that dairying has been almost as large a factor in that improvement as the establishment of the Sugar Company was in its day. I think the ultimate benefits which we shall derive from dairying, unless the industry meets with some unforeseen check, will be quite equal to the good done to the district by the Colonial Sugar Company, and we all know what that was.

708. And the dairying industry does not take the place of agriculture, but is an addition to it? Yes, to a great extent. A man having 70 acres would cultivate 35 or 40 acres, and the balance he would keep as a grass paddock, doing nothing with the land except running a few cows and horses. As dairying has come along, experience goes to show that he makes use of this waste land, and perhaps takes in addition a certain proportion of the land he had under cultivation, finding that he can do so well with his dairy. I know dairymen who are taking as much as £35 and £40 a month for milk.

709. The agricultural products of the district have not been materially reduced, notwithstanding the increase of the dairy industry? There is a falling off in cane, but I think that has been partly due to a feeling of unrest in the mind of the farmers as to the policy of the late Government in regard to the sugar duty. One of my constituents let his cane go out of crop altogether until the question of duty was decided, and he has now 30 acres under crop again.

710. You state that the financial position of the people is satisfactory;—does that apply to agriculturists and business people alike? I think it applies generally. As an evidence of this, and as showing the general prosperity of the place, we find that on the 4th of the month, storekeepers and others pay their bills promptly, and without anything like the amount of assistance they used to receive a short time back from their creditors in Sydney. Then again we find our fixed deposits increasing steadily. A little while back a fixed depositor would come in and receive his interest and take a little bit off his principal to pay his bills. Now we find that he adds his interest, and probably something else, to his fixed deposit.

711. Has there been an increase in the number of fixed deposits? Yes; both in number and value, as far as the Bank of New South Wales is concerned. In Grafton, the deposits, especially fixed deposits, even at the low rate of interest which obtains, have shown a very substantial increase during the last three or four years.

712. Referring to three or four years back, how did borrowers meet their obligations in the shape of mortgages and so on? With very great difficulty; they paid their interest, but not punctually.

713. ;

- E. C. Lewington.
1 Mar., 1900.
713. I mean during the past three or four years? My experience of them is certainly easier and pleasanter than it was previously.
714. You have not so much difficulty? No. I have two trusts, involving about £9,000, and I get my interest paid remarkably well, never losing a penny.
715. Has there been any increase or decrease as regards foreclosures or mortgages? As far as banks are concerned they are very averse to taking any extreme step of that kind. It is only when things become really bad that the bank decides upon foreclosure or sale under a mortgage. But things are now decidedly brighter. We have a number of cases which some time ago were not looking quite as pleasant as we should like them to look, but which have certainly improved; and if these go on for a year or two as they are now doing, we shall probably find that these people who, a little while back, were in "Queer-street," will be able to work on with a certain hope of getting clear of their liabilities.
716. The general tone of the district, then, is prosperous and much improved compared with what it was? Yes. The people are not so extravagant, of course, as in former days. In the first years of my experience on The Clarence, money was made easily and it was spent easily. It was never dreamt that misfortune and disaster could attack the lands of The Clarence. It used to be thought they had a permanent value from which they would never recede. People, however, have learnt the folly of that, and now if they make £1 they try to live upon 18s.
717. Is it your opinion that if proper facilities were given, people would settle and take up land between the different rivers here—between this and the Richmond? Certainly, and also between here and the Bellinger and the Macleay. There is a desire for settlement, but the difficulty is a fear that the farmer may not be able to send his produce to market at such a price as will leave him something for himself.
718. He is not disposed to take up land without proper facilities? No.

William Small, jun., Town Clerk, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Small, jun.
1 Mar., 1900.
719. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand you are acquainted with the land between Grafton and Casino? Yes.
720. Could you give us your opinion of it, roughly? My opinion is that it is land which could be occupied profitably if people had facilities for getting their produce away. It has remained vacant simply because of the want of these facilities. If railway communication were established between here and Lismore the land would be taken up and occupied by people who would carry on dairying chiefly.
721. Do you think any of it is suitable for any other purpose than dairying? Yes; a lot of that land would grow oats.
722. Do you think there is any possibility of this tract of country becoming developed without railway communication? No, I think not; not for a long time.
723. Do you know of any people who have used that class of land and made anything out of it? Yes; I know several people on the same class of land. The same class of land exists chiefly between Grafton and Copmanhurst. Some of this land, close to a creamery, has been profitably occupied, and, from what I have noticed in the papers, the people living on this land, which is similar to that between Grafton and Casino, have the highest test of anybody supplying milk to the creameries in the district. It is very much like the land between here and Casino.
724. Do you think it is land that would require a large expenditure of capital to bring it to a producing condition? No, I do not. I consider that a man selecting such land, as soon as he had fenced it in and ringbarked a little of it, could profitably occupy it for grazing.
725. Are the natural grasses there good, or would the settlers require to introduce other grasses? If a man had 640 acres he could work the land for dairy purposes without putting a thing in it, although it would grow artificial grasses.
726. You think the natural grasses are sufficiently good to justify a man in putting stock on, if the country were ringbarked? Yes. Cattle are running in the district at the present time, and during last winter they were the best conditioned cattle in the district, not excepting the stations on the upper river.
727. Is that usual or unusual out there? It is not unusual. It is the same at the end of any winter. Cattle off the land there are better conditioned than cattle from any other part of the district.
728. We have been informed that the supplies of fat cattle for this district have not usually been got from there? The fat cattle for this district have been got locally, and from the stations on the upper river, simply because the owners of the station at Camira, on the road to Lismore, send their cattle away as stores, chiefly to the Hunter.
729. Does it pay them better to do that? They have never made the test; they have gone on doing it from the time when they first took the station up.
730. You have a very high opinion of the land as suitable for dairying purposes? Yes.

Thomas Trefusis Bawden, auctioneer, and Secretary, Stock Board, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

- T. T. Bawden.
1 Mar., 1900.
731. *Chairman.*] You have been here for a number of years? I am a native of the district.
732. Would you like to make a statement of what you know on the subject of the Committee's inquiry? I know the country pretty well between here and Myall Creek, about 25 miles north of Grafton. I have had experience in dairying on country which, in fact, is inferior to that. I was only dairying for two years, and I did very well.
733. Did you take up the land in its virgin state? I leased an abandoned selection.
734. Was it improved? There were only about 140 acres of it ringbarked.
735. Did you do the rest? No. The other portion was a conditional lease. I had sixty-three head of cattle and my working horses on the land. In two years my clear profit was £230. At the end of two years circumstances cropped up which induced me to abandon the holding and come to town.
736. Was that during the last three or four years? That was in 1896 and 1897.
737. How far were you from a creamery? From 2 to 2½ miles. I was in similar country to that of Mr. Baillie's, only more sandy.
738. What did you make the profit out of? Out of milk and pigs. I started with nothing, and I paid for my cows with the milk.
739. Did you employ labour? I had a boy. When I first went up I had a man and a boy, as I had some fencing to do.
740. Who did the milking? Myself and the boy.

741. You say it was inferior land to that between here and Myall Creek? Yes; it was very sandy country, carrying apple-trees, honeysuckle, and ti-tree. T. T. Bawden.
1 Mar., 1900.
742. Is not the apple-tree a product of good country? Fairly good country; but that was sandy soil.
743. Would not that be better than the country you speak of between here and Myall Creek? No; there is a lot of honeysuckle—more like coast country.
744. How many beasts to the acre could you have carried on your land if it had been all rung? That class of country, I think, would carry a beast to about 10 acres.
745. When it was ringbarked? Yes; it is too sandy and rocky, especially in that particular paddock. If country like that is rung too much the sun strikes the grass, and where the sand is it destroys it. The class of country referred to, being sandy, is better not ringbarked to any extent.
746. Have you any objection to tell us how you started, or what rent you paid? I paid £20 a year for the place, comprising 540 acres.
747. How many cows had you? I used to milk between twenty and twenty-five cows. The largest number of cows we milked was twenty-seven.
748. It would have carried a great many more than that? I could have milked more and had a few dry cows, but I had to pick them up as I could get them.
749. On a holding of 640 acres between here and Myall Creek, do you think that after it had been ringbarked a man could run about 130 or 140 head of cattle? I am certain of it. That would be about 5 or 6 acres to the beast. That country would carry that. It is country that you can ring, because it is harder soil.
750. Is it fairly well-watered country? Yes; and it includes a lot of splendid flats that will grow corn; and, from my knowledge of the country, I think the land could be cut up in such a way that there would be some cultivation land in pretty well every holding.
751. As an auctioneer, what do you think that land would be worth? I should say its present value is about 15s. an acre.
752. And suppose it were improved by ringbarking, and a railway were constructed? To take it up under selection, I should say 30s.; but I believe that if a railway were made, and a freehold were submitted to public auction without any conditions beyond the payment of the money, there are parts of that country that would fetch between £2 and £3 an acre.
753. Do you know what farmers are now paying as rent for good land on the rivers—I mean farmers who carry on dairying to any extent, and who are renting their properties? The rent of good land on the river for mixed agricultural and dairy farms, ranges from £1 to £2 an acre. One man dairying on a 46-acre farm pays a rental of £60.
754. That of course is an improved property which has been fenced? Yes; and there is a small cottage on it.
755. Do you think it would suit the small man with a little capital to take up a piece of this land for the purpose of dairying? Yes, I am sure of it. I think a number of such men would take it up under homestead selection, when much capital would not be required. In regard to the land at Clifton, in reference to which evidence has been given by other witnesses, I wish to say that that land is not accessible, and there is not a creamery within a reasonable distance. In my opinion, that is the reason why it has not been taken up.
756. What is about the distance a man should be away from a separator? I think 5 miles is quite far enough. I know of two properties along the proposed line of railway—one owned by Mr. Heldt, and the other by the estate of the late Captain Hill. They are both about 7 or 8 miles from Grafton. These properties have been idle for a number of years, and now the fences are being made good, and the land is about to be utilised for dairying. Mr. Heldt has built a house which cost him £80; so that there is every prospect of the dairying industry having a great future, and the land between here and Myall Creek is being taken up for dairy purposes. I also know of two other properties along the railway line, about 12 miles from Grafton, which are being refenced with a view to dairy farming, in conjunction with farms on the river. In regard to the carrying capacity of the land along the proposed railway route, 9 miles from Grafton, on the Casino road, there is a selection owned by Mr. Joseph Payne. It is 4 or 5 miles from the proposed railway line. In 1897 Mr. Joseph Payne had 364 acres of land, and he had six head of horses, forty head of cattle, and 200 sheep on it; and in 1898 he had eight horses, fifty head of cattle, and 170 sheep. Mr. Duggan the other day gave evidence with regard to the use of cow-peas as a green manure. From what he said it might be inferred that during the five months that the crop of cow-peas was growing the land could not be used for any other purpose. I wish to say that you can grow maize at the same time that you are growing the cow-pea.
757. I understand this land was not suitable for maize? It will grow maize for home consumption, but not maize fit to compete in the market with rich maize. While you are growing the cow-peas for green manure you can always get something else from the ground. Mr. Stenning was asked why his company did not do a larger trade in poultry. It is a well known fact that there is so much opposition amongst dealers that, in order to get rid of their goods, they will take in exchange from the farmer almost any kind of fowls. The consequence is that the farmer can get rid of chickens two months old by sending them to Sydney with a mixed lot. They do not give the fowls time to grow. In dealing with the Fresh Food and Ice Company, the latter would only take poultry which is really good.

Abraham Lipman, commission agent, Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

758. *Chairman.*] Would you like to make a statement to the Committee on the subject of the proposed railway? Yes. I have been a resident of Grafton for twenty-three years. I have been travelling in these districts, representing Sydney houses, for twenty-six years, and during all that time I have regularly, at short intervals, visited the districts between here and the Tweed, more particularly the Richmond. I was one of the first travellers who was conveyed by coach to Casino from Lawrence, and, without taking into consideration the cost of transmission of samples, the expense from Grafton to get to Casino, 18 or 19 miles from Lismore, was, and I believe would be now, £1, which includes steamer fare, and then you would have to catch the coach leaving Lawrence on Tuesday and Friday. On arrival at Casino you would have to be conveyed to Lismore at a further cost of, say, 5s., independently of samples, and this last item varies from one to forty cases. I was the first traveller who was conveyed by coach by the Woodburn route, and nearly all the traffic is now that way, because the means of conveyance are better. Two firms hold the vehicle trade there, and each sends a coach every morning
A. Lipman.
1 Mar., 1900.

A. Lipman. morning from Chatsworth on arrival of the 7 o'clock steamer from here, one earlier, at 6, and again on arrival of the steamer from here at 8, which arrives at Woodburn the same night. This is the quickest and cheapest way, even to Casino, by the present means of travelling, and at the lowest estimate costs, without samples, 18s. 6d. to get to Lismore, and if to Casino, 5s. extra. The works at the entrance to the Richmond seem to me a great improvement; still I believe as many people travel by way of the Clarence to Sydney from the Richmond as previously, and certainly more of an inter-district nature. I have seen as few as six a day, and as many as forty, travelling between the two rivers. I agree with Mr. Spencer's evidence, except that he only stated cost of travelling to Woodburn, and did not allow for the journey to Lismore, Casino, or Ballina. I have known storekeepers on the Richmond, at different times of the year, who were prepared to make large purchases of potatoes and maize from this river, and I am aware that large quantities of both have been received by steamer from Sydney when, if facilities existed, they might have been procured here. I am no judge as to the quality of the land, having only travelled by the coach road between the rivers; but, as a portion of the proposed North Coast line, I believe it should join at Grafton and Casino. I think there should be a connection with the coast from New England, at a point to be determined by Parliament; and whether this connection is made at Casino or Grafton, either the Richmond or Clarence district is too important to leave out of railway communication, either as from New England or with each other. I am aware of the existence of large quantities of valuable timber along the line, and believe it would go a great way towards paying the cost of the line. I also know there is a large exporting trade done in timber, and lately a saw-mill has been erected at Lawrence, to obtain timber from along the proposed line, or thereabouts. I believe a large item in the revenue would be the return from excursions. I have known, both on this river and on the Richmond, streams of people driving and riding, in some instances 60 miles, to attend a show or race-meeting. In the event of rail to Casino, the traffic that now goes by way of Harwood and Chatsworth would revert to Grafton, seeing that a train trip to Grafton from Lismore would take, say, six hours, and it now takes twenty hours at least to go by way of Chatsworth, and having to remain till next day to get to Lismore.

Edward Ebsworth, District Surveyor, Grafton, sworn, and further examined:—

E. Ebsworth. 759. *Chairman.*] You produce some maps for the information of the Committee? Yes. I produce the county maps from Port Macquarie on the south to the Queensland border. These maps indicate that the close settlement is confined to the lands within easy distance of the streams. Beyond that, there are no ready means of access, the Lismore-Tweed Railway in the County of Rous excepted, and the country is only used for grazing purposes for raising stock. There are now signs of a change along the whole of the coast district, with the extension of the dairying industry. It is the factory system which has enabled this change to come about.

Edward Farrell, master of the steamship "City of Grafton," sworn, and examined:—

E. Farrell. 760. *Chairman.*] What are you? Master of the steamship "City of Grafton," trading between Sydney and Grafton.

1 Mar., 1900. 761. How many trips do you make? One trip a week. We leave Sydney on Tuesday night and arrive in Grafton on Thursday afternoon, and on the return trip we leave Grafton on Friday evening, and arrive in Sydney on Sunday evening.

762. How long have you been in command of the North Coast Company's ships? Twenty-two years.

763. And how long in command of the "City of Grafton"? Exactly twelve months.

764. Are you able to make the trips at present with regularity? Yes; we are making the trips now with great regularity.

765. Would you give us your experience of the entrance to the Clarence River from the time when it commenced to improve? It is very good just now. I got 17 feet this morning at high-water when I came in.

766. How does that compare with the time before any permanent harbour works were undertaken? It is a very great improvement indeed, because the entrance is absolutely straight in and out.

767. From what date do you put the improvement in the entrance? Since the inner wall was completed down to the reef at Yamba—the middle training-wall. There used to be a sand-bank there, right in the centre of the harbour, and it used to force the ships right over towards Yamba, and they were compelled to make a big curve, and then to suddenly round the reef buoy; but now the course is straight in.

768. Then you approve of that portion of the work? Decidedly.

769. Before those works were undertaken, what depth of water used you have at the bar outside? It varied with the weather. The sand on the outer bar is affected by the wind and sea. With north-easterly winds and a long dry summer the bar will shallow up. In a wet season, when there is a certain amount of scour from the river, the bar will deepen. That is where the training-walls are of benefit.

770. What depth of water had you on the bar before the harbour improvements were undertaken? I have seen it so shallow that we have stuck at the black buoy.

771. What number of feet? 10 feet or 10 ft. 6 in. I was stuck there in the "New England" many years ago, right at the black buoy. "The Clarence" was stuck there for weeks, and "The Australian" was stuck there. This was a good many years ago, before there were really any harbour improvements here at all.

772. And now that is all done away with, and you can always enter? To give you a proof of that, I went out last Saturday at dead low water, and I then got 13 ft. 6 in.

773. And what does the "City of Grafton" draw? We were drawing 10 ft. 4 in.

774. Do you ever have to wait outside now? Sometimes, when the weather is very bad, and there is a sea on, the pilot will ask us to wait outside until the tide is favourable. Certain conditions of the sea and tide affect the state of the bar.

775. Which is the worst direction of the wind for entering? South-east, when there is generally a heavy sea.

776. What are your views as to the future improvement of the entrance;—what do you think would be advisable? I think when we get the southern breakwater, we shall have a good harbour.

777. You think the carrying out of the southern breakwater is a necessity? I think so. The southern breakwater will give the necessary shelter—similar shelter to that provided at Newcastle. 778.

778. How far do you think the breakwater should go out? It is a very difficult thing to say. I should say about 1,500 feet, judging from the length of the Richmond breakwater, and the Newcastle breakwater. E. Farrell.
1 Mar., 1900.
779. Would that be as far as the position of the present bar? Yes; it would be a little further out than the present bar.
780. The object being, I suppose, to disperse the sand and send it out to sea? Yes; the idea is that where there is a stone wall and a strong ebb-tide, the sand is continually carried out along the wall. That has been proved in every one of the rivers, without exception. I think the ordinary ebb-tide scour goes about 1,000 feet beyond the limit of the wall, so that we should have deep water outside the end of the wall, as is the case at Newcastle.
781. What is the formation of the bar—is it just like a bill of sand? It comes in from the north beach. We have a splendid south head here; that is the great protection to the Clarence.
782. But I mean on the ocean side of the bar, do you come suddenly into deep water before you come to the bar? Yes, very suddenly from deep water outside—into 18, and 17, and 16 feet, and so on, on the bar, according to the state of the tide.
783. How far does it extend? You run about two ships' lengths—say, 500 feet—on that ridge, and then you get deep water again inside. There is very good water inside—from 20 to 24 feet.
784. Does that bar extend northward to the sandy beach? Yes; it goes right across at present.
785. Then does it extend south also to the sandy beach? No; not southward to the sandy beach, but to the hill, or Rocky Point.
786. Has it altered its position? It has during the last two years. It used to be round the south reef and rocks. It then began to work across to east of north. It got very bad about this time last year, and after some little trouble we got the sand-dredge, "Antleon," to work, with the result that a straight, clear run was made over the bar. We are using that channel; but there was only 12 ft. 6 in. at high water, on a very narrow ridge. The "Antleon" came, and deepened it for us, and it is really better now than when she left it.
787. And do you advocate the construction of the southern breakwater? Most decidedly.
788. At the end of the middle training-wall there is rather a nasty turn, where a joggle gets up;—if the southern breakwater were continued would that point become protected? Yes.
789. And would small steamers always be able to go round to Yamba? I should not say that they would always be able; but the extension of the southern breakwater would certainly afford a great amount of protection—much more than is afforded now.
790. At the present time do small vessels experience a difficulty in getting round that turn to go to Yamba? On one or two occasions during the last three months I have known them to be very doubtful about going round; in fact, I have heard the harbour-master say he would not go round.
791. It is risky? Yes; it is dangerous. The vessel gets a broadside sea at the sudden turn at the end of the training-wall.
792. Would any improvements be required on the northern side of the entrance? They are running out the northern wall now, and that no doubt will have the effect of scouring the sand from the inner harbour and flats.
793. But is there not a bed of rock that requires to be removed at the entrance? Yes; that is what we call the northern reef. They will have to blow that up. The channel is not very wide there now, and to make a good entrance they will have to blow those rocks up.
794. Would it be advisable to do that before the construction of the southern breakwater;—could it be done now? It could be done in the ordinarily westerly weather. In the winter time we have weeks and weeks of very smooth water on the bar.
795. Suppose they were to blow this reef of rocks up, where would the stuff go to? A diver is sent down and the rock is blown up with dynamite, and then a grab dredge lifts it out of the way.
796. Are all captains trading to the Clarence River—Captain McGee, as well as yourself and others—always able to come in? Unless it is very bad weather, like an easterly or south-easterly gale—such weather, for instance, as that in which a mail boat would not go into Sydney.
797. That would be extraordinary weather? Yes; it would occur perhaps only twice a year.
798. It very rarely happens? Very rarely.
799. In fact, the steam service between Sydney and Grafton is now almost as regular as a railway train? It is undoubtedly very regular, as our books will show.
800. Having entered the heads, and having come along the training-wall in very deep water—24 feet, I believe—caused by the scour, how do you get on further on up the river, on your way to Grafton? We really have no difficulty at all in the river. The Clarence is a splendid river.
801. No shallows? There are only four places in the Clarence where we get shallows in flood-time, while other rivers have fourteen.
802. You are always able to get over those shallows in the Clarence? Yes; but they cause a little trouble if the ships are loaded very deep. Then we generally speak to our agents and they interview the harbour authorities, who dredge the shallows for us. The shallows only affect the ships at low tide.
803. The dredge is not required to be used frequently in the Clarence River? No; very rarely.
804. Are you able to navigate the river at night-time? Yes; we go down every Friday night.
805. And go right out to sea? No; we work down so as to get out on Saturday.
806. Do you come in or go out of the port at night-time? No; because there are no lights at the Clarence Heads.
807. With guiding-lights, would it be safe? It would be safe in fine weather and in the present state of the bar.
808. What would be the deepest draught at which it would be safe for ships to come into the Clarence River? If you want a boat to come up to Grafton the draught would be, say, 13 feet 6 inches to 14 feet, for ordinary work, but at the heads there is now nothing to prevent you bringing a vessel in drawing 15 feet.
809. But it would be difficult to get up the river with that draught? You could go to Maclean.
810. But not to Grafton? Not with a draught of 15 feet. There are one or two places that would be rather bad at that extreme draught; but they could be easily improved if necessary. Those shoals are only light sand and mud.

- E. Farrell.
1 Mar., 1900.
811. Without any further improvements at the Clarence Heads, do you think the bar is likely to get worse, remain as it is, or get better? It is bound to fluctuate with the weather.
812. Can you explain how it is that the bank of sand forming the bar accumulates? We have an idea that the sand comes along the north beach with the north-easterly wind; in fact you can see it flying along the beach. This sand gets shifted about until it locates itself in the channel, and then along will come a southerly or south-easterly gale, and the sea will bank it about in a different direction again.
813. You have been a considerable time on the river;—what has been your experience with regard to the increase, or otherwise, of the passenger trade, and the other trade of the port? There has been a very great increase of late years, both in passengers and goods. The dairying industry is over and above anything we have ever had before.
814. Do you always get a full freight both ways? Yes; we have not had any slack season this Christmas at all.
815. Do you bring much freight from Sydney? Yes; including general store goods of every description.
816. And you generally have a good cargo every trip? Yes; twice a month we are full without exception.
817. Tell us what you take back, as a rule? About 400 boxes of butter, each containing over 56 lb. Of maize our average is about 2,000 bags. We carry 150 pigs, and for nine months of last year we had forty-two bullocks every trip. We also carry hides, tallow, bananas, peas, beans, and tomatoes;—in fact it is a wonder where the stuff comes from, and where it goes to. Cream we also take to Sydney, wild ducks, and quarters of beef, which seems to be an industry in the winter time. Then again we carry from sixteen to twenty-four cases of fish, besides poultry and eggs. Sometimes we have 300 cases of eggs on one trip.
818. There is a pretty constant passenger traffic? Yes, you can see that by the published list of passengers. The single fare is 30s.; return, £2 5s., and 12s. 6d. in the fore-cabin.
819. Have you noticed a marked increase in the dairying industry? No one can have helped noticing it.
820. During the last four years especially? Yes.
821. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Will you explain the condition of the crossing inside the bar previous to the construction of the southern training-wall? We had to go round by Yamba. After coming in round the buoy we used to take a sudden turn along the track of the little steamer that took the Members of the Committee to Yamba, and then follow the stone wall round where it is now sanded up, and then we went round by Rabbit Island—right round where the training-walls are now. There is a place there where we had to anchor sometimes, and we had great difficulty to get to Grafton at all.
822. It was a very crooked channel? It was a dreadful channel.
823. What depth of water used your steamers draw? We have been stuck there with 10 feet. For years it was a common thing for one of the old steamers to lie in the Deep Hole partly loaded.
824. Had your boats ever to do that? Yes; I have done that in the old "Agnes Irving."
825. And lighter the cargo down? Yes.
826. Would that shallow depth continue for any lengthened period? Yes; I remember at one time it lasted for nearly two years.
827. Since the southern training-wall has been constructed have you noticed much improvement? There is now no difficulty at all, because there is deep water all along the wall.
828. What would be the shallowest depth along the wall? Twenty feet, and that is near the inner end of the training-wall.
829. Do you consider it a better and straighter channel than the original one? It is a beautiful channel now.
830. In view of the improvement made in that respect by the construction of the southern training-wall, is it your opinion that the carrying out of the breakwater would have a similar effect on the outer bar? Yes; it would have exactly the same effect.
831. For the same reason? Yes; because the ebb tide would scour along the rocks.
832. With regard to the shallows between the heads and Grafton, are those of any length? No; they are very short shallows in the Clarence.
833. How far apart are they;—where is the first one? At an island near Grafton—about a mile and a half from Grafton. That is a shingle shallow which sometimes gives a little trouble after a fresh, but never sufficient to stop our ship.
834. Could it be easily dredged? They do dredge it; it was dredged about four years ago.
835. So as to carry a depth of from 15 to 16 feet? Yes. The next shallow is what we call the Ulmarra crossing. That has kept good for years.
836. At Lawrence there used to be some little trouble? There is an elbow there that could be widened with advantage to us at the present time. Although it is deep in the channel it is very narrow.
837. These are the principal obstructions to large ships that are able to cross the bar? Yes. There is another just below Maclean with 11 feet on it at dead-low water.
838. You have traded on a number of the other northern rivers? Yes; I have traded on the Manning, the Macleay, Port Macquarie, and the Richmond, as well as the Clarence.
839. How does the Clarence entrance compare with the entrances of these other rivers? There is no comparison.
840. In what way? The entrance to the Clarence is protected by a southern reef or headland. Nearly all our bad weather comes in from the south or south-east. Consequently you will come along the coast with really a moderate sea, and when you come to the Clarence bar it is all right.
841. Improvements are being carried out on a number of these other rivers? Yes.
842. Have they been as successful, so far, as the improvements at the Clarence? They have not been so extensive, except on the Richmond, and the Richmond is not such a success inside yet, on account of the bank of indurated sand, that the dredge is now cutting through.
843. Do you think the entrance to the Richmond can be improved at a similar cost, and with similar good results, as in the case of the Clarence? No, I do not. They are building two immense breakwaters at the Richmond.
844. Will they have the effect of improving the bar? Yes; and they are building also a central wall in the river.
845. They have a crossing there also inside the bar? There is always a crossing there between the two breakwaters. They are doing their best now to pump it up and dredge it, and are doing all they can to improve

improve it; but so far not with success. According to the pilot's report they have 12 feet there now at high water.

846. What is the usual depth of the crossing? The pilot gives 12 feet at high water.

847. Is that deeper than previously? Deeper than it used to be, because they can work a dredge there now.

848. The breakwater smooths the water? Yes, considerably.

849. How does the navigable part of the Richmond from the crossing up to Lismore compare with the Clarence;—are there any obstructions? Yes, there are many obstructions. There are the Pinlico flats, the Wardell flats, and just below Broadwater there is a reef, and the channel is narrow, so that you cannot get a ship of any size through without a lot of trouble. Then there is some very difficult water up about Woodburn. Swan Bay is very shallow, also Long Reach, above Swan Bay, and Newby's Reach, further up still. You then go straight to Coraki, a little more than half way to Lismore, and after that the North Arm is very narrow, and is subject to land slips, which block up the channel.

850. About what size steamers could negotiate the river in its present condition—about what draught? A draught of from 9 feet to 9 feet 6 inches to Lismore to work the ordinary tides.

851. About what draught of steamers can, with safety, enter the bar at the present time? You could run a boat in now at about 10 or 11 feet.

852. Would that be over the crossing as well as the bar? Yes; there is 12 feet on the crossing at high water.

853. Would there be any difficulty in removing the obstructions up the river? Yes; some of them are very long—the whole length of a reach of the river.

854. Does the narrowness of the river interfere with navigation to any extent? Yes; up the North Arm. The main river itself is a fair width.

855. How would you compare the Macleay River with the Clarence? The Clarence is, in my estimation, five times a better river than any of the others, both as regards depth of water and width.

856. Would steamers of similar size to those entering the Richmond be able to enter the Macleay? The Richmond is a little better than the Macleay.

857. Vessels do not usually go up the Macleay? Yes, they go to Kempsey; they have to dredge away the flats a little.

Samuel Sec, Mayor of Grafton, sworn, and further examined:—

858. *Chairman.*] I believe you desire to add something to your previous evidence? I omitted to give some particulars regarding the trade on the river. The increase in our trade from the middle of the month of November, 1899, to the middle of this month, February, has been unparalleled. In previous years we always had a slackness during that period, and sometimes our steamers scarcely had any cargo. This year, during the whole of that time, we have had full ships, and sometimes have been compelled to leave cargo behind, and we now have steamers with larger capacity than we had in previous years.

859. And as to the character of the freight—is it anything special? It is of a more varied character; but never in the history of the trade—and I have been associated with it for twenty years at Grafton—have we had such a volume of produce to send away as we have had during the latter part of 1899 and the early part of this year. Every ship has been positively full. That is independently of our timber steamer, which has been constantly employed conveying timber from the Clarence to Sydney—a thing that has never occurred before.

860. Do you think the district possesses any other resources besides those connected with agriculture and dairying;—are there any mineral developments? Yes; this district is very auriferous. There is both quartz and alluvial gold, and at the present time I know of some twenty-five applications for dredging leases in the upper part of the main river, and on the arms of the river—at Orara and other parts of the river. A recent discovery of cinnabar has been made, which is likely to prove profitable, not only to the owners of land, but to the Colony generally. There have been two distinct discoveries; one was made two years ago on the Upper Clarence, about 50 miles from here, and another was made within the last month in the opposite direction at a place known as Corinda. Yesterday I saw the analysis of the stone, and it indicates a cinnabar lode, and shows good prospects, according to the depth they have gone down; thus giving a radius of 100 miles of the Clarence watershed. There are also coal deposits at a place called Coaldale, where there is a seam 6 or 7 feet thick. I brought the matter under the notice of the Government some years ago, and the seam was inspected by Mr. David, who pronounced the coal good, and whose report is in the Government offices. Judging by the indications, I believe there are also coal deposits along the proposed railway line. There are various other minerals to be found in the district, including asbestos, silver, antimony, and chrome. In regard to the navigation of the river Clarence by steamers, a steamer drawing 5 feet 6 inches can go up to Copmanhurst, a distance of 78 miles from the heads, without any obstruction, and the tide flows about 10 miles beyond that point. There is, therefore, a tidal flow of about 88 miles in the Clarence river. I should have mentioned that I know of the existence of coal at the junction, within 2½ miles of the boundary of the city. The proposed railway line crosses the locality. By reference to a map compiled by the late Mr. Wilkinson, Government Geologist, it will be seen that large coal measures exist under the whole of the area between Grafton and Casino.

E. Farrell.
1 Mar., 1900.

S. Sec.
1 Mar., 1900.

FRIDAY, 2 MARCH, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the "Commercial Hotel," Myrtle Creek, at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Edward Thomas Smith, grazier, near Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- E. T. Smith. 861. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? I am a grazier, engaged also in dairy-farming. I live about 8 miles west of Myrtle Creek, and have been there for twenty-five years.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 862. What size holding did you start with? 2,500 acres, taken up as a conditional purchase and conditional lease.
863. Have you since enlarged that area? I have at the present time about 8,500 acres.
864. Will you describe the character of the country in that block? When I first took up the country it contained some very valuable timber, including ironbark, spotted-gum, stringybark, black-butt, and various other scrub timbers, all of excellent quality, suitable for bridge purposes and for building. There was also some cedar and pine in the ranges. I have materially improved the land by fencing and so forth. At present, I have 1,500 acres entirely fenced into eight paddocks, and in these paddocks the land is capable of carrying a beast and more to 5 acres. I have 300 head of cattle and thirty horses on a total holding of 1,500 acres of improved land. That leaves about 7,000 acres of unimproved land.
865. How do you dispose of that? I graze stock upon it.
866. Have you much stock on that portion? I have about 150 head of breeding cattle. The land consists of mountain country, gullies, and ranges. I have it merely on occupation license.
867. You could not improve that? I have improved some of it; I have it nearly fenced in.
868. Are the 300 head of cattle which you carry on the 1,500 acres dairy cows? There are 150 head of dairy cows and heifers.
869. How long have you been going in for dairying? Only for five months—since the creamery started where it is at present. They removed the creamery to suit my convenience, and to make it more central for suppliers.
870. Do you find dairying a profitable occupation? It has been, up to the present. We shall be very large suppliers next spring; we intend to supply again.
871. Do you employ labour? Yes.
872. And do your own family work as well? I have had a son working with me and two hired men, besides female employees for milking purposes.
873. Could you tell us how much milk is produced per cow? About 1 gallon a day would be a fair average.
874. For how many months in the year? I think they would milk all the year round at that.
875. Is that a good result? It is a very fair average, I think.
876. Before the creamery was started and located so as to suit you, what used you do with your cattle? My operations were confined to fattening and selling stock—horses, cattle, and anything else I could sell.
877. Do you find that the dairy industry, so far, is more profitable than that? The dairy industry, I believe, will ultimately pay. In my own experience it has paid well up to the present time.
878. Do you know the character of the country between Casino and Grafton? Yes.
879. Have you been to Grafton? I have only travelled over the country in spots, as it were, where I have seen the line; I have never travelled over the whole route, but I have been on the country right through from Grafton. I know the country all through.
880. Could you tell us any part of the country that we have travelled along to-day that resembles your own holding? There is the country from Sportsman Creek. There seems to be some good agricultural country about there. And again, at Myall Creek and on the Camira station there are some excellent flats for growing maize, and, in fact, good land for dairying or any purpose whatever. As regards the hilly country, that, of course, is rather heavily timbered. It could be very much improved by ringbarking and putting stock on it. If you tickle the soil at all it will grow an excellent crop.
881. Does that ridgy or hilly country we have seen to-day in any way resemble the ridgy country on your holding, which, before it was improved, was not of much use, but which now carries about one beast to 5 acres? It is very similar country, and the whole of Myrtle Creek, from one end to the other, for 15 miles, is land of that character; there is good bottom land all the way through.
882. Going through the country to-day, it seemed to be pretty well supplied with grass all through;—do we see it now in its best condition, in its worst condition, or in its average condition? It is not in anything like as good condition as I have seen it in. We have had a very heavy drought lately, which has cut the grass up wonderfully.
883. Of what duration has the drought been—a fortnight or three weeks? It has dried the grass so that if a bush fire got into it a great deal would be destroyed. There is always good grass in this part of the country where grass grows at all.
884. There is always a good supply of it? Yes; fairly good. Cattle seldom get starved out for want of grass, though I have seen cattle very hard-up for grass.
885. It strikes one, coming through all this well-grassed country, as we have done to-day, that there is very little settlement compared with what one might expect;—how do you account for that? I suppose it is on account of the land being locked up to a great extent.
886. There is a railway reserve on each side of the line, and a great deal of Crown lands? Yes; and there is a great deal of purchased land, purchased by the different holders of the runs.
887. But there is a great deal of Crown lands available—land that could be selected? Yes.
888. Why do you think that has not been taken up? I suppose the river banks have invited the people first, where they have been open to selection, and the back country, where we are at present, has not been attractive; because if people came here they could not get their produce away. People with small means could not settle down in this big place, because they could not live upon it. There was neither dairying or any other industry, except stock-raising, until recently.
- 889.

889. Dairying is quite a recent introduction in this district? Yes. The lands probably would have been taken up wherever there was a chance to make a home, but people could not make a living on them because they could not send their produce away. They could neither send it to Lawrence, Grafton, Casino, nor anywhere else. They could only consume it, and they have to do that to-day. E. T. Smith.
2 Mar., 1900.
890. As an old resident, do you regard the dairying industry as quite a new feature in the development of the country? Yes; and I believe it will be a very great success here.
891. Tell us how you deal with your dairy produce;—do you milk twice a day? Yes; and take it to the creamery, which is about 4 miles from my place.
892. Have you to take it within a short time for the milk to be sound? We take the milk to the creamery once a day. The evening's milk is kept for the morning, and we take the two milkings to the creamery in the morning.
893. How do you get paid for your milk? According to the creamery test.
894. Then the creamery people send the cream on to the factory, and you have nothing to do with that? No; we have nothing further to do with it.
895. How far do you think a dairyman could conveniently and profitably send milk to a creamery? We have no trouble in sending ours. We run down to the creamery in about an hour. We are 4 miles distant, and I think we are the furthest away.
896. I think you said that formerly the creamery was in a position that did not suit you;—was that by reason of the distance? Yes; it was about 2 miles further away.
897. Then you think about 5 miles is far enough to send your milk? I could send it twice as far as at present if we had good roads; but the country is so mixed up with creeks and swamps that it is almost impossible to travel. With a good road you could run milk probably about 10 miles. I would sooner run along a good road 6 or 8 miles than I would do 4 miles along my present road.
898. Is your road to the creamery through your own paddocks or along the main road? Partly; it is a bush road.
899. If a railway were constructed, every man would not want a road laid from his dairy to the railway? No; of course, we have bush roads. If a railway came within reasonable distance the way would be open before us.
900. Are you able to maintain your stock all the year round on the natural grass, or have you to feed them? I only have to feed the working horses.
901. You do not have to grow corn or green stuff? We grow corn, oats, and barley, and we throw that to the cows occasionally and to the horses we are feeding, but we never sell any.
902. Is the natural growth sufficient to keep the cows all the year round? Yes.
903. You need not give them corn or anything else, if you do not like? No; of course they are all the better for it.
904. For producing milk, are they better for a little green stuff? Yes; during the winter—during April, May, June, and July.
905. Do cattle thrive well here, or is there any disease? There is disease, but it is not worse here than in any other part of the country, or nearly as bad as I have seen it.
906. Would it be an advantage to you if this railway were constructed;—as you now send your stuff to Casino, would it be any advantage to you to be able to send it the other way towards Grafton? We should be able to send it to another firm if we wanted to do so, so that if there were two competing for the cream instead of only one, it would be better for us. We could send it then to Grafton or any other place if we wanted to do so.
907. From your practical experience, you believe that between Casino and Grafton there is a tract of country which, compared with your own land, is well suited for dairying purposes? I firmly believe there is.
908. What area do you think a beginner would want to take up to get a reasonable living for himself and his family? A man should have thirty good cows and 100 acres of good grass land—paddocks that had been ringbarked and improved.
909. I am speaking of a man going upon the land in its natural state, who could only afford to put up a house and erect a rough fence around the property;—under those circumstances, how many acres would it take to support a beast? I think 6 acres would be sufficient.
910. Even when the timber was not rung? Yes; from 6 to 10 acres.
911. What part of the country do you refer to—the flat land or the ridges? Both combined. By gradual improvement the carrying capacity would increase.
912. The country is well supplied with watercourses and small creeks? In that respect I never saw better country in my life, anywhere; and I have been all over Australia, and can speak from an experience of over fifty years. I never saw better watered country in my life.
913. And do you really think that with better access this would be a place where a number of people would settle in the dairy line? I believe there is not an acre of land on Myrtle Creek, Wyandah, Dobie, or Wyon, that would not be taken up.
914. You say you have been here about twenty-five years;—had you any previous experience in the farming line? I came from Tabulam, where I was a grazier and farmer; I was there for ten years.
915. And you have been well satisfied with the change? Yes.
916. Are there many others like yourself in this locality engaged in the occupation of dairying? Yes.
917. Has that been a recent development? Some of them have been at it longer than I have been, although they have not been resident here so long. I did not start dairying until recently, and others started as soon as they came here.
918. Are they doing well? I believe they are.
919. Is it an increasing industry in the locality? Yes; they are giving a good supply at present, I believe.
920. And you account for the want of settlement so apparent between here and Grafton, mainly by the fact of the land being locked up, and want of better communication? I believe that is the principal reason why the land has not been taken up.
921. If you had better means of access to a market, do you think it would pay you also to grow crops on your land—hay or corn? Most undoubtedly it would.
922. Does hay grow well in this locality? Splendidly. I never saw better oaten hay, and lucerne grows here very well.
923. Have you grown hay? Yes.

- E. T. Smith. 924. What have you got to the acre? I daresay I have got as much as 30 cwt. of oaten hay to the acre. I have a good stack of hay at the present time, and others have good stacks of hay as well as myself. I never saw better hay in my life.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 925. That would be on the flat land? Yes; I believe the ridges would grow it, too, where I am.
926. And corn? And corn too. I have grown both hay and corn on the ridges.
927. What is the best crop of corn that you have grown? The crops are not extremely heavy, especially on the ridges. I think the last crop I got was about 40 bushels to the acre.
928. And that was on the ridges? Partly so.
929. If you could get your stuff away, where should you send it to? We should send it to Sydney if the freight allowed.
930. Would it go to Casino or to Grafton? I presume, to Grafton.
931. Why? The Clarence River is a deep river.
932. You would get your stuff away quicker? Yes.

Cunningham Henderson, grazier, Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Henderson. 933. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been in the district? Ten years.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 934. How many acres of land do you occupy? Four thousand acres conditional purchase and conditional lease.
935. Any under occupation license? No.
936. What amount of stock have you been carrying? At present I have about 300 head, and average from 700 to 800 on the holding, and turn off from 500 to 600 fats every season.
937. I take it, then, you usually take in stores? I buy stores and fatten them; that is my business. The balance of 150 or 200 odd would comprise a few breeders and mixed cattle.
938. How long would you have those 500 or 600 fats on the holding? From eight to twelve months, according to the condition when put on; none of them longer than twelve months.
939. Is your land improved at all? Yes; the bulk of it is well improved.
940. Of what do the improvements consist? Ringbarking and clearing. I have a little artificial grass, but not very much. I find, however, that what little I have put in is a great success. For instance, *paspalum* sown broadcast in the paddocks is a great success.
941. It takes on? Beautifully.
942. And is an improvement on the natural grasses? I think so. I think the greater the variety of grasses on any place the better it is. I would not say that I should like all *paspalum*, but it is a splendid mixture. I make it a rule every season to sow some *paspalum*, some clover, and perhaps some other grasses, but principally the two mentioned.
943. Does the clover seem to thrive well? Yes; just for a few months in the spring. The summer is too hot for it.
944. Your land is all rung? No; about 2,000 acres are ringbarked. It is not all exactly cleared. It has been well scrubbed; there are no suckers; it is kept in good order. That is what I meant by clearing. The timber is not burnt off.
945. What does your land consist of—principally flats? Mostly flat country.
946. Would it be rather above the average of the district, or would it be a fair average? It might be a little better than the average of the whole country.
947. Do you know the country between Grafton and Casino generally? Yes; I have a pretty fair knowledge of it. I have been through it a good deal with fat cattle.
948. Your land would be on the whole better, I suppose, than the average of that country? Yes; better than the average between here and Grafton.
949. Have you tried any cultivation at all? No; I have confined myself to fattening. I find it such a success that there is no need to go in for anything else.
950. Would the construction of a railway affect you personally? It would in this way: it would open up the Sydney market to me. I send a good many cattle to Sydney, and sell to Sydney buyers; but it is a difficult and expensive matter to get cattle to Sydney.
951. How do you send them? Both by rail and steamer. Tenterfield is our nearest point on the railway. That involves about 90 miles of very rough travelling over mostly hilly country, and then the stock have to stand in the trucks.
952. And from there they have to go to Sydney in the trucks? Yes.
953. The other route would be *via* Grafton, I suppose? They are shipped on the Clarence at Lawrence.
954. There is no shipping of cattle done on the Richmond? Very little. I think the bar is a bit too risky there for shipping cattle.
955. I suppose the larger vessels coming to the Clarence offer greater facilities for taking away cattle? Yes; in fact there is only one boat in the whole trade up this way that is constructed for carrying cattle—the “City of Grafton.”
956. If a railway were constructed you think you should be able to send your cattle from here to Grafton and thence by steamer, instead of driving them from here to Grafton? I do not know about that.
957. I understood you to say that a railway would be an improvement on your present arrangements? If I were sending cattle to Grafton to the butchers there I should probably truck them; but I do not know about shipping, because Lawrence is the shipping port.
958. Then how would the railway assist you, because your trade with Grafton would be a small matter? I conclude that eventually it would go right through to Sydney.
959. But we are considering it only as one section? The only way it would affect me in the cattle trade would be perhaps in sending to the Grafton butchers. I believe that if a railway were constructed here I should have to give up fattening cattle. The country would be closely settled. My opinion is I should have to cut up the land into dairy farms before many years.
960. You, yourself, would cut up your land into dairy farms? I think so. I do not think I should be fattening cattle for any great time after the railway were made.
961. I understand there are a number of creameries in this district, or at least one? Speaking of Myrtle Creek, there is only one.

C. Henderson.

2 Mar., 1900.

962. How far is your holding from that creamery? East from it, about 10 miles.

963. As there is a creamery on Myrtle Creek, would it not be possible for you, without a railway, to cut your land up and utilise it for dairy farms? I am afraid the distance is a little too great, considering that it is only a bush road. It would be about 11 miles to the creamery.

964. But assuming that a number of settlers would be willing to send milk to a creamery from about your locality, would it not be possible to get a creamery established to treat their milk? I think so. If even two or three were to combine together I believe it would pay to send the cream 10 miles.

965. So that even if a railway were not constructed you think there would be a possibility of the dairying industry paying about the locality where you are? Yes. The change may occur gradually, but I believe this country will eventually become dairy country, whether there is a railway or not.

966. But a railway, you think, would give a spurt to the industry? I am sure it would.

967. How do you regard the general tract of country between this place and Grafton, as far as grazing is concerned? Taking it as a whole, you could not call it first-class grazing country; there are only patches of good country; but it is all fair grazing country, and it could be improved to a wonderful extent. At present it is thickly timbered, and consequently sour, because the sun scarcely ever shines on it.

968. Assuming it to be ringbarked, and scrubbed where necessary, what would it be able to carry on an average in the way of dairy cattle? Providing it were well improved, from 5 to 10 acres to the beast.

969. When you say well improved, what would that mean? Ringbarked, and kept in order; no scrub allowed to grow. Every year there are fires which clean up a bit of timber.

970. And it would also include, I suppose, doing as you have done—introducing a few new grasses? Of course, with the introduction of any artificial grasses, the carrying capacity would be much improved.

971. There would be an improvement on the estimate you have given? I think so.

972. And could the improvements you mention be done at a moderate cost? The ringbarking could be done at a cost of from 8d. to 1s. an acre, according to the thickness of the timber. The scrubbing would vary considerably. In the flat country it would be almost nil, and in the ridgy country it might cost another 3d. or 4d.

973. After you have got the land ringbarked and scrubbed, is the introduction of new grasses an expensive item? It is if done quickly; it is a thing that must be done gradually to make it inexpensive. The only method is to watch your chance, and after a fire sprinkle seed about where trees have been burnt. The grass will spread itself by cattle eating the seed, and in that way it can be done without any great cost, though it may take a little time.

974. So that a new settler would probably rely in the first instance on the natural grasses? He would require to do so absolutely for a time.

975. In that case you think he would not be able to carry more than a beast to 5 or 10 acres? Taking the average of the country from here to Grafton, I would not say 5 acres at all—that would be in an improved condition. I would say from 10 to 15 acres in its unimproved condition; but as soon as he began to get the benefit of ringbarking and scrubbing, he could increase his stock each season in proportion to the improvements, until he got up to 5 acres to a beast for the best land between here and Grafton—there is not a great area of that class of country—and then from that up to 10 acres.

976. You think then that the higher land, the hilly country, would need, even with improvements, about 10 acres for a beast? Yes, I think it would; taking it alone, apart from the flats.

977. If a settler with a holding of 600 acres had 200 acres of flat land and 400 acres of hilly country, ringbarked and scrubbed, what could he carry per acre, taking the average from here to Grafton? I should say a beast to about from 7 to 10 acres. That is without artificial feed, and provided he improved it pretty well. My experience is that the flat country is very much better as regards carrying capacity than the ridgy country in this district.

978. What is your impression as to the effect that railway construction would have upon the settlement of the land between here and Grafton? I think that wherever there is water available the country would be taken up, if not immediately, within a very short time.

979. For what purpose? Dairying and mixed farming—dairying principally. I think it would be a good country for fruit-growing. I think the nature of the soil would be very suitable for fruit-growing—vineyards for instance.

980. You said where water was available you thought the land would be quickly taken up;—do you intend to convey by that that water is not universally available along this country? If it were cut into small blocks of 600 acres, there would perhaps be a good many blocks without natural water on them. It would be difficult to cut up the country into 600-acre blocks with natural water on each block.

981. On those blocks which had no natural water would it be possible to so conserve water without great expense? Yes, I think so, in the gullies.

982. You have given us your opinion of the country between here and Grafton, and its carrying capacity; how does the country between Myrtle Creek and Casino compare with that? I think it is very much better.

983. Flatter country? The bulk of it is. For 7 miles from here towards Casino it is hilly country, and after that it is mostly flat.

984. And better soil? Yes, it is decidedly better soil.

985. Speaking generally, you think the railway would result in increased settlement? I have no doubt at all about that.

986. And would be a justifiable undertaking? I think so. In fact I have many inquiries from other parts of the Colony as to the advisability of taking up land here; but the want of facilities to get the produce away seems to block people. When they see that there is such a long distance to cart anything they seem to hesitate. They like to get in closer to a town where there is some means of getting rid of their produce.

987. If a railway were constructed, do you think it would have to rely for its freight mainly upon dairy products, or would there be other products which would assist to provide traffic? I think if we had a railway farming would be entered into in this locality—general farming, maize-growing, potato-growing, hay-growing, &c.

988. Do you think the settlers here could compete with people who are growing similar products on the river banks and other richer land? Yes, I think so, for this reason: that here we should be paying at the rate of only 1s. an acre for our land, while on the river banks they pay from £1 to 30s., and even £2 a year, rent. Under those circumstances I think we could compete with them successfully.

989.

- C. Henderson, 989. It would be only on the flat land that you would be able to grow maize, hay, and potatoes? No, I think not; there is also a lot of very fine ridgy country in this district.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 990. Capable of agriculture? Yes, mostly, from here in the direction of Casino. Between here and Sandy Creek there is a great deal of ridgy country very good for agriculture.
991. You would not apply that description to the land between here and Grafton? No; I would not to the ridges, though I think they would be suitable for growing hay.
992. Are we not correct in assuming that the great argument for the construction of the railway is that by that means a large dairying industry would be fostered? Yes; I believe that to be the chief idea. It would settle a thick population in the district.
993. Any other production would be subsidiary to the dairying industry? Yes, perhaps so; although we have other products. There is, for instance, the prospect of an enormous timber trade between here and the Clarence.
994. You think that would be a considerable item in the traffic? I am certain of it.
995. There is good timber on the ridges? There is a marvellous lot of good timber within a radius of 10 miles of Myrtle Creek.
996. Just a little west of the route, I understand, there is good timber again on the Richmond Range? Yes; in fact, when you get 15 miles this side of Grafton there is a splendid lot of timber. On Camira station, and part of what was originally the Camira holding, but which has since been thrown up, there is a wonderful lot of ironbark. It is hard to say when it will be exhausted, unless there is a railway to carry it away. I think the timber trade would be about the biggest item of the lot for a number of years, and that would be an immediate return, without waiting for settlement.
997. I think you said the timber would go towards Grafton? Mainly, I believe, it would for shipping purposes.
998. Because of the greater facilities there for shipping? Yes.
999. Coming back to the question of agricultural development in this district, is it not a fact that a number of people who are paying high rents on the river frontages and the rich river lands, are entering into dairying and giving up agricultural production? I believe to a certain extent they are, more especially sugar-growers. I do not say much about maize-growers. But I think the chief reason for that on the river banks is a fear of floods. They are sure of the dairying.
1000. We have been given to understand that on land that is nearer Lismore and along the existing railway line, people have gone in largely for the dairy industry, where the land is quite good enough for agriculture? Yes; in the big scrub, for instance, it is very good agricultural ground.
1001. If it pays those people, who have land capable of much higher agricultural production than would be possible here, to go in for dairying, is it not possible that it would pay you even to a greater extent to take up dairying rather than agriculture? Yes; but I think it probable there will be a bit of agriculture done also, to supplement, or in connection with, the dairying, which I think would be the chief industry. I have a little knowledge of a firm engaged in the timber business on the Clarence, and I know that they have constructed a tramway for a distance of 12 or 13 miles from Deepwater, on the Clarence River, towards Myrtle Creek, and the bulk of their timber is taken from between here and 15 miles away to the south and south-east. They take the bulk of their timber from the locality of Myrtle Creek and Myall Creek.
1002. How many miles from Lawrence would 15 miles from here be? That would be, roughly, half way.
1003. So that they start taking timber 15 miles from Lawrence, and come right out to Myrtle Creek? Yes. In many cases they draw timber by road for a distance of 34 and 35 miles. I believe they have 200 men employed, including all hands; such as mill-hands, squarers, and teamsters.
1004. Why is it necessary for them to go that distance back for timber, when, as you say, there is good timber for many miles on the Grafton side of Myrtle Creek? The timber reserves have a good deal to do with it. There are a great many timber reserves along that road.
1005. But they can get on to the timber reserves? They have to pay a royalty and an extra license fee, and they avoid the reserves where possible, and they are now simply picking the timber.
1006. They go further afield in order to avoid paying the fees which they would have to pay if they cut on a forest reserve? I believe so. That is what I heard the timber-getters say themselves. That is the reason they go out so far.
1007. So that they pass by good timber in order to get the other cheaper? Yes.

Thomas Francis O'Keeffe, dairy-farmer, Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined.—

- T.F.O'Keeffe, 1008. *Mr. McParlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the district? Yes; I have known it for nearly forty years, although I have been away from it for some years.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 1009. Could you tell us how many residents there are in the locality? West of here there are about thirty-two or thirty-three.
1010. Is that on the creek? On the creek and its tributaries.
1011. What is their principal occupation? Dairy-farming principally, also grazing and some agriculture.
1012. Where is the agricultural land—on the banks of the creek? Yes; the alluvial flats on the banks of the creeks.
1013. What do they principally grow? At the present time principally maize and vegetables.
1014. Is that for market purposes? No; only for what local market there is.
1015. The maize must be for fodder? No; it is sold locally.
1016. What is your opinion of the district in regard to its capacity for dairying purposes? I believe when it is opened up and ringbarked, and otherwise improved, it will become a place of denser settlement. It is capable of carrying a large population. The country here, if ringbarked, would carry on an average a beast to 5 acres—the whole of it—and on some of the alluvial flats a good deal more.
1017. You consider the alluvial flats better for dairying than the ridgy portions? Yes, for grazing.
1018. Would that apply to cultivation also? Yes; the ridges would grow the lighter cereals, such as oats; but not the heavier crops, such as corn. In comparison with the west, this district carries a greater number of stock to the acre. The grass grows with a better sward. In the western country it grows in tufts. Here, with heavy stocking, the natural grass, such as the blady grass, would be destroyed, and a better quality of grass would take its place.
1019. What is your experience in regard to the blady grass—does it diminish after working the land? Yes; it diminishes by overstocking at first, and couch grass then takes its place. 1020.

T. F. O'Keefe.

2 Mar., 1900.

1020. Is that a better grass for stock purposes? Yes; it will carry more stock.
1021. Do you consider the land suitable for artificial grasses? Yes.
1022. It is sufficiently rich? Yes.
1023. Is the country between Casino and Grafton of a similar character, speaking generally, to the country you have described on Myrtle Creek? There are many flats along the various creeks—such as Sportsman Creek and Myall Creek—of the same character as Myrtle Creek, but I think on Myrtle Creek there is a larger scope of good country.
1024. Do you know the country well between Casino and Grafton, along the proposed line? Yes; I have been over it many times.
1025. What would you consider to be the value of the land along the line, in its natural condition, taking the ridgy land first? I notice that on the other side of the Clarence the Government have fixed the price of land at 30s. an acre. Well, I would rather give £6 an acre for this land than 30s. for that.
1026. But you would not put that as the value of the land? No; but if the Government valuation of 30s. for the other land is correct, then this land is worth £6.
1027. But what value would you put on it? I should estimate it in its natural state at about £1 per acre.
1028. And the value of land such as you describe at Sportsman Creek? If you pick the eyes out it would be worth a little more.
1029. But, putting the two together, and supposing the land were cut into blocks in an ordinary way so as to include with the ridgy land a fair proportion of flat land? In my estimate of £1 an acre I assume that it would be near railway communication. It would then be worth £1 an acre, independently of improvements and in its natural state. Of course, it would ultimately become enhanced in value by ring-barking and other improvements.
1030. What would you consider its value at the present time? I do not think it would be of much value at the present time. It could not be used for dairy purposes or farming. I think it would be worth 10s. an acre for grazing purposes alone.
1031. But, if it were ringbarked and fenced, its value would be considerably enhanced? Yes; I believe it would.
1032. In the event of the proposed railway being constructed, do you think this is a class of country that would be taken up for dairy purposes and for agriculture? Yes.
1033. Taking the general character of the country, in the event of railway construction, what area do you think would be sufficient to maintain a family? I should think about 100 acres should maintain a family—after it is improved.
1034. Would not that be a small area? Not of improved land. I think 100 acres used for dairy purposes would carry sufficient stock to support a family.
1035. I suppose a good deal would depend on the size of the family? Take an average family, say a man and his wife, and four children.
1036. How many cows would 100 acres keep, properly worked? About twenty cows; that would be 5 acres to the cow.
1037. Would the land of average quality maintain one cow to every 5 acres? Taking a general average it would. There are some sandy ridges between here and Grafton, and some inferior land that would not do that.
1038. Do you think the best portions of the land between Grafton and Casino—the flats, for instance—would be used for agricultural purposes; I mean for market purposes? Yes. I think in many places settlers would go in for mixed farming—dairying and agriculture.
1039. Is there much of that class of country along the proposed line—taking a scope of country 10 miles on each side? Yes. On the west side of Myrtle Creek alone I should say there are about 10,000 acres suitable for agriculture. I am not acquainted with the eastern side.
1040. At the average price realised in the Sydney market, do you think it would pay those engaged in cultivation to send maize to market? Yes; taking one year with another I think the land would always average 40 bushels to the acre—that is, the alluvial flats.
1041. Would that average pay the grower at an ordinary price? Yes. I believe it is only the average on the Clarence River banks.
1042. Have you any knowledge of timber? Yes; I have had some years experience in the timber business. I had saw-mills for a number of years. I think a large trade would be done here in timber if there were a railway.
1043. Do you think it likely that the railway would be used for carrying the timber? Yes; the rates are pretty reasonable.
1044. And the timber would go in the direction to Grafton? Yes; to deep water. The local mills at Casino might take some, but that for export would go to deep water, at Grafton.

Henry Valentine Rapp, dairy-farmer, Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined:—

1045. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Dairying. I live close to Myrtle Creek, about 3 miles from here.
1046. How long have you been here? Twenty years.
1047. Have you been carrying on dairying all that time? No; only for the last two and a half years.
1048. What was your occupation before that? Grazing, and doing a little farming.
1049. What extent of land have you? 1,200 acres.
1050. What induced you to go in for dairying? I thought it was the best thing I could do. All my neighbours in the district seemed to be going in for it, and doing pretty well, so I thought I would have a try too.
1051. What has been the result? Very satisfactory. Like all other new places we did not start with the right class of cattle—with a picked herd of milkers, and that sort of thing. I have about 150 cows. They require a little more picking yet to make a good dairy herd. I have no particular breed. I have now gone in for the Ayrshire cross to get a dairy herd.
1052. Of these 150 cows how many do you milk? We milk, on an average, forty-five.
1053. Why only that number out of 150? Well, you cannot always be milking them. It is a bad thing to milk them out too far; it is better to let them go.

H. V. Rapp.

2 Mar., 1900.

- H. V. Rapp. 1054. But have you not rather a large proportion of non-milkers out of 150 cows? No, I do not think so—not as far as I have gone yet. There are times when I milk more, but in the winter time I do not milk so many as I do in the summer. I have never kept a diary to see what I really do milk, but I estimate about forty-five to fifty all the year round.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 1055. They told us in Grafton that they generally milk about eighty out of 120? People who have the real dairy cows will milk their cows longer. I send my milk to the creamery, a distance of about 2 miles.
1056. You heard the evidence of Mr. Smith, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. O'Keeffe, as to the capabilities of the district generally and its prospects in particular from a dairy point of view;—do you agree with the views expressed by those gentlemen? Yes; I think what Mr. O'Keeffe said was pretty correct.
1057. He puts down the land, in its unimproved state, at 10s. an acre; but do you not think that is rather low? Yes; I think it is worth more than that. I think it is worth £1 an acre. All the land about here has been taken up, and we all have to pay the Government £1 an acre for it.
1058. One pound an acre at present? Yes. I would not take £1 an acre for mine.
1059. Have you improved yours much? Yes; I have improved it a good deal. I have fenced and ring-barked, and burnt a good deal of the timber off.
1060. Do you agree with the former witnesses, that when this land is ringbarked it carries one beast to about 5 acres? Yes, that, I think, would be the average; but there are places where it would not take 5 acres to feed a beast.
1061. But 5 acres is about a fair average? Yes. I think so, on a good deal of it.
1062. What crops can be grown advantageously about this part? We can grow maize, potatoes, and hay. On good land on the flats I can grow almost any mortal thing. Everything I have put in has grown.
1063. Sugar? I have grown splendid cane, in small patches.
1064. Do you think that is likely to become a large industry on the flats? Yes; I think so.
1065. It is not necessary to cart that so far? No; if we had a railway we should not want to cart it far.
1066. The dairying industry, you have observed, has gone ahead a good deal? Yes. With regard to our creamery, we have to pay £3 to the company for running our cream to Casino. The cream goes in three times a week, and we have to pay £1 each time for running it in. That is deducted from our cheques, besides a halfpenny a gallon for working expenses. That is a big burden upon us.
1067. During the last three or four years have several other people started dairying here? Yes, several people; and there have been people here looking for places lately. There is one man who has recently come from the Clarence River, but he has not started milking yet. South Coast people, and other strangers who come here, think it is too far away; they try to get in nearer to the towns and centres of population. The land on this creek is as good as anything on the northern rivers. About a mile from here, up the creek, you get on to good open black-soil flats which would surprise you.
1068. But the distance from Sydney or the nearest port makes settlement almost impossible? Yes. We go in largely for pigs on the creek. The maize we grow is nearly all used for feeding pigs, except what is required for the horses in the winter. We have to drive our pigs to Lawrence or to Tatham, a distance of 20 miles, in order to get rid of them.
1069. Would you grow hay and corn for export if you had access to a market? Yes, I think so.
1070. We have been led to believe all through this inquiry that dairying has a great future on the land between Casino and Grafton;—do you believe that? Yes.
1071. And that ridgy country, when cleared and improved, you think is peculiarly suitable for grazing cattle? Yes; that is my experience and observation.

George Henry McKee, farmer and grazier, Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- G. H. McKee. 1072. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the size of your holding? 1,280 acres conditional purchase and conditional lease.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 1073. Does it include any rented land? No. I have 3,000 acres under annual lease in connection with my brother.
1074. What stock do you run on your land? About 500 head on both properties. I have about 150 cows, which I am working into a dairy herd in the paddocks. I may say that I have only recently started dairying. I was away for five years on the Lismore side, at Alstonville. I left here when the cattle market was rather bad, as I was depending on fat cattle, and I went over on the Lismore side and started a butchering business, and I also did a little dairy-farming. As I did not require all the paddocks here for fat cattle, that gave me the idea of dairying, which I had found paid really well, and when the creamery was started here I made up my mind to return, and go in for dairying pretty extensively. I find that the same cattle I milked over there last summer milk equally well, if not better, here. I am perfectly satisfied that this country produces as much milk per cow as the big scrub, which is reckoned one of the best dairying districts in the Colony. I get better results here from the same cattle as regards the flow of milk, although I do not get as good results from the creamery.
1075. Is your land improved? The whole of the conditional purchase land and conditional lease land is improved, but the other is in its natural state.
1076. Does your conditional purchase and conditional lease land consist mainly of hilly country? No; mostly flat country.
1077. How far is it situated from Myrtle Creek? About 5 miles to the west.
1078. You have heard the general tenor of the evidence given about the suitability of this country generally for dairying and cattle grazing—do you endorse that evidence? Yes.
1079. There is a considerable trade in timber between this district and the Clarence, is there not? Yes.
1080. Do you know what the saw-mill proprietors pay the teams for carting the timber into Lawrence? Only for a certain distance. One carrier told me he got 1s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet for carting timber from the "Travellers' Rest" into Lawrence, a distance of something over 10 miles. We have an unlimited quantity of timber here, and it would be a great item of carriage on the railway.
1081. Some questions have been asked of previous witnesses with reference to the growing and exporting of hay in the event of a railway being constructed, and the opinion was expressed that that will be undertaken;—do you coincide with that idea? Yes; I think there would be a fair amount of produce grown for export if we had access to a market.
1082. The freight charged on the main railway lines of the Colony for hay in 6-ton truck-loads is, for
over

over 40 miles, 3s. 3d. per ton;—assuming that that rate were charged, do you think it would pay a man to send his hay by railway to Grafton for shipment from there to Sydney? Yes; because at present we could not cart it by road under 10s. a ton. G. H. McKee.
2 Mar., 1900.

1083. But you would not probably undertake to export it by road? No.

1084. Do you think the prices obtained in Sydney are sufficient to justify a farmer here in paying 2s. 3d. per ton for the carriage of hay, in addition to the steamer freight? Yes, I think so; in fact, I am sure of it.

1085. You endorse the statements of previous witnesses as to the necessity for a railway, and the good results that would ensue to the district? Yes.

Henry Harris, dairy-farmer, Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined:—

1086. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What are you? A dairy-farmer. I have been residing at Myrtle Creek for about three years. I have a holding of 800 acres—a conditional purchase and a conditional lease. H. Harris.
2 Mar., 1900.

1087. How long have you been dairying? About three years.

1088. Do you find it profitable? Yes.

1089. Is your holding improved, and, if so, to what extent? I have ringbarked about 500 acres since I took it up three years ago.

1090. Is it fenced and subdivided? It is partly subdivided.

1091. And improved? Of course it has improved very much since I ringbarked it.

1092. Some of it is unimproved? Yes.

1093. And unfenced? Yes; some of it is unfenced—a small area.

1094. How many dairy cows have you? About fifty head.

1095. All milking? I am milking only about thirty now.

1096. Are you on Myrtle Creek? No; I am 6 miles from here—pretty well north towards Casino.

1097. How far are you from a creamery? I have a separator in connection with my brother; we send our cream to Casino, a distance of 16 miles. We take it to the New South Wales Creamery at Deep Creek, and it goes in from there.

1098. Do you cultivate any portion of the holding? Only a small area at present, principally for green feed for the cattle.

1099. Is your holding suitable for cultivation for market purposes? Yes; we can grow anything we have tried. White clover does well there.

1100. Is your holding fully stocked? No.

1101. How many acres would carry a cow, in its improved condition? The improved land will carry a beast to 3 acres well.

1102. Have you artificial grasses? Only a small percentage of white clover.

1103. Do you know the locality about Myrtle Creek and the different dairy holdings there? I do not know them very well except out where I am living and further from Casino. I have an intimate knowledge of the country between here and Casino.

1104. Do you know whether the holdings on the creek are similar to yours, or is yours superior? There is any quantity as good as mine; mine is about the average. There are some poorer and some a little better; the bulk of my country is very ridgy and rather steep.

1105. Was any portion of it scrub country? No; all forest.

1106. Thickly timbered? Medium. I consider the ridges between my place and Casino the best—better than the flats—either for grazing or agriculture.

1107. Do you know the country south from here towards Grafton? Not intimately; I have travelled over it by coach a few times.

1108. You could not say whether the ridges between Myrtle Creek and Grafton are similar to those on your holding? I do not believe they are, from what I have seen in travelling by coach.

1109. What is the character of the ridgy country referred to, similar to your holding? It is volcanic.

1110. With chocolate soil? Some chocolate and some black.

1111. What agricultural products do you think it would raise? We grow maize and potatoes, and we also grow lucerne in small quantities for the purpose of feeding for milk.

1112. Did you ever take a record of the number of bushels one acre could produce? No.

1113. Could you make an estimate of how many bushels to the acre the land would grow—say, of maize? I am certain we could grow 50 bushels to the acre.

1114. You consider that a good yield? A fair average yield for that country.

1115. Is there much of that class of country between Myrtle Creek and Casino? The bulk of it is of a similar character to mine and suitable for cultivation.

1116. Is it alienated—taken up in holdings? Most of it. I may say that three portions have been taken up within a very short distance of my place during the last month, in anticipation of the railway. Three years ago, when I came here, the population of the parish of Ellangowan did not number more than twelve persons, and now there are about fifty residents.

1117. How many holdings? I could not say. Some holdings are only used for grazing at present; no one is living on a good many of the holdings.

1118. In the event of a railway being constructed, would this land be placed under cultivation, or would it remain under dairying? I believe it would remain under dairying.

1119. The whole of it? Yes; pretty well.

1120. If this land is capable of producing 50 bushels to the acre, would not the people go in for cultivating maize? I do not think so, the country being too hilly; it is rather expensive to work.

1121. It is too steep? Yes. The soil is good enough, but the farmers will not go in for maize-growing extensively, for the reason just stated.

1122. You were present this evening when a number of witnesses gave their opinion of the character of the country along the line of the proposed railway, and also gave evidence with regard to dairying, and agriculture, and timber;—do you endorse the statements made generally by them? Yes; I do.

1123. Is there anything they have omitted which you would like to add? There is a large area of land between here and Casino that would be taken up almost immediately if it were open for selection and people had a railway or other means of getting their produce to market.

- H. Harris. 1124. Have you heard of many inquiries by people desirous of taking up farms for dairy purposes? I have heard of several during the last month—people who have come from the South Coast.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 1125. In the event of railway construction, do you think, from the statements of the different witnesses as to the quality of the land between Myrtle Creek and Grafton, that it would be likely to be taken up for dairy purposes? I believe it would.
1126. Where did you live before coming to the Richmond? I lived in Illawarra for many years.
1127. Were you carrying on dairying there? Yes.
1128. How does the Illawarra district compare with holdings such as yours in this locality;—is it inferior or superior? I believe the country where we are, between here and Casino, is better than the average run of the Illawarra country—that it will carry more cattle, and that the cattle will give more milk. At any rate, that is my experience. The soil is richer on the average.
1129. In your opinion, it is more profitable here than in the Illawarra district? Yes.
1130. That would be owing to the better character of the land? Owing to the better character of the land principally.
1131. How far would it pay to send milk to a creamery? About 4 miles in this district. According to our experience we could not send cream more than 10 miles by road.
1132. It would not pay to convey it more than 10 miles by road? It might pay; but it would be a big handicap to a dairy-farmer to have to send his cream more than 10 miles.
1133. You are more than 10 miles from Casino? Yes; we are 15 miles. We cart our cream 9 miles, and the company cart it the other 6 miles.
1134. Do you consider that if the proposed railway were constructed it would so materially benefit the dairymen as to cause a very large increase in settlement, even between here and Casino? Yes.
1135. In the event of a railway being constructed from Grafton to Casino in what direction would the cream be likely to go? I think the bulk of it would go to Grafton. Of course, the farmer always takes what is the best market; but I think it would go to Grafton, which would be its natural market; otherwise it would have to go to Lismore to be shipped to Sydney. As a matter of fact, we have only the two shipping ports—Lismore and Grafton—and I think it would go to Grafton.
1136. Casino is not touched by ocean-going ships? No.

Alfred Edward Harris, dairy-farmer, Myrtle Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- A. E. Harris. 1137. *Chairman.*] You are a brother of the last witness? Yes.
- 2 Mar., 1900. 1138. And you work in conjunction with him in the dairying business? I own the separator, and I separate for him.
1139. How long is it since you started? I have been dairying off and on for about nine years.
1140. In this district? Yes, at Ellangowan.
1141. How long have you been treating the milk for cream and butter? About five years.
1142. Have you been using your own separator all the time? Yes. I first had a hand separator, but now I have a steam separator.
1143. The milk of how many cows can you treat with that separator? I can treat 400 gallons of milk a day; that would be the product of about 400 cows.
1144. Do you treat the milk of any other producers besides yourself and your brother? I am treating the milk of six persons now.
1145. Do you charge the same as the other creamery? It is impossible to know what they charge. I charge $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a gallon.
1146. Does that pay you? It only just pays me, but it helps things along. Then we have to pay the company to take the cream to Casino.
1147. Are there only two separators in this district—yours and the one mentioned before? Between my place and Casino I should think there are nearly a dozen—towards Tatham.
1148. Have these all grown up within the last four or five years? Yes.
1149. Showing that the dairy industry is increasing? Yes.
1150. Have you had experience in dairying in any other parts of the Colony? Yes; I came from Dapto.
1151. Which district do you think the better for dairying? I think this district—that is, Ellangowan, and towards Casino, and out this way to Myrtle Creek—is fully equal to Illawarra. You get the tail-end of the volcanic country here.
1152. And, of course, you can get land cheaper here? Yes.
1153. What did you pay for yours? £1 an acre.
1154. What is the area? 1,280 acres.
1155. Free selection and conditional lease? Yes.
1156. Are you enlarging your operations, as you can do so, year by year? Yes; improving the place and enlarging it.
1157. And you are well satisfied with the district as a dairying district? I am well satisfied.
1158. Your brother has told us that there is a good deal of this land similar to yours, suitable for dairying—is that so? Yes; there are thousands of acres.
1159. Of this volcanic soil? Yes.
1160. I understand the Crown lands were mostly taken up? Still there are any amount of places where there is a small portion of this volcanic soil. I know a great deal of the land between here and Grafton. The land I have taken up is incomparably superior to the land between here and Grafton.
1161. What do you think of the land between here and Grafton from a dairy point of view? It is only summer dairying country.
1162. What do you mean by that? The grass is not suitable for winter dairying, but it is suitable for summer dairying.
1163. What is the matter with it in winter? The frosts cut it up, and I do not think it will grow artificial grasses very well. I would not like the country on the north side of Myrtle Creek to be judged by the country on the other side.
1164. Before selecting, did you look at the land between here and Grafton? I looked at some of it.
1165. And did not care about it? No, I did not; it is grazing country.
1166. Fattening country, but not for dairy purposes? Not proper for dairy purposes.
1167. Is that your opinion as a practical dairyman? Yes. 1168.

1168. If you had not been able to get this chocolate country you speak of, would you have taken up any of the land between here and Grafton? Not between here and Lawrence—not unless it was alongside the railway line. A. E. Harris.
2 Mar., 1900.

1169. But how would a railway help you to get over the frosts in winter? It would not; but, of course, one would prefer to take up land conveniently situated.

1170. But do you not want to dairy all the year round? It is not profitable in all cases. Your cows only milk well half the year, without feed. You can milk half the year without feed, and I think you could dairy on all this country all through the summer months well.

1171. But in the winter you would have to feed? You would have to turn all the cattle dry. You could dairy all through the summer—say for eight months.

1172. Would it pay a dairyman to work his cows only for half the year? Yes; because he could not work them for more than eight months at any time.

1173. Would it be practicable for you to grow crops in the summer months with which to feed your cattle during the winter months, and so go on milking them all the year;—would not that be a profitable occupation in that country? Yes, I think it would be.

1174. If this land were ringbarked and improved, would that help to make it available for dairying during the winter months? I do not think so. I do not think it is ever winter dairying country. I think it would pay a man better to sell all his winter springers and dairy through the summer.

SATURDAY, 3 MARCH, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the "Commercial Hotel," Casino, at 6 p.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Francis Grant Fanning, grazier, Deep Creek, sworn, and examined:—

1175. *Chairman.*] Where is your holding? At Deep Creek, 6 miles south from Casino.

1176. How long have you resided there? I have resided there continuously for eleven years. I have been in the district for eighteen years, off and on. F. G. Fanning.
3 Mar., 1900.

1177. Do you know the surveyed railway line between here and Grafton—I mean at the Casino end;—there is one survey from Myrtle Creek in a straight line to Casino, and there is another which takes a more westerly course to Casino? Yes; I know those two routes.

1178. Would you compare those two routes in regard to the effect of floods? My remarks will apply to the 1891 flood—the big flood in these creeks. With regard to the deviation, on the west side of the main road the flood waters of Deep Creek are about a mile and a quarter in width, most of them being very light and shallow. They are comparatively harmless, as they are confined to two permanent water-courses—the Serpentine and Deep Creek. There are no waters on the Serpentine, but on each side of Deep Creek the flood-waters extend to some extent. In regard to the original survey I should say the flooded country through which the line would go would be from $3\frac{1}{4}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles across; in fact it is all heavily-flooded country. The greater part of it is dense ti-tree country, and in flood-time is covered in many places with 5 or 6 feet of water, running strongly. We never attempt to cross these waters in flood-time, there being a very strong current of water. The water flows over the main watercourse and spreads over the country generally.

1179. *Mr. Watson.*] It has been suggested that a deviation might be made more to the east, which would cross the Deep Creek waters about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles further down, easterly from the main road;—for what distance along that line is the country bad in flood-time, what is the depth of water, and how far does it extend along that line—say 3 miles below your house? There is not quite as much water along that route as on the original survey, because there is a sand ridge by which the water is confined. The waters on the suggested route have not the same strength as those on the original survey.

1180. How does the original survey compare with the proposed easterly deviation, with regard to flood-waters;—would you class them as similar? No. I think the easterly deviation would be the better of the two. There is less force of water on the deviation, but I do not think there is much difference with regard to length. The adopted westerly route is the best of the three undoubtedly, because the water, as I have already explained, is confined to two watercourses, and can be much more easily dealt with.

MONDAY, 5 MARCH, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Town Hall, Casino, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Donald Campbell, grazier, Woodlands, sworn, and examined:—

1181. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am a grazier, residing at present at Woodlands. D. Campbell.

1182. That is in the direction of Kyogle? Yes, 4 miles from here, on the road to Queensland.

1183. How long have you been there? I have only been here two years; but I have been living on the other side of the road for some ten or twelve years. Before that I was manager of the Woorooloolgan station for eighteen years. 5 Mar., 1900.

- D. Campbell. 1184. That station is situated between here and Grafton? It is about 4 miles from here.
- 5 Mar., 1900. 1185. How far does it extend? It extends to Myrtle Creek, some 20 miles.
1186. What area is comprised in that run? It covers 20 miles from the head station to the head of Wyan Creek.
1187. And how much the other way? About 18 miles.
1188. The proposed line goes through a great deal of that station, does it not? Yes.
1189. Would you tell us briefly the character of the country comprised within its boundaries? Where the line is supposed to go, right across that country, it is not the best character of country.
1190. Is it ridgy or flat? Chiefly flat; but the road from Myrtle Creek through the run until it comes into Deep Creek here, is about the best part of the whole route—where that road actually goes.
1191. This end of the run is the worst? No; I think Myrtle Creek, until you come to Deep Creek—that is 5 miles from here. Coming from the Clarence this way there is, I should say, about 14 or 15 miles of the very worst. Going in any one direction from that it is much better.
1192. We will take that stretch of bad country;—is that of any use for agricultural purposes? There is no doubt the frontages of the creeks are very good.
1193. What would the land grow? It would grow maize, hay, and wheat.
1194. Is there any cultivation of that kind on that land? There are only maize, potatoes, and corn at the present time.
1195. In small quantities, for local consumption? Yes.
1196. With better means of communication do you think that land would be improved and used largely for cultivation? There is no doubt it would be. When you leave this stretch I speak of the country falls into better flats and the river frontages extend more, and then the ridges come in. These are not high; they are undulating ridges. In fact the ridges are the best of it. There are no ridges of any consequence. On both sides of the road you fall into Myrtle Creek and Myall Creek, and there is a good deal of frontage on these creeks.
1197. We want to distinguish between the ridgy and the flat country;—you have told us that the flat country on the edges of the creeks would be suitable for agriculture? They are at present, I suppose, chiefly used for grazing.
1198. With regard to the ridgy portion of this bad part you speak of, what is that suitable for? At the present time it is only used for grazing, but it would produce crops as good or better than some of the rest. There is very good land—a sort of reddish-brown soil, deep and very good; but it is chiefly low country.
1199. How does it compare with the country between here and Kyogle? There is no comparison. One acre of the country between here and Kyogle is worth 5 acres of that.
1200. For both purposes? For agricultural purposes. From Deep Creek right round until you come to Fawcett's Creek, for 40 miles each way. I do not think you could get a finer patch for agriculture in any part of the Colony. That is, going from Woorooloolgan, straight west and north, until you come to Fawcett's Creek.
1201. Is this rich country between here and Kyogle largely cultivated at the present time? Not very largely; but there is a good deal of cultivation on it.
1202. It is chiefly used for grazing? Yes; but there are a great number of selectors.
1203. This rich, good land is mostly alienated? Yes.
1204. With such a large area of much better land adjacent, and at present under cultivation, what are the prospects of the inferior land being taken up? This rich land, of course, will go a long time before the other. You may depend upon it not an acre of that would be left before people would go and select on the other.
1205. But they cannot get this rich land, because it is alienated? At the present time they are trying to get the people on it as fast as they can. Mr. Griffiths told me the last time he was up, only a month ago, that he had forty tenants now.
1206. Would it pay a man better to rent land of this rich soil from a large holder rather than go and take up the land we have spoken of, from Myrtle Creek this way, knowing that he would get the poor land at a very cheap rate, as compared with what he would have to pay for the rich land? It would pay a man to give 15s. an acre rent for this rich country.
1207. In preference to paying £1 an acre to free select the other land? It would pay him better, because he would get a greater return, and he could support a family on so much less land. The ground is undeniably good. It is good for anything we have tried it for yet, and the other land is much poorer.
1208. Then, your contention is that it is better for a settler to have a small area of rich reliable land than a large area of poor land? Much better. People, as a rule, some time ago went in for getting large areas, but they find now that a smaller area of good land is less costly, and keeps them better, and it is better looked after. When a family gets too much ground it is neglected, and it only grows weeds instead of a proper crop.
1209. Do you regard 640 acres as a large block of land for a poor man to handle in this district? Yes.
1210. Could you, from your experience, explain why it is that this large area is not suitable for a small beginner? Because the land is not so rich, and it wants the same labour; you must put the same labour on it for fencing, and all that. It costs a lot to put it under crop, and if it does not repay a man, he is done at once.
1211. In the case of poor land in its natural state, how many acres do you think it would take to carry one cow? About 14 or 15 acres; if ringbarked and improved, I should say about 9 acres.
1212. In regard to this better land, which you say a man could rent for about 15s. an acre, what is its carrying capacity? About 5 or 6 acres to a beast.
1213. As he gets it? As it is at present.
1214. Is that fenced in, or would he have to fence it? It is not fenced in. Any land a man would take up he would have to fence. He would just get the land. Of course, the owner or leaseholder from whom he rents the land would help to fence it for him at starting; but then the man is paying, say, from 5s. to 15s. an acre. He gets the land for the first three years perhaps for 4s. or 5s. Then the rent is raised half a crown every year; but it is better for a man to get 15s. or 20s. an acre for his land than to leave it under stock. At present he would only get about 5s. a year return for his land; but if he lease it out, as the owners

owners are beginning to do, then he makes that 5s. to begin with, and every year the rent is raised, until in a few years he will get £1 an acre. D. Campbell.

1215. That is very good from the landowner's point of view; but from a tenant's point of view how will he go on paying this increased rental? It pays him better to do it, because he makes a very good living out of it. 5 Mar., 1900.

1216. Has dairying increased much in this district during the last few years? During the last three or four years its increase has been something wonderful, and it is going ahead every day.

1217. What class of country have the dairymen selected for their holdings? The best country they could possibly get—the creeks and river frontages.

1218. Rented land? Yes.

1219. What size holdings have they chiefly made a start with? From 200 to 400 acres; some of them have a good deal more.

1220. Take a man with small means to begin with? From 200 acres to 400 acres.

1221. Then on this 200 acres, at your estimate, he can carry forty beasts? Yes.

1222. Can he make a living off that? He makes a very good living off it with his cows and his pigs—that is, if he has a family, and is not paying for labour. If he is paying for labour he wants 600 or 800 acres, because he must have about 100 or 130 cattle.

1223. But the small beginner must work with his own hands and with the assistance of his family? Yes.

1224. Can you point to any instances where a man has come here and taken up within a reasonable distance of Casino any of this bush land—not the red-soil land—but the land you speak of as inferior, land open for free selection? A good number have taken up land.

1225. Whereabouts? It is all taken up from Coraki right up within a mile of the Lawrence and Casino road—between Sandy Creek and Deep Creek, and on what they call Scrub Creek—on fringes in between.

1226. It is taken up as selected land? Yes.

1227. And what are the people doing? Dairying, and they are doing well. When I first knew the people were going there—I was then managing Woorooloolgen—I asked them if they were mad, and what they intended to do. But there they are to-day, and they are well off, and doing, and have lots of stock, dairying, and growing what crop they use for themselves.

1228. And they have holdings of about 500 or 600 acres? Some of them have 1,280 acres. They have taken up 640 acres, and then they have taken up their full quantity. Some of them would select 300 acres, and then would take three times that area again as a grazing right. Nearly all of them have taken up grazing rights as well as their first conditional purchases.

1229. Does not that rather point to the conclusion that the bad land you have spoken of is suitable for dairy purposes? There is no doubt it will be made available. Every bit of it will be taken some day, there is no question about it; but it is nothing like this other country.

1230. I suppose you know all that country pretty well between here and Grafton? I do.

1231. Do you think that the country on either side of the proposed railway line would also be likely to be taken up if they had a ready means of communication? There is no doubt that every inch of it will be taken up, although the country is far inferior to what it is when you come to Deep Creek, and 5 or 6 miles to Casino on the Tabulam, and going west and north from that. The country there is very different altogether. People who come from Grafton or Lawrence can never imagine we have such country at the back here, and unless they go out and see for themselves.

1232. You mean on either side of the line, but further back? Yes.

1233. As an old resident of the district, do you think there would be any interchange of products between Casino and Grafton, if there were a railway line;—is there anything you grow here that they do not grow, and anything they grow that you do not grow, that would bring a large revenue to the railway? There is nothing, I think, in which there would be any interchange between here and Grafton, except stock. We always did supply the Clarence River with cattle; they do not seem to fatten enough cattle for themselves. But I think the journey would be too short to take the trouble to put the cattle on the train.

1234. With good grass, and wide roads, you think they would travel the stock in preference to trucking them? I think so, because between here and Grafton the grass and water are good at all times of the year.

1235. If a railway were constructed between here and Grafton, do you think the main item of revenue in the way of freight would be dairy produce? I think that is all. On the Clarence they grow everything that we do here.

1236. You do not think there would be much interchange of produce? I do not think so.

1237. This a large cattle-fattening district? Yes.

1238. By what means are the cattle conveyed to market;—do many go by steamer? Not many. They go principally to Tenterfield. One or two small lots have gone by steamer from Lawrence to Sydney this year; but as a rule the cattle go from here to Tenterfield, and thence by train. The journey from here to Tenterfield is very heavy on stock. They have nine days on the road, and it is very hard on their feet. Cattle grown on the flat country are cut up a bit. A great number of cattle have gone to Sydney from here by train; in fact three or four drovers were continually going last year.

1239. I want to ask you a very important question with regard to the future development of the country: As an observer of this country, not only round Lismore but also between here and Grafton, do you think it is good all-the-year-round country for feeding cattle;—is the country sour and undesirable, or is it good fattening country all the year round? No; it is not. There is any amount of grass all the year round, but the country from Grafton here, or a good part of it—that is, when you leave Myrtle Creek and go towards Grafton, through Camira, and lower down—is sour country. The grass is inclined to be sour. It is not good fattening country, although on patches that have been ringbarked I have seen very good cattle.

1240. *Mr. Watson.*] That would imply that, though the country is sour under growing timber, it is capable of being improved by ringbarking? There is no question about it, because on Saltwater Creek, at Mr. Zuill's, I have seen very good cattle.

1241. Was that in the winter-time? Yes.

1242. At Myrtle Creek a witness stated that the country about there and towards Grafton was not good for feeding stock in the winter time, and that a man could only milk his cows in the summer months;—

do

- D. Campbell. do you think that is a correct statement? I think that is wrong. If the country is ringbarked and the grass is not allowed to get rank—because it does not matter whether you ringbark or not, if you allow the grass to go ahead it gets rank—if there is enough stock on it and sunlight let into it, a man can milk in the winter, because I have seen very good fat cattle there.
- 5 Mar., 1900. 1243. We do not suppose that a man is coming here to take up a bit of country and live on it without any effort to ringbark it;—as regards the greater part of the country between here and Grafton, if it were ringbarked and thinned out a bit, do you think it would be good fattening country all the year? I would not call it good fattening country, but ringbarking would improve it very much. From Myrtle Creek until you come to within 2 or 3 miles of the Clarence River the country is inclined to be sour. Ringbarking improves it, but I would not call it good fattening country.
1244. Is it country that would be despised and not be taken up, or is it good enough for a man to take up to run cows on? There is no doubt that every inch of it would be taken up eventually. If ever a railway goes there it is certain to be all taken up, and the people who take it up will improve it.
1245. Along the road the indications are that there is almost a profusion of feed wherever one goes,—is that a good quality of grass? That grass is not stocked enough, and then it gets sour.
1246. Is the blady grass bad grass? It is not so bad. Blady grass is good in the winter. When it is young it is not so bad, because it comes up very quickly, and if it is well stocked and kept down it makes good feed. But as a rule there is such a scope of country that it is never stocked.
1247. I suppose you can only keep it stocked really by small holdings—large holdings cannot afford to stock it? Unless the holdings are fenced into small paddocks you can never manage it.
1248. And that is too expensive in the case of large holdings? Yes.
1249. *Chairman.*] Although we know that a lot of the land is not open for lengthy tenure, the stock seem very sparse all along,—why is that? It seems to me they all have too much country. They all went in for too much country. It seems to me that if we had four times the population on the country, it would be much better.
1250. Would you mind giving your opinion as to whether it is or is not desirable that a railway should be constructed between here and the Clarence;—what do you really think are its prospects as a paying concern? I would not like to say. If a railway is constructed between here and the Clarence, I cannot see what is to make it pay for some years to come—for five or six years to come.
1251. At the end of that time do you think it would have a better prospect? There is no doubt that by that time there would be a better prospect, because directly the line would go through all that country, and before it would be anything like completed, a lot of the land would be taken up. But at the present time, after you leave here about 6 or 7 miles, the prospect all the way is very poor until you come within 3 or 4 miles of the Clarence.
1252. A little while ago you said you thought all the land between here and Grafton would be taken up if there were railway communication, and now you say you think it is doubtful? There is no question that if there were a railway it would be taken up; but it would not be as profitable for a man to take up that country as it would be for him to take up good country. He would not make such a good thing out of it. There is no question that if you put a railway there the country on either side would be taken up; but that does not leave it first-class country.
1253. Could you give us an instance of what you think is better country;—whereabouts do you find better country? From the time you cross Deep Creek, and going up both frontages of Deep Creek, you could go right across for 40 miles west and north, and 40 miles the other way straight on end, and you would get such a block of country the equal of which I do not think you would find in New South Wales, except the Big Scrub, and I question whether it is not more profitable than the Big Scrub, because there are plains there without trees, and beautiful black soil, where a man could go and plough 400 or 500 acres straight away—as good land as any man could wish to have. It is only lately they have begun to realise this. Mr. Smith is now letting out his land for dairying, and some two or three years ago we never expected to see a dairy up at Kyogle, and I am sure there will be dozens of them up that way. The quantity of cream that is coming from there daily is wonderful. The dairying population goes on increasing and they bring their produce into Casino to be treated, without any aid at all. It is not the dairying alone, but they have such good agricultural land. There are the creeks, for instance. There is as good land on those creeks as you will get on the frontages to the river, and, except very high up at the head of the creeks, the ridges are beautiful, undulating ridges, every bit of which will be cultivated. There is besides a lot of scrub lands that have been under cedar and pine. On the side of the range a good deal of timber is gone; but on the other side there has been timber for years, and the country that is under scrub is just as good as the big scrub land.
1254. *Mr. Watson.*] When you speak of the land between Grafton and Casino being poor land, you do so in comparison with the lands on the Upper Richmond? Yes.
1255. Suppose a line of railway were constructed from here to Grafton, and a man took up Crown lands with a view to dairying, how many acres do you think he would require—first, of average flat land, and secondly, of average ridgy land? He would want at least 640 acres.
1256. Of either? Of the land between here and Grafton.
1257. Taking the average? Yes.
1258. You think he could do with 640 acres? On some of it he would want a little more.
1259. That is improved, of course? Yes.
1260. You have told us that the land along the line of route between here and Grafton does not afford a very good criterion of the country? No, it does not.
1261. And you say that away from the line on either side the land improves, and would be likely to be taken up? Yes.
1262. Do you think it would be taken up to a distance of, say, 10 miles on either side of the line? Yes; dairymen would come right up to the line.
1263. But would they go out from the line on either side a distance of, say, 10 miles? Yes, and more; they would go up the creeks and the swamps a long distance.
1264. Is there valuable timber on the country between here and Grafton? Yes; there is a wonderful lot of splendid timber.
1265. Of what does it consist? Iron-bark, blood-wood, willibit—a brown timber suitable for piles, and lintels—and mahogany. There is some very fine red-gum and blue-gum—as fine patches of timber as there are in the Colony.

1266. Do you not think it likely that there would be a considerable demand for this timber for railway sleepers, girders, and such like, if it could be got to the steamers and exported at a reasonable price? It is now being taken away daily to Melbourne and New Zealand. D. Campbell,
5 Mar., 1900.
1267. What distance do they have to cart it? In some cases as far as 22 and 30 miles.
1268. To Lawrence? Yes; to Lawrence and Broadwater.
1269. You regard that as an increasing item in the industries of the district? Yes; it is a great item, because there is a tremendous lot of good timber extending a long way back on either side.
1270. As a man who has had great experience in regard to stock and different classes of country, is it not a characteristic of good country that it is generally thickly timbered, and that when once you get that timber ringbarked, and the property improved, it develops into good grazing country—is not that the general rule? No; I cannot agree with you there. My experience is that good grazing country is thinly timbered.

Alfred Clark Simpson, storekeeper, Casino, sworn, and examined:—

1271. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been residing in Casino? Thirty-two years. A. C. Simpson,
5 Mar., 1900.
1272. What are the principal industries in the Richmond River district? At present the dairying industry seems to be forging to the front.
1273. That is the most important? I take it to be so now.
1274. Is agriculture largely carried on? Yes.
1275. I am speaking of the Richmond River district? Yes; around Casino.
1276. Has this district progressed during the past five or six years? Yes; very much since the introduction of systematic dairying.
1277. How far would the initiation of dairying date back? Not more than four years, I think.
1278. Has it materially increased during that period? Yes.
1279. And is likely to continue to increase? I think so.
1280. Have you a knowledge of the country between Casino and Grafton, along the proposed railway route? Yes.
1281. Have you been along that line on different occasions? Yes.
1282. What is your opinion of the character of the country, say, for a distance of 10 miles on either side of the road? It is poor country; there are patches of it fairly good.
1283. When you say poor country, do you mean poor agricultural country or poor grazing country? Poor agricultural country is necessarily poor grazing country. Rich country for agriculture always means rich country for grazing.
1284. But are there not occasions when there is rich grazing country which is not exactly suitable for agriculture? It does not alter the fact that rich country for any purpose is better for agriculture and better for grazing. I am under the impression that most of that country would be utilised for grazing purposes—that is, for dairy purposes—in the event of a railway being constructed; but to render it fit for that I think it would be necessary to lay it down with suitable grasses, and I think that would be done. There is enterprise enough among the people to lay these poor lands down with grasses. They are doing it throughout the district. *Paspalum* and other favourable grasses are being freely sown just at present.
1285. That occurs also with those who occupy dairy holdings generally—they use artificial grasses? Yes. The stationholders often spread *paspalum* about their runs with a view of improving the pasturage.
1286. By that means, I suppose, it would carry more stock? Certainly. *Paspalum* is not only winter-resisting and drought-resisting, but it is in other respects a remarkable grass, very suitable for these northern rivers.
1287. It is not affected by the frost? No. It also appears to be very little affected by the drought. It is of strong, vigorous growth, and a very rich milk-giving grass. I am under the impression that poor land would be very largely availed of in the future for dairy purposes, which, as far as I can see, is the most profitable use it could be put to.
1288. If the proposed railway were constructed is the country of such a character that, in your opinion, it would be taken up for dairying purposes? Yes, certainly.
1289. That is, along the line and for a reasonable distance on each side of the line, so that it would not be too far to carry the produce to the nearest railway station? I have travelled a good deal throughout the Colony, and I have noticed that in other places where the country was quite as poor, and in some cases poorer, the graziers and agriculturists have made a success of it if they have had good means of communication.
1290. A good part of the land is heavily timbered, is it not—the ridgy portion? From Myrtle Creek down towards Bungawalbyn the country is pretty heavily timbered.
1291. Would the land be materially improved if it were ringbarked and properly cleared? Yes.
1292. It would be capable of carrying much additional stock? Yes. I do not know how it would affect the rainfall. This is a country which requires a heavy rainfall.
1293. Is this country well watered? Fairly well; there are a number of creeks through it.
1294. Do you consider it sufficiently well watered for the different holdings that might be taken up along the line? I do not know what the method of watering some of the country would be—whether there is water available within a short distance of the surface or not—but there are a good many creeks.
1295. I mean for watering stock? Yes; I should think they could all get access to water.
1296. With regard to the traffic likely to take place in the event of Grafton and Casino being connected by railway, do you think that would be of an important character? No, I do not think so.
1297. Do you think there would be a large passenger traffic between the two places? No, I should not think so.
1298. Is there a considerable passenger traffic at present;—I am not speaking particularly of Grafton and Casino, but between the Clarence and the Richmond? Not traffic that would be affected by the railway line. It would not affect any traffic that goes Chatsworth way.
1299. Have you a knowledge of the extent of the traffic between the two rivers at the present time? Not in figures; but from ordinary observation I should say the passenger traffic is limited.
1300. Is there any considerable traffic between Chatsworth and Woodburn? Yes.
1301. And between Lawrence and Casino? Not so much between Lawrence and Casino as between Chatsworth and Woodburn. But this railway would not affect that traffic. 1302.

- A. C. Simpson.
5 Mar., 1900.
1302. If a railway were constructed between Grafton and Casino would it not be probable that passengers who now travel by coach between Chatsworth and Woodburn would go by rail, seeing that they could travel in much less time and at a much lower rate than by taking the coach and river steamer? I do not think they would gain either in money or time. It is a very short span from Chatsworth to Woodburn, and the cost is very small to get across. I really cannot see where the economy would come in. There would be loss of time and loss of money in coming up from Grafton and travelling down by train.
1303. How long does it take to go from Chatsworth to Woodburn? A very bad trip, I think, five hours.
1304. Say four hours, and say a passenger wanted then to go to Lismore or Casino, how long would it take to go from Woodburn to either place? A slow trip would be three hours—less than three hours to Lismore.
1305. That would be seven or eight hours from Chatsworth, *via* Woodburn, to Lismore? I think that seven hours would not more than land him at Grafton.
1306. I am assuming that the passengers would start from Chatsworth in the one case, and from Grafton in the other case;—at present most passengers leave Grafton and go down to Chatsworth? I was under the impression that they came from Sydney, landed at Chatsworth, and came across to the Richmond. They do sometimes go from Lismore to Casino and on to Grafton.
1307. But coming back to Chatsworth, and beginning the trip there, would it not be an advantage for a passenger to come direct by train from Grafton to Casino, which would not take the same amount of time as going by Chatsworth and Woodburn? You would have some difficulty in getting passengers to see it in that light.
1308. Would there not be less inconvenience changing from steamer to coach and from coach to steamer? It would affect such a small portion of the traffic that I cannot conscientiously say it would be an advantage. I could not conscientiously say that I believe there would be a large traffic. I do not believe there would be.
1309. I am speaking of the existing traffic? I do not believe it would largely go by train.
1310. You think the passengers would still continue to go by coach? I think the greater number of them would. They touch the business centres more rapidly from Chatsworth going across to Woodburn.
1311. In the event of a railway being constructed, in the case of passengers leaving Casino or Lismore to go by steamer, would they still go by river steamer down to Woodburn and then take the coach over to Hardwood Island and take the steamer there, or would they take the train to Grafton and take the ocean steamer from there? I am under the impression they would still go to Chatsworth.
1312. Notwithstanding the railway? I think so. It is a long and uninteresting trip down the river, and there is nothing to be gained by going up there.
1313. With regard to carriage between here and Sydney, in your business which way do you get your goods? By the Richmond River steamers.
1314. In the event of Casino and Grafton being connected by rail, would you get them by the Clarence and then by rail to Casino? No; thank you. As an ordinary, intelligent man you must know that the carriage would be so expensive to me that I would be clean out of it as against wiser people, who would get their goods by the ocean boats. I would not be patriotic enough to do that sort of thing.
1315. Would that reply also apply to other business people in Casino? I would hope it would not.
1316. I mean in your opinion? Well, it would suit me very well if they thought otherwise. I would be quite content to let them have their opinion. I think it would be a most unwise proceeding for anyone to take that means of getting goods.
1317. You consider it would be more expensive? Considerably—that is, unless the railway were constructed on a new principle, enabling it to compete with ocean-carriage.
1318. Has the town of Casino improved materially with regard to trade? Yes; within the last two or three years it has improved very much indeed.
1319. In what direction—trade generally? Yes, trade generally.
1320. Any particular line more than others? We find that settlers are in possession of more money through the introduction of the dairying industry. There are more settlers to spend money, and more money to be spent. Another factor in the progress of the district is the larger number of pigs that have been reared and sent to market. The farmers in one part of the river have taken this branch of industry up very largely, and they have been shipping large numbers of pigs. This refers more particularly to Kyogle and up that way.
1321. Growing maize and turning it into pork? Yes; I am a saw-mill proprietor as well as a storekeeper, and some few years back I only used to run the mill from four to six months in the year; but now we cannot keep pace with the demands for timber for building purposes. Not only is this the case in regard to local town orders; but the people engaged in the dairying industry are all putting up a substantial class of buildings, and we find that the demand from outside sources is very large.
1322. Your opinion, then, is that business and trade generally is improved? Yes.
1323. Is that likely to continue? Yes; the nature and surroundings of the district warrant that assumption.
1324. Are any of the industries in a languishing condition, or more backward than they were four or five years ago, before the advent of dairying? The only industry that seems to have gone back is that of sugar-growing.
1325. Sugar-cane has not been grown so largely? No; It has of recent years been a loss to the growers.
1326. Sugar was not largely grown on this upper portion of the river? Yes; it was grown in considerable quantities between Coraki and Casino. The finest crops on the river are grown between Coraki and Casino. But those people have abandoned the growth of cane to a large extent.
1327. *Chairman.*] Although there would not be any traffic through from here to Grafton, do you not think that, if a railway were constructed, the settlement that would follow would create a passenger traffic from Myrtle Creek and that direction towards Casino, as well as a traffic in timber and dairy produce? Yes, there is no doubt it would. It would create a traffic for a certain distance, just as is done by a railway in every other place. The traffic for half the distance would come this way, and half towards the Clarence. No doubt it would increase the importance of the town, and there would be a certain amount of traffic, which would grow as time went on.

Granville Moore Elliott, Council Clerk, Casino, sworn, and examined :—

1328. *Chairman.*] What are you? I am Council Clerk of the Municipality of Casino, and I have occupied that position for about eighteen years, having been appointed shortly after the incorporation of the town. G. M. Elliott.
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1329. Do you produce certain figures to show the progress of the town from its incorporation until the present time? Yes. It was incorporated in 1880. It embraces an area of 16 square miles. The rates for the first year amounted to £224 16s. 11d., and last year they amounted to £461 16s. 3d. The population of the municipality at the time of its incorporation was about 600, and at the present time it amounts to some 2,000. I have not the figures showing the value of the ratable property at the time of the incorporation, but the value of the ratable property last year when the assessment was made was £48,659 8s. 5d. The amount of the indebtedness is £2,085 on debentures. The rates in arrears amount to £137.
1330. The town is not lighted at present? No. I may say that I am also Secretary to the Stock Board. The number of stock-owners in the Casino sheep district is about 950; that is the number of those who hold sufficient stock to qualify. The number of cattle is 157,000; horses, 11,000; pigs, 5,500; sheep, 4,000.
1331. Generally, with regard to cattle and pigs, are you able to say that these have been considerably increasing items during the last three or four years? Yes; especially dairy stock.

James Golding Draper, sergeant of police, Casino, sworn, and examined :—

1332. *Mr. Watson.*] What are you? Sergeant of police, stationed at Casino. I am also inspector of dairies outside the municipality. J. G. Draper.
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1333. Speaking roughly, what is the extent of the police district of which you have control? It extends down to Camira on the south and to Kyogle on the north. On the east it extends to within 6 miles of Lismore, or about 13 miles from Casino, and on the west it reaches pretty nearly to Tabulam—that is, nearly 40 miles.
1334. Can you state the number of dairies within that district? There are about 250, with over 12,000 dairy cows. There are ten creameries and one butter factory.
1335. Do pretty well all those dairymen have their produce dealt with at the Casino factory? Yes.
1336. There is no other factory which draws supplies from here? No; the cream is all sent to Casino from the different creameries.
1337. And from Casino it is sent as butter for shipment? Yes.
1338. Have you noticed what progress has been made in dairying of late years? It has gone ahead of late years. It seems to be going ahead every year.
1339. Has there been any disposition to convert to dairying lands formerly under agriculture? Yes; some have given up agriculture, and have gone in for dairying.
1340. That would be mostly on the river banks, I suppose? Yes.
1341. Near the Richmond itself? Yes.
1342. Have any of the settlers turned their maize land into dairies? No; they still grow a little maize.
1343. Have you seen any indications of ordinary pastoral land being converted into dairying land? Yes; Mr. Smith of Kyogle has let three dairies.
1344. Land formerly used for grazing only? Yes.
1345. Has there been any increase in the dairying lately in the direction of Myrtle Creek? No; not in that direction.
1346. Has there not been a creamery established there? There is a creamery there. But Mrs. Greenstreet, at the hotel, who was milking about seventy or eighty cows, knocked that off. I do not know what her reasons were. Some of them said the creamery was rather too far away from the place.
1347. Mr. Smith, of that locality, recently went into dairying? He went into it a little while ago, but he sent me notice during the last two or three weeks that he was knocking off again.
1348. Would it be likely that he was knocking off for the winter, and would start again in the summer? I think he was knocking off for good. He has not sufficient labour there. He had only his son with him, and he had to pay for labour. He seemed to say that all that he got was going to somebody else; that he was making nothing out of it. I refer to Mr. Smith, at Wyon, 8 miles from Myrtle Creek.
1349. He is some distance from Casino, where the factory is? Yes.
1350. How far? It is about 21 miles from here to his place.
1351. Do you think that would have any effect in preventing him from dairying at a profit? No; he sends his milk to the creamery at Myrtle Creek, and the cream is brought in from there by the Company.
1352. Is that creamery far from his place? Between 2 and 3 miles.
1353. Do you know whether the settlers there are under any disadvantage in having the creamery so far from the factory? I do not think so. I do not think they are at any loss in respect to the cream.
1354. Have they to make any special payment for getting the cream into Casino? I could not say.
1355. So the increase of dairying to which you allude has not been in the direction of the proposed railway line? No.
1356. Do you think that the lack of development in the dairying industry at Myrtle Creek is due to poor soil, or to the want of communication? The people are not there at present. There is no one living there now who would be in a position to carry on dairying. The present state of the land, with water lying on it continuously during the winter months, and in rainy seasons, and the timber not being rung, would account for it.
1357. If the timber were ringbarked, and the lower land drained, do you think it would improve the land? Yes.
1358. Sufficiently to encourage dairying? Yes. I have camped there, and found that my horses would not stop there.
1359. Does your answer apply to both ridgy and flat land? Only to the low-lying land.
1360. It wants draining? Yes.
1361. And on the ridgy land the timber wants ringbarking? Yes.

Edward James Robinson, manager, butter factory, Casino, sworn, and examined :—

1362. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is your occupation? I am manager of the butter factory at Casino, for the New South Wales Creamery and Butter Company.

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1363. How long have you occupied that position? Between four and five years. I have only occupied the position of Manager at Casino for the last fifteen months.
1364. Were you previously connected with the same company in another district? Yes.
1365. Has there been a material increase in the operations of your Company during the four years it has been established at Casino? During the fourteen months that I have been at Casino, there has been a marked increase—almost marvellous.
1366. Could you give the Committee some figures showing the amount of business done by the Company? When our Company started here in January, 1898, we were producing about 3 tons of butter weekly. Last January we were producing between 9 and 10 tons, and during that time an opposition company started at Coraki which drained a considerable amount of supplies which formerly came to Casino. So that the increase of the district would be considerably more than our own figures show.
1367. Where do your principal supplies come from? From close to the Richmond River—Tatham, Tomki, Kyogle, and out to the north of Casino.
1368. Can you mention any particular locality where there has been a greater increase than in other localities? The increase has been principally about Kyogle, north of Casino, and between here and Tatham, close to the south arm.
1369. Have you a creamery at Myrtle Creek? We have.
1370. How long has it been established? About eighteen months.
1371. Had you many suppliers when you first started out there? Yes. It was established under very fair conditions at first. We had a supply of about 1,800 gallons per week. That supply increased up to about 3,000 gallons weekly from ten suppliers, but the supply has since decreased considerably, and it has now gone back to what it was when we started, namely, about 1,800 gallons per week from about six suppliers.
1372. When did that decrease take place? It has been going on gradually.
1373. Can you give any explanation of the cause? The only reason I can give is that they are on poor country, and cannot make a living out of it.
1374. Would the distance they are away from the factory have anything to do with it? I suppose it has something to do with it, but not all. We have another creamery existing under exactly the same conditions, and in connection with that creamery there has been a marked increase. I refer to Kyogle.
1375. Is that richer country than at Myrtle Creek? Infinitely richer.
1376. Are the suppliers at Myrtle Creek scattered or close together? I think they are fairly close together. The creamery is in the centre of about ten suppliers, most distant of whom would, I think, be about between 4 and 5 miles away.
1377. You consider that is not too great a distance for the supply of milk? I consider it is too far to cart milk over rough country.
1378. Have you any personal knowledge of the country at Myrtle Creek? Only from observation when travelling over it.
1379. From your experience you would know good dairy country? From my experience I would say that it is very poor dairy country, not at all suitable, except in small patches close to the river banks or creek banks.
1380. Where it is not suited for dairy purposes, is it heavily timbered land? Not particularly so. The timber is principally spotted-gum.
1381. Has this land away from the creek been improved by ringbarking, or is it in its natural condition? Mostly in its natural condition, I think.
1382. Could the country which you class as poor country, not suited for dairying, be considerably improved by ringbarking and proper working? Yes, it could be considerably improved.
1383. If that improvement were carried out, do you consider it would make fair dairy country? I cannot say that, in my opinion, it would ever make fair dairy country. It could be made available to a certain extent, but it would never make fair dairy country.
1384. It would not be up to the standard of what you consider fair dairy country? No, it would not.
1385. In the event of the proposed railway being constructed, would the increased facilities thus given tend to develop the dairy country in that locality and other localities along the line? I think it might, to a certain extent—say close to the creeks or water-courses; but away from those I do not think it would.
1386. At what distance away from the line would it pay dairymen to convey their milk to the creameries;—I mean along the water-courses, where there is good land available? I should consider 10 or 15 miles along the creek. If that land were available—land as good as I have seen close to the water-courses there—no doubt dairy farmers would take it up.
1387. The Myrtle Creek farmers, I understand, convey their milk to the local creamery? Yes.
1388. Is any further charge made for conveying the cream to Casino? Yes.
1389. I mean an extra charge to the suppliers? Yes.
1390. What is that charge? The charge altogether for working expenses, cartage included, is a farthing per gallon.
1391. What price per gallon is paid to the suppliers? It varies with the Sydney market price.
1392. As compared with other creameries close to Casino? There is a difference of an eighth of a penny between Kyogle and other creameries that are close up to Casino. We charge one-eighth of a penny close to Casino, and a farthing for more distant ones.
1393. Do you give the same price to the suppliers at Myrtle Creek as you give to those in other localities? We give exactly the same all round, with the difference of one-eighth of a penny extra in the case of Kyogle and Myrtle Creek.
1394. What is the average price the farmers get? I could not give you that accurately; but roughly I should say about 3d. or 3½d. per gallon on a 3·6 test.
1395. Is 3·6 about the average? It is considerably over the average. About Myrtle Creek it is about 3·1 or 3·2.
1396. Then the quality at Myrtle Creek would be inferior as compared with other creameries? Yes, I think it is a little inferior; but not so much as you would think from the difference between 3·1 and 3·6.
1397. They do not all come up to 3·6? No.
1398. Before your engagement with the New South Wales Creamery and Butter Company had you had experience in connection with dairying? Yes.

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1399. For how long? About twelve or thirteen years.
 1400. In what district? The Bega district.
 1401. Have you a fair knowledge of the dairying capacity of the Bega district? Yes, I think so.
 1402. And the character of the land suited for dairying purposes? Yes.
 1403. Generally speaking, in your opinion, how would the dairy land in this district compare with that in the Bega district? This district compares very favourably indeed with the Bega district.
 1404. Would that imply that it was superior to the Bega district? Yes; in my opinion, given facilities for reaching the market and other improvements that would follow, it is superior to the Bega district.
 1405. What is the quality of the land in the Bega district for dairy purposes;—does it fluctuate very much, some very good and some inferior? Yes, that is always the case.
 1406. You say this district is somewhat superior to the Bega district;—do they use land for dairy purposes in this district as poor in quality as the land which you consider inferior to the Bega district? Yes, they do.
 1407. Take the land about Myrtle Creek and that along the proposed railway line, of which you have a knowledge;—how would that compare with the dairy land in the Bega district? It would not compare favourably at all—with even the worst of it, except as regards certain places close to the water, close to Myrtle Creek, Sandy Creek, and the other water-courses, where there is land somewhat similar to some of the land in the Bega district.
 1408. The Bega district has been improved for a considerable number of years, has it not? It has.
 1409. It has been properly worked for a long time? Yes; it has been for a considerable number of years under dairy farming.
 1410. Has it been laid down with artificial grasses? In some places it has.
 1411. In regard to the land you know along this line, if that were similarly improved and laid down with artificial grasses, how would it then compare with the land in the Bega district? I do not think it would compare favourably at all. My opinion is that it would not compare favourably.
 1412. Is that with the land generally in the Bega district, or with the worst land in the Bega district? With the land generally in the Bega district.
 1413. *Mr. Watson.*] Apart from your experience as a factory manager and factory hand, have you had any experience of land;—have you worked on land yourself? Yes; I have worked as a dairy-farmer.
 1414. So that you have a knowledge of the question from that point of view? Yes.
 1415. *Chairman.*] Would it cost much to improve this Myrtle Creek land in the way you indicate by clearing? I do not think I could give much of an opinion with regard to that, because you cannot tell whether that soil will grow artificial grasses. I do not think it will to any extent. That poor clay soil I do not think will produce artificial grasses. If it does, then it might not cost much to improve the land.
 1416. *Mr. Watson.*] How does the rainfall here compare in regularity with that of the Bega district? It is considerably better in this district. I think the average at Bega is about 30 inches, as against about 50 or 54 here.
 1417. Is the rainfall here fairly regular? Yes.
 1418. Would that greater quantity and regularity of rainfall here have any effect in making it possible to do with inferior dairy land? Yes; it would conduce to make the land more productive.
 1419. They sometimes have severe droughts in the Bega district? Yes.
 1420. If they are a short time without rain they are in trouble? Yes; that is principally on account of the sandy nature of the country.
 1421. *Chairman.*] Do you think the land in the direction of Myrtle Creek would be likely to be taken up largely for dairying? I do not. I think that probably small blocks would be taken on the river or water-courses, but nothing further.

William George Simpson, Mayor of Casino, sworn, and examined:—

1422. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided here? About thirty-six or thirty-seven years.
 1423. What is your occupation? I am a saddler, and also a grazier.
 1424. You are acquainted with the proposal to construct a line of railway between here and Grafton;—are you in favour of that proposal or not? Provided it was a North Coast scheme I might be inclined to support it, but otherwise I am not.
 1425. As a line on its own basis, you are not? I should not be inclined to support it.
 1426. Why? I do not think it would pay. I do not see that there is anything to warrant the construction of the line. Not only would it not open up good country, but I do not see what there is to make the line pay.
 1427. It has been urged as one reason that there would be an interchange of commodities between Grafton and Casino;—do you think that would take place? I do not think so.
 1428. Would you give your reasons? We have a very good bar at the entrance to the Richmond. There is always plenty of water on the bar, and we have three steamers a week running. We get our goods up much cheaper by that means than we would if they were landed at Grafton and sent on by rail.
 1429. What is the depth of the bar now at the Richmond Heads? I think about 14 feet.
 1430. And what is the draft of the steamers? I think they draw from about 10 to 12 feet. We have had no trouble whatever with the bar for some years.
 1431. Do the steamers come in regularly now? Very regularly.
 1432. They are not bar-bound? No; and have not been for some considerable time.
 1433. Could you tell us when any of the steamers were last bar-bound? I think once or twice some time back, but it was through stress of weather from a south-east gale, and not owing to the state of the bar in any way.
 1434. Have the improvements at the Heads had a good effect in improving the entrance? Certainly; they have scoured the entrance out, and I believe it is still improving.
 1435. Independently of goods from Sydney or otherwise by steamer, would there be any interchange of products between here and Grafton? No; I cannot see how there could be. On the Clarence they grow both sugar-cane and maize, and they carry on dairying. We do the same here, and I do not think it is likely that we should send any of these products from Casino for shipment at Grafton, when we have our own vessels trading from the Richmond.

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1436. Is this town progressing? Yes; within the last year or so it has progressed wonderfully. It is prosperous at the present time.
1437. Have the exports increased? Yes, certainly.
1438. Of what have they chiefly consisted? Butter, bacon, eggs, pigs, and all farm produce—especially pigs.
1439. Any cattle? By rail.
1440. But not by sea? No, they do not send them by sea; they get knocked about too much on board the vessels. People prefer to truck them.
1441. What is the course of export from Casino? First by road to wharf at Tomki, about 4 miles down the river, then the goods are put on a drogher and sent down to Coraki—a distance of about 35 miles. They are there shipped on an ocean boat and go down the river for 40 or 50 miles to the Heads. But very little produce is sent from Casino, most of the settlers being on the river-banks. The butter is shipped from the head factory at Lismore. It is taken from here to Lismore by coach, a distance of 18 miles, and is from there carried in cool storage on the large ocean-going boats.
1442. Do you know what is the cost of freight for butter from here to Sydney? The freight on butter from Casino to Sydney is about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb. Total cost of production, including freight, would be about 1.66 per lb. The freight of pigs is from 1s. 6d. to 4s. per head, the pigs being driven down to the big steamer.
1443. Do you know the freight of goods from Sydney to Casino by steamer, drogher, and road? The rates of freight for goods from Sydney vary considerably, and I could not give you the exact charges; but the road-carriage from Irvington, where the goods are landed from the droghers, is about 4s. per ton.
1444. If a railway were constructed, do you think, as a man of business, that goods or passengers would be likely to go from here to the Clarence by the railway, and from there by steamer to Sydney, or would they go the other way? I do not think many goods, except perhaps very light goods, would go by rail to the Clarence, and I do not know that the railway would affect the passenger traffic much. A few might avail themselves of it. But we find that the passenger traffic along that road by coach has not increased at all—the mail contractors complain very much about the falling off.
1445. Is there a line of coaches between here and Grafton? Not Grafton; they go to Lawrence, and then by the steamer. But there is very little traffic. If people want to catch a Clarence boat they go down the Richmond and then across. They either do that or take our own boats right out. We are getting a better class of boats now, and they go right out by our own boats.
1446. Is it any use asking you about the dairy view of the case? I know that dairying is making very rapid strides here.
1447. In Lismore and Casino and to the north towards Kyogle? Yes. As the land becomes opened up, no doubt a great many more people will settle here. People inquire for land every day, but they cannot get suitable land, and they go away. They want good land, and they cannot get it.
1448. Do they express any opinion about the land from here towards Myrtle Creek? They do not seem to care about it. I have travelled a lot over that land, and I know something about it.
1449. What are your views about it with regard to dairying? As a rule, it is of a sandy, spowly nature, and in very wet weather the grass is rather sour—grass that cattle do not seem to do well on; and in dry weather it seems to burn up very much. The reason it is not stocked is that it will not carry too many stock. Although the grass looks good, it is not.
1450. Do you know Mr. Cunningham Henderson's place? Yes.
1451. What do you think of that? He has a piece of rather good ground there. There is a bit of good country just along, towards Wyon and Busby's Flat, and along there. But in some places the ground is of a nasty sandy nature, such as it would not be safe to ride over in wet weather. Even on the ridges the land is rather of a spewy, soft, sandy nature.
1452. You say it would not carry many cattle—what would it carry;—you might distinguish the various kinds of land? Where, on the upper portions of the river, the land would carry, in some instances, almost a beast to the acre—I could pick out spots on Kyogle that would carry a beast to the acre—and larger areas which would carry a beast to 5 or 6 acres, on the land in the other direction, of which we are speaking, it would take 14 or 15 acres to carry a beast. That is in its unimproved state.
1453. Would it be costly to improve it? It would have to be ringbarked, and some of the thickly-timbered country would have to be cleared. Of course, ringbarking and sweetening the grass would improve the land.
1454. Would the creek frontages have to be drained in order to make them fit to run cattle upon? No; I hardly think so. There are some parts of the country where it would be necessary to drain the land, and where it would not be very costly. Of course, I am talking about a belt of land along the line. Back a bit you get into better country.
1455. When you get away from the line the country improves? Yes.
1456. How far off the line have you to go before you get into that improved country? It varies. In some instances you would get into it in 6 or 7 miles, and in others you would have to go back 8 or 10 miles.
1457. Do you know the land on Camira Station? Yes.
1458. Do you look upon the cleared portion about the homestead as good land? Fairly good. I do not think it is equal to some of our lands here, but it is good compared to some land I have seen taken up along the line in other places, where people seem to be making a living. Even along the line the land we call poor land is good compared with land taken up in other portions of the Colony. Even that, no doubt, will be settled on.
1459. Do you think that most of this rich land would be taken up by leaseholders, in preference to other people free-selecting the poor land along the proposed line of railway? Well, I do not know. Some people like to have a holding of their own, and to know that if they improve it they are improving it for themselves. There are others who would rather have a little bit of good land, and rent it. The only way in which it could be made to pay would be in large holdings, of not less than 600 or 700 acres, as dairy farms. Some have been dairying on 40 and 50 acres.
1460. Would a man want some capital to tackle one of those 640-acre holdings? I think so. I do not think it would be any use of a man taking one up without means. It would be an uphill game for the first year or so, when he would have to fence the land in and improve it.

1461. I understand from you that although this land between Grafton and Casino might be taken up from time to time, the development of that country would not be repaid? I do not know. People seem inclined to settle along a railway line, as a rule. I think the land would be taken up immediately the railway was made, and I think people would begin to settle on it.

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1462. And you think their occupation would be chiefly that of dairying? Dairying and grazing.

1463. Not agriculture? I hardly think so.

1464. With such a large scope of good agricultural land in the district generally, do you think it likely they would go up there for agricultural purposes? I hardly think so.

1465. Except to assist in keeping their own stock? Yes. It would not pay them to grow maize—not in that part of the country just near the line.

1466. Then, you think, the chief item of freight on the railway would be dairy produce? I think so. There might be a little timber; there is some good timber along that line. Dairying and grazing would be the chief thing; I do not think they would cultivate much.

1467. Do you not think that the timber export would largely increase if there was a railway by which it could be sent direct? I think so. The only question is whether the freight on the railway would be such as would pay the timber-getters.

1468. The traffic on the railway would consist of dairy produce, and to some extent, timber? The land would be principally used for dairying and grazing; I daresay the people might cultivate a little.

1469. But not much for export? No, I do not think the land is suitable. Where you find those spotted-gum ridges, as a rule, the land is very inferior.

1470. I suppose you come in contact with most of the people at Casino? Yes.

1471. You think you voice their opinion generally with regard to the proposed railway in saying that it would not be a very paying concern? Yes, I am positive of that. It is proved by the very fact that it is so hard to get anyone to give evidence. I tried hard to get people to give evidence; but it has been very difficult to induce them to do so. They do not seem to be much in favour of the proposal.

1472. Is the feeling generally one of this character: that although you do not wish to oppose the railway, still you could not honestly advocate it as a paying line;—is that the kind of feeling that exists? That is exactly the kind of feeling. We do not wish to oppose it; but at the same time we do not feel that we can honestly advocate the construction of the line.

1473. You could not in your mind build up a set of figures or anything that would promise a substantial or reasonable revenue? No; we could not, although we do not wish to oppose the line. I believe the people here feel the same way.

1474. From this end of the line, then, you think the Government could not expect much revenue? I think not; I do not see where it is to come from. Even the commercial travellers coming to this district generally work the rivers from Lismore. Coraki is the centre. They leave the steamer at Chatsworth and go across to the Richmond, and then work the river right up.

1475. Do you not then regard Casino as a large distributing centre? There is a big business done here, and it is improving. Business people are all making additions to their premises.

1476. Still the goods, you think, must still continue to come by sea? I think so. If we had a line across to Lismore I do not know that we would not get our goods that way.

1477. Do you know the country between Murwillumbah and Lismore? I have travelled all through that district.

1478. Railway construction has developed a large dairying industry there? Yes.

1479. Is that a better class of country for dairying purposes than the country from here to Grafton? Yes; there is no comparison.

1480. You cannot make a comparison of what has gone on there and what would take place here? No; the soil there is very rich. It requires a big rainfall; but it will grow almost anything. There is a great depth of rich, chocolate soil, which, when cleared and planted with artificial grass, would carry a tremendous lot of cattle.

1481. Is there anything else you would like to say? No; except that Casino is progressing, and there will be a large population here. People are now inquiring for land. They are looking to this district for an opening, and are coming up here. If they cannot get good land they will settle on other land, provided they have communication with a market.

Laurence Edwin Cope, solicitor, Casino, sworn, and examined:—

1482. *Mr. Watson.*] What are you? A solicitor, residing in Casino. I have been here for fifteen years.

L. E. Cope.

1483. You are acquainted with the proposal to construct a railway from Grafton to Casino? Yes.

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1484. Could you give the Committee any information on that subject which would be of value? I know something of the country between Casino and Grafton. I have been over it several times, and I know it from my own observation and what others have told me. I do not think the line would be justifiable purely as a local line; but if it is proposed to construct a North Coast line right through from Newcastle, so as to junction on to Sydney that way, then I think the line might reasonably be constructed, simply as a matter of through traffic between Sydney and Brisbane. It would save about 150 miles. In regard to the question of the settlement of the country between here and Grafton I know that for some time there has been very little improvement in the settlement along that line; in fact, on the contrary, some of the small holdings have been sold and converted into large ones. I know of one case, not so very long ago, where three holdings were sold together to one man, the total area being about 3,000 acres.

1485. How far were they from the line? They were situated about Myrtle Creek. One of the places was the land on which the creamery was situated. That was used for dairying, but it is not now used for that purpose. The man who was dairying sold it, and the purchaser uses it for grazing.

1486. Do you think Myrtle Creek is a fair criterion of the quality of the remaining land? I think Myrtle Creek is about the best land along the line—the land on the borders of the creek there.

1487. In your view then, the best land along the line is not good enough for settlement? Not under present circumstances. If a railway were constructed it would make all the difference in the world.

1488. If a railway were constructed? Yes. I think in that case the country would be broken up again into small holdings—all the land along the banks of the creeks.

1489.

- L. E. Cope. 1489. Do you think that the general class of land between here and Grafton is such as with improvement would carry a large number of small holdings of 500 or 600 acres? It would not carry a number of holdings at an average of less than 640 or 700 acres.
- 5 Mar., 1900. 1490. They call that a large holding here? Comparatively large.
1491. You think that would be the average? I think so.
1492. There would be a fairly large population if the country carried one family to every 700 acres? Yes, I think it would carry a large population. But I consider that the land between here and Grafton is not so good as other land in the district, and I think the tendency would be to take up the better land first.
1493. Is there much of that better land remaining open for selection? No.
1494. It is pretty nearly all alienated? Yes.
1495. So that any settlement upon that land would be conditional upon arrangements being made with the present owners? Quite so.
1496. Is there a disposition on the part of the present owners to give easy terms for the occupation of the land? Yes, certainly. The great advantage in dealing with private owners is that there is no residence clause attached. I think the ten years' residence makes a great deal of difference in taking up land.
1497. You would have more speculation if there was no residence? A man would sooner give £3 an acre for land on which he was not compelled to reside, than £1 an acre for land on which he was compelled to reside for ten years.
1498. Is it not a fact that a number of homestead selections have been taken up recently beyond Myrtle Creek? I do not know about beyond Myrtle Creek; but there have been some homestead selections this side of Myrtle Creek—on Sandy Creek.
1499. We have had it in evidence from the District Surveyor that a number of homestead selections, which, of course, carry perpetual residence, have been opened further up Myrtle Creek, where the proposed railway crosses? They may have been opened up. I do not recollect any having been opened up here; I think they may have been in the Grafton district. I know there was some land thrown open for homestead selection in the Casino district on Sandy Creek, and for which there was no application at all; while, on the other hand, for homestead selections thrown open on the upper river land there were thirty-two applicants.
1500. That was capitalised as high as £4 an acre in its unimproved condition? Yes.
1501. So that that can be regarded as land above the average? Yes.
1502. Is there anything else you would like to add? I consider that a local railway between Grafton and Casino would be justifiable chiefly from a federal point of view. Under federation, Brisbane would probably become our principal market, and Grafton would be about the southernmost point, which would connect with Brisbane through this line. There is no doubt the construction of a railway would promote settlement along the line to a very large extent, and I think it is possible that the local traffic might after a time pay working expenses without the interest. But I think it would have to wait until people with sufficient capital took up the land, because it would not be of the slightest use for people without capital to attempt to occupy it. The question whether the land would be improved by artificial grasses, and cultivation is really problematical, because that has never been tried yet.
1503. We have evidence to the effect that in one or two cases where ringbarking and clearing and the sowing of artificial grasses were tried on land at the Grafton end, similar to the general run of the land towards Casino, it was successful;—do you think that would be so? I think that is quite possible. The construction of the railway would send up the average value of the land all through, and from a general point of view, the increased value of the land would probably meet the cost of the construction of the line.
1504. The Crown lands there now, which are large in extent, are practically non-productive? Yes.
1505. The Crown gets very little revenue from them? Very little.
1506. But if they were taken up the Crown would get the rental? Yes.
1507. Do you think there is any probability of their being taken without railway communication? I do not think so. At all events they would not be taken up until all the available land in other parts of the district was gone.
1508. That would be a good many years? Yes.
1509. If you go a good distance from communication, you want very rich land to make up for the distance? Yes.
1510. So that this not being very good land, it is not likely to be settled without some communication? No; most of the settlement that has taken place up to the present time has been off the line of railway, down towards Ellangowan, easterly.
1511. Is that better land than the average of the land along the route? I think it is rather better land. The fact of its being more largely taken up arises, I think, to a great extent, from the fact that the ordinary land on each side of the line was reserved. The land is also more freely watered down in that direction, and, unless it is too wet, pays them better.
1512. That is not very far from Casino? No.
1513. And it is probable that those now settled at Ellangowan would not use the line to any great extent? I do not think they would use the line at all.
1514. Could it be held to be fairly similar to the balance of the land along the line? I think it is rather better.

Charles Frederick Napier North, Road Superintendent, Casino, sworn, and examined:—

- C. F. N. North. 1515. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you occupied your present position? About four years and nine months.
- 5 Mar., 1900. 1516. Have you a knowledge of the Casino district? A fair knowledge, I think.
1517. Have you any knowledge of the Clarence district? Yes.
1518. You were a licensed surveyor some few years ago, were you not? Yes.
1519. Where were you working as a surveyor principally? I worked all over the Clarence district, and on the Tweed and the Richmond—principally on the south side of the Clarence, although I have worked on this side also.

1520. How long were you residing in the Clarence district? About fifteen or sixteen years.
1521. Have you a knowledge of the country through which the proposed line of railway would go between Grafton and Casino? Yes; I know it generally.
1522. I do not mean so much along the marked track, but taking a scope of country 10 or 15 miles on each side of the surveyed line? Yes; I know it fairly well.
1523. What class of country would you consider it to be? Generally, it is poor grazing land. There are patches along the creeks fit for cultivation, but taking the general run of it it would be called, I think, poor grazing land.
1524. It is rather heavily timbered, is it not? Yes; in some parts it is very heavily timbered.
1525. Would ringbarking and the carrying out of other necessary improvements have the effect of considerably improving that land? I should say so.
1526. If those improvements were carried out, would it be made something like fair grazing country? The generality of it, I think, would. Of course there are patches that would never become fair grazing land, but the majority of it, I believe, could be made good grazing land by improvements.
1527. From your experience and knowledge of the district, do you think it is such land as would be likely to be taken up in holdings in the event of railway communication being established? I think it would.
1528. What area do you think would be sufficient for a holding? The areas would be large, I think.
1529. About how many acres? I should say it would take pretty well a section—that is 640 acres.
1530. Some evidence has been given with regard to timber country between here and Grafton, have you any particular knowledge concerning that? I cannot exactly locate the places, but I know there is plenty of good timber on Myrtle Creek, and between Myrtle Creek and the Cross Roads, and about the Saltwater there are some large forest reserves. I have been through these forest reserves in the old time, and there is certainly a large quantity of good timber on them—hardwood.
1531. Is it good marketable timber? Yes.
1532. Are you aware whether there are any considerable number of men engaged cutting that timber at the present time? Not from this side, but there are from Lawrence. I know they come out a long way.
1533. They draw it a considerable distance? Yes.
1534. In the event of railway construction, would this timber be conveyed by train to Grafton? There is no doubt it would. I suppose saw-mills would spring up in different parts, and the timber would be cut on the ground and sent in.
1535. In the event of a railway being constructed as proposed, would the road expenditure be necessary as at present? I do not think it would make much difference as far as the road expenditure is concerned.
1536. Which roads would it affect? There is only one road in that direction, and that is the road from Casino to Lawrence; the others are all branch roads. That is the only road it would actually affect.
1537. You think the construction of the railway would not materially affect the road expenditure? No, I do not think it would. We do not get a very large vote for the Lawrence Road (that is, the part within the Casino Road District)—about £800.

C. F. N.
North.
5 Mar., 1900.

TUESDAY, 6 MARCH, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Lismore, at 10.15 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKEFF (CHAIRMAN).

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Grafton to Casino.

Wilfred Parsley Pope, Conditional Purchase Inspector and Forester, Land Board District of Grafton, sworn, and examined:—

1538. *Chairman.*] You are aware of the proposal to construct a line of railway between Grafton and Casino, as indicated on the map, the Government having chosen the western deviation? Yes, I know the line. I know the country thoroughly from Casino to Myrtle Creek. My boundary does not go over Myrtle Creek.
1539. Commencing at the Myrtle Creek end, would you describe the country between there and Casino? The country round Myrtle Creek travelling towards Casino is comparatively flat and is heavily timbered. The land is somewhat poor, but is greatly improved by ringbarking. That class of country extends pretty well up to Deep Creek—within a few miles of Deep Creek.
1540. Would you call it clayey or sandy soil? Sandy soil principally, with to a large extent clay subsoil not very far under the surface.
1541. And what is the character of the timber? Iron-bark, blood-wood, tallow-wood, stringy-bark, spotted-gum, and mahogany.
1542. Taking that stretch of country from between Myrtle Creek and Deep Creek, what are your views with regard to its future development;—what would it be most likely to be used for? For grazing purposes. It is not suitable for agriculture except in a few small pockets just immediately on the banks of the creeks. Otherwise it is not suitable for agriculture.
1543. In your description of the country, about how far do you go on either side of the proposed line of railway? The description I have given would apply for a good number of miles on either side of the proposed line.
1544. Would you say 10 miles on either side? Yes; in fact, on the western side it would extend up to the dividing range between the Richmond and the Clarence. The timber gets heavier as you go further west until you get to the dividing range.
1545. You have stated what you think this country would be likely to be used for;—what is its present occupation? Grazing. It is held by different stations, and there are a few small farms on the banks of the creeks. Between the creeks it is held principally under occupation license by the Woorooloolgan and Bungawalbyn Stations.

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W. P. Pope. 1546. What about dairying in that part? Dairying is carried on only to a limited extent. There is a small area between Myrtle Creek and Sandy Creek, and then along the fringe of Deep Creek there is some dairying carried on, but not to any very large extent. There is one creamery—I think it is called the Karwon Creamery—which takes in a few farmers on Myrtle Creek, and about the southern side of Sandy Creek. Then there is no other creamery until you get on to the banks of Deep Creek about Myrtle Creek—between Myrtle Creek and Deep Creek.

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1547. Are the dairy-farmers increasing in number? They have increased very much during the last two years. I have held the dual position of Conditional Purchase Inspector and Forester since 1896, and there has been a very considerable increase in the dairying industry since that time. The creameries I speak of have been built since that time.

1548. Has dairying, as far as you have observed, succeeded? As far as I know it has succeeded quite well.

1549. Do you know any instances about there where they have started dairying and have given up their occupation? No, none; and I know there are people still going to the place looking for farms, and getting them.

1550. What extent of country do these conditional purchase holders take up? The dairymen I speak of have not so much taken up new land from the Government for dairying as rented land from the stations. The stations as a rule, and in this case, hold all the land on the banks of the creeks—the creek frontages. The dairy farmers rent those places from the station. There has been very little land taken up by selectors for the express purpose of dairying.

1551. Was there any land available for that purpose? Yes, when you get away from the creek frontage—say, a mile and a half or 2 miles back from the creek. But it is unsuitable; the country is not very well watered. It does very well for turning dry cattle into when it is fenced; but you cannot get away from the creek and carry on dairying properly.

1552. Then do we gather from that that there is really no land available there to any extent for dairying purposes, except that which can be rented from the large holders? Not to any extent.

1553. What extent of land have these people rented; what acreage? I am not prepared to say what acreage, because although you see a lot of houses along the creeks, I do not know the areas they have. I could only mention one or two individual holdings, and that would not give you any idea of the total area.

1554. But how much would each person have taken? I imagine from 200 acres to 400 acres. In that class of country that is about what they rent.

1555. Did they take it up in its natural state or was it partly improved—those creek frontages? They take it up in its natural state.

1556. And then did they have to spend money in improvements on the creek frontages? Yes; they have to fence and ringbark it, and build yards. On the country between Myrtle Creek and Deep Creek there are three large timber reserves which contain very valuable timber. There is almost an unlimited supply of stringy-bark, iron-bark, and spotted-gum, all along the line of railway there.

1557. Is the timber industry an active one? Not very; as far as my district is concerned the hardwood timber is worked very little. They are gradually working up from the south to my district; but so far there have been practically no operations in the hardwood. A few men might come out and cut a few logs occasionally, but there is no regular supply.

1558. What do they cut—girders, sleepers, and piles? Yes, principally; but that refers more to the land on the south of Myrtle Creek.

1559. And they take the timber over to Lawrence? Yes. The girders and piles that have been taken out in my district have been principally for local work, such as culverts and small bridges.

1560. But there is in your district, between Myrtle Creek and Casino, a large tract of valuable timber country? A very large supply of valuable timber on either side of the line, and it stretches away on both sides of the line for a good many miles.

1561. If a railway were made to connect the Richmond with that district, do you think it would develop saw-mills and encourage the timber industry to any extent? I feel very sure it would.

1562. Between Deep Creek and Casino, what is the character of the country? The country is very nearly all in the hands of small farmers who are dairymen, and all of whom, as far as I know, seem to be doing very well. They are constantly on the look-out for more land where they can get it. They have been taking farms from the stations. There is very little Crown land between Deep Creek and Casino.

1563. How does that land compare with the land between Myrtle Creek and Deep Creek? The land immediately on Deep Creek is better than the land south of Deep Creek, towards Myrtle Creek. There are better black-soil flats on Deep Creek, and the land is better suited for cultivation than is the case as you get further south.

1564. Is the land taken up more for dairying there? Yes, decidedly so.

1565. Can a man run more cattle on a given area there than between Myrtle Creek and Deep Creek? Yes.

1566. Does your observation lead you to believe that people would occupy these rich patches of country such as you have just described, rather than take up Government land by free selection for dairy purposes;—do you think it would be more advantageous for them to rent, in small areas, some of this rich land that you describe near Deep Creek than to take up larger areas by free selection from the Government of the land over towards Myrtle Creek? I think the tendency would be rather to rent a smaller area and get good land than to take up a larger area and get inferior land.*

1567. It would be easier managed? Yes.

1568. And more certain in its return? Yes. A man who has a good farm knows the capabilities of the place and he can manage it by himself. On the other hand, if he has a large rambling place he has to fence it and ringbark it, and it is always poor, until he has had it ringbarked for some years, and otherwise improved. I think he would rather take up a smaller area which would be easier managed and make sure of his crops, than he would take up a larger scope of country on which he has pretty well the same expenditure, and perhaps more, and is more uncertain of the return.

1569. Coming towards Casino, and away to the north up in the direction of Kyogle, does the country get very much better again? There is no sort of comparison at all between the land we have been speaking of, and the land on the north side. As you get north of Casino the quality of the land changes so much

for

* NOTE (on revision):—The land is not "rich," but is better than adjoining country at the back.

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for the better that there is no sort of comparison between the land north of Casino and the land south of Casino. I daresay Kyogle has some of the best grazing land in the Richmond River district. It is open country on that side until you get up, say, to Wiangarie, and then you begin to get close to the mountains, and the country is very much rougher. But from Casino up to about 6 miles above Wiangarie it is magnificent grazing country.

1570. And how has that country developed in regard to population as compared with the country out towards Myrtle Creek? As regards population, it is not developing to any great extent, because the land I speak of is in the hands of two station-holders—Mr. Barnes, and Mr. Smith, of Kyogle. Mr. Smith is just beginning at New Park, about 20 miles from Casino, to let out some of his best land, and a creamery has been erected there.

1571. Do you know what he gets an acre for that land? I have no idea. I am not sure whether he has let it or not, but I know he is working the farm on halves, and he has taken for that purpose what is generally recognised as the best part of the station.

1572. Does the practice of dairying on halves obtain much here? Yes; to a very large extent.

1573. The small man I suppose likes that because it enables him to start with next to no capital? Yes; I think that is the object. They can commence with practically no capital. They get the use of the cattle, and they can make a start.

1574. And when a man has to take up land in its natural state, heavily timbered, and do the necessary fencing, that involves the expenditure of capital? Yes. A considerable area of land has recently been taken in exchange by the Government from the station at Kyogle. The station gave up a large area of country of very good quality, and it was very much rushed; a great number of selectors balloted for it.

1575. If a railway were constructed from Casino in the direction of Grafton, passing through the country you have described as far as Myrtle Creek, do you think that would assist settlement, and the taking up of that kind of country? I am quite sure it would assist it very materially.

1576. How would the railway improve matters? It would give so much easier access. It would be far easier for people to go there. That was the case along the line from Lismore to the Tweed, where their cream can be carried only a few miles to the railway platform instead of having to be carted 5 or 6 miles to the factory. In wet weather the roads down there are very bad, and sometimes it is as much as they are able to do to draw their cream along the road; whereas, if a railway were taken along there, there would be a siding within a few miles, and it would do away with the long drawing over a bad road. I heard a man say the other day that, with 3 miles drawing, he had to keep two horses employed all the time, and he had to feed them. That was during a spell of wet weather. That is where I think the advantage of a railway would come in.

1577. With regard to the land out in the direction of Myrtle Creek, is it good grazing land, having regard to the natural grasses that grow there? No; it is not good grazing land. You could not call it good grazing land.

1578. What is the matter with it? I do not quite know what is the matter with it, but it is poorly grassed. The grass is thin when you are riding over it. The roots of the grass appear to be far away from one another, and it is sour. Of course, it is very much improved by ringbarking.

1579. It is improved by clearing and letting the sun in? Wonderfully. I dare say the tract of country that would carry a beast to 20 acres in its unimproved state would, when improved by ringbarking, carry a beast to 12 or 15 acres.

1580. In your observation in moving about the district, do you think dairying is the one industry that has made the most advance in this district? I have no doubt of it at all.

1581. If this railway were constructed, do you think the Government would have to look for the main item of freight to the carriage of dairy produce, and, of course, store goods back? I think so.

1582. The main item of freight outward would be dairy produce? I think so. I think there would be a large quantity of timber sent along the line also, but the main freight on the railway would be dairy produce.

1583. With regard to the timber industry, spotted-gum seems to grow very largely here;—what is that timber used for? I have seen very little spotted-gum used. I am told it is a matter of fashion. I have been generally led to believe that spotted-gum was good for anything, but it is not a popular timber. I honestly believe it is as good timber as you can get. I have inquired of timber-getters and saw-mill owners why it is not used more largely, and they say it is simply because for the present it is not popular. I believe the same thing obtains in every market, as far as timber is concerned.

1584. Would it be largely used for beams for houses and that kind of thing? I do not imagine you could get any better timber for all purposes for which hardwood is required. There is an enormous quantity of it. I have seen a good deal of it felled for fencing and other purposes, and it seems to be of the very soundest description.

1585. It does not warp and twist? Not as far as I know. I think the same thing applies to other timber. It largely depends on the time of year you cut it. If you cut it when it is full of sap it will probably warp, but every timber will do the same thing.

1586. Is it much used in the district? Not very much.

1587. What do the people use? Principally iron-bark or red-gum—some call it blue-gum and some red-gum, but it is the same timber.

1588. Do they use that for building purposes? Yes; the gum is used more than any other timber for building purposes? I forgot to mention, with regard to timber, that on the dividing range between the Richmond and the Clarence there is probably enough pine to last 100 years even if they cut it as fast as they like. This timber in very large quantities would, I think, be drawn on to the line at Busby's Flat.

1589. Is the colonial pine in much demand in the market? Yes; it is in very great demand. I suppose there are forty or fifty teams in Casino now drawing colonial pine from the one reserve I spoke of, and it seems to me that they can always get rid of as much as they like to draw.

1590. Is it sawn locally? No; it is simply drawn in the log.

1591. The timber is in sufficient quantities to justify the belief that saw-mills would be started at different centres? I think so: the timber is there without doubt.

1592. *Mr. Watson.*] Is it not too much scattered? No; the timber is very close—a good number of trees to the acre—the spotted-gum in particular is very close. The iron-bark, of course, is rather more patchy. You can find spotted-gum all over that scope of country between Deep Creek and Myrtle Creek. It is

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- thickly covered with spotted-gum. Then you will find patches of iron-bark which runs right out some-times, and then comes again.
1593. Is the pine also near that line? No; the pine would not be nearer than about 14 or 15 miles from the line. Still with a good road that is comparatively nothing to a timber-getter.
1594. When country that is largely grown over by spotted-gum is ringbarked, does it not generally make fairly good grazing country? Yes; I think land originally covered with spotted-gum when ringbarked makes better country than any of the other. I know of one case in particular below Deep Creek where the main road goes from Casino to Grafton. On one side the timber has been ringbarked, but on the other side it has been left, and the difference is wonderful. On the side where it has been ringbarked there was a thoroughly good green sward of grass, and on the other side it was pretty well bare. Ring-barking sweetens the land.
1595. From what you have seen and heard of this country, do you think that a dairyman taking up a holding could, if it were ringbarked, rely on the natural grasses, or would he have to improve his grass? He would have to improve his grass.
1596. By artificial grasses? Yes.
1597. Is that being done in most of these places where dairying is successfully carried on? Yes; it is done pretty well universally.
1598. *Paspalum* is largely planted? Yes. I have known instances where people have ridden about on their horses and sown *Paspalum*. There are two kinds of *Paspalum*. The kind most commonly used is *Paspalum dilatatum*, and the other kind, which exists in this district, but is at present little known, is called *Paspalum compressum*. The latter, I think, is likely to become a good fodder grass when it becomes more known. It is a creeping grass, not unlike buffalo, but much finer and more succulent. It creeps along the ground and excludes everything else.
1599. It seems thoroughly to suit the country? Except that the frost damages it, whereas the frost does not damage the *Paspalum dilatatum*.
1600. Is the frost severe on the ridgy land as well as on the flats? Not so severe.
1601. Do you think the country between Casino and Grafton—the Myrtle Creek country, for instance—is country upon which you would have to cease dairying in the winter months, or do you think a man with an improved holding could go on milking all the year round? I think that, with improved land and artificial grass, the farmers could dairy all the year round.
1602. What are the timber-getters paying for haulage? A man can draw timber 8 or 10 miles almost as easily as he can 5 miles. Say, for 10 miles it would cost probably 1s. per 100 superficial feet.
1603. How would that work out per ton approximately? It would take 500 feet of pine to make a ton, so that would be 5s. a ton.

James Stocks, pharmaceutical chemist, Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Stocks.
6 Mar., 1900.
1604. Mr. Watson.] What is your occupation? I am a pharmaceutical chemist, residing at Lismore, and now out of business.
1605. You are acquainted with the proposal to construct a railway from Grafton to Casino? Yes.
1606. Do you know the country through which that line would pass? Yes.
1607. How long have you been in the district, and what experience have you had? I have been resident in the district of Casino and Lismore for about forty years.
1608. And have had frequent opportunities of viewing this land? Very frequent. Perhaps I ought to explain that I have bred and reared cattle myself somewhat freely, but relinquished that occupation some few years ago.
1609. So that you have had experience in grazing matters? Yes; experience as well as observation. I travelled frequently between Casino and the Clarence for the first twenty years of my residence here, though I have not travelled there so much lately. I know the land very well from Casino to Lawrence, and from Casino to Grafton.
1610. How would you describe the land coming north from Grafton towards Casino? Going the reverse way, at Casino and Deep Creek, the first 3 or 4 miles is fairly good land. Then commence, after crossing the swamp, what are commonly recognised as the spotted-gum ridges, which continue, in the main, to Deep Creek. The first portion of the land is fairly good—that is, up to the swamp—the next has been commonly recognised as being miserably poor—that is, up to Deep Creek—and is usually described as spotted-gum ridge land. On both banks of Deep Creek there is a slight improvement. The soil is better, having been formed, to a considerable extent, by frequent floods passing over it. That, of course, dies away, and in the course of from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile, there begins the same kind of land as on this side of Deep Creek—a very slight amount of loam on the surface, and, beneath, gravelly, poor, hungry soil, capable of producing nothing, so far as one can judge.
1611. How far does that extend? That extends to Myrtle Creek. Perhaps I ought to say that on the banks of Deep Creek there were a few farmers, some of whom continued to struggle, but others, of whom I know personally, could not endure any longer, and had to abandon their holdings.
1612. Could you mention the names of any of those people? The first one, as the most notable, was James Carlill. He gave up his land, and would have abandoned it altogether, but his father took it up, simply as a last resource, and his father owns it at present.
1613. How long ago was that? About sixteen or seventeen years ago.
1614. Were there others, then, who abandoned their land? Yes.
1615. About the same time, or later? Since then—not at that time.
1616. Not very recently? Within a year or two past, I could not say exactly.
1617. How do you describe the land between Deep Creek and Myrtle Creek? I think you said it was mostly spotted-gum country? Yes, and timbered generally. It is not confined so much there to spotted-gum as on this side of the creek; it is more of a mixed character, as previously described—that is, embracing other hardwood, such as iron-bark, red-gum, blue-gum, grey-gum, and mahogany.
1618. And the soil? The soil is what I should describe as miserably poor, fit for nothing but grazing.
1619. About Myrtle Creek? On the banks of Myrtle Creek it is similar to Deep Creek. It is somewhat improved by frequent floods washing over from the Creek. The first and principal occupant there was Benjamin

Benjamin Sellar. He was there as head station-keeper for the late Clark Irving. He kept an accommodation house there. I had frequent occasion to stop there during the night, and at those times had ample opportunities of making inquiries of Sellar as to the character of the country, and its capabilities. One thing that struck me was that surrounding the homestead he had always a good garden. My first impression was that it must be attributable to very superior soil. But he explained to me in conversation that notwithstanding its apparent productiveness he could never get a second crop, even there, without having it well manured. In explanation of its apparent richness he explained still further that it had been refreshed by continual floods; but by going back 100 yards or so it would be found that the land was very poor, and not capable of producing anything whatever.

J. Stocks.
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1620. Take the country further on towards Grafton? That is just a repetition of the same thing until you get to within 12 miles of Lawrence.

1621. What do you mean when you say it is a repetition? The same kind of country.

1622. Poor? Yes. I know of no farmers who have ever succeeded in doing any good there—not one. As a further instance of its character I may say that the New South Wales Creamery Company established a creamery in that direction somewhere, I understand in the vicinity of Deep Creek as the most likely place that could be selected on the whole route. They continued that creamery for three years, and from the first day to the last there was a continual loss until finally it was closed, and it is closed now.

1623. That is at Deep Creek? I understood the manager to say it was in that vicinity.

1624. Is there not a creamery working now at Myrtle Creek? I do not know.

1625. The men who abandoned the selections you spoke of about Deep Creek had no opportunity of going in for dairying on the modern system before they abandoned it? The man I spoke of, Mr. Carlill, went in for dairy-farming, and his explanation to me, and his father's also, was that he could not live at it, and his only alternative was to abandon the farm, and he went away and obtained a situation in ordinary employment down south.

1626. That was before the introduction of the modern system of factory dairying? No, it was not.

1627. If it was seventeen years ago it was before the introduction of that system here? Well, before the bulk of it was introduced here.

1628. Was there a factory or creamery here then? I had a large plant myself.

1629. But I am speaking of a factory with modern appliances? No.

1630. Is the land from Myrtle Creek to within 12 miles of Lawrence, as mentioned by you—that would embrace about 30 odd miles—unvaryingly poor? I should not use the word unvaryingly; that would be, perhaps, too sweeping. Of course, there are a few acres of fair land here and there.

1631. Do you know the Camira station? Yes.

1632. How would you describe the land about the head station there? I call that fair, nothing more.

1633. Would that description of fair apply to the flats immediately around the head station, or to the ridgy land about—there are both? It certainly would not apply to the land between the station and the Casino-road.

1634. It would apply only to the land about the station homestead, which is mostly flat? Yes.

1635. Do you know another station further along towards Lawrence, occupied by a gentleman named Zwill? I know the land generally.

1636. How long is it since you saw that land? Twenty years.

1637. Was it ringbarked or improved then? No, it was not, except certain portions, which were specially cleared so as to improve it.

1638. How did those portions which had been cleared compare with the balance of the land;—was there any considerable improvement visible? No. It is not in the nature of the land at all to improve materially by either ringbarking or the falling of the timber, except on a very superficial scale on the near surface. Of course, I do not mean to say that if the sun's rays are not able to get to the land properly that land would be the same as if the sun could operate upon it; but in regard to the depth of soil, it is idle to suppose that ringbarking would make any difference.

1639. When people use the term "the land improves," they really mean that the quality of the product improves? So it ought to do.

1640. That is what I mean by my question whether there is any material improvement in the grazing as a result of clearing? Yes; the grass would be more rank and of greater growth, and would do very well for stock simply for grazing; but as for cultivation, the thing is simply absurd.

1641. Do you think it would be sufficiently good grass for milk-production? I do not see how a man could live upon it. I never met with one who could. The land on the other side of that—that is, for the last 12 miles to Lawrence—is not worth considering, and it is not on the railway route.

1642. What about the land along the railway line towards Grafton from the point just referred to? The same kind of land continues until you get on to the township. The township of Grafton being on a peninsula is very often flooded, and to my knowledge has been under water for a depth of from 10 to 14 feet. The land there is, of course, altogether different, because it has been constantly fed with fresh loam brought down by the floods; but all the other land that has never been flooded to any extent remains the same, and that land continues to within about 3 miles of Grafton.

1643. Coming back to Myrtle Creek, do you know Mr. Rapp, who is living there? Yes, I know Mr. Rapp.

1644. I understand from his evidence that he has some 1,200 acres of land at Myrtle Creek;—how would you describe his land? It is a mixed kind of land. A large portion of it is what I should call moderate grazing land, with certain patches in it of fair agricultural land. That is all that can be said about it.

1645. He informed the Committee that he had carried on dairying there very successfully during the last two years? I am pleased to hear it.

1646. And his estimate of the carrying capacity of the land when properly improved and laid down with artificial grasses was a beast to 5 acres;—do you think that would be a rosy estimate? I do.

1647. What would you yourself put it at, taking the average of the land with your experience of stock? Suppose it were ringbarked and given a chance with some artificial grass—say, *Paspalum* or something like that—what would you think it would then carry;—how many acres would it take to feed a beast? I have had no experience of *Paspalum* grass, so I could not say.

1648. Well, take the natural grass? With the natural grass I should say not more than one beast to 10 acres.

1649.

- J. Stocks. 1649. That is, when it was improved? Of course, it would depend upon what the improvement was.
- 6 Mar., 1900. 1650. I say if it were improved as a man could improve it, by ringbarking and giving the grass a fair show? It certainly would not carry more than one beast to from 8 to 10 acres. Perhaps in one thing I may be misled in some degree. I have always been accustomed to very good land, especially in this district; and that being so, I may probably be inclined to undervalue what another would esteem very highly. Some years ago, when travelling along the southern line of railway, from Goulburn to Sydney, I met one or two gentlemen who were stock-owners. On one part of the road I observed what I thought to be some fairly good grass, about 6 in. high. The manager of a station asked me if I did not think that was very superior land. I told him I thought he was joking. I did not consider that superior land, but fairly good land. I said, "How many beasts would it carry to the acre; would it fatten any now;" and he said he thought it would if it were allowed a little more freedom, and that sort of thing. I said, "In order to know what good land is compared with this, you must go on the Richmond, where they will show you some land on which the cattle and the horses can feed on the grass all the year round." However, I did not succeed in convincing him that that land was not very superior land; at the same time, if he had talked from then till now, he would not have convinced me that it was superior land. In giving my evidence on this occasion I wish, of course, to make a reasonable allowance for a difference in that way. I do not wish my description of the land to apply absolutely to every acre along the route of the proposed line. I say that, generally speaking, along the road from Casino to Grafton the land is so poor and unsubstantial that nothing like dairying could ever be entered upon. I notice that the other day Mr. Ebsworth, district surveyor, made a statement to the Committee with regard to the land that was alienated, and so on. He said the land comprised 23,000 acres of railway reserve, 93,000 acres alienated, 100,000 acres in process of alienation, 139,000 in forest reserves, 35,000 in other reserves, and 320,122 acres available for settlement. In all the particulars given there, there is not one word stated as to the different uses to which these portions of land were made available. If he had stated how much were used for dairying, and how much for grazing by stations, then there would have been some force in his remarks.
1651. But is it not possible that some of the land may be quite suitable for dairying but would not be put to that purpose owing to the lack of communication? Not owing to lack of communication. It is quite possible there may be some; but they would comprise, in my opinion, a very small area that would be suitable for dairying.
1652. You think that lack of communication would have no deterrent effect on the taking up of land for dairying? No, it would not have a prejudicial effect. A railway established anywhere would have a beneficial effect, and I should be very pleased to make use of this railway if I were travelling that way; at the same time I am equally convinced it would be a disastrous mistake to spend money in making a railway which would never be likely to pay.
1653. That is another question. The point I asked you about was whether, in your opinion, the lack of railway or other communication would not deter people from taking up that Crown land, even if it were moderately suitable for dairying? Probably it would deter them.
1654. So that, as far as that argument is concerned, it is possible that some of the land would be suitable for dairying, though it is not taken up? Well, it would be a very small area. I know the land.
1655. As to the general aspect of the railway, you say you think it would be inadvisable to construct it? Very.
1656. Because it would not pay? It would have no prospect whatever of paying.
1657. You do not think that this land would be taken up for dairying purposes? I am quite sure it would not.
1658. What effect would the construction of the line have upon the trade in Lismore? None whatever.
1659. Do you think there would be no traffic from a point, say, about Myrtle Creek towards Lismore, if the railway were constructed? I should not regard the traffic as worth consideration.
1660. There would be so little? Yes.
1661. Not even in timber? No.
1662. Do you not regard the timber along there as of any value? It would not go that way. If it came from Myrtle Creek it would go down towards Coraki; it would go down on the eastern side of the road a long way from the line of railway. It would be so far that, in fact, it would be a considerable additional cost. In all probability the timber could be drawn to the wharf at Coraki at as little expense as if it went by the railway.
1663. But we are informed that the better timber lies to the west of the proposed line some few miles;— is it not possible that that timber would be brought to the railway for shipment at deep water on the Richmond or on the Clarence? That is possible.
1664. So that it is possible there would be some amount of freight in that way? Yes.
1665. But not sufficient, in your opinion, to justify the railway? Certainly not.
1666. I think you said it was some time since you were over this country, and then there was not much done in the way of ringbarking, or anything of that sort? No.
1667. So that you saw the land in its natural condition, unimproved? Yes.
1668. In commenting on Mr. Ebsworth's evidence, you will recollect that he had recently been over the country and seen it, or a portion of it, in its improved state? Yes. That would not alter the matter; it would make no material difference.
1669. There would be no passenger traffic of any moment? None worth speaking of.

Denis Carroll, Sub-Inspector of Police, Richmond and Tweed Districts, sworn, and examined:—

- D. Carroll. 1670. *Chairman.*] Do your duties take you in the direction of Casino, and Deep Creek and Myrtle Creek, on towards Grafton? I notice by my note-book that on the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th of February, 1897, I was in the country out between Casino and Wyon, Myrtle Creek, and between Wyon and Tabulam. The people in the neighbourhood of Myrtle Creek and Wyon petitioned the Government to have a police-station established there, and I was directed to go out and report as to its necessity, which I did on the dates just mentioned. I went through the country generally, from farm-house to farm-house, had a look at the country, and inquired as to population, and the necessity for a police-station, and I know that my report was that there was no necessity for a station there, and one has not been formed.

1671.

1671. The district was not sufficiently populated? Yes. I remember that I said in my report that I did not think the country was likely to carry a big population, and I did not think there was any necessity for the police-station. I inquired as to the class of country, and whether it would be likely to carry a population. D. Carroll.
6 Mar., 1900.

1672. What was the nature of the information you obtained? The upshot of the inquiry was that I did not think there was any likelihood of a population ever being settled in that country, except, perhaps, along the banks of the creeks. The ridges and the country back off the creeks was very poor.

1673. Had the dairying industry started then? That was three years ago; there was no dairying to speak of then, or very little. I have not been there since.

1674. They were using the land then just for grazing purposes? Yes.

1675. Did they say it was not good grazing country? No. It seemed to me to be very fair grazing country about Wyon, and from there on to Myrtle Creek.

1676. Was it all in its natural state or improved? It was pretty well all in its natural state, except in odd places, where paddocks were fenced in and ringbarked.

1677. Has not the dairying industry pretty well advanced since 1897? Yes. I do not think very much of it out in that neighbourhood.

1678. We have come through there, and we have had evidence from the residents who are actually carrying on dairying in that locality? I could not offer an opinion upon that.

1679. Has the country in your district, and in other parts, advanced more materially than has been the case out there? Yes; much more so. The country between here and Byron Bay, and between here and Ballina—in fact, the whole of the Richmond and Tweed lying east and north-east from here—has gone ahead very much.

1680. In what direction? It has increased in population, and has been occupied principally for dairying purposes.

1681. Has that occurred since the railway was built between here and Murwillumbah? The railway between here and Murwillumbah has lent great assistance to the increase of the dairying industry. It has given great facilities to the people on each side of the line to bring their cream and milk to the factories. The railway has helped settlement along very much.

1682. How does the country between Lismore and Murwillumbah compare with the country you went out to report upon about Myrtle Creek? There is no comparison. The country between here and Mullumbimby is first-class land. It is of volcanic formation, and it grows lovely grass, while the country about Myrtle Creek, to which I have before referred, is poorer soil—sandy, pipe-clay soil.

1683. Do you think there is anything else you could tell us? I do not think so. I do not pose at all as an expert in the knowledge of land.

1684. You concluded that they were a law-abiding population at Myrtle Creek? There is only a sparse population there. In fact, there is no crime reported from there. The police from Casino and Coraki patrol out there occasionally, and they are able to attend to all the work required in that locality; so that I did not see any necessity for a station there.

John William Pidcock, hotel-keeper, Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

1685. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you followed your present occupation? About five or six years. J.W. Pidcock.

1686. Previous to that were you a resident of the Richmond district? Yes; I was a resident of Sandy Creek for five years. 6 Mar., 1900.

1687. What part of Sandy Creek? In the neighbourhood of Sandy Creek Station, down the creek.

1688. Were you a landholder? Yes.

1689. Is that near the proposed railway line—the surveyed line? About 7 or 8 miles from the proposed line, east.

1690. What area of land had you in that particular holding? I selected 1,280 acres, but was only granted 996 acres.

1691. Did you occupy it for any lengthened period? Five years.

1692. What was your experience with regard to the character of the land at that particular place? The land is very poor indeed, and as a matter of course, the grass is equally so.

1693. When did you first take it up? About the end of 1888 or the beginning of 1889.

1694. For what purpose did you take it up? For grazing.

1695. There was not so much dairying carried on at that time? No, there was no dairying. It had been attempted, but it was not a success.

1696. You had not then the modern improvements which exist at the present time for carrying on dairying successfully? No; there were no dairy factories then.

1697. Have you had much experience in dairying? Yes, I have had a great deal. I have been all my life among stock—nearly all my life on the Richmond amongst stock and dairying.

1698. How far would your land be from Casino? About 12 or 13 miles.

1699. Would that be your nearest town? Yes; Coraki was about the same distance away—it may be a mile nearer.

1700. Did you experiment in dairying? On a very small scale I did.

1701. Was your holding a fair sample of the land in the locality? It was a choice piece.

1702. That would imply that the lands near you were of a worse character? Decidedly.

1703. Did you carry out any improvements in the shape of ringbarking? Yes, I ringbarked.

1704. What was the area? 1,280 acres.

1705. Would that all be conditional purchase land? No; there were 596 acres of conditional purchase land, and the balance was under conditional lease.

1706. How much of the conditional purchase land did you improve? About 400 acres.

1707. With what result;—was it suitable for grazing purposes? On some of the land that I ringbarked an extra outlay was entailed in keeping down the suckers.

1708. That is invariably the case, is it not? In that country, yes.

1709. It was the second growth? Yes, that was the trouble.

1710. How many head of stock had you grazing on the property? On the 1,280 acres, from the end of September, or the beginning of October, until February, I used to graze about 180 or 200 breeders.

1711. How many milking cows? I only milked at most about nine or ten.

1712.

- J. W. Pidgeon
6 Mar., 1860.
1712. As far as dairying was concerned, your operations were on a very small scale? I was satisfied it would not pay, and my dairying was very small indeed. I might add that I did not grass half the number during the winter time, as the land would not then carry the same number of stock.
1713. Was it fully stocked during the best part of the year? Yes.
1714. Taking the result from the time you were there, do you consider that in taking up the land as a selection you made a fair speculation? Not for the purposes for which I took it up. I took it up for breeding cattle on—to raise cattle.
1715. Did you sell the selection when you left? No; I sold an interest to my brothers.
1716. You disposed of it? Yes.
1717. Have they got it now? Yes.
1718. If you had had the appliances for carrying on a dairy farm which are now available, do you think that industry could have been successfully carried on? I would not attempt to dairy on that country at all. It can be done successfully for three or four months in a good season.
1719. Do you know what your brothers use it for now? Yes; for feeding. You cannot breed cattle successfully on it; there is no lime in the country.
1720. They take cattle on agistment? No; they breed cattle elsewhere, and put them there to grow.
1721. Not to fatten? No; unless it is lightly stocked in a good season.
1722. Have you a knowledge of the land between Casino and Grafton along the surveyed line? Yes.
1723. A good general knowledge? Yes; I have known it for the last thirty years.
1724. Does your knowledge of it extend up to the present time? Yes; I have been along it within the last eighteen months—along portion of it.
1725. Does your knowledge extend away from the road on either side, say, for a distance of 10 or 18 miles? Yes; I know the country intimately from mustering stock on it.
1726. You know it from between Casino and Myrtle Creek in the same way, and the other portions right through to Grafton? Exactly; within 5 or 6 miles of Grafton. I have only been along the road from Saltwater Creek to Grafton. Over there I have not been off the road on either side.
1727. What is your opinion of the general character of the country, taking the whole distance between Casino and Grafton;—I am not speaking exactly of the country you can see from the road, but what is your opinion of the country on either side of the road, say, for a distance of from 10 to 15 miles? My opinion on the country is that it is poor sandy soil, and only capable of being stocked very lightly.
1728. Does that apply to the whole country? With the exception of a few favoured spots. There is one spot they call Kangaroo Hills, on Mr. Vickery's station, and there is Pumpkin Swamp, held by Camira Station. There is a fairly good tract of country there, and at Saltwater Creek there is another small area of fairly good pastoral country.
1729. Do you know the Camira Station? Yes, I have been at Camira head station.
1730. What is your opinion of that country? In a good season the ridges round there look very nice.
1731. Is it not a fact that a considerable portion of it is flat country? Only Pumpkin Swamp, and in that neighbourhood.
1732. There is a flat where they cultivate, and where we were told they raised a crop of maize which went 80 bushels to the acre? I do not think so. I should be surprised if there were 40 bushels.
1733. Coming back to Myrtle Creek, is that a similar class of country to your selection? Exactly; the same timber, the same grass, and the same country.
1734. Do you know Mr. Henderson's property? Yes; I know Mr. Cunningham Henderson's property.
1735. What is your opinion of that? His is a fairly good selection.
1736. Do you know the property held by Messrs. Harris, two brothers? Yes; they are at Ellangowan.
1737. What is your opinion of that? They hold a very nice little piece of land. It is of volcanic formation such as exists only in two or three places between Casino and Grafton.
1738. Do you know Mr. George McKee's property;—does that compare favourably with yours? It is no better; it is poor.
1739. Does he not carry on dairying on his selection? He may do it a little, but he did not do it.
1740. We are informed that he carries it on with some degree of success? It is very recently. He was a butcher a few months ago.
1741. Do you know the property of Mr. Smith, one of the oldest residents at Myrtle Creek? Yes.
1742. What is your opinion of the character of his land? It is similar to Mr. McKee's; it is very good for three or four months in the year.
1743. Are you aware that he is carrying on dairying to a considerable extent? I am aware that he is dairying and milking a lot of cows; as to the result, I cannot say for certain.
1744. In view of the testimony of those who own these lands as to the results that have been obtained from dairying—which we believe to be successful—would not your selection, assuming it to be of a similar character, be equally successful? I cannot think that any of those farmers can have carried on dairying successfully; in fact, I am positive that it cannot be done.
1745. In regard to the character of the land along the railway route, it is mostly heavily timbered, is it not? In places, yes.
1746. What is the nature of the timber? Spotted-gum and iron-bark.
1747. Have you had any knowledge of country thickly timbered with spotted-gum? Yes.
1748. In its natural condition, is there much grass? No; there is not much grass.
1749. When ringbarked and cleared, have you noticed any marked result? I have noticed a marked result—that is, in gravelly, spotted-gum country.
1750. But it is nearly always gravelly with spotted-gum? Some spotted-gum country is dark soil.
1751. What is the character of the soil where the spotted-gum grows to which you refer? The soil is of a spewy sandy nature—very pale, almost white.
1752. Does that apply to the spotted-gum ridges extending between Grafton and Casino? Generally. There is a volcanic formation at Ellangowan, which carries spotted-gum and iron-bark, and that is excellent country when ringbarked.
1753. With regard to iron-bark, is there much timber of that class along the line? Yes, there is a good deal; there is a good deal of very mixed timber along the line.
1754. Would this timber be of any considerable market value? A good deal of it has been already cut.
1755. Where would that be? All along from Lawrence to Myrtle Creek.

J. W.
Pidcock.
6 Mar., 1900.

1756. They are at present cutting there? I could not say whether they are doing so at present, but numbers of parties have been out there cutting, and teams have been drawing piles to the mill and drawing timber both to the Clarence and the Richmond for shipment to New Zealand and Melbourne.
1757. There is a considerable quantity of timber cut and drawn there? Yes; there has been a considerable quantity.
1758. And there is ample scope for continuing the industry to a much larger extent? That would be the case on the western side of the line, but on anywhere near the road any really good timber has pretty well been cut.
1759. Taking land in its natural condition, such as the land we are now referring to, when it is ringbarked and properly worked, what would you say would be its increase in value? I suppose you could not expect an increase in value of more than 10 per cent.
1760. Is that the general result of ringbarking? That is my experience.
1761. Would that class of country grow artificial grasses? I do not know; I have not had much experience in artificial grasses. But I do not know what artificial grass could be raised there successfully.
1762. Do you know Mr. Duggan's free-selection, near Grafton? Yes.
1763. Did you know that before it was selected? Yes; it was a box ridge principally—white-box.
1764. What sort of country did it strike you to be when you saw it? Box ridges are fairly good ridges. They are far before stringy-bark, black-wood, or tallow-wood country.
1765. Did you think at the time that that selection was a desirable choice? Well, not at that time. There was better land, but not better land in that neighbourhood. It was the pick of that part of the district.
1766. How many acres in its original condition would it take to keep a cow or one head of cattle? I should imagine these ridges would take about from 7 to 8 acres. It would vary a lot, according to the season.
1767. Do you mean to say that that was its carrying capacity when it was a box country;—it was thickly timbered with box, was it not? Fairly thickly timbered, but not out of the way; it was the pick of that country round there.
1768. Was it similar land to that across the road? No; the hill was decidedly superior to the land on the opposite side of the road.
1769. How many acres would it take of the land on the opposite side of the road to maintain a cow? When I was along there last, immediately opposite Duggan's selection was an undergrowth scrub—a sapling scrub, and it would take a good many acres—12 or 15—if it were all like that. I never was across the road, but I have been over Duggan's place before it was ringbarked.
1770. Do you consider Duggan's selection considerably improved? Yes, decidedly.
1771. How many acres do you consider, in your experience, it would now take to keep a cow? Four or 5 acres all the year round.
1772. Is it a class of country that would be suited for agriculture? No. No form of agriculture could be carried on there successfully without manuring—no crops such as maize, lucerne, or sugar-cane.
1773. Taking that particular selection as an illustration of the country for some miles further along, how would you compare that in its original state with country 10 miles further towards Casino? The country generally 10 miles further from that selection towards Casino is, in its natural state, decidedly inferior to Duggan's. That is the case until you get to Saltwater Creek, where there is a good patch of pastoral country. But the average could never be put in the same condition that Duggan's is in at present. Ringbarking would not do it—the country is too poor.
1774. With regard to the unimproved country along the surveyed line, how many acres do you consider it would take to keep a cow? From Saltwater Creek to Myrtle Creek, taking the average, it would take 10 acres to the beast.
1775. That is without improvements? Yes.
1776. Suppose it were improved to the same extent as Duggan's selection, how many acres would it then take to maintain a cow? Well, it would make very little difference to the majority of the country. I daresay it would take about 7 acres.
1777. If a railway were constructed, and facilities given for sending produce to Grafton at one end and to Casino or Lismore at the other, is the class of country along the line of such a nature that it would be likely to be settled upon? I do not think so—not for dairying or pastoral pursuits. It might be for timber possibly.
1778. Land is very seldom taken up for timber purposes, is it? They might take up land for a home, as it were, while they were working the timber, and abandon it afterwards.
1779. *Mr. Watson.*] You had your place for five years? Yes.
1780. Did you ring it all? I rung about 400 acres.
1781. That is about a third of it, roughly? No; about two-thirds of what was thickly timbered. The other was thinly timbered. It was a third of the holding, but it was really two-thirds of the timbered country.
1782. How long did you attempt to thicken stock that land?—I think you said your brothers now use it, but what did you attempt to do with it in the early part? I attempted to breed cattle on it.
1783. Seeing that you had only a portion of it ringbarked, you would not for some time get, even from what was ringbarked, any benefit, would you? No, but I could make a calculation; I could reasonably allow for the improvement that would accrue.
1784. For some time ahead? Yes.
1785. How long do you reckon it takes for the improvements to be effective? That country would not improve. After two years, as soon as the timber is dead, the improvement is very noticeable. There is an early spring on it, and the grass looks nice, but it is always thin. After two years the suckers begin to come, and then you have the trouble.
1786. If a man has a small area he can keep the suckers down, can he not? Yes; but it is worth the land to keep them down.
1787. You say you carried, speaking roughly, a beast to 6 acres in the summer? Yes, for four months.
1788. And half that number in the winter? Yes—and not half that number in the winter. Not quite a beast to 6 acres. I carried from 180 to 200 on 1,280 acres.
1789. You have already said your land is not all improved? No, not all improved. That which was not timbered, or was very lightly timbered, could not be improved by ringbarking. There were at least 120 acres that ran into a flat with no timber at all on, or only sufficient for shade.
1790. And on the other you had 400 acres cleared? Yes.

John Gibson, Manager for the New South Wales Creamery and Butter Company at Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Gibson. 1791. *Chairman.*] How long has the factory been established at Lismore? Five years. I have been here all the time.
- 6 Mar., 1900. 1792. Have you a statement in regard to the dairy industry in the Richmond district? Yes. It is as follows:—The New South Wales Creamery Butter Company established a butter factory at Casino about three years ago, and started operations on an output of about 3 tons per week. At the beginning of this year the output had increased to 9 tons per week, a very satisfactory increase of 300 per cent. since starting. The principal supply to Casino factory came from farmers settled on the main arm of the Richmond, North Casino, Kyogle, and Upper Richmond, all of which, judging by results, are eminently suited for dairying pursuits. At the request of ten farmers, who signed a requisition, the company erected a creamery at Myrtle Creek, and, owing to the poor nature of the country for dairying, the supply is now much smaller than when we started there, and we do not hope for any increase from that direction. A creamery was also erected at Mongogarie, which, however, we are now compelled to close down. The falling off in supply at the creameries at Myrtle Creek and Mongogarie is mainly due to the inability of the farmers to continue the payment of rent, which is 2s. 6d. per acre. One supplier from that part told me that 1s. per acre was as much as the majority of them could live at, as with improvements and the benefit of a favourable season it took 10 acres to keep one cow. It may be as well to add that the farmers of these localities are treated, as regards cost of manufacture, exactly as they are at Kyogle, North Casino, and those places, where the industry is on a progressive footing. On the whole I consider the country in the direction of Myrtle Creek unsuitable for dairying, excepting in small patches along the watercourses, and do not think a line of communication would induce the settlement of those intending to follow this industry. On the other hand, the country mentioned around Kyogle, Upper Richmond, North Casino, and the main arm, are so favourably considered by this company that they are prepared to expend a considerable amount of capital to induce settlement of farmers intending to follow dairying. Owing to the impossibility of direct shipment from Casino we are compelled to carry the butter made there to Lismore, which entails an additional expenditure of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb., which, on 9 tons of butter, comes to £21. The supply at the Lismore factory since it started has been steadily increasing, although showing a slight falling off in 1898, owing to a long spell of dry weather. The figures are:—1895, 350 tons; 1896, 700 tons; 1897, 900 tons; 1898, 896 tons; 1899, 1,000 tons. The cost of butter to the farmer landed in Sydney, is $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb., this charge covering manufacture, freight, and selling charges.
1793. You made the statement that farmers about Myrtle Creek could not afford to pay 2s. 6d. per acre per annum rent to the squatters for the use of their land;—what rental do they pay in the districts that prosper? From 5s. to 7s. 6d. an acre.
1794. Do they get on better than these other farmers? Yes.
1795. Could you tell us about the size of the holdings on fairly rich land? About 200, 300, 400, and as much as 500 acres.
1796. How many beasts do they carry to the acre? In these particular districts, on good land, one cow to 3 acres.
1797. Is that mostly cleared land? Yes, mostly cleared.
1798. Do the tenants have to do the improvements when they take up the land;—do they have to fence in every block? They are generally put on a sliding scale, and the rent gradually increases.
1799. What do they start with? I think it is about 2s. 6d.
1800. And in most cases they are able to make their improvements and pay the increased rent? Just so.
1801. You have not had to discontinue your operations at Myrtle Creek? At Mongogarie we have ceased operations.
1802. How does the character of the milk from those districts compare with the milk from land of a better class? It is much poorer.
1803. Is that owing to bad feed? The grasses are not as good.
1804. Have you yourself seen that country under grass? Yes; as district inspector I periodically visit those districts. I visit them a dozen times a year.
1805. What was your experience before you came here as manager of the Company? My experience was on the South Coast.
1806. For a considerable number of years, then, you have been looked upon as an expert in dairying? I have been twenty years in the business. I have followed up dairying in the South Coast district, in the Mudgee district, and in the Wellington, Monaro, and Shoalhaven districts.
1807. Suppose you had left one of those districts, and had come to this part of the country, and you could not get any of this good land for which they pay the higher rentals, and where dairying is admittedly a success, would you, as a practical dairyman, have taken up any of that land between Casino and Myrtle Creek for the purpose of dairying? Certainly not.
1808. Why? Simply because it is not suitable. The ground is poor. In good patches it could be improved by putting down *Paspalum dilatatum* and other grasses such as that, but on the high lands the grass is generally useless for dairying.
1809. *Mr Watson.*] Would not *Paspalum* grow on that land? No, not on the land I speak about between Casino and Myrtle Creek. It is nothing but that volcanic formation where the iron-bark and spotted-gum ranges are. *Paspalum* might grow on the flats, but it would not grow on the hills.
1810. *Chairman.*] Is there enough of that level good land to induce a large dairying population to settle on that country? I do not think so.
1811. It is somewhat limited? Yes.

William Kennedy, Surveyor, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Kennedy. 1812. *Chairman.*] You had charge of the survey of this line from Casino to near Myrtle Creek? Yes.
- 6 Mar., 1900. 1813. Do you hand in a statement making a comparison between the original survey and the proposed western deviation? Yes. It is as follows:—The western deviation was surveyed by me in 1891, after examining the country with Messrs. Lloyd and Gillett, railway surveyors. I think this deviation was suggested

suggested by the Engineer-in-Chief, partly with a view of making a junction station near the junction of W. Kennedy, Mongogarie and Deep Creeks, to suit a connection with Grafton, Casino, and Tenterfield surveys, and also to locate the line on higher and drier ground, as against the permanent survey to the east of the Casino-Lawrence Road. I have never actually followed the eastern survey, but from its closeness to the main road, and from frequent inquiries from residents living on the spot, and an experience of the 1891 flood in Deep Creek, I am confident that the western deviation is greatly to be preferred to the eastern from an engineering point of view—that is, with regard to crossing the flooded stretch of country lying between Richmond River and Deep Creek.

6 Mar., 1900.

Christian Balzer, cordial manufacturer and coach proprietor, Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

1814. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you had a mail contract between Woodburn and Chatsworth? Yes.
1815. For how long? For one term of three years, and another term of about twelve months. I started in 1894, and finished in October, 1898.
1816. What was the passenger traffic like between those two places? There was a fair amount of passenger traffic; not out of the way though.
1817. Could you give us any figures on the subject? For the twelve months from the 1st of May, 1895, to the 30th April, 1896, the gross takings amounted to £668 8s. 2d. That is the only year for which I had the line of coaches to myself. At any other time there was opposition on the road.
1818. You continued to run the coaches after the date you have mentioned? Yes; I was running from the 30th April, 1896, till last October twelve months.
1819. Was there any sign of an increase or decrease in the passenger traffic during that time? There was no increase; it would be about the same. Opposition came, and I was very glad to get off the line.
1820. But during the time for which you gave the figures you had practically control of the whole thing yourself? Yes; I bought the opposition line out, and for that twelve months there was no opposition on the road.
1821. So that you had a knowledge of every person who travelled that road? Yes.
1822. Would that include commercial travellers with their samples, and things of that sort? Yes; it includes the whole of the takings as shown by the books.
1823. Have you any means of ascertaining where those people came from before they got to Woodburn or Chatsworth;—would they come from the river or from Sydney? Often from Sydney. There was a Sydney mail twice a week to Harwood Island. That came through the same line. Then there were passengers from here to Sydney and Grafton, and passengers from Grafton and Sydney here.
1824. Would many of the passengers from Lismore make towards the Clarence to get to Sydney? If the bar was bad on the Richmond they would. There would be less passenger traffic when the bar on the Richmond was good than when there was a bad bar.
1825. So that many passengers would not go across from Woodburn to the Clarence if they could go out of the Richmond without hindrance? Not many.
1826. I understand that there has been a good bar on the Richmond of late? Yes.
1827. And there has been no serious detention of the steamers? No.
1828. In view of that, has the direct passenger traffic between here and Sydney increased—I mean between Lismore and Sydney by steamer direct? Yes, it naturally would.
1829. With a proportionate decrease in the number who have travelled *via* Harwood Island? Yes.
1830. Take commercial travellers, would they in most cases come to both rivers on the one general trip from Sydney? As a rule they would come from Sydney, perhaps, to Grafton, and then come over here. Sometimes they would go back to the Clarence, and at other times they would go back direct to Sydney from here.
1831. I think you said that when the bar was good there were not so many passengers going across by coach? No.
1832. When the bar was bad, would there be any considerable number? Yes. We used to say it would be good for the coaches when the bar was bad, and when the bar was good the traffic would fall off a good bit.
1833. But when it had fallen off, would it then be small, fair, or what? There was a fair amount of traffic for one line of coaches at any time; but when the two lines came on there was not sufficient for them.
1834. How many times a week did the coaches run? Every day each way.
1835. There was just about enough traffic to keep one line going? Yes.
1836. That would be on the average, allowing for a good bar and a bad bar? Yes, one line of coaches would pay at any time.
1837. What was the fare across? Seven shillings and sixpence between Woodburn and Chatsworth, and 10s. between Woodburn and Harwood Island.
1838. Supposing a commercial traveller wished to reach Lismore from Grafton, what would he have to pay under present conditions? It would depend on the size of his load.
1839. Leave his load out of the question, and say just one passenger? It would cost him 3s. down the river to Chatsworth, 7s. 6d. over in the coach to Woodburn, and 5s. from there to Lismore. His total payment, from Grafton to Lismore, would be 15s. 6d. If he took a return ticket his coach fare, both ways, would be 12s. 6d. instead of 15s.
1840. Suppose there was a railway between Grafton and Lismore, would there be on the down-river towns, both on the Clarence and the Richmond, anything in the way of business which would compel a traveller to go to those places in any case? Yes, in a great many instances.
1841. Say at Coraki and Maclean? If they come from the Clarence they want to do Ballina and Lismore. When they get to Woodburn they often go down to Ballina first, or they could come to Lismore first, and then go down to Ballina.
1842. So that, coming across the short distance between Chatsworth and Woodburn, those towns, such as Ballina and Coraki, are easily reached by the travellers? Yes. Then there is Maclean, on the Clarence River, they often go from Grafton to Maclean, perhaps stop a day or two at Maclean—that is 6 miles above Chatsworth—and then they go to Chatsworth and across to Woodburn.
1843. Do you think the travellers would use a railway from Grafton to Casino—the general run of travellers? I am sure they would not; they would come Chatsworth way.

C. Balzer.

6 Mar., 1900.

- C. Balzer. 1844. Why? Because it is more convenient. By the railway a passenger would have to go from Grafton right away round to Lismore, and then he would have to go to Ballina and back to Woodburn; whereas by going from Grafton to Chatsworth and across to Woodburn he could go down to Ballina and up to Lismore; or he could go right round the river, starting from Woodburn. Say he arrived in Woodburn from the Clarence, he could go up to Coraki, from Coraki to Casino, from Casino to Lismore, and from Lismore to Ballina, and then he could go on to Sydney, or come back to Woodburn and across to the Clarence again.
- 6 Mar., 1900. 1845. You think they would not have so much dead time on their hands that way? Not nearly so much, because they leave Grafton at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and get to Chatsworth at 7. They can get over to Woodburn that night or wait till next morning if they like; then they can get up to Lismore next morning, or go to Ballina.
1846. You do not seem to think, then, there will be much traffic for a railway between here and Grafton in the way of passengers? No, I do not think so.
1847. Are there many travellers on the northern rivers who take their own conveyances, or engage special conveyances, in addition to those who travel by the ordinary coaches? Yes, a good many get specials, and some, not many, have their own vehicles.
1848. The figures given by you would not allow for special conveyances, I suppose; but would include only your own takings; or did you have the special conveyances for hire? They would only hire special vehicles from me up in Lismore. It was very seldom that a special went from Woodburn, because nineteen times out of twenty when the passengers came to Woodburn they would take the steamer. Very few specials went from Woodburn; but I have coaches and buggies here which would be hired perhaps to go from here to Casino or Coraki, or perhaps to Ballina.
1849. I was referring more particularly to those who would be going right through between the two rivers? Not many have their own vehicles down there.
1850. Would there be many who would hire special conveyances to carry their samples? Yes.
1851. That would be between Woodburn and Chatsworth? Yes.
1852. Suppose you were able to say how many had engaged such traps, and the amount paid, would that mean any considerable addition to the figures given by you for the year? I have put down all that passengers paid for conveying their samples as well as themselves.
1853. Were there any other people from whom they could hire conveyances? No, there was no opposition on the road.
1854. Not even in the way of special conveyances? No.
1855. So that the figures you gave included all that traffic? They included the whole of the traffic on the river, except people with private vehicles.
1856. Those would not form a large proportion? No.

George Nesbitt, storekeeper, Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Nesbitt. 1857. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been engaged in your present business? Four and a half years.
- 6 Mar., 1900. 1858. And previous to that? I was a commercial traveller for over thirteen years, principally in the North Coast district.
1859. Would that include from the Clarence or the Macleay north? From the Manning north.
1860. I suppose you have frequently travelled between the Clarence River and the Richmond River? Yes; during the last five years, prior to my leaving off, I travelled between the two rivers on an average every five to six weeks.
1861. Would you make a round trip in that time? Yes.
1862. That is, coming from Sydney and returning? Yes; travelling right up to the Macleay and the Manning, and then taking a steamer up to the Clarence or the Richmond, as the case might be.
1863. Suppose you wanted to make a tour over the whole of the district you have mentioned, how would you work it—from the Manning River north? I would take the Manning and the Macleay together. I would either go to the Manning or the Macleay, and work on to the other rivers and go to Sydney, or I would ship my samples to Sydney and travel overland by buggy to Grafton from the Macleay, provided I started on the Manning.
1864. And your samples would then go by steamer to Grafton? Yes.
1865. And how would you work the Clarence River? I would work down the river to Maclean and Chatsworth where I had customers.
1866. And then to the Richmond? I would then go over to Woodburn, and would work from there either to Ballina or Lismore, so that I would not cover the ground a second time.
1867. You would visit Casino, would you not? Yes.
1868. How would you get to Casino? I would go out from Lismore to Casino and back.
1869. That would complete your tour? Yes.
1870. And in returning to Sydney? I would either go from Ballina to Sydney, or, if I wanted to do a second trip the same month—overlap the other as it were in the trip—I would return to the Clarence.
1871. Generally speaking, what was the practice during the time you were engaged in that capacity—would you more frequently in returning to Sydney go by Ballina or by the Clarence? In the early part of my time as a traveller I invariably went back to the Clarence, because I would get blocked on the bar on the Richmond in the old days. But in the later years I generally went direct from the Richmond to Sydney.
1872. When you intended to visit the Clarence and the Richmond in leaving Sydney, which steamer would you take—one to the Clarence or one to the Richmond? It would not matter which.
1873. What was the usual custom? There was no usual custom. I either went direct to the Clarence or direct to the Richmond, just as I fancied business was.
1874. Could you not say which way you would mostly go? In the first portion of my travelling, the first years, I went to the Clarence, but in later years I have as often come to the Richmond.
1875. Was it the usual custom of those engaged as commercial travellers to follow the same lines you have yourself indicated? I believe it was.
1876. As far as your knowledge goes? Yes; I could instance two or three who invariably went to the Clarence, but they made longer trips; that is to say, they spent two months perhaps on the two rivers, and went back to the Clarence for the second month's trade.
- 1877.

G. Nesbitt.
6 Mar., 1900.

1877. In the event of a railway being constructed from Grafton to Casino, and also from Casino to Lismore, do you think the passenger traffic—I am referring now particularly to commercial travellers—would go by rail? I should say, having a knowledge of the mode of travelling, that it would be more convenient to adopt the present system of travelling from Chatsworth to Woodburn.

1878. Would you say how it would be more convenient? Well, you arrive at Woodburn, and you travel down the river, touching at the little townships, until you get to Ballina. There is less loss of time doing that, because, after having finished your business at Ballina, if you are carrying samples you can ship those on the returning boat to Lismore direct, and travel from Ballina to Lismore by coach, which occupies little more than three hours; consequently, you have half a day to make your appointments in Lismore before the arrival of your samples—you get your outside work done before you touch your samples. Then, having arrived at Lismore, you work Casino from there, and work to Coraki either by coming back to Lismore and down to Coraki, or, if the road between Casino and Coraki is anything like fair travelling, you go that way to Coraki, and you arrive back at the place you started from without loss and without traversing the distance twice.

1879. That is Woodburn? Yes.

1880. You made your starting point at Woodburn, but you did not tell us how you got to Woodburn? From Chatswood—that is, if I came from the Clarence.

1881. Say you came from Sydney to the Clarence by an ocean steamer, what would be the track? I would go direct to Grafton, and work down to Chatswood by way of Maclean, and then come across to Woodburn. I would then either go up to Lismore and finish at Ballina, or the reverse, if I wished to go back to the Clarence.

1882. Would that be the most speedy way to go through the whole of the two districts? I found it so.

1883. And the least expensive? It would not be more expensive than travelling from Grafton to Casino.

1884. Could you not, coming up by ocean steamer from Sydney, land at Maclean, then take Grafton, and come to Casino by rail;—how would that compare with the route you have indicated? From my experience it would not be advantageous, because in going from Grafton to Casino, a distance of over 60 miles, a commercial traveller would be travelling dead country. There is not a township between

1885. But it would not take long to do that journey by train? To send samples by train is rather expensive. That would stand in the way of going that way.

1886. We had a commercial traveller who gave evidence that it would be less expensive? I am afraid he did not travel much by rail.

1887. He gave his experience, and his statement was that it would be more speedy and less expensive? It would be more speedy, but more expensive, with no equivalent.

1888. Have you travelled the line between Lawrence and Casino? Yes.

1889. Is there much traffic on that line in the shape of commercial travellers and ordinary passengers? I never went by that road, except when the road between Chatsworth and Woodburn was very bad, and my experience amongst them was that with one or two exceptions travellers did not go that way.

1890. That would be going through a lot of dead country—40 odd miles? Yes.

1891. By coach? Yes.

1892. The journey from Lawrence to Casino is through dead country, and would take a considerable time by coach, whereas the journey by rail from Grafton to Casino is only 20 miles further, and would be done in much less time? But I explained that I never travelled the road from Lawrence to Casino, unless I was forced to do so by the bad state of the road between Chatsworth and Woodburn.

1893. What is your observation in regard to other traffic—say, in the first instance, between Chatsworth and Woodburn;—was there much travelling in the different coaches, and by private vehicles, and on horseback? Private vehicles and horsemen were very scarce. The only vehicles I noticed were the mail coaches and the coaches carrying the travellers' samples.

1894. That would be the principal portion of the traffic? Yes.

1895. It is some years ago since you were a traveller? Four and a half years.

1896. Have you any means of ascertaining whether that traffic has increased or diminished since you left the line? I cannot speak positively, except that I never go that way myself now. During my four and half years' residence at Lismore I have only travelled that road three or four times.

1897. Do you frequently go to Sydney? Yes; on an average twice a year.

1898. And you take the ocean steamer direct from Ballina? Yes; they are more regular now.

1899. The bar has improved to a considerable extent, and there is not the same delay that used to occur in years gone by? I would not attempt it when I was travelling at first.

1900. I suppose you are aware that the practice now in going to Sydney is for people to take the river steamer to Woodburn, and then go over by coach to catch the Clarence steamer, and go by that way to Sydney? I believe there are passengers who go that way.

1901. Do you know whether that traffic has shown any increase of late years? I could not say.

1902. *Chairman.*] The people do not seem to interchange visits in these districts very much? No; nor goods either. I consider that we should not have any goods going from here. I was looking into the matter this morning, and I find that the only products we could get by railway from the Clarence would be potatoes and maize. We have sufficient maize on this river. I made inquiries this morning, and I found that we have not had 20 bags of maize by steamer from Sydney for the last twelve months. As regards potatoes, the freight from Grafton to Lismore by rail would be equal to the water carriage from Sydney to Lismore.

1903. What is the freight on potatoes from Sydney to Lismore? One shilling a bag. It is 9s. a ton by rail for 80 miles; that would be 9d. a bag. The ton rate would be charged. Then we get a superior potato. The ocean steamers make tri-weekly trips to this river now that there is a good bar, so that in registered tonnage the shipping is equal to that on the Clarence with two steamers a week. We have trading here regularly the "Tomki," 600 tons; the "St. George," 500 tons; and the "Electra," 400 tons, making an aggregate tonnage of 1,500. The steamers trading to the Clarence are the "City of Grafton," 825 tons, and the "Kalatina," of 680, or an aggregate of 1,505 tons. I might mention that within the last month all our letters have come direct, and we do not get any letters *via* the Clarence, as we formerly did. This is in consequence of the good bar. A statement has been made that it is customary to unload the steamers coming up this river. I have made inquiries from the agent of the N.C.S.N. Company, and I find that such is not the case. The steamers land their cargo at the wharf to which it is consigned, and they do not unload any cargo at any wharf to lighten the ship.

WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Lismore, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. | JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Grafton to Casino.

Thomas Borton, mail contractor and coach proprietor, Lismore, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Borton.
 7 Mar., 1900.
1904. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know anything of the passenger traffic between here and the Clarence? I know very little from personal observation of the passenger traffic between here and the Clarence.
1905. What is your line at present. From here to Ballina.
1906. Can you say whether there has been any increase in the traffic from Sydney to the Richmond of late years? There has been a very great increase, indeed.
1907. What course did that traffic take previously? Some few years ago the main traffic used to go *via* Woodburn to Harwood Island to meet the Clarence ocean boats.
1908. But recently? Recently, for the last three years, there has been no delay whatever at the Ballina entrance.
1909. With the result? That the main body of the traffic goes direct. I may say that three years ago I had only one coach on the line to Ballina. I have now three, and there are others on the line as well. Three other people are in the same line of business, taking passengers between here and Ballina, and there are besides a great number of private vehicles used by people driving down to meet their friends.
1910. A portion of the traffic between here and Ballina would, I suppose, be a local traffic? Yes; but that would be only small in comparison with the through traffic.
1911. The greater number would be passengers proceeding to and from Sydney? Yes.
1912. Why do they take the coach from Lismore to Ballina rather than go by the steamer down the river? That coach trip often saves twenty-four hours.
1913. That is because of the steamer loading on the river? Yes; she has to travel 73 miles, and the overland journey is only 22 miles.
1914. So that practically all passengers by the Richmond River boat to Sydney go by Ballina? I suppose seven-tenths of them do, and half of the balance travel down the river by the boat through not knowing the advantage of the land line. Anyone who knows the advantage and the saving of time, and that sort of thing, does not hesitate a moment.
1915. What is the coach fare from Lismore to Ballina? Seven shillings and sixpence.
1916. And the time occupied? It takes the coach from three to three and a-half hours. It is broken country; you rise about 700 feet on the journey.
1917. How would the Ballina route compare in point of time and cost with the route to Lawrence;—for instance, you say it costs 7s. 6d. from here to Ballina, and takes three hours. Well, if a man wished to get to Chatsworth, how long would it take him, and what would it cost? It is 26 miles to Chatsworth from Woodburn.
1918. He would have to pay something on the river steamer to get to Woodburn? Yes; I think the fare is 3s. 6d. to Woodburn. The coach fare to Chatsworth was 10s.; but I believe that owing to opposition it is now considerably less—I think 7s. 6d.
1919. How long would it take? Not less than four hours.
1920. I mean the journey altogether? It would take ten hours from Lismore to Chatsworth; there is generally a delay at Woodburn.
1921. The fare from Woodburn to Lismore is 3s. 6d.? I believe it is.
1922. Your evidence, then, is to the effect that, owing to the improvements on the Richmond River bar, the Sydney traffic now comes by the Richmond boats? Yes. I can also say, from personal observation of the entrance to the Richmond, that there has been no delay whatever for the last two years.
1923. Any delay that may have occurred to the steamer would be up the river, and would not affect the passenger traffic? It would not affect the passenger traffic to the river.
1924. I should suppose, then, that, in your opinion, if the railway were constructed from Grafton to Casino, it would not attract any of the Richmond River passenger traffic? No. I do not believe there would be one passenger in twelve months who would go that way, except, perhaps, those who had business at Grafton.
1925. Or on the road? Exactly. The railway would not be used as a means of transit to Sydney. I have been travelling the district for the last thirty years, and I know the country along the proposed line between the two rivers. I was carrying the mail along that road in 1866. If the country between Casino and Grafton were anything like equal to any part of the district on this side of the river, it is only natural to suppose that it would have been settled; but though it has been open for settlement ever since the Free Selection Act was in force, people have not been able to make a living on that side of the river at all. I do not think the fact of there being a line of railway there would improve the quality of the land, and enable the people to get a living off it; consequently, there could be no settlement there of any moment. There is not an acre of land available on this side of the river that has not been taken up years and years ago. It costs people £10 an acre to clear it, and yet they can go out and make a living off it, while on the land along the Casino to Grafton road they cannot make a living off land already cleared.
1926. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You say there has been a marked increase in the passenger traffic between the Richmond and Sydney during the last few years? Yes, very marked indeed.
1927. And you gave, as a reason, that it was owing to the improved condition of the Richmond bar? Yes; on account of there being no delay—no uncertainty as to crossing the Richmond bar.
1928. What is the fare between Ballina and Sydney at the present time? £1 5s. saloon, single fare.
1929. What was it three years ago? £1 15s., as well as I can remember.
1930. Would not that reduction account for the marked increase in traffic? I think the fares have been reduced throughout on all the lines, that of the Clarence included. 1931.

1931. Is it not your experience that where there is a material reduction in fares the effect is to induce traffic? Certainly. T. Borton.
1932. Would not that, to a large extent, account for the increase in traffic between Ballina and Sydney? Not as between the two rivers. 7 Mar., 1900.
1933. Apart from that, would not that reduction of fares have a material effect in increasing the traffic? I do not think it would have very much effect.
1934. You do not think the reduction of fares would cause more people to travel? It does, as a general thing, but I think that most of the travelling public coming to the Richmond would come at any price; that is my experience of the district.
1935. Have you any knowledge of the passenger traffic between the Clarence and Sydney? None, personally.
1936. Are you aware that the reduction in fares there caused an increase of nearly 50 per cent. in the passenger traffic? The same thing would apply to this district.
1937. You said just now you did not think it would have any effect? I think it would proportionately.
1938. That is what I am asking you—whether such a substantial reduction in the fares would not have a material effect in increasing the traffic? Yes, I believe it would.

Louis O. Paulsen, master of the steamship "Tomki," sworn, and examined:—

1939. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You are master of the S.S. "Tomki," belonging to the North Coast Steam Navigation Company? Yes. L. O. Paulsen.
1940. How long have you been trading to the Richmond River? Off and on, for the last nine years, but permanently, for a little over twelve months. 7 Mar., 1900.
1941. The last twelve months? Yes.
1942. I suppose you are well acquainted with the river and the entrance? Yes.
1943. When you commenced trading here first, nine years ago, what was the condition of the entrance? It was very much inferior to its condition now. There is no comparison between its condition at the present time and what it was nine years ago.
1944. You consider it was a bad entrance nine years ago? Yes, very bad; that was before they began the breakwaters.
1945. Was the shallowness of water on the bar? Yes; on the bar and on the crossing.
1946. The bar was rather difficult to negotiate? Yes.
1947. Were there frequent delays to steamers getting in and out? Yes.
1948. That was owing to there not being sufficient water? Yes; there was too wide a spread.
1949. From that time up to the present have you noticed any marked improvement? There has been a continual improvement since the harbour works were commenced.
1950. You consider there is a marked improvement in the entrance? Yes.
1951. Do you meet with the delays now in crossing in and out that you did previously? We meet with no delays whatever. Since I have been here, during the last twelve months, I have crossed the bar at high-water, at low-water, and at any state of the tide.
1952. What depth of water does the "Tomki" draw? About 10 feet when loaded.
1953. What would be the average depth of water on the bar about nine years ago? At that time I have known it to be as low as 6 feet.
1954. I mean the average depth when it was crossable? Between 8 and 9 feet, sometimes only 7 feet. Nine years ago when I was sent here, the "Tomki" had to be taken off the line owing to insufficient water, but that state of things is altered now.
1955. What depth of water is there on the bar now? It has averaged 15 feet during the last twelve months.
1956. That would be an increased depth of between 7 and 8 feet? Yes.
1957. There is a crossing, is there not, inside the bar? Yes; but we have not had any trouble on the crossing either.
1958. An improvement has also taken place in the crossing? Yes, an equal improvement; in fact at the present time we have more water on the crossing than we have on the bar—we have about 15 or 16 feet.
1959. Captain Farrell told us the other day there was only a depth of 9 ft. 6 in. on the crossing inside the bar? There is an equal depth at the crossing and the bar. I have been coming here for twelve months, and I have had nothing less than from 10 to 12 feet on the crossing, and I have had 14 feet on it; there was a depth of 14 feet to-day. Probably Captain Farrell was speaking of some time ago.
1960. Your experience is that at the present time both the bar and the crossing are very greatly improved, and carry a depth of about 15 feet? Yes; I came in yesterday at dead low-water, drawing close on 10 feet.
1961. There are other steamers trading between the Richmond and Sydney, are there not? Yes; but the "Tomki" has the deepest draught.
1962. So that if the "Tomki" can trade here there can be no difficulty as regards the other steamers? None whatever.
1963. Leaving the entrance, are there any obstructions to navigation in the river between Lismore and the Heads? There is of course a little obstruction in some places; there are crossings here as well as in other rivers.
1964. Where would these crossings be, beginning at the Heads? We have none that we have any trouble with until we get up to Swan Bay. Of course at dead low-water you may have a little difficulty if you are drawing about 12 feet of water.
1965. Where would that difficulty be? Below Broadwater, that is the only place.
1966. How far would that be from the entrance? About 18 miles.
1967. What depth of water would there be there at low tide? At dead low-water there would be about 10 feet.
1968. Do you know what kind of bottom it is? It is a muddy bottom.
1969. It could be dredged? Yes; without any trouble.
1970. Coming further up the river, what other obstructions are there? We have not much trouble then until we get to McPherson's, about 2 miles below Swan Bay. The dredge was working there once before, I think.

- L. O. Paulsen. 1971. Is that the most serious obstruction? That is one of the worst at the present time, at low-water.
- 7 Mar., 1900. 1972. What is the depth there? I should say about 9 feet at low-water. It would carry quite that much.
1973. Then if your vessel drew 10 feet there would be some difficulty in crossing? Yes; even if we drew 9 feet there would be some difficulty, because it is very narrow. When the dredge worked there before she only got a narrow passage, not sufficiently wide for ships to get through.
1974. And with regard to other obstructions further up the river? We have none of any consequence. Of course it is a muddy bottom everywhere.
1975. Speaking generally, these obstructions between Lismore and the Heads are such as could be dredged? Yes, easily.
1976. The reason I ask is because Captain Farrell said there would be very great difficulty in removing these obstructions, as a number of them were on rocky bottom? I have no experience of that kind. There are plenty of rocks about the river, of course, pretty close to the channel, but if there were rocks actually in the channel we should not be able to negotiate it.
1977. You think that in the channel all the obstructions can be removed by dredges to a sufficient depth to enable steamers crossing the bar to navigate the river as far as Lismore? Yes, I think so. There are places in the North Arm which could be improved as well.
1978. Have you noticed in connection with your steamers a marked increase in the number of passengers between here and Sydney? Yes; there has been a wonderful increase both in passengers and cargo.
1979. What do you think has been the cause of the increase in the passenger traffic? The improvement in the bar, the regular depth of water, and the regularity observed by the steamers trading between here and Sydney. There are now three boats a week regularly, and passengers can depend upon coming and going with certainty. Except in exceptional weather, when all the northern rivers are affected, we have no difficulty in communicating with Sydney and keeping up our regular trips.
1980. What is the passenger fare between Ballina and Sydney at the present time? £2 5s. return, and 25s. single.
1981. The fare was considerably higher, was it not, a couple of years ago? Yes; there has been a reduction since the beginning of the year.
1982. Was it not the beginning of last year? No; the beginning of this year.
1983. What was it three years ago? The same as it is now; but about twelve months ago it was raised to £2 10s. Three years ago it was £3 to Lismore.
1984. Then there has been a reduction of 10s. on the return fare? Yes.
1985. In your opinion, would that reduction in fares cause an increase in the passenger traffic? No, I do not think so. It would not have anything to do with it.
1986. It would not cause people to travel more? Not to any great extent. The greatest number of people travel at Christmas-time and other holiday seasons, and then there are excursion rates.
1987. Has not that the effect of causing people to travel? Certainly.
1988. And when there is a general reduction has not that a tendency to create traffic? No doubt, as population increases in the district. I put it down to an increase of population in the district. Without the population there could not be an increase in the passenger traffic to any great extent.
1989. *Chairman.*] Has it ever been necessary in your experience, since the river has been improved, to discharge the cargo of the "Tomki" into droghers and bring it up the river? No; not since I have been in charge of her.
1990. Your practice is to load up the river and go right down to Ballina, picking up cargo on the way? Yes; going and coming I have never had to unload or do anything of the kind since I have been in charge of the "Tomki."
1991. And do you discharge as you come up the river? I discharge as I come along. I had a full ship this time—as much as I could put into her.
1992. Going down you do pick up some cargo by droghers;—that is for the convenience of the shippers, and not on account of the shallowness of the river? Exactly; we discharge our cargo at various places as we come along—a little here and a little there. The main portion of our cargo, of course, comes to Lismore.
1993. Do any of the other steamers have to discharge cargo on the river to enable them to come up? Not to my knowledge. I have never heard of their having to lighter the ship before getting up the river. The "Oakland" comes up loaded, drawing 11 feet 6 inches.
1994. *Mr. Watson*] Does she come right up the river with that draught? As far as Coraki. She does not come right up to Lismore with a full cargo. She generally brings about 200 tons up here.
1995. Could a vessel drawing 11 feet 6 inches safely come up to Lismore? She could come up here drawing 11 feet at high-water. There are places at low-water that would have to be improved; but a steamer can come up with the tide drawing from 10 feet to 10 feet 6 inches—that is, at a certain time of the tide. At low-water you could not do that. It is all right if you can use the tide—that is, up the arm.
1996. What is the difference in the flow of tide at Lismore? About 3 feet. The rise and fall is between 3 and 4 feet.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Grafton to Casino.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of Mr. E. Ebsworth, District Surveyor, Grafton.]

SCHEDULE OF PARTICULARS OF CROWN LANDS UNDER LEASE AND LICENSE ALONG THE ROUTE OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

Sir,

District Survey Office, Grafton, 15th March, 1900.

At the request of the Chairman of the Sectional Committee of Public Works, when taking evidence at Grafton from the 27th February to the 1st March, 1900, on a proposed Railway from Grafton to Casino, I have the honor to forward a Schedule (attached), giving particulars of the Crown Lands under lease and license along the proposed route.

I have, &c.,

EDWD. EBSWORTH,
District Surveyor.

The Secretary, Public Works Committee.

SCHEDULE of lands shown on map laid before Sectional Public Works Committee at Grafton, of lands along the route of the proposed Railway from Grafton to Casino, held under occupation licenses and annual leases.

Occupation Licenses.

No. of Licenses.	Area under License.	Rentals.	
		Average per section of 640 acres.	Total.
35	acres. 351,864	s. d. 14 11 (0.28d. per acre.)	£ s. d. 408 14 6

Annual Leases.

No. of Leases.	Area under Lease.	Rentals.	
		Average per acre.	Total.
178	acres. 125,695	d. 1½	£ s. d. 790 6 10

The rents for these lands are very low in each class of holding under present conditions. The reasons for these low rents are—

That the land is heavily timbered generally with growing trees, and includes several forest reserves.

The lands are held by a few holders, principally the original lessees of Camira, Wooroooolgan, Bungawalbyn, and Southgate former pastoral holdings, who do not compete against each other when tendering for these leases.

These holders require the grass mainly to rear cattle, which they fatten on other properties for market.

That the tenures are not secure enough to encourage ringbarking and suckering where now allowable.

That the country is always understocked; and the prevailing native blady grass, though nutritious when kept short, quickly outgrows its present capability of being eaten down, and becomes long and coarse, in which state no beast will eat it. It is the practice, if possible, to annually burn this long grass, but it is usually too green to do so, except after an occasional touch of frost in winter.

That better tenures cannot be given to the present lessees, as it is known the lands will be wanted during the next few years for close settlement in dairy farms and cultivation.

Much better rents are obtainable by the Crown for the same class of forest lands in areas of from 40 to 320 acres, where they are becoming tried for dairying, near the Clarence River, under longer tenures, as special leases of from five to seven years, the rents ranging from 6d. to 1s. 9d. per acre, according to position, with compulsory conditions also of ringbarking, fencing, and sowing additional grasses—improvements to revert to Crown at termination of leases.

An example of the present value of private land for dairy use, 4 miles from Grafton, being a subdivision of portion 83, parish of Great Marlow, intersected by the Grafton-Casino Road and proposed Railway, is furnished on an accompanying plan of Mount Edgcombe Estate. Of this subdivision, lots 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 (ringbarked forest ridge land), compare in quality of soil and everything else but position to Duggan's land in the parish of Southgate, viewed by the Sectional Committee. These lots were purchased in 1899 to make a dairy farm at a price equal to £3 per acre unimproved.

EDWD. EBSWORTH,
District Surveyor.

[One plan.]

GRAFTON TO CASINO RAILWAY

PLAN

Scale



Note—Line now submitted shewn thus ————
Line submitted to previous committee ————
Trial Surveys ————



1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

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

Printed under No. 10 Report from Printing Committee, 30 August, 1900.

SYDNEY : WILLIAM APPELGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

- * The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
- * The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
- * The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

- * WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

[* On the 14th June, 1900, The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT having accepted the office of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, retired from the position of Chairman, and a Member of the Committee, Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Vice-Chairman, was elected Chairman in the place of Mr. TRICKETT, and The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN was chosen as Vice-Chairman. On 4th July, The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM was elected to the vacancy on the Committee caused by the resignation of Mr. TRICKETT.]

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred, for consideration and report, the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek, have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed railway should be constructed; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

REASONS ADVANCED FOR THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

1. The question of connecting the northern and western railway systems of the Colony by means of a cross-country line has, according to the official statement put before the Committee, been discussed for many years past, the reasons advanced in support of its construction being that such a line, besides effecting a complete connection of the railway systems west of the dividing range, would afford facilities for speedier intercommunication between the northern, western, and southern main trunk lines, be a good stock-carrying line, by providing a means for the transference of starving stock from the western plains to New England and adjoining districts, open up to New England farmers a market in the dry west for all kinds of produce, be a line of military and strategic value by greatly aiding, should occasion arise, in the transport of troops to and from any part of New South Wales or the other colonies, preserve intact the continuity of the Colony's railway system in the event of the Hawkesbury Bridge being damaged or rendered uncrossable, and shorten the journey between Brisbane and Melbourne by about 100 miles, and, if the Cobar line were carried on to Broken Hill, that between Brisbane and Adelaide by about 320 miles.

POINTS OF JUNCTION ORIGINALLY PROPOSED.

2. The originally proposed points of junction with the western and northern railway systems were Dubbo and Werris Creek, Dubbo affording a more direct route for extending the line further south towards Parkes and Young. The proposal to make Wellington the junctioning point was brought before the Department of Public Works in 1890, when it was urged that by starting from Wellington the line would serve better country, and pass through more settlement than would be the case by going from Dubbo. The routes differ only for a distance of 30 miles, as far as Murrungundy; from that point they are identical.

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

3. The proposed railway would be 159 miles 27 chains in length. Leaving the Great Western Railway at about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles north of Wellington Station, the route proceeds nearly north to the Talbragar River, the valley of which it follows, in a north-easterly direction, to a point about 46 miles from Wellington. Cobborah is left to the south-east, at a distance of about 10 miles from the line. Thence the route is northerly to the neighbourhood of Mundooran, where the valley of the Castlereagh River is followed north-westerly for about 15 miles, and more easterly to the point where it crosses the ridge between the counties of Napier and Pottinger. The spurs of the Liverpool Range are then skirted, and the general direction maintained to the crossing of Werris Creek and the junction with the north-western line about 5 miles west of Werris Creek Station. The works are described as moderate in character, no large rivers having to be bridged; but a considerable extent of the country through which the route passes is undulating. The ruling gradient is 1 in 75, and the sharpest curve 15 chains radius.

ESTIMATED COST.

4. The estimated cost of the line, calculated at the present price for rails, £7 10s. a ton, is £511,149, or £3,207 18s. 3d. per mile.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

5. The Railway Commissioners, in their report upon the proposal, say they are unable to recommend the construction of the line. The annual cost, calculating the interest on capital expenditure at 3 per cent., and maintenance and locomotive expenses on the basis of a tri-weekly train service, is given as £26,954, and the traffic revenue, based upon local rates for all traffic except live stock, as £8,586, which leaves an estimated annual loss of £18,368. In their opinion there is no immediate prospect of the line paying working expenses, nor reasonable ground for assuming that it would materially increase the volume of traffic. A better method for a more direct and speedy means of transporting stock in times of drought, and one that would serve the best interests of pastoralists and the country generally, when the time comes for the construction of such a line, would be, they say, to make a connection between Brewarrina (to which place a railway is now being constructed from Byrock) and the Collarendabri district.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

6. The Committee have inquired very fully respecting the proposed railway—the necessary official witnesses having been examined in Sydney, the country along the route inspected, and evidence taken at various places.

As it was considered advisable that as many of the Committee as could make it convenient should go over the route, four members left Sydney for that purpose on 27th April, and the inquiry in the country was opened at Wellington, where not only residents of that town and district, but also witnesses from Spicer's Creek, Mitchell's Creek, and Orange were examined. The following day it was continued at Dubbo, at which town it was directed chiefly to the question of making Dubbo the point of connection with the Great Western Railway in preference to Wellington; but the evidence there included also representations from the district of Peak Hill in advocacy of a line from Narramine, through Tomingley and Peak Hill, to Parkes or Forbes.

From Dubbo the Committee returned to Wellington, and thence, accompanied by an additional member, and by an engineer from the Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, they proceeded to inspect the route of the railway and to take further evidence.

Travelling by way of Mitchell's and Spicer's Creeks they reached Murrungundy, the point near which the routes from Wellington and Dubbo converge, and thence proceeded to Cobborah, and from Cobborah to Coolah, *via* Leadville.

Leadville. Leaving Coolah, the Committee, taking the main road to Gunnedah, passing Queensborough and Binnia, and then branching off on the road to Coonabarabran, went direct to Weetalibah—which is on the railway route—and on to Ulinda and Binnaway.

From Binnaway the Committee proceeded to Coonabarabran, which, being an important town closely interested in the question of railway construction through the country in its vicinity, was regarded as a place that should not be overlooked in the inquiry. The townspeople were found somewhat apathetic in the matter—chiefly for the reason, as they explained, that their past efforts towards obtaining railway communication, though long sustained, had been so unsuccessful that they regarded the prospect of obtaining railway facilities as almost hopeless. The construction of the railway from Dubbo to Coonamble they considered to be a serious blow to their interests, inasmuch as Coonamble being their principal market for flour they would have Dubbo as a competitor, that town having the advantage of the railway, while Coonabarabran would be handicapped by a road journey of 60 miles. In view of this they now desire railway communication which will enable them to find a market at Newcastle, and urge the construction of a line from Coonabarabran to connect with the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek railway at Bomera, about 60 miles from Werris Creek.

Coonabarabran was left for Bundella, on the route of the railway, the Committee travelling *via* Binnaway, Ulinda, and Weetalibah, and taking evidence on the way at Weetalibah Homestead, and at the Flags, Bomera. From Bundella they proceeded to Colly Blue, Spring Ridge, and Werris Creek, evidence being taken at each place.

Werris Creek, though the terminus of the proposed line and the point for junctioning with the Great Northern Railway, is not the place through which the trade of the country along and in the vicinity of the route of the Wellington-Werris Creek line, and within reach of the Great Northern Railway, passes. That position is held by Quirindi, and in view of this the Committee deemed it advisable to visit Quirindi and examine witnesses there. They, therefore, at the conclusion of the Werris Creek evidence, left by train for Quirindi, arriving there the same morning; but on interviewing the Mayor of Quirindi and others, it was found that no evidence was forthcoming.

Meantime the Committee had received a telegram, and subsequently a letter, from the Council Clerk, Tamworth, asking them to visit Tamworth, and take evidence respecting the proposed railway, as a number of witnesses desired to be examined there. A reply was telegraphed that the Committee would be prepared to hear the evidence at Werris Creek or Quirindi; but in view of no witnesses appearing at Quirindi, the Committee went to Tamworth in the afternoon of the day upon which they visited Quirindi, and the following day examined seven witnesses.

The next day the Committee continued their inquiry at Armidale, to which place they had been urged to go, as twelve witnesses connected with the town and district, in addition to delegates from Inverell, Tenterfield, and Glen Innes, all representing the Farmers and Settlers' Association, were anxious to give evidence. To the first communication received on the subject the hon. secretary of the association was informed that the Committee could not visit Armidale, but would be prepared to examine the witnesses at Quirindi. Another letter, however, represented that the expense of sending delegates to Quirindi would be very heavy, and very probably would prevent Tenterfield, Glen Innes, or Inverell from sending representatives; and the Committee, reconsidering the matter, and finding that a visit to Armidale need not occupy more than one day, went there, and took evidence from fifteen witnesses. Arriving at Armidale on the morning of the 16th May, they left the same night for Curlewis, where four other witnesses were examined, principally with reference to an alternative line from Curlewis to Gilgandra; and the inquiry relating to the proposed railway was closed until the 2nd June, when evidence was taken at Gilgandra. Subsequently some witnesses were examined in Sydney.

AN ALTERNATIVE LINE FROM CURLEWIS TO GILGANDRA.

7. The alternative line from Curlewis to Gilgandra was suggested by one of the witnesses examined in a previous inquiry, and, afterwards, at the Committee's request, investigated to a certain extent by the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, and the Chief Railway Traffic Manager. From the report of the engineer sent over the route to make an exploration, it will be seen that a fairly easy line, with a grade of 1 in 60, or possibly better, could be obtained, through country "eminently adapted for farming purposes," and at a cost per mile not much greater than the estimate in connection with the Wellington to Werris Creek route. By the alternative route there would be 38 miles less of new line to construct. The traffic prospects also favourably compare with those connected with the line referred to the Committee.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS OF THE LINE.

8. In his report upon the traffic prospects of the proposed line, the Chief Traffic Manager of the Railway Department points out that though the line would serve several townships, at varying distances, there is no large settlement on the route. Mundooran would be at a distance of 3 miles from the line; Cobborah, 9 miles; Leadville, 20 miles; Coolah, 17 miles; and Coonabarabran, 25 miles. Dealing with the known traffic coming from the district through which the line would pass, as it exists to-day, and allowing a margin for development, the following estimate is given, assuming that local rates would be charged on wool, goods, and wheat:—

Wool, goods and wheat	...	...	...	...	...	£4,821
Passenger traffic	...	...	...	...	...	1,195
Parcels, &c.	..	....	...	...	...	350
Mails, 160 miles, at £12 per mile	..	...	...	...	...	1,920
Add, to meet expected traffic	...	...	...	...	...	300
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£8,586

If, as is usual in such cases, an extension of the through rates were applied to wool, general goods, and wheat, the estimate would be:—

Wool, goods and wheat	...	...	...	..	...	£2,871
Passenger traffic	...	...	...	...	...	1,195
Parcels, &c.	...	...	...	..	...	350
Mails, as above	...	...	...	...	...	1,920
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£6,336

If local rates were charged in the case of wool and general goods, the Chief Traffic Manager states, the disposition would be on certain sections of the line to continue forwarding to existing railway stations by road, and he is doubtful whether local rates could be maintained. The estimated annual cost to be set against the above estimates would be £26,954.

CHARACTER OF THE LAND ALONG THE ROUTE.

9. There is a considerable quantity of good land along the route, but most of it is alienated. The Crown land available for settlement is generally of an inferior description. From information placed before the Committee, it appears that the total quantity of alienated land within the trafficable area of the line is 1,134,450 acres, in addition to which there are 248,000 acres of settlement leases, 393,400 acres of reserves, and 907,200 acres of Crown land. Of the Crown land, the leasehold areas expiring in 1900 amount to 223,700 acres, there are 373,500 acres representing occupation licenses, 310,000 are untenanted, and 184,400 acres consist of land designed for settlement. The population estimate of the district is, in round numbers, 8,000, and the stock, taking the figures for 1899, number 769,219 sheep, and 9,243 cattle.

RESULT

RESULT OF THE INQUIRY.

10. What the Committee saw of the country, and most of the evidence given, were not favourable to the construction of the railway.

At Wellington it was contended that the country between that town and Murrungundy, the point at which the routes from Wellington and Mudgee converge, was far superior to that on the route to Murrungundy from Dubbo, and from what the Committee saw on their journey from Wellington, and what was seen during their inspection of the country from Dubbo to Munderoran when considering the line from Dubbo to Coonamble, it seems clear to them that so far as relates to the nature and capabilities of the soil, there is somewhat more to be said in favour of Wellington as the point from which the proposed line should be constructed than can be said for Dubbo. Much of the land, however, between Wellington and Murrungundy is already within reach of the Great Western Railway, and the same may be said of the land on the route to that point from Dubbo. Regarding the other matter for consideration in dealing with the rival claims of Wellington and Dubbo—that is, the best point of connection with the Western Railway, if the line from Werris Creek should in the future be continued southwards towards Parkes and Young,—the Committee consider that there is no need to express any opinion as they do not recommend at present the construction of a cross-country line.

For about 16 miles from Wellington most of the land in the vicinity of the route is under cultivation, and about the same distance from Werris Creek there is a considerable quantity of land under the plough; but, along the route generally, the land is used for pastoral purposes, most of it being included in a few large estates consisting chiefly of purchased land.

It was stated in the course of the inquiry that, if the railway were constructed, three or four times the quantity of land now under cultivation would be put under crop, as the railway would enable land to be utilised which could not be dealt with under present circumstances.

Cobborah farmers favour the Wellington route, and urge that it is difficult to grow wheat in competition with those possessed of railway facilities. Farmers to the east of Cobborah now send their wheat to Mudgee, a distance of 50 miles, and those to the west send it to Dubbo. Around Coolah township, which is about 17 miles from the surveyed route for the railway, not much land is cultivated, but in the district, taking the counties of Lincoln and Napier, there are about 17,000 or 18,000 acres under crop.

All but one station-owner beyond Coolah expressed themselves in favour of the railway, and stated that the progress of the district—especially in farming—had been greatly retarded by the want of such a means of communication, but they were not to any extent disposed to contribute in the form of a special tax towards meeting the estimated loss in connection with the line.

THE ALLEGED SPECIAL ADVANTAGES FROM THE RAILWAY.

11. With reference to the special advantages mentioned in the official statement as having been urged in support of the construction of the line, the evidence points to the following conclusions:—

Connecting the Railway Systems.—Except for the interchange of rolling stock between the western and north-western districts, which would be an exceptional thing, the railway authorities do not see any advantage from a railway point of view in connecting the two systems. Nor would a further connection between the western line and Parkes or Forbes be, in their opinion, of any consequence in regard to traffic. The interchange of traffic between the north and the west, by this cross-country line, would be comparatively limited; the railway traffic generally is to and from the coast,—not intra-provincial.

Carriage of Stock.—As for the railway being a good stock-carrying line, the railway officers do not consider there is sufficient reason on this ground to justify its construction. The movements of stock from the north and north-west in

times of drought are towards the south-east, or practically from west to east, at right angles to the proposed line. It is admitted that the railway might afford a certain measure of relief in connection with starving stock, but not to an extent that would make such a thing important from a railway point of view. Fat stock would probably continue to go to Morpeth and Newcastle, the Aberdeen Meat Works, and Sydney.

A Western Market for Northern Produce.—The prospect of the farmers between Wellington and Werris Creek, and further north, finding, by means of the proposed line, a market for their produce in the west, is not a very attractive one, inasmuch as produce sent in this direction would have to compete with that grown in the agricultural centres along the western line from Orange to Narramine.

Military value of the line.—The alleged military and strategic value of the line may be a matter of some importance, but, in the opinion of the Committee, the consideration of a question of that kind, as a special reason for the construction of a cross-country railway, is premature.

Shortening the journey to Melbourne and Adelaide.—With regard to shortening the journey between Brisbane and Melbourne, and Brisbane and Adelaide, as, according to a statement by the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, the trains on the proposed line would be of a mixed description, the traffic estimate of the Commissioners being based on three trains a week, it is hardly likely that anyone would travel by this line such long distances as those involved in the journey to the southern capitals. The traffic now between Brisbane and Melbourne is very limited, but whatever it might be people would naturally travel by the quick trains, and these would not run between Werris Creek and Wellington.

THE BLAYNEY-HARDEN CROSS-COUNTRY RAILWAY.

12. The line from Blayney to Harden is a cross-country line, with some features in common with the proposed railway. This line, the railway authorities say, has never been a paying one; last year the loss in working expenses and interest amounted to, practically, £42,000. Yet it goes through a fair area of good country, and through a much more thickly populated district than that through which the Wellington to Werris Creek line would pass, there being, for instance, on the route, the towns of Carcoar, Cowra, and Young. It was stated, on behalf of the Railway Commissioners, that if the proposed line would develop new country, and bring business on to the existing lines, they would not object to a temporary loss, but of this they see no prospect.

CONCLUSION ARRIVED AT.

13. From the evidence, and their inspection of the country along the route, the Committee have arrived at the conclusion that it is not expedient the proposed railway should be constructed. Except within a few miles of either end of the route (which areas are already served by railways), the country is very sparsely populated, and though the construction of the line would probably increase the amount of agricultural production, and, perhaps settlement, in the district, it does not appear that the extent of the increase would be very material. An immediate and large increase in agriculture, as the result of constructing a railway, is advanced as a reason in support of such proposed works in every inquiry carried out by the Committee, and yet nothing is more evident, in relation to railways already constructed, than the many miles of splendid agricultural land traversed by them which has never been touched by the plough. The Wellington to Werris Creek proposal exhibits the additional disadvantage of having but very little land along the route, outside the large private estates in the district, that is suitable for agriculture. From the partial inquiry already made, the alternative line between Gilgandra and Curlewis would appear to be worthy of investigation whenever the policy of a cross-country line is again considered. Much of the country through which the proposed line would pass, including the mining district of Leadville, would be better served by a railway suggested by the Committee in their report upon
the

the railway from Dubbo to Coonamble, and regarded favourably in the district, viz., from Mudgee to the country east of Cobborah, in the direction of Dunedoo, and on towards Caigan, eventually continuing northwards in the direction of Coonabarabran.

While, however, the Committee are not disposed to recommend the construction of the proposed railway, they desire to draw attention to the condition of the roads in the district, which, to a considerable extent—especially in the vicinity of Spring Ridge, Werris Creek, and Quirindi—are in a state of disrepair, and which, in the absence of a railway, should receive attention in order to provide the settlers with a fair means for getting their produce to market.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

14. The following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings shows the resolution passed by the Committee:—

Mr. McFarlane moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed railway from Wellington to Werris Creek, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Watson, and passed.

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
24th August, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

WEDNESDAY, 18 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a statement, giving particulars of this proposal? Yes. It is as follows:—

H. Deane.

18 April, 1900.

RAILWAY FROM WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration on 12th December, 1899, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Wellington to Werris Creek."

The question of connecting the Northern and Western railway systems by means of a cross-country line has been discussed for many years past, and there is no doubt there has existed a widely expressed opinion in favour of the connection being effected. The originally proposed points of junction were at Werris Creek on the Northern line and at Dubbo on the Western line.

The proposal to make the junctioning station on the Western line at Wellington in place of Dubbo was first prominently brought before the Department in July, 1890, when a deputation representing the Wellington district waited on Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith, and indicated certain advantages attaching to the Wellington route over that from Dubbo, asserting, *inter alia*, that the line from Wellington would serve better country and pass through more settlement than the Dubbo rival route.

The respective lengths of the two routes are:—

Wellington-Werris Creek.....	159 miles 27 chains.
Dubbo-Werris Creek.....	157 " 35 "

With the exception of about 30 miles at the western end the routes are one and the same.

It will thus be seen that the present proposal is, for all practical purposes, the same as the Dubbo route, differing only as to the junctioning point. So far as the commercial and industrial aspects are concerned, all arguments advanced for or against the one route may be equally applied to the other.

It is claimed that special advantages will be gained by the construction of such a cross-country line. These may be briefly stated as follows:—

- (1) The line will make a complete connection of the whole railway system of the Colony west of the Dividing Range.
- (2) It will afford facilities for speedier inter-communication between the Northern, Western, and Southern main trunk lines, and will, therefore, tend to create increased traffic.
- (3) It will be a good stock-carrying line, and in times of drought will provide a ready means for the transference of starving stock from the western plains to New England and adjoining districts where the seasons seldom fail; on the other hand, in the great dry West there is often a good market for all sorts of produce which at present, in the absence of such a line, is closed to the farmers of the district mentioned.
- (4) Its military and strategic value as a connecting line will be considerable. It will greatly aid, should occasion arise, in the transport of troops to and from any part of New South Wales or the other colonies.
- (5) In the event of the Hawkesbury bridge being damaged or rendered uncrossable, such a line will be found most useful in preserving intact the continuity of the Colony's railway system.
- (6) The construction of this line will shorten the journey between Brisbane and Melbourne by some 100 miles, and assuming the Cobarr line was carried on to Broken Hill, it will effect a saving of about 320 miles between Brisbane and Adelaide.

H. Deane.
18 April, 1900.

The Railway Commissioners have reported on the proposed line in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act. Their report, which does not favour the construction of the line, is as follows:—

Proposed Line of Railway, Werris Creek, Wellington—160 miles.

In accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act of 1888, section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

<i>Cost of Construction—</i>		
Estimate of Engineer-in-Chief for Construction (exclusive of land and compensation)	£511,149	
<i>Annual Cost—</i>		
Interest on capital outlay at 3 per cent.	£15,336	
Cost of maintenance, and traffic and locomotive expenses ...	£11,618	
	£26,954	
<i>Traffic Revenue Estimate—</i>		
Merchandise and live stock	£4,820	
Passenger, parcels, and mails.....	3,766	
	£8,586	
Total annual cost		£26,954
Total estimated traffic		£8,586

The revenue estimate is based upon local rates being charged for all traffic except live stock, and that of expenditure upon a tri-weekly train service.

There is no immediate prospect of the proposed line paying working expenses, nor is there, in our opinion, any reasonable ground for the assumption that the construction of the line would materially increase the volume of traffic.

We are unable, therefore, to recommend its construction.

It is assumed that, in the proposal to connect the Northern and Western lines by a cross-country railway, an important object is to afford a more direct and speedy means of transporting stock in times of drought, and if that be so we venture respectfully to suggest that, when the time comes for the construction of such a line, the best interests of the pastoralists and of the country generally will be served by making the connection between Brewarrina—to which place a line is now under construction—and the Collareubabri district, which we are recommending in another report should be connected with Narrabri.

The following is the official description of the proposed line:—

Length, 159 miles 27·179 chains; estimated cost, £511,149, or £3,208 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.

This line begins about 2½ miles north of Wellington Station on the Great Western Railway at 249 miles 60 chains from Sydney, and proceeds nearly north to the Talbragar River, which it strikes at about the 280th mile. The line then follows up the Talbragar River Valley north-easterly to about 296 miles, leaving Cobborah to the south, thence the line is northerly to the neighbourhood of Mundooran, where the Castlereagh River Valley is followed north-westerly for about 15 miles. A more easterly direction is then taken, crossing the ridge between the counties of Napier and Pottinger, near 350 miles; the spurs of the Liverpool Range are then skirted, and the general direction is maintained through to the crossing of Werris Creek, and to the junction with the North-western line at 409 miles 7·179 chains, about 5 miles west of Werris Creek junction with the Great Northern line.

The works are moderate in character, no large rivers having to be bridged, but there is a considerable length of the line on which the country traversed is undulating in character.

The ruling gradient is 1 in 75, and the sharpest curve is 15 chains radius.

With the rails at £5 5s. per ton delivered in the Colony the cost is £2,963 18s. 6d. per mile. But these rates have been revised. The rails are £7 10s. per ton, so that the cost per mile comes to £3,208 as given in the statement which I have just read.

2. Will you give us your usual detailed description of the cost? Yes. Before I read that I wish to say that I hand in a book of reference and a section of the line in two parts and a compilation of county maps showing the position of the line. The estimate for this line is divided into three parts, the first part being about 29 miles in length, the second part 87 miles, and the third part 43 miles, making a total of 159 miles.

WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

Revised Survey.—Part No. 1.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway 29 miles 23·18 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade 1 in 75. Sharpest curve, 15 chains radius.

New fastenings; new 4 ft. 6 in. T.O's.; ¼ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.		Average per mile.
	£	s. d.	
Earthworks	10,205	15 0	348
Timber bridges and culverts	5,148	7 0	176
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	3,130	15 0	107
Permanent-way materials. (Rails taken at £5 5s. per ton)	18,254	6 6	623
Freight	3,558	2 0	121
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £3,008 2s. 6d.	16,415	15 8	560
¼ ballasting at 4s. = £2,578 8s.			
Sleepers at 3s. = £10,829 5s.	4,725	0 0	161
Station-works, including junctions and sidings	2,984	0 0	102
Station buildings; waiting-sheds, £460; platforms, £378; loading banks, £450; goods-shed and platform, £345; station-master's cottage, £281; 5-ton crane, £207; 20-ton weighbridge, £242; trucking yards, £621	1,500	0 0	51
Water supply	483	9 0	17
Gradient and mileage posts	483	9 0	17
Telegraph	1,000	0 0	34
Miscellaneous			
Cost of works	67,888	19 2	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent., nearly.	10,133	0 10	348
Total cost.....	£78,022	0 0	2,664
With rails at £7 10s. per ton add	£7,149	0 0	.....
Total	£85,221	0 0	2,909

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

3

WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.—Revised Survey.—Part No. 2.

H. Deane.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway 87 miles in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 75. Sharpest curve, 15 chains radius.—New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inch T.O.s.; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast; Sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

18 April, 1900.

Description.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
Earthworks.....	£ 57,167 10 0	£ 657
Timber bridges and culverts.....	27,673 11 6	318
Large bridge over Talbragar River.....	2,717 17 6	31
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions.....	4,638 0 0	53
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	54,186 18 0	623
Freight.....	11,596 1 3	133
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £8,932.....	48,743 4 0	560
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting, at 4s. = £7,656.....		
Sleepers, at 3s. = £32,155 4s.....		
Station works, including sidings.....	11,130 0 0	128
Station buildings, waiting sheds, £1,150; platforms, £1,134; loading banks, £1,350; goods-shed and platform, £345; 5-ton crane, £207; 20-ton weighbridge, £242; trucking-yards, £3,105; station-master's cottage, £281.....	7,814 0 0	90
Water supply.....	4,500 0 0	52
Gradient and mileage posts.....	1,435 10 0	17
Telegraph.....	1,435 10 0	17
Miscellaneous.....	2,000 0 0	23
Cost of works.....	235,038 2 3	...
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly).....	35,255 17 9	405
Total cost.....	£270,294 0 0	3,107
With rails at £7 10s. per ton add.....	£21,225 0 0	
Total.....	£291,519 0 0	3,351

WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.—Revised Survey.—Part No. 3.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway 43 miles 4 chains in length with 60-lb. rails; ruling grade 1 in 75; sharpest curve, 15 chains radius—New fastenings; new 4 inch 6 feet T.O.s.; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated cost.	Average per mile.
Earthworks.....	£ 16,465 12 6	£ 382
Timber bridges.....	7,045 3 6	164
Bridge over the Mooki River.....	1,918 4 6	44
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions.....	2,880 0 0	67
Permanent work materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	26,813 14 0	623
Freight.....	5,454 0 0	127
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £4,419 16s.....	24,119 9 0	560
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting at 4s. = £3,788 8s.....		
Sleepers at 3s. = £15,911 5s.....		
Station works, including junction and sidings.....	10,048 10 0	233
Station buildings.—Passenger station, £403; waiting sheds, £575; platforms, £654; cottages, £562; loading banks, £750; goods sheds and platforms, £690; 5-ton cranes, £414; 20-ton weighbridges, £484; trucking yards, £1,242; engine shed, £805; carriage shed, £230; coal stage, £195; turntable, £575.....	7,579 0 0	176
Water supply.....	3,000 0 0	70
Gradient and mileage posts.....	710 6 6	17
Telegraph.....	710 6 6	17
Miscellaneous.....	1,000 0 0	23
Cost of works.....	107,744 6 6	...
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly).....	16,161 13 6	375
Total cost.....	£123,906 0 0	2,878
With rails at £7 10s. per ton add.....	£10,503 0 0	
Total.....	£134,409 0	3,122

WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.—Revised Survey. Summaries of Estimates.
(A)—With rails at £5 5s. per ton.

Part.	Description.	Length.	Estimated cost.	Average per mile.
1	m. c. to m. c.	m. c.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	249 60 to 279 3·18	29 23·18	78,072 0 0	2,664 11 6
2	279 3·18 „ 366 3·18	87 0	270,294 0 0	3,106 16 6
3	366 3·18 „ 409 7·18	43 4	123,906 0 0	2,878 3 9
	Total.....	159 27·18	472,272 0 0	2,963 18 6

(B)—With rails at £7 10s. per ton.

Part.	Description.	Length.	Estimated cost.	Average per mile.
1	m. c. to m. c.	m. c.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	249 60 to 279 3·18	29 23·18	85,221 0 0	2,903 11 4
2	279 3·18 „ 366 3·18	87 0	291,519 0 0	3,350 15 10
3	366 3·18 „ 409 7·18	43 4	134,409 0 0	3,122 3 2
	Total.....	159 27·18	511,149 0 0	3,207 18 3

H. Deane. These three parts added together, as shown in the statement, gave a total of 159 miles 27·18 chains. It is stated that the Dubbo connection will cost from £5,000 to £6,000 more than the Wellington connection.*

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3. That extra cost occurs between Dubbo and 29-mile point at Sandy Creek? Yes. The rest is common to the two.
4. Can you tell us how it is that although the Dubbo to Werris Creek connection is 2 miles shorter than the Wellington to Werris Creek route, the expense of that line is so much greater? It is a little rougher. The earthworks are heavier. I will submit the details.
5. *Mr. Watson.*] Does not the item for engineering contingencies seem high—15 per cent.? It includes surveying, supervision, and office work, and comes out at about 7 or 8 per cent. as a rule. It is rather low.
6. It seems higher than we have had previously in the estimate? On those very flat lines you are not liable to the same increases, and there is a considerable element of uncertainty as regards conditions on a line of this character. There are no townships to go through, and we do not know what may be required.
7. Has there been any survey made of a suggested line between Curlewis and Gilgandra? No.
8. I notice that on the map supplied by Mr. Harper that line, which I think was first suggested to the Committee in the evidence of Mr. Alexander Wilson, is shown;—I thought that some flying survey had been made? No. I could have it examined; but I think it is very doubtful whether you could get a good line across there. You would have to traverse ridges and valleys.
9. Mr. Wilson says that that part of the country is much easier? It cannot be.
10. He says that the ridges flatten out as you go westward, and that you get round the bottom of the spurs, which otherwise you would have to cross? At the point where the divide between the Castlercagh and the Namoi is crossed, the end of the Liverpool Range runs across, and the same ridge continues to Coonabarabran. You have there a great deal of mountainous country. I should say that that country would be very difficult through which to make a railway. I may say, for the information of the Committee, that a line has been surveyed right up to Coonabarabran from about Mundooran, and it is a very rough line.
11. *Chairman.*] What is the distance in a straight line from Wellington to Werris Creek? The distance from the Gap is about 127 miles, in a straight line.
12. It would be as well to explain why you have to go so far to the north and to make the line so much longer? It is to get the best location. The dotted line marked on the map going through Dunedoo and Coolah has been surveyed, but the line, although shorter, is not so good.
13. Is it more expensive country? It is, and I believe that there would have to be a tunnel to the north of Coolah. The country between Wellington and Dunedoo is very much rougher than the country along the route that has been adopted.
14. Would a railway over the lesser mileage come to as much as, or more than, a railway over the extended mileage? Yes.
15. There is a difference of about 32 miles in the distance? You would only be able to cut out a very small portion of that, and probably when the line comes to be worked up to put it on a footing with the present proposal it would be very nearly as long.
16. If you got to Coolah, would you then have to go to the north? Yes; I think too that the dotted line on the map goes through better country, and it is very much nearer to Coonabarabran than the other one. It would serve Coonabarabran very well. The Coonabarabran-road comes down nearly in a southerly direction, and would strike the line in about 32 miles.
17. You have lately been over the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes.
18. What is the character of the country in the first 30 miles? In the first 30 miles it is good country throughout, with the exception of some small patches. From Wellington to Mitchell's Creek it is basaltic. This is 10 miles out. From there it is chiefly sandstone. The soil is very good, chiefly light, and suitable for agriculture. On the Castlercagh River there is a patch of basaltic country again, then there is sandstone. There are one or two patches of barren sand, but there is not any large extent of it. When we get to Oakey Creek station, we get on to the basaltic country again, and you follow that pretty well all the way to the Gap.
19. Is there cultivation along the route? It is too far away from railway communication to offer inducements for cultivation, but where crops have been put in, they have been very successful. That has only been done in a very small way. Of course we find cultivation at the southern end, and also patches at the Werris Creek end.
20. I suppose that about half way the cultivation ceases? You do not see cultivation to any extent after you pass the Talbragar.
21. The last half of the line towards Werris Creek is badly watered, is it not? No; it is very well watered. With the exception of the black soil plains, which do not appear suitable for cultivation, nearly all the country is suitable for cultivation where it is not ridgy.
22. How would you get on as regards obtaining railway material on the line? Ballast would be plentiful, and there are patches of iron-bark; but I am afraid the best of the iron-bark in the west has been cut out.
23. *Mr. Shepherd.*] There seems to be a great many curves;—are these to avoid hills? Yes.
24. Taking it altogether, the country is comparatively level, is it not? Yes; the location of the line is a very fair one. The grades are not steeper than 1 in 75, and for a very large part of the length it is almost a surface line. At the same time you have low spurs and ridges to get round and over, and you cannot make it a straight line; you must curve about a great deal in some places.
25. *Chairman.*] There would be no very expensive bridges, would there? No; the most expensive will be those over the Talbragar River and the Mook.
26. This line averages about £3,200 a mile in cost? Yes.
27. The lowest being £2,900. I suppose you would not regard any portion of this line as being a surface line;—could it be made as light as the Moree line? Not any one of these sections, but there are long stretches which would be on the surface like most of the Moree line.
28. Could the line in those places be constructed by just throwing up earthworks? Yes, just by low embankment. Taking, for example, the part from a point about 277½ miles up to 279 miles, that bit is almost

NOTE (on revision).—After going into the estimate of the route *via* Dubbo, I find that there will be very little difference between the cost of the two lines. They may be taken as practically equal.

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almost a surface line with very small cuttings; but when you get to 279½, you have a long and very awkward cutting, which, of course, adds seriously to the expense, and, like many other cuttings on the line, causes the average cost of the line to mount up. From Spicer's Creek, 275½ miles, it is pretty even; but that big cutting would more than make up for all that cheapness.

29. What rails will be used? 60-lb. rails.

30. Have you gone into the comparative distances looking at it as a transcontinental line? I gave instructions for the preparation of the comparative distances, and I have had them partly completed. I will submit them when ready to the Committee.

31. The fifth reason in favour of the line is as follows:—

In the event of the Hawkesbury Bridge being damaged or rendered uncrossable, such a line would be found most suitable in preserving intact the continuity of the Colony's railway system.

I should think that that is rather a remote contingency? I suppose that is in case an enemy's gun destroyed the bridge.

32. *Mr. McFarlane.*] There is hardly any agricultural land on this line, is there? I think that nearly all along, the land would be suitable for agriculture.

33. You stated that cultivation did not extend very far along the route at present? No.

34. But you say that the soil is fit for cultivation? Yes.

35. What produce do they grow principally? When I spoke of cultivation I meant chiefly wheat, oaten hay, and lucerne. Further away from the railway wool is pretty well the only produce.

36. That would be outside the agricultural area? Outside the cultivated area.

37. If this line were constructed, do you think it would have the effect of causing the balance of the land that is suitable to be put under cultivation? I believe it would. I believe that the owners would be very glad to let out the land on the share principle, and I believe there is a good deal of Crown land left which would be suitable for agriculture.

38. Can you give us any idea of the amount of Crown land within reasonable distance of the line? I think the officers of the Lands Department ought to be able to give that information.

39. What do they use the land you spoke of as suitable for cultivation for outside the actual agricultural area? There it is all sheep stations.

40. Are they principally large holdings? Yes; on the Talbragar they seem to be mostly small holdings, but beyond there they are more or less large.

41. Are there many leasehold areas? Yes. Each pastoralist has a certain area of purchased land, and a considerable quantity of leasehold land.

42. Is it a class of country which will carry a large population if railway facilities are provided? I believe it would. I think it is a very fine piece of country, taking it altogether. The wonder is that there is so large a tract so near the Dividing Range destitute of railway communication.

43. Did you notice the Crown lands along the route;—are they as good as the lands that have been taken up? I made inquiries about that, and I was told that the alienated land by no means comprises all the best land.

44. The unalienated land is considered of good quality suitable for agriculture? Yes. Of course, included in the unalienated land there are many patches of very bad land.

45. Of course, there are considerable areas that could not be selected on account of the reserves? Yes.

46. Could you give any information as to how the Commissioners arrive at the estimated increase of traffic? I could not.

47. I understand that they make the same rule apply in all cases, and reckon on so much per cent. increase in traffic as a result of railway communication? I do not know.

48. Do you not think that that should depend on the character of the country that the railway goes through? Yes.

49. It is your opinion that there would be a greater increase in an agricultural country? Yes; as far as my opinion is of any value on the point, that is what I should expect.

50. Do the Commissioners propose to charge local rates? Yes; they say so in their report.

51. Will not the freights be very high, seeing that the Sydney market will be the nearest one for the local products, and will not the high freights be a great handicap on the producers? I have not studied the subject sufficiently to be able to give you any reliable information on that point. I should think that for a long time to come there would be a considerable demand for the produce locally, so that the distance to Sydney may, perhaps, not have much bearing on the matter.

52. *Mr. Leven.*] I suppose it would be possible to mark on the parish map all the principal stations which the railway would pass through? Yes.

53. There is no population between the stations? No; the wool from two-thirds of the distance is conveyed to Mudgee.

54. Where does the other go to? On the Namoi side, probably to Quirindi.

55. *Dr. Garran.*] There are some very fine stations on the route? Yes.

56. Is the land purchased? Yes, largely.

57. Then the line would run where the land is good? The good land is not all purchased. Many years ago the low alluvial land and black soil was most in demand, the red soil and the box-tree country not being so much cared for. But it is just the box-tree country that is so suitable for agriculture; it is magnificent soil.

58. *Mr. Watson.*] Has any attempt been made in this connection to see how far it will fit in with a further connection with the Western and the Southern lines? Yes. Surveys have been made between Dubbo and Parkes and Wellington and Parkes.

59. Of course, that seems of some importance, if we are to take any heed of one of the reasons advanced in the summary you placed before us—that is, touching the military aspect of the question, and the moving of troops, and stock also, from the Northern to the Southern line;—would you care to express an opinion as to which point of junction with the Western line from the north would best fit in with a further extension from the Southern line? I would point out that if you want a connection between, say, Dubbo or Wellington and Young, that has already been pretty well done through *via* Blayney and Cowra. If you want a connection further west between the Western and Southern lines, the easiest point would be Narramine. That is a far cheaper bit of country than from Dubbo to the same point, and a line from Narramine to Parkes or from Dubbo to Parkes would be far cheaper than a line from Wellington to Parkes. From Forbes to Grenfell, with the exception of the Lachlan Bridge, the connection is easy.

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60. Then you say it is cheaper to reach Parkes, supposing you want to make for the southern line in that direction, from Dubbo or Narromine than from Wellington? Yes.
61. An additional advantage, I suppose, would be that the line would pass through at least two settlements—Tomingley and Peak Hill? Yes.
62. Have you been over either of these routes between Wellington and Dubbo and Parkes? No.
63. Is there not a suggestion before the Department to make a line from Parkes towards Peak Hill? It crops up periodically.
64. It would seem that the best point of junction between the Southern and Western lines enters into the proposed starting point for the connection with Werris Creek, because if you are to utilise the existing Blayney-Harden line between the Western and Southern lines, it would be more in a direct line to junction at Wellington? Yes, it would. There are many advantages, no doubt, to be gained by a junction at Wellington.
65. That would mean the abandonment of any further attempt to run a cross-country line between the west and south? Yes.
66. I think you said you were getting a table of distances prepared? Yes.
67. Would that include the distance by Wellington and Blayney to Harden, and on to Melbourne? Yes.
68. As compared with, say, Dubbo to Parkes and Grenfell, and thence to Melbourne? Yes.
69. *Chairman.*] With regard to the grade which you have got of 1 in 75, have you not a worse grade in the south on the main line? Yes, there are heavy grades on the Mountains; but the others are being gradually improved.
70. Have you not a worse grade between Werris Creek and the Border? Yes, there are long grades of 1 in 40 north of Tamworth.
71. Is a grade of 1 in 75 the best that you can get on this route without very great extra expense? Yes; I think a grade of 1 in 75 is about the most suitable, but it is a very fair grade.
72. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you not think, considering that we are going to Coonamble Junction, that it would be far better to go from Werris Creek to Dubbo, as the distance is 2 miles shorter? It is 2 miles shorter, but it is not any cheaper.
73. But do you not think, considering that that is the junction from Coonamble to Dubbo, that it would be far better to make that junction at Dubbo? I do not think there is much to be gained by it. If you wanted to get across from Dubbo or Wellington to Parkes, I should be inclined to recommend the Dubbo junction.
74. All the business of that district is done at Dubbo, is it not? It is an important centre; but Wellington is a very good district too.
75. Yes; but is not Dubbo an important centre as far as pastoral pursuits are concerned? Yes.
76. To give a disinterested opinion, would you junction at Dubbo or Wellington, looking at it from a commercial point of view? I think that, looking at it as a north to south line, I should take Wellington.
77. But looking at it as a commercial line? Taking it altogether, I think I should prefer Wellington. At the same time, looking at it from another point of view—that is to say, that you want to bring stock from the extreme west into the good country, Dubbo would be the shortest.
78. Suppose you want to bring stock from Nyngan, Warren, Nevertire, and further out west, would you not make the junction at Dubbo? I should, if that were the only reason.
79. Is it not a fact that this line was at first proposed as a cross-country line for the interchange of stock? That is one of the great arguments in favour of it.
80. Do you not think it is an argument that will have force? I think it has some force. I do not know that it has as much force as it used to have.
81. But considering that population is increasing, and that irrigation is to be carried on out west, do you not think it would be better to have that Dubbo to Werris Creek connection? As it really means only an extra 30 miles of travelling, taking it altogether, looking at the completion of the railway system, the formation of a road from north to south, on the whole I should take Wellington.
82. *Mr. Dick.*] It is stated, amongst the special advantages coming from the line, that—
It will afford facilities for speedier intercommunication between the Northern and Western, and Southern main trunk lines, and will, therefore, tend to create increased traffic.
And further down it is stated by the Commissioners:
- There is no immediate prospect of the proposed line paying working expenses, nor is there, in our opinion, any reasonable ground for the assumption that the construction of the line would materially increase the volume of traffic.
- Could you say who is responsible for the first of these two directly conflicting statements, viz., that the volume of traffic will be increased? No. I read that statement for the Under-Secretary.
83. *Dr. Garran.*] It is stated in your evidence that this line will shorten the distance between certain points? Yes.
84. If it does that, there will be less money levied by the Commissioners for taking stock from one place to another? Yes; but the shortening of the distance must tend to an increase of business. It appears to me that in dealing with the advisability of making a line of this kind, you have to take a great many circumstances into consideration. You have this question of running a line north and south, and shortening the distance, say, between Queensland and Victoria. There is the question of running stock from the dry districts to the better watered districts, and you have further to look at the line as an inducement to further settlement and agriculture. The people up there at present make use of the Mudgee line, and when they get on to the railway system at Mudgee, the distance is very much shorter from there into Sydney than it is from Wellington.
85. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Was any consideration given to the running of that line from Werris Creek to junction with the Dubbo-Coonamble line near Gilgandra;—it would appear to be a much shorter line? No; no consideration has been given to that. I do not think it would be at all suitable, because I know Gilgandra and the country round it. You could not make a cheaper line there.

THURSDAY, 19 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
 WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVITEN, Esq.
 JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

86. *Mr. Dick.*] I find that the statement read by Mr. Deane, which sets forth the views of the Commissioners in reference to this railway to a considerable extent denies the claims set forth on behalf of the line? Yes; they do not recommend the line.

H.
 McLachlan.

87. One of the main reasons given in support of the construction of the line is that it would be a good stock-carrying line, as it would enable stock to be removed from droughty to more favourable districts? Personally I do not think there is a great deal in that, because when a drought takes place in the Western District it is pretty general. If there is a drought about Narrabri and Moree the stock are shifted to the coast or to the New England District. It would not appear that it would make any large traffic for a cross-country line.

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88. It is urged that they would be able to transfer stock to where droughts do not so often occur? That would be the case as far as local conditions are concerned, along the line of route. That, no doubt, would be an advantage, but not sufficient to warrant the railway being made.

89. Do you think it is likely that stock about Nyngan would be sent to Werris Creek, and Murrurundi? No, unless in a very exceptional year. Stock from Nyngan and that district found good country during the last drought in the Central Western Division.

90. Could you state where the stock were conveyed which were taken from the district, between the proposed line and the proposed Mudgee to Coonamble line, and the Western and North-western districts last year? The greater part of the stock from that district have been coming in from the Northern line at Quirindi. The stock from the Northern Districts were removed towards the coast or into the New England country.

91. Would the construction of this line materially alter that condition of affairs? I think not. I thought the Committee might, perhaps, ask for information on that question, and I asked an officer to get out particulars for the month of November, one of the drought months, giving an idea of the number of stock shifted during that month from the different stations. In that month 68,000 starving sheep and 440 cattle were shifted. I submit the following return:—

STARVING Stock shifted during November, 1899.

From	To	No. of Cattle.	No. of Sheep	From	To	No. of Cattle.	No. of Sheep.
Narrandera	Dubbo	.....	4,400	Darlington	Hay	60	.....
Jerilderie	Gundagai	.....	5,500	Hay	Goulburn	.....	1,000
Carrathool	do	.....	2,900	Burrumbutlock	Woolabra	.....	3,600
Uardry	do	10	3,600	Whitton	Wagga	.....	600
Whitton	do	.....	5,600	Centerfield	Goulburn	80	.....
Groongal	do	10	200	Bourke	Dubbo	30	.....
Carrathool	Culcairn	110	13,600	Condobolin	Trangie	.....	2,500
Bundure	do	.....	6,400	Bourke	Girilambone	.....	6,300
Yanko	do	.....	500	Cobar	Byrock	.....	2,600
Carrathool	Bowning	.....	5,200	Cowra	Bourke	140	.....
Morindah	Yass Junction	.....	2,100				
Culcairn	Bredalbane	.....	1,900				
					Total	440	68,500

These were the movements of stock during the month of November last.

92. Were they miscellaneous stock, or special kinds of stock? It was ordinary stock; there were some fairly big flocks, but nothing special about them. During the two succeeding months we shifted 300,000.

The months during which there were heavy removals were November, December, January, and February.

93. This line runs practically from north-east to south-west. I gather from your statement that the climatic conditions make it necessary that the stock in that district should come practically at right angles to the line? We move the stock, as far as the north and north-west is concerned, from outlying districts towards the central division.

94. That would be practically from north-west to south-east? From west to east you may say.

95. In that list of removals there are practically none from the Northern district? At about that time the Moree and Narrabri districts had rain.

96. Is that a general thing when there are droughts in other parts of the Colony? Well droughts are sometimes partial.

97. Would that lend any colour to the theory that you might transfer stock to that district? The Narrabri and Moree district is at present in fairly good condition; but not the Bourke district.

98. Narrabri is further north and west than Werris Creek? Yes, it lies north-west.

99. Is the character of the country around Werris Creek such that at most times it is in a satisfactory condition? I should not say that that is the case immediately around Werris Creek. We have had bad seasons about Werris Creek; but, as a rule, it is not so bad as the country further west.

100. Then, even after arriving at Werris Creek, stock might be sent further on? Yes; they might be sent either to the coast or into the New England district; they would not go to Werris Creek.

101. But you think that the line would, in that aspect, be an important one? Not essentially important. Of course it would afford a certain measure of relief, but not sufficient to justify its construction.

H.
McLachlan.
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102. The first claim put forward is that the line will make a complete connection with the whole railway system of the Colony west of the Dividing Range;—could you indicate what benefits would be derived indirectly? We might want at some time to interchange rolling stock from the western and north-western districts, but that would be rather an exceptional thing. Five years ago there was a drought in the western district, and the Riverina district was exceptionally good, and the fat stock driven to Sydney was being sent from the Riverina; consequently we found it convenient to remove rolling stock to Riverina, and the cross-country line between Blayney and Harden was an advantage. Personally, I do not see what material advantage there would be from a railway point of view in having a connection between Wellington and Werris Creek.

103. Many regard this line as the first section of a further connection between the various lines of the colonies to Parkes and Forbes;—would a line of that character offer any advantage to the railway authorities? Certainly not such as would justify the cost.

104. What advantages would follow from a complete line of that character—anything more than you have indicated? No; I do not see any further great advantage, because, as a rule, the traffic is from and to big centres. I do not think that the local traffic between Wellington and Parkes would be considerable, or the traffic between Wellington and Werris Creek.

105. You do not anticipate much local traffic between Wellington and Werris Creek? No.

106. Mr. Deane told us yesterday that the line would pass through some very fair country; is it likely that the railway will cause the land to be opened up for agricultural settlement? The idea of the Commissioners is that for 20 miles out of Wellington there is good agricultural country—at Mitchell's Creek, Spicer's Creek, and Stony Creek—but it is limited to that distance. The average distance from the railway is about 10 miles, and the Commissioners do not consider that too big a handicap for the agricultural produce to be brought in by road. They do not anticipate any big development in agriculture, however, if the line is made.

107. Do you expect much traffic in the shape of wool and other pastoral products from that country? The Commissioners have given an estimate of £8,500, assuming that local rates are charged, but through rates would probably have to be conceded, and that would bring it down to a little over £6,000; so the prospects of profit are most unfavourable, considering the cost of the line.

108. Would the construction of the Dubbo to Coonamble line interfere with the prospects of a cross-country line? It would, about Gulandra, because you would have two lines competing for the traffic. I may state that the idea of the Commissioners is, as they have stated before, that they prefer to see that country opened up by a line starting from Mudgee—perhaps, from Mudgee to Mundooran—where they consider the possibilities of agricultural development very much better, in addition to getting a more direct route to a market.

109. I find that the Commissioners indicate in their report that, as far as a stock-carrying line is concerned, they prefer to see a connection between Collarenebri and Brewarrina;—would you indicate what advantages that would have over this more southern connection? It is not a thing that they would recommend. If a line is to be made to give relief to drought country, they think that it should be made in that direction; but they do not wish it to be understood that they immediately press it. It is excellent stock country, and if such a line were made, stock would be removed to Collarenebri, then to Narrabri, and towards New England. If the western country were good, they could move down the Western line.

110. They think that a more northerly connection would give relief to a larger area than a line from Werris Creek to Wellington? The Commissioners think so. It would give relief where facilities are not so easily obtained.

111. Do you think it preferable to wait till we have a connection between Mudgee and Coonamble instead of building this cross-country line? The Commissioners would rather see a line from Mudgee towards Mundooran.

112. Is there any hope that a line from Werris Creek to Wellington would develop into a paying line? No; the Commissioners see no prospect of it developing into a paying line within a reasonable time.

113. You altogether deny the claim that the construction of the line would increase the volume of traffic on the existing lines? The Commissioners do not think there is much in that.

114. Do you know in a general way what is the trend of pastoral products from the district crossed by this line? The greater part of it goes by the Northern line, and a good deal comes in at Quirindi.

115. Do the people in that district suffer great hardships from drought? Not that we have heard.

116. *Dr. Garran.*] Where does the traffic between Werris Creek and Wellington come on to your line now? The greater part of that traffic is drawn to the Northern line. A good deal comes in at Quirindi, and some into Muswellbrook; but, speaking of the traffic as a whole, the greater portion would come towards the Northern line.

117. All that there is to get you get now? I think so.

118. You do not think that the pastoral business would be intensified as to its products? Not to any remarkable extent—the country is well settled now. I believe there is very little Crown land left. Most of that line would run through private property.

119. The excellent stations on that line are well looked after now? Yes.

120. And they produce about as much as they can? Mr. Harper, who has been over the route, could give you a better idea of that than I can.

121. This is to be a cross-country line? Yes.

122. Have you any other cross-country lines at work? We have one, which has some characteristics in common with this, that is the line from Blayney to Harden.

123. When that was started it was thought that a great deal of stock would go down that line through Young on to the south? Some years back there was a good deal of stock traffic from the Northern line to Albury for the Melbourne market; but I am sorry to say that, for the last few years, that traffic has practically fallen away.

124. That is due to the stock tax, very likely? Yes, and I dare say the tick has had something to do with it. In addition to that the Victorian people get store stock down by the Darling into Riverina, and are feeding their own market.

125. You think that they feed themselves better from the west than from the north? At present there is nothing going from the west by rail.

126. In ordinary seasons they get their stock better from the Darling than they can from the Northern line? They get store cattle from the Darling and fatten them.

H.
McLachlan.
19 April, 1900.

127. I want to know whether, in ordinary seasons, they have a better market on the Darling than the Werris Creek way? The store stock may come from Queensland; but, taking as an instance, November and December last year we carried no cattle at all from Bourke to Albury.
128. When the Blayney, Young, and Murrumburrah line was doing its best, was it ever a paying line? No; it was a line which lost us a great deal of money. In 1892, for instance, we earned £38,000 on that line, and last year £32,000. I think a good deal of that has been due to the falling off in the stock business. Last year the loss was practically £42,000—that is, in total working expenses and interest.
129. *Mr. Watson.*] How do the working expenses compare with the earnings? The working expenses and earnings are very nearly equal, but there has been a dead loss in interest. On the 31st December, 1898, the working expenses came to £32,390, and the earnings to £33,914, so they practically balanced. The line is an expensive one, and the interest has to be paid. At the same time you have to recollect this in connection with the Blayney-Murrumburrah line—that it is a connection between very much more important sections of the country, and in addition to that it passes through country which I believe is much better than that through which this line would pass, and it is much more thickly populated. For instance, on the Murrumburrah to Blayney line we have three or four important towns, such as Carcoar, Cowra, and Young.
130. *Dr. Garran.*] The line is paying working expenses but not interest on the capital? Practically.
131. That is the only important cross-country line that we have experimented with, and it has failed? It is losing a lot of money.
132. Is the experiment on that line any encouragement to make another cross-country line? It certainly is not any encouragement.
133. And the circumstances are very much more in favour of that line than of the proposed Werris Creek line? Yes.
134. Has the Blayney line induced much new settlement? I think it has encouraged agricultural settlement.
135. You have more wheat and other produce on that line? Yes.
136. Have you more passenger traffic? I think so.
137. But it has not to any considerable extent improved the receipts? No.
138. Do you recollect what was the cost per mile of the Blayney to Murrumburrah line? It cost pretty well three times the amount per mile of the estimated cost of the line now proposed.
139. If you were making it now, you could do it at a much lower cost? It is difficult country.
140. They took the wrong route? That is an engineering question.
141. But could we not make the line more cheaply now than we did? Certainly; you would get material, and labour, and other things, at a more reasonable rate.
142. Supposing we could make that line now as cheap as we expect to make this line, would it be a paying line then? No.
143. Do you think that this line would draw the traffic from the other railway, assuming that the Dubbo to Coonamble line is made? That is a question that I find it difficult to answer, but Mr. Harper has worked out the statistics.
144. When you said that the Commissioners would prefer an extension of the Mudgee line, did you mean an extension from Mudgee to Coonamble or from Mudgee northwards? Northwards to go towards Mundoran.
145. I suppose that on the eastern side, about Gulgong, the country is rough? Well, the estimate of the cost of the line from Mudgee to Coonamble is not an excessive estimate, it is a little higher than that of the Dubbo to Coonamble line. I think Mr. Deane estimated that it would come to about £1,000 per mile.
146. Talking of travelling stock, we had some evidence on another inquiry that if we had a railway made like this one, to take stock from the dry country eastward—there really is not grass in the east to accommodate all the starving stock that would want to go there;—do you know anything about that? No.
147. The assumption of those who are in favour of this railway is that it would result in the saving of starving stock? I know from some squatters that in the last drought the western people found it difficult to find grazing country—they had to pay very high prices about Orange and Wellington. The Riverina people had also difficulty in getting grazing country.
148. This line is to cost about £500,000 without purchasing the land, and I suppose we might add £50,000 for that? There would be extra cost. A great deal of it is private land.
149. You think there is no chance of the line paying fair interest on such a sum of money as that? No.
150. You do not want your capital account overloaded? No.
151. It is as much as you can do to show a good return for the capital you have to pay? Yes, and the Commissioners do not see that the construction of this railway would be justified, even in the light of some prospective advantages. If they could see that it was going to develop new country, and would bring business on to the parent lines, they would not mind the loss at first; but they see no prospect of that.
152. You do not mind feeling your way with a pioneer line into new country if it would pay? No. The Commissioners think it is a very proper thing to open up new country with promising conditions.
153. You do not think that the increased settlement would correspond to the increased expenditure? The Commissioners think it would not.
154. The question as to whether the junction should be at Dubbo or Wellington is a very minor question? Yes, it is a matter of detail. As a matter of fact, Mr. Harper has been asked by the Committee to get information in regard to the route from Curlew to Gilgandra and Dubbo, and he has done so.
155. Any wool or fat stock travelling on that line marked red on the map would be stock for Sydney, would it not? Yes. The northern stock and wool would probably go to Morpeth and Newcastle, or be shipped to the Aberdeen meat works.
156. So far as the traffic to Sydney is concerned, it would suit better to have the line from Wellington than from Dubbo? I think so.
157. The traffic in starving sheep comes only in drought years? Yes.
158. Whereas the traffic in wool and fat stock goes on every year? Yes. The trend of the traffic will be to the seaboard.
159. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How is the traffic revenue estimate arrived at? We send an officer to the district who goes in advance of Mr. Harper; then Mr. Harper picks him up and gets his figures, and any further evidence that he can, and submits an estimate to the Commissioners. They check it; then it is adopted

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as their estimate. You may say that the estimate of probable revenue is derived from information furnished by Mr. Harper.

160. Is it proposed that this revenue will be in addition to the revenue already obtained on the existing line? Yes. There is the revenue which will be created by the line if it is made.

161. I suppose that grain is included? Everything—general goods, merchandise, wool, live stock, passengers, and maize. The estimate of £8,000 odd includes revenue from all sources.

162. I see that the Commissioners do not favour this line at all? No.

163. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is there any regular system in regard to how the amount of additional revenue is arrived at—is it from actual knowledge by making inquiries? Yes. First of all we know pretty well the traffic that comes from the district by the returns from the stations which the district feeds.

164. That is the traffic that comes in the usual way by team? Yes. We send a man into the district who finds out the probable population of the township, the number of sheep, and an estimate is based on that. It is based as far as possible on the actual facts.

165. How is the estimate of revenue from the prospective traffic arrived at? That is an estimate which the Commissioners, as a rule, would not care to make, it would be problematical.

166. I understand from a previous inquiry that there is a certain percentage allowed for increased traffic when the railway is carried out? Sometimes the Commissioners add say 25 per cent. on for the development of traffic after the railway is carried out.

167. What I want to know particularly is this: Is that 25 per cent. increase allowed on a sort of rule-of-thumb system, or is it based on actual facts as to the development of the district? There is no rule. Everything depends on the merits of each particular case.

168. In this case, it has been stated in evidence that the land between Wellington and Werris Creek is agricultural and capable of carrying a fairly large population in the event of the railway being constructed? Yes. As I have mentioned already the Commissioners do not hold a very strong opinion in regard to that matter. The land for 20 miles outside of Wellington is fairly good; but outside that it is principally pastoral country.

169. Is it not a fact that the country throughout the whole distance is similar to that within the 20 miles from Wellington? No. The Commissioners think the first 20 miles out of Wellington is better than the rest.

170. From a previous inquiry, it would appear that the Commissioners base their estimate on the probable increase of traffic by a certain percentage without taking into consideration the capabilities of the district through which the line passes? What the Commissioners look at is the traffic that exists.

171. I am speaking of increased traffic? They do not, as a rule, deal with increased traffic. Sometimes they will say that a district will develop so as to make the line a paying one, but, of course, what they give you are the figures of the existing traffic.

172. What I want to know is whether they take into consideration the capabilities of the country through which a line is proposed to be made? They look at it more from a commercial point of view. That would rather be a matter of policy. I do not think the Commissioners would care to make an estimate as to prospective traffic.

173. I was given to understand that they did make such estimates? No; not as a rule.

174. In the event of a railway being constructed, do they not make some estimate in regard to the probable increase in traffic? Not as a rule—it is a matter for you gentlemen to consider whether the prospects are good enough to warrant you in recommending the line.

175. I understood that you allowed a certain percentage for increase of traffic? No; there is no rule of that kind.

176. There has been some diversity of opinion as to the route of the proposed line, would you care to express an opinion as to whether the route proposed is the best? The Commissioners would rather not do that. They were asked to report on the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line, and they did not go into the question of an alternative line.

177. What, in your opinion, would be the best method of connecting the two lines? The opinion of the Commissioners is that the connection had better stand over.

178. But, in the event of its having to be carried out, what would be your opinion in regard to the best connection? That is a matter which the Commissioners have not considered. They would not hazard an opinion, unless the matter were directly put to them. They simply went over that one line and looked at the merits of that.

179. It has been stated in evidence that whilst the land is suitable for agricultural purposes, which also carries with it closer settlement, owing to there not being proper facilities for conveying the produce to market, large areas of land there have to be placed under grazing? Yes. The Commissioners do not anticipate that a development in agriculture would take place if the line were made.

180. Will you explain the method in which the Commissioners ascertain the capabilities of the country in which it is proposed to make a railway;—do they go over the land so as to obtain a correct opinion as to its capabilities? They go as nearly as possible over the route of the proposed line. In this case they went to Werris Creek and drove through to Wellington, meeting local people on the route, and getting information at both junctions. They have also been from Mudgee to Coonamble.

181. In traversing the proposed route they may come on land of indifferent quality, though 3 or 4 miles away it may be very good country;—do the Commissioners take that into consideration, and do they make due inquiry as to the country which will be served by the proposed railway? They always make due inquiry.

182. Do the Commissioners always investigate the matter themselves? Yes; they make it a rule to go over the land personally.

183. One, two, or three of the Commissioners? As a rule, three Commissioners. The three Commissioners went over the route of this line.

184. And they were satisfied that it was not a country that would carry a large population? Yes. They do not think there is any prospect of its carrying a sufficient population to make the line pay.

185. I am not speaking about its being a paying line, but as to the increase of population—would you care to express an opinion about that? The Commissioners are of opinion that there would be no great increase of population following the construction of the line.

186. It was stated in evidence yesterday that the area between Wellington and Werris Creek is good agricultural country, and that the reason why agriculture has not developed there is that there are not proper

proper facilities to convey the produce to market. We are told that if there were facilities for getting to market, the land would be turned into agricultural areas;—is that in harmony with the Commissioner's report? No. The Commissioners do not think there would be any great development of agriculture in that district following the construction of a railway. That is their opinion after going over the line, and making themselves acquainted with the district.

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187. A great deal depends on how they go over the country. They may go along some beaten track, which is usually the cap of a ridge, whence they see the country at a great disadvantage, whilst 2 miles away they might come upon a different class of country altogether. I should like to know whether the Commissioners have followed the usual bridle track, or have made a sufficient exploration of the country to enable them to form an opinion as to its possible development? In this case there is no main road between the two places, and the Commissioners were quite satisfied that what they saw enabled them to judge accurately as to the prospective traffic. I think they took three days to examine the district, and they got sufficient evidence to warrant them in making the report, which they did make.

188. If the officers of the Department gave evidence to the contrary of that, would it be correct? I think not.

189. *Chairman.*] I understand that the Commissioners cannot see one valid reason for recommending this railway? No; the Commissioners do not see any ground upon which to recommend the line.

190. Not even upon the broad ground of a transcontinental connection? No; they see nothing in that to recommend it as a thing of to-day. That might come in many years time.

191. I thought you seemed rather to make a little of the idea of the connection of the two systems;—do you not think there is a little more advantage in that respect than you seem to indicate? No; I do not see any great advantage in it, because the interchange of traffic would be comparatively limited, between the north and the west. Our traffic is to and from the coast; it is not inter-provincial.

192. If this line were constructed it would deprive other parts of the railway of revenue, would it not—of some through traffic? You might say that it would take a little from the Mudgee line; but we should get a longer mileage for freight. Wellington is further from Sydney than Mudgee, consequently if you get traffic midway between Werris Creek and Wellington, you would get a much bigger railway mileage than we get to-day.

193. As a means of shortening the distance between Brisbane, Melbourne, and Adelaide this railway would be of considerable advantage, would it not? No; I do not think any one would ever travel. If trains were running they would have to be mixed trains. The estimate of the Commissioners was based on the three trains a week. People would naturally use the quick trains. There would be no through-traffic between Brisbane and Melbourne by this route. The traffic now between Brisbane and Melbourne is very limited.

194. Your experience is that people would sooner come by rail to a large city like Sydney? Yes.

195. You really cannot advance one reason in support of this railway? No.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

196. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand that you prepared an estimate on which the Commissioners based their report as to the traffic to be expected from the proposed line of railway? Yes.

J. Harper.

197. Can you give the Committee the details? Yes; I have here a report, which is as follows:—

19 April, 1900.

PROPOSED LINE, WERRIS CREEK TO WELLINGTON, 160 MILES.

(Estimated cost, £511,148; ruling grade, 1 in 75.)

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had very careful inquiries made as to the probable traffic and prospects on this proposed line. It has, necessarily, been rather difficult to estimate what the traffic would be, as it might be more or less affected by the railway proposals still under consideration.

On the immediate route of the line there is no large settlement, but it serves several townships at varying distances, as follows:—Mundooran, at a distance of 3 miles; Colborah, at a distance of 9 miles; Leadville, at a distance of 20 miles; Coolah, at a distance of 17 miles; Coonabarabran, at a distance of 25 miles.

From Werris Creek, until the neighbourhood of Talbragar River is reached, the agricultural development is not large, and the population is sparse. Approaching Wellington, in the districts of Mitchell's and Spicer's Creeks, considerable agricultural development exists. A considerable quantity of the land is available for agriculture, and no doubt as opportunity offers will be thrown open for such purpose.

The population, including Mitchell's and Spicer's Creek, and Coonabarabran, is between 5,000 and 6,000.

Dealing with the known traffic coming from these districts, as it exists to-day, and allowing margin for the development which may be regarded as close at hand, the estimate would be, assuming local rates were charged on wool, goods, and wheat:—

Wool, goods, and wheat	£4,821
Passenger traffic.....	1,195
Parcels, &c.....	350
Mails, 160 miles, at £12 per mile	1,920
Add, to meet expected traffic	300
Total	£8,586

If, as is usual in such cases, an extension of the through rates were applied to wool, general goods, and wheat, the estimate would be:—

Wool, goods, and wheat	£2,871
Passenger traffic.....	1,195
Parcels, &c.....	350
Mails, as above	1,920
Total.....	£6,336

If local rates were charged in the case of wool and general goods the disposition would be on certain sections of the line to continue forwarding to existing railway stations by road, and I am doubtful whether local rates could be maintained.

198. I understand that you have had some statistics prepared as to the way in which the land is held on the route between Wellington and Werris Creek, and on the suggested route from Gilgandra to Curlewis? Yes.

199. I believe you have a map prepared which shows the trafficable area which would be served by the proposed line between Werris Creek and Wellington, and also the area which would be served by the suggested line from Gilgandra to Curlewis? Yes; the boundaries of one being shown by a deep red line on the map, and of the other by a broken red line.

200. In what way is the land held between Wellington and Werris Creek? On the map referred to the alienated land is shown marked blue; settlement and improvement leases, blue etching; reserves, green; Crown

J. Harper. Crown lands, brown; leasehold area, brown etching; land designed for settlement, brown with white spots; land taken up for settlement between 1st July, 1898, and 31st October, 1899, blue, white etching, and diagonal crosses; land taken up since 31st October, 1899, blue, white etching, diagonal crosses and circles. The total area of alienated land on the proposed line is 1,134,450 acres. Settlement leases, 248,000 acres; reserves, 303,400 acres; Crown land, 907,200 acres. Of the Crown lands the leasehold areas expiring in 1900 are 223,700 acres; occupation licenses, 373,500 acres; untenanted, 310,000 acres; land designed for settlement, 184,400 acres. On the suggested line from Gilgandra to Curlewis the total area alienated is 780,700 acres, 302,200 acres of settlement leases, 235,100 acres of reserves, 853,600 acres of Crown land.

201. Have you made an inspection of the two routes? No; I have had a very careful inspection made of the alternative route, and I have myself inspected the route between Wellington and Werris Creek.
202. And you have had an inspection made by another officer of the other route? Yes.
203. What class of traffic would be got on the proposed route under present conditions? Under existing conditions, the bulk of the traffic at the Werris Creek end of the line, and for a distance of about 70 miles, would be chiefly pastoral produce. At the Wellington end, for a distance of 18 or 20 miles, it would be agricultural produce. Over the balance of the distance it would be chiefly pastoral produce.
204. Could you describe the character of the land going north from Wellington;—is it good, bad, or indifferent? For 18 or 20 miles it is very excellent land, about Spicer's Creek and Mitchell's Creek. Then you pass into very dry country until you get on to the Talbragar. Of course, it is patchy. Until you get within 12 or 15 miles of Mundoran it is good country. Then you get into indifferent country.
205. Whilst you follow that valley near the Castlereagh, the land is pretty fair? Yes.
206. Then after leaving the Castlereagh and going to Werris Creek, what is it like? For 20 or 40 miles it is mixed black and red soil. I should think the black soil predominates.
207. Is the black soil of a clayey nature? I think it is, and I do not think it would be suitable for agriculture.
208. For 30 or 40 miles from there it is patchy? Yes.
209. Would you say that the bulk of the land is suitable for agriculture, or that only a small portion of it is? There is a good deal of it suitable for agriculture. It would be impossible for me to say what proportion; but I should think at least one-third of it would be suitable for agriculture.
210. It would appear that until you get between Cobborah and Wellington you do not get much agriculture? No; and between Cobborah and Wellington there is some very bad country, some good country, and some indifferent country.
211. Right on towards Werris Creek from there, there is at present no agriculture? Not worth mentioning except on Mr. Binney's estate, who has 5,000 or 6,000 acres under wheat. But I do not think that this line would serve that estate.
212. And there there is no agriculture carried on? Not to any great extent.
213. Is the land such that, in your opinion, it would induce agriculture if the line were constructed? I think there is a lot of land on that line which agriculturists would be glad to get hold of; but the greater part of the line passes through alienated land.
214. Do you think it is not likely that those who at present own that land would go in for agriculture? I think they probably would. The line would give added value to their land; but I do not think the Crown land would be improved to any great extent.
215. Is that because the alienated land comprises the best for agricultural purposes? Yes.
216. It has been found in other parts of the Colony that the early settler who had the first opportunity of choosing land made an error by taking the black soil country and leaving the timbered country, which has proved to be better for agriculture? I do not think they are perpetuating that mistake now; they have realised which is the best.
217. Has that red soil been taken up on this route? I think it has generally.
218. On the map you have had prepared there is a fairly large area, coloured brown, representing Crown land? Yes.
219. Taking that first bit directly to the north from Wellington that is rather rough, is it not? Yes.
220. That would be of no value for settlement? No; of none whatever.
221. Getting further north and east we find another large patch of brown? Yes; that is also unoccupied.
222. What is the country like north of Weetalibah? It is very rough country, unsuitable for agriculture or any other settlement.
223. Those areas which I have referred to would appear to be the larger part of what now remains of the Crown lands? Yes.
224. That would reduce the quantity of Crown lands available for settlement? Yes.
225. There seem also two or three large reserves on the route—are they of any value? They are either timber or water reserves.
226. From what you have said it would seem that the Crown lands are not sufficiently good to be greatly improved by the line? No.
227. Assuming that there is, including alienated as well as Crown land, a considerable area suitable for agriculture, but not now under agriculture, would that, in your opinion, be a sufficient justification for the construction of the line? I do not think so.
228. Are we to understand, then, that we are not, in your opinion, justified in constructing a railway into agricultural country, to depend upon the local traffic only? No; I should say that under certain conditions it is a very desirable thing to make a railway into agricultural country, even assuming that it will not pay at the commencement; but I do not think that the area which this line would traverse is of such a character as to warrant the construction of the line for agricultural development. I would unhesitatingly favour a line to go through land of which 80 or 90 per cent. was available for agriculture. I should say that such a line deserves very great consideration, and should very probably be constructed. But as regards this line, there is so much land on the route that is not suitable for close settlement and agriculture, that I do not think it is a desirable one to make.
229. Do you think that the through traffic would amount to anything considerable if the line were constructed? I can scarcely conceive what the through traffic would be.
230. It has been contended that we might expect a fair amount of traffic in stock between the Northern and the Western lines, with a view of getting south to the Melbourne market; do you think anything of that? I do not. I think that if the stock tax is withdrawn, the fattening for the Melbourne market will take place in Southern Riverina.

231. But before the stock tax was imposed a great deal of fat cattle went from Queensland, did they not? They would not find their way on to that line; they came in at Bourke, and were fattened on stations to the north-west of Bourke; but the properties to which those cattle came have been abandoned as cattle stations, and are now carrying sheep.

232. May not that have been due to the loss of the Melbourne market through the stock tax? I do not know. I should imagine that they had found sheep to be more profitable. I think that Southern Riverina, on the Murrumbidgee, and the Murray would be largely devoted to fattening. Store stock may come from Queensland, but it would not pay to bring them by rail.

233. As against the opinion you have expressed, it seems peculiar that before the stock tax was in operation cattle were not fattened in Riverina for the Melbourne market? No; because under the existing conditions it would not pay them. The late Mr. Tyson sent 75 per cent. of all the cattle that went to Melbourne; but he cleared out his cattle to make way for sheep.

234. You do not think that the trade would assume any great dimensions? I do not think so. If it did it would be probably about Bourke and the Western line rather than for the Northern.

235. So it does not affect the present proposal to any extent? No.

236. Then, again, the argument has been put forward that the line would be useful for taking starving stock towards New England;—do you think there is anything in that? It might have its value for that purpose; but I should imagine that a line further west would be infinitely of greater value. I do not think that this line would be of much value for that. A line further west would answer very much better, which I would suggest should go from Brewarrina to Collareendabri, giving an opportunity for stock from the west to be picked up and taken towards the northern high-lands, and that that line should be reached by the extension of the Coonamble line towards Walgett, and from Walgett to a point between Collareendabri and Brewarrina. That would then serve the whole of the northern district to the Queensland border.

237. Have you given any thought to the possibility of reaching Coonabarabran? The air-line shown on the map would bring Coonabarabran 10 miles closer to the line of railway than would the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek.

238. You can now give us the result of your investigations regarding the suggested line from Gilgandra to Curlew? I may explain that I have formed no estimate of what the probable traffic would be on that line, it would be impossible to do it. I will read the report which I have received, and which I have verified:—

PROPOSED CONNECTION WITH NORTHERN AND WESTERN LINES.

COMMENCING at Curlew, the country to be served right through to Gilgandra is excellent for the purpose of mixed farming, and after getting over the "Bando" plain, it is of a generally undulating character, chiefly box, pine, and apple tree, and fairly well improved. A considerable amount of new and close settlement is taking place between Curlew and Coonabarabran. Around Curlew alone, and in the county of Pottinger, which includes Tambar Springs and a portion of Gunnedah, there were 10,000 acres of cultivation last year, the average yield being from 20 to 25 bushels per acre. Similar land is procurable almost right through to Bearbong, which is 22 miles from Gilgandra. On the Werris Creek-Wellington line the country for the first 50 miles, i.e., between Werris Creek and Oakey Creek, is more suitable for pastoral than agricultural purposes.

The Gilgandra line, which has not yet been surveyed or explored, it is understood could be put down as indicated approximately on the accompanying map, would make the distance between Curlew and Gilgandra something like 115 miles as against 160 from Werris Creek to Wellington. At two central points, viz., Bomera and Piambra, the two lines would only be 7 miles apart; and, with the exception of the settlement on the Talbragar River and on Mitchell's and Spicer's Creeks, it may be said that both of the proposed lines would serve the same country on the south side, whilst on the north side the Gilgandra-Curlew connection would, in addition, serve a large tract of good country known as Tooraweenah, Margon, &c., in the vicinity of the Warrumbungle Mountains, and also the excellent pastoral country on "Bando." In the year 1898—not a good one—this holding produced 600 trucks of fat stock. Gunnedah, 33 miles from the Bando woolshed, and 25 miles from the drafting or delivering yards, is the nearest railway station to "Bando."

Setting aside for the time being the question of engineering difficulties, which it is understood are as great on one line as on the other, there is no doubt that some strong arguments can be brought forward in favour of the connection from Curlew as against Werris Creek:—

- (1.) The distance from Werris Creek to Dubbo, *via* Curlew and Gilgandra, would be about the same as *via* Wellington, i.e., 190 miles.
- (2.) The length of new construction would be about 45 miles less, *via* Curlew.
- (3.) The Gilgandra-Curlew line would not enter into much competition with a line from Mudgee to Coonabarabran, but the Werris Creek-Wellington line would.
- (4.) Coonabarabran (population 1,450) would be within 20 miles of rail communication as against 25 on the Wellington proposal.
- (5.) Coal is procurable at Curlew.
- (6.) A connection with the Walget *via* Coonamble would give both these towns a serviceable connection with the north and west. The distance from Walgett to Newcastle, *via* Gilgandra, would be about 422 miles, as against 366, *via* Narrabri (north bank of river). On the other hand, the distance from Coonamble to Newcastle, *via* Gilgandra, would be 20 miles less than from Sydney, *via* Dubbo. Under a scale of maximum rates, Newcastle would be able to compete with Sydney for the Coonamble and Walgett trade.
- (7.) A greater area of agricultural land would be served, and to some extent the Gilgandra-Curlew line would feed the north-west and Coonamble branches.

239. No effort has been made in that case to make up an estimate? No; it would be impossible to give an estimate.

240. But looking at it generally, would you say that, in proportion to its length, the Curlew-Gilgandra line would serve the traffic of as large an area as this line? Yes; I am inclined to think it would. If I remember rightly this Committee has expressed the opinion that an extension should be made from Mudgee. This line keeping further north would enable that line to be built with more advantage.

241. We suggested that the line might be taken in the direction of Dunedoo? Yes. This line, assuming it were necessary to make it, would give a better connection with Coonabarabran, and would not stand in the way of a connection from Mudgee.

242. From the report of the officer, whose statement you have read, it seems that the engineering difficulties are not great? I give that for what it is worth. He is not an engineer.

243. Your officer will be able to form some idea of the character of the country, and he seems to be favourably impressed with it? Yes, that is compared with the other line.

244. Did I understand you to read from the report that on as far as Bomera the land from Curlew was fairly good? Yes. Between Bomera and Tooraweenah the land is not so good. There is a lot of good land between Tooraweenah and Coonabarabran.

FRIDAY, 20 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	|	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.	|	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek:

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- J. Harper. 245. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I notice that the Commissioners do not recommend the construction of this line?
 No.
 20 April, 1900. 246. On the ground that it is a non-paying line, I presume? I should not like to say what their motive is in not recommending it; but I should think that it is in the interests of public policy. I should not like to say that they do not recommend it because it is a non-paying line, because they have recommended lines for the consideration of the Government which were non-paying lines.
247. Is it not a fact that its being a non-paying line is a great objection to it? Certainly, from a financial point of view; but there are lines which may be non-paying in the first instance, but which may offer a reasonable prospect of paying subsequently, and which will open up the country. I should not like to put this line in the same category as other lines which will probably come before the Committee, which, on the surface, do not appear to be paying lines, but which have a good prospect of becoming paying lines by-and-bye, and also of developing the country.
248. Is it not a fact that this line passes through good country? I have said so. It passes through some good pastoral country, and through some good agricultural country. The same thing may be said of a number of existing lines.
249. That alone would not be sufficient to justify the carrying out of the line? I do not think so. I do not think that, as a matter of public policy, it would be a wise thing to make this railway.
250. The Commissioners take into consideration when a railway passes through good country that there will be a considerably increased traffic? Yes; that is always considered.
251. I should like to get some information as to how the Commissioners arrived at the estimated increase in the traffic? I do not know that they have shown any estimated increase.
252. As a rule they do? I do not think so.
253. They generally anticipate an increase in the traffic? Yes.
254. I should like to know how they arrive at that? Of course, it has to be more or less arbitrary. It depends on the nature of the holdings, the character of the land and the rainfall, and a lot of considerations which any business man would weigh, and an addition is made to the estimate of the absolute traffic by the Commissioners to represent any increase which is within a measurable time of being realised.
255. I should like to know what steps are taken to ascertain the character of the country along the route of the railway to justify the statement that it is good agricultural country or good pastoral country, whether there is any actual exploration made, not only of the line but also of the country for some distance away from it? Not by individual officers. The Commissioners prefer to rely upon experts connected with the Lands Office.
256. Who would they be? The district surveyors.
257. In getting reports from district surveyors with regard to the character of the country, is it always taken for a fact that the district surveyor inspected the country in view of a proposed railway? Whatever information he has to give is taken for what it is worth and weighed in connection with our experience of what comes from the district. We have an absolute means of testing precisely what that area of country is producing.
258. On the route of this proposed railway, although the land is good, there are not many agricultural holdings, because there is no means of getting produce to market. I do not, therefore, see how the Commissioners could form an estimate of the traffic from the existing state of things? I would suggest then that you should discard their estimate, and build railways in view of the traffic which may be developed by it. The Commissioners cannot possibly say that in any district there are so many thousand acres of land which is going to be devoted to agriculture. That is a matter for this Committee.
259. The conclusion is that if the country is good, a railway will have the effect of inducing cultivation? Do you not think it would be a fair thing for the Committee to determine that, instead of for us to do it.
260. I want to ascertain whether sufficient steps have been taken to find out whether the land along this line is good agricultural country? That is not our mission; it is yours. Our duty is to give an estimate of the probable traffic. In my capacity of manager of the railways, I cannot tell you the character of the country.
261. The best reply to the question would be that you do not know? I am not going to say that I do not know. I have already stated what my impression of the country is.
262. I have seen it stated that so much of the country is fit for agriculture;—I should like to know whether the country has been sufficiently explored to justify the statement? I think I can answer the question by saying that the Commissioners think the greater part of the land on the route of this line is more suitable for pastoral occupation than for agriculture.
263. Do you not think it wise before constructing a line, to procure reliable data as to the capabilities of the district? If you can tell me how you are going to get reliable data I should be glad to accept it. I have been looking for reliable data for the last twenty years.
264. Surely there would be some officer of the Department capable of giving a report as to the character of the land, and whether it is suitable for agriculture or for dairying purposes? That sort of inquiry is no part of the Commissioners' duty; that is the function of this Committee. I give the only information that I am prepared to swear to. Matters of conjecture I am not able to swear to.
265. I am making inquiries to find out what officers give the data? I should be only too glad to assist you. The best of my experience of the Colony I give to the Committee; but I cannot go into details as to the quality of every acre of land.

266. We want to find out where we could get the data? I should think the local land office would be the best place. J. Harper.
267. You would get it from the district surveyor? Yes. 20 April, 1900.
268. Does he get instructions from the Railway Commissioners to report on the country through which a railway is to be made? No. Whatever information he obtains we get by our own initiative. We send an officer who obtains the information from the district surveyor.
269. It would appear that there is not very much pains taken about it? I deny that—very great pains, indeed, are taken.
270. You stated just now that the Railway Commissioners do not make inquiries as to the character of the country from the district surveyor? I did not. I said distinctly that the Railway Commissioners did have inquiries made from the district surveyors. We gather the information from them.
271. We have got it in the shape of a report? Yes.
272. In the event of this line being constructed, is the country of such a character that it would carry a large population, say for 10 miles on either side of the line? If you would say where the population is coming from, and state the terms on which the owners will let them have the land, I could tell you.
273. I am asking your opinion as to whether the country to be traversed by this line would be likely to carry a large population? As far as this line is concerned, you will notice that there is a great deal of alienated land. I cannot tell what are the intention of the owners of that land.
274. I am asking whether the country is of such a character that it would carry a large population? That I prefer not to answer.
275. *Mr. Levien.*] Have you been over that country? Yes.
276. Is there much good agricultural land near the Werris Creek end? Not in the immediate neighbourhood.
277. It is pastoral land there? Yes; in the neighbourhood of Werris Creek. Most of the agricultural land is south of the projected line.
278. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you acquainted with the country on the proposed line from Gilgandra? No.
279. You could not say whether it would be practicable to make a cut across there? The officer who was deputed to go and look into the matter says it is practicable, but he is not an engineer, and I should not like to endorse his opinion.
280. Are you aware what the principal stock is on the proposed line? Sheep chiefly.
281. They really want a more easy way of getting their wool and produce to market? Yes.
282. The roads in that district are rather bad, are they not? The way we went, trying to follow the route of the line, was very bad indeed. It was simply bush tracks. There are roads through the district which do not follow the proposed line.
283. From the character of the line I should imagine that the country is very rough there? Yes. The deviations in the line are intended to avoid elevations along the route. It is broken country when you have got a few miles from Werris Creek.
284. From the estimated cost the country must be rather difficult for railway construction? Yes. For a pioneer railway it is rather a heavy cost per mile.
285. Is there sufficient timber there to provide sleepers for the railway? I think that, adjacent to the line, they might get what sleepers are necessary. About the Talbragar there is plenty of iron-bark.
286. Did you notice what timber is growing there? The only timber of any value will be the iron-bark on the ridges. Practically the same timber will be available for that line as would be available for the Mudgee to Coonamble or the Dubbo to Coonamble line.
287. Is the route of the line well watered? I would prefer not to answer that question. A lot of the country there is supposed to be badly watered.
288. *Dr. Garran.*] You say that, for many years, you have been trying to get a good test as to the probable increase of settlement? Yes.
289. You have had to make a great many guesses during the course of the last twenty years, would you tell us whether, as a rule, your estimate has been above or below the mark? I think that, as a rule, I have been above the mark.
290. You have been too sanguine? I think I have generally. I have also been below the mark. For instance, I was below the mark in regard to the Cobar line. I do not think I was above the mark in regard to the Moree line.
291. Were you below it? I was a little below it.
292. The Department did not expect that that line would be such a success? No.
293. At Cobar you were above the mark before the mining was resumed? Yes.
294. But since it was resumed you have been below the mark? When I made my estimate of that line the mining was a dead letter. Since then it has been revived.
295. Your original estimate has been exceeded? Yes.
296. In regard to the Berrigan and Finley country, has your estimate been above or below the mark? It has been exceeded.
297. As far as experience goes that line has been justified? Yes.
298. Where a railway goes through private land much will depend on the willingness of the land owners to subdivide and sell or lease their land? Yes.
299. And you have no means of knowing beforehand whether they will do that? No.
300. And you do not know even when they have subdivided the land what they will do with it? No; I could mention a case in which a railway was projected where the owners of the land determined to place it all under lucerne to fatten stock for the market; but we had thought that population would be allowed to settle on that land.
301. I suppose the squatters study how to turn their land to the best account? Yes.
302. Sometimes you get into their confidence? Yes.
303. Do you know whether it is better to grow wool or wheat? I think most of them say it is better to grow both.
304. One plays into the hands of the other? Yes.
305. Is it better for the squatter to grow his own wheat or to let the land to small farmers, and take his share of the produce? It depends on the class of farmers he can get. Almost any squatter who can get a good class of farmers will be content to let them have the land. The difficulty is to get a good class of farmers.

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- farmers. There have been a lot of very indifferent farmers, who have not done justice to their contracts.
306. I suppose that farming, like everything else, is an industry that requires some knowledge of the character of the work? Yes.
307. It is not every man who has land hunger who would make a good farmer? No.
308. It is impossible for you to tell whether, if we make a railway through all that land marked blue on the map, any considerable portion of it would be devoted to agriculture? Yes.
309. Has there, in recent times, been a considerable sale of agricultural land belonging to the Peel River Company near Tamworth? I have heard that land there was going to be sold, but I do not know what the result has been.
310. It has not affected your traffic? No.
311. Would the land on the route of this proposed railway be as good as that land? That is rather a large question. The line would be 160 miles long.
312. I am referring to the first part? In the first part the black soil is as good as the best part of the Peel River Company's land, where the soil is black.
313. If it would pay to cultivate on the Peel River, it might pay to go to Werris Creek and do the same thing there? Yes. The line to Manilla passes through a large portion of the Peel River estate, and there is also a river.
314. Does the Peel River experiment cast any light on what might be done on the route of this railway? I think it would be better for the Committee to form their own opinion after they have been in the district.
315. But the Committee riding over and looking at the land would not be able to see whether it would be better to grow wheat or wool? No; but the Committee would have local witnesses before them who could give better information than I can.
316. But as the land has not been under wheat, even local witnesses can only say what they expect? I do not think the Committee would expect me to express an expert opinion on the subject.
317. Witnesses vary much in their quality;—some witnesses that we get in the country are so perfectly certain that a line will pay from the jump that if we acted on their opinion we should have railways all over the country? That is so. But I take it that the common sense which characterises the proceedings of this Committee is enough to guard them against snags of that kind.
318. Looking over our records, we see extraordinary assertions from people, all of which have been falsified? No doubt.
319. This projected line passes through a district which is at present occupied pastorally? No, not entirely. For a distance of 18 or 20 miles from Wellington there is good agricultural land.
320. The traffic which the line would get comes to the railway somewhere already? Yes; either at Quirindi or Wellington.
321. Would you get any more traffic if the railway were made? Only so much as could be expected to arise from having a railway close to an area devoted to agriculture.
322. You do not think that the railway would stimulate the growth of wool? No.
323. The squatters produce all the wool that they can, and if they had a railway they could not produce more? No.
324. It is only from the produce of tillage that you could get increased results? Yes, barring the discovery of mines.
325. The chance of getting increased traffic depends upon the chance of increased cultivation? Quite so.
326. And if there were a railway continued northward, from Mudgee to the west, that would take all the agricultural produce just as well as a cross-country line? No; it would not take it all. It would not affect the cultivation at Spicer's Creek.
327. You mean that it would not increase that? I should expect that it would increase it.
328. But there is no prospect of such an increase of traffic as would pay the interest on £500,000? No.
329. And you do not think that the pastoral reasons for making a cross-country line are, at present, very urgent? No.
330. The starving stock trade only comes in starving years, and then it does not pay? Exactly.
331. Does it pay the stock-owner? It is very good relief to the people who are able to take advantage of it.
332. Are not the charges which you make and the charges which they have to pay for the grass when they get to the grazing land so high that it barely pays them to save the lives of the sheep? That is so. I am quite sure that a drought which affects the Western District would probably also so much affect the district in the neighbourhood of Moree, and out to the Queensland Border that the whole of the available grazing country would be absorbed by stock from that district.
333. Suppose that we made this cross-country line, and you fixed your fares as low as possible, could the lands in the east, which are better watered by rain, take all the stock from the Darling country? No.
334. To make a cross-country railway in the hope that it will meet the difficulties of a drought year, is to rest upon a broken reed? It would be indicating that the people who own the New England country do not know their own business, that is to say, that they would hold the country on the off chance of their being able to let it in time of drought to people who want to bring their stock on to it instead of doing the best they can with it themselves.
335. I suppose that the New England people stock their land pretty well? Yes.
336. Then if holders of land had their land fully stocked, how could they take stock from other places? They could not do it, if they were managing their land properly.
337. You do not think that the good land would be used in a dry year to grow food for the western sheep? No; I have noticed that when we have been carrying stock during the last two years, people will acquire land to which to remove their stock. The big financial institutions do that, but as far as a general movement of stock is concerned in such cases it is impracticable; they cannot get the land for the purpose.
338. That is not the case in the Murrumbidgee district? Practically the whole of that land was acquired by Mr. McCaughy. He leased it, but I think he will be shrewd enough to acquire it absolutely in the future.
339. It might pay him to go to a great expense to save superior stock, but it would not pay in the case of ordinary stock? I do not think it would.
340. Has it come under your notice as traffic manager that these sheep which have come from the west to get food have gone back again? Yes; we are carrying sheep back now. 311.

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341. After how long? Some have been there about twelve months.
342. Has New England taken much of the starving stock? Not very much. The pastoralists on the plains have been timid about sending their sheep there on account of fluke. It is sour country.
343. In a droughty season there is not so much risk of fluke, is there? Fluke is always there.
344. Do they get foot-rot there? No.
345. The people on the western slopes feel a drought as well as the people in the far west? Yes.
346. Then they will have the first pull of the grass-land in New England? If they have grass they reserve it for stock for the market; they will not turn a lot of store sheep on it.
347. It occurs to me that it would be far better to send the stock to market than to send it back to the Darling? When they rent the land they put so many sheep on it that the animals do not fatten, it merely keeps them alive.
348. Do you charge low rates for those who send them back? We allow 50 per cent. on all stock forwarded under a certificate from the local stock inspector, stating that it is necessary for the preservation of the lives of the stock that they should be removed. We also require a certificate from the stock inspector of the district to which they are sent. If he furnishes a certificate to the effect that the stock are fit to travel again, and we get a certificate from the inspector of the district to which they are going back that there is grass and water available, we carry the stock back at a reduction of 75 per cent.
349. Then in your opinion this route from Wellington to Werris Creek would not be of any great value as a starving-stock route? No; in my opinion the whole thing is premature. I do not see that the circumstances of the Colony warrant the construction of this line.
350. If it is not valuable as a starving-stock route, and it is doubtful whether it will induce much fresh agriculture, and as you got the traffic already, where is the advantage of making the line? As I have said, I do not think the circumstances of the Colony warrant the construction of this line. I cannot see what advantage is to be gained by it. I may mention that the Wellington people expect to be able to supply Moree and other districts with forage; but they will probably have plenty of competition from the Inverell district.
351. All the district between Narramine and Orange is good fodder-growing country? Yes; and so is the district between Moree and Inverell.
352. Would that be as great a length of country? There is about 100 miles of good country.
353. You think that the real market for Inverell produce will be in the west, not in the east? Yes; and as far as that is concerned, from Murrurundi and at least as far as Gunnedah there is a lot of agricultural land that will grow all they want in the shape of produce.
354. Then the Inverell people will be better off when the line is completed than they would be if they had a line made to Glen Innes? Yes; I think they are beginning to discover that themselves.
355. Of course, their market to the east is the market of the world, where they have plenty of competition? Yes; they have an advantage, as far as the west is concerned.
356. If the west is to trust to the east for forage that would be supplied in the shape of preserved food, hay, and so on, and not sending the sheep to the food, but sending the food to the sheep? Yes.
357. That is the service which the line will render to the western country? Yes; I am sure that the solution of the difficulty will be by carrying food to the stock.
358. *Chairman.*] This line is advocated by some as having national advantages in connection with the trunk line;—what are your views on that? I do not know where the national advantages will come in.
359. Did you make a note of the population between Wellington and Werris Creek? Yes; it is 6,000 for the whole district.
360. Did you notice what kind of a water supply there is at the Werris Creek end? There is only creek water, and it is highly mineralised in some of the creeks. We cannot use the water for our locomotives.
361. It is not a permanently-watered country? No.
362. Have you formed any opinion as to the two rival connections—Dubbo to Werris Creek and Wellington to Werris Creek? No; the only matter I looked into was that which I reported upon. I should think the route would be from Wellington, not from Dubbo.
363. Why do you favour Wellington in preference to Dubbo? I do not favour either; but I should say that the connection would be better made from Gilgandra, because you have got through the worst country when you get to Gilgandra. Starting from Gilgandra you get into a better class of country.
364. Can you tell us what proportion of the produce from the trafficable area at present goes to Mudgee? No; I could not tell you that. A good deal goes to Quirindi. The dividing point would be at Morven.
365. I suppose that the bulk would go to Mudgee, that being the nearest route to Sydney? Yes. Some of the Coonabarabran traffic goes to Gunnedah, and some to Quirindi. This line would take the Coonabarabran traffic at Morven, about 70 miles from Werris Creek; then Bomera, 45 miles from Werris Creek would take a portion of the traffic, and Walhallow would take another portion. That is the traffic which would go north. That which would go west would be taken from Mitchell's Creek, Spicer's Creek, and Cobborah.
366. From Spicer's Creek to Werris Creek it is all Crown land, held under long leases? No; some of the land is worthless, and is untenanted.
367. I suppose you could not advance one valid reason in favour of the construction of this line? I could not.
368. *Mr. Dick.*] What are the advantages, from a railway point of view, of a cross-country connection? The only advantage that I know of is that if you had a quantity of rolling-stock locked up in a wrong district, which we always take care to avoid as far as we can, it might expedite its removal. We find, as a matter of experience, that that cross-country line between Blayney and Harden is little availed of by people travelling to Melbourne; nine-tenths of the passengers prefer to come to Sydney, undertaking the longer journey.
369. That disposes of another claim urged on behalf of the line, that it might shorten the distance to Melbourne by 100 miles? My experience is that travellers who go to Melbourne want a day's spell by the time they get to Sydney.

WEDNESDAY, 25 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

H. Deane. 370. *Chairman.*] Have you some documents to hand in in connection with the proposed railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes. Following my evidence given on a previous occasion, I now hand in a tabulated statement giving particulars of the cross-country connection between the Northern and Western railways:—

WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.			
<i>Length of Cross-country Connection.</i>			
	Miles.		Miles
Brisbane to Wallangarra	233	Brisbane to Wallangarra	233
Wallangarra to Werris Creek	236	Wallangarra to Sydney	490
Werris Creek to Wellington.....	166*	Sydney to Albury	386
Wellington to Blayney	76	Albury to Melbourne.....	190
Blayney to Harden	113		
Harden to Albury	158		1,290
Albury to Melbourne	190		
	1,172	Sydney to Wellington	248
		Sydney to Mudgee	190
		Sydney to Werris Creek	254
Werris Creek to Dubbo	157		692
Dubbo to Wellington	30		
	187	Sydney to Wellington	248
Werris Creek to Wellington.....	159	Wellington to point opposite Cobborah ...	42
			290
Extra distance	28		
		Sydney to Mudgee	190
Brisbane to Wallangarra	233	Mudgee to point opposite Cobborah	46
Wallangarra to Werris Creek	236		236
Werris Creek to Wellington.....	166*		
Wellington to Parkes	67	Byrock to Brewarrina.....	58
Parkes to Forbes	20	Brewarrina to Collarenebri	109
Forbes to Grenfell	38	Collarenebri to Wee Waa and Narrabri..	101
Grenfell to Koorawatha	32	Narrabri to Moree	63
Koorawatha to Harden	49	Moree to Inverell	96
Harden to Albury	158		427
Albury to Melbourne	190		
	1,189	Byrock to Wellington.....	208
		Wellington to Werris Creek.....	166
Brisbane to Wallangarra	233	Werris Creek to Narrabri	96
Wallangarra to Werris Creek	236	Narrabri to Moree	63
Werris Creek to Dubbo.....	162*	Moree to Inverell.....	96
Dubbo to Parkes.....	79		629
Parkes to Forbes.....	20		
Forbes to Grenfell	38	Byrock to Wellington.....	208
Grenfell to Koorawatha.....	32	Wellington to Werris Creek.....	159
Koorawatha to Harden	49	Werris Creek to Uralla	89
Harden to Albury	158		456
Albury to Melbourne	190		
	1,197		

* Station to station.

SATURDAY, 28 APRIL, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Wellington, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Roger Taylor Burton Gaden, grazier and farmer, and President of the Railway League, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

R. T. B. 371. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The Committee would be glad to hear any remarks which you wish to make in regard to the proposal into which they are now inquiring—the construction of a railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? I believe that the proposed railway should be, and will be, constructed, because it forms the missing link which is required to connect the Northern with the Western and Southern railway systems. I believe, too, that the line would be a paying one, because I know the greatest part of the country which

it

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Gadon.
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it would traverse, though I have not travelled through some of it for a number of years. The land along the line is such as people could easily settle upon, inasmuch as a great deal of it is agricultural land, and, I understand, nearly two-thirds of it is still unalienated. I would add that there is good timber for a good part of the way which the line will take—timber which could be used for sleepers and for building purposes.

372. What kind of timber? In some places there are belts of iron-bark. Upon the agricultural land the timber is chiefly white box.

373. Is much of the land you speak of at present under cultivation? Nearly all the land along the proposed route, for a distance of 16 miles from Wellington, is under cultivation.

374. What stock does the land carry? Principally sheep.

375. Is any dairying now carried on between Wellington and Werris Creek? No; because that country is now too far removed from centres of population to make dairying there profitable.

376. Would the construction of the proposed railway give an impetus to agriculture or to dairying? I am certain that it would. Many of those who are now settled on the land would put three or four times as much ground under crop as they cultivate now, and the railway would cause them to utilise land which they cannot utilise now.

377. What are the principal crops grown here? You can grow in this district nearly anything that you care to plant. That statement is well borne out by the exhibits which my son has shown at Bathurst, Dubbo, Bourke, Orange, and Wellington. In each of those places his exhibits of produce have beaten the Government exhibits. You can grow wheat, potatoes, sorghum, millet, and barley in the district.

378. Are they growing those crops here now? Yes.

379. Has the fruit industry received any attention here? Only to a limited extent. Fruit does very well here.

380. Are there any vineyards of any extent? Not of any great extent; but vines do very well here, and I do not think you can beat this part of the Colony in wine-producing.

381. Do you find that wine arrives at maturity here more quickly than it does in warmer districts? I am hardly able to express an opinion on the subject: but I know that they make very good wine here. As a rule, it is a very strong wine, and resembles the Albury and Hunter River wines.

382. How far have you been along the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek? I have been as far as Mundooran from Wellington, and, years ago, I went through the greater part of the whole district that the line would traverse.

383. What is the character of the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? It varies a great deal. When you get on to the Liverpool Plains, and on to the Castlereagh, you get into black soil country; between Wellington and Mundooran it is mostly red soil and chocolate soil.

384. I suppose agriculture is not carried on at any great distance from the existing lines? Wherever land can be got it is put under cultivation, out as far as Cobborah; but the farmers out there are at a great disadvantage because of the cost of haulage.

385. Is any mining done in the neighbourhood of the proposed line? Yes; the Mitchell's Creek Mine is not far from the proposed line.

386. Is that a gold mine? Yes. Copper is also found in the district.

387. How far is Mitchell's Creek from here? About 9 miles.

388. Then it is near enough to be benefited by the existing railway? Yes; but the carriage from that mine would add very much to the returns of the proposed railway, and there are other mines being opened up which the construction of the proposed railway would greatly benefit. There is a place where coal could be got very close to the proposed railway.

389. How far from here? About 36 miles, on the Talbragar Creek. I know that the Railway Commissioners have looked at the proposal before the Committee only from the commercial point of view; but I look at it also from the national point of view.

390. What is your opinion as to the likelihood of the line paying;—we have had rather an unfavourable estimate of its possibilities? I was astonished when I read the Railway Commissioners' report. I believe that this would be a paying line, because I feel sure that a large population would settle on each side of it if it were constructed.

391. Do you think that the Commissioners' estimate of revenue is too low? Yes. There is a lot of land now locked up which will be settled upon when the leases fall in, and a railway would assist that settlement. Of course, there are spots which are somewhat barren; but their barrenness is made up for by the goodness of the timber growing there.

392. Do the people living along the route say that they would go into farming more largely if there were a railway? Yes; and there is no doubt that they would. At the present time it costs them about 4d. a bushel to get their wheat carried from Spicer's Creek to Wellington, whereas, if there were a railway, it would be carried for less than 1d. a bushel.

393. Is the clearing of the land you speak of very expensive? Not as a rule.

394. What does it cost per acre to clear it? In some parts it would not cost more than 10s. an acre, while in other parts it would cost 30s. an acre.

395. Is the soil easily worked? Yes. There is a great deal of good agricultural land in the district—really first-class land—though people seeing it under timber might not think that it was good. The average yield of wheat here would compare favourably with the yield in any other part of the Colony.

396. *Mr. Watson.*] What bearing do you think the construction of the proposed line would have upon national interests? The proposed line would connect the Northern railway system of the Colony with the Western and Southern systems.

397. Do you think that such a connection is required at the present time? Yes.

398. How would it be used? It would be a great saving of time to people travelling either to the north or the south of the Colony. It would enable people to make direct journeys without the necessity of going to Sydney.

399. Is it not probable that, even if the railway were constructed, it would be necessary for some years to run only slow or mixed trains upon it, so that it might still be quicker for a traveller to make his journey *via* Sydney than directly across country? I think the Commissioners would run the trains in such a way as to produce the most revenue. If they ran quick trains across the proposed line the public would, of course, travel by them, and I think that even slow trains would make the direct journey more quickly than

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than it can be made now. Mr. Engineer Jones stated to the Under Secretary for Works, in his report on the proposal in 1891, that :—

The value of a cross line to Werris Creek is more especially due to the facilities it affords for intercommunication between the different sections of our railway system, and thus creating increased traffic.

It is a midway connection, thereby insuring a great saving in distance over the existing routes. Taking Wellington and Werris Creek as common points, I find there is a gain of 352 miles compared with the present railway journey, *via* Sydney.

Should the line from Cobar to Broken Hill be made, the Wellington-Werris Creek cross-line would bring Adelaide within 1,439 miles of Brisbane, as against 1,808 by the present route, *via* Melbourne and Sydney, thus giving a saving of 369 miles.

With respect to Melbourne and Brisbane, assuming the present Harden to Blayney branch be used, the Werris Creek connection would shorten the journey by 143 miles.

I think there can be little doubt a cross line would be largely used for the carriage of mails.

It will also be a good stock carrying railway, and, in time of drought would afford facilities for the transfer of starving stock from the west to New England and other districts.

The military and strategic value of such a connecting line as the one under consideration cannot be overlooked. It would greatly aid, should occasion require it, in the speedy massing of troops or their transport to any part of New South Wales or the other colonies.

In the event of the Hawkesbury Bridge being damaged by an enemy or otherwise rendered uncrossable, the Werris Creek line would be found most useful as preserving intact the continuity of our railway system.

I quite agree with that statement.

400. It has not been found that the Blayney-Harden connection is much used by through passengers? I contend that that connection is not on all fours with the proposal before the Committee. What we originally wanted was a line from Werris Creek to the western line, and then on towards Harden. The Blayney-Harden line, however, has now been constructed, and although it passes through a great deal of inferior country, it furnishes a connection between the western and the southern lines. If another connection were made between Werris Creek and Wellington that would answer the purpose in hand. The Blayney-Harden line has really no feeders; but the proposed line would make up for the mistake which was made when that line was constructed, and it would pay the Railway Commissioners to run quick trains on it.

401. Are you able to form an opinion as to whether any considerable number of people from this district, or from places further to the west, would wish to travel to places on the northern line more quickly than by going round through Sydney? If the proposed railway were constructed anyone who wished to visit the northern part of the Colony would use it in preference to going round through Sydney, because of the saving in time and expense. The proposed line would also provide means of moving stock in times of drought. Only a very short time ago some thousands of tons of chaff were sent from Wellington to Moree. That chaff had to be sent round by way of Sydney; but, if the proposed railway had been constructed, it would have gone direct. I am certain that if the line had been constructed during the recent drought a lot of stock from Forbes and the districts out in that direction would have been saved.

402. Was not stock sent to Dubbo, and places round about from the western district, only a year or two ago? Yes.

403. This district would not get many stock from the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? If the country were properly settled I think it would.

404. But people living between Wellington and Werris Creek would not be likely to send stock to Wellington for agistment? If the district were as bad as it has been during the last two years they would do so. I have known them to have a very bad season out north when we have had a good season in Wellington.

405. What would cause stock from Parkes and out that way to pass Wellington to get to the northern line? The Wellington district is not sufficiently large to meet the requirements of all the stock that requires food. I have known thousands of sheep to pass through Wellington going northwards, and great numbers of them to die on the roads, whereas if the proposed railway were constructed they would be trucked direct to the New England country, or to the country about Tamworth and Werris Creek, where there was good feed during the last drought. The stock I speak of could not make that way, because of the want of grass and water on the road.

406. Do you think a trade in fodder between Wellington and Moree is likely to develop;—we understand that the Hunter River District supplies a great deal of fodder to the northern districts? The Hunter River District does not supply it all.

407. It has been suggested that a less expensive connection, and one which would go through better country, would be a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra, junctioning at Gilgandra with the Dubbo-Coonamble line;—can you offer an opinion as to the relative merits of the two routes? I think that the proposal into which the Committee is inquiring is a better one than the suggested Curlewis-Gilgandra line. A line from Wellington to Werris Creek would pass through better country than a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra.

408. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What crops do you grow? Wheat, corn, barley, rye, oats, potatoes, sorghum, pumpkins, and marrows.

409. What area have you under cultivation? My place is about 3 miles from Wellington, and I have only lately gone into farming. I have only 300 or 400 acres under cultivation.

410. What is the average yield of wheat per acre in a moderate season? I think that the average yield in the district through which the proposed line would pass might safely be put at 16 bushels to the acre. During the last two or three years the yield has been as much as 30 bushels and more to the acre.

411. Do you grow maize to any large extent? Maize does not do so well here as other crops. As a rule we do not get rain at the right time for it; but when we get good crops they are very heavy. I have known a crop of maize to yield as much as 90 or 100 bushels to the acre. During the last thirty years I have never known failure in the wheat crop.

412. How does your land compare with other agricultural lands in the district? I think it is fair average land.

413. How would your land compare with the land along the route of the proposed railway? Some of that land is quite as good as mine, some of it a little better, and some of it worse.

414. Generally speaking, would it be similar to your land? Yes.

415. Would it grow the same crops as your land grows? I cannot see why it should not. That district must have a similar rainfall to ours.

416. How many acres in the district you speak of would be sufficient to enable a man to maintain himself and his family by agriculture? That is a very hard question to answer; but I believe a man would do very well with 1,000 acres, if he went in for mixed farming.
417. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed, most of the people who would settle in the district would use the land for agricultural purposes? Yes; but, in my opinion, settlers would act more wisely by going in for mixed farming. By spelling the land, and running stock on it for a year or two, you conserve its fertility.
418. How many acres used solely for agriculture would be sufficient to make a farm? About 320 acres; but I do not think the farms should be as small as that, although many of those who are making a living in this district have not one-fourth of that area.
419. Do you consider the district that we are speaking of a first-class grazing district? Some parts of it are very good for grazing, and could not be surpassed.
420. Is the land 10 or 12 miles back from the route of the proposed line similar to that on the route? There is a great deal of land back from the route of the line which is superior to that nearer in.
421. Would that superior country be served by the proposed line? Yes.
422. Is the unalienated country which you have mentioned close to the proposed line, or at some distance from it? It is land that would be served by the proposed line.
423. Would it be taken up if the proposed line were constructed? Yes; on the first land day after it was offered. There is a continual cry for land now.
424. Are the holdings along the route very large? There are some pretty large holdings close to Wellington. I suppose Mr. Barton has the largest holding, and he has about 5,000 or 6,000 acres under cultivation. I believe that the proposed line would go through his land.
425. If the proposed line were constructed, is it likely that these holdings would be cut up into small areas? When population comes to the district, that must be a matter for the consideration of the landholders.
426. How far is Mr. Barton's place from Wellington? His head station is about 6 miles from Wellington, but his land extends 12 miles further out along the proposed line.
427. Is the district well watered? You can get plenty of water in Mitchell's Creek by sinking wells.
428. Can you get water all through the district by sinking wells? Yes.
429. If the proposed railway were made, would the district between Wellington and Werris Creek carry a fairly large population? I am certain that it would.
430. With an increase of population, there would naturally be an increase of traffic? Yes; that would follow.
431. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you think that within 20 miles on each side of the proposed line there is much land as suitable for agriculture as the land from which you obtained 16 bushels of wheat to the acre? I think that there is.
432. Mr. Harper has told us that the best land for agricultural purposes within the influence of the proposed railway has been alienated? Yes; but that land would be made more reproductive if it were served by a railway.
433. Do you know what the rainfall is between Wellington and Werris Creek? Between 24 and 25 inches. The rainfall increases as you get towards the Liverpool Plains.

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Stanley Septimus Lowe, farmer and grazier, Spicer's Creek, sworn, and examined:—

434. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is Spicer's Creek from Wellington? Twenty-two miles.
435. Will you describe the country on Spicer's Creek? It is country very suitable for wheat-growing, with a rich chocolate soil.
436. Is there much of it suitable for wheat-growing? Yes, a great deal.
437. What is the area of your holding? 4,500 acres.
438. How much of it do you cultivate? I have not done much farming hitherto, because I am rather far from the railway; but I have about 240 acres now under cultivation.
439. How much of your land is suitable for agriculture? About 500 acres. My land is situated at the head of the creek.
440. Do the holdings further down the creek contain larger areas of arable land? Yes.
441. How much of the land in those holdings is fit for cultivation? I should say quite 60 per cent.
442. In what direction does the good land extend? It is equally good in all directions.
443. How far does it extend along the route of the proposed line? It is good all the way from Wellington to Cobborah. My run was thrown open last year, and the greater part of it was taken up on the first day, while, after the second day, there was not an acre left.
444. Is the Crown land there suitable for agriculture, or is it suitable only for pastoral occupation? It is suitable for both agricultural and pastoral pursuits.
445. Then why has it not been used? It is held under a ten years' lease.
446. The Crown lands on the Medway Holding have been open for selection for some years;—why has it not been taken up? I am not acquainted with that land, but I know that all the Sandy Creek country to the east of it has been taken up. I do not say that all the land is good, but, generally speaking, the land is good.
447. Your holding is now about 22 miles from a railway station? Yes.
448. Do you find that a serious handicap to agricultural operations? Yes.
449. What do you pay for carriage? About 4d. a bushel on wheat.
450. Is the road a good one? Fairly good, but it is very hilly.
451. What do you pay for back-loading? The carriers generally bring back-loading at about half rates.
452. Would the construction of the proposed railway stimulate agriculture in that district? I think so.
453. At the present time landholders are prevented by the high rates of road-carriage from going in for agriculture? That is true to a great extent, but the land is so good for agriculture that, in spite of the disadvantage to which you refer, a good many people are farming it, and they are increasing their cultivation areas.
454. Would the proposed line confer any other benefit upon the district that you speak of besides cheapening the carriage of produce? Yes; it would also provide facilities for sending away wool and stock.

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S. S. Lowe. stock. The people of Spicer's Creek would not dream of asking for a railway simply to serve themselves; but the district is a good one, and would contribute a considerable amount of traffic to the proposed railway if it were constructed.

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455. What is the average size of the holdings near Spicer's Creek? They vary very much; but I know of several farms which comprise over 500 acres of cultivation. There are a good many holding of all sizes.
456. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the land be used only for agriculture, or would it be used for mixed farming? It would be used for mixed farming. There are some rocky hills which could not be farmed at all, unless they were used for grape-growing.
457. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The estimated cost of the proposed railway, exclusive of what must be paid for land resumption and compensation, is very large;—do you think that the people through whose land the line would pass would be willing to give the Government what was required for railway purposes? I cannot speak on that point.
458. Is the country you hold average country? No; there is better agricultural land lower down the creek, and nearer to the proposed railway.
459. How much of the country within 20 miles on each side of the proposed line is fit for agriculture? I think about 60 per cent.
460. How far along the line would country of that nature extend? For about 12 miles beyond where I live, so far as I know the district.
461. That would be about 34 miles from Wellington? Yes.
462. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed there would be a disposition to largely increase the area of land under cultivation in the district? I am sure of it. The area of cultivation is being largely increased at the present time. A large paddock on a holding next to mine gave 40 bushels of wheat to the acre the year before last, and last year there was every probability of a similar yield when an early frost destroyed the grain in the ear, and the crop had to be cut for hay.
463. Was that crop grown on river land? No; on the land that is usually used for wheat. Last year I myself had an average of 24 bushels to the acre all through.
464. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is there much land under cultivation in the vicinity of Spicer's Creek? Yes, a considerable area.
465. Would that land be largely increased if the district were given railway communication? I think so.
466. What is the character of the land in the reserves along the route of the proposed line? The land in the reserves is similar to the rest of the land in the district. A mile of country was reserved on each side of the first surveyed line.
467. What is the value of the land on Spicer's Creek? Freehold land is worth, on the average, about £2 an acre.
468. Improved or unimproved? That is land which has been fenced and ringbarked.
469. What would be the value of unimproved land there without a railway? From 15s. to £1 per acre. The quality of the land varies in different localities.
470. Would those prices apply all along the line, as far as Cobborah? They apply as far as the fall between Spicer's Creek and Sandy Creek.
471. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it materially increase the value of the Crown lands of the district? I should think so, because of the facilities it would afford to settlers.
472. Is the country well watered? Not naturally.
473. *Mr. Gaden* told us that water is always obtainable by sinking wells? Yes; I have sunk wells in the creeks myself.
474. Do you ever suffer severely from droughts? Yes; in 1880 we suffered very severely from a drought; so much so that all the stock had to be removed.
475. If the Crown lands in the district were thrown open for settlement what would they be used for? Chiefly for agriculture, I think.
476. That would mean closer settlement than would follow pastoral occupation? Yes.
477. Where would you remove sheep to in the event of a drought? I was only a schoolboy at the time of the 1880 drought, and I know that our own stock were removed to the Mudgee River, but I cannot say where other people took their stock.
478. What other crops are grown besides wheat? The chief crop is wheat, but maize is also grown, and so are lucerne, oats, and rye.
479. Where is your market? Wellington is our chief market, but we also send to Mudgee and to Gulgong.
480. If the Crown lands in the district were thrown open for settlement, would the market you have now be sufficient to absorb the whole production of the land, or would you have to find other markets? Last year a great deal of wheat had to be sent away from here, and the year before last wheat was sent from here to Johannesburg.
481. Would it pay you to grow wheat for the Sydney market? I should think so. It is the opinion of older farmers than myself that it would pay us.
482. *Mr. Watson.*] The Railway Commissioners estimate that a loss of £18,000 per annum will be incurred if the proposed railway is constructed;—*Mr. Harper* expects to receive a total revenue of only £8,586? I think that the Railway Commissioners have over-estimated the probable loss. In my opinion they have not made sufficient allowance for the increase of traffic that may be expected. The proposed line would complete the connection between the Northern, Western, and Southern railway systems, and would no doubt take a great deal of intercolonial traffic.
483. The intercolonial traffic would have to be passenger traffic, because it would be too expensive to send goods by train from Brisbane to Melbourne? At any rate, trade always grows after a railway is made, and many railways which did not pay at first have come out well in the end.
484. I believe that last year the Commissioners lost about £40,000 on the Blayney-Harden line? That is an incomplete connection.
485. Do you think that the proposed line would increase the chance of the Blayney-Harden line paying? Yes.
486. Do you think it would be worth the while of the landowners along the route to guarantee any proportion of a probable deficiency—(say) an amount equal to what they now pay in land tax? I am 12 miles from the line, and practically it would not benefit me very much more than the existing line does; but it might pay me to give one-half.

Alexander Ross, farmer, Spicer's Creek, sworn, and examined:—

487. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long where you are now living? I have resided about twenty-three years at Spicer's Creek. A. Ross.
23 April, 1900.
488. Have you a good general knowledge of the country through which the proposed railway would pass? Yes; for the first 50 or 60 miles.
489. What do you grow on your land? Wheat.
490. How many acres have you under cultivation? 1,100 acres.
491. What is the size of your holding? 1,326 acres.
492. Is the land well suited for agriculture? It is splendidly suited for agriculture.
493. What is the average yield of wheat to the acre? Eighteen or 19 bushels; that is the average yield since I have been there.
494. Is your land a fair sample of the country for the first 50 or 60 miles along the proposed route? It is just about equal to the average run of the country for the first 50 miles along the proposed route.
495. Is the land along the route of the proposed line as suitable for agriculture as your land? Yes; but a small belt of iron-bark comes in about 24 miles from Wellington, on the left side of the road. That belt comprises about 2,000 acres.
496. Is your property near the route of the proposed line? My boundary is about 2 miles away from it.
497. What distance from Wellington is your holding? Twenty miles.
498. Do you bring your produce to Wellington? It mostly goes to Geurie, about 18 miles from my place.
499. What does it cost you per bushel to take it there? Twopence-halfpenny per bushel.
500. Do those who are engaged in pastoral pursuits devote themselves chiefly to the breeding of stock? Yes; all the Crown lands in the district is given up to stock.
501. Is much dairying done in the district? Not after you get 10 or 12 miles from Wellington.
502. Is the land suited for dairying? Yes; it is splendid land.
503. Is dairying profitable where it is carried on? Yes.
504. If the proposed railway were made would more land be used for dairying? Yes; dairying would then be a live thing right through the district.
505. Would dairying pay better than sheep-farming? On the average it would; but last year was an exceedingly good year for wool-growing, because the price of wool was so high.
506. Is any large area of Crown lands open for settlement in your district? On Gillinghall Holding there are about 3,000 acres of Crown lands, which fall in next July; on Bodangora Holding there are 12,000 acres, and on Murrumbidgee Holding there are 40,000 acres.
507. What kind of country is it? Splendid country; you could not get better.
508. Will that land be taken up when it is thrown open for settlement? Yes; it will not remain open a day.
509. If the proposed railway is made will people take up the land for agriculture or for stock-raising? For agriculture.
510. How many acres of that land would be required to maintain a family by farming? 400 acres.
511. For stock-raising a larger area would be required? Yes; 1,600 or 1,800 acres.
512. Is it land which would carry a large population? Yes.
513. The map shows that there is Crown land not held under lease still open for settlement? Some of the land on Cobrauraguy Holding is thickly timbered, and would cost a great deal to clear.
514. Have you a knowledge of the country for any distance from Wellington, extending 15 or 20 miles on each side of the proposed line? Yes.
515. How would that land compare with the land nearer the surveyed route? It is of equally good quality.
516. For what distance out would the railway serve that district? It would serve the land to a distance of about 18 miles.
517. What is the greatest distance which the farmers now send their produce by road? The farmers living about Cobborah have to cart their wheat 50 miles, which takes away all the profit.
518. What is the value of improved land in your locality—land which has been fenced and cleared? About £7 an acre; that would be average land.
519. What would be the unimproved value of the unalienated land? About 30s. an acre.
520. Would the construction of a railway increase the value of that land to any marked extent? Yes; if the railway were made, and that land thrown open to selection, it would not be many years before it would be all under cultivation. The following statement shows the acreage under wheat between Spicer's Creek and Mitchell's Creek:—

Holder.	Area of Holding (C. P. land).	Area under cultivation.	Holder.	Area of Holding (C. P. land).	Area under cultivation.
	acres.	acres.		acres.	acres.
F. G. Lowe	5,000	500	A. Williams	400	250
T. Jordan	1,250	300	J. McLeod	1,500	400
J. Horwood	570	90	M. Finn	320	200
W. Creigan	1,985	130	D. Laws	300	100
G. Antes	320	90	D. Gollan	1,265	700
J. Horwood	240	115	A. McLeod	240	120
P. McCabe	1,170	15	Lockrey Bros.	740	350
J. Ross	1,680	400	T. Crick	920	700
A. Ross	1,263	1,000	J. Courts	400	110
G. Rowe	1,665	1,100	John Courts	450	270
S. J. Squires	40	30	J. Hollow	600	280
J. W. Ross	480	260	P. Bright	80	20
D. Ross	1,165	600	G. Astill	80	30
T. Speechly	120	50	E. Bright	80	15
A. Speechly	240	100	Jas. Rutherford	5,000	.....
A. Williams	240	160	H. Bird	120	80
J. Bourke	320	90	Thos. Slack	640	300
T. Newby	120	40			

Of the land to be thrown open for selection, there is already surveyed, on Gillinghall, 3,000 acres, in four blocks; on Bodangora, 12,000 acres, in nineteen blocks; and on Murrumbidgee, 150,000; but only about 40,000 acres would benefit by the construction of the proposed line. All that land is suitable for cultivation, and the district contains plenty of timber for railway purposes. The area under cultivation has been increasing about 25 per cent. every year.

All the holdings I have mentioned are within 6 miles of the proposed line,

521.

- A. Ross.
28 April, 1900.
521. Some of the holdings are very small;—have the holders no other occupation? No.
522. Are they men with families? Three of them are not.
523. In the event of the proposed railway being constructed, would the large holdings be cut up into agricultural areas? I should think so.
524. You think that the land would either be cut up or would be used by the land-holder himself for agriculture? Yes.
525. *Mr. Watson.*] How long does it take you to get to the railway station now? The trip takes two days.
526. Would a line from Mudgee to Duncodoo serve you? No; it would be too far away.
527. Would it pay you to make any contribution towards the annual upkeep of the proposed railway, with a view to reducing the large annual loss which the Railway Commissioners anticipate upon the construction of this line;—could you pay, for that purpose, as much as you now pay in land tax? Yes.
528. Would you be prepared to give a guarantee to pay that amount? Yes, because it would be nothing to what I pay now for carriage.
529. Do you think that the people generally who would be served by the proposed line will look at the matter in the same light? Certainly. There is no comparison between the land tax and what we have to pay for road carriage.

William Smith, junr., farmer and grazier, Mitchell's Creek, and Chairman of the Bodangora Progress Committee, sworn and examined:—

- W. Smith, junr.
28 April, 1900.
530. *Mr. Watson.*] Bodangora is 12 miles north of Wellington? Yes.
531. What are the views of the people in your district in regard to the construction of the proposed railway? The construction of the line would lessen the cost of carriage to farmers and pastoralists, and would enable persons engaged in the mining industry to obtain coal for their operations instead of wood, the supply of which is now beginning to decrease. It would also give facilities for the transport of mining machinery and other requisites for mining. The following memoranda have been sent to me by the manager of the Mitchell's Creek Freehold Gold Estate, Wellington, in connection with the proposal before the Committee:—

Amount of quartz crushed—14,200 tons per annum.
Quantity of gold won, average for three years—9,000 oz. per annum.
Gross value of gold won, average for three years—£32,000 per annum.
Number of men employed directly—240 (all year round).
Annual freight paid to Railway Commissioners at present—£660.
Weight of goods carried at present—200 tons per annum.
Amount of firewood consumed—2,800 cords, valued at £1,650 per annum.
Amount of wages and salaries paid—£21,000 per annum.

If railway constructed, coal would be used instead of firewood; calculated consumption, say 60 tons per fortnight—1,560 tons per year—

Freight on coal from Lithgow to Bodangora would be	£936
Goods—extra freight, Wellington to Bodangora, say	£40

Increase in freight account

Amount paid to Railway Commissioners as freight from commencement of operations to date (January, 1900), say £5,000.

I am also instructed by the manager of the mine to say that they can be certain of at least seven years' work, and that they propose to shortly place in position machinery of the most modern type at a cost of £10,000; the machinery now there being worth something like £100,000. In addition to the Mitchell's Creek Mine, there are five other mines known to me. Applications for the erection of a public battery have been made by those on the old Kaiser field. It has been stated that all the reefs will pay wages, and the field would give a great deal of traffic to the railway. It is proposed to construct a station $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Bodangora, and another station would be necessary at Comobella. There is also a copper-mine at Bolaro. If the proposed railway were constructed, the traffic to and from that mine would go to Bodangora instead of coming to Wellington as it does at present. There are numerous indications of mineral deposits throughout the district, and the assayer, the metallurgist, and the manager at Mitchell's Creek are all highly impressed with the metalliferous character of the country. I have no doubt that, as years go by, the district will be one of the richest mining districts in New South Wales, and that opinion has been endorsed by Father Curran. There are larger copper deposits within 2, 4, and 8 miles of Bodangora; but owing to the cost of carriage it is impossible under present conditions to work them at a profit, though they would pay if there were a railway to carry coal, machinery, and other mining requisites. There are also large deposits of limestone within a mile and a half of the proposed railway station at Bodangora, and also large deposits of ironstone, and as the country progresses, these will be made use of. The population of Bodangora is about 900, and of the surrounding district 1,650. The industries of the district comprise pastoral, agricultural, and mining pursuits. The estimated area of the land under cultivation there is 5,500 acres, giving a yield of 50,000 bushels of wheat and 3,750 tons of hay. The town has a public school, with an average attendance of 120 children; there are three places of worship—Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Wesleyan, and a post and telegraph office; there is a police station, a Mechanics' Institute, and a licensed hotel. Most of the land around the town is alienated, but away from it there are 5,000 acres of Crown land, which will shortly be made available for settlement. Several of the miners hold small blocks of land under special lease. This land they cultivate. There are about 35,000 sheep and a large number of horses and cattle in the district. The Mitchell's Creek mine runs a stamper of 50 head, and it is intended to bring the battery up to 100 head. Lincoln is a small settlement, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Bodangora. It has a public-house and a post office. There is another small settlement at Kaiser, a mile from Bodangora, and there are several dwellings there. The following is a statement of the

the business done at the Post Office, Bodangora, during the year 1899, and was furnished by the local postmaster:—

W. Smith,
junr.
28 April, 1900.

Letters posted, inland	17,754		
" intercolonial	864		
" foreign	400		
" registered, inland	615		
" " intercolonial	103		
" " foreign	6		
" letter-cards, inland	30		
" post-cards, inland	180		
Total	19,952		
Newspapers posted	1,440		
Packets posted	760		
Parcels	106		
		£	s. d.
Stamps received and sold, value	290	13	0
Money-orders issued, 619, value	1,856	7	0
Savings Bank deposits, 358, value	1,806	2	6
Postal-notes sold, 1,253, value	543	15	9
Telegrams transmitted, 780, value	42	7	4
" " O.H.M.S., 28, value	2	10	9
Total receipts	4,541	16	4
		£	s. d.
Telegrams received, 739,* value (£44 4s. 1d.)	221	7	0
Money-orders paid, 64, value	1,535	6	7
Savings Bank warrants paid, 158, value	68	6	7
Postal-notes paid, 170, value			
Total payments	1,825	0	2
		£	s. d.
Total receipts	4,541	16	4
" payments	1,825	0	2
Grand total	6,366	16	6

I exchange mails daily as under:—To and from Sydney (and parcel bags), once; to and from Wellington, once; to and from Jabbone, once.

*This does not include calls; records only in Head Office.

There is a daily mail to and from Wellington.

532. I suppose most of the land around Mitchell's Creek is already alienated? Yes.

533. There is very little Crown land there? Out towards Mr. Ross's holding there are large areas of Crown land, the leases of which fall in next July.

534. Is that good land? Splendid land.

535. Do you think it would be taken up if the proposed railway were constructed? It will be taken up in any case, and the wisdom displayed in throwing it open for settlement in large blocks will make the land doubly valuable.

536. How far are the copper deposits you spoke of from Bodangora? There is one at Bolaro, about 20 miles from the proposed Bodangora station, in a north-east direction; another one about 2 miles from the proposed line, and another about 4 miles from it.

537. Are they being worked now? No; because the rates of freight are too high.

538. The field that is 20 miles from Bodangora is only 30 miles from Wellington;—would a saving of 10 miles road carriage make all the difference between profit and loss in its working? I think so; it would mean 10 miles each way.

539. Are the deposits large? Very large.

540. Do you know what assays have been made? All I know is that the mines would pay to work if it were not for the high rate of carriage at present prevailing.

541. I understand that the manager of the Mitchell's Creek mine has stated that if the proposed railway were made he would use Lithgow coal;—would it cost him much to cart coal from Wellington to the mine? Yes; and it would not pay him to cart it. About two years ago the Lithgow people supplied the mine with coal at reduced rates, but it would not pay to cart it from Wellington. The manager of the mine has told me, however, that if coal could be brought within 2 miles of the mine he would use it. The supply of wood is lessening.

542. Do they chlorinate at the mine? Yes. I think that there will be an increase of 30 per cent. in the cultivation in this district, and out towards Mr. Ross's holding the area of land under cultivation will be very large indeed.

543. Will the construction of the proposed railway greatly stimulate agricultural production? Yes; because it will give better means of transport. The transport by team is too expensive for a low priced product like wheat.

544. Do you know enough of the people along the route to hazard the opinion that they would exchange pastoral for agricultural operations if the proposed railway were made? They would combine pastoral pursuits with agriculture. The late Mr. Thompson, of the Agricultural Department, spoke of the land as some of the finest agricultural land in New South Wales, and he considered that dairying, if ensilage were used, would pay 20 per cent. better than agriculture.

545. Did he say where you would find a market for your produce? I think that if we produced a good article we could find a market for it in Great Britain.

546. You have to take the produce a long distance to get to the sea port? Yes; but dairy produce takes up comparatively little space.

Donald Ross, farmer and grazier, Spicer's Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- D. Ross.
28 April, 1900.
547. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have heard the evidence which was given to-day by your brother;—will you make a statement embodying what fresh evidence you have to give to the Committee;—I think you know the country further along the proposed route than he knows it? The country to the south-east of the line is for the most part fine agricultural land, and along the Talbragar River there is a lot of land suitable for grazing. The agricultural flats are similar to those about Wellington, but they are larger.
548. What proportion of the land within twenty miles of the proposed line would be suitable for agriculture? To the south-east about three-fourths of the land would be suitable for agriculture; out towards the Talbragar the land is more suitable for grazing.
549. Is much of the land being cultivated now? No; there is very little cultivation out that way.
550. What is the reason of that? The people out there complain about the cost of carriage; they have now to send their produce to Mudgee.
551. Do you think that, with the construction of a railway, they would turn their attention to agriculture? I believe that the agricultural increase would be as much as 50 per cent. within a short time after the opening of the line. Between Wellington and our place agriculture is increasing at that rate.
552. Would an increase in population follow the construction of the line? Yes.
553. What is the land like on the north side of the proposed line? About one-fourth of it would be suitable for agriculture.
554. How far along the route will your descriptions apply? For about thirty miles.
555. Do you know anything of the country between Curlewis and Gilgandra? No.

MONDAY, 30 APRIL, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Wellington, at 10'30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

John McLean, farmer and grazier, near Cobborah, sworn, and examined:—

- J. McLean.
30 April, 1900.
556. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you living at Cobborah now? I am not interested in property there at the present time, but I lived there for about eleven years.
557. I understand that you have a good general knowledge of the country between Wellington and Murrumbidgee? Yes. From Wellington to the Talbragar I look upon the country as highly suitable for both agriculture and pastoral pursuits.
558. For what distance along the proposed route? About 30 miles.
559. And extending how far on each side of it? On the west my description would apply as far as Dubbo, and on the east—as far as my knowledge of the district extends—about 15 miles.
560. Is the country so good that it could be wholly devoted to agriculture, or will it be necessary for settlers on it to combine agriculture with grazing? The whole of that country is not adapted for agriculture.
561. How much of it is good agricultural land? I should think that about two-thirds of it would be fit for agriculture.
562. How many acres of agricultural land would be sufficient to maintain a man and his family decently? In my opinion 1,000 acres would be a nice holding for a man.
563. Would it be necessary for him to farm the whole of this 1,000 acres in order to maintain himself? No; he could farm one-half of it, and use the other half for grazing.
564. Is the greater part of the good agricultural land between Wellington and Cobborah now under cultivation? No; part of it is still Crown lands, though as good as the land that has been brought under cultivation.
565. Is any of the land on the Medway holding arable land? The land I am referring to comprises part of the Murrumbidgee holding and part of the Bodangora holding.
566. If the Dubbo-Coonamble line and the Wellington to Werris Creek line were both constructed, and the Murrumbidgee holding thrown open for settlement, which line would the traffic use? The Wellington-Werris Creek line. That line would command a large local traffic, and would make the distance to Sydney less than it would be by using the Dubbo to Coonamble line.
567. What effect would the construction of the proposed line have upon the country between Wellington and Cobborah? The tendency would be to cause land suitable for agriculture to be used for that purpose. It is difficult for people living 30 miles from a railway to go in for agriculture in competition with people living nearer the railway.
568. Where do the agriculturalists of Cobborah usually send their wheat and other produce? The people residing to the east of Cobborah send to Mudgee, a distance of 50 miles, and those residing to the west mostly send to Dubbo.
569. Has agriculture made fairly rapid progress during your residence in the district? It has been somewhat rapid since I went to live in the district; but it has been greatly retarded by the want of railway communication.
570. Do you think that a great deal more land would be brought under the plough if the proposed railway were constructed? I think that three times as much land will be put under cultivation within the next ten years if the proposed railway is constructed.
571. What is the average yield of wheat between Wellington and Cobborah? About 16 bushels to the acre, excluding last year's returns? I go by the police returns for the Cobborah district.
572. Do the farmers regard that as a fair yield? Yes, year in and year out.

573. If the proposed railway were constructed, would they at any time find a market on the northern or north-western lines? Yes. Last year stock was sent from the northern districts to the Cobborah district, and the firm to which I belong sold a very large quantity of straw to feed starving stock. If the railway had been constructed, that straw would have been sent to the district from which the stock came. I think that in dry seasons a considerable quantity of hay would be sent northward from the district you have been speaking of. J. McLean.
30 April, 1900.
574. It has been stated that the proposed line should be constructed for national reasons;—have you any opinion to give on the subject? I think that is a very important consideration.
575. What national advantage would accrue from its construction? The line would serve the public who wish to travel from the southern to the northern railway system.
576. That would not bring much revenue to the railway? I think that the country along the route would be very much settled upon, and the line would serve a large territory.
577. The Railway Commissioners estimate a loss of about £18,000 per annum on the working of the proposed line;—do you think that the character of the country through which the line goes would justify us in recommending a proposal which would entail so large an annual loss? I think the deficiency has been estimated upon the present traffic; but the prospective traffic, if a line were constructed, should be much greater. I am of opinion that the line would be a paying one in the near future.
578. The Railway Commissioners say that if the line would develop new country and bring business on to the main lines, they would not mind an initial loss; but they see no prospect of such development? In my opinion the land which is suitable for agriculture would, if the proposed line were constructed, be used in that way. I admit that it is difficult to estimate what the traffic return would be.
579. Taking it for granted that the district we have been speaking of deserves railway communication, would it be best served by a line from Wellington going in the direction of Cobborah or by a line from some other point on the main line? I am of opinion that if the proposed railway started from Wellington it would go through country which would justify its construction. That country is not close either to Dubbo or to Mudgee, and is only served by the existing lines to a limited extent.
580. The Western line serves the country that you are speaking of for the first 15 miles from Wellington? Yes.
581. Would the remaining portion of the district be as well served by a line from Mudgee as by a line from Wellington? No.
582. It has been suggested that a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek would be better than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek;—what is your opinion upon that point? When you get about 10 miles away from Dubbo you come to an iron-bark range on the north side of the river—poor country, that will never be suitable for agriculture—and that country extends right up to Mundooran, and almost to Cobborah, although there it opens out into open box flats and iron-bark ridges. The country is much better on the southern side of the river.
583. The country north of Dubbo is inferior to that 10 miles north of Wellington? Yes; very much inferior.
584. What are the rates of carriage from Cobborah to Wellington and from Cobborah to Mudgee? I have paid £2 a ton for the carriage of wool to Mudgee and 6d. a bushel for wheat. From a point 12 miles west of Cobborah I have paid 4d. a bushel for the carriage of wheat to Dubbo.
585. Do you think that people within 10 or 15 miles of the proposed line would be willing to make any contribution towards meeting the estimated annual loss on it? I am not in a position to express an opinion upon the subject.
586. If you were a landholder along the route, would it pay you to contribute towards the reduction of the deficiency as much per annum as you now pay in land-tax? If I were a landholder in the district I should be prepared to give the Government what land was required for railway purposes.
587. But you would not guarantee to make good any part of the estimated annual loss? No; I have spoken to a few landholders on this subject, and they are mostly of the same opinion.
588. *Mr. Shepherd.*] If a man had 1,000 acres fit for cultivation, would it not pay him to put nearly the whole of it under crop, and then to alternately work and spell portions of it? That is a systematic way to farm; but where you have a large area under cultivation you also require a large area to graze the stock which are used in the work of the farm.
589. Is it not an advantage to occasionally spell farming land? Yes.
590. What crop do they grow in the district? Wheat, chiefly.
591. What price do farmers get for their wheat? Last season the price was 2s. 4d. a bushel; that is the lowest they have got.
592. If a farmer paid 4d. a bushel carriage, his return would be about 2s. a bushel, or something like 30s. per acre per annum? Yes.
593. What is the cost per acre of harvesting a crop? It varies considerably; it might cost one farmer 15s. an acre, while some pay more and others less.
594. Cannot you strike an average? About 15s. an acre.
595. Is Mudgee the nearest market to the district we are speaking of? It is the best railway terminus; it is nearer to Sydney than Wellington is. Our wool generally goes to Mudgee, and our wheat to Dubbo or Mudgee.
596. If the proposed railway were constructed, how far would your place be from a station? The place where I used to live would be about 3 miles from the proposed line.
597. Do you not think it would pay a man to make some contribution towards reducing the loss on a railway, if the construction of that railway saved him 47 miles of carriage? That may be so; but other people who would be benefited by the line, such as travellers from Melbourne to the northern line, would not be asked to pay anything in that way.
598. Is it usual to ringbark land which it is intended to clear? Yes.
599. How long is the timber left after it has been ringbarked before you commence to burn it off? About three years.
600. In the meantime how is the land used? For grazing purposes. Some people who have only a limited area proceed to clear the timber straight away.
601. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know anything of the district from Cobborah on towards Werris Creek? I have travelled from Mundooran to Coolah.
602. Is the land through there as good as the land between Wellington and Cobborah? Part of it is. There is some very fine country towards Coolah.

Robert Patten, farmer and grazier, Comobella, near Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

R. Patten.
30 April, 1900.

603. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where is Comobella? It is 12 miles from Wellington, in the direction of Cobborah.
604. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you long resided in that district? I have known it for twenty years, and I have been here permanently for three years.
605. Are you engaged in farming pursuits? Yes.
606. Have you a fair knowledge of the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? I know the country for 15 miles from Wellington.
607. What is the general character of that country? It is all good agricultural land.
608. Is most of it under cultivation? It is largely under cultivation, but I should not like to say that most of it is under cultivation.
609. Is it your opinion that it is all fit for cultivation? Yes, with the exception of the tops of the ridges.
610. What crop is chiefly grown? Wheat.
611. It has been stated that the average yield of wheat in this district is from 16 to 18 bushels? My locality's yield would average about 17½ bushels.
612. Is the Crown land in the district similar in character to the land which has been alienated? Yes.
613. If it were thrown open for settlement, would it be taken up for the same purposes? I think so.
614. Is the country thickly timbered, or is it land that is easily cleared? It can be cleared fairly easily, though in some places the timber is heavy.
615. Is the produce grown in your district sent to Wellington to market? Mostly.
616. What rate of carriage is charged for wheat? About 1½d. a bushel.
617. If the railway were constructed would the wheat be sent by train? Yes; all of it.
618. Are there any tenant farmers in your district? Yes.
619. What rent do they pay for the best land? On an average 3s. to 4s. an acre, taking bush land and cleared land as it comes. Generally speaking, if the tenant makes any improvements the rental is not raised; but if the landlord makes improvements the rental is increased by 10 per cent. on the value of the improvements.
620. What is the improved value of the land itself? Between £5 and £6 an acre.
621. What is its unimproved value? Between £1 and 30s. an acre.
622. In arriving at the improved value of the land, do you take into consideration the cost of clearing, farming, and so on? Yes; and the cost of erecting farm houses, and constructing dams, roads, and fences.
623. Would the construction of the proposed railway materially increase the value of the land? It would increase the value of the land.
624. Would it substantially increase the value of the existing Crown lands? Undoubtedly.
625. If the Crown lands in the district were thrown open for settlement, would they be immediately taken up? I think so.
626. Do you consider the Crown lands sufficiently good for occupation? Yes.
627. What would be a sufficient area of such land for the maintenance of a man and his family? I think 500 acres would be required.
628. If you were cutting up land for settlement purposes, in what sized blocks would you subdivide it? I would subdivide it into not less than 500-acre blocks.
629. *Mr. Watson.*] When you say that the unimproved value of the land in the district varies from 20s. to 30s. an acre, do you refer to land near Wellington, or to the land at the further end of the district with which you are acquainted? I spoke of the land in my own locality.
630. What class of soil have you there? Chiefly red volcanic soil.
631. Is there a good depth of soil? Yes; except on the limestone outcrops.
632. How far are you from the nearest railway station? Eight miles.
633. The meaning of "unimproved value," according to the Taxation Acts, is the price which land would fetch in the open market after deducting the value of improvements;—if a man could get good volcanic soil within 8 miles of a railway for £1 or 30s. an acre, he would be lucky? Certainly he would; but he would not get land for that.
634. Then the land is worth more than £1 or 30s. unimproved? Yes, according to that definition of the word "unimproved." In my opinion, if facilities for transport were increased, the dairying industry would spring up. At the present time we cannot dairy because of the cost of carriage, and at present prices the wheat-growing industry is at a standstill.
635. Is the country well adapted for dairying? I think so.
636. What other industries would there be? There is a considerable outcrop of limestone, and I think that the burning of lime for agriculture and other purposes is an industry which might spring up. Then pig-raising would naturally follow dairying, the pigs being supported on the waste products from the dairy. With mixed farming, paddocks that were lying fallow could be used for the grazing of stock.

Thomas Quirk, farmer, grazier, and flour-mill owner, Gladstone, sworn, and examined:—

T. Quirk.
30 April, 1900.

637. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the extent of your holding? I have about 1,600 acres at Gladstone, and other land in another district.
638. Where do you get the wheat which you make into flour? Within 20 miles of Wellington. Most of our wheat comes from the north, from the direction of Spicer's Creek and Mitchell's Creek.
639. Is good wheat for milling purposes grown out towards Cobborah? Very good wheat. I am not acquainted with the country beyond the Talbragar; but I am perfectly acquainted with the country between Wellington and the Talbragar.
640. Where is your mill? At Wellington; the business is carried on by my partner. I went beyond the Talbragar once, and the country there seemed rather scrubby.
641. How do you regard the country between here and the Talbragar? It is splendid land for agriculture and for pastoral purposes. It is good land for fruit and vines.
642. Do you think that the proposed railway would have any appreciable effect upon that tract of country? It would benefit the people there, and would increase population. In my opinion the proposed railway would greatly assist in making the Blayney-Harden line profitable.

T. Quirk!
30 April, 1900.

643. Confining yourself to its local effects, do you think it would bring about a material increase in the population and production of the district you have spoken of? Yes.
644. Is the country between Wellington and the Talbragar now used to its full capacity? Not to one-third of its capacity.
645. What is the maximum distance which produce can be carted to a railway? I think that a farmer who has to go more than 10 miles to get to a railway station labours under very great difficulties.
646. Do you think that it will be necessary for this country to construct railway lines within 20 miles of each other? The time will come when that will be done. If a man can bring a load of wheat to market and get home the same day he does very well, but when he has to be away for perhaps three days he is farming under difficulties.
647. At the present time men are making a living by farming average land and carting the produce 20 miles to a railway station, do you think that prices will go down? I do not think so. I think that they are now as low as they can be.
648. Would the construction of the proposed railway help to concentrate trade at Wellington? Yes, very largely. The railway would be a very great boon both to the district of Wellington and to the Colony at large.
649. Do you grow any produce here which you could exchange with people living along the Northern railway? Yes. We grow lucerne here pretty extensively, and on the Talbragar they grow potatoes, turnips, and vegetables of all kinds. We also grow wheat and various cereals, and the proposed railway would open up a very large market for our produce in the north-west, and would help the people there by allowing them to send their stock here in times of drought. I have resided in the Wellington district for twenty-nine years, and I have never had a failure of crops during the whole time. My average return has been over 20 bushels to the acre.
650. Is that yield to be obtained only on the flat land like that on the banks of the Bell River? No; on all the wheat-growing land. There is some land in the district which the proposed railway would traverse which has alluvial soil to a depth of 80 feet. I was sinking a well at my place, and it was 80 feet before I came to the rock, going through beautiful soil the whole way. There is certainly no better agricultural district in the Colony. The quality of our wheat is excellent, and our losses of stock are comparatively nothing. The country is well watered, and possesses mineral wealth. The Bodangora mine is a very extensive property, and I am pleased to say that last week a reef was discovered on my land, about 6 miles from Wellington, which bids fair to be as good as the Bodangora reef. A few years ago some iron-stone was sent from the district to be assayed, and we received a report to the effect that it was superior to anything which had been submitted up to that time; but under present conditions it is of no commercial value. We have some of the best iron ore in the Colony, and we have also limestone and coal; while iron-bark suitable for sleepers grows in the district.
651. Where is the coal deposit? On Spicer's Creek.
652. Not very far from where the proposed railway crosses Spicer's Creek? I do not know the route of the proposed railway; but it is just where the road from Wellington to Cobborah crosses Spicer's Creek.
653. What is the quality of the coal? It is very good; but it is lighter in colour than the Lithgow coal.
654. What is the thickness of the seam? Between 6 feet and 7 feet. When I came to Wellington, twenty-nine years ago, agriculture was confined almost entirely to the alluvial land on the river banks, and the quality of the wheat grown was not very good; but since they commenced to cultivate the volcanic soil, the quality of the wheat has improved wonderfully. Twenty-nine years ago not more than about 20,000 bushels of wheat were grown within 20 miles of Wellington; but in 1898 the firm of which I am a member received into the mill 44,400 sacks, or 177,176 bushels of wheat, costing £31,634. In 1899 we received 91,226 sacks, or 381,075 bushels, at a cost of £45,000, and this year we have received 50,000 sacks, or 200,000 bushels, at a cost of £23,000. I estimate the yield of the district within 20 miles of Wellington at about 800,000 bushels for 1899, and for the present year about 880,000 bushels. If the proposed railway were constructed, the production of wheat would nearly double itself in four years. The land between Wellington and Cobborah is well suited for fruit and for vines. I have grown both with very satisfactory results. Dairying is carried on in several places, and is doing very well.
655. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How much of your 1,600 acres is under cultivation? About 300 acres.
656. And how much is fit for cultivation? About one-half.
657. How long have you held that land? About ten years.
658. Since you are within 7 miles of a railway, why have you not cultivated more largely? Because I am not a farmer by trade. I am a miller, and I carry on farming more as a hobby. I am away from home a great deal, travelling and supervising the mill business. There is probably no one in the district better qualified than I am to give an opinion upon its resources, because I know every corner of it, and I know how the people have been getting on here for the last twenty-nine years. I believe that the Wellington farmers are, as a rule, very well to do.
659. Are you acquainted with the country for any distance along the proposed line? Yes, for about 40 miles.
660. What is the character of it? It is good average agricultural land.
661. What proportion of it could be cultivated? About two-thirds. I had nearly 2,000 acres of land close to the route of the proposed line, about 1,920 acres of which could be cultivated; but not five acres have been cultivated because of the distance from a railway.
662. Are the railway rates to Sydney a great handicap to wheat production in the Wellington district? No; I look upon those rates as very fair. In my opinion the Railway Commissioners do what they can to encourage agriculture.
663. You think that it would pay the farmers to cultivate largely? I do.
664. What stock is carried in the district? Sheep, cattle, and horses.
665. What is the average weight of a fleece here? My sheep have yielded 7 lb. 2 oz. to the fleece.
666. Is the wool of a superior character? It is very good. I got £375 for the wool off 1,400 sheep.

John Perry, farmer and grazier, Walhallow, sworn and examined:—

667. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you acquainted with the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? J. Perry.
With the exception of a few miles, I think, I have been over the whole of it.
668. Will you describe the country in sections, keeping within 10 or 20 miles of the proposed line? 30 April, 1900.
From

J. Perry. From Wellington to Mitchell's Creek it is all splendid agricultural land. I have travelled through the farms on each side of the proposed line for a distance of about 50 miles, and I know that the land is some of the finest in the Colony. I have also been along the route of the proposed line as far as Cobborah.

30 April, 1900.

669. What is the country like between Wellington and Spicer's Creek? There is some very good land, and there is some poor land. Taking it altogether, the land is good, though it is not good pastoral land.

670. What is the land like from Spicer's Creek to Cobborah? It is fairly good agricultural land; but it is not good grazing land. The agricultural land is good in patches. The land on the hilltops is inferior.

671. How much of that land would be suitable for agriculture? About one-third, allowing for the hills and valleys. Of course, some of it is exceptionally good.

672. Then, on to Leadville, what is the land like? The flat country is rich agricultural land, and good land for pastoral purposes, while the ridges have a red loamy soil, than which you could not get better land for wheat.

673. Then the whole of that land is good either for agriculture or for pastoral purposes? Yes; I should think three-fourths of it would be good for agriculture.

674. Is it similar country from Leadville on to Coolah? Somewhat similar country. About Coolah there is some splendid agricultural land. The hilly country to the left of the line is not so good; but all the flats and the land along the Talbragar River are very good. The proposed line would tap Cockatoo corner, where there is some of the finest land in the Mudgee district. Mr. Bowman told me that what kept him from putting land under cultivation was the cost of carriage. I am travelling for the "Sunshine" harvester, and I have been to nearly every farm in that district.

675. From Coolah on to Bundella, what is the country like? It is good both for agriculture and for pastoral pursuits; there is both black soil and red loam. Some of the best wool, wool that has brought the highest price ever obtained for greasy wool, has come from that district.

676. What ratio does the agricultural and pastoral lands bear to the whole area? I do not know any bad land there, wherever it is possible to cultivate the land it is good for agriculture. Allowing for hills and stony ground, I should say that one-half of the land is fit for agriculture. Mr. McMaster, of Rockgedgel, told me that if he could get the railway there he would put a couple of thousand acres under cultivation. He grows lucerne there.

677. The black soil is generally better than the red soil for lucerne? Black alluvial soil is very good for lucerne, but black soil which cracks in the hot weather allows the sun to get at the roots, and lucerne will not grow well on it.

678. Does the land continue good from Bundella on to Spring Ridge? Yes.

679. And from Spring Ridge to Werris Creek? That is nearly all black soil country.

680. So that there is very little barren country the whole way through? That is so. Even the scrub land, which used to be looked upon as absolutely useless, is good. On Spring Ridge they have very seldom missed a crop for the last seven years, and they hardly ever get less than 25 bushels to the acre, while they have got as much as 40 bushels to the acre. The land in the Colly Blue scrub used to be considered of no value, but I have stripped seven bags from an acre of wheat grown on that land.

681. Is most of the land along the route of the proposed line taken up? A great deal of it is. I was sub-reporter to the Department of Agriculture for a number of years, and four years ago my return of the cultivation for the district round Spring Ridge was 140 acres. Now there are 5,358 acres under cultivation in that district; but it is a great handicap to farming that we should have to pay from 1s. 9d. to 1s. 3d. a bag to send wheat from Spring Ridge to Quirindi. If the small holders there had railway communication, they would extend their cultivation. Mr. Binney there has 3,000 acres under cultivation, and he is putting about 5,000 acres under cultivation. The following return gives the area under cultivation in the various holdings in the district:—

Name of Landholder.	Acreage under cultivation.	Locality.	Name of Landholder.	Acreage under cultivation.	Locality.
Mr. Binney	3,500	Spring Ridge.	Mr. Mercer	40	Blackville.
Mr. Higgins	320	Kickerbill.	Mr. Foster	80	"
Mr. Lord	189	Spring Ridge.	Mr. Miller	90	Spring Ridge.
Mr. Darby.....	90	Colley Blue.	Mr. Barnes	40	"
Mr. Constable	60	"	Mr. Kingeton	30	"
Mr. Dyson.....	90	"	Mr. Smith	40	Merrigullah.
Mr. Doolan	300	Walhallow.	Mr. A. Doolan	80	Walhallow.
Mr. Della	40	Colley Blue.	Mr. Nellens	80	"
Mr. John Perry	160	Walhallow.	Mr. McLean	60	"
Mr. Joseph Perry	56	"	Mr. O'Neill	60	"
Mr. Busbie	60	Yarraman.			

All these holdings are within about 20 miles of the proposed line, and the people I have named would be compelled to use the railway. In that black soil country we cannot get along at all in wet weather.

682. Have you a return of the number of sheep held by the people living along the line? I can give you an approximate estimate of the number of sheep there. At Walhallow they have shorn as many as 150,000 sheep, though they only shear from 50,000 to 60,000 sheep there now. Mr. O'Neill has about 4,000 sheep; Mr. Leonard about 4,000; Mr. G. G. Binney, 4 D, 7,000 or 8,000; Mr. Charrington, 6,000; Mr. Campbell, 2,000; Mr. Roberts, 3,500; Trinkey, 50,000; Rockgedgel, 50,000 to 60,000; Moreduval, 12,000; Coomoo Coomoo, 30,000 to 40,000; Mr. Busbie, Yarraman, 6,000; Mr. Pengelly, Yarraman, 4,000; Mr. Wood, Yarraman, 5,000; Mr. Foster, Blackford, 3,000; Bomera, 30,000 to 40,000; Saltwater, 7,000; Oakley Creek, 30,000; Ulinda, 20,000; Binnia, 40,000; Ulamabri, 40,000; Urawilkie, 40,000; Goorianawa, from 40,000 to 50,000; and a number of small holdings carry between 12,000 and 15,000. The wool from all these sheep goes to Quirindi by team at the present time. There is also a lot of land on Bando Holding, which would be within the influence of the proposed railway.

683. Is it long since you were over that country? I was over some of it only six months ago.

684. Have you frequently been through the district which the proposed railway would traverse? I was over a great deal of the district twelve months ago, but I have known it for thirty-five or forty years.

685.

J. Perry.
30 April, 1900.

685. Have you been over the country through which the suggested line from Dubbo to Werris Creek would pass? I was through it two years ago. From Mooren it is poor sandy country with honeysuckle hills. The flats at the bends of the river are suitable for cultivation. Towards Binnia there is good soil, but a lot of the country is very poor.

686. Would a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek pass through superior land? I think so.

687. Are there many large cattle in the district through which the proposed line would pass? No. Most of the runs are carrying sheep. There are some cattle on "4 D" and Rockgedgiel holdings, but not a large number, and there are cattle in the vicinity of Coonabarabran.

688. How much arable land is there, on the average? At the other end of the proposed line, from Werris Creek to Bomera, nearly all the land could be cultivated.

689. What is the average yield there? Last season was the worst we have experienced; but, three years ago, it was quite a common thing to get 7, 8, 9, and 10 bags to the acre, and I have got nearly 11 bags to the acre. Taking bad seasons with good, we have averaged from 12 to 14 bushels to the acre. I stated my average yield to the police at 14 bushels. The average yield for the district during the last five years might safely be reckoned at not less than 12 bushels to the acre, and my own average would be more than that.

690. Do the farmers who are more than 20 miles from a railway station find themselves greatly handicapped by the cost of carriage? Yes. I am compelled to pay 3d. a bushel to get my wheat taken to Quirindi, and, if it rains, the carriers will not take it at all.

691. Have you spoken to many of the farmers about the prospects of the proposed railway? Yes, and they think that it would be their salvation.

692. Would they largely increase their cultivation if the proposed railway were made? Yes; because the railway would mean a saving to them of nearly 1s. 3d. to 1s. 9d. a bag.

693. What description of timber does the land between Wellington and Werris Creek carry? There is splendid timber all through—box, iron-bark, and pine.

694. Do you think there would be enough for railway purposes? Yes. They get piles out of the Trinkoy scrub for all the bridges around Quirindi.

695. Would the mining industry be assisted by the construction of the proposed railway? Not at the Werris Creek end of the line, because there is no mining in that part of the district; but at the Wellington end the railway might be of advantage to mining people.

696. Do you think that the estimated deficiency—£18,000 a year—upon the construction of the proposed railway is likely to be made up within a reasonable time? I do not know why the Commissioners have stated the probable revenue of the line at so low a figure as £8,586. With regard to compensation, I consider that any landholder whose land was taken for the construction of a railway would be amply compensated by the advantages which he would get from the railway, and the increased value of the remainder of the holding. The Coonabarabran people are now producing more than they consume, and they would have to use the railway. They have been paying 2s. 3d. and 2s. 6d. a bag to have their wheat carted into Quirindi.

697. In what direction is stock sent from the district through which the line would run to get feed in times of drought? To New England. One of the greatest troubles in connection with the moving of stock is that there is no water at Oakey Creek or along the stock route.

698. Would the construction of the proposed railway facilitate the removal of stock? Undoubtedly. Then, too, it would be a great advantage to have a connection between the Northern, and Western, and Southern railway systems. As I have already stated, the construction of the proposed railway would lead everyone along the line to go in more for agriculture. I myself would put in another 100 or 150 acres, and I have heard others say that they would do likewise. About Spring Ridge we can grow as good wheat as is grown anywhere, and I think that in the course of ten years our output of wheat will be as good as output of wool. The railway will give the people in this district the only chance they have of making a good living. We have already started to export wheat from New South Wales, and have sent away three shipments. The northern farmers wish to make Newcastle the port of export, and if the Government grant money for the erection of elevators it will give more encouragement to farming operations. The smallness of their holdings must compel many men to cultivate.

699. Do you think that the construction of the proposed line will bring a larger population into the district? Yes. At Spring Ridge there is an area of land sufficient for the establishment of a nice little village, and when the railway is made there will be a village there, and another at Dempsey's.

700. *Mr. Watson.*] You are one of the directors of the Farmers' and Settlers' Co-Operative Association? Yes.

701. You have, therefore, occasion to travel through the country considerably? Yes; and I have been over nearly the whole of the northern district.

702. Do you think that the proposed railway would create an interchange of commodities between the western and the northern districts. Yes. I have already known chaff to be sent from Maryvale, which is near Wellington, to Moree.

703. Was that an experiment? No; the people of Moree had to get chaff from somewhere.

704. Was a large quantity sent? Yes.

705. Why did not the Moree people get their chaff from the Hunter? The Hunter River people could not supply it just then.

706. Do you think there would be a fair amount of through traffic upon the proposed line? I think so. The Tamworth people, and all the farmers in that part of the country, with the exception of the Quirindi people, who would like the railway to start from Quirindi, are strongly in favour of the line. The Armidale and Glen Innes people have held meetings advocating its construction.

707. Do the people of those districts think the proposed railway will enable them to tap sources of supply around Wellington and at other places on the Western line? They have a magnificent potato-growing district in the north, and they often cannot get rid of their potatoes under present conditions; but they think the construction of the proposed railway would give them an outlet for their produce. Then, too, in times of drought the railway would be used for stock traffic.

708. They could not send potatoes to Wellington by way of Sydney in competition with the potato-growers of the other colonies? No.

709. During the last five years would the northern districts have drawn very largely upon the Wellington district

- J. Perry. district for fodder if a railway had been constructed? Yes; the Rockgedgiel people, the Coomoo Coomoo people, and other station-holders have been compelled to obtain fodder for their animals.
- 30 April, 1900. 710. Do you think that the people through whose land the line would pass would be prepared to contribute an amount equal to the amount they now pay in land-tax to make up some part of the annual deficiency estimated by the Railway Commissioners. A man having land within 5 miles of the line might pay the full tax, and a man within 10 miles but beyond 5 miles half the tax? Personally, I should be very pleased to make such a contribution, because it would pay me to do so by reason of the saving in freight which I could make, and I think, too, that the line would raise the value of my land 10s. an acre. Where men pay 1s. 9d. a bag freight and take four bags off an acre of land, they are now paying 7s. 6d. an acre. That charge is very much more than the land-tax, and would pretty well all be wiped out by the construction of the railway in proximity to their holdings.

Murdoch McLeod, miller, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

- M. McLeod. 711. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you been in Wellington long? Eighteen months.
- 30 April, 1900. 712. How much wheat do you grind at your mill per annum? About 52,000 sacks, or about 220,000 bushels.
713. Where does your wheat come from? Within a radius of 20 miles of Wellington; but more particularly from the direction of Mitchell's Creek northwards, and Curra Creek to the west.
714. Is it good wheat? Splendid wheat. I am a partner of Mr. Quirk.
715. Is the wheat grown in this district equal to the general run of New South Wales wheat, so far as you know? I think it is superior to all other wheat that I have handled. For eleven years I was manager for Messrs. Brunton & Co., at Granville, and I suppose more wheat has gone through my hands than through those of almost any other man in the business in this colony.
716. Do you get much wheat from Spicer's Creek? Yes.
717. And from other localities along the proposed line? Yes. I have had wheat brought to the mill from a distance of 30 or 40 miles in the direction the proposed line will take.
718. Within 20 miles of Wellington where does the bulk of the wheat come from? About as much comes from Mitchell's Creek as from Curra Creek.
719. Have you had any experience of the cost of carriage? Generally speaking, the cost of carriage is very much against the farmers in the district.
720. What carriage have they to pay? The charges vary according to the distance; some of them have to pay as much as 4½d. a bushel. Last season a farmer brought in several loads of wheat by team from a place 45 miles away, a place equally distant from Parkes, Molong, and Wellington. I believe that there was a difference of ½d. or ¾d. a bushel in favour of the Wellington prices at that time.
721. How far from Wellington is Mitchell's Creek? Twelve miles.
722. What is the charge for carting wheat from Spicers' Creek? 1s. or 1s. 6d. a bag.
723. What has been the price of wheat during the last three months? From 2s. 1½d. to 2s. 4½d. in Wellington for fair to prime milling wheat.
724. Would the proposed line assist in settling population in the district through which it would pass? Undoubtedly.
725. Would people within 12 miles of Wellington use the proposed railway? Yes, because we should purchase wheat "on rail" at the nearest railway station. We are large buyers of wheat "on rail." Last year we sent over 50,000 sacks of wheat to Sydney.
726. How much wheat do you obtain from the farmers along the route of the proposed railway? Roughly, about 20,000 sacks last season, and there are other buyers in the district. The representatives of Mr. Crago and of Mr. Gillespie bought considerable quantities of wheat last year.
727. Did they get much of their wheat from the localities you have mentioned? Yes.
728. They buy in the same way as you do? Yes.
729. And presumably at the same price? Yes.
730. Do you send much flour into the district through which the proposed line would pass? Nearly all the people who bring wheat to the mill take away flour. Of course, those within the influence of the Mudgee line obtain their flour from Mudgee.
731. In the event of the construction of the proposed railway, the Commissioners would get the advantage, not only of the transport of the wheat, but also of the back loading of flour? Yes.
732. Would the people in the district get their supplies from Wellington? Yes, as the nearest market.
733. Did you notice any increase in the wheat-production last season over that of the season before? Yes, though it was not appreciable at our mill, because we have not bought so much for export and for other purposes recently, since the farmers are holding back on account of the low prices. I have been given to understand that there is an increase of from 25,000 to 30,000 sacks of wheat in the production of the district this year.
734. Do you export flour as well as wheat from Wellington? Yes; 50 per cent. of our output goes to Sydney.
735. In view of the very low price now obtainable for wheat, do you think it will pay farmers to grow it for export? I am afraid not. I think that under existing circumstances, and with a continuation of low prices, New South Wales will never become an exporter of wheat.
736. Will the cost of freight have anything to do with that? Yes. The railway rates are very fair, but the distances are very long.
737. People living on the main line will have a great advantage over people living between Wellington and Werris Creek? Where farmers were close to a railway it would not make much difference, because the difference in the railway rates would be very little; it costs no more to send wheat from Dubbo to Sydney than to send it from Wellington to Sydney.
738. Where farmers are at a distance from the railway is their wheat brought to Wellington direct by team, or to the nearest railway station? Either to Wellington or to the nearest railway station.
739. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think it possible that, under more favourable auspices, New South Wales will become an exporter of wheat? Yes; and the construction of the proposed railway would make conditions more favourable for the farmers. The Wellington district is eminently suited for the storage of wheat in bulk, and if elevators were erected along the line, farmers would store it instead of rushing it all down to Sydney, and congesting the market. We are using last season's wheat now, and there is not a sign of the presence of weevil. At Sydney, on the other hand, wheat would not keep in bulk for three months.

Lachlan

Lachlan McAlister, farmer, Wellington, sworn, and examined :—

740. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you can describe to the Committee the character of the country on the eastern side of the proposed railway? Yes. After you leave Wellington the land is good agricultural land, chiefly adapted for wheat-growing, until you get to Cobborah. Of course, there are interspersed small areas of scrubby land which is not occupied, but upon which there is good timber. After you leave Cobborah, there is good alluvial black soil along the Talbragar which is fit to grow anything. That country extends to Coolah. Back from the river the land is more suited for wheat-growing; but the river land is fit for lucerne, maize, and crops of that kind. I have seen very good crops of wheat grown there; but people will not put large areas under wheat in that part of the country, because of the difficulty in getting it to market. When you get to the Liverpool ranges the country is suited chiefly for grazing, until you get to Oakey Creek, 20 or 25 miles from Coolah. From Oakey Creek to Werris Creek it is mostly plain country, and good agricultural land right through. L. McAlister.
30 April, 1900.

741. Do you know anything of the country on the western side of the proposed railway? I know a little of that country, though I do not know it as well as the country on the eastern side of the line. The black alluvial soil on the eastern side is quite different from the soil on the western side of the line, where the country is suited more for wheat-growing or for grazing.

742. What effect would the construction of the proposed railway have upon the development of the district through which it would pass? It would cause large areas of land to be put under crop, and it would increase settlement; the increase in the area under wheat would be something wonderful if railway facilities were given. At the present time road carriage is so high and the price of wheat so low that the farmers cannot attempt to grow wheat.

743. Do the people residing along the line complain of the long carriage? They say that if they had a railway they would put large areas under wheat. I asked them why they were not growing more wheat, and they told me that they were too far from the railway.

744. Is a great deal of land which is fit for agriculture now being used to depasture sheep simply because of its distance from a railway? Yes; most of it is being so used.

745. What interchange of products would there be between the northern and western districts if the proposed railway were constructed? I do not think there would be much interchange of products between Wellington and Werris Creek; but the people in each district would be interested in sending produce out west.

746. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway would develop the district to such an extent that the estimated deficiency would cease after ten or fifteen years? I fully believe that it would. The increase of population in the district, with its consequent increase of traffic, and the traffic between Queensland and Victoria, would be certain to make the line pay.

747. The railway authorities seemed to think that there would not be much passenger traffic from Queensland to Victoria along the proposed line? I know that if I could save 100 or 200 miles in travelling I would try to do so.

748. Are good potatoes grown on the Talbragar? I have seen as good potatoes grown there as in the Hunter River and Shoalhaven districts.

749. In that case could not the Talbragar country supply Dubbo and the western districts with potatoes more easily than they could be supplied from the northern districts? Yes; I have seen splendid vegetables of all descriptions growing in that district, out as far as Coolah. I was there last November twelve months, during a very dry time.

750. Can you offer an opinion as to the respective merits of a connection with Dubbo and a connection with Wellington? There is no comparison between the country that a line would traverse from Dubbo to Murrungundi and the country between Wellington and Murrungundi; in one case you have a hungry sandstone country, and in the other strong alluvial soil.

Robert Porter, newspaper proprietor, and Secretary Railway League, Wellington, sworn, and examined :—

751. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been a resident of Wellington? I have been a resident of Wellington for twenty-six years, and I have resided in the county forty-two years. R. Porter.
30 April, 1900.

752. I understand that you have prepared a statement? Yes. I should like first to refer to the opinion given on Saturday that only about 33 per cent. of the land through which the proposed line, Wellington to Werris Creek, runs has been alienated from the Crown. I think Mr. Gaden meant that the counties through which the line runs, as a whole, contained but about 35 per cent. of alienated land, though the line itself might run through lands the whole of which are purchased. For instance, take an extract from the Statistical Returns published by Mr. Coghlan, page 25, Part XI. The county of Napier, through which the line runs, is stated to contain 23·91 per cent. of alienated land in proportion to the total area. I presume Mr. Coghlan's statistics are correct. Another county, Pottinger, is stated to have 50·72 per cent. of alienated land. Another county, Lincoln, is put up at 18·67 per cent. There is another county, but add together the three percentages named and divide by three, the mean will be found to be only nearly 31 per cent., showing a very large area of Crown lands available for settlement in time. Those statistics, I think, dispose of opinion stated by Mr. Harper in answer to Question 118. And now, gentlemen, I wish to call attention to another matter which, in my opinion, would, to a very great extent, justify the construction of the line. I refer to the existence of coal between about the 22nd mile from Wellington and the 34th mile—I cannot give the exact distances. First, at Spicer's Creek, just where the road from Wellington crosses the creek, the Committee will notice the complete change to sandstone country. The creek is a bed of sand. Within sight of the road a shaft was sunk down on to a thick bed of coal. Speaking from memory only, I think that shaft was only 30 feet deep, and the seam of coal was stated to be 7 feet thick. I did not go down the shaft, but I was there when others measured it, and I was told it was 7 feet thick. A large quantity of coal was got out and sent away for trial, and a lease of the ground was applied for and granted. I produce a copy of the plan. The coal turned out to be of poor quality, but large orders could have been got for it to burn in furnaces, with a little wood in addition, if it could have been delivered at a low rate. The want of railway carriage rendered the mine useless, and it was abandoned. I produce an analysis by Mr. W. A. Dixon, registered analytical chemist. Mr. Dixon says the seam appears to be a lignite. I do not think it was; and

R. Porter. and Messrs. Mackenzie and Davis, also assayers, spurned the idea that it was a lignite, but said it was altogether too heavy, and was an earthy coal. It was, I am aware, altogether unfit for railway purposes, but large orders could have been obtained if it could have been delivered by rail. Twenty-four miles of road carriage killed it. Other assays were made, one of which was as under:—

Hydroscopic moisture.....	7.4
Volatile hydrocarbonates	38.41
Fixed carbon	42.75
Ash.....	11.00
	100.00

Sulphur, 2.08 per cent. ; ash, grey colour ; no coke.

On this subject I should like to read the following extract from a letter written by Mr. R. N. Williams, of Cobar, dated 18th October, 1888:—

I have no desire to make you believe that you have a first-class article and an article suitable for all purposes ; but I have no hesitation in stating for your future guidance that it is useful for smelting purposes, and if used as indicated eventually the coal-fields will be heard of supplying the various mining centres of the Western district. If it were possible for you to deliver coal here for about 20s. per ton, I could now give you an order at that price for about 1,000 tons per month to start with ; and as soon as the contemplated extensions are added to the company's smelting works double the quantity would be required.

I quote that extract to show the value of the coal. I believe that, unfortunately, a large quantity of the Cobar copper ore is now being sent to Lithgow to be smelted. I understand that the coal deposit that I speak of lies a mile or two to the east of the route of the proposed railway. I should also like to quote the following:—

Extract from a report upon Geological and Mineralogical Survey, by S. Stutchbury, 1 July, 1852.

THE Talbragar River, below the station, exhibits sandstone fit for building purposes similar to that at Dubbo, and would be easily quarried.

In the dry bed of the river picked up some slabs of coal, evidently brought down the stream. Barbigal is 18 miles from the confluence of the Talbragar with the Macquarie River, 14 miles through the bush. Tried for gold without success. Mitchell's Creek falls into the Talbragar about 1½ mile above Barbigal. Traced the coal first found loose at Barbigal to its site. Found it on the Talbragar River, 2½ miles above the station (Gillis's Murrinutgindigundi), and 3 miles above the junction of Spicer's Creek. The section exhibited in the bank of the river is the following:—Large rocks of coarse conglomerate sloping back to a height of 200 feet ; fine-grained sandstone, 20 feet ; loose, scaly, culmlike coal, 6 feet ; hard fissile coal, resembling the splint coal of Lanarkshire, 5 feet to the water-line, probably more. The upper bed of coal would answer well for calcining metallic ores or burning lime ; the lower bed is highly inflammable and useful for most purposes, greatly resembling the splint coal so much valued in Scotland for smelting iron. These beds are probably extensive and easily got at by sinking into, the angle of dip being very small, scarcely perceptible from the horizontal.

According to Mr. Stutchbury, who was one of the best geologists who ever visited New South Wales, we have, not far from the proposed line, coal that would run all the trains from Orange outwards, and to the Northern towns, at a cheaper rate than coal could be got from Lithgow or Maitland. If Mr. Stutchbury's report be true, an immense saving could be made by utilising the coal lying at our doors, and cheap carriage given to farmers on the line. Now, with regard to the national aspect of the proposed line, the Wellington Railway League are, of course, actuated to a certain extent by local motives ; but on the other hand they are largely influenced by the idea of connecting the Northern districts with the Southern by the one missing link between Wellington and Werris Creek. Perhaps the idea has some sentiment about it. According to Mr. R. E. Jones' report, there would be a saving of 143 miles between Brisbane and Melbourne. The line would form the railway system of the colonies into one compact whole. I am told that many residents of Melbourne and Victoria generally have large interests in Queensland, and the line would be much used for the carriage of machinery and passengers. I will conclude by quoting from a letter from the Right Honorable Geo. J. Goschen, First Lord of the Admiralty, to the editor of *United Australia*. He says:—

It is very much to be desired that newly-federated Australia should be served with an organ which, rising above local and provincial considerations, will devote itself to what you designate as Commonwealth questions. I need scarcely say that I have watched the development of federation with the keenest interest.

Apart from the increased prosperity which I hope it will bring to Australia, it will facilitate its military and naval defence. As First Lord of the Admiralty, this side of the subject is naturally of much interest to me, and it will be a source of peculiar interest to me if in the near future the union of all the Australian colonies into one compact whole should be followed by improved arrangements for giving practical effect to their patriotic aspirations, to contribute by personal and other services to the defence of the Empire.—Yours faithfully, Geo. J. GOSCHEN.

I feel sure that if all the land lying between Wellington and Werris Creek were thrown open for selection to-morrow it would be applied for within a week.

753. Do you know the whole of that land ? I know it as far as Cobbarah. When you have forty or fifty applications for miserable mountainous country, I feel sure that that land would be applied for at once. Something has been said about potatoes. Both potatoes and onions, I am told, do well on the Talbragar, but potatoes are not grown in large quantities in the Wellington district because it is too hot for them, and they will not keep. The potatoes used here come mostly from Orange.

Walter Prideaux Pridham, auctioneer and stock and station agent, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

- W. P. Pridham. 754. Mr. Watson.] How long have you been in Wellington ? Twenty-two years.
755. Then you have had a good opportunity to make yourself acquainted with the value of the land in the district ? Yes.
756. Do you know the district through which the proposed railway will pass ? Yes ; as far as Cobbarah.
757. How would you describe that country ? Generally it is good wheat land.
758. Would any large area of it be unfit for cultivation ? More than 50 per cent. of the land in the neighbourhood of the proposed railway would be fit for cultivation. Near Wellington almost the whole of the land could be cultivated.
759. What would be the value of that land unimproved and without a railway ? About 30s. an acre roughly.
760. Would the construction of the proposed railway make a great difference in its value ? I think it makes a difference of £2 an acre to be within 5 miles of a railway station, and £1 an acre to be just beyond 5 miles from a railway.
761. Would land 10 or 15 miles back from the line be increased in value by its construction ? I think the construction of the proposed line would considerably increase the value of such land. Land suitable for

for wheat-growing is worth £2 an acre more when it is brought within 5 miles of a railway station, and £1 an acre more when it is brought within 20 miles of a railway station.

762. The map shows a large area of country just north of Bomely to be untenanted; what sort of country is that? Scrubby country.

763. Is it rough country? I believe that the greater part of it is good country, although it is scrubby.

764. Why has it not been taken up;—it has been open for selection since 1884? It may be good wheat-growing country, but it is dog infested, and not good sheep country. If the proposed railway were made it would soon be taken up.

765. Do you think that the greater part of the district through which the line would pass is fit for agriculture? I think that every perch of it would be taken up if the line were made.

766. There is some untenanted Crown land at Cobrauraguy? That land is dog-infested too. The lessee of the adjoining land told me that the dogs there are very troublesome.

767. Is it country that would be suitable for agriculture? I believe that every acre of it would be suitable for agriculture.

768. How far is it from Wellington? Eighteen miles. There is no water there.

769. Could not water be conserved there? Yes; and a man who held the land in freehold would conserve water there, but a Crown lessee will not.

770. There is another block on the resumed area of Medway holding? That is all wheat land.

771. So far as you know the country adjacent to the route of the proposed line is pretty well all good land? Yes; and I am of opinion that the proposed railway would open up a splendid belt of country.

772. I suppose that the leases of the Crown land will, most of them, expire this year? Yes, and every block made available for settlement would be applied for, more especially if hopes of a railway are held out.

773. Is the land in the reserves similar to the surrounding country? You cannot generalise in regard to that land. Taking the country right through from Wellington to Cobborah it is wheat growing land, with very little ridgy country.

774. Do you know any country close to the existing line which is similar to that between Wellington and Cobborah? Yes, the Mitchell's Creek and Spicer's Creek country.

775. Is there similar country between Wellington and Dubbo, or Wellington and Orange? Yes; you will find similar land there. Between Wellington and Geurie there is similar land, and it has been increased in value by the construction of the main Western railway. Generally speaking the land away from the railway is worth from £1 10s. an acre, and, within 3 or 4 miles of the railway, £6 an acre.

776. There have been sales of unimproved land between Wellington and Cobborah at a much higher figure than 30s. an acre? Yes.

777. That would be land beyond the average in quality? It would be land within the influence of a town.

778. Do you think your valuation is a fair average one? Yes. Of course there is some land there which would not be worth 2s. 6d. an acre.

John Irving, auctioneer and land agent, Wellington, sworn and examined:—

779. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided in Wellington long? Yes.

780. How long have you been engaged in your present business? Over five years.

781. What does your business consist in? In the disposal of properties—chiefly town properties.

782. You are not engaged in the grain business? No, though I watch it very closely.

783. Have you a good knowledge of the produce trade? I have made it my study for the purpose of this inquiry.

784. Have you any statement to make to the Committee on the subject? My inquiries have been directed entirely towards the production of grain within 35 miles of Wellington.

785. Along the route of the proposed railway? Yes. The land already cultivated, being prepared for cultivation, and suitable for cultivation, commencing at a point 5 miles from Wellington, and going out 35 miles, amounts to 80,000 acres. That estimate was made a few days ago, and refers only to secured land. To 80,000 acres must be added about 60,000 acres—12,000 acres in the Bodangora holding, 3,000 Gillinghall holding, 30,000 acres in the Murrumbidgee holding, and 15,000 acres in the Murrungundy holding—all of which is suitable for agriculture, and will be thrown open for settlement during the present year. Of the 80,000 acres, between 30,000 and 40,000 acres are either under cultivation or cleared ready for cultivation, and I estimate that within four or five years after the construction of the proposed line, there would be 100,000 acres under wheat.

786. How far does the land you are speaking of extend on each side of the proposed railway? From 5 to 10 miles on one side, and to as much as 15 miles on the other.

787. Have you a knowledge of the country you refer to? I have a fair knowledge of portions of it. The information I have given you has been obtained from thoroughly reliable persons.

788. Is it your opinion that when the land now held under lease is thrown open it will be taken up? I think that every acre of it will be taken up.

789. Have you had experience in farming? Yes, in my earlier days, though not in this district.

790. Would you consider yourself a fair judge of agricultural and grazing country? Yes.

791. How does the wheat of this district compare with that in other wheat growing districts in which you have been? It is equal if not superior to the wheat grown in other districts in which I have been, and I have been in a great many, Inverell and New England amongst them.

792. What value would you place upon the land now under cultivation, say, 20 miles out of Wellington? From £2 10s. to £3 an acre for good land.

793. What rent would such land produce if leased to tenants? I have had no experience of leasing in this district. There is very little private leasing here.

794. What is the value of the unimproved land? £1 an acre; that is the average value.

795. I am asking you for present values? Yes.

796. In the event of railway construction, how much per acre would the value of land be increased? In a very short time the average increase would amount from 50 to 100 per cent.

797. Do you mean immediately along the route of the proposed railway, or extending some miles back from it? Within a reasonable distance for farming purposes—say 10 miles. Of course, the land in the immediate vicinity of the line would be increased in value more than land further away. 798.

W. P.
Fridham.

30 April, 1900.

J. Irving.

30 April, 1900.

J. Irving.
30 April, 1900. 798. Is the Crown land of the same character as the land already settled upon? What I have seen is very similar, and I have been favourably impressed with it, but, as I am not thoroughly acquainted with it, I should prefer not to give evidence in regard to it. The 100,000 acres which I estimate would be under wheat shortly after the construction of the line would produce an average yield of about 16 bushels to the acre, and a charge of 3d. per bushel freight on that yield would give a return of £5,000. Then there would be the revenue earned by the carriage of wool, stock, merchandise, and passengers. I went into the matter to satisfy myself that the line would be a reasonably profitable one. I think that within a reasonable time after its construction 3 acres of land would be under cultivation in the district for every acre that is being cultivated now.

Charles George Scott, storekeeper, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

C. G. Scott.
30 April, 1900. 799. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been carrying on business in Wellington? I have been here about eleven years.
800. Do you know the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? I know it for a distance of about 15 miles from Wellington.
801. I suppose you have business intercourse with the farmers within than distance of Wellington? Yes.
802. Would you say that they are generally prosperous? Undoubtedly.
803. Have you considered what effect the construction of the proposed railway would have upon trade and business in Wellington? We think that the construction of the proposed railway would almost double the wheat production of the district, because the country which the line would traverse is known to be good wheat-growing country.
804. Within the 15 miles that you know, is there much good agricultural land which is not now under cultivation? Well, some of the agricultural land has only been recently acquired by the present holders and has not been cleared; but it will be cleared very shortly. The cutting up of the Nanima holding settled a good many people on the land. That land has been cleared, and the acreage now under wheat within 10 miles along the route of the proposed line has been trebled within the last three years. We buy a good deal of wheat. During last season we sold about 250 bales of corn sacks, and each bale contained 250 sacks. A great deal of the wheat is still in the barns and has not been thrashed.
805. Were all the bags which you supplied sent to the district north of Wellington? No; but there is a good deal of wheat grown out in that direction. We buy a lot of wheat from Spicer's Creek and Mitchell's Creek.
806. Have you heard from any of the farmers along the proposed route that they are handicapped by their distance from a railway? Yes, and we know that it is so, because we frequently have to pay freights for them, and we have been charged as much as 4d. a bushel for road carriage, and I know that 6d. a bushel has been paid in some instances, which is more than the railway freight from Wellington to Sydney. The wheat grown here is, as a rule, very good, and if not the best in the Colony it is equal to anything grown elsewhere. The Wellington wheat got the first and second prizes at the Sydney Show this season.
807. What quality of flour does it make? Excellent flour. It is a hard wheat, and I have heard Mr. Brunton say that it is one of the best. Mr. Crago always buys a certain quantity of it for mixing. It is supposed to be very much harder than the northern wheat, and equal to the southern in that particular.
808. What is the value of the agricultural land within 10 and within 20 miles of Wellington? Within 5 miles of Wellington the land would be worth from £4 to £5 an acre; between 5 miles and 10 miles out it would be worth £3 an acre; and within from 10 miles to 20 miles of the town it would be worth £2 an acre.
809. What would be the effect of the construction of the proposed railway upon the Crown lands within those limits? It would increase the value of the Crown lands very much; it would make land which is now worth only £2 an acre equal in value to lands close to Wellington.
810. Have you had experience in land valuing? Yes, a little.
811. Do you think that landholders would be willing to pay, annually, an amount equal to what they pay in land tax to assist in making up any loss upon the proposed line? I cannot say, but I am sure that it would be a very beneficial thing to them to get their wheat carried for 1d. a bushel instead of 6d. a bushel.

Frederick James Rodda, farmer and commission agent, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

F. J. Rodda.
30 April, 1900. 812. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where are you farming? About 2 miles from Wellington, on the Macquarie River. I am a native of the district, and I know the first 100 miles of the country through which the proposed railway would pass very well. There is a very large tract of land between Wellington and a point 20 miles on the other side of the Castlereagh River which is admirably adapted for wheat growing, and is equal to any land around Wellington. Of course, there are ridges and portions of a big iron-bark scrub which in places encroach upon the land I am speaking of.
813. Can you show us in what way the traffic of the proposed railway can be increased to make up the estimated deficiency? There are about 100 miles of country all of which is suited for wheat-growing, and some of it is now under cultivation. Those who are now cultivating that land have to pay very high rates for the carriage of their produce to Wellington, Mudgee, Dubbo, or whatever railway station they send it to. Some of them pay as much as 2s. a bag for road carriage. If the proposed railway were constructed the carriage would be reduced to 3d. or 4d. a bag.
814. But it is estimated that there will be an annual deficiency of £18,000 in the working of the proposed line? It cannot be expected that all the land I am speaking of will be put under cultivation, and will produce wheat right away.
815. It has been suggested that people who will benefit by the construction of the proposed railway should guarantee the State against any loss on it;—do you think that is a fair thing? No, I do not.
816. You admit that the carriage which the farmers now pay would be reduced by more than one-half if the proposed railway were made? It would be reduced much more than that.
817. That being so, is it not only fair that the persons reaping an advantage from railway construction should guarantee the Government against loss? They might give a guarantee up to a certain extent.
818. Do you think they would guarantee an amount equal to what they now pay in land-tax? That would be right enough.

819.

819. As the traffic on the line increased the deficiency would decrease, and their contributions would be reduced? I think it would be a reasonable method of dealing if the guarantors knew exactly what they were undertaking, and had not to contribute more than they are at present paying for land carriage. F. J. Rodda.
30 April, 1900.
820. Have you had any conversation with the landowners in the district in regard to the railway? They seem to be of the opinion that, with a railway, the saving in cartage would be so great that the guarantee contribution would be purely nominal. At the same time, there is a large tract of country which is suitable for agriculture that lies so far from the route of the proposed line that it could not be farmed.
821. *Mr. Watson.*] At what distance from the railway line can a man afford to cultivate his land? At present prices a farmer has to go too far when he is more than 15 miles from a railway station. A man growing wheat must be able to take his produce to the railway station in a day and to get home the next. He should not be three days over the business. If a farmer had only 15 miles to go he could get back next day; but if he had 20 miles to go the journey would break into three days.
822. Is the good country that you have spoken of within 10 or 15 miles of the proposed railway? Yes; the proposed railway runs right through it. Part of the country through which the line would go is land which I would not take at a gift under present circumstances; but it would be good wheat-growing land if it were near a railway.
823. Would the proposed railway give an impetus to other industries besides farming? There is a large quantity of timber within easy distance of the route of the proposed line.
824. Is it difficult to supply Wellington with timber now? Yes, especially to get hardwood; but the proposed railway would run through a forest of iron-bark.
825. Is timber along the route of the proposed line suitable for railway purposes? I think so.
826. Is the country easy for railway construction? It is fairly easy.
827. Is it long since you were last over the country? I was through it about nine months ago. Of course, I did not follow the route of the proposed line; but I know its direction, and I travelled in its vicinity.
828. That country is now stocked with sheep? Yes, and, you may say, with native dogs in places.

Frederick Henry Kennard, Mayor of Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

829. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in Wellington? Thirty years.
830. What facts do you desire to bring before us in connection with our inquiry? I have some figures here in regard to the town of Wellington. Last year the ratable value of property in Wellington was £12,278, and this year it increased to £14,405. Property is gradually increasing in value in Wellington. During the last three years there has been a wonderful advance in the price of land here. F. H. Kennard.
30 April, 1900.
831. What is the reason for this increase in values? The way in which the land in the district is being taken up. The prospect of the construction of a line to Werris Creek has also stimulated people to obtain land in the district. All the farmers and settlers here are well to do. There are very few insolvencies in the district, and those who have become insolvent have been mostly strangers who were on their last legs when they came here. I do not think there has been an insolvency of a genuine Wellington resident during the last ten years.
832. Are the farmers generally tenants, or are they freeholders? They are generally freeholders, and a great many of the farmers are beginning to buy land in the town itself, and to build on it. There is not an empty house in Wellington, and eighty new buildings have been erected here during the last twelve months—buildings ranging from the substantial business premises of Messrs. Wise & Co. to small two-roomed houses.
833. What is the population of Wellington? About 3,000, and twenty years ago, when we formed the municipality, it was just over 1,400. I have been some distance along the route of the proposed railway, and out near Murrungundy. There is a mineral spring there which has been highly spoken of by Dr. Barker, the Health Officer here, and other doctors in the district. They say that the spring is of great benefit to people suffering from rheumatics, and there are two people ready to build a sanitarium there when the railway is made.
834. Is the spring close to the proposed line? It would be within 2 or 3 miles of the station if the proposed line were made.
835. Have you a good knowledge of the country through which the line would pass? Yes, for about 20 miles from Wellington; and I have been on the Werris Creek end, out towards Tambar Springs, and very nearly into Coolah.
836. Is the country, so far as you know it, good country, capable of carrying a considerable population? I think so.
837. Is what you have seen good agricultural country? Some of it is very good, though there is also some that is very bad.
838. Is the country which you do not consider good agricultural country suitable for grazing? Most of the country which I have seen would be good grazing country.
839. Is dairying carried on in this district to any extent? Not much.
840. What is the reason of that, seeing that it has made such rapid strides in other districts? People have told me that there are not the right sort of cows here.
841. Has dairying been attempted here? They had a butter factory here, but people said that they could do better with their milk than supply it to a butter factory, and that it was better to grow wheat than to bother with cows.
842. If the proposed railway is constructed will the country between Wellington and Werris Creek be used for dairying? Some of it will be.
843. It has been said that that country is first-class wheat-growing land, do you endorse that opinion? I know that there is some very good wheat land within about 25 miles of Wellington. I think that if it is worth while to make railways like the Berrigan and Finley lines a line from Wellington to Murrungundy would pay. It would stimulate wheat-growing, and the district through which it passed would become almost a granary.
844. Do you think Wellington will be the centre of a large wheat-growing district? Yes.
845. Is much Crown land available for settlement within 30 miles of Wellington? There is a good deal of land on the Murrumbidgee Holding which will shortly be thrown open. 846.

- F. H. Kennard.
30 April, 1900.
- S46. Do you think that that land will be taken up when it has been thrown open? I am sure it will. I have heard several say that they are going to try for it.
- S47. Have you any idea of the value of the land outside of Wellington farming land? If you want any land within 7 or 10 miles of Wellington you have to pay from £4 10s. to £5 an acre for it.
- S48. Is that improved land? Yes, land that has been cleared. There is some land on the Nanima Estate for which I was asked £6 an acre in its unimproved condition. That land was covered with trees, though there was a fence around it. The proposed line would give a direct route from Brisbane to Melbourne, because the Western and Southern lines are already connected. I brought that point under the attention of the late Mr. Eddy, and he said it was a good one.

TUESDAY, 1 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Wellington, at 10'30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, ESQ. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Charles Hampden Barton, Manager of the Wellington Branch of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, sworn, and examined:—

- C. H. Barton.
1 May, 1900.
- S49. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you are the owner of Towri run, about 7 miles from Wellington, through which the proposed railway would pass? Yes. I look upon the proposal before the Committee as a national work. A connection between the Western and Northern lines must be made sooner or later for strategical reasons, even if the line had to pass through barren country, while it is of national importance that our railway systems should be connected with each other by the most direct and convenient routes. Just as the Blue Mountains had to be crossed in order to reach Bathurst and the rich agricultural and pastoral land beyond, so the country between the Western and the Northern lines, whatever its character, must be crossed in order to make a connection between the two lines to complete our railway system. The intervening country is, however, of such a character that I believe a connecting line would eventually pay much better than is anticipated.
- S50. Admitting that there is some ground for urging the construction of the line to facilitate military operations and the better working of our railways, do you think that the time for its construction has yet arrived, seeing that the Railway Commissioners estimate an annual loss of £18,000 upon the working of this line? I do; and I doubt the figures of the Railway Commissioners. I believe that the traffic on the proposed line, when it is worked in with the traffic on the existing lines, will be found to pay very much better than is anticipated.
- S51. The Railway officials were asked what advantage the construction of the proposed line would be to them—whether it would be a convenience in working the traffic, or would result in the gaining of revenue; and their answer was that, except at times when they had a large quantity of rolling stock locked up in a place where it was not required, a cross-country connection would be of no advantage to them? Undoubtedly the proposed railway would gain a good deal of extra traffic. I do not think that the Railway Commissioners have allowed for the extra carriage which would come from increased tillage and the larger population which the proposed railway would cause to settle in the district which it would serve. I do not think they are quite aware how much traffic a large farm gives to a railway. I feel sure that the Government gets more than £1,000 per annum from my property in freight. A large farm gives much more traffic to a railway than the biggest pastoral holding.
- S52. You have 7,000 acres under cultivation? I have 7,000 acres altogether, but only 4,000 or 5,000 acres under cultivation.
- S53. In what way do you think the Commissioners' estimate of revenue would be exceeded? A great deal of agricultural land in the district through which the proposed line would pass is still in the hands of the Government; but when it is thrown open, and a railway is made, it will be taken up and used. Then, too, with a railway, the people who are now cultivating will increase their cultivation.
- S54. Are you acquainted with the country along the route of the proposed line? Only as far as Cobborah.
- S55. Between here and Cobborah, would the construction of a railway be followed by any increase in population and traffic? I have not the slightest doubt of it.
- S56. Are the holdings between Wellington and Cobborah large holdings? They are not large for station properties, but they would be large for farms.
- S57. Would the construction of the proposed railway induce settlers to go in for cultivation rather than for the raising of sheep? I think it is necessary to do something in that way to make a place pay. Where people cultivate, they can get better results from sheep than can be obtained without cultivation.
- S58. Do you think that mixed farming will come about? Yes, and then more sheep will be carried than are carried at the present time.
- S59. Even if a change were made from grazing to mixed farming, how would the railway traffic be increased thereby? Even a small farm will give more traffic to a railway than a large pastoral property. Five hundred acres under cultivation would give more traffic to a railway than 10,000 acres used for grazing. A man who is grazing sheep on 10,000 acres would require only himself and two boundary-riders to work the place, whereas with a farm he would require ten or twelve men. Then, for farming operations, a man requires machinery, bags, and all sorts of requisites, and has large quantities of produce to send away.
- S60. But agricultural produce is carried by the railways at a lower rate than that at which wool is carried? I do not suppose produce pays quite as well as wool, but it keeps a large staff employed, and the trains full instead of half empty.
- S61. If the proposed railway were constructed, would there be an interchange of products between this district and districts west of it, and the districts on the Northern and North-western lines? The country on the Northern and North-western lines is very similar to the country out west, in that it is subject to drought.

drought and requires large supplies of fodder; so that if the proposed railway were constructed we should have twice as large a market for our produce, because the northern and north-western markets as well as the western markets would be open to us. C. H. Barton.
1 May, 1900.

862. Would you draw any of the products of the northern and north-western country to this district? The tendency would be for stock to come from the north to the south, and there might be a saving by sending wool over the proposed line. I do not think there is much agricultural country north of the Hunter valley.

863. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that the population of Brisbane and Melbourne is sufficiently large to provide a fair number of passengers for a direct through line? The question is a difficult one to answer, but I believe that there would in time be a very great increase in the passenger traffic. The fact that people would be able to visit Orange and similar places on their journey might bring them this way. The proposed line would give opportunities for an interchange of commodities such as we can hardly conceive at the present time. I believe that there would be a great deal of traffic between the western and the northern lines. For a long time past I have been supplying large quantities of chaff to Narrabri and Moree. I sent it to Wright, Heaton, & Co., and to Scott, Wilson, & Co. I have a brother in the north-western district, but I did not send any to him. In 1899 I got nearly £1,000 from Wright, Heaton, & Co. for chaff sent to Moree, and nearly £300 from Scott, Wilson, & Co. I have received nearly £100 from Scott, Wilson, & Co. this year.

864. Is it likely that others besides yourself send chaff in that direction? I do not know if other people send chaff in that way so far. My chaff was sent there in a time of drought, but I do not know why the order came to me. They may go on getting chaff from me, but it will depend upon the seasons they have.

865. The presumption is that you were able to supply chaff more cheaply than the people of the Hunter district could supply it? They paid me the full market price for it, and asked for no reduction. We sold 100 or 150 tons at a time. If the proposed railway were made we should probably supply a great deal more, and people living along that line would be in a still better position to supply it? The line would open up a very big trade for Cobbyrah, for instance.

866. A few extra miles do not make much difference in long railway haulage? I do not know how the Commissioners arrange their rates, but from Wellington to Moree, by way of Sydney, is a tremendous distance. No doubt it is a presumptuous thing to set one's opinion against that of a railway expert, but I believe that the returns of the proposed line have been under-estimated, in view of the probability of a large increase in the trade of the district. The Commissioners' estimate might be correct for a year or two after the line was opened, but it would not be much longer than that before the traffic commenced to increase. I think I am right in saying that there would be an increase of 50 per cent. almost immediately.

867. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you reason to believe that the landholders along the route would be willing to give to the Government whatever land was required for railway purposes? I think it is possible that they would. No doubt if they were approached they would make some concession. For my own part the existing line suits me very well, though the construction of the proposed line would be an advantage to me, and I should, therefore, fall in with other landholders in giving what land was required.

868. It has been suggested that those who benefit by the construction of the new railways should promise to make good part of any estimated loss by paying an amount equal to what they pay in land tax? The construction of the proposed line would benefit not only the people in the district but all the people in New South Wales, and also people in Brisbane, and in Melbourne, and therefore I do not know why the people of the district should bear the whole expense. I would rather give my land than consent to an arrangement like that.

869. Landholders within easy reach of the proposed railway would effect large savings in the carriage of their produce? I consider that landholders more than 10 miles out from Wellington would be fools if they did not give what land was required for the line, if by doing so they would get the railway any sooner; but I do not think they should be asked to subsidise the line as if they were the only people benefited by it. They have to pay their share of the general taxation.

870. As the traffic increased their contributions would decrease? That is all very well, but by the same argument it may be shown that in a very short time there would be no loss on the line, and therefore no tax upon the general ratepayers.

871. For about 10 miles at each end of the proposed line the country is already served by the existing railway? I do not know that you can cut off as much as 10 miles. The Orange farmers compete with us for the western trade, and they would also compete with us for the northern trade, so that they, too, would furnish traffic to the proposed line.

872. Would you use the proposed line? Sometimes. Some of my land is closer to the line than other parts are. The proposed railway would gain traffic not only from Wellington, but also from Orange, Blayney, and Bathurst.

873. Are the landowners along the route in fairly good circumstances? I think they can be considered fairly prosperous men. The quantity of chaff I sent to Moree was about 500 tons.

William Patrick Mitchell, stock and station agent, sworn, and examined:—

874. *Vice-Chairman.*] Will you make a statement to the Committee of your views in regard to the proposed line? During the drought, two years ago, as agent here, I had charge of a good many thousands of sheep, horses, and cattle. The horses were sent from Bourke, and nearly all the stock was depastured in the country to be traversed by the proposed line—along Spicer's Creek and out Comabella way. I had 4,000 sheep which came from Dubbo, paddocked for some months, on 1,280 acres. People continually bring stock from in and around Dubbo to Wellington. I also had stock from Forbes, Coonamble, Walgett, Dubbo, Bourke, Narraminy, Trangie, and Cobar; so that the Wellington district was nearly crowded out by starving stock. Most of that stock is brought here by road, but I believe that if there had been direct railway communication with the Narrabri district, a lot of the sheep which died in that district would have been sent here and saved. This was the only district which had good grass during the dry season. W. P. Mitchell.
1 May, 1900.

875. Is it the practice to understock in this district? They do not overstock here; they stock just up to the carrying capacity of the land. At a place to which I sent 137 horses for Cobb & Co., of Bourke, the land was carrying nearly a sheep to the acre as well as cattle, but there was abundance of grass, and the horses went away fat. The place I am referring to is held by Messrs. Martin Bros., Bodangora. 1 am

W. P.
Mitchell.
1 May, 1900.

am not quite sure that they were running a sheep to the acre all the time, but I know that they sheared a sheep to the acre. In one case a gentleman from the Walgett district bought 2,000 acres of land here, and a certain area under annual lease, for £2 10s. an acre, and was thus able to save his stock. The land carried over a sheep to the acre, and the sheep are fat now.

876. What was the character of the land which he bought? About 1,200 acres were fit for cultivation. It was not all ringbarked when he bought it, but he ringbarked some of it afterwards. I made an offer of £2 15s. an acre on behalf of a Forbes buyer for improved and partially improved land along the route of the proposed line, but the holders wanted £4 an acre. That was a block of 6,000 acres of secured land about 14 miles from Wellington. I have been engaged in lending out money for a Sydney firm, and in nearly every instance their own valuator has valued the land on which it is being advanced—partially improved land—at £4 an acre. I consider that any land within 15 miles of Wellington, which is well improved, is worth £5 or £6 an acre. Of course that valuation does not apply to river flats.

877. What would you call "well improved" land? Land which has been cleared, fit for the plough, and has been fenced. Last season a good deal of the wheat about here was bitten by the frosts, and farmers, thinking that it would not mature, cut a good deal of it for hay. That hay is now practically useless to them, because they have so far to haul it that it would not pay to export; whereas, if the proposed railway were made, they could send it away by train. I believe that a great many of the people along the route of the proposed line from Wellington to beyond Cobbarah would be only too happy to give what land was required for railway purposes.

878. Do you hear serious complaints from the farmers about the handicap which they now suffer? Yes, often.

879. Does their distance from a railway prevent them from extending their agricultural operations? Yes. If the proposed railway were made, the traffic on it would often increase the traffic on the main trunk lines as well, because a great deal of produce would be sent right through to the metropolis.

880. How would you compare the land between Dubbo and Murrungundy with the land between Wellington and Murrungundy? I do not think that it is as good; it is more sandy, and, according to experts, does not grow as good wheat. The Wellington wheat was awarded first prize at the Chicago exhibition, the reason being given that it contained more phosphorus than any other wheat. The Wellington soil contains more phosphorus than any other soil in New South Wales. I have already had a visit from a man who represents five intending applicants to inquire about the throwing open of the Murrumbidgee leasehold area. This gentleman believes that between twenty and thirty farmers will come from Numurka, in Victoria, to ballot for the land. Two or three blocks were balloted for the other day for homestead selections. The largest block was between 400 and 600 acres, and there were seventy-three applicants.

881. How much land of average quality will maintain a man and his family in decent comfort? I think that with good land, such as that along the route of the proposed line, towards Spicer's Creek, a man can live on 640 acres; but 1,000 acres or 1,250 acres would make a decent block, and would enable a farmer to combine sheep-raising with wheat-growing, and then if one failed he could fall back on the other.

882. How is the country timbered? It is pretty heavily timbered; chiefly with white box, but with pine in places.

883. What does it cost to clear it? I should say that you could get green timber cleared for between 30s. and £2 an acre.

884. Do the farmers ringbark the land first? If they can afford to wait, they ringbark first, and then burn off the timber when it is dead.

885. You say that improved land is worth £5 to £6 an acre within 15 miles of Wellington? Yes.

886. In its unimproved state, would land be worth from £3 to £4 an acre? Good agricultural land is worth £2 10s. and £3 an acre unimproved. Those prices have been given for land here.

James Bonnor, general merchant, Orange, sworn, and examined:—

J. Bonnor. 887. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand that you have resided at Orange for a number of years? For twenty-five years.

1 May, 1900. 888. How would the construction of the proposed railway affect Orange? For many years past the Orange farmers have been in the habit of supplying produce to districts similarly situated to Werris Creek. For instance, we have supplied large quantities of chaff, potatoes, and oats, to places along the western line as far as Bourke; and also to Cobar, to Condobolin, to Hay, to Gerodgery, and, in some years, to Albury. Last year we sent produce to Morce and Narrabri, and we have also sent it to Newcastle. The closer the centres of supply and demand are brought together the better it is for both producers and consumers. At the present time a great many stock die for want of food; but, if the squatters could obtain fodder more cheaply, the losses in stock would be much less than they are. These losses of stock are a very serious thing for the colony, and we have just gone through a season in which some millions of sheep have been lost.

889. Would the proposed railway give you facilities for sending produce to districts to which you do not send it now? Yes; it is not only in bad seasons that we supply produce to the places I have mentioned; we also supply it, more or less, in good seasons. It is always going forward.

890. Would the proposed railway be used by you to forward produce? The proposed railway would bring centres like the district between Coonamble and Dubbo, and Dubbo and Werris Creek, into touch with districts like that between Dubbo, Wellington, and Orange, and would thus create three times the traffic. It would enable the squatter who wanted supplies of fodder for his stock to obtain it at the cheapest rate; it would enable people living in warm parts of the country to obtain all kinds of English fruits, such as cherries and apples, which are grown in Orange, and also potatoes, butter, and produce of that kind, more cheaply than they can get them now; and it would also enable people to bring their families into the cooler districts during the heat of summer. At the present time, people rent furnished houses in Orange for the summer, and still more would come if the proposed railway were made.

891. Do you think the districts on the North-western line would require much produce? I have been twenty-five years in business in Orange, and we have been supplying those districts ever since the North-western railway was opened. The railway journey from Orange to Narrabri by way of Sydney and Newcastle is almost prohibitory, but if there were a line *via* Walgett and Werris Creek the distance would be very much reduced. The proposed line would increase the passenger traffic, the stock traffic, and the produce

J. Bonnor.
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produce traffic. It would increase the passenger traffic, not only by bringing people from the hot districts to the cooler districts, but also in giving a more direct route from Melbourne and the Southern line to the northern parts of the Colony, and to Queensland. Then, too, the line would decentralise business. At the present time nearly every town in New South Wales depends on Sydney for its trade; one town can hardly trade with another. But if Glen Innes, Narrabri, Mudgee, and the Western line were all connected, it would tend towards decentralisation, and give facilities for an interchange of products.

892. Would the proposed railway be used to send supplies from Orange, Dubbo, and Wellington to the north-western districts? It is bound to do so.

893. Would there be any substantial traffic within a reasonable period? I should think so. Every buyer will go to the nearest market, in order to save trainage, whereas, now, people sometimes say that it costs too much to buy produce, and therefore let their stock die. If the proposed railway were made, they would buy produce and save their stock.

894. Have you received orders recently for chaff for any of the northern towns? Yes, last year.

895. What quantity of chaff did you send away? Last year about 1,000 tons of chaff were sent from Orange to the Northern lines.

896. To Narrabri and Moree? To places all along from Newcastle to Narrabri and Moree.

897. Would you use the proposed line for sending produce to other districts? Orange, Bathurst, Carcoar, Wellington, and Dubbo are likely to become in time large manufacturing centres, and the proposed railway would put large sheep and cattle districts into easy communication with these towns. One-third of all the potatoes grown in New South Wales is grown in the Orange district, and the production is increasing.

898. Do they not grow potatoes in parts of the north-western district? They grow them in Glen Innes. At the present time it is almost impossible to supply potatoes to Coonamble. Mudgee is not much of a potato-growing district, and beyond Orange, to the west, it is too hot for potatoes. The production of potatoes in the Orange district is increasing every year, and it will increase more and more as the demand increases.

899. Would the proposed railway be used for the carriage of potatoes? Yes; and also to send away fruit, chaff, and produce generally. We can grow grain of all kinds, except maize. Oats, wheat, peas, and crops of that kind grow well.

900. Do you receive much wheat from Wellington? A fair quantity. The millers at Orange need the dry wheat from these districts to mix with the local wheat, which is of a tougher nature.

901. Have you any knowledge of the country along the route of the proposed line? No.

902. You consider it a matter of some importance to Orange to have the line constructed? I do not look upon it as an outlet for Orange so much as a national matter.

903. But you think that it would benefit Orange? Yes; it would give an outlet for Orange produce, and would enable us to draw supplies of beef and mutton from other districts. Coonamble is a good district, and can very often supply good stock when stock in other districts are poor because of a drought. Loop-lines, such as that proposed, are necessary for the convenience of the travelling public, and for military purposes, and, in view of the speedy consummation of federation, should be constructed.

904. But only the most urgent of these lines can be carried out at once? That is so.

905. *Mr. Watson.*] From Orange to Moree *via* Sydney is 605 miles, and *via* Wellington and Werris Creek it would be 375 miles,—the charge per ton for chaff, in 6-ton trucks, would be 13s. 10d. for the 605 miles, and 10s. 10d. for 375 miles;—do you think that a saving of 3s. per ton in freight would materially affect the produce traffic between the two districts? The Government make great concessions on produce such as chaff; but the charge on produce other than chaff from Sydney to Bourke is 35s. per ton. This would leave a much greater margin than appears in the carrying of chaff, and would tend to decentralise the trade.

906. There is not the same distinction drawn between the "up" and "down" journey in respect to produce such as chaff as there is in respect to other produce? No. I think Mr. Combes was Secretary for Public Works when these concessions were first made, and the produce trade has grown rapidly ever since. After concessions were made we began to send produce to places to which we had no idea of sending before, because the rates were prohibitory. The Colony must be opened up for trade, and, as our rivers are not navigable, we must have railways. I am satisfied that the construction of the proposed line will create a considerable amount of traffic.

James Stuart Leeds, stock and station agent, Orange, sworn, and examined:—

907. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you a statement to make to the Committee? I have always been of the opinion that a line should be constructed from Werris Creek to the Great Western line. As federation is now very close, with the abolition of the stock tax in Victoria, such a line would greatly assist northern stock-owners, by giving them an opportunity to use the Melbourne market as well as the Sydney market. At the present time they have only the Sydney market, but the removal of the Victorian border duties will give them a market in Melbourne, and the proposed line, together with the Blayney-Harden line, would assist them in getting there. In my opinion, the construction of the proposed line would improve the prospects of the Blayney-Harden line, which is now worked at a heavy loss.

J. S. Leeds.
 1 May, 1900.

908. Mr. Harper told us that, prior to the imposition of the Victorian stock tax, the greater part of fat cattle travelling towards Melbourne came from the Queensland border, west and north, and went through Bourke, and he seemed to be of the opinion that if the tax were removed the traffic would go that way again? If the proposed railway were constructed it would be of advantage to stockowners in the northern part of this Colony, and also to the Queensland stockowners. A great number of stockowners have not used the Melbourne market, because they have been unable to get there.

909. If there were no border duties, would stockowners in the northern part of New South Wales be able to compete with stockowners in southern Queensland? I see no reason why a man who had fat stock in the northern district should not use the Melbourne market as well as the man who had fat stock at Bourke. A Queensland stockowner has to travel his stock many hundreds of miles by road before he can put them on to the train at all, and that wastes the stock; whereas if the proposed railway were constructed a stockowner in the northern parts of this Colony could put his beasts almost directly into the train, and land them in Melbourne in better and finer condition than the Queensland stock. In this way he would get a better profit from his stock than the Queensland owner would get.

- J. S. Leeds. 910. Is the New South Wales country as good for fattening big stock as the Queensland country is? Most decidedly. From Tamworth right away to Moree, and further, it is all rich fattening country; but at present the stockowners have only the Sydney market to go to.
- 1 May, 1900. 911. Is much fattening done in New England? Yes; at the present time the Sydney market has to depend largely upon the stock from the highlands.
912. You think that there would be a considerable through traffic in large cattle? Both in sheep and in large cattle.
913. It has been urged in favour of the proposed line that it would be of advantage in enabling stock to be removed from drought-stricken districts to places where they could get pasture? Certainly it would.
914. In what direction would the movement of stock be—from the North and North-western line towards Wellington and the Western line? The stock would be sent wherever there was grass and water.
915. Which districts are safer for stock—the western or the northern districts;—where is the rainfall most likely to be seasonable? Starving stock has to be sent to the highlands on the Northern, Western, and Southern lines.
916. In that case I do not see why starving stock should come towards Wellington from the northern districts? Stock has been trucked from Riverina to Bathurst for grass. Some stock which were trucked from Burrabogie to Bathurst are there still. Stock could not have been sent from the Southern line to the Western line had it not been for the Blayney to Harden connection. Only the other day it was said that the Blayney-Harden line would have paid had it not been for the Victorian stock tax.
917. Is it likely that if the proposed railway were constructed stock in dry seasons would be sent from the Moree and Narrabri districts towards the Western line? I think so; just as stock has been sent on to the Western line from Riverina.
918. Why would they not be sent on to the New England table-land? No doubt a great many would be sent there.
919. The proposed line would give them another outlet? That is so. When the Victorian stock tax is removed the live-stock traffic to Melbourne must add materially to the revenue of the proposed railway.

George Hawke, farmer, Orange, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Hawke. 920. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you have had some experience of milling? I was for eighteen years the manager of a mill at Millthorpe. I was the first to conceive the idea of erecting a mill there, and I built the mill.
- 1 May, 1900. 921. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been engaged in farming at all? Yes; I have a farm on which one of my sons is living. It is within 6 miles of Orange, and is under my management. I was asked to give evidence before the Committee in regard to the probability of produce from the Orange district being sent into the Moree district over the proposed line. About Orange we grow potatoes, which cannot be grown in the Moree district, and no doubt if we could send them there at a reasonable cost a large trade would spring up. There would also probably be a considerable trade in fodder.
922. Are you acquainted with the country in the vicinity of the proposed railway? I was through part of it many years ago, but I have only a superficial knowledge of it now.
923. Do you think it would be better to connect the Northern line with Dubbo rather than with Wellington? It seems to me that if there are no engineering difficulties in the way it would be better to make the connection at Wellington.
924. Do you know anything of the agricultural capacity of the land through which the line will pass? To my recollection the soil is generally rich, but when I went through the district agriculture was not thought of, and the country was being used purely for pastoral purposes.
925. It is estimated that there will be a deficiency of £18,000 per annum on the working of the proposed line;—can you tell us how that deficiency would be decreased? My experience of railways is that when a railway is first made although the traffic may be little the place quickly grows. I remember when bullock-drays brought everything to Bathurst and to Orange; but I do not know how many drays would be required to deal with the traffic now.
926. The Western line was pushed out into entirely new country, but the proposed railway is merely a connection between existing lines? Yes; but it would go through a great deal of country which is not served by them.
927. Have you reason to believe that the proposed line would give any great impetus to farming? We believe that we are on the eve of federation, and Orange is talked of as a likely place for the federal capital. If Orange became the federal capital the proposed line would bring Brisbane, and places to the north, much nearer to us than they are now, and I imagine that the passenger traffic would be very heavy.
928. Do you think that the estimated deficiency would be got rid of within a reasonable time? I think that the undertaking is so large that a loss of £18,000 should not be looked upon as a very formidable thing. Plenty of industries have been started and have been kept going for eight or ten years before making a profit, but eventually they came to pay.

Joseph Aarons, farmer and grazier, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Aarons. 929. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you resided long in the district? I have resided in Wellington since 1854, and I have been in the district since 1844.
- 1 May, 1900. 930. You have been largely engaged in farming and grazing pursuits, I understand? Yes, very largely.
931. Have you a fair knowledge of the country through which the proposed line would pass? I know every mile of country from Wellington right up into Queensland, as far as the Darling Downs.
932. Will you describe for us the country between Wellington and Werris Creek within 20 miles on each side of the proposed line? I think that at least nine-tenths of that country is fit for agriculture; in fact, the whole of the land through which that line will pass is fit for a mixed agricultural and pastoral occupation.
933. What would be the character of the one-tenth that is not fit for agriculture? It would be good, sound pastoral country.
934. Is there no barren country? No.

935. What prospect is there of the proposed line being self-supporting within a reasonable time? I have every reason to believe, not only that it would be self-supporting, but that it would exceed the most sanguine expectations. I have seen far inferior country settled upon and cultivated. The existing hunger for land in these districts satisfies me that as fast as the railway is made population will settle on the land through which it passes. I used for many years to supply my stations at Nanima and down the river with stock from Northern Queensland. J. Aarons,
1 May, 1900.
936. Would the construction of the proposed railway largely develop the mining industry here? Yes. There is a belt of copper-bearing country which goes from Copper Hill at Molong as far as Bolaro. The proposed railway would be close to the copper deposits about Bolaro.
937. Is that country being prospected? It is being worked, and, with a railway, a good many mines would be opened up and a large population settled on the land.
938. Is the timber along the route suitable for a railway and for mining purposes? Yes, and there is any quantity of it.
939. Timber of what description? Box, iron-bark, stringy-bark, and gum on the flats. It is all good agricultural land, and, no matter what the seasons, will always give a fair average crop. I have been cultivating since 1851.
940. Does it seem to be the general impression that the proposed railway, if made, would be a success? Yes. As soon as land is thrown open in this district people come from all parts of Australia to take it up.
941. Do you think that the owners of land along the route would be prepared to give the Government as much as will be required for railway purposes? In my opinion, they would. The proposed railway would open up a trade for which the Wellington people have been yearning for years. The Railway Commissioners seem to have ignored the stock traffic from the Queensland side which the proposed railway would serve. I have brought cattle from Queensland in thousands, and have gone through the country myself to buy them. The stock traffic will be much greater than some people anticipate.
942. You are talking of fat stock? Fat stock and store stock. At the present time they have to take a great deal of stock to Bourke, but a good deal of store stock comes this way, and it is good country all the way through.
943. Is this district ever so short of feed that stock must be sent elsewhere for pasture? In one or two extremely dry seasons we have been a little short, but there have been no losses here to compare with those of other districts. People send stock to this district for both the Northern and the Western districts.
944. There is generally an abundance of pasture here? Yes.
945. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway would encourage people to send stock here from the Northern districts in bad seasons? Yes.
946. The proposed line would derive a considerable amount of traffic from that source? Yes; and I have no hesitation in saying that it would return interest on the cost of construction within a very short time. I have had so many years' experience in bringing stock to the district that I know that that traffic will be very large.
947. Is it difficult to get stock here now, because of the roundabout way in which it has to come? Yes. A great deal of the stock would have to go round Bourke way.
948. What is the country like between Dubbo and the nearest point on the proposed line? It is sour country—scrubby, iron-bark, granite country—there is no comparison between it and the country from Wellington out. The moment that the land through which the proposed railway would run is thrown open for selection it will be jumped at. Scores of people have asked me when such and such a run is to be thrown open. If the proposed railway were made, fat stock from Northern Queensland would have a better chance of getting to the Melbourne market than they have by going round through Bourke, because they would be saved hundreds of miles of travelling. Then, too, a large trade in produce would open up between Wellington and Werris Creek. Last week I got a note from a firm in Tamworth—Messrs. Garvan and Cousins—inquiring what I could supply 100 tons of lucerne chaff at.
949. *Mr. Watson.*] You have not done business with them? No, because my supply of lucerne has been disposed of. If the proposed railway were constructed, the settlement along it would create a great deal of traffic.

John Perry, farmer and grazier, Walhallow, sworn, and further examined:—

950. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand that yesterday you omitted to mention one or two points which you think would be of importance? Yes. Yesterday I made no reference to the revenue which would probably be derived from the fat-stock traffic on the proposed railway. J. Perry.
1 May, 1900.
951. Do you think that that would be considerable? It would be a very large item.
952. Would you truck from Spring Ridge towards Newcastle? Yes.
953. For how far back along the proposed railway would there be a disposition to truck towards the Northern line? For fully 70 miles; from as far back as Oakey Creek, I should think.
954. Do you think that most of the station-owners there use Newcastle as their place of export and general depôt? Yes. The construction of the proposed railway would also enable the Coonabarabran people to export their produce, if they were growing more than they could consume.
955. How far would they be from the proposed railway? About 30 miles. Some of them would be nearer to it than that.
956. The Coonabarabran district is said to be a very good one? They can grow as good wheat and fruit there as is grown in the Colony. There is an enormous area of land there which is fit for cultivation. The Government are now throwing open a lot of land within 20 miles of the proposed railway which is as fine as any land that I have seen.
957. One of the witnesses yesterday expressed the opinion that with wheat at the present prevailing prices New South Wales would not become a large wheat-exporting country;—do you agree with that? I do not. We have already loaded three ships with wheat for the London market, and we find that by shipping direct to London we can get better prices than we can get in the Sydney market. We can land wheat in London for about 10½d. a bushel, so that at 29s. 4½d. a quarter the farmer receives 2s. 10d. a bushel net profit. By making Newcastle the port of export—and we are prepared to send 5,000 bags from there—there will be a saving of 1d. a bushel to the farmers; and if the proposed railway were made the people living along it would be in a better position for exporting wheat than the people at Wellington, because they would be nearer Newcastle. 958.

J. Perry. 958. Do you think that we can produce wheat so cheaply as to be able to compete in the English market with wheat grown in other parts of the world? The only serious competitor that we shall have is the Argentine; we can produce wheat as cheaply as they can grow it in the United States.

1 May, 1900.

959. What has it cost you to sow and to harvest your wheat crops? Using modern four-furrow ploughs, and cultivating ordinarily good land that has been ploughed at least once before, I have known 34 acres to be ploughed in a week. Taking any land, I average that with four-furrow disc ploughs a man can plough 18 acres a week at a cost of 2s. 6d. an acre; the harrowing can be done for less than a shilling an acre, and the harvesting, with combined harvesters, does not cost 6d. an acre. If we pay a man 30s. a week and find him in food, and another man £1 a week and find him in food, to sew bags, the harvesting does not come to more than 2s. Then there is 2s. an acre for seed. I only use half a bushel of wheat to the acre, and that would cost about 1s. 4d. For oil and sundries I allow 1s. an acre. Taking those figures, I estimate that we can grow wheat for about 8s. 6d. an acre—for something between 8s. and 10s.

960. At that cost, and knowing the price of land, do you think that it will pay people to grow wheat for 2s. a bushel? Yes; at from 2s. 6d. upwards, if the wheat is handled by means of elevators. There is a direct saving to the farmer in lessening the cost of handling of wheat. If South Australia, with an average yield of 6 and 7 bushels to the acre, can export 4,000,000 bushels of wheat, we in New South Wales, who have better land and a better rainfall, can do at least as well. We can, and we are exporting wheat. Those with whom I am connected are about to load a fourth shipment. Two gentlemen have sent us as much as 3,150 bags—1,650 bags from Currabubula, and 1,500 bags from Manilla. Mr. Binney is growing wheat 30 miles away from Quirindi, and is increasing his acreage. I have heard that he has paid as much as 1s. 3d. a bag for cartage, but I myself have had to pay 1s. 9d. a bag to send wheat 36 miles. 6,565 bags of wheat were taken by the "Vortigen," and the freight, insurance, and loading, and unloading charges came to 10½d. a bushel, which will leave the growers about 2s. 8d. a bushel net. The English co-operative society which is selling for us only charges ½ per cent. commission, whereas in the ordinary way of business perhaps 2½ per cent. would be charged. When I was here yesterday I forgot to mention the mining that is done round Leadville and Stringybark. Stringybark is within 20 miles of Cobborah.

961. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How much seed do you sow per acre? Sowing 26 lb. of seed and 1 cwt. of Thomas' phosphate, I have harvested 6 bags to the acre.

962. What does the ploughing cost per acre? It does not cost me more than 2s. 6d. an acre. Mr. York, with a "Sunshine Harvester," in my district, took off nearly 800 bags of wheat in fourteen days with his own and his brother's labour, and I, with my two sons, have taken 304 bags off 136 acres. I employed two men for two days to cart the bags, and it cost me 4s. 6d. for oil, &c., besides.

WEDNESDAY, 2 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Dubbo, at 11 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAT CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

James Andrew Ryan, Mayor of Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

J. A. Ryan. 963. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the district? I have been a resident of the district for thirty-four years.

2 May, 1900. 964. What are your views in regard to the proposed construction of a railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? My opinion is, that the interests of the country would be better served by the construction of a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek.

965. What are your reasons for that opinion? I believe, in the first place, that there would be more stock traffic on a line coming into Dubbo, especially in view of a probable connection between the Western and the Southern lines, commencing somewhere near Dubbo. I think that such a connection will be made in the future, and that a cross-country line such as that would be largely used to convey stock to Victoria. I believe that the stock traffic from the northern parts of this Colony will be very large in time to come. The railway would also be of use in times of drought in removing stock from the western districts to higher country, such as the proposed line would give access to. The land between Dubbo and Murrungundy is good agricultural country, and I believe that if it were given railway communication it would carry a large farming population.

966. You do not regard the proposal before the Committee as complete in itself, but as part of a further connection between the Western and the Southern lines? Yes. Such a connection would make the proposed railway more profitable.

967. Are you personally acquainted with the country between Dubbo and Werris Creek? I know the country between Dubbo and Murrungundy, but I do not know much of the country beyond that. A line from Dubbo to Murrungundy would pay better than a line from Wellington to Murrungundy, and would serve more people. There is good country between Wellington and Murrungundy; but a line going from point to point would cross the creeks at right angles; whereas a line from Dubbo would follow the directions of the creeks, and would thus be easier of access to the farmers settled along them.

968. What is the proportion of good agricultural land between Dubbo and Murrungundy within from 10 to 20 miles on each side of the route of the proposed line? The best land would be on the southern side of the Talbragar.

969. On the southern side of the proposed line? Yes; on the northern side there is a good deal of iron-bark country.

970. Are there any other reasons why you prefer a connection with Dubbo to a connection with Wellington? I believe that a connection with Dubbo would serve the traffic better in years to come, and would also open up more country.

971.

971 It is estimated that the construction of the proposed railway will involve an annual loss of £18,000; do you think that the character of the country to be served by it justifies the incurring of such a loss? The line is not one which I would advocate as a paying commercial concern at the present time. In years to come, when the population of the district is bigger, and there is more traffic between the main trunk lines, the proposed railway would pay.

J. A. Ryan.
2 May, 1900.

972 Would the line be used for the carriage of starving stock? Yes; it would be used for the removal of stock from the western country to the Mountains, and their transport back again after the breaking up of the drought.

973. Mr. Harper tells us that the drift of that traffic is from the North-west to the South-east, at right angles to the general direction of the proposed line? The movements of stock depend upon the rainfall. Sometimes a good rainfall in one part of the Colony creates enough food to support perishing stock from many other districts. The New England country, for instance, might get a good rainfall, while we did not, and in that case the proposed railway would serve us for the transport of our stock to New England.

974. Would there be any interchange of products between the Western and the North-western lines? The proposed railway would be used for the carriage of wheat and chaff, but the traffic would not be very great.

975. Would produce grown at Dubbo and along the Western line be exchanged for the products grown in the Northern and North-western districts? The interchange would not be very great. But the line would be of great service to people in its vicinity. It would be of more use for that purpose than in opening-up commercial intercourse between the districts on the Western and the Northern lines.

976. A good deal has been said about the national aspect of this proposal; have you any opinion to offer upon that point? That is the strongest claim which the proposal has upon us in Dubbo. It would help to give communication from one part of the Colony to another, and in that way it would be useful for all time.

977. What would you call a national advantage? The proposed line would improve the communication between various parts of the Colony, and, when federation comes, it will be very desirable to have the Colony intersected by railways at different points.

978. Is there much Crown land available for settlement between Dubbo and Murrungundy? I could not say; but there are some leasehold areas still to be thrown open.

979. What is the average yield of the land within 10 miles of Dubbo, along the proposed route? From 20 to 30 bushels to the acre. The land along the valley of the Talbragar is considered superior wheat-growing land.

980. *Mr. Watson.*] You say that on the Northern side of line from Dubbo to Murrungundy it is poor land? A good deal of that land is covered with iron-bark.

981. Would there be much settlement upon that land? No; that country would be used only for timber.

982. A considerable quantity of timber comes from there now? Yes.

983. It is claimed by those who advocate the line from Wellington to Werris Creek that from Wellington to Murrungundy there is a large area of agricultural land on both sides of the proposed railway which would be served by it? The land on Mitchell's Creek and Spicer's Creek is good agricultural land; but the line from Wellington to Murrungundy would cross those creeks at right angles. On the other hand, a great many settlers would benefit by a railway going up the Talbragar.

984. Would it not be better to have good country on both sides of the line than on only one side of it? I would put the timber traffic against any other traffic as a feeder to the line. I think that the timber would equal in value any agricultural production.

985. Does the cutting of timber give employment to as many people as agriculture gives employment to? I think so. The iron-bark forests here have supported a large number of people for the last twenty or thirty years.

986. Would a line from Dubbo to Murrungundy give access to more timber than a line from Wellington to Murrungundy? Decidedly.

987. Has not a great deal of the best iron-bark between Dubbo and Murrungundy been felled? A good deal of it has been felled, but there must be a good deal of timber still there. When the timber getters have a long way to draw the timber they only fell the best trees.

988. Can it be correctly said that the best of what remains of the iron-bark between Dubbo and Murrungundy is north of Murrungundy? No. A lot of the best timber is within a few miles of Dubbo.

989. It has been stated that the iron-bark forests from Murrungundy towards Murrumbidgee are practically untouched? The further you go from Dubbo the more timber there is.

990. That being so, a line from Wellington to Murrungundy would tap almost the virgin forest? Yes. We expect that a great deal of timber will continue to go to Cobar for many years to come, and it would be more convenient to send that timber through Dubbo than through Wellington.

991. What is the particular demand for timber at Cobar? It is required for mining purposes generally—supports, surface works, and so on.

992. Do they prefer iron-bark for those purposes? Yes, if they can get it, but the road carriage has stood in the way of the timber trade.

993. It has been suggested that a better cross-country line would be one from Curlew to Gilgandra;—do you know the country between those points? No; but I think that later on such a connection will be justifiable. Such a line would not pay just now any more than a line from Dubbo or Wellington to Werris Creek would pay; but it would pay in the future.

994. A line from Curlew to Gilgandra would save some 50 miles of construction, although it would not give such a direct connection with the Northern line? If the proposed connection is to be considered in the light of an intercolonial line, I think it would be desirable to take it from Werris Creek to Dubbo.

995. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you well acquainted with the country between Dubbo and Murrungundy? I have travelled over it a good many times.

996. What sort of country is it? The soil is loamy, some of it light and some strong, but all good wheat land. Some of the land along the Talbragar is very rich, and will be good land for orchards in time to come. It would also suit vines. You could grow wheat right up to the tops of the hills. It is all open box country.

997. Do you consider it fit for either agricultural or pastoral pursuits the whole way through? Yes.

998. Are you acquainted with the country from Wellington to Murrungundy? I have never travelled through it, but I believe that it is good agricultural country.

John

John Miller, station manager, Murrungundy, sworn, and examined :—

- J. Miller.
2 May, 1900.
999. *Mr. Watson.* I understand that you know the route of the proposed railway from Wellington to Murrungundy, and the alternative route from Dubbo to Murrungundy? Yes.
1000. In view of all the circumstances of the case, which way do you think the line should be taken? I would follow the Dubbo to Murrungundy route. The land on both sides of that route is good wheat-growing land. Of course, there may be a patch here or there, of a mile or so in extent, covered with iron-bark and black pine, but even that ground, if it were cleared, would grow wheat.
1001. How would you describe the country between Wellington and Murrungundy? In my opinion, having regard to the agricultural capabilities of the soil, I think that the country on one route is on a par with that on the other.
1002. Is there not a good deal of iron-bark country on the northern side of the Dubbo to Murrungundy route? I do not think so.
1003. Roughly speaking, the Dubbo to Murrungundy route keeps to the south of the Talbragar River? Yes, until somewhere about the junction of Booni Creek. After it crosses the Talbragar there are 10 or 12 miles of rough country, but, further on again, much better country is opened up. According to my recollection of the route, I should not think there are more than 4 miles of what I should call bad country—stony ridges, with iron-bark on them—between Dubbo and Murrungundy.
1004. Does the line leave the Talbragar before it reaches Murrungundy? No.
1005. How would you describe the country on the northern side of the Talbragar, going 10 or 15 miles back? I should call it box country, with apple-tree flats, interspersed with black pine. About 2 miles out of Murrungundy it runs through iron-bark and black pine.
1006. I understand that for 21 miles out from Dubbo the country is good? Yes.
1007. After that you find iron-bark country on the northern side of the Talbragar? Yes.
1008. Is that country uniform, or is some of it better than other parts of it? It is interspersed with box flats, which would be used for agriculture if a railway were made there.
1009. The iron-bark country seems to run for a good distance north and west of the proposed line;—how would you compare that tract of country with the country through which the line from Wellington to Murrungundy would pass? There is more agricultural land, on the whole, from Wellington to Murrungundy, though there are bad spots on that route, just as there are on the northern side of the Dubbo to Murrungundy route.
1010. But on which route would there be the greater area of good land? I think on the Dubbo route.
1011. Is there any considerable tract of bad country close to Wellington? The country is all broken up on that route. There is not a run of good land; the good land is crossed here and there by patches of bad land.
1012. How much bad land is there—one-half? Speaking roughly, I should say that fully one-third of the land might be classed as broken, or bad country.
1013. Do you think that there is a larger area of broken and rough country on the Wellington route than on the Dubbo route? Yes.
1014. Does the broken country between Wellington and Murrungundy contain any valuable timber? White pine grows there, and that is valuable timber; but the trees are very scattered. The iron-bark has been pretty well cut out; but no doubt the young timber which is growing up will be valuable in time.
1015. Has the good timber north of the Talbragar, towards Murrungundy, been cut out? Yes; the best of it has been cut out.
1016. Would we be right in assuming that the best timber to be got now lies northerly from Murrungundy, towards Mundooran? Yes.
1017. So that either the Wellington or the Dubbo route would tap the good timber country equally well? Yes.
1018. Why do you recommend the Dubbo route in preference to the Wellington route? Taking a straight line from Wellington to Murrungundy, the distance is about 33 or 36 miles, so that settlers half-way would be within 15 miles of a railway station, supposing the Dubbo to Murrungundy route were taken. If, however, the Wellington-Murrungundy route were followed, the settlers between Dubbo and Murrungundy would be left without railway communication. If a line is taken from Dubbo through Murrungundy to Werris Creek, it will mean that in the future, where there is an acre of cultivation now, there will be 100. The cost of carriage kills a farmer when he is 28 or 30 miles from a railway.
1019. How far are you from the railway now? Twenty-nine miles.
1020. Have you any cultivation? Yes; we have just finished clearing 640 acres, and we have 4,000 acres which would be put under crop if we could send our produce away. Most of my neighbours who are now cultivating would put in much larger crops if they could get railway communication.
1021. What is the area of the Murrungundy holding? There are 17,000 acres under lease, and about 45,000 acres altogether, including the purchased land.
1022. When does the lease expire? On the 1st August.
1023. Is it likely that the land will be taken up? No doubt some of it will be taken up. There is bad land on the north side of the Talbragar; but there are good box flats through it.
1024. Is most of the Murrungundy leasehold on the northern side of the river? No; it is mostly on the southern side of the river.
1025. Has your resumed area been taken up? Yes; on the river frontage.
1026. Is any of the resumed area on the southern side of the river? No; the resumed area is all on the northern side of the river.
1027. That land is not so good as the land on the southern side of the river? No.
1028. Do you think there is any likelihood of what remains of the resumed area being taken up? I do not think there is any chance of it. It includes the iron-bark scrub which I have spoken of.
1029. Do you think that any of it would be taken up if railway communication were given to that part of the district? No; I do not think anyone would touch it. There is not a sufficient area of good land to make up for the bad land.
1030. On the resumed area you get into the heart of the iron-bark country? Yes; it is all big stony hills right back until you get to the fall to the Castlereagh. Land will be taken up on the Murrungundy leasehold and also on the Ballymore holding as soon as the leases fall in.
1031. On the northern side of the river? On the southern side of the river, and a small area on the northern side.
- 1032.

1032. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway is justified by the character of the country through which it would pass, and the likelihood of creating settlement and increasing production? I consider that a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek would give more convenience to settlers, and would go through better country than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek, and that, therefore, there would be more traffic on a line from Dubbo than on a line from Wellington.

J. Miller.
2 May, 1900.

1033. Putting aside rival routes, do you think that the construction of any railway is justifiable? I do; because I think the construction of the line would create settlement and increase production.

1034. To a sufficient extent to give a chance of the line paying? Yes.

1035. Would the owners of Murrungundy be willing to give to the Government so much of their land as would be required for railway purposes? My employers have authorised me to give the land required for a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek.

1036. Would a line from Dubbo afford you greater facilities for getting away produce than a line from Wellington? Not if we intended to send our produce to Sydney; but from Dubbo there is a prospect of getting a line to Parkes, thence south, and such a line would give us an outlet to the southern markets, and would help us greatly in dealing with stock.

1037. Is it not likely that the export of wheat to London will increase each year? I expect that when the railway is made the production of wheat will increase.

1038. Will it not be necessary to find a market for our wheat out of the Colony? Yes; we should have to do that, and we have to do it now to some extent. The more country we have under wheat the more stock we shall carry; and therefore the more wheat we have to send away the more fat stock we shall have. If I were an owner of poor stock in the Western district, I should prefer to see the line made from Dubbo to Murrungundy rather than from Wellington, because of the saving in distance in travelling stock along it from the Western line.

1039. If you are going to produce wheat and wool it must be of advantage to you to have the shortest route to Sydney, and the line from Wellington would give you a shorter route than the line from Dubbo? Either line would suit us for the conveyance of produce. In my opinion, the balance lies in favour of the Dubbo route.

William Henry Baker, station manager, Barbigal, sworn, and examined:—

1040. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Will you describe the country along the route of the proposed line from Dubbo to Murrungundy? For about 20 miles it is good country, and then it becomes a little rough, with stony iron-bark ridges. After the line leaves Murrungundy it strikes into good country again—country with patches of apple-trees. The ridges are iron-bark, but there are good apple-tree and box flats.

W. H. Baker.
2 May, 1900.

1041. I understand that there are about 10 miles of indifferent country? Not so much; only about 6 miles.

1042. What is the country like from Wellington to Murrungundy? Some of it is very good.

1043. Is it not all good country? No; some of it is rough. On the whole it is a trifle better than the country between Dubbo and Murrungundy.

1044. Have you been along the whole route as far as Werris Creek? No; I have not been much further than Mundooran—about 50 miles.

1045. What benefits do you think would be obtained from the construction of the proposed line? I think that a line from Dubbo would be a cheaper line to make than one from Wellington. For one thing, it would be nearer good timber; then, too, the line from Wellington to Murrungundy goes through a good deal of hilly country.

1046. What great benefit would be derived by connecting Werris Creek with the Western line? The connecting line would open up the country through which it passed. At the present time the cost of road carriage prevents the people along the Talbragar from going into farming; but every man along the route would go into farming if the line were made.

1047. Do you think that the traffic would return anything like £27,000 a year, which is the estimated annual cost of the line, exclusive of land and compensation? One would have to be acquainted with the country right through to be able to give an opinion on that subject. What I have seen of the country beyond Mundooran is good; but I do not know the country all the way through to Werris Creek. I have heard that there is some intention of making a connection between the Southern and Western lines, junctioning with the Southern line at Parkes or Forbes. If it is intended to make that connection, it would be better to connect Werris Creek with Dubbo than to connect it with Wellington. I do not see how you could take a line from Wellington to the Southern line, because of the mountains at the back of Wellington.

1048. How do you account for the fact that there are thousands of acres of magnificent land between Wellington and Dubbo which are not being cultivated? That land is not open for selection; but nearly all the land that has been thrown open for selection between Wellington and Dubbo is now being farmed; the holders are farming every bit of it they can.

1049. What is the cost of clearing land in this district—land with green timber on it? From £1 to 30s. an acre, extra heavy from £2 to £2 10s. The timber consists chiefly of box and pine, both good wood to burn off.

1050. That would have to be pretty open country? They can clear fairly heavily timbered country for 30s. an acre.

1051. How long is timber left after it has been ringbarked before it is cleared? A good many people do not ringbark their timber at all; they clear it straight away. The dead timber costs from 10s. to 15s. an acre to clear, if extra thick from £1 to £1 5s.

1052. How is the land in the district chiefly used—for farming, or to graze sheep and cattle? Both for farming and for grazing. Barbigal has 500 acres under cultivation.

1053. What stock is carried? Both sheep and cattle.

1054. As a rule, do the farmers appear to be prosperous and satisfied with their returns? They are doing the best they can, but it is impossible for them to get their produce away because of the cost of road carriage. I have 250 tons of hay which I cannot do anything with.

1055. What does it cost you to produce a crop from the time you commence to plough until you have the grain in your barn? £1 an acre.

1056. Do you use modern machinery for cultivating and harvesting your crop. Yes.

Edwin

Edwin Henry Utley, ex-Mayor of Dubbo, sworn, and examined :—

- E. H. Utley. 1057. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been residing in the Dubbo district? About twenty-five years.
- 2 May, 1900. 1058. How far does your knowledge of the country along the route of the proposed line from Dubbo to Werris Creek extend? From Dubbo to the road down the Castlereagh to Mudgee.
1059. Do you know the country between Wellington and Murrungundy? Yes.
1060. How would you describe it? A great deal of it is fair agricultural land, though a good percentage is hilly, stony country.
1061. Would there be much inferior country? I should say a good deal.
1062. How does the country between Dubbo and Murrungundy compare with the country between Wellington and Murrungundy? The country on each route is similar, but the Dubbo to Murrungundy route would pass through flatter land than the other.
1063. Would the land between Dubbo and Murrungundy carry a larger population than the country between Wellington and Murrungundy? I think so. It is carrying a larger population at the present time. There is more population between Dubbo and Murrungundy than in any other part of the district.
1064. What class of settlement? Chiefly farmers. The country between Wellington and Murrungundy is rougher, more hilly, and more stony than that between Dubbo and Murrungundy.
1065. But as far as the quality of the land generally is concerned, how do the two districts compare? I think the land between Dubbo and Murrungundy is superior to that between Wellington and Murrungundy. There is not a great deal of difference in either the soil or the timber, but, if anything, the land between Dubbo and Murrungundy is flatter than the land on the other route, and it is more easily worked. A higher percentage of that land than of the land between Wellington and Murrungundy is fit for agriculture.
1066. Is a large area of Crown land available for settlement between Dubbo and Murrungundy? There must be a great deal of land there which is still held under pastoral lease.
1067. If the proposed railway were constructed from Dubbo to Werris Creek, would that land be settled upon? Yes.
1068. Is it sufficiently good land to carry a fair population? Yes. Every bit of it would be taken up to-morrow if it were thrown open.
1069. Do you think that the proposed line would be a paying one? I think it is very hard to say definitely whether a line will or will not pay, but I am of the opinion that light lines of railway will open up the country and encourage population.
1070. Where do those who are settled at Murrungundy do their business—at Dubbo or at Wellington? They all come to Dubbo. At times they may take their wheat to Gulgong.
1071. Which town do they generally use as their market town;—where do they mostly send their produce from? From Dubbo.
1072. Have you a good knowledge of the timber trade in the district? Yes.
1073. Where do you get your supplies of timber? From the country due north from Dubbo.
1074. What sort of timber is there? Iron-bark and pine. The pine is used for house building, and the ironbark for mining purposes and for public works. At the present time I am supplying the Railway Department with the sawn planking required for the Byrock-Browarrina line.
1075. Then the whole of the timber is not used locally? No; I send timber to places both east and west of Dubbo.
1076. In what locality is the best timber found? The timber on the eastern side of the Talbragar is not much good; but that on the western side, and between Dubbo and Gilgandra, and Dubbo and Cobborah, is splendid timber.
1077. Is there much timber between Dubbo and Murrungundy? You would tap the forest all along that route. Timber comes in now from that part of the country.
1078. Is the timber obtained between Dubbo and Murrungundy, or beyond Murrungundy? It lies on the west side of the Talbragar.
1079. How far from the route of the proposed line? A mile in some places, and a few miles in others.
1080. How far is the best timber from Dubbo? To get into the best timber we have to go back nearly 30 miles.
1081. How far would that be from Murrungundy? Scarcely any distance.
1082. So that the best iron-bark could be reached by either a line from Wellington, or a line from Dubbo to Murrungundy? Yes.
1083. If a railway were constructed, would the timber come by train? Yes.
1084. Would the train rates be less than is charged for road carriage? Yes.
1085. What is grown by the agriculturists between Dubbo and Murrungundy? They grow almost everything in the fodder line; they grow wheat, and they grow a large quantity of potatoes.
1086. What is the average yield of wheat per acre? I have known crops to yield as much as 40 bushels of wheat to the acre; but the average yield would be from 20 to 25 bushels to the acre. It is a fine sample of wheat.
1087. Is the land there specially adapted for wheat-growing? Yes.
1088. In the event of the construction of the proposed line, would there be much interchange of produce between the Northern and North-western districts, and the Western district? I think so.
1089. What products would be exchanged? A good deal of stock would be shifted backwards and forwards along the line, especially in dry times. When we were suffering from drought we could send our sheep northwards, and when the people up north were suffering from drought they could send their stock down here.
1090. Has stock ever been sent here in times of drought from the Northern and North-western districts? Last summer we sent hundreds of tons of chaff to Narrabri by way of Sydney. I think one man alone sent 500 tons. I should think that a railway from Werris Creek to Dubbo would be of great benefit to the Colony at large. The line would be practically a straight one, and would keep along the western slope, which contains the richest land. I do not think it is judicious to take a railway through hilly country when you can keep away from the hills, and at the same time go through rich land.
1091. You prefer the Dubbo route to the Wellington route? Yes.
1092. Would a line from Wellington to Murrungundy pass through hilly country? Yes, and some of it

is mountainous country, whereas from Dubbo to Murrungundy there are no mountains. There would be a great many engineering difficulties in the way of getting a line out of Wellington. The Macquarie River would have to be crossed, and a range of mountains would have to be got over, whereas a line could be taken out from Dubbo without any difficulty at all. Then, from near Dubbo a line could be taken to the main Southern line, though I think that such a line should branch off at Narramine.

1093. Putting aside the question of rival routes, do you think that the construction of any line is justifiable? Yes. I have always been of the opinion that the country has been kept back through not being opened up sufficiently.

1094. In the event of the Dubbo route not being recommended, would you consider the Wellington to Werris Creek line justifiable, and *vice versa*? Yes. In my opinion our railways have not been pushed ahead enough. We should have spent money on railways in preference to many other public works.

William Webb Baird, farmer and grazier, Cootba, sworn, and examined:—

1095. *Vice-Chairman.*] How much of the country along the route of the proposed line from Dubbo to Werris Creek do you know? I have been through that country; but I do not know it very well after you pass Merrygoen.

1096. Will you describe the country as far as you know it, taking that on the southern side of the proposed line first? From Dubbo to Murrungundy the proposed line would run up the valley of the Talbragar, which is very good agricultural country, and well settled. The land on the southern side of the route is a great deal better than that on the northern side; but there are fairly good patches of land on the northern side. The land on the southern side is all good agricultural land.

1097. Is there much good agricultural land between the dividing ridge north of the Talbragar and the Talbragar itself? I should not say so.

1098. What is the general character of that country? Iron-bark, with flats in between. There are good patches of agriculture; but I should not like to say exactly how much good land there is.

1099. In general terms you do not consider the land on the northern side good agricultural country? No.

1100. What is the land like from Murrungundy to Merrygoen? Near Merrygoen the line is crossed by an iron-bark ridge, which begins north of Brocklehurst. Along the valley of the Talbragar there is good land between Brocklehurst and Murrungundy; but further north the country is pretty rough. It is fairly good grazing country after it has been ringbarked; but without ringbarking it is no good. A good deal of it has been ringbarked. From Merrygoen to Binnia, about 26 miles, the country is such as I think would be cultivated if there were railway communication. If it were my country I should cultivate it if I could get my produce away. At present that district is handicapped by its distance from market. I have a property 3 miles from Dubbo, and another 9 miles from Dubbo, and, while I do well with agriculture on the one, I cannot do so well on the other, because of the extra cost of haulage.

1101. How does the country between Wellington and Murrungundy compare with that between Dubbo and Murrungundy? For the first 12 miles I do not think there is much difference; but when you get at that distance from Wellington you get into some pretty rough country, between Mitchell's and Spicer's Creeks. Then there is a rough patch after crossing Spicer's Creek, between Spicer's Creek and the Talbragar. Five or 6 miles out from Murrungundy you get on to a good patch again.

1102. How would you compare the country generally on the two routes? I think that if anything the country on the Dubbo route has the advantage.

1103. Do the people along the route of the proposed line complain of the hardships to which they are now subjected by their distance from market? It is the general complaint that the payment of road carriage kills farming operations.

1104. Do you know anybody holding a large area of good agricultural land who is at the present time absolutely prevented from cultivating it because of the cost of carriage? I cannot say that I do; but my brother told me only yesterday of a man who, although last year he cultivated 900 acres, was not going to put an acre under cultivation this year, because he does not think it worth while to do so. That man lives 9 or 10 miles from Dubbo.

1105. How near to a railway must a man be to make agriculture pay? The man that I speak of has a lot of sheep, and he believes that there is more in sheep-raising than in farming. Sheep at present are very valuable.

1106. If the proposed railway were made, would the landholders along it go in exclusively for agriculture, or would they combine agriculture with grazing? They would combine the two industries.

1107. What leads you to that opinion? It is my own experience that it pays best to combine farming with grazing. When you wish to spell your cultivation paddocks you can run stock on them, and plough up new land.

1108. If you were told to cut up the land into blocks of a sufficient size to attract population to the district we are speaking of, what size would you make them, say, 10 miles back from the main line? I think that if a man liked to work he could make a good deal more than decent wages on a 640-acre block.

1109. Would he be able to use his land for mixed farming? Yes; he could cultivate 200 or 250 acres and run sheep on the rest. He might, perhaps, carry a sheep and a half to the acre.

1110. Is the district between here and Werris Creek a district to which stock are likely to be sent in times of drought? The New England district is one which rarely suffers from drought; and, three or four years ago, when we had a terribly bad winter here, I lost 4,400 out of 5,500 sheep, because I could not get my stock away.

1111. Was there no district towards the east to which you could send them? There was no grass north, south, east, or west to which I could get them.

1112. Was there no grass about Orange at that time? No. If I had sent my stock there the cold would have killed them. Starving sheep from this district cannot stand the winter climate in the Orange district.

1113. It is fairly cold in the New England district in winter? I do not think it is as cold as in the Orange district.

1114. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed you would be likely to find a market for the products of this district on the Northern and Western lines? No doubt if they had a big drought round

W. W. Baird. round about Moree we could, but otherwise we could not. A great deal of chaff went from here to Narrabri by way of Sydney two or three years ago.

2 May, 1900.

1115. That was during a period of exceptional drought? Yes. A line from Dubbo to the main Southern line, *via* Parkes, would give a direct cross-country connection which would give us access to a southern market.

1116. Are you shut out from the southern markets now? I cannot say that we are, because we can use the Blayney-Harden line; but we have to go a long way round.

1117. Does the railway travelling affect the condition of stock much? Stock lose in condition during every four hours that they spend in a railway truck. From the time an animal is put into a truck until he is taken out again he is losing condition. If a line were made from Werris Creek, through Dubbo, to Parkes, you would save a bridge over the Macquarie, and would go through fertile, unalienated land. A grade of 1 in 70 could be obtained all the way from Dubbo to Parkes, and very little would have to be paid for compensation.

Craven Hyde Fitzhardinge, solicitor, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

C. H. Fitzhardinge.

2 May, 1900.

1118. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been in Dubbo? I have been practising here for thirty years.

1119. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What are the advantages which you think would be derived from the construction of the proposed railway? I think that a connection between the Northern and the Western lines would be of great advantage in assisting the people in the arid west to remove their stock in periods of drought, which come almost annually, to the more-favoured New England district; and it would enable the people in the Northern districts to send their produce to a good market out west. The line would be very easily constructed, and it would open up a large area of country for settlement.

1120. Do you think it likely that it would become self-supporting within a reasonable time? I think so. It is astonishing to see how much traffic there is on the Western line, both in goods and passengers; and I have no hesitation in saying that within a few years a cross-country line to Werris Creek from Dubbo or from Wellington would be self-supporting.

1121. Have you a personal knowledge of the country through which such a line would pass? I have been from Dubbo through Murrungundy, Cobborah, Merrygoen, Binnaway, and Warkton, to Coonabarabran. I know the country thoroughly from Dubbo to Cobborah, on both sides of the route of the proposed line, and also from Murrungundy to Wellington.

1122. What are the opinions of the residents of the district in regard to this proposal? The farmers out about Cobborah are all anxiously waiting for railway communication. Although they grow wheat, they only strip it for grain, and lose all the straw; but if they could afford to send chaff away it would pay them to grow for hay as well as for grain, and they would put larger areas under cultivation.

1123. Is that the general opinion? Yes; they would increase their cultivation if they had a railway within 10 miles.

1124. Would the people through whose land the line would pass be willing to give the Government whatever land was required for the railway? I think that 10 miles out from Dubbo they would, where the line did not touch small holdings. On the Dubbo-Coonamble line there are one or two cases of great hardship caused by the line going through small holdings. I knew one such holding that was cut in two, and it would be very hard to expect the holder in such a case to give his land to the Government without compensation.

1125. Do you think the people living along the line would be prepared to contribute something to a fund to guarantee its success? I do not think a guarantee would be given by the people between Dubbo and Cobborah, because most of the land is held by small holders. I think, however, that the farmers and the squatters, who are more liberal in these matters, would be prepared to give such a guarantee. The small farmers should not be expected to give a guarantee.

1126. If such contributions were levied, they would decrease year by year as the railway began to pay? Of course, if a tax were made, the people would have to pay it, but they do not like the land tax. The farmers would help the railway by creating traffic for it.

1127. Could you describe the country through which the line would pass? As far as Murrungundy there is good agricultural land on the south side of the Talbragar, and also for 2 miles on the north side, except for occasional ridges. A large quantity of wheat comes into Dubbo year after year from that land.

1128. Do you think that the railway should start from Dubbo, or should it start from Wellington? From Dubbo. By bringing the railway from Dubbo you would save so much haulage to the people living further west who would use the line to get to the New England tableland, and you would also have a shorter line, and one that would go through the best country. In my opinion the line should junction with the Coonamble line just beyond the Talbragar, to save the expense of another bridge over that river.

1129. What is the country like between Dubbo and Murrungundy? It is excellent agricultural land, except on the ridges. From Wellington to Murrungundy the land is not so good. About to where the Mitchell's Creek gold-mine is the country is very poor, and east of the road from Murrungundy to Wellington it is inferior country. I held an improvement lease on Spicer's Creek, but I had to abandon it, because the land was so inferior.

1130. In your opinion, the land is better between Dubbo and Murrungundy than between Wellington and Murrungundy? Yes, for settlement; though there is more mineral country on the Wellington route. North of the Talbragar there are large iron-bark forests, and where the iron-bark is cleared off the land is very good for wheat-growing. The land on the Coonamble line, which people at one time fought shy of because of the iron-bark on it, has now been taken up, and produces good wheat crops. It is sandy land, with a clay bottom. Nearly all the teams which bring in iron-bark sleepers—between 20,000 and 30,000 sleepers have been brought in from the Coonamble line during the last two months—come in along the Coonamble-road, showing that the timber grows in places to the north of Dubbo and not to the north-east. A line from Wellington to Murrungundy would not tap the iron-bark scrub from which the timber is now being drawn so well as a line from Dubbo to Murrungundy.

1131. *Mr. Watson.*] But do not the iron-bark forests run from Murrungundy northwards nearly to Munderoran? Yes; but not to Merrygoen. No doubt the Wellington line would tap the forest at one point only, and the supply of timber there would soon be exhausted. The proposed railway is generally termed

a national line, because it will be a main connecting line, and if it comes to Dubbo it would probably be continued from Dubbo to the Southern line. I have a slight knowledge of the country from Dubbo towards Parkes, and I know that an excellent line can be obtained there, a junction being made on the other side of the Macquarie River. On the other hand, if the line from Werris Creek were brought to Wellington it would be a difficult matter to take it out of Wellington towards Parkes. If the line goes to Wellington it will have to stop there.

C. H.
Fitzhardinge.
2 May, 1900.

Roderick Baylis MacKenzie, Acting District Surveyor, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

1132. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been stationed long in this district? Nearly fifteen years.

1133. Does the Dubbo district extend down towards Wellington? It extends in that direction as far as a point between Geurie and Maryvale—10 miles from Wellington.

R. B.
MacKenzie.
2 May, 1900.

1134. How far north-east does the Border go from there? It meets a circle which is drawn at a radius of 10 miles from Wellington.

1135. Is any large part of the land along the route of the proposed railway from Wellington to Murrungundy within your district? My district goes as far as Muntooran.

1136. Then you have a pretty fair knowledge of the country from Wellington to Murrungundy and from Dubbo to Murrungundy? Yes.

1137. Can you offer an opinion as to the character of the land through which a line from Wellington to Murrungundy would pass? It is partly farming land and partly pastoral land. There is some very rich land, and some very poor land. The country between Dubbo and Murrungundy and between Wellington and Murrungundy is similar.

1138. Is the proportion of good and bad land similar? Yes.

1139. It has been stated that the land between Wellington and Murrungundy is practically all fit for the plough;—do you agree with that statement? No.

1140. How far would your general description of the land apply—to all the land within the coloured portions of the map between the main line and Murrungundy? No; the land between the Castlereagh and the Talbragar is chiefly very poor.

1141. Is the land somewhat similar on each side of the proposed Wellington route until you get out towards the Talbragar? Yes.

1142. From the Talbragar northwards the line would go through some Crown land? Yes.

1143. Can you say whether the leased land there, or any large portion of it, is suitable for agriculture? The leasehold area of Bodangora Holding is very suitable for agriculture. Northerly from the Talbragar is poor country.

1144. I understand that that lease expires shortly? It will expire on the 10th or the 30th July next.

1145. Is it probable that that land will be made available for settlement then? Yes; in areas of about 700 acres on Bodangora.

1146. How far is the greater part of that land from Wellington or Geurie? It is 13 or 14 miles from Wellington.

1147. Is it uniformly good agricultural land, or is it broken? It is broken; part of it is stony.

1148. Would a block of 700 acres include some stony country? Yes. We have divided it for homestead selections, and the 700-acre blocks include good land and stony land.

1149. You would not make the blocks quite so large if the land were all good agricultural land? No. The land that we are speaking of is a little nearer to Geurie than to Wellington.

1150. A little further north there are some reserves and some other pastoral leases;—how would you describe that land? The land on the Murrumbidgee Holding, and through Elong Elong, Spicer's Creek, Narran, and across to Medway, is all mixed country.

1151. There is rather a large reserve a little to the north-west of Bodangora? That is a forest reserve.

1152. Is it still being kept, and likely to be kept, as a forest reserve? Yes.

1153. And, presumptively, it is not good agricultural land? No; it is sandy country. All that part of the district is very patchy.

1154. Would 700 acres be a fair area for the maintenance of a family? No. The 700-acre blocks that we were speaking of comprise some of the best land.

1155. Along the route of the proposed line from Bodangora, northwards to a point between Cobborah and Muntooran, what area would be necessary to maintain a family? All the selectors there are inclined to increase their holdings up to 2,560 acres. Out towards Cobauragay and Spicer's Creek the country is better.

1156. What I want to know is what population would the country carry if the proposed railway were constructed? I think that if the proposed railway were constructed from 300 to 500 acres would be sufficient for a holding.

1157. That would not be iron-bark country? Yes; where good land can be put in with inferior land.

1158. How would you describe the land between Dubbo and Murrungundy? For the first 9 miles on the southern side of the proposed railway route it is good agricultural land, and the land on the northern side is partly good, though it runs out into iron-bark country; it is good agricultural country down to the Talbragar River. On the south side of the route, after you get out about 3 miles, there is a little fringe of good country right up to the 9 miles limit; but that country also runs back into iron-bark forests. From there to Murrungundy, on the northern side of the Talbragar, the country varies from light sandy country to good red-soil country. On the northern side of the Talbragar, from nothing to about 3 miles from the river, you get into iron-bark forests right on to the Castlereagh. The good flats narrow down towards Murrungundy.

1159. Would the good country be as much as 3 miles wide at Murrungundy? No, because the bad country comes in closer to the river there.

1160. What about the country on the southern side of the route? That is about half and half; half good red-soil country and half poor sandy country running back towards the Wellington to Werris Creek line. It is patchy all through.

1161. Just as the Wellington end is patchy? Yes; in this district.

1162. Assuming the traffic area of a railway to extend about 15 miles on each side of the line, would you be likely to get more traffic from a line from Wellington to Murrungundy than from a line from Dubbo to Murrungundy? I think that there would be more traffic on the Wellington line, because the Coonamble line would take a lot of traffic that would otherwise go to a line from Dubbo to Murrungundy. 1163.

- R. B. MacKenzie.
2 May, 1900.
1163. Do you think there is a possibility of the country between the Talbragar and the Castlereagh being settled—the iron-bark country? Yes. A large part of that country is in the Murrumbidgee Holding, and is being designed for settlement now.
1164. If it were found that in that iron-bark country there is a fair area of flat land suitable for agriculture it would make a difference to the traffic? Yes.
1165. Do you think, from your knowledge of that country, that there is likely to be much settlement on it? I do not think that settlement will be successful there for some considerable time. The land is more likely to be kept for forestry purposes, or to be let in big grazing, improvement, or scrub leases.
1166. Is there a considerable area of country there with a very light sandy soil? Yes.
1167. That would not be of any value for agriculture? No. There are patches of it which would be suitable for orchards.
1168. Is the climate suitable? Yes; the rainfall is good.
1169. Is the country fairly good from Murrungundy to Cobborah? Yes; there is some very good country along there, especially near Cobborah.
1170. Is much Crown land likely to be made available for settlement between Murrungundy and Cobborah? No; there are only one or two areas which would be opened up there.
1171. Does the good land between Murrungundy and Cobborah extend north and south of the proposed route for any considerable distance? The good land extends further to the south than to the north. It extends east right to the limit of the district; to the north it goes a little beyond the Talbragar River.
1172. There you again strike the iron-bark forest which runs towards Murrungundy? Yes; between the Talbragar and the Castlereagh there is a good deal of land within forest reserves.
1173. Would the timber in those reserves be equally accessible from a line from Wellington to Murrungundy as from a line from Dubbo to Murrungundy? The timber would be very much nearer to the Dubbo line than to the Wellington line.
1174. For some distance from Dubbo the good timber must be nearly cut out? A good deal of it has been cut out. The further you go the better the timber gets.
1175. At what distance from Dubbo would you reach the best part of the forests? About 12 or 14 miles out. They bring in timber from all directions.
1176. Beyond Murrungundy, in the direction of Murrungundy, it must be pretty well virgin forest, and that timber would be equally accessible from either route? Yes. The Coonamble line would serve one part of the forest and the proposed line the other.
1177. Can you offer any opinion as to the character of the country between Dubbo and Peak Hill? Between Dubbo and Tomingley, a distance of 32 miles, the country is very poor.
1178. Would that description apply to the country on both sides of a line from Dubbo, *viz* Peak Hill, to Parkes or Forbes? Yes. Fifteen miles from Dubbo you get into better country on the western side.
1179. What is the country like from Tomingley to Peak Hill? You get good country then.
1180. What is the country like between Narramine and Peak Hill? It is very good country.
1181. Is most of it suitable for agriculture? Yes. Between Dubbo and Tomingley you are on the edge of the bad country, but out west the country is good.
1182. Is the country between Narramine and Tomingley at present held under pastoral occupation? No; a good deal of it is settled on now.
1183. Is there any large leasehold area there? There is Bulgandramine. Then Haddon-Rigg will shortly be open. The rest of the country into Narramine has all been selected.
1184. With a view to serving a settled district and increasing production, would you favour a line from Narramine towards Tomingley? Yes. There are few engineering difficulties in the way of constructing such a line.

With reference to the Committee's inquiries this afternoon, regarding a comparison of traffic between a contemplated line from Wellington to Murrungundy, and one from Dubbo to Murrungundy, I estimate that such a comparison favours the Wellington-Murrungundy route by two to one.

Richard McGee, railway station-master, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

- R. McGee.
2 May, 1900.
1185. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you been long in Dubbo? Nearly five years.
1186. Do you get much produce from the country through which a line from the Western line to Werris Creek would pass? Not much. We get the Talbragar traffic and the Murrungundy traffic.
1187. Do you get the traffic from towards Cobborah? We get some Cobborah traffic.
1188. Does it amount to much in the aggregate? Not to very much. We get the whole of the Murrungundy traffic, and the traffic from the country between Murrungundy and Cobborah; but we do not get the whole of the Cobborah traffic, because some of it goes to Wellington and some to Mudgee.
1189. Where is all this produce generally sent? Usually to Sydney. It consists chiefly of wool, skins, hides, and tallow.
1190. No farm produce? Very little, except some wheat. The wheat all goes to Sydney, or towards Sydney.
1191. Has much produce been sent from Dubbo to the North-western line? Not during the past year, I think; but a year or two ago a considerable quantity of produce was sent from Dubbo to Narrabri, and out Moree way.
1192. Can you say how much? I think about 100 tons. The matter was referred to during the Committee's investigation of the Coonamble railway proposal. It is only in seasons of drought that there will be traffic of that kind.
1193. What is the volume of traffic done at Dubbo station? For the year ending 31st December, 1899, the tonnage inwards received at Dubbo was 12,119 tons 13 cwt. 3 qrs.; and outwards, 21,038 tons 4 cwt. 3 qrs.
1194. Was there much stock traffic? Last year there was a falling off in the stock traffic. We received 455 horses, 3,247 cattle, 1 calf, 25,800 sheep, and 41 pigs; and we sent away 754 horses, 2,177 cattle, 184 calves, 124,454 sheep, and 64 pigs.
1195. Has there been any marked increase in the traffic during the last five years? There has been a very decided increase each year. The wool traffic from the district beyond Coonamble fell off for a time; but the Dubbo district has hardly been affected by the drought.
- 1196.

1196. Has the traffic in farm produce increased? Yes, considerably.
 1197. Are stock brought to Dubbo in times of drought? Over 20,000 sheep which were received here came here for feed. They came from Cannonbar, Girilambone, and other places out west.
 1198. Has stock ever been sent here by rail, because of scarcity of feed in the district? Not since I have been here.

R. McGee.
 2 May, 1900.

William Mortimer Beckles Dayrell, manager, Dubbo Flour-milling Company, sworn, and examined:—

1199. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Can you give the Committee any information as to the extent of the farming operations along the route of the proposed line? During the last five months we have received between 20,000 and 25,000 bushels of wheat from the country between Dubbo and Murrungundy, and I believe that there must be between 400 and 500 tons of wheat still there. A good deal of the wheat goes back to the farmers in the shape of grist.
 1200. Is much wheat grown beyond Murrungundy? We do not get much wheat beyond Murrungundy. The wheat grown beyond Murrungundy goes either to Mudgee or to Gulgong; we cannot depend upon getting it.
 1201. Do you get any wheat from the district lying between Wellington and Murrungundy? We buy wheat along the line towards Wellington as far as Geurie.
 1202. What is the yield of wheat in this district? About 17 or 18 bushels in that part of the country of which I am speaking. They are fortunate in getting storms up that way.
 1203. Which would be the better route for a railway, from Dubbo to Werris Creek, or from Wellington to Werris Creek? I would not venture to pass an opinion upon the subject, because I do not know the country between Wellington and Werris Creek. If the line were brought to Wellington, it would make another junction, of course.
 1204. I suppose some of the farmers, from whom you get wheat, have to bring it at least 30 miles by road? Yes; those who cart from Murrungundy.
 1205. Do they complain about the distance? I have not heard any complaint. Sometimes it happens that it is cheaper to send the wheat into Mudgee. The rates of carriage depend a good deal upon the state of the roads.
 1206. Would the farmers in that district be likely to increase their cultivation if the proposed railway were made? They appear to be doing that now.
 1207. Can you give us some account of the progress of this district? Ten years ago there was not sufficient wheat grown in the district to keep a mill running six weeks, but now we have a surplus.
 1208. Has the progress of the district been regular? Yes, and rapid. There is sufficient wheat grown around Murrungundy to keep the mill going without drawing upon the Narramine wheat.
 1209. What is the price of wheat delivered at the mill? It started at 2s. 2d., and went up to 2s. 3½d. and 2s. 4d. this season. The average price would be about 2s. 3d., which is very low.
 1210. Do the farmers consider it a remunerative price? No; the small holders complain of the price.
 1211. Is the price of wheat likely to rise or to fall? I see no hope of the price of wheat improving; but as wool is now at a good price, no doubt many holders will run sheep instead of growing wheat.
 1212. Is New South Wales likely to become an exporter of wheat? New South Wales already exports wheat.
 1213. Will the exportation of wheat from the Colony have any effect upon the price? If the producers could pool their wheat and export a large quantity, so as to "bear" the market a bit, they might succeed in getting more for it. If they exported their surplus early in the season, so as to make wheat a bit scarce, they might improve the local market.
 1214. I suppose wheat is the chief crop grown here? A few oats are grown in the district, but none to speak of.
 1215. Are potatoes grown to any extent? Some very fine potatoes have been grown round about Ballymore at times, but you could not call this a potato-growing district.
 1216. Is fruit grown here to any extent? Yes, nearly every kind of fruit.
 1217. If the proposed railway were constructed would the fruit-growing industry progress? It seems to me that orchardists are all beginning to complain that it does not pay to grow fruit, so that there does not seem to be much hope of fruit traffic.
 1218. Is the flour produced here of first-class quality? Yes; we send flour to the principal bakers in Sydney.
 1219. *Vice-Chairman.*] If the proposed railway were constructed, would you expect to find a market for your flour out on the Northern and North-western lines? I think we should be able to send a good deal along there.
 1220. Can you make a comparison between the wheat grown in this district and that grown in the northern districts? The northern wheat is softer than ours, and would do better with harder wheat mixed with it.
 1221. Would the construction of the proposed railway greatly stimulate the production of wheat in the district between Dubbo and Werris Creek. It should do so, because it would enable the farmers to get their produce to market more quickly.
 1222. How long have you been in the district? I came here in 1866.

W. M. B.
 Dayrell.
 2 May, 1900.

James Charles Tibbits, farmer, Myton Fields, sworn, and examined:—

1223. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is your holding from Dubbo? About 4 miles.
 1224. Have you a pretty good knowledge of the country which would be served by the proposed railway? I have been over nearly every inch of it.
 1225. Will you give us a general description of the country which would be served by the proposed railway—country within 15 miles of the route? Between Dubbo and Cobborah there are very rich flats, some of which are wide and some narrow. Then a rough ridge comes in, and lessens the area of good country; but beyond that ridge, towards the north, you come upon good country again, though the land is densely covered with iron-bark and scrub. My sons have taken up land on Ranter's Creek, 15 miles north of Mundooran. They have improved it by ringbarking, and it is astonishing to see what ground which

J. C. Tibbits.
 2 May, 1900.

J. C. Tibbits. which used to be considered worthless will grow when cultivated. Last year the wheat failed on all the rich Macquarie River flats, but in the iron-bark country the frosts did not touch it at all. I saw wheat standing 3 feet high in a paddock in which I counted thirty-one stumps and trees ringbarked, but to all appearances would have returned five bags to the acre.

2 May, 1900.

1226. What yield of wheat was obtained? The man growing that wheat cut it for hay; but the yield would have been very good. Except on the gritty, iron-bark country, which will not grow anything, the soil is very good.

1227. What would be the cost of clearing iron-bark country per acre? I cannot tell you; but nine out of ten trees are hollow, and burn well when [they are old and dead. There can be no doubt about the fertility of the iron-bark country. It is the greatest mistake in the world to suppose that it is barren. You will see fruit growing there that will astonish you. I saw a peach-tree, which was growing within 7 feet of an iron-bark stump, 3 feet across; and I never saw anything like the fruit that it produced.

1228. Do you think that the cost of clearing that land will prevent it from being brought into cultivation for some years? Yes.

1229. Until all the available box flats and other better land has been brought into use? Yes.

1230. But you think that the iron-bark country should not be looked upon as hopeless from an agricultural point of view? That is what I wish to convey. In my opinion there are several reasons why a line to Werris Creek should start from Dubbo instead of from Wellington. In the first place, I think the passenger traffic would be greater from Dubbo. Two Circuit Courts and two Courts of Quarter Sessions are held in Dubbo, and the Land Board has its head office in Dubbo. Then in the Talbragar district there is a deposit of coal 6 feet thick, and mineral waters which should prove a fortune to the district. The water is similar to that obtained at Baden and other water-places in Germany and England. Leamington, in Warwickshire, which I remember as a small village, is to-day a city because of its mineral springs; and why should not Dubbo become a city for the same reason?

1231. How far are the springs from here? Only 24 miles.

1232. How far away are the coal-measures that you speak of? They are in the same 40 or 50-acre block. Then there is shale there, too; and they have tapped artesian mineral water there. In my opinion the connecting line should be taken from some place further north than Werris Creek, and should join the Dubbo-Coonamble line about Gilgandra.

1233. Why do you think that that would be a better connection? It would be a shorter connection. Coonabarabran is away from the line at the present time, and it would be served by the line that I speak of.

1234. Is the country between Curlewis and Gilgandra better than that between Werris Creek and Dubbo? I do not say that it is better country; but it is as good, and a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra would tap iron-bark forests which have never been touched yet. East of Ranter's Creek there are miles of iron-bark forest, which has never been touched. If the people residing in the western district were compelled to send their stock to New England it would not pay them to travel 30 miles extra to get to the junction at Wellington; and besides there are no trucking conveniences at Wellington for large numbers of sheep, while there are such conveniences at Dubbo. People sending stock from out west to the Northern line would save 40 miles of transport by going through Dubbo to Werris Creek instead of through Wellington. Then, if we wanted to send forage from Dubbo to the Northern line, it would be very hard for us to have to send it an extra 40 miles. The Dubbo district can produce whatever the Wellington district can produce, and it is nonsense to talk about the competition of Orange.

James Heane, stock and station agent, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

J. Heane.

2 May, 1900.

1235. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you formed any opinion upon the question into which the Committee is inquiring—the making of a connection from the Western line to the Northern line? I have thought more upon the question of making a connection between the Western line and the Southern line. By leaving the Western line at Narramine and going south you would escape the rough country which you would have to go through if you took a line south from Wellington.

1236. What is the necessity for making a line towards Peak Hill from the Western line? The whole of the country between Narramine and Peak Hill has been taken up in small areas, or will be so taken up directly it is available for selection, and such a line would serve that country. I think, too, that the connection is one which should be made for intercolonial reasons. I know that you can get shale on the Talbragar. I held a run there for some years, and you could pick up the shale and light it with a match. Coal is also to be obtained there, and mineral waters.

1237. Would that country be served by a line from Wellington? I think it would be better served by a line from Dubbo.

1238. How far from Dubbo are the coal and shale deposits? It is about 22 miles to where they sank the shaft on the Ballymore Hill. That place is within about three-quarters of a mile of the mineral spring, which has been running for fifteen years. They send the water down to Sydney.

1239. Mr. Harper is of opinion that the Queensland fat cattle which might under Federation be sent to Melbourne would take the old road through Bourke, rather than come on to the Northern line, and then through from Werris Creek to Dubbo or Wellington? I think they would go to Bourke and then come down by train to Narramine if a railway were constructed from there across to the Southern line. Fat cattle would not come on to the Northern line from Queensland, because most of the Queensland cattle come from places beyond the Warrégo River, and could not get on to the Northern line.

1240. Then we could not expect much cattle traffic on the Werris Creek, Dubbo, or Wellington line? I should think not.

1241. Is the rainfall about the same in the districts at each end of the proposed line, or is it good in one and bad in the other? I have been trying for the last thirty-five years to determine in what month we may expect rain. When I reckoned up the rainfall for every month during twenty-five years I found that seven months of each year received a little above the average and five a little below it. If the seasons are good to the north the stock goes that way, and if they are bad there and good here the stock comes this way.

1242. I understand that last year a great number of the stock came to this district for agistment? Yes.

1243. Did most of them come by rail? Yes; a great many of them came by rail, and a great many of those which came from the direction of Bourke were driven. A good many of the sheep started to travel here by road, but when they became too weak to travel they were sent on by rail. At the present time sheep are travelling out to the West Bogan for grass. The railway rates are too high to allow people to use the trains if they can possibly send their stock by road.

1244.

1244. I understand that the rates for starving stock are so low that they hardly pay the cost of haulage? They give half rates for short journeys, but those half rates are equal to the full rates to Sydney. If it costs 4½d. to send a sheep from Nyngan to Sydney, it would cost the same to send one from Bourke to Nyngan.* J. Heane.
2 May, 1900.

1245. Are we to understand that it does not pay to send starving stock short distances by rail? Not if they can be travelled.

1246. Would you call the distance from Bourke to Dubbo short? No. The longer the distance the nearer the cost of train carriage comes to the cost of droving.

1247. Would there be much stock traffic on the proposed line, or would it be only a stand-by in the worst seasons? It would be a stand-by in the worst times, so far as the starving stock traffic is concerned.

1248. Do you think that with federation New England stock-breeders will compete with Queensland stock-breeders in the Melbourne market? No. I have known fat stock to be brought from the country you speak of to Dubbo for sale in very dry years; but I think there is no probability of its being taken to Melbourne. I think that in the future they are more likely to take stock to Sydney dead than alive.

1249. You do not think the traffic would assume its former dimensions? No. In the olden times I have seen 100,000 sheep between Murrungundy and Obley, all coming from Queensland.

1250. Is the proposed line likely to open up country which is fit for agricultural development? I do not know the country about Werris Creek; but, as far as Cassilis or Coolah, you have a stretch of country which it would be of great advantage to open up. If there were a railway, there would be an enormous quantity of grain exported from the district between Dubbo and Coolah. There are patches of iron-bark country where the ridges run through that district, but between the ridges there is good agricultural ground. A person driving along the road, say, at Beni, might think that he was passing through very poor land; but just near there is Jones' Creek, where you can get 10 or 12 miles of agricultural land, and it is so in other places in the district.

1251. There is good country on the Castlereagh, near Munderoran? Yes; there is very good country above Munderoran.

1252. The proposed line would go within 30 miles of Coonabarabran? I have never been there, but I know that it is a farming district, and that they have had a mill there for some thirty years past, so that they must grow a considerable quantity of wheat.

1253. The flour from that mill would not be sent to the railway? No. A railway going down the Talbragar will open up a large area of iron-bark country, and the line from Dubbo to Coonamble will go past similar country. The timber out there is, at the present time, too far away to be brought into Dubbo. If a line is taken from Wellington to Murrungundy the difficulty of getting across the Talbragar will prevent teamsters from bringing timber to it.

Charles Cadell, stock and station agent, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

1254. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you resided at Dubbo? During the last ten years.

1255. Have you a knowledge of the country through which the proposed railway would pass? Yes, as far as Coolah. C. Cadell.
2 May, 1900.

1256. How would you class that country? It is good agricultural country. There is timbered country there too. It is good sheep country. When you get further out the country becomes better. You get then on to rich black-soil country.

1257. Does this district compare favourably with other districts to which railways have been constructed? Yes.

1258. It has been stated that stock frequently come from the western districts to Dubbo for feed? Stock have been railed to Dubbo from the west. People here have a lot of country which they generally lease for the use of starving stock in time of drought. Messrs. Tobin and Sons, who have a station up Coonamble way, must have had 40,000 sheep in this neighbourhood last season.

1259. Can you tell us what places starving stock come from to the Dubbo district? This year a lot of stock came from the Lachlan, out Forbes way. A good deal of that stock has been paddocked up Cobborah way. They came by road. Then stock came here from Bourke by rail. They were trucked to the railway siding nearest to the place to which they were going. Two years ago from 50,000 to 100,000 sheep passed through Dubbo to stock up the country out Narrabri way.

1260. Does stock always come to Dubbo? Yes, nearly every year. A large number of stock has been sent out Cobborah way.

1261. I suppose the number of stock coming here depends on the severity of the drought elsewhere? Yes. Out Bourke way there are very few stock now left.

1262. Have stock been sent from Dubbo to other districts for feed? Yes, small lots have been shifted.

1263. In what direction did they go? They went out Cobborah way, and out Munderoran way. They were fortunate in having grass so close at hand.

1264. The north-west district, between Moree and Walgett, suffers severely from droughts? Yes.

1265. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the people there use it to send their starving stock towards this district? I think so. I think, too, that there would be a good deal of stock traffic towards New England. The New England people buy a lot of sheep out this way.

1266. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the Narrabri people bring their stock this way by train, or would they drive them here? If the roads were good they would drive them; but if the roads were bad they would send them by train.

1267. Which do you prefer, a line from Wellington or a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek? I think that if a connection is to be made from the Western to the Southern line, the Werris Creek line should come to Dubbo. The country between Wellington and Murrungundy is very similar to that between Dubbo and Murrungundy. I should like to mention that forage has been sent from the Dubbo district to Narrabri. During the last drought a lot of forage was sent from here.

1268. Is that traffic likely to continue? It all depends upon the seasons.

1269. Has fodder been sent from this district in more than one year. The people in this district have not been farming on a big scale till the last few years.

1270. You have not had much surplus produce before? That is so.

THURSDAY,

* NOTE (on revision):—Live Stock Rates, Bourke to Sydney, are 4½d. per truck per mile, for short distances 8d. per truck per mile; thus bringing half rate to about the same price as fat stock.

THURSDAY, 3 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Dubbo, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Jacob Matthews, Mayor of Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

J. Matthews. 1271. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is Peak Hill from Dubbo? 44 miles.

3 May, 1900. 1272. You have come here prepared to give evidence on the Wellington to Werris Creek railway proposal in its bearing upon the future connection of the Western and Southern line? Yes. I think that a line from Wellington to Werris Creek would be too much to the east to suit Peak Hill; but if a line were taken from Werris Creek to Dubbo, and another line from Narramine through Tomingley and Peak Hill to Parkes or Forbes, they would open up a very large belt of splendid country, and would serve the interests of the Colony at large. The country between Narramine and Peak Hill is perfectly level, except for two little hills which the road crosses, and which could be got round by going a quarter of a mile off the road. Even if you went right over them with the railway you would not need a cutting more than 8 feet deep. From Peak Hill to Parkes a line on which a grade of 1 in 100 could be obtained has been surveyed. By constructing a railway through that country you would open up some of the very best wheat producing land in the Colony. There is no bad country between Peak Hill and Parkes, and a plough could be put into 90 per cent of the land there. There are no stones except for 2 or 3 acres on a hill here and there. The Harvey Ranges would be from 8 to 12 miles from the proposed line, except at Mingelow, where they come in to within about 7 miles. For 80 miles westward from the foot of the Harvey Ranges it is all splendid country, and south from them there is good country for a distance of 150 or 200 miles. A line such as I spoke of would connect that country with the Western line and with the Southern line, and would give us an outlet for our produce both towards Bourke and towards Condobolin. Mr. McDonnell Stuart, the Railway Engineer, was in Peak Hill on the 24th October, 1898, and he reported favourably on the scheme. The area under cultivation at that time was 15,300 acres, and the estimated increase for the following year was 5,800 acres. All this country is newly settled country, and hardly any of it has been selected more than fourteen years; but when people found that it was good wheat-growing land they rapidly increased their cultivation area there. The number of sheep in the district at that time was 193,300, and the quantity of the storekeepers' supplies imported about 500 tons.

1273. To what area of country do those figures refer? To country within 10 miles of the proposed line between Parkes and Narramine. The area of the holdings there now is 530,702 acres. That area is held under conditional lease, conditional purchase, homestead selection, annual lease, and other leases from the Crown, and, with the exception of eight to ten holdings, lies within 10 miles of the route which a line from Parkes to Narramine would follow. The area now under cultivation is 22,992 acres, which more than bears out Mr. Stuart's estimated increase. The number of the holdings in the district is 170, and the number of sheep carried 263,742.

1274. *Mr. Watson.*] You have not included township allotments as holdings? No; the holdings comprise farms and stations. The first township you come to from Narramine is Tomingley, with a population of about 150. Then you come to McPhail, a prosperous mining centre, with a population of about 400. Then comes Peak Hill, with a population of about 1,000; Mingelow, with a population of 30 or 40; and Briertown, with a population of 150 or 200. At Mingelow there is a gap through the mountains called the Greening Gap. From Mingelow to the Gap there is a main road, and as at that place the mountains are narrow the distance across them is only 3 or 4 miles. Once you get through the gap, about 12 miles out from Mingelow, you come on to the flat country again. There is a sort of horse-shoe basin due east from Mingelow. This basin is surrounded by mountains, and contains, I should think, 30,000 acres, all of which are held by about thirty settlers. The basin that I spoke of is on Bolderodgery holding. From the centre of the horse-shoe to Mingelow is 20 miles; to Parkes, 30 miles; to Wellington, 40 miles; and to Molong, 35 miles. At this point I should like to read the following letter from the Under-Secretary for Public Works, dated Sydney, 24th April, 1900, and addressed to the Honorable Member for Condobolin:—

Sir,

With further reference to the request of the Peak Hill Railway League to be furnished with estimates of cost of the proposed railway extensions, Parkes to Dubbo and Parkes to Narramine *via* Peak Hill, I have the honor, by direction of Mr. Secretary O'Sullivan, to inform you that there has been no survey of the length (24½ miles), which would have to be substituted for the northern end of the Parkes-Dubbo line in order that the junction should be at Narramine; but it has been explored, and is roughly estimated to be 11½ miles shorter than the Dubbo connection.

The estimate of the Parkes-Dubbo line, if brought up to date, would amount to about £253,000.

A very rough estimate, founded on an exploration only, as regards the 21½ miles at the northern end, gives about £212,900 as the approximate cost of the Parkes-Narramine line.

1275. *Vice-Chairman.*] In your opinion, if it should be necessary to make a connection between the Western line and the Parkes line, it could be made more easily and more cheaply from Narramine than from Dubbo? Yes; because by that route you would save over £44,000, and from Dubbo to Tomingley is 11½ miles longer than from Nyngan to Tomingley. Then, too, whereas from Dubbo you have to go through hilly country, from Narramine the country is perfectly level.

1276. Which of the two connections with Tomingley would open up the best country? One from Narramine. The country between Dubbo and Tomingley is stringy-bark and iron-bark country, and is not good; whereas the country from Narramine to Tomingley is all good. Our yield of wheat last year was about 12 bushels to the acre; but a great deal of the wheat was cut for hay, because we had heavy frosts late in the season, which injured the early crops. The early wheat was very heavy, and went, I think, fully 25 cwt. to the acre, but late wheat did not do so well, though it averaged 12 bushels to the acre. Of course

course we have had droughts in our district, but we never had stock die from starvation in our immediate vicinity, and last year every available paddock was taken up by people from down the river. I think there were 150,000 sheep and a number of horses in paddocks there all the winter, and there are some there even now. J. Matthews.
3 May, 1900.

1277. Will you describe the mining centres between Dubbo and Parkes? There is no mining done till you get to Tomingley, whether you start from Naramine or from Dubbo; but at Tomingley there are a couple of gold-mines which employ 150 or 200 people. Then you go on to McPhail, where there is a mine employing about 400 people—a big mine which belongs to a very large syndicate. Further on, at Peak Hill, mining operations have been considerably retarded because of the refractory nature of the ores, but during the last two or three months the promoters have had a water-jacket constructed at a cost of about £4,000, and they have also secured the services of Mr. Taylor, the Government Mineralogist. The water-jacket was started more than a fortnight ago, and it has been used ever since without a hitch. The directors of the mine told me the other day that there was no doubt about the success of this treatment. With the water-jacket they now put through 18 tons in twenty-four hours, but they hope to be able to put through 25 tons in twenty-four hours. They now use 2 tons of coke a day, or over 700 tons a year. All that coke is now carted from Forbes.

1278. If the treatment of refractory ores which you speak of proves a success, will it be followed at other mines in the district? Yes.

1279. Is there a good body of refractory ore there? They think so. They have 1,500 tons at grass, and I have never heard of there being a shortage. There must be a good supply of ore or Mr. Taylor would not have given up his Government position to take the management of the mine. If the water-jacket is enlarged, they will use 1,000 tons of coke a year at Peak Hill for it alone. The total output at the Proprietary mine has been about 20,000 oz., and during the last two or three years their operations have been practically stopped because of the refractory nature of their ore. A cyanide company bought 3,000 tons of tailings, which they are treating. At Alectown there are no reefs, I understand, but there are alluvial workings.

1280. Are we to understand that you would sooner see a railway made from Dubbo to Werris Creek than from Wellington to Werris Creek, because you are afraid that if the line were taken from Wellington it might prevent the construction of a line from Narramine towards the Southern line? Yes.

1281. If the proposed line were made from Dubbo to Werris Creek, would you find a market for your produce on the North and North-western lines? I think our market lies out in the direction of Wilcannia, Bourke, Walgett, and Brewarrina. Up Morce way we get into a district which is served by the New England country.

1282. Would a line from Narramine to the Southern line stand on its own merits apart from its value as a connecting line, because of the land which it would open up for settlement? I think so. Whenever a block of land in the district becomes available for settlement there are from 100 to 300 applicants for it.

1283. Would a connection between Curlewis and Gilgandra suit you as well as a connection between Dubbo and Werris Creek? Yes, and a great deal of railway construction would be saved by making that line.

John Dight Mackay, pastoralist, Bulgandramine, sworn, and examined:—

1284. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been over any of the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? No; though I have been up the Talbragar from Dubbo to Cobborah. J. D.
Mackay.
3 May, 1900.

1285. The feeling of the people down your way is in favour of the Dubbo-Werris Creek line, because it would improve the chances of a connection from Narramine to Parkes? Yes; and because it would give us a shorter route to the Northern district.

1286. What advantage would you gain by being able to get easily from Dubbo to the Northern line? During the last two years a large quantity of fodder has been carried by train from this district to Narrabri, and a large number of stock, chiefly from the Coonamble district and the country beyond have come into this district for grass.

1287. Then you anticipate that if the line were made from Dubbo to Werris Creek the people down your way would be able to use it to send fodder to the Northern districts? Yes.

1288. There would be a demand for fodder only in times of drought, I presume? Yes.

1289. You would not expect a regular and permanent trade in fodder? There is always a considerable amount of stock traffic between this district and the district further north. The bulk of our store stock goes towards the Liverpool Plains to be fattened, and it seems to me that in the near future stock will be able to travel only by rail, because the stock routes are being very much curtailed, and have deteriorated very much by the traffic along them, and by the burrs which grow on them. Reasonable railway rates would be cheaper and more satisfactory to stockowners than droving.

1290. Do you think that railway rates will ever be low enough to allow you to truck store stock? I see no reason why not.

1291. At present the rates are very high, unless it be for starving stock? They seem to us unduly and unreasonably high.

1292. What do you think it would pay a man to give for railway carriage for 1,000 sheep for a distance of over 150 miles? Unless sheep are travelling immediately after shearing I am satisfied that it would be profitable to train them even at the present rates, because the depreciation on the stock routes is so great. The stock routes are utterly unimproved, and are always depreciating, so that the wool gets covered with mud and burrs. I am sure that the depreciation of the sheep is equal to 1s. an animal at present prices for mutton and wool, where stock travel over 200 miles. One reason why the railway is not used so much as it might be is the shocking treatment which stock receive in the trains. They are shunted and knocked about in such a manner that where they are at all weak the losses are too large to make it profitable to send them by train, but, in my opinion, the training of store sheep is increasing.

1293. I suppose that as settlement advances, the size of the stock routes will be lessened? Apparently so; they seem to be curtailing them in many places now.

1294. Are there any other things which would make the proposed line valuable? The facilities which it would give for the carriage of stock and of fodder are the two main reasons, so far as local interests are concerned, for the construction of the line; but another advantage its construction would have is that it would shorten the route from Brisbane to Melbourne and Adelaide.

J. D. Mackay. 1295. Do you not think that, to construct the line for that purpose, would be to go a good deal in advance of requirements? Probably it would. In speaking in favour of the line, I have looked upon the proposal merely as it affects this district.

3 May, 1900.

1296. Do you agree with Mr. Matthews in what he said about the land lying south of Narramine? Yes; all that district is very good. I might mention that the statistics which he gave you did not include any land within 12 miles of Narramine or 10 miles of Parkes.

1297. Your station is one of the few leasehold areas on the route of a line from Narramine to Parkes? Yes. There are three such holdings.

1298. Is the land comprising your leasehold area suitable for settlement? Yes.

1299. I understand that the lease will shortly expire? My lease expires in 1903. I recently redivided, and there was a great rush for the land, there being 100 applications for most of the blocks. That land has been settled within the last eighteen months.

1300. What is the land on the leaseholds of the other runs like? It is excellent land.

1301. Do those leases fall in this year? One of them falls in in August, 1900, but I am not sure when the other falls in.

1302. But it cannot be very long before both leases expire? No. There is one leasehold area not included in the statistics which have been given to you which falls in next July. That land has been already surveyed, and lies within 12 miles of Narramine.

1303. I understand that the greater part of the land along the line that you have suggested is already settled upon? Yes; a great deal of it only recently. Much of it has been taken up in comparatively small areas, and it is necessary that the holders should cultivate.

1304. Would you say that a connection between Narramine and Parkes is justified by reason of the quality of the land through which it would pass, apart from other considerations? Yes. The average rainfall at my station, taking the records since 1882, has been between 21 and 22 inches; in 1888 it was below 12 inches; but in no other year has it been below 16 inches.

1305. You have come here to-day because you wish the Committee to keep in view, when considering the question of connecting the Western and Northern lines, the great probability of the construction of a line from Parkes to Narramine? Yes. A line from Parkes to Narramine would be a paying one, and would require no costly works. Between Narramine and Peak Hill only five small culverts would be required.

1306. Such a line would serve a number of centres of population? Yes. The population of Tomingley and its neighbourhood is about 1,100. It is a mining centre which has been profitably worked for fifteen or sixteen years, and last year about 1,000 oz. of gold were sent away from there. Then the McPhail Mining Company pays £1,800 a month in wages, and the year before last it paid a dividend upon an enormous capital. Everything points to prosperity in the district.

1307. In suggesting a connection from Narramine to Parkes, have you had in view the probable extension of the line from Forbes towards the Great Southern line? Yes; I would also like to mention that there has been an agitation for a line from the Bogan Gates to Trangie, but it seems to me that a more serviceable connection would be a line from Narramine to Parkes, and a branch line could then be taken out from Peak Hill in a westerly direction.

1308. West from Peak Hill, how far would the agricultural land extend? Certainly as far as a line joining Nyngan with Condobolin.

1309. That would be between 50 and 60 miles? Yes; the country continues about the same as you go west, but the rainfall decreases.

1310. When you get out towards Gilgunnia you get into purely pastoral country? Yes.

1311. In that class of country you cannot afford to have your railways too close together? No; a branch line going west from Peak Hill would tap a lot of excellent farming country which lies within 30 or 40 miles of Peak Hill.

Thomas Bridle, farmer and grazier, Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

T. Bridle.
3 May, 1900.

1312. *Mr. Shepherd.* I understand that you advocate the construction of a line from Narramine to Parkes? Yes.

1313. In preference to a line from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes; a line from Wellington to Werris Creek would be of little use to us, even as a connection with the Northern line, because of the long distance which we should have to travel in order to get to it. I consider that the country between Narramine and Parkes is better country, both because of its agriculture and because of its mining possibilities, than the country which the proposed line would serve, and it is also country through which a much more easily and cheaply constructed line than the proposed line could be taken. I am well acquainted with the country from Narramine right through to Tumut. I came here a little over fourteen years ago, and took up land 12 or 14 miles west of Peak Hill. I considered then that the land would be especially good for wheat-growing and for grapes, and I have never had any cause to complain of it. Although we have passed through prolonged droughts, there has never been a total failure of the crops. There has been partial failures, but I have never had a bit of land which I could not mow or cut. You can make 95 per cent. of the land between Narramine and Parkes, and extending 20 or 30 miles to the west, a wheat paddock. To the east the good land is limited by the Harvey Ranges. There are a good many small selectors in the district, and as they do not hold sufficiently large areas to be able to live by grazing alone, they must be provided with road or with railway communication. Of course, the better country is, from an agricultural point of view, the softer the ground, and the worse the roads. I live between 38 and 40 miles from Parkes, and I find that I cannot increase my cultivation, because in a moist season the road gets cut up so badly that the price of carriage takes away all my profits. At the present time wheat is worth about 5s. per cwt., and wool about £5 per cwt., so that the result will be that unless good roads be provided the wheat-growing industry must be destroyed. As the Condobolin line only cost about £2,100 a mile, I see no reason why a similar line should not be constructed through the country I speak of. I think that it would be a better speculation to make a railway than to make a road, and the settlers in the district have been promised assistance. Close to the Harvey Ranges there is a belt of mineral country which the railway would serve. Of course, if you kept in close to the ranges you would have comparatively little agricultural land on the eastern side of the line, but by keeping more to the west you could have 15 miles of good country on each side of the line, country that would produce from a ton and a half to 2 tons of hay per acre. My area under crop last year was 470 acres. I cut 55 acres

T. Bridle.
3 May, 1900.

acres for hay, and I got 100 tons of hay. Then I stripped 415 acres, and got 1,626 bags of wheat. Those were my results in a dry season. I have been paying 1s. 6d. a bag to have my wheat carried away, and although I have never refused the offer of a teamster, there are three or four loads still to be taken away. If the season had been a wet one I could not have had my grain taken away at a price which would pay me, and I should have had to give up farming. I have a man cultivating on the halves system with me. He got an unemployed ticket to come up here, and has a wife and two children. He is a man well worth supporting, and is doing well just now; but if I had to stop growing wheat he would have to go back to Sydney. The district is so good that a line through it must eventually pay. Mr. Stuart, in his report, gives a fair account of the country, and he admits that the line would pay from the start. When I took up my land fourteen years ago I had two men at £1 a week, and 10s. a week for victuals, working for three weeks in a garden of 2 acres, and then the land was not properly grubbed, and it cost another 30s. a week to finish it. Where the timber is dead, however, I can get it grubbed out for very little. A great many people out there would put a large area under wheat if they could get it away.

1314. How far are you from the railway now? Half of my land is within 38 or 40 miles of Parkes. I have obtained as much as 7 and 8 bags of wheat to the acre, and my son has obtained as much as 8 bags to the acre on his land. A man who is living within 31 miles of the railway has 2,500 bags of wheat which he will not be able to get drawn away this year, and if next summer turned out wet he would have to discontinue cultivating, and live by sheep-farming, and so would I. Last year I paid £400 for machinery, and I may clear that amount this year; but if the seasons are good the roads will be so cut up that I shall not be able to get my wheat away. I have no doubt that a line through that country would pay, because where people have good land they can bear to be taxed; whereas if you tax people on poor country too heavily you will tax them off the land altogether. The Government should be able to make any line pay in good country, either by extending the betterment principle or by imposing taxation.

1315. What is the quality of the wheat grown in the district you are speaking of? It is the best wheat in the Colony. I have obtained 2s. 9d. a bushel for some of my wheat in Sydney this year, and the rest of it is on its way to England. I was one of the first shippers with the Co-operative Company, and my wheat was classed by an expert as of "A" quality.

1316. You have not found out yet whether it pays to send wheat to England? No. Last year I sold my wheat locally, and I did not get paid at all.

1317. In your opinion is it more profitable to use land for agriculture than to depasture sheep? I think that agriculture should pay at least twice as well as pastoral pursuits, and 1 acre of farm land will furnish as much traffic to a railway as 20 acres of land under sheep. I can get my farming done on the halves system, and if I get 4 bags of wheat to the acre, and 8s. per bag, I make 16s. an acre that way, which is a great deal more than one can make with stock.

1318. Would not four bags to the acre be a pretty heavy yield? Yes.

1319. What is the average size of the holdings in your district? Some of them are very small, while a great many people have holdings of between 2,000 and 3,000 acres. The conditional purchases run up to 2,560 acres, while holdings of another class average from 800 to 1,000 acres. These men must either have railway communication or must leave the district, because they have not enough land to maintain themselves by keeping stock, and they cannot grow wheat profitably because of the heavy cost of road carriage.

1320. A man could not make a living on 40 acres? No, unless he had his land planted with vines.

1321. What do you consider a fair area for the maintenance of a man and his family? I should be sorry to have less than 2,560 acres; but with agriculture, and having a good outlet for his produce, a man might do with much less. With hard work and care a man might make a living on 200 or 300 acres; but, if through misfortune he got into the hands of the storekeepers or bankers, he would be ruined. Without a railway the small holders must mortgage their property, and then the land will all drift into the hands of large holders. At the present time there is a good class of men on the land, and they will work well if the Government gives them a railway.

1322. Is it usual amongst the farmers in that district to grow their own vegetables, potatoes, and fruit? For the last three or four years there has been a drought, and vegetables could not be grown without irrigation.

1323. I suppose they all keep a few pigs and poultry? Yes.

1324. So that living is very cheap with them? Yes; it does not cost them much to live.

1325. Do farmers there seem prosperous and contented on the whole? Yes.

1326. But they feel the handicap of their distance from a market? Yes, and it is becoming worse every year, because as traffic increases the roads become worse.

1327. At what distance from a railway station will farming pay? Within 12 or 15 miles. A man ought to be able to get to the station in a day, so that he can send in his produce on a day's notice.

1328. Would the country you describe be within 15 miles of a railway from Parkes to Narramine? On the eastern side of the line it would be within 7 or 8 miles.

1329. What proportion of the land in the district that you have been speaking of is fit for agriculture? I think that 95 per cent. of the land on the western side of the line would be good for agriculture, and for 8 miles on the eastern side of the line 80 per cent. is good land. Further to the east the country is barren and useless.

1330. Do you feel satisfied that, in the event of railway construction there, the increase in population would be very large? Yes. A railway would promote agricultural settlement, and would also assist the mining industry. If the Peak Hill Proprietary have discovered the proper way of treating their refractory ores immense quantities of coke, coal, limestone, and ironstone will have to be conveyed there, and the railway would very much lessen the cost of carriage. I own 1,500 shares in an adjoining mine, and I have no doubt of their value. There are five small towns on the route of the line. I have been connected with mining for over forty years, and although I have seen scores of mining towns almost deserted, these towns have become populated again. The connection with the Northern line would be of great assistance to the district, and would be of national importance, because under present circumstances the blowing up of a bridge or two between Sydney and Newcastle would completely disconnect the northern system from the other railway systems of the Colony. These connecting lines are of value, too, in allowing an interchange of products between the various parts of the Colony; and it is better that our people should supply themselves in this way than that they should obtain supplies from other parts of the world. Eventually the proposed line would be a paying line, and would be of great advantage to people in the country.

Robert

Robert George Dulhunty, Inspector of Stock, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

R. G.
Dulhunty.
3 May, 1900.

1331. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you occupied your present position? Twenty-two years. I have been in the district for fifty years, so that I know it thoroughly. In round numbers, there are 1,600,000 sheep in the Dubbo district this year.

1332. Compared with other districts, do you consider it a good grazing district? Yes; it is a very good district.

1333. I understand that it is never very severely affected by droughts? Sometimes we have droughts; but they are never very severe. I have also charge of the Canonbar district. When you get beyond Nevertire you get into country in which the stock suffer. That district has recently lost 60 per cent. of its stock through drought, whereas the stock in our district have increased.

1334. Has it ever been necessary to send stock from this district to other districts for grass? Yes.

1335. In what direction do they go? Most of them go in the direction of New England.

1336. We have been told that the surplus stock is sent from here to the Liverpool Plains to be fattened? Yes; but of late years we have not had very much surplus stock to send to the Liverpool Plains, because what we have had have been sent into the Canonbar district. We have sent a lot of stock to Goulburn, Yass, and places in that direction to be fattened.

1337. I understand that starving stock has been sent to this district in times of drought? Yes; last year we had something like 2,000,000 stock in the district, which had come chiefly from the Bourke, Coonamble, and Walgett districts.

1338. Do many sheep come here from the north-west districts? A large number of sheep are coming from the north-west districts now into the Cobar district, where there is grass.

1339. How do they come? By train where they can. Very large numbers came by train last year.

1340. What distance would people drive sheep rather than send them by train? It depends very much on the season. When the season is very dry people cannot drive their sheep at all.

1341. In an ordinary season what distance would sheep be driven? Fat stock would travel on foot nearly as far as Dubbo in a good season, and take the train there. The travelling stock reserves and roads into Dubbo are very fair; but beyond Dubbo, and between Dubbo and Sydney, Bathurst or Mudgee, there are only lanes, and the sheep cannot travel.

1342. Do you think that the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line would be largely used for the conveyance of stock from the north and the north-west? I think that it would.

William Handover, produce merchant and timber contractor, Dubbo, sworn, and examined:—

W.
Handover.
3 May, 1900.

1343. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you are personally acquainted with the iron-bark forests in this district? Yes. The most suitable timber for railway purposes that we get in Dubbo is the iron-bark.

1344. Has most of the good timber near Dubbo been cut out? No.

1345. At what distance from Dubbo is there still a considerable quantity of iron-bark available? Within a radius of from 10 to 25 miles.

1346. Is that a long distance to draw iron-bark for sleepers? No; it is only a fair distance.

1347. Is there any large area of iron-bark forests from that point along the proposed line? There is good timber from Dubbo right away to Gulargambone, a distance of 75 miles. At the present time we are supplying sleepers for the Brewarrina line. We have supplied about 147,000 sleepers, all of which have been cut within 25 miles of Dubbo.

1348. *Mr. Watson.*] If good iron-bark can be obtained within 12 or 25 miles of Dubbo, why do sleeper-getters go further out? There are a large number of teams plying between Dubbo and Coonamble, and they take timber as back loading rather than return empty. Teams have brought timber from the other side of Gilgandra, a distance of 45 miles, at the same rate as other teams have brought timber 23 miles.

1349. Is there much iron-bark from Murrungundy due north to Murrumbidgee? There is about the same quantity of iron-bark there as there is in the country north from Dubbo.

1350. Where does the best timber grow? The belt of timber runs due north to a point 12 or 13 miles north of Tooraweenah, and in some places it may run 10 miles to the east.

1351. At Murrungundy a railway would tap the ironbark country? Yes.

1352. Would not a line from Wellington to Werris Creek, *via* Murrungundy, and a line from Dubbo to Coonamble, serve that iron-bark country very well? Yes; but it would be better served by a line to Werris Creek from Dubbo than from Wellington. Within the last twelve months Mr. Ewers and myself have supplied something like 250,000 iron-bark sleepers and about 500,000 feet of girder stuff to the Government. All that timber was obtained within 25 miles of Dubbo, and we are still getting sleepers here for the Dubbo-Coonamble line. There is sufficient timber on the Dubbo-Coonamble line to last for the next thirty years. We have some 40,000 sleepers already cut for the first section of that line, and the total number of sleepers required will be something like 260,000.

SATURDAY, 5 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Commercial Hotel," Cobborah, at 9 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. |

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

George Paterson, farmer, Bonny Plain, near Cobborah, sworn, and examined:—

G. Paterson.
5 May, 1900.

1353. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far are you from Cobborah? 7 miles, on the road to Leadville.

1354. What is the country like from Murrungundy to Cobborah, and from Cobborah to Dunedoo? Most of the country between Murrungundy and Dunedoo would be a farming district if it were given railway communication.

1355.

1355. Is the country equally good on each side of the river? From Cobborah to Dunedoo there is very little difference; but from Cobborah to Murrungundy the country is not so good on the northern side of the river as it is on the southern side.

G. Paterson.
5 May, 1900.

1356. Is there not a good deal of cultivation between Murrungundy and Cobborah on both sides of the river? Yes, and it is increasing every year.

1357. Is there still a considerable area of land fit for agriculture, and within 15 miles of the proposed railway route, which has not yet been brought under the plough? Yes.

1358. What is the reason of that? The want of railway facilities for getting produce away.

1359. What does it cost to cart produce to a railway station now? It costs about 6d. a bushel to send wheat to Mudgee, which is our nearest railway station.

1360. Is that charge regarded as a serious handicap? It is the cost of road carriage which has kept the district back, from the time it was first settled.

1361. Are you acquainted with the land within 10 miles of Wellington? Only along the road. I know that it is a great wheat district.

1362. How far is Cobborah from the route of the proposed line? About 6 or 8 miles from the nearest point.

1363. Then it would be well within the influence of that line? Yes.

1364. Do you know anything about the country beyond Dunedoo, towards Coolah? No doubt it is splendid farming and pastoral land. Going that way you go through the great Pine Ridge property, which is beautiful country.

1365. Is the land along the route of the proposed line suitable only for agriculture, or would it be used better for mixed farming? On the frontage on both sides of the river from Cobborah to Coolah the land could all be used for agriculture if it were required. There are places 10 miles across where the land could be used for agriculture.

1366. Can the Talbragar valley be described as a highly fertile district for 10 miles on each side of the river? There is no doubt about it. The land is very good from here to Coolah.

1367. What yield of wheat is obtained in the district? If we do not get 20 bushels to the acre we consider the crop a partial failure.

1368. How long have you been here? Twenty years.

1369. Are there any holdings which have been under crop for the greater part of that time? Yes.

1370. What would be the average yield? I have not kept a record; but anything under 30 bushels is not considered a good crop. I think I should not be over-estimating the average yield if I put it at 15 bushels to the acre.

1371. How long have you been cultivating? I have been cultivating one of my paddocks for fifteen years, and I have got as much as eight bags, and as little as three bags, from an acre on that paddock. We expect 20 or 25 bushels from an acre for a fair crop.

1372. Are there any large leaseholds shortly to fall in to the Government which may be made available for close settlement? There are 10,000 acres on the Tucklin and Bolaro Holdings which will be thrown open shortly, and I suppose 8,000 acres of that land are fit for cultivation.

1373. How many acres of the Talbragar land would maintain a man and his family in decent comfort, year in and year out? Well, I have been living for the last twenty-three years on what I make out of 300 acres.

1374. Have you been satisfied? One has to cut one's coat according to one's cloth; but 300 acres are not enough.

1375. Would 640 acres be enough? Yes, a man could make a living on 640 acres; but if he wished to keep a few sheep or cattle, and to have a bit of spare ground, it would require 1,000 acres to make him contented.

1376. Will the district grow other crops besides those you have mentioned? No doubt about it if we had the rain. The ground is strong enough to grow anything, and we have occasionally grown very good crops of maize, getting as much as 70 bushels to the acre. During the last five or six years the seasons have been unusually dry in this district.

1377. What other advantages would accrue to the district by the construction of the proposed line? As a connecting line it would be useful in many ways; it would be useful for moving stock from place to place in time of drought, and for moving troops across the country in time of war.

1378. Do you expect to find any market for your produce in the northern and north-western parts of the Colony? Not in the New England district, but the proposed line would enable us to send produce into districts like the Bourke, Cobar, and Coonamble districts. To take produce to Mudgee is like taking coal to Newcastle, and to take it by road to Coonamble costs so much that there is no profit in doing so. Last year we had to cut our wheat for hay because the grain was no good.

1379. Does your distance from a railway station prevent you from sending away small consignments of fat stock? Yes; that has been a loss to us.

1380. Do you think that with a railway small consignments would frequently be sent from the district? Yes, and the stock would be delivered in Sydney in good condition. The 50 miles of road between here and Mudgee are chiefly metalled, so that sheep whose feet are soft after coming off cultivation paddocks can hardly travel over the distance.

1381. Is this district considered a good fattening district? Yes.

1382. Are sheep ever sent to this district from elsewhere during drougthy years? Yes. With regard to the fattening qualities of the district, I might mention that two years ago I sold a small lot of sheep to a butcher in Gulgong, and when I went in a fortnight afterwards I saw one of them, an aged ewe, which weighed 108 lbs., a 2-year old wether, 90 lbs., and a lamb, ten months old, 58 lb. The heaviest sheep which I have killed myself weighed 105 lbs. I keep Lincolns chiefly.

Thomas Paterson Yeo, farmer and grazier, Elong Elong, near Murrungundy, sworn, and examined:—

1383. *Mr. Watson.*] How far is your place from Cobborah? 12 miles. It lies in the direction of Dubbo.

1384. What effect would the construction of the proposed line have upon the production of the district round Elong Elong? If the proposed railway were constructed more of the land would be used for agriculture.

T. P. Yeo.
5 May, 1900.

- T. P. Yeo.
5 May, 1900.
1385. Is there more land available for agriculture than is now being cultivated? Yes.
1386. For how many miles would the agricultural land extend across the route of the proposed railway from Elong Elong? On the southern side it would extend 10 miles, and on the northern side not so far, because you get out into iron-bark country there.
1387. Several routes have been suggested to serve this district—a line from Wellington to Werris Creek, a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek, and an extension of the line from Mudgee;—which, in your opinion, would best serve the district? A line from Wellington to Werris Creek and an extension of the Mudgee line.
1388. That would be two lines;—if you were going to make a line to Cobborah, from what point on the existing line would you start? From Wellington.
1389. Why is that? I am not acquainted with the land between Cobborah and Mudgee.
1390. Is it good country from Cobborah to Wellington? It is good agricultural country.
1391. Do you know the country out towards Coolah or north towards Binnaway? No; I am not acquainted with it at all.
1392. Do you corroborate what Mr. Paterson has said about the productiveness of this district? Yes.
1393. Does much stock come through here going towards Werris Creek or the Liverpool Plains? Yes; a lot of stock passes through this way.
1394. In which direction does the stock route run? There is a stock route from here to Mudgee.
1395. That is the way that fat stock would travel? Yes.
1396. Have you seen store stock going to the Liverpool Plains? Yes; I have seen them coming up the river from Dubbo.
1397. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you think that it would be better, in the interests of the district, to have a connection with Wellington than one with Mudgee? I am not in a position to say which would be the better route.

Francis Scheibel, senior-constable, Cobborah, sworn, and examined:—

- F. Scheibel.
5 May, 1900.
1398. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I understand that you are prepared to furnish certain returns to the Committee? Yes; I have the crop and population returns, which were collected in January last.
1399. What are the boundaries of the district to which your figures apply? From Cobborah, the boundary of the district runs along the Talbragar as far as Murrungundy, a distance of 18 miles. It then follows Spicer's Creek as far as the Wellington-road, a distance of 30 miles, and comes back on to Sandy Creek, a distance of about 20 miles. Then it goes along Sandy Creek to the Talbragar, a distance of 30 miles. It also runs out from Cobborah towards Gulgong, a distance of 19 miles; on to Redbank, 12 miles, and across to Tucklin, a distance of 1½ miles. The area of cultivation in this district last year was 6,805 acres, of which 5,263 acres were under wheat. The yield of wheat was 53,192 bushels. The area of Crown lands under lease was 158,167 acres, and the area of freehold property, 48,190 acres.
1400. What is the population of the district? Nine hundred and fifty.
1401. Are the people here chiefly engaged in agriculture, or do they combine agriculture with grazing? They go in for mixed farming.
1402. Are they generally pretty well contented? They are fairly well contented, though they say that they would have more land under cultivation if they could get their produce away.
1403. How far have they to cart their produce generally? Mudgee, the nearest railway station, is 47 miles from Cobborah.
1404. Do they consider that distance too great a handicap? Yes.
1405. What would be about the average yield in this district? I have not been here sufficiently long to be able to say, but the people here consider it to be from 15 to 18 bushels to the acre.
1406. I suppose wheat is the principal crop grown? Yes.
1407. Is it generally grown for grain or for hay? Most of it is grown for grain.
1408. *Mr. Levien.*] Does much stock come through this district, going towards Werris Creek, from Dubbo or Wellington? A great many stock travel through here, but they are mostly going on to Luo to be trucked.
1409. What about store stock? A number of store stock travel out from Dubbo through this district.

James Bell, farmer and grazier, Narran, near Cobborah, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Bell.
5 May, 1900.
1410. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Are you an old resident of this locality? I have been here about eleven years.
1411. Would the proposed railway serve the interests of this district? Yes.
1412. Do you think it would be largely used? Yes; very largely used.
1413. Which route would you prefer—that from Wellington or that from Dubbo? So far as the residents of the district are concerned, one route would do as well as the other; but, whereas a line from Dubbo along the Talbragar would run in the same direction as the present Western line, and pass through 20 miles of country which is already served by that line, the line from Wellington would go at right angles to the Western line.
1414. How far is your property from the route of the proposed line? About 4 miles.
1415. Has much land been taken up between Cobborah and Wellington? Pretty well all the land has been taken up between those two places. On my holding people have taken up land 5 miles back from the river. The holdings are continuous from there to Wellington.
1416. Do you endorse the evidence that has been given by other witnesses this morning? Yes.
1417. Have you any information which you would like to give to the Committee? I should like to say that north of the Talbragar there is agricultural land on the eastern side of the proposed route, but, on the western side, there is a large forest reserve and about 50 miles of iron-bark country, the timber on which would be suitable for railway purposes. Teamsters have come 70 and 80 miles to get timber from that forest, which speaks well for its merits.
1418. That timber could be used in the construction of the proposed line? I think so. At the present time this district is labouring under considerable hardships. It is costing us now 7d. a bushel to take wheat to Mudgee, and 5d. a bushel to take it to Dubbo. As the price is only 2s 3d. a bushel, by the time we have paid railway charges and cartage there is very little left. Our present situation prevents us from growing anything but wheat, and we cannot get any market for our hay.

1419. How would a connection with the Mudgee line suit the requirements of the district? I think that the residents of the immediate district would prefer a connection with Mudgee. My place is on the boundary line between Mudgee and Dubbo. J. Bell.
5 May, 1900.
1420. Do you think the connection with Mudgee would be more desirable than the connection with Wellington or with Dubbo? I think it would, in the interests of the district.
1421. Which line would give the best return to the country—a line from Mudgee, a line from Wellington, or a line from Dubbo? I think that the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek would be the best, and would produce most revenue. Several questions have been asked about the stock traffic through this district to the Liverpool Plains. The graziers on the Liverpool Plains draw most of their stock from Dubbo, Bourke, and the western districts, and most of that stock comes through this district. I have known as many as 10,000 sheep to come through my run in one week.
1422. Does much travelling stock go through this district in the direction of Wellington or Dubbo? In the season we have, I suppose, 100,000 sheep passing through the district, taking both store stock and starving stock into calculation.
1423. Do you refer to stock going in the direction of Wellington or Dubbo? No; to stock coming from the west. Stock comes here from the west and from the south-west.
1424. Would the proposed railway be used for the conveyance of starving stock, or would the rates be too high? No; I think the railway would be used.

Alexander Douglas, grazier, Bomely, near Murrungundy, sworn, and examined:—

1425. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the size of your holding? I have about 8,000 acres of leased land. A. Douglas.
5 May, 1900.
1426. Is any part of your holding now under cultivation? Yes; about 40 acres.
1427. What is the carrying capacity of your run? There are about 5,000 acres improved, and the land carries about a sheep to 2 acres, taking it altogether.
1428. Do you find yourself handicapped by your distance from the railway station? Undoubtedly.
1429. How far are you from a railway station? 33 or 34 miles, and it costs me about 30s. a ton to send my wool there.
1430. Is the land which you hold suitable for agriculture? Part of it is, but it is not very good country; it is what I would call second-rate agricultural country.
1431. What yield have you obtained from the 40 acres that you are cultivating? Last year I got about 15 bushels to the acre.
1432. How far are you from the Talbragar? I have a frontage to the Talbragar, and the land on the frontage is fairly good; but off the river, going northwards, the country is only second-rate.
1433. The land runs back into inferior iron-bark country? Yes.
1434. What is the character of the land on the south side of the river? Between my place and Wellington it is the very best wheat-growing land.
1435. How much of the frontage land on the northern side of the river is good agricultural land? I have about 600 acres fairly good and about 50 acres really good.
1436. Is there not a fringe of good agricultural land on the northern side of the Talbragar? The poor country comes down pretty close to the river on the north side, but the country on the south side is good.
1437. Would the interests of this district be best served by a connection with Wellington, by a connection with Dubbo, or by a connection with Mudgee? A connection with Mudgee would give us a direct route to the Sydney market. If we could not get a connection with Mudgee a connection with Wellington would be preferable to a connection with Dubbo. I do not think the people here would take advantage of the line if it went to Dubbo, though where I am living it might be used.
1438. Why would the people here be disinclined to use a line coming out from Dubbo? Because of the extra haulage which they would have to pay. Farmers have told me that if the railway came from Dubbo they would continue to send their produce to Mudgee by team. A line from Wellington would go through better country than a line from Dubbo, and would obtain more traffic.

MONDAY, 7 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Commercial Hotel," Coolah, at 9 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (Vice-Chairman).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.	JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Thomas Holden Richard Preston, first-class constable, Coolah, sworn, and examined:—

1439. *Vice-Chairman.*] Can you furnish the Committee with the crop and population returns for this district? Yes; with the returns which were taken in January of this year. T. H. R.
Preston.
7 May, 1900.
1440. To what district do your figures refer? The figures refer to the counties of Lincoln and Napier. The greater part of the district lies to the south of the proposed line, though the district extends also about 12 miles northward. The area under wheat in the county of Lincoln, in January last, was 478 acres, and the area cut for wheaten hay was 100 acres, while the total area under crops of all kinds was about 800 acres. In Napier, the total area under wheat grown for grain was 400 acres, and grown for hay 230 acres, and the total area under crops of all kinds about 900 acres; making a total cultivation in the two counties between 1,700 acres and 1,800 acres.
1441. Do those figures show an increase on the figures for the previous year? There was an increase of about 350 acres in the area under wheat. The greater part of the cultivation in the county of Lincoln lies close to Cobborah, and the greater part of the cultivation in the county of Napier is on the Castlereagh and up north. There is very little cultivation in Coolah itself. 1442.

- T. H. R. Preston.
7 May, 1900.
1442. What is the population of the district? About 700.
1443. Does that show an increase on previous years? Yes; there has been a considerable increase this year.
1444. What is the reason for that increase? I think it is because more land has been made available for settlement.
1445. And is more land to be thrown open for settlement this year? Yes; I believe that a good deal of land will be thrown open shortly. Land is being surveyed on both Queensborough and Gundare holdings—I think 17,000 acres on Gundare, and a large area on Queensborough.
1446. Does much travelling stock pass through Coolah from Dubbo? A good deal. Most of it is on its way to the meat-works near Muswellbrook.
1447. Where does that stock come from? The large stock generally comes from Queensland and from other places up north.
1448. *Mr. Levien.*] They do not touch Werris Creek at all? It is very seldom that anything comes from Werris Creek.
1449. Do they come from New England at all? Sometimes.
1450. Many? Not a great number. Most of the cattle come from Queensland.
1451. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Does your return of the population include women and children? Yes.

John William Swanston, station manager, Booyamuirra, sworn, and examined:—

- J. W. Swanston.
7 May, 1900.
1452. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the area of your holding? About 5,000 acres. I was managing the Queensborough holding for about three years.
1453. Have you any information with which you would like to furnish the Committee? I have been in this and the Leadville districts for about twelve years, and during the whole of that time I have been engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits. There is a large area of Crown land in this district, which will shortly be thrown open for settlement. I think the leasehold area of the Queensborough holding is equal to about 25,000 acres, and I think that the leasehold of the Botheroe holding also falls in next July. There is also some land on Gundare which will fall in shortly. The proposed line goes throughout Botheroe and Queensborough holdings.
1454. The nearest point on the proposed line will be about 17 miles from Coolah? Yes.
1455. For what purposes would the land which is thrown open for settlement be taken up? For pastoral purposes, I suppose, though a good deal of the land is suitable for agriculture. I do not think people can use it for agriculture without a railway.
1456. It is too far for a market? Yes.
1457. Are you engaged in agriculture in this district at all? Yes.
1458. For station purposes? Yes.
1459. There is no mill in the district? No.
1460. Flour has to be brought here from Mudgee? Yes, and from Coonabarabran and Gulgong.
1461. The principal industry here is sheep and cattle raising? Chiefly sheep-raising.
1462. Is the district suitable for cattle? A good deal of it is.
1463. If the proposed railway were constructed would the greater part of the district be within its influence? Yes; a considerable number of cattle are fattened on the Tongy holding, within 4 miles of Coolah, in a south-east direction.
1464. Would the district be within a reasonable distance of the proposed line for agricultural traffic? Yes; I think that agriculture would pay here if there were a railway, because the soil is well suited for grain. Three years ago, although the season was a dry one, I stripped 24½ bushels to the acre from 14 acres, and a good deal of the grain had already fallen to the ground.
1465. Would a large part of the land which is to be thrown open for settlement be suitable for agriculture? A great part of the land on Queensborough and Botheroe holdings would be suitable for agriculture. I cannot give you much information about the Gundare land.
1466. Do you usually have good seasons in this district? Yes; our average rainfall for the past ten years has been nearly 31 inches. Our record is as follows:—1890, 37·86; 1891, 31·57; 1892, 34·61; 1893, 35·55; 1894, 27·31; 1895, 24·68; 1896, 27·35; 1897, 19·93; 1898, 31·56; 1899, 19·99; 1900, 10·63 (to 1st May). Like many inland districts, Coolah has maintained a fair average; 1899, which was supposed to be a drougthy year, gave us nearly 20 inches.
1467. Does the rain generally come at times when it would be beneficial to wheat crops? Yes; but we are so far from market that last year we had to cut our wheat for hay, although it would have yielded between 30 and 40 bushels of grain to the acre.
1468. Have you any opinion to offer as to the probable development of agriculture if the proposed railway is constructed? I think that a good many landholders would go in for wheat-growing if there were a railway within a reasonable distance.
1469. Is there a large area of freehold or conditionally-purchased land in the district? Yes; a good part of the Coolah Valley is held in that way, though there is some Crown land on the Coolaburragundy Creek. A lot of the Gundare country is on that creek, and so is the land on the Coolah holding which was thrown open last year.
1470. In what areas was the land thrown open? It was thrown open in settlement areas of from 3,200 acres up to 4,000 acres.
1471. Was it designed for pastoral settlement? Yes; but the surveyor who is cutting up the Queensborough land tells me that on some of the flats it will be thrown open in small areas.
1472. But unless men can send their produce to market they will not be able to use small areas of land? No.
1473. Taking the district generally, would one-third of the land be fit for agriculture? I think more than one-third of it would be fit for agriculture, though, of course, some of it is ridgy country, which would not be suitable.
1474. Do you know anything of the movements of travelling stock through this district? In good seasons a good many stock travel through the district.
1475. Are they mostly fat stock making towards Newcastle and Aberdeen? A good many fat sheep go to Aberdeen; but the store cattle go to Muswellbrook, and down on to the Hunter, and store sheep go towards New England.
1476.

1476. It is not likely that stock would have to be sent from this district in times of drought? No.
 1477. It is more likely that stock would be sent to the district? Yes.
 1478. What is the rate of freight here? We get our wool sent down to Sydney by way of Mudgee for £4 16s. a ton, £2 of which is for road carriage to Mudgee.
 1479. How much do you pay to bring stores up from Mudgee? In off seasons £2 a ton.
 1480. Have you ever attempted to send wheat away? No. Other cereals, and lucerne, pumpkins, and potatoes, also do well in the district. With increased settlement and smaller holdings more sheep will be depastured in the district than we have now.
 1481. How many sheep do you run to the acre? The good land will carry a sheep to the acre.
 1482. How many sheep were there on the Queensborough holding? From 17,000 to 20,000.
 1483. And how many acres would that holding comprise? About 50,000 acres. It has a lot of scrubby land there which is absolutely worthless, and which has recently been thrown open in scrub leases.
 1484. Had that land been improved? No; I ringbarked it after I went there.
 1485. Had you time to see the effect of the ringbarking? No.
 1486. So that the run was unimproved when it was carrying 20,000 sheep? Yes. I think the previous owner ran from 17,000 to 20,000 sheep.
 1487. If the land had been ringbarked and the suckers kept down, how many sheep would it have carried? From 25,000 to 28,000.
 1488. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What sort of country is there on the other side of the proposed line from here? There is some good country there.
 1489. Would it be equal to the land which you have described? Yes. The country round Coolah is hilly, whereas the country you refer to is level country.

J. W.
Swanston.
7 May, 1900.

Hugh McMaster Kennedy, station manager, Old Coolah, sworn, and examined:—

1490. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your holding from Coolah? It is on the opposite side of the creek.
 1491. What is the area of the station? 11,000 acres.
 1492. Do you carry sheep or cattle? Both.
 1493. How many sheep have you? 10,000.
 1494. And what number of cattle? 250 at the present time.
 1495. Do you find the country very suitable for fattening stock? Yes.
 1496. About how many do you send to market yearly? About 6,000 sheep and about 200 head of cattle.
 1497. Where do you generally send your stock to from here? We generally truck the sheep at Lue, and the cattle at Rylstone.
 1498. How long have you been in the district? I have resided here ten years.
 1499. Have you been any distance along the route of the proposed line? No.
 1500. What advantages do you expect from the construction of the proposed line? I think that a good deal of country would be used for agriculture if the line were made. The squatters would lose a good deal of the land, which is not of much use for pastoral purposes, for agricultural purposes.
 1501. Have you generally a good supply of grass here? Yes.
 1502. So that, as a rule, you do not require to move your stock? That is so. We have had no losses during the last few years, though the seasons have been very dry.
 1503. Would there be a sufficient quantity of grass here to attract stock from other districts in dry seasons, or is the country pretty well stocked? It is pretty well stocked.
 1504. So that it would not be available for stock from other districts? I do not think it would.

H. McM.
Kennedy.
7 May, 1900.

Thomas Regan, station overseer, Coolah, sworn, and examined:—

1505. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been here? Nearly twenty-six years.
 1506. Have you a general knowledge of the district? Yes.
 1507. How would you class the country—as agricultural or as pastoral country? A great deal of the land in the district is suitable for agriculture.
 1508. There is not a very large area under cultivation at the present time? No.
 1509. If the proposed railway were made, would the area under cultivation be materially enlarged? Yes; because farmers would be able to send their produce to market.
 1510. How far is Coolah from the nearest railway station? Seventy miles. Mudgee is the nearest railway station.
 1511. Is the produce that is grown here sent to Mudgee, or is it consumed locally? Anything grown down Leadville way may be sent to Mudgee, but nothing grown near Coolah goes to Mudgee.
 1512. Which would suit the district best, the proposed line or a line from Mudgee coming within 17 miles of Coolah? If the line went out Cassilis way from Mudgee it would go through good country, though most of that country has been secured.
 1513. Is there much trade between Coolah and Wellington? Not that I am aware of.
 1514. Is there much between Coolah and Mudgee? Most of that traffic goes to Mudgee.
 1515. Have you had much experience in agriculture? No; though I have seen 32 bushels of wheat taken off an acre of land there.
 1516. Was that an exceptionally high yield? It was a big yield; but even of late years they have grown good crops on the Gundare holding, though they have had to cut them for hay.
 1517. Is there much land which would give 32 bushels to the acre available for cultivation? If the railway came within 17 miles of Coolah, a lot of those who own land in the district would probably lease it in blocks of 80 or 100 acres for agricultural purposes. It costs 10d. a bushel now to send wheat from Coolah to Mudgee, and the price of wheat is only 2s. 3d. a bushel.
 1518. *Vice-Chairman.*] Would a line which went towards Cassilis suit this district better than any other line? A line going towards Cassilis would go through country which has nearly all been secured; whereas on the route of the proposed line there is a lot of land yet to be taken up. On Gundare holding there are about 11,000 acres to be thrown open for settlement.
 1519. *Mr. Levien.*] Does much stock travel between this district and New England, either way? I do not know much about the movements of travelling stock here, because I have been living off the road. No stock comes through Gundare.

T. Regan.
7 May, 1900

- T. Regan. 1520. *Vice-Chairman.*] How many acres on the Gundare holding are to be thrown open? About 11,000 acres.
 7 May, 1900. 1521. Of the 11,000 acres, how much is suitable for agriculture? About 4,000 acres.
 1522. In what size blocks has it been surveyed? It was surveyed in blocks of 3,700 acres and upwards; but it will have to be re-surveyed, because adjoining selectors have disturbed the survey by taking up additional conditional purchases on the surveyed land.

Francis John Piper, grazier, Coolah, sworn, and examined:—

- F. J. Piper. 1523. *Mr. Levien.*] How far from Coolah do you live? About 4 miles.
 7 May, 1900. 1524. How long have you resided in the district? I have lived in Cassilis and in Coolah all my life.
 1525. What is the size of your present holding? I have a settlement lease comprising 3,818 acres.
 1526. Have you any land under cultivation? No. My land has only recently been taken up.
 1527. Do you know anything of the agricultural operations carried on in this district? Most of the land here is fit for agriculture—that is, the land on the river frontages.
 1528. What yield have you obtained in this district? As much as 40 bushels to the acre.
 1529. That was an exceptional crop? Yes.
 1530. What is an average yield? Twenty bushels to the acre.
 1531. What is the quality of wheat grown here? That depends upon the season; it is fair to good.
 1532. What have you done with the wheat which you have grown? I have sent it to Mudgee.
 1533. How far from Mudgee was it grown? At a place 50 miles from Mudgee.
 1534. How many acres were comprised in the area which you held there? 600 acres.
 1535. How many acres had you under cultivation? Thirty acres.
 1536. Have you seen much stock travelling between this district and the New England district? During the last six months I have seen about 15,000 sheep, mostly Queensland stock, going west. I think that a line from Mudgee would suit this district better than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek.
 1537. What does it cost to clear land for agricultural purposes here? About £2 an acre.
 1538. *Mr. Watson.*] If it were dead timber what would it cost? About £1 an acre.
 1539. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What do you mean by clearing—taking out the stumps and making the land fit for ploughing? Yes.
 1540. *Mr. Watson.*] Would a line from Mudgee to a point somewhere between Cobborah and Dunedoo be within a reasonable distance of Coolah for agricultural traffic? No.
 1541. How far would it be from here? About 26 miles.
 1542. Would that be too far? Yes.
 1543. How near would you require to have it to make it to of any value to you? A line to benefit the district should come within 12 miles of Coolah.
 1544. Would that be a reasonable distance? Yes.
 1545. What do you think of the district from an agricultural point of view? It is a very good district.
 1546. What proportion of the land is fit for agriculture? One-third.
 1547. *Vice-Chairman.*] How does the land about here compare with that about Cassilis? I think this land is as good as that.
 1548. Have you ever considered whether a line from Muswellbrook to Cassilis would suit the district? I think that a line from Muswellbrook would suit us.
 1549. Does any large number of stock go to Muswellbrook from this district? Yes. The Aberdeen works are close to Muswellbrook, and store stock also go to Muswellbrook sale-yards.

TUESDAY, 8 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Exchange Hotel," Binnaway, at 10:15 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

David Innes Watt, grazier, Ulinda, sworn, and examined:—

- D. I. Watt. 1550. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is Ulinda from the nearest point on the proposed railway? About 3 miles. I am about 19 miles from Wellington.
 8 May, 1900. 1551. What is the size of your holding? 50,500 acres, including both freehold and leasehold.
 1552. How long have you resided here? I have owned country here for twenty years, but I first came to the district forty years ago.
 1553. What is the average carrying capacity of the land? About a sheep to 3 acres.
 1554. How much land in your holding would be available for agriculture if a line were constructed from Wellington to Werris Creek? About 8,000 acres.
 1555. How would you describe that land? It is red soil and chocolate soil.
 1556. What is your average rainfall? About 26 inches.
 1557. How are you situated with regard to the existing railways? We are about 100 miles from either the Northern, the Western, or the Mudgee lines.
 1558. Has the progress of the district been retarded by its distance from a railway? Yes; and especially the farming industry.
 1559. Do you think that if the proposed railway is constructed, there will be enough good land along the route to allow of a fairly large number of agriculturists being settled along it? I think so.
 1560. If you had a line within a few miles of your station, how many acres of land similar to the 8,000 acres that you say is fit for cultivation, would maintain an ordinary family in decent comfort? I should think about 1,000 acres.
 1561.

1561. Could a family be maintained on that area by agriculture alone, or would mixed farming be necessary? Mixed farming would be better. D. I. Watt.
1562. Would the country lend itself more to mixed farming than to pure agriculture? Yes. Besides Ulinda, I also hold Gowang, in the Warrumbungle Mountains, about 20 miles west of Binnaway, and Kerbin, and Yarragrin. These three stations comprise about 48,000 acres, taking both the leasehold and the freehold areas. 8 May, 1900.
1563. How would you describe that country? It is not well adapted for farming.
1564. What is its average capacity for stock? About a sheep to 2½ acres.
1565. Is it good fattening country? Yarragrin is good fattening country.
1566. Have you suffered much from the drought of late years? No; I have not suffered materially from drought since 1885.
1567. Has any large number of stock been sent to this district from drought-stricken districts? Yes; large numbers.
1568. How many? Approximately about 200,000 sheep. 75,000 sheep were sent here by one owner.
1569. Is it a usual thing to send sheep here when there are droughts in other parts of the country? People frequently send sheep, horses, and cattle here from other parts.
1570. During your residence in the district has it been necessary to send sheep away to other districts for feed? Yes, on one occasion.
1571. But, as a general rule, you have not suffered from the disastrous droughts which have afflicted other parts of the colony? That is so.
1572. When they have droughts in other parts of the colony is there generally sufficient grass in this district to depasture sheep from other districts? All the inferior country about here is rented in times of drought by stock-owners in other districts, who wish to save their stock.
1573. What market would you have for your products other than wool in the event of the construction of the proposed railway? If the railway were constructed I should be able to send grain to Sydney for export.
1574. What is the average size of a holding in this district? They run from 40 acres up to holdings the size of mine.
1575. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are the holdings generally extensive? Yes.
1576. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you ever tested the agricultural possibilities of your land? I have grown small crops.
1577. With what results? I have always got good crops of hay.
1578. What is an average yield? From a ton and a half to two tons to the acre.
1579. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is that wheaten hay? Yes.
1580. *Vice-Chairman.*] A good many suggestions have been made for connecting this part of the country with our railway system;—would you care to offer an opinion upon the respective proposals? The line which would suit us best would be one from Mudgee through Mudooran to Coonabarabran.
1581. Would that open up a large area to population? Yes.
1582. Would it serve the district more conveniently than any other route? Speaking for this part of the district, I think that it would. The cost of carriage would be very much less.
1583. Would such a line tap the agricultural land better than the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes, within 25 or 30 miles of Binnaway.
1584. If that line were made would the district be fairly served as far as Coonabarabran? Yes.
1585. *Mr. Watson.*] How would a line *via* Redbank and Merrygoen suit? That line would suit this part of the country very well.
1586. *Vice-Chairman.*] If the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line were constructed, would there be any large area of agricultural country more than 20 miles away from it? I think not.
1587. You think an extension from Mudgee would be the best in the interests of the district? Yes.
1588. Do you think that such a line would be the best in the interests of the colony generally? I could not say.
1589. *Mr. Shepherd.*] In your opinion, would the granting of a railway tend to the cultivation of a large area of land in the district? I think so. At the present time people cannot cultivate large areas here, because there is no outlet for their produce.
1590. Do you think that the land would be cultivated on the halves system, or would landholders cultivate their own land? I think that landholders would cultivate their own land, and that they would also engage in cultivation on the halves system.
1591. *Mr. Levien.*] Does much travelling-stock cross this part of the district to get to Werris Creek? No; the stock travels down by Cassilis and along that way.
1592. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the general cost of carriage inwards and outwards from Ulinda? 2s. 9d. per cwt. to the nearest railway station, and 6s. a cwt. to Sydney. It costs me more now to take wool to the railway station than I had to pay forty years ago when I took it to Morpeth.
1593. Do you pay the same rates for inwards and outwards carriage? Yes.
1594. Has the progress of the district been retarded by the want of a railway? Yes.
1595. What is the financial condition of the landholders in this district? I think the district within a radius of 50 miles of Binnaway is financially one of the soundest in the Colony.
1596. Do you fatten any large stock here? I fatten about 10,000 sheep in the year, and shear about 50,000.
1597. Any cattle? No.
1598. Which is your principal market for fat stock? Aberdeen and Homebush.
1599. Would the construction of the proposed railway help you to get away large consignments of fat stock? It would assist me in selling small lots of stock as they were ready for sale.
1600. At present it does not pay you to send away small consignments? No; you must send the sheep away in flocks of from 1,000 to 1,500.
1601. With a railway a small holder would be able to send away small lots at frequent intervals? Yes.
1602. *Mr. Levien.*] I suppose it would be a great advantage to you if you could act immediately upon the receipt of a telegram from Sydney in the sending away of stock? Yes. At the present time, if we send away stock on the advice that the market is good, we get them in when prices are very low again.
1603. *Vice-Chairman.*] What yield of grain have you obtained in the district? I have never stripped any grain.

- D. I. Watt. 1604. Do you know anyone who has? Yes; in the neighbourhood of Binnaway they have got as many as 33 bushels of wheat to the acre.
- 8 May, 1900. 1605. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the country between Curlewis and Gilgandra? I know something of it. I think it would be very difficult country for a railway.
1606. It has been suggested that that would be a better route for a cross-country connecting line than the proposed route? I do not think that it would. I think the country is rougher and less suited for agriculture.
1607. Is there less population on it? Yes.
1608. Would a line from Mudgee have a better chance of paying than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek? I think so.
1609. Do you think it would be worth the while of the owners of land in this district to contribute to a fund to make up at least part of the estimated deficiency on the working of the line—say a sum equal to what they now contribute to the general revenue in land-tax? I do not think so.
1610. You do not think that the line will be of sufficient value to them to justify them in guaranteeing any part of a loss upon it? I do not think so. If we had railway communication, no doubt farming would be gone into largely, and the production of the country would be increased, so that I think in a very short time the line would pay.
1611. The evidence of the Railway Traffic Manager is that there would be a deficiency of £18,000 a year on the working of the line, without taking into account what would have to be paid for land and compensation? I think that when people begin to go in for agriculture here that deficiency will very soon be wiped off.
1612. Mr. Harper has told us that he has made allowance for an increase of traffic, and, even assuming that the increase would be greater than has been allowed for, there would still be a large deficiency. A contribution of 1d. per acre from the alienated land within a reasonable distance of the line would give about £5,000 a year, which would considerably reduce the deficiency? I think that a cross-country railway would make a great deal of revenue by conveying starving stock from one district to another. This district, considering its proximity to Sydney, is the worst served in respect to railway communication of any in the Colony. It takes us two days to drive to the railway at the present time.
1613. How long are the teams on the road? About six days.

Frank John Sheppard, grazier and farmer, Mooron, sworn, and examined:—

- F. J. Sheppard. 1614. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in this district? I have known it for twenty years.
- 8 May, 1900. 1615. Do you know the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? No; I can speak only of the country immediately around Binnaway. I do not know much of the country between Cobborah and Dubbo.
1616. Do you know the country between Cobborah and Werris Creek, in the locality of the proposed railway line? Yes.
1617. What is your opinion of that country? Some of it is the best country in New South Wales for either pastoral or agricultural pursuits.
1618. Is any large extent of it suitable for cultivation? Yes.
1619. Have you tried cultivation to any considerable extent yourself? I have cultivated as much as 200 acres.
1620. What have you grown? Wheat, corn, and lucerne.
1621. Were the results satisfactory? Yes; the year before last 100 acres of wheat averaged 18 bushels to the acre, and that was a bad year.
1622. Taking a number of years, would the yield exceed that? I have not had experience in cultivation for more than five years. The nearer you get towards Werris Creek from here the better the land gets; it is the most productive land in New South Wales.
1623. Do you endorse what was said by Mr. Watt in regard to the productiveness of the district? Yes.
1624. How far are you from a railway station? Eighty-four miles.
1625. To what station do you send your produce? To Mudgee—that is, my wool.
1626. There seems to be a difference of opinion as to what route a railway should take to serve this part of the country? To serve this part of the country alone I think that a line from Mudgee would be the best to construct; but I do not think such a line would be the best for the whole Colony.
1627. Are there parts of the district which would be so far away from a Mudgee extension that that line would not serve them? Yes. Out on the Coonabarabran side the people would be almost as far from a railway, if that line were made, as they are now. A cross-country line would serve a greater number of people.
1628. In the event of the Werris Creek line being constructed, do you think it should start from Wellington or from Dubbo? I cannot give you an opinion on the subject. If it were cheaper to send our goods *via* Wellington to Sydney I should like to see the line start from Wellington.
1629. A line from Wellington would give you a nearer route to Sydney? Yes.
1630. Would there be any traffic between this district and the western district? Yes.
1631. Then a line from Dubbo would give the shortest route to that traffic? Yes, by a few miles.
1632. Where would the bulk of the traffic go—towards Sydney or to the west? Towards Sydney.
1633. Why is the agricultural land in this district not under cultivation? Because of the lack of a railway.
1634. Would either a line from Mudgee, or the proposed railway from Wellington to Werris Creek, induce agriculture in this district? I think so.
1635. To any large extent? To a very great extent.
1636. If a railway were brought within a measurable distance of your property would you extend your agricultural operations? Yes.
1637. And have you reason to believe that others similarly situated would do the same? Yes.
1638. Do you think that that would cause a volume of traffic which would add materially to the railway returns? Yes.
1639. I understand that mixed farming is now carried on in the district to a considerable extent;—would that continue, or would the whole of the agricultural land in the district be used for agriculture? A good

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good deal of it would still be used for fattening stock on; but, with a railway, stock-breeders would be able to send away their fat stock in small lots, whereas now we can only send away large flocks at a time.

1640. At the present low price of wheat would it pay to grow for outside markets? I think so.

1641. What market do you supply now? The local market; but we cannot extend our area of cultivation, because the local market does not increase, and the carriage to Sydney under present conditions is too costly.

1642. What is the cost of carriage from your place to Mudgee? £3 a ton.

1643. Is there a fair percentage of agricultural land in this district? The agricultural land is fairly distributed through the district.

1644. Do you consider the land which is not suitable for cultivation good sheep country? Yes. I think that a railway ought to be constructed in this district, because it is a district which has been neglected for years. Although, in one way, the district is the most go-ahead district in the Colony, and everyone seems to be making money here, or doing much better than people in other parts of the country, we have been left completely out in the cold in the matter of railway communication.

1645. Do you prefer the Wellington-Werris Creek route to any other? I think so.

1646. Has there been any agitation on the part of the residents of this district for some recognition of their claim to railway communication? Yes. I think meetings have been held at Coonabarabran, at Cobborah, and at Munderooran.

1647. Which route do the people of the district advocate? Each place wants its own special route.

1648. But you think that the proposed line would serve the greatest number of people? Yes.

1649. Would it open up a larger area of country than any other line? I think so.

1650. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose you will admit that there should be some probability of the line being self-supporting to justify its construction? No; I think that the Government ought to be prepared to do something for the people of the country in these matters.

1651. If a railway is constructed to one district, and there is no possibility of its being self-supporting, other districts must pay for it? A railway may not pay for the first two years; but it must pay afterwards.

1652. If the people of the district are confident that a railway will be self-supporting within a reasonable time, do you not think that they might make a contribution towards a fund to assist in getting rid of any deficiency? The people living in the district through which a railway passes are not the only people to benefit by its construction. The people in the metropolis gain by the construction of these railways.

1653. Do you not think it would be worth while, for the sake of obtaining a railway, to guarantee some part of any estimated deficiency? I do not think that the public should be called upon to do that. The Government should assist each part of the country.

1654. In contributing to a guarantee fund the landowners would not be paying more than they were paying before the railway was constructed? Let them depend upon the rates charged upon the railway. In this district we should be satisfied to pay even 6d. more than we pay now to get a railway, because of the convenience it would afford us.

1655. What return have you got in growing maize? I have got 35 bushels to the acre, and, in one year, when I irrigated from the Castlereagh River, 70 bushels. There are possibilities of irrigation on the Castlereagh.

1656. I suppose it does not pay you to send to the railway now? No; but if the proposed railway were made it would pay us to grow maize and wheat. There are a number of people in the district who have not large enough holdings to keep themselves going by raising stock; but if the railway were made they would put part of their land under crop, and do very well. Without a railway they find it pretty hard to make a living.

1657. *Mr. Watson.*] You now pay 11s. a ton to send wheat from Mudgee to Sydney, and from Binnaway to Sydney, *via* Mudgee, the rate would be 12s. 4d. per ton, so that your saving would be considerable; would it not, under those circumstances, pay you to contribute so much per acre to wipe off any estimated deficiency on the working of a railway? It might pay me to do so; but I do not think it would be fair to require me to do so.

1658. If you obtained 18 bushels of grain to the acre, and saved 3d. a bushel carriage, it would surely pay you to contribute 2d. or 3d. an acre towards making up a deficiency? It might; but I think that the Government should stand any estimated loss, without asking individual landholders to assist in making it up. Eventually, of course, the railway would pay.

1659. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Would you think it more satisfactory, instead of contributing so much per acre, to pay special rates to make up any deficiency? I think so. I might say that I am here to represent Mr. McMaster, of Binnia, and Mr. Duncan McMaster, of Binnia and Bundella. They are both in favour of a line from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Robert Beames, farmer and grazier, Binnaway, sworn, and examined:—

1660. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the extent of your holding? 3,390 acres.

1661. How many sheep do you carry? I have no sheep on my holding at present, but I usually carry from 1,000 to 1,500 sheep.

1662. Is that exclusive of the land which you use for cultivation? I have only a small area of land under cultivation—about 40 acres.

1663. Is the land you cultivate specially good land? It is a fair sample of the land on the river frontage. There is plenty of other good land on the river frontage which has not been cleared.

1664. What returns have you obtained from the 40 acres? I have had as much as 15 bushels to the acre.

1665. Your market for grain has always been Coonabarabran, I suppose? Yes.

1666. What price do you get for your wheat? This year I got 2s. 6d. a bushel. The price varies from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. a bushel.

1667. Is the land back from the river as good for cultivation as the river frontage? The flats run back some distance on this side of the river; some of them are from $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile wide. On the other side of the river the ridges come in closer.

1668. Is the ridgy country only suitable for grazing? Yes.

1669.

R. Beames.
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- R. Beames.
8 May, 1900.
1669. It would run about a sheep to 3 acres? About that.
1670. What proportion of your holding is suitable for agriculture? About 600 acres.
1671. If you had a railway within 20 miles it would pay you to go in for cultivation more largely? Yes; and a larger area would be put under cultivation in the district generally.
1672. Would a much larger area be cultivated? Yes. Last year the farmers in Coonabarabran had to keep their wheat over because the local consumption was not very large, and they could not send it away.
1673. Has Coonamble been a market for this district? No; it has been served by Gulgong for a long time past.
1674. Do you know much of the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? I do not know Werris Creek; but I know Wellington and Dubbo. There is a lot of agricultural country coming out from Wellington; but a few miles on this side of Dubbo the land is scrubby.
1675. Do you think that the Wellington route is better than the Dubbo route? It would go through better farming country.
1676. How would you describe the country between Merrygoen and Binnaway? There is a lot of good agricultural country there.
1677. How would you class the country between the Talbragar and the Castlereagh? There is some very nice country there. A lot of it would be good for agriculture.
1678. What proportion of the land around Binnaway would be fit for agriculture? Perhaps a fourth.
1679. Do you consider the land between Binnaway and Weetalibah good agricultural land? Yes; there is a lot of good agricultural land there; but there is a lot of very bad country, too.
1680. Do you think a line from Mudgee towards Merrygoen would be a better line for the district than one from Wellington to Werris Creek? No; I think the Wellington to Werris Creek line would suit most people, and it would go through good country.
1681. Through better country than a line from Mudgee to Merrygoen would go through? I think so.
1682. Do you think it would be an advantage to be able to go *via* Werris Creek to Newcastle when sending wheat away? Yes.
1683. Do you think it would be worth your while to contribute anything towards making good any loss that there may be on the working on the line? No doubt the line would be a grand thing for the district; but I think it would be a difficult thing to get the people to contribute to it.
1684. The line would not be of much advantage to grazing land? A railway here would help both agricultural and pastoral operations, though, of course, it would help agriculture more than grazing.
1685. Do you grow for hay as well as for grain? Yes; I have been here twenty years, and I never yet saw a failure of crops on this river. You can always get either hay or grain. In one year the wheat was about 7 feet high, and I had oats 9 feet high. A man was a fortnight cutting 3 acres of oats, and I got 20 tons of hay off the land.

Samuel George Sheumack, farmer, Binnaway, sworn, and examined:—

- S. G.
Sheumack.
8 May, 1900.
1686. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been in the district? About thirteen years.
1687. What is the size of your holding? 540 acres.
1688. How much have you under cultivation? 100 acres.
1689. What crops are you growing? Wheat chiefly, and maize. I have also grown potatoes, pumpkins, melons, turnips, mangel wurzel, and other crops.
1690. Do you grow wheat for hay or for grain? Generally for grain.
1691. What yield of hay do you get? We have only lately taken up our place, and we have had nothing but a continuation of droughts since we have been there, so that we have not had heavy crops; but, with fair seasons, we shall get from 25 to 30 bushels to the acre. One gentleman a few miles from here got as much as 40 bushels to the acre.
1692. What yield of maize do you get? About 30 bushels is the most that we have got yet; but we have not had a good season.
1693. Have the potatoes also been a partial failure? Yes; lately.
1694. Do you consider the land highly suitable for the crops that you have mentioned? I do.
1695. What does it cost you to clear land for cultivation? About £2 an acre.
1696. Do you kill the timber on it first? We ringbark part of it first, but we have taken off part of the timber when green.
1697. When you ringbark how long do you wait before pulling down the timber? About twelve months.
1698. Then you grub it out and burn it? Yes.
1699. Does £2 an acre include the cost of ringbarking, grubbing, burning, and making the land fit for cultivation? Yes.
1700. Is this a good district for honey? There is no better district in the Colony, with a good season. If we had a railway we could send 20 or 30 tons of honey to the Sydney market every year.
1701. Does the eucalyptus produce good honey? Yes; the best honey.
1702. What kind of trees grow on the land? Yellow-box, white-box, iron-bark, and red-gum.
1703. Apple-trees? Yes; but they give the honey a bad flavour.
1704. Do you cultivate land to produce food for your bees? No; the bush-honey is the best.
1705. Is it your opinion that the opening of the proposed railway will encourage people to go in largely for farming? Yes.
1706. I understand that you have some brothers engaged in farming? Yes; there are six of us here.
1707. Have they holdings of their own? No. There are five of us waiting for land to be thrown open, and as soon as it is thrown open we shall take it up. If there were a railway thousands of acres would be taken up for farming. We are kept back by the want of a railway.
1708. Many of the holdings here are very large? Yes.
1709. Do you think that if there were a railway the large holders would engage in farming, either on the halves-system, or on their own account? I believe that they would; I am sure that Mr. Watt would.
1710. Which pays best, farming or grazing? I could not tell you; I have had no experience in grazing.
1711. Where do you find a market for your produce? Coonabarabran is our only market.
1712. How far away is that? Twenty-two miles.
1713. Have you a ready market there? No; and the buyers give us just what they like.
1714. Have you tried dairying? No.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE--RAILWAY FROM WELLINGTON TO WERRIS CREEK.

1715. Do you think that the district would be suitable for dairying? Yes.
 1716. Have you tried fruit-growing? We have an orchard, but it is only young; we have not had fruit from it yet.
 1717. Do the trees promise well? Yes; they are doing very well, notwithstanding the continuance of droughts.
 1718. What trees have you? Pretty well all kinds.

S. G.
Schaumack.
8 May, 1900.

Charles Naseby McWhirter, hotelkeeper, Binnaway, sworn, and examined:—

1719. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been here? All my life.
 1720. Is the country around Binnaway fit for agriculture as well as for grazing? Yes.
 1721. How much of the land within 10 miles of Binnaway is fit for agriculture? Most of it.
 1722. Are the ridges good agricultural land? No; the ridges are a bit too stony.
 1723. Have you yourself had experience in farming? Yes; I have been engaged in farming operations all my life.
 1724. What area have you under cultivation? I started with a small area, and now I have about 200 acres under cultivation.
 1725. What do you usually sow? Mostly wheat.
 1726. What has been your yield? On an average the wheat crop yields about 20 bushels to the acre, but one crop which was burnt would have given 40 bushels.
 1727. How often have you had a total failure of crops? Never.
 1728. Have there been any partial failures? No; you can always get hay, even if there is no grain.
 1729. Is there any general demand for land in this district for agricultural purposes? No; all the land in the district is taken up.
 1730. If more land were thrown open, would it be taken up for agriculture, even with a railway? Yes; people are waiting for land.
 1731. Do you think that if a railway were constructed, large as well as small landholders would increase their cultivation areas? I think so, because a railway would give an outlet to their produce. At present we have only the local market.
 1732. Do you send any of your produce to Mudgee or to Wellington? No.
 1733. The rates of carriage are too heavy? Yes.
 1734. With a railway, how many acres could a man make a living on? In some places a man would want more land than he would want in other places. Along the river frontage a man could do well with 640 acres, if he farmed it.
 1735. Where do you get your supplies from? From Mudgee.
 1736. What rate of carriage do you pay? £3 a ton.
 1737. Which would serve the largest area of good land—the proposed line, a line from Mudgee, or a line from some other point? I think the proposed line.
 1738. Do you know the country from Curlewis to Gilgandra? I know some of it. Most of it is good land.
 1739. Which line would go through the greater area of good land—the proposed line, or a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra? The proposed line.
 1740. Has there been much traffic in stock from the Northern or North-western to the Western line? There used to be a good deal four or five years ago. Stock used to come this way from the direction of Wellington and Dubbo, and sometimes stock used to go from this district towards those places.
 1741. Does this district often receive starving stock from drought-stricken districts? Yes; during the last few years.
 1742. Do you know any other time when starving stock were sent here? Yes; between 1877 and 1879.
 1743. This district does not, as a rule, suffer from drought? No; it stands the dry weather well.
 1744. Is it sound sheep country? Yes; sheep do very well here.
 1745. Is it good country for fattening large stock? Yes. A few miles away from the river there is any quantity of good country.
 1746. Does anyone here go in for fattening big stock? Yes; about 10 miles west from here they go in for fattening big stock.

C. N.
McWhirter.
8 May, 1900.

WEDNESDAY, 9 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Coonabarabran, at 10:30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Kenneth Murchison, journalist, and a member of the Local Land Board, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

1747. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you resided here? Twenty-seven years.
 1748. During that time, you have doubtless had opportunities of observing the growth and progress of Coonabarabran? Yes.
 1749. Will you outline to the Committee the general course of events as they have marked the development of the town since you came to reside here? There are other gentlemen present who have known Coonabarabran for a longer period than I have known it, but I have seen the beginning of its industrial development. When I first came here a great part of the western, and nearly all the north-western traffic, except that which went to Narrabri, came through Coonabarabran, and that is why I settled here. There was not much else to induce settlement of that kind, because the place was very small. Mr. Neilson, who is now the largest property owner in Coonabarabran, was at that time building the first mill; but now there

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Murchison.
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there are two mills in the town, a co-operative company having put up a second mill in 1892. The co-operative company's mill has since been burnt down, but we had faith enough in the district to rebuild it. When I first came to Coonabarabran, large numbers of teamsters camped here at night, coming from Walgett, Coonamble, and the north-western districts, and people will tell you that they have seen as many as thirty and forty teams here. We then regarded the town as likely to be on the permanent main route of traffic from the north-western district to Sydney and to Newcastle. The stock came through Coonabarabran to Mudgee and to Muswellbrook, *via* Coolah, and teamsters came through on their way to Muswellbrook also. At that time the Northern line had not left the Hunter Valley, and the Western line was somewhere about Wallerawang, while no decision had been come to with regard to the Mudgee line. Then the Northern line was pushed on, the North-Western line was made, and the Western line was taken to Bathurst, to Orange, to Wellington, and on to Bourke, and Coonabarabran was isolated. Ever since then there has been a struggle against unnatural conditions on the part of the men living here. We tried for years to get a line which we would still accept as a very good line, not only for ourselves, but for the others—a line from Muswellbrook, *via* Cassilis, to Walgett. Money was voted for that line, but the cost was found to be too great, and therefore we would not ask for it now. We consider, however, that a line from Wellington to Werris Creek, which is the proposal into which the Committee is inquiring, must, in the natural order of things, be constructed to connect the railway systems of the Colony and to bring the New England district into communication with the western district. We feel sure that the line will be constructed, and we considered that the next best thing for us and the country would be a branch line, leaving that line somewhere near Bomera, and going through Coonabarabran to Coonamble, and then on to Walgett, or whatever place was thought best. We considered that that line would be the cheapest to make, and would open up most country. Such a line would make Newcastle our nearest port, and would also enable us to send our produce to Sydney. It is most important that these wheat-growing districts should be able to get to the coast by the nearest possible routes, because those of us who look beyond the local aspect of this matter know that, even if we have to pay only as much for sending 500 miles as other people pay for sending only 300 miles, the taxpayers generally have to make up the loss. Ultimately we shall have to depend upon other countries for our market, but for a good while to come we shall have a good outlet in the Western and North-western districts. We send our flour out to Walgett and to Coonamble now, but the construction of the line from Dubbo to Coonamble will unfairly handicap us. We are not afraid to compete with any other district, but we cannot continue to compete with Dubbo if we and the other taxpayers of the country are called upon to subsidise a line from Dubbo to Coonamble.

1750. How has Coonabarabran progressed during the last fifteen years? Most of the progress made by the town has been made during the last fifteen years, but we have now arrived at a stage at which people are thinking of giving up their land. Mr. Proctor, who lives out towards Baradine, recently sold his place because he did not know what he could do with it, and there are others who are prepared to sell because of the difficulty of doing anything with the land without railway communication. If a railway were made the district would make more progress in the next three years than it has in the last fifteen or twenty years, during which time population has increased and land has been taken up in all directions. The new Land Act gave an impetus to settlement, so that country which would not have been looked at ten years ago is being rushed now, and the area under cultivation has been doubled or trebled, though it is not as large as might be expected, from the fact that we have two flour-mills here. These mills, however, are not employed half their time, because they cannot get a market for their flour. Mr. Finley, who is one of the chief farmers here, has tried to get rid of his farm because of the difficulty in selling his produce. Messrs. Binney, out towards Quirindi, bought a lot of his wheat for seed the year before last, because it was the best wheat obtainable; yet, although he grows such good wheat, he feels that he would be doing better by going in for large stock or sheep. He paid 2s. 6d. a bag for the carriage of that wheat, but, as a rule, he would have to pay 1s. a bushel for carriage. On the occasion to which I refer he must have sold nearly 50 tons of wheat. Last year he was trying to let his farm, and this year he wants to give up farming altogether. If, however, there were a railway, he would increase his cultivation area five or sixfold. He has enough good land, but, under existing conditions, he cannot use it profitably for agriculture. I would like to read to the Committee some evidence which I gave before the Sectional Committee which visited Coonamble. In 1897 the number of holdings of 1 acre and upwards in the district, was 366, and the area of alienated land 563,999 acres.

1751. Within what boundaries does that land lie? Within 20 miles on either side of a line from Bomera to Coonamble, through Coonabarabran.

1752. How far along that line do the holdings that you speak of extend? From Tambar Springs to Tooraweenah; from a point about 40 miles on the Werris Creek side of Coonabarabran, to a point about 35 miles on the Coonamble side. The area of Crown lands in occupation was 1,364,260 acres, and the total area under cultivation 4,502 acres, of which 2,029 acres were under wheat for hay, and 1,743 acres were stripped for grain, yielding 27,268 bushels; 730 acres were under maize, and yielded 8,841 bushels; and 24 acres were under other grain crops. 983 acres were cut for wheat, oats, and barley hay; 203 acres for lucerne hay; 60 acres for green food; 63 acres for potatoes; and 5 acres for sugar-cane. Then there were 53 acres under fruit, and 52 acres under other crops. The horses in the district numbered 4,986; the milch cows 1,083; and other cattle, including calves, 13,200; the sheep, including lambs, 891,265; and the swine, 658. The quantity of wool produced was 2,090 tons. Although the area under cultivation in this district is not large in comparison with that in other districts, it produces more than it requires for local consumption, because of the artificial isolation of the district to which I have already referred. The farmers who are at any distance from Coonabarabran have to take their wheat to Dubbo or to Quirindi, and they cannot afford to pay the high rates which are charged for road carriage. The soil and climate, however, are especially favourable to the growth of wheat and fruit. I know the Tumut country, and, indeed, pretty well all the country from here to Melbourne, and I know that there is no better fruit-growing district than the Coonabarabran district. There are large areas of splendid fruit-growing and wheat-growing land in this district; but between Coonabarabran and Narrabri there is a great deal of vacant land which is a nuisance to pastoralists, because of the dingoes which breed there. Large areas of Crown lands in the district were abandoned when the late Mr. Garrett arbitrarily raised the rents of the lessees, and that land has never been occupied since.

1753. What kinds of fruit grow in this district? Apples, peaches, plums, and stone fruits of all kinds. It is rather cool for oranges about Coonabarabran itself, because the immediate district is very high, and
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you have to ascend whether you come from Gunnedah, Mudgee, or Coonamble. At Baradine and Coonamble, however, they grow oranges as good as any in the Colony.

1754. In what way would a line from Wellington to Werris Creek serve Coonabarabran and the surrounding country? It would serve us in a small degree by giving us better access to Newcastle than we have now.

1755. How far would you be from that line? About 30 miles. Ulinda would be about the nearest point.

1756. Would the producers of this district look upon that distance as a serious handicap; so serious that they would be compelled to ask for the construction of a branch line? I think they would be compelled to ask for the construction of a branch line from Bomera.

1757. Do you think that such a branch line should stop at Coonabarabran? It would suit us to have it stop there, and, as both Coonamble and Walgett seem likely to be provided for, we should not be justified in asking that it be taken further on? Coonamble, however, properly belongs to this district, and the traffic for that district should pass through Coonabarabran on its way to Newcastle.

1758. Do you think that the interests of this district, and of the districts north and south of it, would be better served by the proposed line, and a branch line to Coonabarabran, than by an extension of the railway from any other point on the existing line? I think so.

1759. Would the continuation of a line from Mudgee to Merrygoen serve this district as well? I do not think so, because it would cut us off from Newcastle and the Northern line.

1760. What market do you expect to find for your products on the Northern line? There is traffic of various kinds from one district to another. Stock from districts a little beyond us go up on the Northern line in times of drought.

1761. But what permanent market are you likely to find for your products on the Northern line? It is not a market for our products there that we look for so much as a connection right through to Queensland.

1762. What business would you do in Queensland? Well, transaction in stock would be large.

1763. The official evidence is that the stock traffic would be served by a line going further to the north-west? We want a connection with Newcastle and with the Northern line, not only for stock traffic, but for general commercial purposes.

1764. What other business do you expect there will be in addition to the stock traffic? The passenger traffic will be a large item. We have not had much communication with the north up to the present time, chiefly because it is too costly to get there.

1765. What this district wants is an outlet for its agricultural and pastoral products? Yes; and for our fruit.

1766. You would like to get your produce to the seaboard as cheaply as possible? Yes, and, if possible, we should like the option of going either to Newcastle or to Sydney.

1767. Will you describe to us in general terms the country within 10 miles of Coonabarabran? It is chiefly agricultural country, and is especially suitable for small holdings.

1768. Small pastoral holdings? Occupation by small farmers, who would combine agriculture with pastoral pursuits.

1769. What would you consider a small holding? From 300 up to 4,000 or 5,000 acres.

1770. Would you call anything under 5,000 acres a small holding? Yes.

1771. How much land within 20 miles of Coonabarabran is suitable for agriculture? I cannot say; but I daresay one-third.

1772. Could we take the land between Binnaway and Coonabarabran as typical of the country round Coonabarabran? No. There is more bad country between those places than in the district generally, except going towards Narrabri, where it is iron-bark forest country. The roads into Coonabarabran, as a rule, pass through pretty bad land.

1773. Would the country 20 miles out from Coonabarabran, along the Mendooran road, be typical of the country round Coonabarabran? No; the land for 15 miles alongside that road is much worse than the average country.

1774. What is the population of Coonabarabran? Something over 700.

1775. Are there any other industries in the town besides flour-milling? Yes; Mr. Neilson has a saw-mill in connection with his flour-mill, and there is another saw-mill in the town, and a third about 14 miles out.

1776. What is the average rainfall of the district? About 30 inches. The climate here is an important consideration; it accounts for our good wheat, our good fruit, and our good health.

1777. *Mr. Watson.*] What sort of land is the vacant land in the direction of Narrabri? A good deal of it is scrubby country, with iron-bark and box forests.

1778. Would not that country be suitable for either improvement or settlement leases? Yes, part of it would be.

1779. Has any attempt been made to have the land occupied in that way since the new Land Act was passed? All that is available has been taken up in settlement leases. The land has been offered on improvement leases, but I do not think any sensible man would take it under the conditions which have been attached to those leases; it would ruin him to do so.

1780. If the vacant land you speak of is suitable for pastoral purposes it seems strange that it should be vacant when it might be obtained on a fairly reasonable tenure? It is not very good for pastoral purposes, and a great deal of it is bad, though the bad land is generally well timbered with iron-bark. All through it, however, are areas which might be taken up in small holdings, and under favourable conditions would be cultivated. At present, however, that country is too far from a railway to make it profitable to grow wheat there. Pretty nearly all of it is patchy country. If the proposed line were made, this district would have the Newcastle market, and would be able to trade with the Hunter district. That trade we look upon as likely to be very considerable in the near future.

1781. What products would you exchange with the Hunter district? We would send agricultural products there. We anticipate that before many years have passed a large amount of manufacturing will be done there, and then the people living in the district will not produce enough for their own consumption.

1782. Are not the people living in the Hunter district exporters of agricultural produce? They do not grow much wheat down there.

Robert Neilson, storekeeper and miller, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

- R. Neilson.
9 May, 1900.
1783. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you resided in the district? About twenty-six years.
1784. Have you travelled through the district much? Not very much.
1785. Are you acquainted with any part of the proposed line? I have been to Bomera, and I know the country between there and Coonabarabran. I know nothing of the Werris Creek country, except by hearsay. When I came here with Mr. Murchison, in 1872 or 1873, there were only two or three houses in Coonabarabran. I got 70 tons of goods up that year by way of Muswellbrook, and I paid 3s. 9d. per cwt. freight. Now, however, it costs me 3s. per cwt. to bring goods from Gunnedah, and the railway freight, which used to be 5s., is 6s., because of the extra mileage.
1786. What do you think of the agricultural capabilities of this district? I have been informed that the agricultural area of the district could be increased to 100,000 acres.
1787. In what direction could the additional cultivation be made? In the direction of Baradine and Goorianawa.
1788. How far from Coonabarabran? Twenty-eight miles.
1789. How far from the proposed railway? A little over 50 miles.
1790. Would not the distance from a railway be too great a handicap to permit of agriculture there? Well, at Burrowa a man built a mill, and it had to be closed because of the competition of the railway 20 miles away.
1791. Would the proposed railway benefit Coonabarabran? If the proposed line were made, we should hope for a branch line from it to Coonabarabran.
1792. Do you think that the estimated deficiency of £18,000 would be made up within a reasonable time? I think that we should be agreeably disappointed by the result of constructing the proposed line. The passenger traffic, north and south, would be considerable. Then, too, although the construction of a railway from Dubbo to Coonamble has been sanctioned, wool will continue to come towards Coonabarabran from within a short distance of Coonamble. Out as far as Calga the wool may go to Quirindi this year, although that wool has been looked upon as likely to provide traffic to the Dubbo-Coonamble line.
1793. What is the average yield of wheat in this district per acre? It depends upon the fertility of the soil and the energy of the tiller. If the tiller works properly he may get as much as forty bushels to the acre.
1794. Is wheat the only crop that is grown here, as a rule? Wheat and maize.
1795. What is the yield of maize? The crop which they are now pulling is poor, because of the terrible heat wave from which the whole Colony suffered. Maize grows well here, and is of good quality.
1796. What proportion of the land within 20 miles of Coonabarabran is fit for agriculture? Coonabarabran was placed, by the occupiers of the Ulimambri run, in some of the worst country near here. For 20 miles outside of it you will find as good land as there is in the Colony. Beyond Ulimambri, as far as Bomera, the country is very good indeed, and so it is, too, on the other side. Out towards Goorianawa and Baradine you will find good country.
1797. How far would the good country you speak of be from the proposed line? It would be within 50 miles of it, and some of it runs close up to the proposed line.
1798. Is this district largely used by starving stock in seasons of drought? Yes; it was perfectly inundated with stock last year. Every piece of ground that had grass on it at all was sought after by the people in the Walgett and other districts.
1799. The stock traffic would be a source of revenue to a railway? Yes; and the railway would be the means of saving valuable animals.
1800. From what districts do the stock come? From the Namoi and Walgett districts, and even from the Coonamble district. Mr. Keogh had to secure country for his stock, I believe.
1801. As a rule, you have a superabundance of grass in this district? Yes. It is the general opinion of the farmers of the district that the construction of the proposed line is to be advocated in anticipation of the further relief which would be afforded to us by a branch line from it to Coonabarabran. I was one of a deputation which waited upon the late Mr. John Sutherland, when he was Secretary for Public Works, and, in speaking of the rough country in the district, I pointed out that there was a lot of very valuable iron-bark upon it. Mr. Sutherland thereupon said that it would be a pity to destroy that timber before there was a market for it; but we cannot get a market for it until we get a railway. It will be a great advantage to the farmers to be able to save even a penny a bushel in the carriage of their wheat, while the rates of carriage for goods sent from the city here are not low.

Richard Johnstone Parker, manager of the Australian Joint Stock Bank, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

- R. J. Parker.
9 May, 1900.
1802. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been stationed in Coonabarabran long? I have been here over twenty years.
1803. Are there any other banks here? No.
1804. Then you should have a pretty fair idea of the general condition of the district? Yes.
1805. What has been the financial condition of the district during the time that you have been here—has it been one of steady improvement? On the whole it has.
1806. Has this district been affected by the droughts which have injured other parts of the Colony? We have not been injured nearly as much as other districts.
1807. There are a considerable number of people with small holdings in this district? Yes.
1808. Do they get along fairly well? Yes, on the whole. The high price of wool last year helped all the settlers in this district very materially.
1809. If wool goes back to its former price will there still be a good outlook for the people about here? A fair outlook; but I have always strongly advocated mixed farming. Ever since I have been here I have done my best to encourage small men—and we are interested chiefly in the small settlers of the district—to go in for mixed farming. Those who have done that have done much better than those who have confined themselves to one kind of enterprise.
1810. Do the holdings, as a rule, contain a fair proportion of agricultural land? Yes.
1811. Which, in your opinion, would be the best route for a railway to serve this district? We are strongly persuaded that the construction of a line from Wellington or Dubbo to Werris Creek would suit us best, because it would give us hope of a branch line on to Coonabarabran.

1812. The proposed line, which leaves Coonabarabran 30 miles from it, will hardly develop the country to the north, out towards Baradine? It would certainly not help this district as much as we need help. R. J. Parker.
9 May, 1900.
1813. Therefore a branch line would be required? Yes.
1814. Is there any prospect of such a line paying? It is hard to say that there is, if the Dubbo to Coonamble line is to be carried out; but even if that line is constructed, a good deal of the heavy traffic from that district will still come this way in good seasons.
1815. You could hardly expect a branch line going out towards Tooraweenah to pay after the Coonamble line was made? A branch line from the proposed line through Coonabarabran towards Walgett would answer all purposes. Such a line would go through a large extent of country which is at present very sparsely populated, though it is land which might be cut up into comparatively small holdings.
1816. Is the land between Coonabarabran and Baradine similar to that between Binnaway and Coonabarabran? Part of the way it is, but as you get further out it is much better. Going north, after you get out 5 miles in the direction of Baradine, you begin to descend, and then you get on to very much better country. Unless something is done to relieve the producers of this district, the district will go back. We have two mills here, and I do not think that they find it easy to get rid of the production of the district now. We cannot send it away to the larger centres of population, and, therefore, unless some new outlet is provided in the north-west, I am afraid that farming will receive a considerable check. The district is specially suitable for small holdings, on which a man might run, say, 1,000 sheep, and cultivate 400 or 500 acres. That class of settlement would be of advantage to the whole country.
1817. Is a fair proportion of the land in the district suitable for agriculture? Yes, a good proportion. With the exception of some of the country to the north-west, which has been spoken of as forest country, a good deal of the land yet to be thrown open is superior country.
1818. Yesterday we seemed to pass through a considerable area of country which is unsuitable for wheat-growing:—is that country similar to the district generally? No; the land which is yet to be thrown open contains, I believe, a considerable portion of agricultural land.
1819. You refer to Crown land? Yes.

William Nash, grazier, Gorah, sworn, and examined:—

1820. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How far do you live from Coonabarabran? About 17 miles, in the direction of Coonamble. W. Nash.
9 May, 1900.
1821. Have you resided long in this locality? About thirty years.
1822. Have you had any experience in farming? I was reared on a farm, and I have been farming ever since; we farm about 50 acres at the present time.
1823. What is the character of the land in the locality in which you reside? We have a large area of splendid land which is especially suitable for wheat.
1824. What area do you hold? 28,000 acres.
1825. Freehold and leasehold combined? Yes.
1826. Is there much agriculture in your neighbourhood? Yes; we are out on the Bugaldi Creek.
1827. How far are you from the nearest railway station? We are about 127 miles from Mudgee. Gunnedah is nearer, but the road there is not so good.
1828. I presume that there is not more land under cultivation, because of the difficulty in getting produce to market? Yes. I have 900 bushels of wheat in my woolshed now, and there is no possibility of doing anything with it, while other farmers are similarly situated.
1829. Have they in the past depended solely upon the local market? Yes; upon the Coonabarabran and Coonamble market.
1830. Is that market over-supplied now? Yes, it has been over-supplied for the last two years. The small farmers prospered very well for five or six years; but since we have over-produced there has always been a large quantity of grain which cannot be got rid of. From my place down the creek and towards Baradine there must be at least 60,000 acres of beautiful wheat land. I consider that that land is superior to the land between Gunnedah and Tamworth.
1831. There is very good land about Tamworth? Yes, it is a better district than this; but in that district you see the Peel River Company's bullocks feeding on the flood flats while farmers are ploughing up the gravelly ridges.
1832. What would you consider a fair yield of wheat in your district? I believe that the farmers out there have got an average yield of from 15 to 16 bushels; but we have had heavier crops.
1833. How would you compare the country between Coonabarabran and Binnaway with the country which we have just described? The flats between Coonabarabran and Binnaway are very narrow, so that you could only put small areas of agricultural land into a farm. The country that I have described is more suitable for farming.
1834. Would the ridgy country between Coonabarabran and Binnaway be suitable for agriculture? No.
1835. Where is the best land within 20 or 25 miles of Coonabarabran? I do not think you could get more suitable land for farming than that towards Baradine.
1836. Where is the worst land? Out towards Narrabri.
1837. Is the land in this district suited to maize? No; my experience is that there is not a sufficient rainfall for maize. The trouble is that though at present there are a good many small holders in the district, and within a few months their number will be increased, because there is a large area of country out towards Baradine which will have to be taken up, the local market is already too small to support them, and the construction of the Coonamble line will deprive us of the Coonamble market.
1838. With equal facilities would the farmers here be able to compete with those around Dubbo? I think so.
1839. Generally speaking, how would you class the country between Werris Creek and Wellington or Dubbo? I think it is a fair average country. There is some very good land all the way down the Castlereagh.
1840. Would the construction of the proposed line be of any material benefit to the Coonabarabran district? The line would be rather far off; it would not be of much advantage to the district. Anything beyond 20 miles is a long way to carry produce at the present low prices.
- 1841.

- W. Nash, 1841. Would you consider a branch line to Coonabarabran necessary to serve the farmers in the district? They must be given some assistance, or otherwise they will cease to grow crops. This district cannot prosper without a railway.
- 9 May, 1900. 1842. Would a branch line to Coonabarabran be of material benefit to it? Most certainly.
1843. Would it serve the farmers out where you live, 17 miles from Coonabarabran? We should be in a better position if the line were constructed than we are in now.
1844. Is there any large area of Crown lands in your neighbourhood suitable for cultivation? Yes.
1845. What would you describe as a small holding? From 100 to 300 acres.
1846. Would that be sufficient to maintain a man and his family? It is not sufficient; but a great many people are trying to make a living on such areas.
1847. If proper facilities were given would it be sufficient? Most certainly it would.
1848. There are some leasehold areas in the district which are shortly to be thrown open to settlement? Yes.
1849. What is the country like? A great part of it is very good. The Bugaldi country and the country around Baradine, which is not grazing country, is chocolate soil country. The owners of the runs have been buying up the black-soil plains; but they have not bought up the red-soil country; so that there is now a large area of it to be thrown open for settlement.
1850. Do you consider it good wheat-growing country? Yes.
1851. What percentage of the land in the district would be suitable for wheat-growing? At the very least there are over 30,000 acres suitable for wheat-growing. From the time you pass Yermin, down the Baradine Creek, to Wangan, and from Baradine to Terrididgerie, the country is good.
1852. Where do you generally do business? In Coonabarabran, in Mudgee, or in Sydney. Our chief business is done in Sydney.
1853. Where does your wool go? It mostly goes to Mudgee.
1854. Have you any knowledge of the timber here? We have large forests of pine and iron-bark out towards Narrabri. You get into very good timber 7 miles from Coonabarabran.
1855. Is this timber being cut at the present time? Yes; on the Narrabri side. The forest reserve runs right through from Narrabri to near Gorah. I do not refer to that as suitable farming country, although there are patches of good country along the creeks.
1856. Have you been connected with farming in other districts than this? I have had a farm at Hampden, and I have travelled a good deal.
1857. How would you compare this district with other districts? The good land to which I have referred is equal to anything that I know of in other districts for wheat-growing, oats, and barley; but we have not a sufficient rainfall to grow maize. For thirty years I never saw the wheat crop fail, and 1877 was the only year in which we had to cut our wheat for hay.

Frederick George Failes, M.R.C.S.Eng., Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

- F. G. Failes, 1858. *Vice-Chairman.* Will you kindly supplement, as far as you can, the evidence which has been given before the Committee this morning? A great deal has been said about the necessity for making a branch line from the proposed line; but I should like to say something about the country beyond Coonabarabran, out Baradine way. We claim that this district takes in all the country which supplies wheat to the flour-mills here—that is, the country out towards Tooraweenah and the country out to Baradine. I am not prepared to agree with the statement that a line stopping at Coonabarabran would serve these outlying parts of the district. Coonabarabran is situated in the heart of the bad part of the district, and to bring a line here would not, I think, be satisfactory to the outlying country. I look upon Baradine as the centre of the best wheat-growing land in the district. Out there there are very large areas of land which are now uncultivated, but which could be used to grow wheat. If wheat were grown there, and a railway were made only to Coonabarabran, the produce would have to be drawn 30 miles to get to a railway station, and for 16 miles it would have to come through very hilly country. I believe that New South Wales is likely to become a large exporter of wheat, but I do not think that the Baradine farmers could grow wheat and draw it 30 miles to a railway station, and then sell it in competition with other growers near the coast.
- 9 May, 1900. 1859. What alternative do you suggest? I think that any branch line to Coonabarabran should be continued on as far as Baradine, or at least over the ridges. I should like to point out to the Committee that the farmers have not experimented with the poor country round Coonabarabran, so that what can be done with it remains to be seen. As a hobby I have tried what I could do with 8 acres near the hospital which the Committee have allowed me to cultivate. Of course, I pay no rent for the land, but I have been able to clear it, pale it, and grow hay upon it at a profit.
1860. What is the character of the land? It is land upon which gum, stringy-bark, apple, and other inferior timbers were growing.
1861. Is it ridgy land or flat land? It is rising ground.
1862. What crops have you got? The last two or three years have been exceptionally bad, hot summers. I have grown no wheat on the land, although wheat-growing is the staple industry of this district. This year I could have had a very fair crop of corn, but, owing to the dryness of the summer, it did not germinate till too late, and I have had to cut it to feed the cows. I have had no crop from which I could tell you the yield of corn. I am certain that this ground can hardly be beaten for growing potatoes. I have grown "Early Rose" and other potatoes, and I know that potatoes of a better quality cannot be grown, though the yield is not heavy. I was advised, too, by the late Mr. Thompson, of the Agricultural Department, that the land I spoke of would be very good for fruit. It is a red, sandy loam. Roughly speaking, there are 1,000,000 acres of scrubby forest country between Coonabarabran and Narrabri, and it has been asked, why has it not been taken up? To that question my reply is that the conditions under which it has been offered have not been such as would allow anyone to take it up, though I am certain that a large area of it is quite as good as the land which I have been cultivating, and, with easy conditions, people could afford to clear the best of it. The cost of clearing and fencing large areas of this country would be proportionately less than I had to pay for a small area. I think those who take up this country should have practically no rent to pay for a number of years, and should not be compelled to forfeit the land when it became valuable.

1863. *Mr. Watson.*] Cannot people take the land up in improvement or settlement leases at very low rentals? The condition has been imposed that one-fourth, one-fifth, or one-sixth, should be cleared, and kept cleared, and people cannot afford to clear so much. It is bad enough to have to clear a large area of ground; but to keep it clear is still more difficult, because to do that it is necessary to keep it under cultivation for a number of years, since only in that way can you eradicate the red-gum scrub. If the public who wish to take up land were allowed to offer suggestions as to the way in which they should be permitted to take it up things would be better. It would pay the Government handsomely to let people have land such as I am speaking of, for a number of years for nothing, simply to get rid of the vermin which now live on it.

F. G. Failes,
M.R.C.S. Eng.
9 May, 1900.

1864. *Vice-Chairman.*] What would be a suitable area for a holding in the country you speak of? Five thousand or 10,000 acres. Such a block would include areas suitable for cultivation.

1865. Are artificial grasses grown in this district? Very little. Farming is in a most backward state here. I know that, because I come from Norfolk, one of the best agricultural districts in England. It only requires the stimulus of a good market, however, to bring about improvements. I believe that at the present time there is not such a thing as a drill in the district.

1866. There is an area of untenanted country shown on the map to exist within 15 miles north of Coonabarabran? That is all scrubby country.

1867. Is the country similar right on to Narrabri? I believe that it is.

1868. What is the character of the country going east towards Bomera? Between Coonabarabran and Bomera there is a lot of splendid agricultural land. There are 200,000 acres of Crown lands to be thrown open shortly, and that land is incomparably superior for agricultural purposes to the greater part of that which is now available for agriculture.

1869. Where is the land you speak of situated? Round about Bomera and Trinkey.

1870. Did you use any manure in the 8 acres which you cultivated for the hospital? Not so far, because I have only taken two crops off the land. There are large ironbark forests in most of the scrubby unused country near Coonabarabran, and the timber there is very good. I believe that Coonabarabran would be a great trucking place for stock, if the railway came here, and that stock from Queensland and from the Walgett district would come here to be trucked, though, if a line is taken from Narrabri to Walgett, that will cut off some of that traffic.

1871. If there were a railway to Coonabarabran would the settlers be able to send away small consignments of sheep frequently? Undoubtedly. It would pay small settlers well to fatten small lots of stock to send away; and I believe that, with cultivation, the poor country will be better adapted for that sort of farming than for any other. If the poor sandy ground is laid down in suitable grasses I believe that it can be used in that way.

1872. Has any land been thrown open in the district lately? Not much land has been thrown open lately, but what land has been available has been taken up at once.

1873. Could you offer any opinion upon the probability of an exchange of commodities between this district and those along the proposed line? We have always looked for our main market out towards Walgett and the North-west; but I do not see how it would be possible for us to send produce round by Werris Creek to those places in competition with growers who are more favourably situated.

1874. Was fodder sent from this district out to Walgett, or in that direction, during the last drought? I am sure that the Baradine people sent fodder out that way.

1875. How far is Baradine from here? Twenty-seven or 28 miles by road.

1876. Do you agree with other witnesses that the best connection you can get will be by a branch line from the proposed line? I do not quite fall in with the suggestion that a branch line should be brought into Coonabarabran alone. I think that such a line should be extended on to Baradine.

1877. You do not consider that a branch line from some other point on the existing line, say Mudgee or Muswellbrook, would be better? We have had our minds diverted from the Muswellbrook proposal because of the improbability of getting it, but for years I thought that that would be the best line to construct. I wish to emphasise the fact that I do not think it is everything to have a railway brought to one's doors. As a matter of fact, I believe that the best line we could get would be a line from Coonabarabran to Walgett, without any other connection, so that we could send all our produce out west. Coonabarabran is the most inland place in New South Wales which has an altitude of 2,000 feet, and for that reason I consider that our future traffic should be with the west. As a sanatorium for the people out west I believe that Coonabarabran would be second to none in the Colony, and we could grow fruit and other produce for them.

1878. Has fruit been tried to any extent in this district? Our last Police Magistrate, Mr. Edwards, had a most successful orchard. His successor tried canning the fruit, but he did not make a success of it, because of the distance it had to be sent away. One could not wish for better results than can be obtained from growing grapes here.

1879. Is any mining done within 20 miles of Coonabarabran? I do not think anything of importance has been done in mining. A very poor quality of coal has been discovered in the district, and it might improve at a lower depth.

George Edgar Wright, road superintendent, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

1880. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been here? Nearly seven years.

1881. What is the general trend of the traffic in this district? Until last year practically the whole of the traffic went to Mudgee, and thence to Sydney; but last year an enterprising firm of forwarding agents in Quirindi (Messrs. Dawson and Rogers) offered certain inducements which took about 250 tons of wool to Quirindi. Some of that wool was shipped at Newcastle for Sydney, and some for Melbourne. A considerable quantity of back traffic also came that way.

G. E. Wright.
9 May, 1900.

1882. Did the firm you speak of offer lower rates than had been charged before? Yes; they carried the wool more cheaply than it could have been carried into Mudgee.

1883. And the same with the back loading? Yes.

1884. Is that alternation of route likely to be permanent, or does it depend upon the seasons? It depends upon the seasons. During good seasons teamsters can go to Quirindi more easily than to Mudgee, because, although the road to Mudgee is a better road, it is fenced to such an extent that there is very little feed upon it, whereas the animals can get grass on the Quirindi road. Then, too, the Quirindi road is softer than the Mudgee road, and saves shoeing.

1885.

- G. E. Wright. 1885. Would the Quirindi road be available in a drooping season? Not without a considerable expenditure of money.
- 9 May, 1900. 1886. Do you think that the roads will be improved in a few years? Not at the ordinary rate of expenditure. We have done very little work between Coonabarabran and Bomera, a distance of 40 miles; we only spend £250 upon that road. Between Coonabarabran and Mudooran we spend nearly £1,000 a year, and from Mudooran to Mudgee there is a main road nearly the whole way.
1887. I understand that efforts have been made to obtain larger votes for the Quirindi road? Yes, last year.
1888. Unsuccessfully? Yes.
1889. On the ground that the traffic did not warrant an increase of expenditure? Yes.
1890. Which is the shortest road from Coonabarabran to Mudgee, that *via* Mudooran? No, *via* Merrygoen. Most of the traffic goes *via* Merrygoen when the river is down, which is nearly always; but when the river is up, the traffic goes through Mudooran, to take advantage of the bridge there.
1891. Coonabarabran is the centre of a number of districts? Yes; for the Baradine country, and for Borah for land work, though their wool goes to Gunnedah.
1892. What freights are charged for road carriage to Coonabarabran? Sometimes the charge is as low as 2s. a cwt., but at the present time it is 3s. or 3s. 3d. In the wool season the rates are lower than at other times, because of the back loading.
1893. That would apply either to the Mudgee or to the Quirindi road? Yes.
1894. Would the construction of the Dubbo-Coonamble line have any great effect on the trend of traffic from Coonabarabran, supposing that no other line is constructed? It should have. The Urawilkie wool went to Quirindi last year. That place is 60 miles from here, and before that they sent their wool to Mudgee. As, however, they are within 30 miles of Coonamble, they will send their wool to the Coonamble line when that line is completed. The Baradine traffic will, I think, come this way, and the Tooraweenah traffic will go to Mudgee, although Tooraweenah is within 35 miles of Gilandra. The light traffic in this district and the passenger traffic goes to Gunnedah—the only heavy traffic that way being a van, which plies fortnightly.
1895. If a line were constructed from Wellington to Werris Creek, going through Merrygoen, and a little south of Binnaway, would it or the Coonamble line get the Tooraweenah traffic? The Werris Creek line, because of the saving in trackage. Such a line would take almost the whole of the traffic in this district.
1896. What is the distance from Mudgee to Coonabarabran? One hundred and ten miles by way of Gulgong and Merrygoen.
1897. And from Quirindi, *via* Bomera, to Coonabarabran? About 100 miles.
1898. And from Werris Creek? A little less.
1899. How far is it from Coonabarabran to Gunnedah? Sixty-five miles.
1900. Is the road there worse than other roads? It is not a very bad road, but it is a road that people will not use.
1901. How far south does your district extend? To Merrygoen.
1902. How far does it go in the direction of Coolah? To Coolah and on to Cassilis.
1903. What money do you spend on those roads? £450 on the road to Coolah, and £75 on the road to Cassilis.
1904. What do you spend on the road to Quirindi? £250 on the 40 miles between here and Bomera. A road will have to be made between Coonabarabran and Tambar Springs for the convenience of the settlement which we expect will take place there; but, so far, the traffic has not been sufficient to warrant an expenditure. There are between 200 and 250 miles of scrubby country between Coonabarabran and Narrabri which is now held under annual lease; but in times of drought that country is rushed by starving stock, and, at the present time, there must be 20,000 sheep depasturing on it. For close settlement that country is quite out of the question, and the timber there is not very good.
1905. Do you mean that the timber is not good immediately around Coonabarabran? Yes. We have great difficulty in getting a 30-foot stick. We are building a bridge now, and the timber-getters will have to go out 10 or 15 miles to get a 35-foot stick. They may get it nearer, but there is really no good timber within 20 miles of Coonabarabran.
1906. The good timber grows out towards Narrabri? Yes; there is really good timber out in that direction.

Alexander Deans, butcher, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Deans. 1907. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you long been a resident of this district? Thirty-three years.
- 9 May, 1900. 1908. Do you consider it good country for pastoral purposes? No, not generally.
1909. Is it good fattening country? No.
1910. Is it country which will carry stock for breeding purposes? Yes, it is very good breeding country for either sheep or cattle.
1911. Is it profitable country on which to keep sheep? Parts of it are; but a great deal of it is not of much use.
1912. In which direction does the bad country lie? North, towards Narrabri.
1913. How would you compare the country between Binnaway and Coonabarabran with the surrounding district? It is better than the land out towards Narrabri; but it is inferior to the land west and east of Coonabarabran.
1914. Do you buy fat stock to any large extent? Yes; but I buy very few in this district.
1915. Where do you get your fat stock? Chiefly in the Coonamble district.
1916. Both sheep and cattle? I often get stock from the country to the east of Coonabarabran, about 8 miles from here.
1917. Would the heavily-timbered country carry stock if it were ringbarked and cleared? The more you ringbarked the country to the north the quicker the suckers grow; but, east and south, in the box country, ringbarking makes a great deal of difference.
1918. Taking a belt 30 or 40 miles wide, how would the country between Werris Creek and Wellington compare with the country in the neighbourhood of Coonabarabran? It is about the same as the country to the east, though there are a few patches that are not so good. From Ulimabri to a point 8 miles east from Coonabarabran there is no better land.
- 1919.

1919. Would that land carry a fair population if it were given railway facilities? Yes; every 600 or 700 acres would support a family.
1920. If used for agricultural and grazing? If used for agriculture.
1921. What crops would the land be most suitable for, wheat or maize? Wheat.
1922. If the proposed railway from Werris Creek to Wellington were constructed, would it be of any practical benefit to Coonabarabran? Yes, it would do it a great deal of good.
1923. Would it be sufficiently near to Coonabarabran to enable the people here to take advantage of it? I think so.
1924. It has been stated to-day that it would not be of material advantage to Coonabarabran unless a branch line were constructed to the town? It is my opinion that a branch line should be made to Coonabarabran from some point on the proposed line.
1925. What is the country like between Curlewis and Gilgandra? It is fair country. From Curlewis to Tambar Springs the country is good. From Tambar Springs to the range at Blantyre or Fancy Ground there is fair country, and from the range to Binnaway the country is inferior. Then from Binnaway, for a distance of 20 miles south-west, the country is good. That brings you to Bearbong, and from there to Gilgandra it is medium, iron-bark country.
1926. Which would suit Coonabarabran better, the proposed line or line from Curlewis to Gilgandra? The proposed line.
1927. The distance from Coonabarabran to the Curlewis-Gilgandra line would be only 18 miles? Yes; but that line would take us further up on the Northern line than Werris Creek, and much further west than Wellington.
1928. Do stock travel to this district in seasons of drought? Yes; a great number come here.
1929. Where do the surplus stock go from this district? They go west and north-west to the Coonamble and Walgett districts as stores.
1930. Are they bought up by the people there, or are they sent there to get a bigger market? The people of those districts come here and buy them, and take them away. People also come here for stock from the New England district.
1931. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the stock be sent by train from this district to any part of the New England district? In time of drought it would be easiest to use the line. During the last drought stock going from this district to New England were compelled to go very nearly to Coolah, and then back through Tambar Springs, and in towards Quirindi, to get there, there being no water on the Gunnedah-road. I think it would have been much better for them if they had been able to use the railway.
1932. Do the stock going in that direction number a great many? I think so.
1933. Where would most stock go to, to the New England district, or to the north-west district? I think to the New England district. I know that thousands of sheep have been brought down Coonamble way, and have come through this way to New England.
1934. Do the stock in this district suffer much in times of drought? No.
1935. The district is well watered and well grassed? Yes.
1936. Do stock come to this district from other districts where there is not sufficient grass? Last year every available acre was taken up.
1937. Did sheep come here from other districts then? Yes; they came here from the Walgett district; some of the witnesses have stated that we cannot get rid of our surplus wheat; but I find that the local market will take all the pigs that I can raise, though it is too far to drive pigs to the railway station. If there were a railway close at hand, the farmers could get rid of their surplus wheat very easily by raising pigs.
1938. Would that be profitable? I am certain that it would.
1939. Would it be as profitable as sending wheat direct to market? More profitable, I think. I notice that in Sydney a pig about 8 months old seems to fetch as big a price as anything else of the same age, and an animal of that age does not require very much wheat. I sell a good many pigs to the farmers here, and I find that suckers taken away about Christmas time weigh from 150 lb. to 2 cwt. at 8 months of age, and I know that they get nothing but pumpkins and wheat. It seems to me that the profit on pork would be greater than that on anything else, even sheep-breeding.
1940. Do you do much business through Mudgee? No.
1941. It has been suggested that a line from Mudgee to this district would meet the requirements of Coonabarabran? Such a line would serve us as far as the Sydney market is concerned.
1942. How would it serve the country generally as compared with either the proposed line, or a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra? I think that the proposed line should be made, because that would suit all parties. It would suit the Cobborah country, the Westalibah country, the Oakey Creek country, and the Tambar Springs country.

John Henderson, grazier, Ullman, sworn, and examined:—

1943. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the size of your holding? 75,000 acres, all told.
1944. How far is that from here? My country comes within 15 miles of Coonabarabran.
1945. In what direction does it lie? East, along the Quirindi-road.
1946. What stock are you running? Sheep, principally, and a few cattle as well.
1947. What number of sheep have you? Nearly 28,000 at the present time.
1948. And what number of cattle? Two hundred.
1949. Are you cultivating any of your land? Only for hay, for winter feed for my working horses; but if the railway were made I should cultivate more. I should endeavour in that event to cultivate on the share system.
1950. How much of your holding is suitable for agriculture? Fully a half.
1951. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you mean of half your secured land, or half of the 75,000 acres? Half of the secured land.
1952. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How much of the land is secured? 23,000 acres.
1953. What has been return per acre from the land that you have cultivated? I have never cultivated wheat for grain; but I have got about 1½ tons of hay to the acre. I also grow a little lucerne.
1954. How does the lucerne grow? It grows very well; I cut it three times during the last two seasons, and they were as dry as any I have experienced in the district.

J. Henderson.
9 May, 1900.

- J. Henderson. 1955. I suppose the land on which you grow lucerne is pretty flat? Yes. I am trying to grow it on a ridge now, but I do not know how it will succeed there.
- 9, May, 1900. 1956. Have you a river or a permanent creek? There is a small creek, and there are a few permanent water-holes in it.
1957. Is the flat upon which you are growing lucerne much above the creek? No; only a few feet above it. Part of the land may be subject to floods, though I have never seen it flooded.
1958. How long have you occupied your run? Nearly twelve years.
1959. What weight of wool do you get per fleece? From $5\frac{1}{2}$ to $7\frac{1}{4}$ lb.
1960. What kind of sheep do you run? Merinoes principally, and we have a few crossbreds.
1961. Are you able to send any large number of fat sheep to market? I have not been sending many in the past; I have to look forward to cultivating and to improving before doing much of that sort of thing.
1962. Do you consider the run fully stocked? It is fairly stocked at the present time, considering the seasons. The surplus stock is disposed of as store stock, as a rule.
1963. Which is your nearest railway station? Quirindi.
1964. How far are you from there? Seventy miles. We sometimes dispose of small lots of fat stock; but it is not worth sending away a small lot.
1965. It would pay you to send away small lots if you had a railway within easy distance? Yes.
1966. In what way would the proposed railway benefit you if it were constructed? By helping me to get rid of my sheep and my wool, and to take away farm produce. I was a heavy sufferer last year by not being able to get my wheat away in time.
1967. How far would you be from the proposed line? It touches my land on one side; but the homestead would be about 15 miles away from the line.
1968. Is yours heavily-timbered land? The timber is not very heavy; but there is a good deal of it.
1969. What description of timber is there? Box, iron-bark, apple, and a little pine.
1970. Have you a fairly good rainfall? Yes; during the twelve years that I lived there the lowest rainfall was $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and last year we got only 14.66 inches. The average, however, is somewhere between 24 and 26 inches.
1971. Is the timber on the run valuable? There is a little good pine; but I do not think the iron-bark is very good.
1972. We could not reckon upon the timber being of much value to the railway? Not to any extent.
1973. Have starving stock been depastured upon your holding in dry seasons? No; but I have not had to reduce my stock in such seasons.
1974. I suppose you can run about a sheep to 2 acres? Yes; though I consider that the freehold land will carry more, because it has nearly all been ringbarked.
1975. Has not the leased land been improved? Not to the same extent. For one thing, there is hardly any water on it.
1976. Its carrying capacity would be increased if you had it improved? Yes.
1977. What do you consider the difference between improved and unimproved country? Improved country will carry twice as many stock as unimproved country, and probably a little more. Of course, there is timber that only gets worse if you ringbark it.
1978. When does your lease expire? It is practically up now.
1979. Do you think that the land, when it becomes available for selection, will be readily taken up? Yes; if a railway is made, and in any case if it is thrown open in fair-sized areas.
1980. In what way would the proposed railway benefit you? It would benefit the country all along the route, and there would be more farming done, more labour employed, and more money spent in the district if it were made.
1981. What is the general opinion of the people in the district as to the probability of the proposed railway becoming self-supporting within a reasonable time? I think the general opinion is that the railway would be self-supporting before it had been running many years, because of the extent to which it would develop the district.
1982. Are you confident that it would pay within a few years? I think that it would; though, of course, if the price of wheat became so low that farmers did not care to grow it, that would tell against the railway.
1983. Do you think that settlers who would be benefited by the construction of the line would be willing to contribute towards a fund to make up part of any deficiency? I do not think they would contribute enough to make up £18,000 a year.
1984. If you saved half of what it now costs you to send produce away, could you not afford to make such a contribution? I think that personally I should be agreeable to contribute; but I cannot say what the people generally think about it.
1985. The contributions would be reduced as the traffic increased and the line became self-supporting? Yes; I do not think it would be unfair.
1986. You would gain by the saving in rates? Yes; and by prompt delivery.
1987. Have you tried fruit-growing on your holding? Only on a small scale; but the district is a splendid one for fruit. The poorest land will grow fruit, and I know land on which trees which have not been attended to for the last twelve years are producing good crops.
1988. *Mr. Watson.*] A tax of 1d. per acre on the alienated land through which the line passes would produce about £5,000 per annum;—do you think that that would be too large a contribution to ask towards making good any deficiency? I do not think it would; but I doubt if my neighbours would take the same view of it, though some arrangement of the kind would be fair enough.

Nelson John Proctor, grazier, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

- N. J. Proctor. 1889. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you know the country between here and Baradine, and round about Baradine;—will you kindly describe that country? For the first 8 miles from Coonabarabran the country is poor and mountainous, with rocky hills and steep gorges. Then it begins to improve.
- May, 1900. 1990. Do you get on to low land then? Yes; you are going down hill for 4 miles after rising 4 miles from Coonabarabran. You are descending until you get to the Yarrenden Creek.
1991. Does the good country continue from there on to Baradine? Yes; though there are patches of inferior country to the right of the road. 1992.

1992. And what is the country like around Baradine, to the north-west and the east? It is all flat country. N. J. Proctor.

1993. Is it suitable for agriculture? It is more suitable for agriculture than for anything else.

9 May, 1900.

1994. Can you compare it with the country in any other part of the western district? I have been through the Narramine district, which is a large farming district, and I think that the country I am describing is very similar to that. Some of it is very superior country, but some of it, which is scrubby, is not suitable for grazing.

1995. Is the rainfall there as good as that in the Narramine district? I think it is better. During the six years that I have been living there the average has been a little over 20 inches.

1996. Have agricultural operations there been retarded by reason of the distance from a railway? Yes.

1997. I suppose there has been some agriculture? There are some 500 acres now under cultivation within 15 miles of Baradine, and the average yield is from 16 to 20 bushels to the acre. Last year was an exceptionally bad year, and the yield was not then so high. A late frost blighted the wheat when it was fairly grown.

1998. Would the construction of the proposed railway stimulate agriculture in the Baradine district? Very little, unless there is a branch line.

1999. How far do you think the branch line should extend? Right out to Baradine; you get into good country there, and there would be about 10,000 acres of land available for cultivation.

2000. Do you think there is a sufficiently large area of good land around Baradine to justify the construction of a branch line? I think so, with the pastoral assistance which would be given to such a line.

2001. How far is Baradine from Coonamble? Forty-four miles.

2002. It would be 55 miles from the proposed line? Yes.

2003. To which line would the traffic go? I think that agriculture will die out in the district altogether unless a railway is brought nearer to it. The present market for the district is Coonamble, Walgett, and Pilliga; but when the railway goes to Coonamble we shall be unable to compete with the Narramine farmers.

2004. If a branch line were taken as far as Coonabarabran, what would be the position of the Baradine people? Much better.

2005. They would have a minimum distance of 27 miles to draw their produce then? Yes.

2006. Would a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra have any more effect upon the Baradine district than the proposed line would have? It would not suit the district so well, because it would make our railway haulage greater.

2007. Would an extension from some point on the existing line serve Coonabarabran and Baradine better? Not better than a branch line from the proposed railway. At Baradine they are just tapping one of the finest iron-bark forests in New South Wales.

2008. Does the forest extend right up to Narrabri? Yes. The timber reserve runs right into the township of Baradine. The people on the other side of Baradine have a market for their hay and chaff on the Namoi; but when the Narrabri-Walgett, and the Dubbo-Coonamble lines are made they will have no outlet at all.

2009. They will then be in the same position as Coonabarabran? In a worse position.

2010. What are the general rates of carriage inwards and outwards from Baradine? As a rule, it costs us from 4s. to 4s. 6d. per cwt. to bring goods from Mudgee or Quirindi, while for our wool we pay from £3 10s. to £3 12s. 6d. a ton.

2011. Is the country out in that district good pastoral country? Some of it is very good.

2012. What is the average capacity of the land now held under pastoral occupation? The only station property near there is Goorianawa, which is good plain country. The town of Baradine is practically on the resumed area of Goorianawa.

2013. Are there many small settlers in the district? Yes.

2014. What is the average size of their holdings? As a rule, 2,560 acres. Some of their holdings carry a sheep to the acre, and did so during the whole of the last drought. The country which is suitable for agriculture is not pastoral country.

2015. What would be a fair size for an agricultural holding? With a railway, I think a man would do very well on 2,560 acres, if he combined agriculture and grazing.

Edmund May-Steers, Inspector of Stock, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

2016. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been here? Ten years.

E. May-Steers.

2017. Have you held your present position all the time? Yes.

2018. Is the district a sound stock district? Yes.

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2019. Is it suitable for fattening, or chiefly for carrying stores? Chiefly for carrying stores.

2020. And for breeding? Yes.

2021. What are the boundaries of your district? From Baradine to Gulargambone; thence to the junction of the Merrygoen Creek; from there to Leadville, and on to Coolah; and then across the mountains to the Tamarang Range; and thence on to Mullaley, and back to Baradine.

2022. Then the district extends out about 45 miles in every direction from Coonabarabran? Yes, on the average. On the 31st December, 1899, there were 840,000 sheep, and 18,000 large cattle in the district.

2023. I suppose part of the district suffered from drought during the last few years? It has suffered very slightly.

2024. I suppose they have suffered out towards Gulargambone? The drought has been bad there, but not so bad as in other places. There have been no losses of stock through the drought.

2025. How did stock round about Coonabarabran fare during the recent dry seasons? This year is the worst year they have had since I have been in the district.

2026. Have there been any large losses this year? I do not think there have been any losses yet; but there is a possibility of loss if the rain does not soon come.

2027. Generally speaking, this district has escaped the drought which has affected other districts? Yes; and when they have had droughts in other parts, sheep have come here for agistment.

2028. What has been the trend of the stock traffic through the district;—has it been towards New England? Yes; store stock have gone in that direction. The back country people send their stock through

- E. May-Steers. through here for grass to New England; and the New England people come to this district to buy sheep to stock up with.
9. May, 1900. 2029. Where is the store stock mostly fattened—in New England, or on the Liverpool Plains? On the Liverpool Plains.
2030. Would the proposed line be used to any extent for cross-country traffic? Not to a great extent. The country through which it passes is practically always good, and owners will not truck store sheep if they can travel them.
2031. Does much fat stock go through the district, on its way to Muswellbrook or the Northern line? Yes. It goes chiefly to Aberdeen or to Flemington.
2032. Where does it come from? From the Pilliga, Walgett, and Coonamble districts.
2033. That stock would not use the proposed line to any extent? No.
2034. It would be much better for the holders in the north-western district, if they wished to use the railway, to drive in towards Narrabri? Yes.
2035. They would not drive half way and truck the rest? No. Some of the stock-owners in the Narrabri district drive right through to Mudgee and Rylstone in good seasons to truck to Flemington.
2036. Towards Werris Creek the line would probably be used for the conveyance of fat stock? The people close to the line would use it.
2037. Where does the fattening country commence, going towards Werris Creek? It starts about Rockgedgiel.
2038. Then it is likely that the 50 miles of line at the Werris Creek end would be used for the conveyance of fat stock? I believe so, though I do not know that part of the country well.
2039. Would a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra be more largely used for stock traffic than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek? Only in bad seasons.
2040. It might be used, then, for moving starving stock? Yes.
2041. Otherwise you do not think there would be much difference? No; I think that the people who fatten stock would cross that line to go on to Mudgee.
2042. It has been suggested that the Mudgee line might be extended out towards Merrygoen;—do you think that such a line will attract more fat stock? Not to any large extent: not so much as if the line were taken right out to Coonabarabran.
2043. Why should people truck stock at Coonabarabran rather than at Narrabri—that is, stock coming from the north-west? I think the distance would be less from Narrabri. Then, too, drovers could hold back their stock at Coonabarabran and keep it on the Crown lands, trucking it when they liked.

John Taylor, farmer and carrier, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Taylor. 2014. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your place from Coonabarabran? Three miles.
- 9 May, 1900. 2045. What is the extent of it? I have purchased 45 acres; but I also hold land for grazing purposes under annual lease.
2046. How much land have you under annual lease? 640 acres.
2047. How long have you been residing here? Since 1859.
2048. I suppose that as a carrier you have a thorough knowledge of the country? A pretty good knowledge. We bought our present place in April, 1860. There was no farming then; but people grew a little wheat for their own use, and ground it themselves. Afterwards we began to take our wheat to Mudgee, and to bring back the flour.
2049. Where is your principal market now? My principal market is at Coonabarabran.
2050. Are you acquainted with the country between Wellington and Werris Creek? With part of it; but I do not know the route right through from one end to the other.
2051. Will you describe the country so far as you know it, within 15 miles of the proposed line? From Werris Creek coming this way the country is good for the first 50 miles; good grazing and good agricultural country.
2052. On both sides of the line? Yes, most of it.
2053. Is it good for agriculture chiefly? Some of it is good for agriculture, and some for grazing.
2054. Roughly speaking, what would the proportions be? About one-third would be fit for agriculture, and the rest would be good grazing country.
2055. What is the character of the next 40 miles of country? About a fourth of it would be fit for agriculture. Some of it is very good land; but other parts are only second or third class land. The balance varies from good or fair pastoral country to poor country.
2056. The first 50 miles are better than the next 40? Yes. Then on towards Wellington the land improves.
2057. What proportion of it is fit for cultivation? About half.
2058. Have you done any farming yourself? I have been farming for nearly thirty years.
2059. All about this neighbourhood? Yes, in this neighbourhood.
2060. What has been the result? With the exception of one season I have always got a crop. That was in 1877.
2061. What is your average yield? From 16 to 20 bushels to the acre. Last year the average yield was about 18 bushels.
2062. Have you always grown wheat? I have grown oats and corn. I have obtained as many as 50 bushels of corn to the acre.
2063. And how much hay? As many as 2 tons to the acre; but that was an exceptionally good crop. An average crop is about a ton to the acre.
2064. In what way would the district benefit by the construction of the proposed line? The country out from Coonabarabran would not benefit by the construction of the proposed line unless a branch line were brought to Coonabarabran itself. The town is situated in the most barren part of the district, and the best land lies to the east and west of it, while there is good land to the south, and some to the north, which, if the produce could be sent away, could be brought into use. The country to the north is very sandy; but there are many patches of 300 or 400 acres which would grow wheat, corn, and other crops.
2065. The cost of carting produce to the railway station now prevents people from farming? Yes, that and the low price combined. I have wheat at the present time which I am using and selling for horse-feed.
- 2066.

2066. What is the freight to the nearest market? I think it would cost about 1s. a bushel to send wheat to the railway. The only way in which our farmers can make anything is by taking flour out west; but there are so many of them doing that now that they have a job in getting buyers.
2067. Is the land sufficiently good to enable you to compete successfully with growers in other districts? Yes; if we had railway facilities.
2068. What is the cost of road-carriage on goods per ton? From Gunnedah, about 3s. a cwt.; and from Mudgee, from 3s. 6d. to 4s. a cwt.; but I think it is cheapest to bring things through Quirindi, because of the saving in railway freight.
2069. Do the people in the district seem inclined to go in for cultivation? A great many of them would go in partly for cultivation and partly for crops if there were a railway. Those who carry sheep and farm a little do better than those who only farm, because they are able to use their poorer land, which otherwise they could not use for grazing.
2070. What would be a sufficiently large holding for a mixed farm? I think nothing less than about 640 acres; that would be a small holding.
2071. A good hardworking man could make a fair living on that area? Yes; if he had facilities for getting rid of his produce.
2072. At what distance from a railway could a man farm successfully? At not more than 20 miles.
2073. That would take him two days to deliver his produce? Yes; a day in and a day out.
2074. As a rule do the small settlers live entirely on their holdings, or do they exist by taking contracts? Those who have very small holdings take contracts, and when they cannot get any work to do they use their time in improving their land. I have only 45 acres, and I manage to make a living, but it is chiefly by working elsewhere.
2075. Are the settlers pretty prosperous where they are near a railway? Settlers near a railway are more comfortable than those further off, because they can turn their produce into ready money without loss of time. When we grow hay or wheat we have often to keep it six months before we can turn it into money.
2076. Do the settlers in this district live pretty comfortably? Yes; where they keep cows. I favour the proposed route more than any other, because I hope that at some time we may get a branch line from it to Coonabarabran. The Curlewis-Gilgandra line would not serve the country at all. At Werris Creek you are right on the Northern line; but at Curlewis you are a long way from it.
2077. Would the proposed line be largely used for moving starving stock in bad seasons? Yes; but we may not have bad seasons for a long time. I think, however, that the proposed line would get a good share of the stock traffic whether the seasons were good or bad; and there might be a good deal of timber traffic.
2078. Is there a good supply of timber? Yes; out to the north and north-west.

J. Taylor.
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Thomas Deans, farmer and grazier, Coonabarabran, sworn, and examined:—

2079. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand that you are an old resident of the district? I settled here in 1863.
2080. Have you been residing here ever since? Yes; within 25 miles of the town.
2081. Have you a good general knowledge of the district and its capabilities? I have a fair knowledge of it.
2082. Have you had any experience of other districts? I lived near Hartley for seven years.
2083. Is the land in this district good agricultural land? Some of it is very good, though some of it is inferior. In places you might get 400 or 500 acres of good land, and in other places only 30 or 40 acres.
2084. Where it is not suitable for agriculture, it is suitable for grazing? Yes.
2085. In all cases? Yes.
2086. Do you endorse what has been said about the proportion of grazing and agricultural land? Yes; I endorse what evidence I have heard.
2087. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway will benefit this part of the district? I consider that it would benefit a great deal of it. I have had a good deal of experience in bringing goods into the district during the last five or six years, and I prefer to bring them from Quirindi.
2088. Do you think that the proposed line would be better than a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra? Yes.
2089. If a line were constructed from Wellington to Werris Creek or Dubbo, would it induce a number of people to settle in the district? I think so; though I do not know much about the land between Cobbarah and Wellington.
2090. Do you know the Werris Creek country? Yes; it is very good country.
2091. Do you think the Coonabarabran district would be too far from the proposed line to allow farmers to make use of it? I do not think so.
2092. In what direction is your holding from Coonabarabran? It is 8 miles from the town, in an easterly direction.
2093. Do you think that you could farm profitably if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes; and I would send my produce, stock, and wool to the railway.
2094. Do you grow wheat? I grow all sorts of things, including peas and pumpkins.
2095. Do you think various crops could be successfully grown in the district generally? I think so; and they might be used for fattening stock. Pumpkins, for instance, might be used in that way.
2096. Have you found farming profitable? Yes.
2097. Do you grow much wheat? I have about 70 acres under wheat.
2098. What is your average yield per acre? In a fair average season, from 18 to 20 bushels to the acre. I have received as much as 30 bushels to the acre, and my lowest yield has been 15 bushels.
2099. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What vegetables do you grow? Peas and pumpkins; and I also grow corn, wheat, barley, and potatoes. I grow pumpkins for my milking cows.
2100. Have you grown turnips? No; I cannot grow them.
2101. What has been the average yield of your various crops? I have had from 15 to 20 bushels of peas to the acre, and, in good seasons, from 15 to 20 tons of pumpkins to the acre, while in other seasons I have not got a ton.
2102. Do you grow fruit? I have some fruit-trees, but they are not in a good position, they are down on the banks of the river, and the frost kills the fruit.

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- T. Deans. 2103. *Vice-Chairman.*] What are the general rates of freight on your store goods? I pay £4 16s. 9d. a ton to bring goods from Sydney to my place. Of that amount £2 is paid to the teamster, 2s. 6d. is commission, and the balance is steamer freight from Sydney to Morpeth, and rail from there to Quirindi.
- 9 May, 1900. 2104. By what other route do you get goods? I also get goods from Mudgee. The road carriage from Mudgee would cost £3. I have got a few things from Gunnedah, but that road is too expensive.
2105. Are the rates dearer now? Yes. I have to pay £3 now to bring things from Quirindi, whereas I used only to pay £2. As a rule, the Mudgee carriers have to feed their animals, while the Quirindi carriers can depend upon the grass and kurrajong trees along the road.

THURSDAY, 10 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at Mr. McMaster's residence, "Morven," at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

James Mair Alison, grazier, Oakey Creek, made an affirmation, and was examined:—

- J. M. Alison. 2106. *Vice-Chairman.*] How is Oakey Creek situated with respect to the proposed railway? It is about 75 miles from Werris Creek and 102 miles from Dubbo.
- 10 May, 1900. 2107. What is the extent of your holding? Between 30,000 acres and 40,000 acres.
2108. Would much of the land on Oakey Creek be suitable for agriculture if there were a railway near to it? No; we have had a great deal of trouble in growing enough hay to feed our own horses.
2109. What has the trouble been due to? To the want of rain at the proper season.
2110. As a rule rain does not fall at such times as would render agriculture profitable in the district around Oakey Creek? In the little paddock which we have, we only get a good crop of hay about once in three years.
2111. What is the country like to the east and to the west of your holdings? The country between here and Merrygoen is bad—mostly iron-bark scrub. It is very bad pastoral country.
2112. Do you think it has any agricultural possibilities? I do not think the sandy country is good for anything. It cannot last long without manure. From here to Mundooran the country is very bad.
2113. Would the construction of the proposed line confer much benefit upon the pastoralists along the route by giving them a more speedy and certain means of conveyance? The wool that goes from Weetalibah goes straight to Mudgee now by road, and, of course, the proposed railway would take it away more quickly, but I do not think it would take it away more cheaply. From here to Mudgee is 90 miles, and from Mudgee to Sydney is 190 miles. From here to Dubbo, however, is 100 miles, and from Dubbo to Sydney is nearly 300 miles, a much greater distance; so that I think no one could afford to send round by way of Dubbo.
2114. One reason which has been urged in support of the line is that "it would afford facilities for speedier intercommunication between the Northern, Southern, and Western main trunk lines, and will, therefore, tend to create increased traffic;"—what products are likely to be interchanged between the North and North-western and the Western and Southern lines, if the proposed railway be constructed? I do not see how there can be any interchange at all.
2115. The distance to Sydney from Morven, *via* Mudgee, is 280 miles, and *via* Wellington 328 miles, a difference of 40 miles in favour of the Mudgee route? Yes, and there would be another 40 miles in favour of the Mudgee route on the way back.
2116. It has been urged that the proposed railway might be used for the transport of starving stock to the New England country? When the proposed line was first mooted Sir John Robertson had the idea that the starving stock on the Macquarie could be sent to New England and Liverpool Plains country, which at that time was all cattle country; but now the New England country has all been fenced in, and has been drained, and what land is not used by the stockowners there is taken up by the large flocks of starving sheep which come from the Moree district. Country which formerly used to produce foot-rot has been so much improved by drainage that it is now often overstocked, so that last year hundreds of sheep died round about Moree, because they could not be received in the New England country, and the Moree district is nearer to New England than this district.
2117. Would many consignments of fat stock be sent along the proposed line to Sydney? I do not think so. You could not take stock around by Dubbo and Wellington to Sydney, because it would be too expensive. The stock from this district would all go to Mudgee.
2118. They carry fat stock from Bourke to Sydney? Sometimes; but at Bourke they have no choice in the matter, though they find the carriage very expensive. Fat stock come to Bourke from Queensland.
2119. As a rule, where are fat stock sent from this district? Very often to Quirindi; but I think that most of them go to Mudgee.
2120. You do not think that the construction of the proposed line would alter the trend of the traffic? I am sure that it would not.
2121. Apart from its military value, am I right in concluding that you see little or no advantage in the construction of the proposed line? I cannot see that it would do any good. The country will have to pay for it, and there will be no traffic on it.
2122. It has been suggested in connection with this and other lines that the landholders of this district should make an annual contribution towards the reduction of any loss on working. Could you afford to make such a contribution? I should not like to make any promise on the subject.
2123. Could a landholder afford to pay as much as he now pays in land-tax for such a purpose? I should not like to pay another land-tax, and I do not think other landholders would.
2124. Can you suggest any other line which would serve this district better than that proposed? I think that a line out from Mudgee would be the best.
- 2125.

2125. For what reason would you urge the construction of that line? For every reason.
2126. Would it open up better country? It would go through good country. There is no better farming country in the Colony than that between Mudgee and Redbank.
2127. Do you think that such a line would serve the country better than the proposed line? Yes; except that the proposed line might be of advantage for military purposes, though, I think, that a line from Muswellbrook through Cassilis, and Redbank to Mudgee, would do as well for the transport of troops, and such a line would bring us closer to Sydney.
2128. *Mr. Watson.*] If a line were constructed from Mudgee to Redbank, where could it be taken afterwards, if it were thought advisable to extend it? It could be taken straight out. There is a loss of £18,000 or £20,000 a year on the Mudgee line now; but if that line were taken on to Coonamble the loss would disappear.
2129. A line has been sanctioned from Dubbo to Coonamble: that being so, which would be the best direction to extend the Mudgee line from Redbank? Through Redbank, and then on in a direction which would keep Coonabarabran about 30 miles to the east.
2130. Is not the country west of Coonabarabran rather rough? It is good healthy country, and farmers would do well there with 2,000 acres or 3,000 acres, and by keeping a few sheep.
2131. But would not the line be an expensive one to make after it got past Merrygoen? What does it matter what the expense is, if you have produce to carry on it.
2132. However, in the meantime, you suggest that a line should be taken from Mudgee as far as Redbank? Yes; that would go through the best of the country.
2133. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What sort of country is there along the route of the proposed line? There is a very narrow strip of good country between Wellington and Cobborah; but, after that, the country which the proposed line will go through is as bad as it can be.
2134. What would be the width of the strip of good country that you speak of? That strip of country is not very wide. In the olden times they always kept out of the bad country. From Wellington to Cobborah is nice farming country; but the good country is very narrow.
2135. From Cobborah coming this way what is the country like? There are a good many good patches going through Mundooran; but generally the country is not good. There is not much agricultural country there.
2136. What would be the carrying capacity of most of the land so far as you know it? It is not very great. Besides, that country is grass-seed country, and you cannot lamb good sheep on it.
2137. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed people would be encouraged to settle on the land as agriculturists? I think that if you took a railway anywhere some people would settle upon the land through which it went; but the question always arises: Is there not better land to go through.
2138. Do you think that the construction of a railway would increase the traffic of the district to such an extent as to wipe out a deficiency of £18,000 a year? I do not.
2139. You do not think it is desirable to construct the proposed line? I do not. Where is the passenger traffic to come from. There is no population in the district. I think that before a line is constructed there should be a population to be served by it; and I am sure that if the proposed line is made it will be a national loss. In Melbourne they have seen the folly of constructing lines that will not pay.
2140. *Vice-Chairman.*] With regard to the stock traffic from other districts to New England, what has been the history of that traffic, so far as this district has been concerned? We have had to remove our sheep only once in thirty years. The stock which has been taken to New England in such numbers was taken there to stock up the country after it had been depleted by a drought. They were sent there by Mr. Green and other people from districts to the south of us, and some 200,000 sheep went there. That was about three years ago. Of course, small flocks of sheep have gone to the district at other times through this district.
2141. Could a considerable number of sheep have passed through this district without your knowledge? I do not think so. The New England holders have often to buy sheep. In some parts of New England they cannot lamb sheep, and they have to come and buy our store wethers. They take two or three fleeces off the sheep that they buy, and then they send them away to be fattened; but that traffic is not considerable. We buy their store wethers to fatten down here.
2142. Would that traffic increase with the construction of the proposed railway? The construction of the proposed railway would not alter it a bit. It hurts sheep more to send them 100 miles by train than to drive them that distance, unless, of course, the season is very dry.

John McMaster, grazier, Binnia, sworn, and examined:—

2143. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good general knowledge of the district through which the proposed line would pass? I know the country in the immediate vicinity of Morven and on towards the Northern line; but I do not know the country towards Wellington.
2144. How would you class the land within 20 miles of the proposed line? From here on to Werris Creek there is a great deal of good agricultural land.
2145. Is the balance of the land suitable for pastoral purposes? Yes.
2146. Is the pastoral industry a profitable one in this district? Yes.
2147. Is the country good fattening country? Yes; it is both good fattening country and good wool-growing country.
2148. Is it suitable for both cattle and sheep? Yes.
2149. Is much of the land between here and Werris Creek occupied by agriculturists? Yes, a fair quantity.
2150. Principally at the Werris Creek end? Yes, and I think that the area under cultivation is being extended.
2151. Is there much land in the leasehold areas which are shortly to be thrown open for selection suitable for agriculture, but uncultivated? So far as I know there is not a great deal.
2152. Would the construction of the proposed railway tend to increase the area of cultivation in the district? I think so.

J. M. Alison.
10 May, 1900.

J. McMaster.
10 May, 1900.

- J. McMaster. 2153. Which would serve the district better, the proposed line, or a line from Mudgee? The proposed line. It would be a national line, connecting our Northern and Western railway systems.
- 10 May, 1900. 2154. Would it benefit the district as much as a line from Mudgee would? I do not think it would benefit it quite as well, though I do not think there is much difference between them in that respect. A line from Mudgee would be more beneficial, as being a more direct line to Sydney.
2155. Would the proposed line suit the traffic from this district to the north-west districts and to New England better than any other? Most decidedly.
2156. Is there any considerable stock traffic between New England and the north-western districts and the district lying between Werris Creek and the Western line? A few years ago over 200,000 sheep passed Binnia within the space of a fortnight or three weeks on their way to New England to grass.
2157. If the proposed railway were constructed would it be used for the conveyance of stock? I think so. There would be times when the stock would be compelled to travel by rail. The stock that I refer to were hardly able to travel, and I think that if there had been a railway they would have taken it.
2158. Would you send stock by railway if you were near to it? Yes. If I had a lot of valuable stock, which I wanted to send somewhere to grass, I should certainly truck them there.
2159. Do you send away many fat stock? Yes, a good many.
2160. Where is your market for fat stock? Homebush.
2161. Where do you truck them from? The sheep that we send from the Liverpool Plains we truck from Quirindi, and sheep coming from holdings nearer this way we truck at Mudgee or Luc.
2162. If the proposed line were constructed, would you truck at the nearest railway station, or would you continue to drive to Quirindi and Mudgee? There are times when we should use the line, but at other times we might not. It is all a question of expense. At the present time we have only to send stock 50 miles to get them to Quirindi, whereas, if we used the proposed line, we should have to send them a long way round.
2163. How far is your homestead from the route of the proposed railway? I suppose not more than 6 or 7 miles. We should only have to send our stock a few miles from Bundella to get to the line station, so that in all probability we should use the railway there.
2164. Would people living along the route use the proposed railway, or would they drive their stock and their sheep to Mudgee? I think they would use the line.
2165. What crops is this district chiefly suited for? Wheat and corn.
2166. How would the agricultural area in this district compare with the wheat-growing land which you have seen in other districts? A great part of it would not be as good as the land in other districts.
2167. If the proposed railway were constructed would it open up for settlement a large area which is not now settled upon? No doubt it would in time increase settlement.
2168. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you any agricultural land on your holding? Yes, a small area. I have only grown crops for my own use.
2169. What yield do you usually get? During the last few years the yield has been very small; but in some seasons we have had a good yield.
2170. Year in and year out, what sort of crops do you get? I have never grown wheat for grain.
2171. What is a fair average return for hay? I have obtained 2 tons to the acre.
2172. What is the rainfall on your land? From 24 to 25 inches.
2173. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you start agricultural operations on a larger scale? In all probability I should.
2174. Would you lease any land on the halves system? I should be inclined to lease land on the halves system.
2175. Where is Binnia? Binnia is about 4 miles from Oakey Creek, and within a few miles of the proposed line. It is 75 or 78 miles from Werris Creek. Another property in which I am interested is Bundella, which is 25 miles nearer Werris Creek than Binnia. My father has also a property near Coolah.
2176. What is the average carrying capacity of your Binnia property? About 40,000 acres there carry from 25,000 to 30,000 sheep.
2177. That is, taking the bad and good land together? Yes.
2178. Is yours fair average country? I should say that it would be better than the average.
2179. Is that because it has been improved, or because the land is better? I think that the land itself is better than the average.
2180. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think it would pay freeholders along the route to make a contribution towards reducing any deficiency upon the working of the railway? I do not think so. I should not be prepared to make such a contribution.
2181. Do you not think that the railway would be worth a penny per acre per annum to you? I should not like to promise to pay anything. Agriculture is a thing which can very soon be overdone.
2182. It seems pretty evident that New South Wales growers will soon have to take the prices paid for wheat in the markets of the world; do you think that they can grow wheat at those prices and pay 10s. or 11s. a ton to send it to Newcastle or Sydney? I could not say.
2183. Is this as good wheat country as, say, the Narrandera country? I could not say; but I dare say that part of the land in this district is equally good. I should think there would be plenty of agricultural land in the district.

FRIDAY, 11 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at "The Flags" Hotel, Bomera, at 12:30 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDEBAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Donald McGillivray, station manager, Bomera, sworn, and examined:—

2184. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is Bomera from the route of the proposed line? The route passes through the run, and the homestead would be about 5 miles from the nearest point on it.
2185. What is the area of Bomera holding? I supervise 150,000 acres.
2186. In one holding? Yes.
2187. What is the average carrying capacity of the run? The secured land, which comprises an area of 36,000 acres, carries about a sheep to the acre, and the leased land, of which there is about 115,000 acres, carries, I suppose, 3,500 cattle, which are equal to about 27,000 sheep.
2188. Is that part of the run devoted to cattle? Yes; we do not carry sheep on that land.
2189. How much of the whole run, taking secured and leased land together, is suitable for agriculture? I consider that there is 20,000 acres of good land fit for wheat-growing.
2190. Is any of the leased land fit for agriculture? Of the leased land on the Blandtyre, I suppose, 25,000 acres are fit for wheat.
2191. What is the difference between the leased land and the secured land? There is very little difference. Taking it on the whole, I think the leased land is quite as good as the secured land—that is, the 25,000 acres on the Blandtyre.
2192. Have you tested any part of the agricultural land on the secured area? Merely for growing hay.
2193. What was the average yield which you got? I have been here three years, and during that time I have cultivated about 18 acres for station purposes, and have obtained about 3 tons of hay to the acre. Those years have been bad years.
2194. What is the average rainfall at Bomera? During the last three years it has been about 23 inches. Before that it was greater.
2195. How far is Bomera from the nearest railway station? It is 51 miles from Gunnedah and 62 from Quirindi.
2196. What is the average freight to and from Quirindi? Two shillings per cwt. At the present time they want 3s. 6d. per cwt., because of the drought.
2197. Is that the charge for both inward and outward traffic? That is what they want for bringing things out; I have not had anything sent in.
2198. What is the country between here and Werris Creek like? It is suitable for both agricultural and pastoral pursuits. The black soil country is not so reliable for wheat as the box country, but a great part of it is very suitable for cultivation, and there are large farms on it. One gentleman has 6,000 acres under cultivation close to the route of the proposed line.
2199. Where is that? On "4 D" holding.
2200. Would the country between Bomera and Werris Creek support close settlement if there were a railway? Yes.
2201. How many acres of it would support a family in decent comfort? 400 acres, if the land were cultivated.
2202. Would it be necessary to devote the land exclusively to agriculture, or would it be better for a settler to go in for mixed farming? Mixed farming would be safer.
2203. How many acres would be sufficient if a man went in for mixed farming? I should think about 640 acres.
2204. How much Crown land is there available within 20 miles of the proposed railway? The 25,000 acres on the Blandtyre, to which I have already referred, has been surveyed, and the land is now waiting to be balloted for. The 115,000 acres of Crown land in the Bomera holding is all within 25 miles of the route of the proposed line.
2205. Is it a fact that the greater part of the best land along the route of the proposed line has been secured and is now in the hands of private owners? A great deal of the land has been secured.
2206. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed the owners of land in the district would go in for agriculture, either by themselves, or on the halves system? We are prepared to offer 20,000 acres of our secured land for cultivation on the halves system. The people who own Bomera also own Kentucky, in Riverina, and they have had as much as 15,000 acres under cultivation there. If the proposed line is made I shall have instructions to work in that way.
2207. Is the share system being practised in this district? Yes, to some extent; but I cannot tell you how much. In Riverina we take a bag to the acre, and the farmers only have the land while it is under crop; at other times we have it for sheep.
2208. *Mr. Watson.*] Is a bag an acre all you get for your share? Yes; but the farmers pay for clearing the land.
2209. *Vice-Chairman.*] What market would you expect for your produce if you went in for agricultural pursuits? The general colonial market and the world's market.
2210. You do not look for a market out towards Moree and Walgett? I should not expect to send a great deal out there, though a little might go there.
2211. It has been urged that the proposed line would form a connecting link between the Northern, the North-Western, and the Western railway systems;—would you find a market in those districts? No doubt. We grow lucerne here splendidly, and we should find a market for it in the Bourke district and in the northern districts. The proposed line would also be used for the transport of sheep backwards and forwards. During the first two years that I was here 325,000 sheep passed through Bomera, travelling for grass.

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2212. Where did they come from? From Narrabri and that district. Some were going towards Mudgee while other lots were going towards New England.
2213. Is that traffic likely to be permanent, or was it only the result of the drought? It was the result of the drought.
2214. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it be used by stock travelling for grass? I am sure that it would. A flock of 12,000 sheep which passed this place took four days to go 10 miles, and men were skinning the sheep that could not travel all the way along the road. That sort of thing has happened even this year.
2215. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is not the case you refer to an isolated one? Yes; that happened because of the drought. The sheep were splendid sheep, but they were in a very bad way.
2216. *Vice-Chairman.*] For what purposes would lucerne be bought in the western district? To feed sheep. They often have to feed their sheep out there.
2217. I suppose they would only feed valuable stud sheep? They sometimes feed paddock sheep, too.
2218. How long would it pay to feed ordinary sheep? We are well aware that it does not pay to feed them, but I am afraid to say how many months the sheep have been fed at Canonbar, though at very large expense.
2219. Is it not a fact that the feeding of sheep in times of drought has proved so unprofitable that it is not likely to be again indulged in, except to save valuable stud sheep? I do not know. I have not had to feed sheep here, though we have had to feed them on Kentucky.
2220. Do you know the country from Bomera towards Wellington, on the route of the proposed line? I know the country between Bomera and Coolah. That country is very like the country here.
2221. Do you think there would be much agricultural produce sent from that district if there were a railway? I am sure of it. The production of the district would be increased tenfold if there were a railway. The Commissioners' estimate of revenue seems to me an absurdly low one. If there were 15,000 acres under crop in the district, and only a very low yield were obtained, at the rates that we have to pay for carriage now the railway revenue would be something like £20,000. At the present time it costs us 1s. 2d. a bushel to send wheat from here to Quirindi.
2222. All that the railway would get for haulage for that distance would be about $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a bushel? If we could get our grain carried for that price, we should be able to cultivate.
2223. You are of opinion that, even if the railway does not pay, there will be a considerable increase of settlement in this part of the country after it has been made? Yes; the 25,000 acres already referred to would mostly be put under cultivation. We should lose our 115,000 acres of leased land; but then we could make much more use of the 36,000 acres of secured land.
2224. Do you think that, in order to obtain a railway, the landholders in this district would be prepared to contribute towards making good any deficiency in revenue as much as they now pay in land-tax, the contributions to be reduced as the deficiency disappeared? I should think so. I should advise it, and I could pretty safely promise that my principals would agree to it.
2225. Do you think that the land required for a railway could be obtained from the landholders free of cost? I am of opinion that it could. I think that they would all give their land; I am sure that the Government would get our land.
2226. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you send your fat stock to the Sydney market? Yes; I send them to Quirindi and truck them there; but the stock route is so bad at the present time that I cannot send my fat stock away at all.
2227. How long does it take to travel sheep to Quirindi? It takes us three weeks to get sheep from here to the saleyards at Homebush.
2228. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you use the nearest railway station to send your fat stock from it? Yes; it would never pay to drive sheep past the railway.
2229. Would other owners truck their fat stock at the nearest station? Yes; everyone would. There is a man in the Narrabri district who travels some of his fat stock; but I do not think it ever pays.
2230. Do you send much fat stock away. I sent nearly 8,000 fat stock away one year. That was a fairly good season, although we only got 17.6 inches of rain.
2231. Do many other stock-owners send fat stock away? The proposed line will be nearer to Bando holding than Gunnedah is,—and they have sent 63,000 fat sheep from that station in one season alone. No one who had fat stock would travel them, where they could take the train.
2232. *Vice-Chairman.*] Which would suit this district best,—a connection with Dubbo, or a connection with Wellington? I do not see that it would make much difference to the district; but from what I know of the country, a connection with Wellington would be more advantageous to the Colony at large. For one thing, it would give a straighter route to Melbourne.
2233. *Mr. Shepherd.*] On what terms would you offer your 25,000 acres if you went in for the share system? I think on the consideration we received a bag an acre.
2234. What facilities do you afford men for settling on the land;—in some places seed is provided? My principals provide seed. If a man is very poor, and has horses and labour but not sufficient money to buy wheat for feed, they supply him with wheat, and get it back when the crop comes up.
2235. Would a bag an acre be taken in full satisfaction of the landlord's claim? Yes; but the tenants would have to clear the land. We lend them money if they find it necessary to employ labour to assist in clearing it.
2236. What interest is charged on that money? 5 per cent.
2237. For how many years is the land leased? For four years. During the last year, when the farmer is putting in his wheat, we also provide lucerne seed for him to sow.
2238. But when the fourth crop is taken off the farmer has to give up the land? Yes.
2239. Do you think that in four years a man would recoup himself for the expense of clearing the land? Yes.
2240. What is about the average cost of clearing land? It would take about 5s. an acre for average country.
2241. *Mr. Watson.*] That is when the timber is dead? Yes; the timber has all been rung years ago.
2242. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you know a great deal about Australian country;—how would you describe the Bando country? The Bando country is the best in Australia for fattening stock quickly. It will fatten more stock in a year than any other country will.
2243. Is it good country for breeding purposes? Yes; it is wonderfully good country for breeding stock, but it is not so good for wool.
- 2244.

2244. What is the average weight of a fleece there? About 8½ lb.; but the country is full of trefoil burrs. I should also like to mention that this is one of the best timber districts that I know away from the rivers. Wonderfully good iron-bark and pine grow here, and if the railway were constructed, a great deal of timber would be sent away by it. Then, too, we have some of the best building stone in the Colony—a beautiful white sandstone—and it is easily got. D.
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2245. Is it liable to fret? No; we have chimneys of it that were built in 1863 still standing.

Charles John Smith, grazier and farmer, Tambar Springs, sworn, and examined:—

2246. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided in this district long? Since 1853. C. J. Smith.

2247. Have you been engaged in farming pursuits? I have been farming ever since I came here, and I was brought up on a farm. 11 May, 1900.

2248. What results have you had from your farming? I have never grown wheat until the last three seasons, though I have grown corn and hay for my own use.

2249. How many acres have you had under wheat? About 42 acres last year.

2250. What was the average yield? Between 16 and 17 bushels to the acre last year, and 22 bushels the year before.

2251. Where is your market? Quirindi.

2252. Do you send any wheat to Sydney? I have not done so yet.

2253. What distance is your property from this place? About 15 miles.

2254. What is the nature of the country in your locality? The soil is alluvial.

2255. Is a large part of it adapted for agriculture? All the land on the creek where I am living is better suited for agriculture than for anything else.

2256. What does it cost to carry grain to Quirindi? The usual charge is 2s. a bag; but I employ my own teams.

2257. What yield of corn have you obtained? I have not taken any note of it.

2258. Has corn been successful? Not during the last twelve months; but the year before I had a very good crop. Last season was the worst I ever experienced.

2259. What is the country like between here and Werris Creek, along the route of the proposed line? There is a lot of agricultural country there.

2260. Is it land that could be cultivated and settled upon if the railway were constructed? Yes, and if it were thrown open for settlement. What keeps us back is the fact that we have no means of getting our produce away.

2261. Are many of the people in this district engaged in agriculture? There are a few where I am living, but they only cultivate on a small scale. I am only cultivating on a small scale; but if there were a railway I should go in largely for agriculture.

2262. Do you think that would be profitable? It is the only thing for us to do, I think.

2263. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the people here use it for sending their produce away? Yes; it would be cheaper to use the railway than to send away produce by carts or in waggons.

2264. What is the area of your holding? 1,300 acres.

2265. How much of your land would be suitable for agriculture? 800 acres.

2266. Is your land similar in character to the adjoining land? Yes. A number of people would cultivate all their land; but I do not believe in the alluvial black-soil country for agriculture, although I have several hundred acres of it. It is not as good as the timbered country.

2267. What trees grow on the timbered country? Apple and box.

2268. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the owners of the land through which it passed give that land to the Government free of cost? I do not see why they should not.

2269. Would the landholders here be willing to make a contribution of a penny per acre to make good the estimated deficiency of £18,000 per annum on the working expenses of the railway? We are pretty heavily taxed now; we pay £2 an acre for all our land, besides the taxation. At the same time, I should not be against making such a contribution, to be sure of obtaining the benefits which the construction of a railway would give me.

2270. What is your experience of the fattening qualities of this district? Where I am the country is as good as you will find in the Colony.

2271. Do the stock fatten rapidly upon it? Yes.

2272. Both cattle and sheep? Yes.

2273. Have you had any knowledge of farming in other districts? Yes; at Wallabadah, 25 miles from Murrurundi.

2274. How would this land compare with that for agricultural and pastoral purposes? It is about the same. I have known paddocks to be under wheat here for thirty years, and to give as good crops now as they did at first.

2275. What is the black-soil country in this district best adapted for? For grazing.

2276. Is it better grazing country than the other country in the district? Yes; but in dry weather it cracks and opens up, so that it is not good for agriculture.

2277. How many stock have you? Very few at present, because I have had no grass for five years. I generally have 100 head of cattle, 400 or 500 head of sheep, 30 or 40 horses, and some milkers.

2278. Where is your market for fat stock? Maitland.

2279. How do you get them there? I drive them to Quirindi, and then truck them.

2280. If the railway were constructed would you use it? Yes; I should not drive my sheep a bit further than was necessary.

2281. Would others situated similarly to you do the same? I think so. If they did not they would lose money.

2282. Is the agricultural land you have spoken of heavily timbered? Yes; but my land has been ring-barked for a number of years, and most of the trees have fallen down.

2283. How much would it cost per acre to clear green timber in this district? I have had no experience of clearing green timber.

2284. What does it cost to clear timber that has been ringbarked? If it were not too thick, 5s. an acre ought to do it.

Frederick John Turner, farmer, grazier, and storekeeper, Tambar Springs, sworn, and examined :—

- F. J. Turner. 2285. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you attempted any cultivation? Yes; I have grown wheat, and grain, and
 11 May, 1900. corn.
2286. With what result? I put in an acre of wheat, and I got 67 bushels off it.
2287. What yield of corn have you had? 82½ bushels to the acre from 4 acres. I only cultivated the land to make a comparison between it and the Wollambi country.
2288. What year was it that you got your large yield of wheat? In 1879.
2289. Was that a good season? Yes.
2290. Have you grown hay since? Yes.
2291. What has been your yield? About 3 tons to the acre during the last four or five years. Of course, we have had droughts here.
2292. Do you think that you would do better than that with a fair season? Yes.
2293. What is the area of your holding? I have a family selection of about 1,200 acres.
2294. How much of your land is as good as that from which you got the large yields which you have mentioned? 1,000 acres; it is all agricultural land.
2295. Was the land which you cropped situated on the banks of a creek, or was it specially good? There was nothing specially good about it; it is about 2 miles from the creek and about 2 miles from the mountains.
2296. How do you regard the country generally round Bomera and Tambar Springs from an agricultural point of view? Bomera is nearly all agricultural country, and so is the Tambar Springs country, whereas the Bando country is all grazing country.
2297. Has much of the resumed area of the Tambar Springs holding been taken up? Yes; all that has been available. There were 1,100 and 1,200 applicants for the blocks last January.
2298. What was the area of those blocks? From 450 to 1,100 acres was the size of homestead selection blocks, while the settlement lease blocks measured about 3,000 acres.
2299. Was it thought that a man could make a living by agriculture on 450 acres? Yes.
2300. How far from a railway is this land? A man taking up that land would be 63 or 64 miles from Quirindi.
2301. Do you think that a man could make a living on 450 acres at that distance from a railway? No. Without a railway those people will have to throw up their land. They are Adelaide people, and people from other parts of the Colony, who did not inspect the land before they took it up.
2302. *Mr. Levien.*] Were the successful balloters Adelaide people? They were all strangers to me.
2303. *Mr. Watson.*] If the proposed railway were constructed, would people be able to make a living on 450 acres in this district? Yes.
2304. What proportion of land in this district is suitable for agriculture? About two-thirds.
2305. Is the rainfall here suitable for wheat-growing? Yes.
2306. Does it fall at the right period of the year for wheat? Yes; it never fails. Last year was the worst we have had; but even then the rain came at the right time, and this year the season has been favourable so far.
2307. It has been suggested that if the railway were constructed, some of the large landholders would lease land to agriculturists on the share system;—would many be anxious to take that land? Yes; it would pay people to take it.
2308. Did you hear Mr. McGillivray's evidence? Yes.
2309. Do you think that the terms which he mentioned would be reasonable here? They are not as good as we have here at the present time, where the landholder clears the land, and finds the seed for the first year, taking one-third of the produce as his share for five, ten, or fifteen years, as agreed upon.
2310. I suppose those conditions would suit people, inasmuch as it would not be necessary for them to find capital to clear the land? Yes. It would suit small holders better to take up land under those conditions than to take up land for themselves. Of the twenty who have taken up land on Bando, near my holding, there are fifteen who will not be able to stay there, because they will not have enough capital; whereas if the land were cleared for them, and they were provided with seed for the first year, they would be all right.
2311. Was the timber on the land they took up dead? Yes.
2312. What would it cost a man, using bullocks, to drag down trees and to clear that land? From 5s. to 12s. 6d. an acre for dead timber, and about 20s. for green timber; but there is very little green timber.
2313. You think that most men have not enough capital to be able to pay for the clearing of any considerable area? Yes.
2314. But if they can run a few sheep on the land at first, they will eventually be able to clear it? Yes.
2315. You regard this as a good agricultural district? Yes; it is more fitted for agriculture than for grazing. It is only the plain country that I consider fit for grazing proper. I was farming in the Wollambi district for many years, and all I got was from 7 to 11 bushels to the acre; whereas here I got 67 bushels in my first crop, while a neighbour got 48 bushels; but there is no market for the grain. I might mention that I get up about 75 tons of goods a year for my store.
2316. What do you pay for freight between Quirindi and your place? Three shillings a hundred weight.
2317. Are the rates lower in the wool season? I do not know; I only started last December; but I do not think they are lower then. Perhaps they would vary from 2s. 6d. to 3s.
2318. Do you think landholders here would be willing to contribute something towards making good any deficiency on the working of the line? The station-holders have told me that they would give what land was required for a railway free of cost.
2319. Do you think people could afford to pay as much as they now pay in land tax to help to make good any deficiency in working? I am sure that they could.

James Nicholas O'Rourke, farmer and grazier, Tambar Springs, sworn, and examined :—

- J. N. 2320. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the extent of your holding? With my brothers, I hold about 3,000 acres.
 O'Rourke. 2321. How long have you been in the district? About thirty years.
2322. How much land have you under cultivation? Pretty well 40 acres between us. 2323.
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2323. Is your land conditionally purchased land? Most of it.
2324. What crops are you growing? Wheat and corn.
2325. What yields do you get? The wheat crop is equal to about 19 bushels to the acre, and the maize crop to about 30 bushels; but I have not been growing very long, and the last few years have been very dry.
2326. What crops would you be likely to get in a good season? Forty bushels or more of wheat and about the same quantity of maize.
2327. How much of your land is suitable for agriculture? Nearly all of it.
2328. What is about the average size of the holdings in the district? The small holdings range from 450 acres up to 2,000 acres.
2329. Would there be a large increase in agriculture if a railway were constructed? Yes; I think that a lot of the recent settlers here will not be able to continue to hold their land if they do not get a railway.
2330. Where do you send your wheat? To Tamworth.
2331. How many miles is that? About 100 miles. I truck it from Gunnedah or Curlewis, and the road carriage costs me about 2s. a bag.
2332. What is the usual method of clearing land here? Principally by burning off and digging out the roots with pick and shovel.
2333. What is the cost of clearing per acre? I think land can be cleared for the plough at a cost of 10s. an acre, if the timber has been dead for a considerable time.
2334. I suppose, where the timber is heavier, it costs a little more? Yes.
2335. What effect would the opening of the proposed railway have upon the district generally? A very good effect; it would assist the small holders to go in for agriculture. They cannot make a living unless they cultivate their land, and at the present time there is no market for their produce.
2336. Do many holders in this district combine farming with grazing? Yes, and the number is likely to increase.
2337. Do you carry any stock? Yes.
2338. If there were a railway would you occasionally send small consignments to market? Yes. It does not pay to send a small flock by road, especially in dry weather.
2339. What is the smallest number that it would pay to send by road? Two hundred, and you would not be able to take them far if they were fat stock.
2340. Is it usual for farmers to join together to make up a sufficiently large flock to send away? Yes; they sometimes send away 100 or 150 each to make up a load.
2341. Would the proposed railway assist any other industry besides farming and grazing? I think that a great deal of timber would be cut in this district, and sent away by the railway. The line would run through splendid timber country; country with beautiful pine and iron-bark upon it.
2342. Have you tried fruit-growing at all? Yes, and I have got very good results with any sort of a season.
2343. What kinds of fruit have you grown? All kinds. Grapes grow splendidly.
2344. Do you send your fruit to the Tamworth market? No; we only grow for our own use, or to sell about the district.
2345. Are there any saw-mills in the district? We have one at Tambar Springs.
2346. Where do they get a market for their timber? Principally round about the district. There is a great demand for timber; but it is hard to get it away, because of the cost of carriage.
2347. Do many stock travel through the district in dry seasons? Yes; both sheep and cattle.
2348. Which direction do they go? They are either making towards New England, or they are going towards Dubbo and other places to be sold.
2349. Is there land in this district to which stock can be sent in dry seasons? Yes. Bando is a splendid fattening country.
2350. It is not heavily stocked country? Not at the present time.
2351. How would a railway be supported in this district? By the produce traffic and the stock traffic. Owners will not drive their stock if they can send them away by train.
2352. Do you feel satisfied that within a reasonable period of time the estimated deficiency of £18,000 would be made up? I think so.
2353. Do you feel sure that the district would largely benefit by the construction of a railway? Yes.
2354. And the traffic upon it would largely increase within a short time after its construction? Yes.

J. N.
O'Rourke.
11 May, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Bundella Hotel," Bundella, at 8 p.m.]

Hugh McMaster, grazier, Rocksgediel, sworn, and examined:—

2355. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you resided in this district? About forty years.
2356. What is the area of your holding? I have 30,000 acres of freehold, and about 25,000 acres of leasehold.
2357. Do you confine yourself to grazing? Yes.
2358. Do you not cultivate any land? Only for station purposes.
2359. What is the carrying capacity of your land? We have 32,000 sheep on the land now, and we have had as many as 70,000 sheep on it. On the average the run carries about 45,000 sheep.
2360. What is the carrying capacity of the improved land? A sheep to about an acre and a half.
2361. And of the unimproved land? A sheep to about 4 acres.
2362. Is the leasehold area thickly timbered? Yes; the freehold land is mostly plain country, and the leasehold land is mostly ridges or sandy country.
2363. How far is your station from Bundella? Six miles.
2364. What is your opinion of the country between Binnaway and Werris Creek, and within 25 or 20 miles of the route of the proposed line? After you pass Oakey Creek, going towards Werris Creek, you go through some of the best grazing country in Australia.

H. McMaster.
11 May, 1900.

- H. McMaster. 2365. Can you tell us how much of the land would be suitable for agriculture? I have had very little experience of agriculture; but in a fairly good season very nearly the whole of the land would be suitable for agriculture. In a dry season a great deal of the land would not grow crops well.
- 11 May, 1900. 2366. I understand that the land is better adapted for wheat than for any other crop? Yes.
2367. How much of your freehold land would be suitable for wheat? I think about two-thirds.
2368. How does your land compare with the land generally between Binnaway and Werris Creek? The land on the Binnaway side is better for agricultural purposes than the land on this side. It is red-soil country, which, I think, is the most suitable country for agriculture.
2369. Do you run cattle? I have only a few on my holding.
2370. Do you send many fat sheep to market? We have sent as many as 12,000 in a year, and we have sent as few as 10,000.
2371. Where do you send them? To Quirindi, and thence by train to Homebush.
2372. Do you find any difficulty in driving stock to Quirindi? At the present time we could not get them there at all if our neighbours did not allow us to water them at their wells.
2373. Are the other graziers in the district similarly situated? I think that all between here and Quirindi are similarly situated, except those who have only to go through their own land to get to the railway station.
2374. Are there many small graziers in the district? A good number.
2375. Do they fatten sheep for the Sydney market? Some of them do.
2376. Do they send their sheep in in small lots? Yes.
2377. Is it a drawback to have to do that? Yes; it costs more in proportion to drive a small lot than to drive a large lot.
2378. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you consign your sheep from the nearest station in preference to driving them to Quirindi? Yes.
2379. Would others similarly situated do the same? Yes; I do not think anyone would do otherwise.
2380. I understand that there are large areas of leased land in the district which will shortly be thrown open to settlement;—if railway communication were given would people take up that land? Yes; I think it would be taken up for wheat-growing. At the present time land in this district can only be used for grazing.
2381. How much land would be required in this district to maintain a family wholly by grazing? I do not think a man could make a decent living by grazing on less than 1,000 acres.
2382. Given railway facilities? Yes.
2383. How much land would it take to maintain a family if they went in for growing wheat? From what I have heard I think 40 or 50 acres would be enough. A man near Quirindi told me that he made nearly £400 on 40 acres of land upon which he grew wheat.
2384. Do you think that any considerable area of the purchased land in this district would be used for agriculture if the proposed railway were made? Yes; if wheat-growing would pay better than grazing.
2385. Do many stock travel to this district from other districts, or to other districts from this district? A great deal depends upon the seasons. Last year a great number of stock came by train to Quirindi from the Moree district, and then crossed the Range into the Cassilis district.
2386. How many stock came that way? I think there must have been 50,000.
2387. Is that an annual return? No; but I think it has occurred twice during the last five years. On one occasion sheep from the Riverina district passed through here, and, on another occasion sheep from the Moree or Walgett district came through here and went south.
2388. Does store cattle travel between this and other districts? Yes. This is a fattening district, and store sheep come here from other districts.
2389. It has been suggested that the Mudgee line might be extended so as to serve the district lying between the Western and Northern lines? Such an extension would not serve this part of the district, because it would not come near enough to it. It might suit the people living down towards Cobborah, but we should still use the Northern line.
2390. If the proposed railway were made, from what distances would people bring wool and agricultural produce to it? From 20 to 30 miles; but it would depend upon their distance from the Northern line.
2391. Could people carry wheat a distance of 20 or 30 miles to get to a railway station, and then compete successfully with growers in other parts of the country? People so situated would be at a disadvantage; but I think they could grow wheat profitably.
2392. Do you think landowners in this district would give the land required for the construction of a railway free of cost? I could not say. Of course, it would be a small item to people who were really in favour of the railway. I am only a part owner, and I cannot speak for the firm, but I do not think we should be prepared to give more than the strip required for the lines. I do not think we would give land for station purposes.
2393. Would you be prepared to make a contribution to decrease the estimated deficiency upon the working of the railway? I do not think it would pay us to agree to anything like that.
2394. Would the landholders of the district be willing to pay a sum equal to the land tax, which would return about £5,000 a year if contributed by the land within the influence of the railway, with a view to decreasing any deficiency? I cannot speak for others, but, personally, I would not agree to it.
2395. Which line would be the more suitable to construct—a line from Wellington or a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek? I should think that a line from Wellington would go through better country than a line from Dubbo; but if it were proposed to connect the Southern and the Western lines by a line going south from Dubbo, it might be well to connect Werris Creek with Dubbo.
2396. Which route would suit this district the better? As things stand to-day, the Wellington route.
2397. Which route would serve the larger number of people? I think the Wellington route.
2398. There would be more business with Sydney than with places out west? Yes.
2399. Is there much trade between this district and Dubbo? I do not think so.
2400. Is there much trade between this district and the North-western district? Yes.
2401. Have many stock transactions taken place between this district and the New England district? Yes. People are always buying stock in the New England district and bringing them here, or buying stock here and taking them to New England.
2402. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed new traffic would spring up to such an extent

extent that in a few years the line would be a paying concern? I think that it would be a paying line. H. McMaster.
I do not think that there would be the loss which the Commissioners estimate. A lot of produce would be sent into this district from New England in dry seasons, and from districts further to the south, out towards Walgett. 11 May, 1900.

2403. Do you think there would be much traffic between the Western district and the North-western district if the proposed line were constructed? I think there would.

2404. What would that traffic consist of? Stock and produce. I do not think people would go all the way round by Sydney if they could get a shorter route across country.

Thomas James Finley, junr., Bundella, sworn, and examined:—

2405. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the area of your holding? My father has about 25,000 acres of secured land and about 15,000 acres of Crown land. T. J. Finley, junr.

2406. How long have you been here? Twelve years.

2407. Have you been grazing all that time? Yes.

2408. Do you think that the proposed line should be constructed? Yes.

2409. What would be the effect of the construction of the proposed line? It would increase the production of the district and prevent the loss of stock. Nearly all the districts in the Colony suffer from drought at times, and generally at such times the best districts suffer most, because owners there wait so long for rain that when their stock are starved out they find that they have been too late in applying for country elsewhere, or that the roads are too bare for their sheep to travel.

2410. Would the proposed line be largely used for the carriage of store stock? Yes. Last year I heard of sheep being trucked from the Riverina to Narrabri by way of Sydney, and I believe that a great deal more trucking of stock would be done if sheep were not kept so long in the trucks. If the proposed line were made it would bring the Riverina district much nearer to the Narrabri district than it is now.

2411. In which direction would stock mostly move in this district—towards New England, or from the North-western district towards the Western line? I think that it would move mostly towards New England, that being a district which suffers less from drought than other districts do, though at times the movement would be the other way. As a rule, produce would come down to this district from the New England district, and stock would go from here to the New England district.

2412. It has been stated that during the last drought stock from the North-western district could not be taken in the New England district? That might have been an exceptional case; but I do not think it would generally happen.

2413. Do you think that there is usually sufficient country in New England to afford relief to a large number of sheep? Yes.

2414. It has been found that the mountainous country adjacent to the Riverina is very early secured in times of drought, by a comparatively small number of men, and that others who come afterwards are unable to get country there? The small number of men represent a great number of sheep.

2415. Still there has not been room for all the sheep that people wish to send there? The recent drought has been wider-spreading than droughts usually are; but, as a rule, the mountainous district of the Colony would relieve a great many sheep.

2416. What effect would the proposed railway have upon the fat stock traffic of the district? It would be a very great help to it.

2417. Do fat stock lose in condition by being driven to Quirindi? Yes; they lose on the average a lb. a day, and in certain seasons of the year their wool gets covered with burrs.

2418. Does that reduce the value of the fleece? Yes.

2419. If the proposed line were constructed people could send away small consignments of fat stock at frequent intervals? Yes; and, if there were a railway, people would be more inclined to grow lucerne to feed their sheep with. If, however, you fatten your sheep now in that way, they waste so much in being driven to the railway that you gain nothing; whereas if you could truck the sheep direct from your paddock it would be profitable.

2420. If lucerne were grown could more sheep be fattened than are fattened now? Yes.

2421. If the proposed railway were constructed, would pastoralists still send their fat stock to the Northern line? I do not think so; I should not. It has been tried with both cattle and sheep in good seasons, and the conclusion that has been come to is that it pays best to use the railway.

2422. Have you had any experience in agriculture? Only in growing for home consumption.

2423. What has been the result of agricultural operations here? Wheat is pretty well always a success, but oats do not do so well.

2424. Is the comparative failure of oats due to the want of something in the soil, or to the want of rainfall? To the want of rainfall.

2425. How much of your 25,000 acres would be suitable for cultivation? About three-fifths.

2426. And how much of your leasehold area? About one-fifth.

2427. If the proposed railway were constructed would you be inclined to put your land under crop, either on the share system or under some other system? Yes, if it would pay me to do so; but this year sheep have paid better than wheat. If wool was only 6d. a pound and sheep 1s., we should go in for cultivation.

2428. Under normal conditions it is usually assumed that with a suitable rainfall, good land, and a railway, agriculture pays better than sheep-raising;—would you be inclined to go in for agriculture? Yes.

2429. Would other landholders in the district do the same? I have not spoken to them on the subject; I dare say they would.

2430. What proportion of land fit for agriculture is there between here and Werris Creek within 20 miles of the route of the proposed line? I think three-fourths of the land would be fit for wheat-growing; it is all country similar to that through which the Committee have been travelling during the last few miles.

2431. Does similar land extend north and south to any distance? Not so much to the south. From Colly Blue on, the land is pretty well all the same, north and south.

2432. How far is Colly Blue from Werris Creek? A short 40 miles.

2433. Do you think the line should come from Wellington or from Dubbo? I am strongly in favour of Wellington as the junction. 2434.

- T. J. Finley, junr.
11 May, 1900.
2434. Is that because it would give a shorter route, or because it would give you a connection with the Southern line? Because it would give us a better connection with the Southern line than we should have if the junction were at Dubbo.
2435. It has been suggested that the Dubbo connection would be valuable in giving more direct access to the Western district;—do you think that that advantage is as great as the advantage of being connected by the shortest distance with Sydney and the Southern line? I think that the connection with Sydney and the Southern line is the more valuable of the two to us.
2436. Do you think that it would be worth the while of landowners in this district to make a contribution of so much an acre towards reducing any deficiency upon the working of the railway? I should be willing to give the land required for the construction of the line.
2437. Would you be willing to contribute, say, a penny an acre to making up any deficiency? The question is, would the Government credit the proposed line with all the traffic that belonged to it. Quirindi is our trucking station now, and I am afraid that the proposed line would not get credit for the increase of traffic on the main line which its construction would occasion.
2438. Have some of the settlers here only recently gone upon their land? Yes. There has been a considerable increase in settlement during the last two or three years.
2439. Without railway communication these settlers would have to depend upon grazing? Yes.
2440. They are too far from the main line to be able to grow produce? Yes. It is 50 miles from here to the railway, and some of the settlers are still farther away.

Thomas Davidson, farmer, Merrigala, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Davidson.
11 May, 1900.
2441. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is your place from Bundella? Ten miles.
2442. How far would you be from the proposed railway? About 2 miles.
2443. How long have you been residing here? Twenty years.
2444. Have you had any experience as a farmer? Not very much, though I have grown small crops during the last few years.
2445. What is the size of your holding? 300 acres.
2446. Do you occupy plain country or rising country? Part of my land is plain country and part of it rising ground.
2447. How much of it is adapted for agriculture? About two-thirds.
2448. What agricultural operations have you carried on there? I have had 16 acres under hay.
2449. What yield have you got? From 30 cwt. to 2 tons an acre.
2450. How long have you been growing there? About six years.
2451. Were those fairly good years, or rather bad years? Rather bad years; I have not had a good year yet.
2452. What crop would you expect to get in a fairly good season? I think I should get from 2 to 2½ tons to the acre.
2453. What market have you for your produce now? I sell to people passing to and from Tambar Springs.
2454. If you had a railway, would you have sufficient agricultural land to make a living upon it? Yes.
2455. Have you ever sent produce to the existing lines? No.
2456. Why? I have never had enough to do that, and it would not pay to send hay so far. I have never grown grain.
2457. What would be the rate of carriage from your place to Quirindi? £2 10s. a ton.
2458. If the proposed railway were constructed, what change would you make in your operations? I would grow as much as I could.
2459. Would you grow for hay or for grain? For both, I think; whichever would pay.
2460. How many acres of fairly good land would be sufficient to maintain a family in this district? About 500 acres, if the man who took it up got a good start.
2461. Could a man maintain a family on that area by agriculture alone, or would he have to go in for mixed farming? He would do all the better to go in for mixed farming.
2462. Do you run any sheep? Yes, a few.
2463. Would it pay you to put all your land under agriculture if there were a railway? If there were a railway I should put pretty well all of it under agriculture.
2464. We have had various opinions as to the capacities of black soil for wheat-growing? I believe that the sandy ground is better.
2465. Do you mean red sandy land? No; it is raw sand where I am cultivating.
2466. What timber grows on that land? Gum and pine.
2467. Do you find the soil better for wheat than the black soil? Yes.
2468. Have you tried the black soil for any crop? Only for hay.
2469. What was the result of the trial? The result was not as good as I get from the sandy soil; but it was a payable result.
2470. Do you run any cattle? Only a couple of cows.
2471. Do you think that with railway communication the district would be adapted for dairying? I think so.
2472. How would you describe the district from a stock-carrying point of view? It will carry a sheep to the acre.
2473. Is it good fattening country? The plain country is; but the bush country is not so good.
2474. Is it a good breeding district? Yes.
2475. What is a fair average clip in this district? From 6 to 6½ lb.
2476. Would you describe the country as well watered? Where I am it is well watered. I have a little well, 11 feet deep, and there is always plenty of water there. You can get water anywhere on the plains at a depth of from 20 to 25 feet.
2477. If the leased lands in the district were thrown open to settlement would they be easily taken up? I think so.
2478. In spite of the distance from a railway? Yes; there would be any amount of applicants.

2479. If a railway were made, would your neighbours go in for agriculture more extensively? Yes.
2480. Would the construction of a railway encourage close settlement in this district? Yes. I believe that if we had a railway plenty of land would be made available for settlement.
2481. Are your neighbours at present prevented from sending small consignments of fat stock to market by reason of the expense? They have some trouble sometimes; but I do not know much about the stock traffic.
2482. What is the rainfall in your part of the country? About 30 inches.
2483. As a rule, does the rain fall at the right season for wheat? Yes. I have never had any trouble in getting a crop of hay, though I could do with more rain than I have had. My crop averaged from 1½ ton to 2 tons an acre last year.
2484. Do you think that without a railway you will be prevented from extending your agricultural operations? Yes; because it is of no advantage for me to put in more than I could use myself, or sell on the road.
2485. Are the other farmers in your neighbourhood in the same plight? Yes.
2486. If you cultivated a couple of hundred acres, what market would you expect to get—the Sydney market or a market to the north and north-west? We should have to go to Sydney, I think.
2487. Do you think that you would find any market for hay out Moree and Walgett way? We might, at times.
2488. There would be no permanent market there? There would be no permanent demand; they would not want fodder in a good season.

T. Davidson.
11 May, 1900.

Robert Thomas Slack Smith, station manager, Merrigala Holding, sworn, and examined:—

2489. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How far is your run from Bundella? Twelve miles.
2490. Do you endorse the statements which have been made by the several witnesses to-night with regard to the disability under which the farmers and graziers in this district labour for the want of a railway? Yes.
2491. Have you suffered in the same way yourself? Yes.
2492. What is the size of the holding that you manage? There are 2,200 acres of purchased land and about 1,400 acres of leased land in it.
2493. Is it all grazing land? We use it all for grazing, except 12 acres, which we cultivate for our own use.
2494. Is the land suitable for agriculture? The greater part of it could be used for agriculture. There are over 2,000 acres of plain country, and the rest of the land could be used for wheat-growing.
2495. Do you mean 2,000 out of the 2,200 acres of purchased land? Yes.
2496. Have you been long in the district? All my life.
2497. How far are you from a railway station? We are 55 miles from Quirindi.
2498. Do you send fat stock to market? Yes, to Quirindi.
2499. Is this good fattening country? Yes. The 2,000 acres of plain country comprise very good fattening land.
2500. Do you agree with previous witnesses in the statement that most of the land in this district is suitable for agriculture? I think that it is, so far as I know it.
2501. Would the construction of the proposed line cause additional settlement within 20 miles of it? I think so. If the line were made, land, which otherwise would not be taken up, would be taken up for small holdings.
2502. Would large holders be prepared to lease their land on the share system? I fancy that a number of them would be inclined to do so. Most of the graziers in the district are now suffering from the want of a railway, and the small men more than the large men, because a small flock of sheep costs proportionately more to drive than a large flock, and cuts up more on the road. When a small flock of sheep leaves a paddock the animals fret, and will not feed until they reach their destination. The loss sustained in driving them to Quirindi is considerable.
2503. Is it only in dry seasons that there is a loss? I think that there is always a loss when you are travelling with small lots of sheep.
2504. If the proposed railway were constructed would you and others similarly situated use it for sending your stock to market? Yes.

R. T. S.
Smith.
11 May, 1900.

Edward Hayden, farmer, "The Plantation," sworn, and examined:—

2505. *Mr. Watson.*] Your holding is close to the proposed railway line? The proposed line goes right through it.
2506. What area have you? My father and I together hold 920 acres.
2507. Do you cultivate any of it? About 20 acres.
2508. Have you been long on it? About twenty-eight years.
2509. Is most of your land suitable for cultivation? Yes; the whole of it.
2510. Do you substantiate what has been said by other witnesses with regard to the desirability of a railway in this district? Yes.
2511. Would you cultivate a larger area if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes I think that I should cultivate the whole of my land.
2512. Do you think that agriculture would pay you better than grazing? Yes.
2513. What results have you obtained from your cultivation? The best crop we had went 60 bushels to the acre.
2514. What was your worst crop? About 20 bushels to the acre. We have not grown any grain during the dry seasons; we have cut our wheat for hay.
2515. What yield of hay have you had? From 30 cwt. to 3 tons.
2516. What has the hay crop been during the dry seasons? From 30 cwt. to 2 tons. A man can always get a fair crop of hay.
2517. Have you cultivated any land other than that on your own holding? I have about 2 acres in the township which I have cultivated.

E. Hayden.
11 May, 1900.

- E. Hayden. 2518. With what result? I never weighed the crop; but I should think it was equal to about 2 tons to the acre.
 11 May, 1900. 2519. What is the character of your land? It is all plain country.
 2520. Do you consider it well suited for cultivation? Yes, in fair seasons.
 2521. Are there many other selectors near you? No; very few.
 2522. Are there many small holders in the district? Yes, a good many.
 2523. Is their land generally suitable for cultivation? Most of it is.
 2524. Would they go in for cultivation if there were a railway? I think so.
 2525. Would you be willing to give what land was required for railway purposes? I do not think so.
 2526. How much of your land would the railway take? About a mile.
 2527. That would be about 12 acres;—could you not afford to give that area of land? I do not think so. I have only a small holding.
 2528. It is estimated that there will be a loss of £18,000 a year upon the working of the proposed line;—do you think that the country should incur that loss? I think that the loss would not be so great if this district were opened up by a railway.

Richard John Stevenson, grazier, Brennan's Gap, sworn, and examined:—

- R. J. Stevenson. 2529. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far from Bundella do you live? Twelve miles, and I should be the same distance from the proposed line.
 11 May, 1900. 2530. How long have you been residing in the district? Six months.
 2531. Have you had any previous experience as a farmer? Very little.
 2532. What is the size of your holding? 1,445 acres.
 2533. How do you use it? For grazing.
 2534. What is its carrying capacity? A sheep to 2 or 3 acres when it is improved.
 2535. Is much of it fit for agriculture? No; very little.
 2536. If the proposed line were constructed, would you be induced to go in for agriculture? Not to a great extent.
 2537. How many acres would you cultivate? Not more than 20.
 2538. What is the character of the country at Brennan's Gap;—it is mainly ridgy country, I suppose? Yes.
 2539. What class of timber grows there? Box and kurrajong.
 2540. What benefits do you anticipate from the construction of the proposed line? If there were a railway I could send stock and produce away more easily.
 2541. It would also assist you in getting up supplies? Yes.

Boyd Peter Sievers, grazier, Brennan's Gap, sworn, and examined:—

- B. P. Sievers. 2542. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the area of your holding? I have no holding; my son has 720 acres at Brennan's Gap.
 11 May, 1900. 2543. What is the character of his land? It is very fair land—land upon which box and kurrajong grow. About 200 acres of it could be cleared and cultivated.
 2544. Have you had experience as a farmer? I was brought up on a farm in the Old Country.
 2545. If there were a railway close at hand, would your son be induced to cultivate that 200 acres? Yes.
 2546. At what distance from a railway can a man grow wheat and other grain profitably? It will not pay a man to farm who is over 25 miles from a railway station.
 2547. How many settlers are there at Brennan's Gap? There are nine of us there, and our properties adjoin.
 2548. What is the average size of the holdings there? 640 acres is the area of the smallest, and 2,400 acres is the area of the largest. There are more than 10,000 acres in the nine holdings.
 2549. Has that land been recently taken up? It has been taken up since the Land Act of 1895 was passed.
 2550. Was it taken up with a view to agriculture or with a view to grazing? The railway route has been surveyed for twenty years, and we all hope that the line will be constructed some day.
 2551. If the railway is not constructed, what will be the position of those settlers? We shall have to struggle on without it; but if the railway is made we shall get ahead of things a bit.
 2552. The construction of a railway would make a substantial change in your prospects? Yes.
 2553. Without a railway they are not too good? That is so.
 2554. Is much cultivation being done out there now? No. I had a little crop of swede turnips, which yielded at the rate of 30 tons to the acre, and I have cultivated a bit of a garden.
 2555. On what soil were the turnips grown? On very deep black soil.
 2556. Do you think the black soil would be profitable to grow wheat on, year in and year out? There is a difference between black soils. There is one kind of black soil in the box country, and another kind of black soil on the plains. In the box country a certain amount of chocolate soil is mixed with the black, and there is a great depth of soil.
 2557. What else have you grown? Onions and cabbages, and I have had large crops. I am clearing some land now.
 2558. Can we form any general conclusions as to the capacity of the land in the district from the results you have obtained on the plot you have cultivated, or was that plot a selected area? There was nothing particular about the plot I selected.
 2559. Have the other holdings at Brennan's Gap as much good soil as there is on your son's holding? There is one holding there of 790 acres, of which you could cultivate 50 or 60 acres if there were a railway. Another man, for whom I was asked to speak, holds 640 acres, and would be able to cultivate from 60 to 80 acres. If a railway be not made we cannot afford to grow more than we require for our own use. Of course, we produce a little wool.
 2560. Is there a larger area of good land within 20 miles of the route of the proposed line from Bundella to Werris Creek than there is at Brennan's Gap? Yes; there is considerably more arable land along the route of the proposed line. Brennan's Gap is the worst part of Rockgedgiel, except for wool-growing.
 2561.

2561. If the land now held under lease were thrown open, and a railway were made to the district, would a considerable agricultural population be attracted here? All the land that is thrown open will be snapped up. B. P. Sievers.
11 May, 1900.
2562. Has most of the good land here been alienated? I think there is a good deal of arable land still held under lease. That land would be cultivated if it were thrown open for selection, and if there were a railway.
2563. If some of the large landholders in the district offered good agricultural land for lease on the condition that they would pay for clearing it, and would provide seed for the first crop, taking as their share of the profit one-third of the produce, would you be prepared to take it up, supposing there were a railway? I should be prepared to pay a bag an acre for such land; that would be equal to about 10s. an acre. We can run a sheep to the acre when fully stocked. 100 sheep produce about two bales of wool, so that they would give a certain amount of traffic to the railway.
2564. Do you corroborate what has been said by other witnesses as to the expense and difficulty of sending away small consignments of fat stock? I have had no experience in the matter.
2565. Would you be prepared to pay as much as you now pay in land tax to get rid of any deficiency upon the working of a railway? I should. I think that if we went in for wheat-growing we should get an average return of 30 bushels to the acre. I have seen a sandy piece of ground, not far from here, produce 28 bushels to the acre, after having been cropped for seventeen years without manure. There were 8 acres in that piece.

Richard Curtis, farmer and grazier, Brennan's Gap, sworn, and examined:—

2566. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long at Brennan's Gap? About two years. R. Curtis.
11 May, 1900.
2567. How many acres of land do you hold? 2,400 acres.
2568. The Brennan's Gap country has been described as rather poor;—is that your opinion of it? It is good grazing country. If it is ringbarked it will carry about a sheep to the acre.
2569. How would you class it as agricultural country? I think it is good agricultural country.
2570. How much of your area is suitable for wheat-growing or for cultivation? Eighty or 100 acres.
2571. Is your land a fair sample of the land in the district? I think so.
2572. Is agriculture carried on in the district to any extent now? No.
2573. What is the reason of that? They are nearly all new settlers there; and, besides, there is no market for produce grown there.
2574. If the proposed railway were constructed would all the available land be used for agriculture? I think so.
2575. Do you corroborate the statements of previous witnesses from Brennan's Gap in regard to the disabilities under which you are labouring? Yes.
2576. Are you in favour of the construction of the proposed railway? Yes.
2577. How far are you from the surveyed route? About 12 miles.
2578. Would you use the line to send produce to market? Yes.
2579. You would not continue to carry your produce to Quirindi? No.
2580. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the character of the holdings up your way? They are all conditional purchases and conditional leases.
2581. What kind of timber grows at Brennan's Gap? The timber is pretty nearly all box and kurrajong; but there are a few stringybarks.
2582. Is there any iron-bark on the higher land? No.
2583. Do you think the timber there will be of value? The stringy-bark is valuable timber.
2584. Is there enough timber there to provide traffic for a railway? I think so. Some of it would be rather hard to get out; but there is plenty of it.

John Ewbank, grazier and storekeeper, Bundella, sworn, and examined:—

2585. *Vice-Chairman.*] Will you make a statement of your views with regard to the question before the Committee? I wish to inform the Committee that there is splendid timber—stringy-bark and blue gum—on the main range. I suppose there are trees there having lengths of 60 and 100 feet as straight as a gun-barrel. Hundreds of thousands of feet of sawn timber could be got from those forests, and the timber trade would be a great source of traffic for the railway. Then, too, the soil is excellent; it will grow anything. The country that I am speaking of is about 15 miles from here, on the top of the main range—straight up Bundella Creek. J. Ewbank.
11 May, 1900.
2586. Is it easy of access? I think so; at any rate, it could be made easy of access.
2587. Is there any iron-bark there? No.
2588. Is there a considerable area of the country you speak of? A great area; enough to build a colony.
2589. Has the timber ever been tapped? No. I have been here for twenty-seven years, and when I wanted some slabs to build a store I was informed that I could be supplied with slabs 2 feet and 3 feet wide, and as smooth as if they had been sawn.
2590. What kind of timber was that? Stringy-bark.
2591. Is not stringy-bark a bad timber to place in exposed positions? It does for rails and palings; but it does not make good posts, because it does not stand well in the ground. It also makes good shingles. The land at the place I speak of is quite flat for many miles, and generally has water on it, though I have been told that there is no water there this season.

SATURDAY, 12 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at new "Colly Blue Hotel," Colly Blue, at 12 o'clock noon.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Thomas Woore Frederick Busby, grazier, Colly Blue, sworn, and examined:—

- T. W. F. Busby.
12 May, 1900.
2592. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far do you live from Colly Blue? Twelve miles.
2593. And how far from the nearest point on the route of the proposed railway? About 16 miles.
2594. What is the size of your holding? 17,000 acres. Two of us hold 11,000 acres of freehold, 3,000 acres of conditional purchase land, and 4,000 acres of conditional lease land.
2595. What is the average carrying capacity of your run? I bought a place with 18,000 sheep on it, and I have been running 15,000 or 16,000 on the average for the last eight years.
2596. Is there much difference between the carrying capacity of the freehold land and that of the leased land? Not when it is improved.
2597. But under original conditions? The improved land is equally good, whether it is on the leasehold area or on the freehold area.
2598. How would you describe your country? I have both ridges and plain country.
2599. What is the principal timber? Box and apple.
2600. How much of your land is suitable for agriculture? 9,000 or 10,000 acres.
2601. Is it black soil? Black loam on the creek flats and plains.
2602. Have you ever gone in for agriculture? Yes; I have 200 acres under cultivation now. I have had three crops of wheat, with an average yield of 25 bushels to the acre.
2603. Have you cut any wheat for hay? Yes.
2604. How much hay did you get? From 2 to 3 tons to the acre.
2605. Have the seasons during which you have been cultivating been favourable to agriculture? One year was, but the other two were not. Last year we got a good crop, but at most of the places around here they had to cut their wheat for hay. In a favourable season, I think we should get from 40 to 60 bushels of wheat to the acre.
2606. What market have you found for your agricultural produce? Hitherto it has all gone into Quirindi.
2607. How far is that from your property? Forty miles from the farm.
2608. What is the carriage to Quirindi? I pay 1s. 6d. a cwt. for my ordinary loading, but I think the cost of carrying wheat is higher.
2609. Are the rates of carriage a severe tax upon agriculture in this district? Yes.
2610. Do you speak on behalf of any of your brother pastoralists? Yes; on behalf of five or six of them.
2611. Has their experience been similar to yours? Yes; so far as agriculture is concerned.
2612. If a railway were constructed, would you farm a large part of your 9,000 acres? Yes; although without a railway we cannot afford to farm it.
2613. Would you cultivate yourself, or would you let our your land on the share system? I should probably do both. What I have done so far has been done on the share system.
2614. Has there been a steady increase in the area of land put under cultivation here, or is there a disinclination to increase the cultivated area without railway communication? Within the last five or six years everyone has cultivated a certain area, and the extent of cultivation is increasing every year.
2615. Do you know much of the movements of stock between the Northern and North-western lines and the Western line? Fully 100,000 sheep must have passed through the lane here last year, on the way to New England.
2616. Where did they come from? I do not know; they were on their way to New England for grass.
2617. Is that traffic usual, or was it due to abnormal seasons? It was due to the drought.
2618. Is there much loss of condition in travelling fat stock to a railway? It cuts them up a good bit. They have to go long stages without water from here.
2619. I suppose it does not pay to drive any but fairly large consignments of stock to the railway? The smaller the flock the greater the cost per head of sending it in.
2620. If the proposed railway were constructed, would small settlers frequently send away small consignments of stock to the Sydney market? I am sure they would.
2621. It would not pay them to do so at the present time? It would not.
2622. What is your rainfall here in average seasons? The average rainfall is about 27 inches.
2623. Is that a suitable rainfall for agricultural pursuits? Yes.
2624. It is estimated that there would be a deficiency of £18,000 upon the working of the proposed line, and it has been suggested that the land-owners who would be benefited by its construction should make some contribution to reduce the loss;—could you afford to contribute annually for that purpose, until the railway became a paying one, as much as you now pay in land tax? Perhaps, as a purely business matter, it might pay me to contribute; but, as a taxpayer, I would protest against such an arrangement.
2625. If, without making such a contribution, you could not get a railway, would it pay you and your neighbours to make the contribution? I think that possibly some might agree to contribute, but others would not. From a business point of view it might pay me to contribute, but I could not speak with certainty until I had looked into the matter.
2626. Have you been authorised to speak for others in respect to giving what land is required for railway purposes? I have heard some people say that they would give their land.
2627. You do not think there would be much difficulty in getting that concession? I do not think there would be much trouble about it.

2628. How would you describe the country between Colly Blue and Werris Creek? It is a succession of plains and ridges.

2629. What proportion of it, within 20 miles of the route of the proposed line, is suitable for agriculture? There is very little which is not. Some of the open plain country might be a bit too hard, but there is some of the best agricultural land in Australia on these plains.

2630. Is it good fattening country? Yes; this is the finest fattening district in the Colony.

2631. What is the average weight of a fleece here? Good flocks will cut $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 lb. to the fleece.

2632. Do you fatten stock in this district for the Sydney market? Yes; there is more fattening than anything else done here.

2633. Is there much timber that would be valuable for railway construction or for other purposes close to the route of the proposed line? Yes.

2634. What timbers grow here? Iron-bark and pine. The red-soil country, after the timber has been taken off, grows very good wheat.

2635. Is it the practice in this district to stock up to the full capacity of the land? Yes; on freehold land.

2636. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the district become settled with a large permanent population? I think so. I and my family have been living within 50 miles of Colly Blue for the last seventy years, and I think that this is the safest and richest district in the Colony, and I have been in Riverina and in other districts.

2637. The experience of the share system in other parts of the Colony is that after the land has been under crop four or five years the owners use it for grazing again;—do you think that that would be done here? No; unless the land were being worked out and required improving. All wheat land requires a rest now and again; but I do not think there would be more than an ordinary rest given to it.

2638. You think that agriculture would be a permanent thing in the district? Yes.

2639. *Mr. Shepherd.*] On what terms do you carry on the share system? So far, I have merely stipulated that the land should be cleared. I have fenced it, and I have given the man who cleared the land the right to the crop. Now I have another man on different terms. He is to have a bit of it, and he has to get it ready for a crop next year.

2640. How long did you lease the land? For two years.

2641. After that time, had the tenant to give it up? Yes. Now another man has it, on slightly different terms. He has to sow and plough the land for me next year, while he will probably get some more ready for himself. I have really not enough land ready.

2642. Will it pay a man to crop land for two years only? It will pay the expense of clearing the land. I have been told that the terms I have given him are too easy.

2643. Does he find the necessary tools? Yes; I merely give him the land. Of course I have to run his horses.

2644. Was the land ringbarked before he took it over? What he took over was covered with green timber.

2645. How much an acre did it cost him to clear it? I could have had it cleared for about 15s. an acre.

2646. When does the rain fall here? Our best rains come between January and April. Then we get good spring rains in September. As a rule, we get wet winters. I should like to add that as the leased land is thrown open for selection every acre of it will be taken up. Land is becoming very valuable here. I own a property for which £3 an acre was offered, although the land had not been cleared, and there was about 11s. an acre owing to the Government on it.

2647. What was the character of that country? Some of it was plain country, and some of it red soil ridges, timbered with box and apple trees.

Alexander Pyke, farmer, Yarraman, sworn, and examined:—

2648. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in this district? Twenty-five years.

2649. Have you a good general knowledge of its agricultural and pastoral possibilities? Yes.

2650. What is the country like along the route of the proposed railway line, so far as you know it? It is good agricultural country, and good fattening country.

2651. How far is Yarraman from here? Twelve miles.

2652. Where do you get your supplies from? From Quirindi.

2653. How far is Quirindi from Yarraman? Thirty-five miles.

2654. How many tons of goods do you have sent up in a year? Yarraman, Blackville, and Coomoo Coomoo comprise a district which would be an important feeder to the proposed line. There are forty families in that district. I receive between 110 and 130 tons of goods per annum, and there are about 300 tons of goods received in that district altogether.

2655. What is the rate of carriage? I have paid as much as 3s. a cwt.; but 1s. 6d. is the present rate.

2656. How far is Yarraman from the route of the proposed line? It is within 12 miles of it.

2657. How does this district compare with other districts that you know? I should say that it is one of the best agricultural and pastoral districts in the Colony. It is one large plain from Colly Blue to Yarraman, and from here to Blackville, though there are occasional ridges.

2658. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you use it for bringing up goods? Yes.

2659. Would others in the district also use it? Undoubtedly. Only a short time back there was not an acre of land under cultivation in this district; but this year there will be more than 1,000 acres under cultivation in the district that I have spoken of; and if the proposed railway were made thousands of acres would be cultivated.

2660. Is there much land here available for cultivation? Not much Government land; but there are thousands of acres of secured land which the holders would be glad to lease.

2661. Is much cultivation done by these holders at present? The largest area under cultivation this year would be about 120 acres; hitherto the largest area has been about 70 acres.

2662. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the land which is suitable for agriculture be cultivated? I am sure that it would.

2663. To what distance from the route of the proposed line? Up Yarraman way it would be cultivated to a distance of 18 or 20 miles.

T. W. F.
Busby.

12 May, 1900.

A. Pyke.

12 May, 1900.

2664.

- A. Pyke.
12 May, 1900.
2664. Do you think that the large holders would lease out land for agriculture? Yes. At the present time Mr. Forester is cutting up his land for that purpose. He has 4,000 acres, and all of it, except about 300 acres, is fit for cultivation. In our small district there is a population of 300 persons at the present time, and at shearing time there are nearly 1,000 persons within a radius of 18 miles.
2665. If a railway were made, would the settlement increase? Yes; because where one person is employed now fifty persons would be employed then.
2666. Do many fat cattle and sheep go from this district to the Sydney market? Yes; a very large number in good seasons.
2667. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the stock be sent by train? The stock from our district would go by train, and so would stock from the district further out.
2668. Do you think that if the railway were constructed it would pay within a reasonable time? I think that the Government never undertook the construction of a better or more payable line.
2669. Do you think that the Railway Commissioners' estimate for traffic is too low? Yes; but the estimated loss is a very small one. Some account must be taken of the loss to the Colony through so many thousands of acres of good land lying vacant. I am prepared to erect a flour mill directly the construction of the line is assured. At the present time we have to pay from 5d. to 6d. a bushel to send grain to Quirindi; so that the local growers at Quirindi can send their produce to Sydney for much less than we have to pay. Notwithstanding that, however, we are extending our area of cultivation every year, and the extent of cultivated ground would be largely increased if we had a railway.

Francis Lord, farmer, Spring Ridge, sworn, and examined:—

- F. Lord.
12 May, 1900.
2670. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far do you live from here? About 5 miles, in the direction of Werris Creek.
2671. What is the extent of your holding? 1,465 acres.
2672. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 200.
2673. Is all that under wheat? Yes.
2674. What is your average yield? About 12 bushels to the acre.
2675. How long have you resided in the district? Three years.
2676. Have you been growing during average seasons? No; during bad seasons.
2677. Would your yield be larger in a better season? Yes.
2678. Where do you find a market for your produce? I generally sell my wheat in Quirindi.
2679. How far away from your place is that? Thirty-seven miles.
2680. What does it cost you to send produce there? Last year it cost me 2s. a bag; this year I paid 1s. 9d. a bag.
2681. Do you consider those rates a handicap? A very great handicap. I admit that they are below the ordinary current rates for carriage, but, together with the low price of wheat, they make a big hole in our profits.
2682. How much of this land is freehold? It is all conditional purchase and conditional lease land.
2683. Would you be induced to cultivate a larger area if the proposed railway were constructed? I have been increasing my area every year for the last four years. I started with 35 acres, and this year I have 200 acres. If a railway were made I should be inclined to cultivate every available acre.
2684. Are your prospects sufficiently encouraging to lead you to go on increasing your area? Certainly.
2685. Are you in favour of the construction of the proposed line? Yes.
2686. Are your neighbours of the opinion that it would be of great benefit to the district? They all agree in that.
2687. How many landholders are there within 20 miles of your holding? I cannot say; but the whole of the land is occupied, so that if I wanted more land I do not think I could get it.
2688. Do you know if those who are engaged in agriculture under the share system are satisfied with their results? No. Mr. Binney carries on the share system on his holding, and those who are working with him seem to be fairly well satisfied; but I do not know what results they have obtained.
2689. Is land which is offered on the share system generally taken up freely? "4 D" is the only holding in the district on which land has been offered in that way, and it appears to me that nearly all the available land has been taken up.
2690. You think that the traffic which would be created by the construction of a railway would, within a reasonable time get rid of a deficiency of £18,000? Judging by the expansion of traffic which has occurred during the three years that I have been here I think that the deficiency would be soon made up.
2691. Would landholders be willing to give their land for railway purposes? I understand that the holders of Breeza were willing to give what land was required. Whether they are still ready to do so I cannot say.
2692. If you could save £50 a year by the construction of the railway, would you be willing to pay something towards getting rid of any deficiency? Personally, I should be glad to do anything in that way, because a railway is the only thing that will do us any good.
2693. Do you think that the principle is a fair one? I do not object to the principle.
2694. I suppose you run stock on your land? I have a few cattle, but no sheep at the present time; I am merely farming. I have been in other parts of New South Wales, and I think that the resources of this district are very great; but no encouragement is given for their development, nor is their development possible without railway communication. The line of demarcation between the agricultural and the pastoral interest is not so clear in this district as in others, because we are beginning to see that the black soil—which at one time was considered purely pastoral land—is good agricultural land. That has been proved by my own experience and that of others, though I admit that at the present time we do not exactly understand how to till the black soil to the full advantage. I have no doubt, however, that by observing and experimenting we shall eventually ascertain how to get the best results, and there is an enormous area of black soil country. No doubt this is a splendid wheat-growing country, and I think corn, barley, and other cereals could be produced here. Then, too, the railway would probably cause dairying to be gone in for in the district; but at present it is impossible for dairying to be carried on here, because there

is no way of getting rid of the produce. To get our wheat from Quirindi to Sydney costs us less than to send it from our homesteads to Quirindi, and at the present low price of wheat the cost of road carriage is a heavy handicap to growers.

F. Lord.
12 May, 1900.

2695. What has been your experience of the result of railway construction in other districts? When a railway terminus is made, a forced activity is created in the district, and it is often said that directly the line goes beyond a town that town is done for; but if the resources of the district are good, the town will not go back. If railways were never to be made because the terminal town would be injured by their extension, we should never have a railway outside the metropolitan area.

Francis Wilson Darby, grazier and farmer, Coolanbilla, sworn, and examined:—

2696. *Mr. Watson.*] What area of land do you hold? Nearly 3,000 acres.

F. W. Darby.
12 May, 1900.

2697. Do you cultivate any portion of your land? About 150 acres.

2698. How far are you from the nearest market? My place is 35 miles from Quirindi.

2699. What yield of wheat do you get? My average last year was about 20 bushels to the acre.

2700. Was last year an average season? No; it was a bad season.

2701. What would be your average yield for a number of years? From 25 to 30 bushels to the acre.

2702. What effect would the construction of the proposed line have upon the land immediately in your vicinity? If the railway were made, I and my neighbours would put a larger area under wheat, because we should have better access to market, and would be able to send away our produce at a profitable rate.

2703. Is a large proportion of your land suitable for agriculture? I could take 1,000 acres for agriculture without interfering with my grazing.

2704. Would you keep some of your land for grazing, even though it might be suitable for agriculture? Yes; I should not put it all under cultivation.

2705. Have your neighbours the same proportion of good land as you yourself? Some of my neighbours would have a greater proportion of agricultural land.

2706. What is the country like between your place and Werris Creek? It is plain country.

2707. Is the plain country suitable for agriculture, or do you prefer the rising ground? There is some of it which I would not care about taking. Some of the soil in the plain country is brown ground, and better for wheat than the black soil. There are large areas of rising country along the route of the proposed line which would be suitable for agriculture.

2708. Would all of that country be suitable for agriculture? No; the tops of the mountain ridges would not.

2709. What do you pay to have your wheat carried to Quirindi? About 1s. 6d. a cwt.

2710. Do you find that a handicap? Yes.

2711. Are you and your neighbours in favour of the construction of the proposed line? Yes; and I can speak for John Kelly, George Cameron, John Steel, William Della and brother, and Charles Crothers.

2712. Would they all go in more largely for cultivation if a railway were constructed? Yes.

2713. Would the line go through land belonging to any of those whom you have mentioned? No; we are all away from the route. I am 8 miles from Colly Blue; but my place would be within 5 miles of a station at Spring Ridge.

2714. With a railway you would save from 3½d. to 4d. a bushel in freight to Sydney? About 4d. a bushel.

2715. In view of that fact, would you and your neighbours be prepared to make any contribution towards decreasing any deficiency upon the working of a railway? I am not prepared to answer that question.

2716. What do you consider your land worth? From 30s. to £2 an acre, unimproved.

2717. If you saved 4d. a bushel in freight, on an acre yielding 20 bushels, you would save 6s. 8d.;—could you not, under such circumstances, afford to pay 2d. an acre towards reducing any loss on the line? I think so; on acreage under cultivation.

2718. If it became a question of having no railway, or having a railway and paying such a contribution, would you be inclined to make the contribution? Yes; under those circumstances.

2719. I suppose you send away fat sheep occasionally? If we had good seasons, I would send five or six trucks of fat sheep and two or three trucks of cattle away every year, besides sixteen or twenty bales of wool. With the railway close at hand it would pay us to send away a truck load of sheep at a time; but it does not pay us to drive a small flock 20 or 30 miles to a railway station. I might add that John Kelly, fourteen years ago, had 10 acres of black soil country under wheat, and got a yield of 20 bushels to the acre. Now he has 155 acres under cultivation, and the yield last year was 20 bushels to the acre.

William Douglas Simson, grazier, Trinkey, sworn, and examined:—

2720. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you any knowledge of the Crown land which would be affected by the proposed line if it were constructed? I know the Crown land on our own run, which is situated on the northern side of the route of the proposed line.

W. D. Simson.
12 May, 1900.

2721. What is the area of your run? 70,000 acres, including the land held under occupation license.

2722. How much of it is secured land? 28,000 acres.

2723. What proportion of the balance is suitable for agriculture? About two-thirds. Nearly all of that land will be thrown open for selection in a very short time, and other land in the district will also be available.

2724. Is that land now covered with green timber? Some of it is plain country, and some of it is covered with timber. The plain country has a light, black soil, which is suitable for agriculture.

2725. Do you know any other areas suitable for agriculture? There are 20,000 acres on a holding adjoining mine. There is a tremendous lot of good land on Bomera, and a lot of good land on Wandemah, 18 miles from the route of the proposed line, though some of it will be nearer to Curlewis.

2726. Do you think the Crown would be benefited by the construction of the proposed line by reason of the increased value which it would give to Crown land in the district? Yes; at the present time it will not pay us to clear and to cultivate this land; but if we had a railway here it would be profitable. I took up some land on an improvement lease, and most of that land would be suitable for agriculture if there were

- W. D. Simson.
12 May, 1900.
- were a railway near at hand; but the minimum rate of road-carriage now is 1s. 9d. a cwt., and in good seasons the roads are so heavy that it is almost impossible to get anything taken in at all, at cost of 2s. to 2s. 3d. per cwt.
2727. Is a large proportion of the secured land on Trinkeby holding suitable for agriculture? Yes; there is very little of it that is not suitable. The land that would not grow wheat would grow corn.
2728. Do you think that if the proposed railway were made landholders in the district would be prepared to cultivate their land or to lease it on the share system? Yes; if it would pay them to do so.
2729. Do you think it would pay them? I think so. I think that within a little while the returns from wheat will be much larger than they are now.
2730. What proportion of the leasehold areas that you are acquainted with is suitable for agriculture? I think about two-thirds. It is only the ridges that are not suitable. I have a garden at my place, and nearly everything seems to grow in it.
2731. Is it black soil or on the rising ground? It is nearly all red soil. I have had 70 or 80 acres of black soil under wheat for years, and in any sort of season we get from 3 to 4 tons of hay. We have never got less than 2½ tons.
2732. Is that soil lighter than some of the black soil? Yes; I once stripped 9 acres of wheat, and got a yield of 22 bushels to the acre. There would be a certain amount of traffic on the proposed line, not only towards Sydney, but also towards Melbourne. I have sent sheep to Sydney for sale, and they have been resold and sent on to Melbourne; but with a direct line I would send them to Melbourne myself. If there were a railway, all the fat stock going from the district would use it, because the roads are so eaten down that they are not fit for animals to travel on.

[The Committee met at the Spring Ridge House, at 4:45 p.m.]

George Clift, grazier, Breeza, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Clift.
12 May, 1900.
2733. *Vice-Chairman.*] What distance is Breeza from Werris Creek? Sixteen miles.
2734. Part of your holding is very close to the Breeza railway station? Yes; it surrounds the Breeza railway station.
2735. In what direction is it from the route of the proposed line? The proposed line would run parallel with our property on the southern side of it, all the way from Werris Creek to Spring Ridge, a distance of about 22 miles.
2736. What is the area of your holding? 130,000 acres.
2737. What is the average carrying capacity? From one to two sheep to the acre; it all depends upon the season.
2738. Is it all secured land? Yes.
2739. How much of it would be available for agricultural purposes? I could not say exactly, but some thousands of acres.
2740. Half of it? No, not so much. I dare say between 10,000 acres and 15,000 acres would be suitable for agriculture.
2741. Have you ever tried agriculture on any part of it? Yes.
2742. How much did you cultivate, and what yield did you get? My sons put in 50 acres last year, and, though the crop was a failure, they got 18 bushels to the acre.
2743. What yield do you expect in a fair season? From 35 to 40 bushels to the acre.
2744. What is the average weight of a fleece in this district? About 6½ lbs.
2745. Do you find any difficulty in sending away your wool and other products? Yes, from this side of the run.
2746. Is that because of the heavy roads? Yes.
2747. Would the proposed railway be of advantage to you? Yes. I could have sent 45,000 sheep away from here if there had been a railway and trucking conveniences.
2748. Do sheep lose in condition when being driven to the railway? Yes.
2749. If the proposed railway were made, would you truck from the nearest station? Yes, and I should send to other markets than those to which I now send.
2750. To what other markets? To Melbourne.
2751. Would it pay you to send stock from your place to Melbourne by rail? Yes, when stock was bringing good prices.
2752. Do you carry any cattle on your holding? Yes; but not a great number.
2753. Is yours good fattening country? Yes; I do not think you could get better.
2754. With the construction of a railway, would you be able to fatten more sheep than you can fatten now? Yes, and you could turn over your stock more quickly, and put others in their places.
2755. Have you at any time received large consignments of stock from other districts because of the drought in those districts? No; though some relatives of ours had 13,000 sheep on some of our country.
2756. Have you ever been forced to send away your own sheep during a drought to a more favoured district? Yes; twenty years ago.
2757. Not since then? No.
2758. Does this part of the country not suffer from droughts as much as other parts? No; and with rain it soon recovers.
2759. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you place a larger area of land under cultivation? Yes; I think we could lease a lot of land on the share system, if there were a railway here.
2760. Do you think that the share system would settle a considerable population in this district? Yes, under proper conditions, if people would live and let live.
2761. We have been informed that in some places where the share system has been in force, the landholders after three or four years have allowed the land to go back to pasture, and the agriculturists have had to seek fresh fields;—would that be the case in this district, or would agriculture become a permanent institution here? It would become permanent here.
2762. What area would maintain a farmer in this district in decent comfort? 300 acres.

2763. Under what conditions would you offer land to be farmed? A man now has 900 acres under wheat near Werris Creek on our holding. G. Clift.
12 May, 1900.
2764. What terms do you allow him? We have helped him along greatly.
2765. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed the estimated deficiency of £18,000 per annum would shortly disappear? I think that the traffic on the line would increase every year.
2766. Would it pay you to contribute towards the reduction of any annual loss as much as you now pay in land tax on land within the influence of the railway? I am not prepared to answer that question, because I am only one of a firm, and the other members must be consulted.
2767. Do you think it would pay other landholders further along the line to contribute 1d. an acre per annum upon all land within 20 miles of the railway, in order to secure its construction? I think it would.
2768. Do you think that it would be of material advantage to have a connection between the Northern and Western railway systems? I think so.
2769. Would there be an interchange of products along a connecting line? I think so.
2770. Would you expect to find a market on the Western line, out towards Bourke? If there were a drought out there, we could buy stock there and bring them here by train; but it would not pay us to bring them by road.
2771. Are the runs in this district stocked to their full capacity? Our run is stocked up pretty well.
2772. Do you think that the construction of the line would result in a national gain, by reason of the saving of sheep which it would effect? I think so.
2773. Is there much room for starving stock in the New England district? Yes; that district is an outlet for stock from the plains.
2774. Would it pay stockowners out towards the west to use the proposed line to send stock to Aberdeen? Yes; because the driving of them by road takes away their condition.
2775. Would it happen in times of drought in the west that sheep in ill condition would be sent here to fatten, and then be trucked on to Aberdeen or some other place to be killed for export? Yes.
2776. What is the rainfall in this district? From 28 to 30 inches.
2777. What carriage do you pay from the furthest end of your property to the railway station at Breeza? I cannot say, because we use our own teams.
2778. Would you be willing to give the land required for railway purposes? Yes.
2779. Which line would you prefer—one from Dubbo to Werris Creek, or one from Wellington to Werris Creek? I should like the junction to be at Wellington.
2780. Is that because it would give you a shorter route to Sydney and to Melbourne? Yes.

Archibald Campbell, grazier, Spring Ridge, sworn, and examined:—

2781. *Mr. Watson.* What is the area of your holding? About 2,300 acres. A. Campbell.
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2782. Is it all conditional purchase and conditional lease? It is all conditional purchase or freehold.
2783. How far is it from where we are now? About 11 or 12 miles from here south of the route of the proposed line.
2784. Would this be the nearest point to it on the proposed line? Yes.
2785. What is the carrying capacity of your land? In reasonable seasons about two sheep to the acre.
2786. During the recent dry years how many sheep have you been able to carry? I have carried a sheep and half to the acre.
2787. Is yours all plain country? No; I have some timbered country as well.
2788. Is it fairly level country? Yes.
2789. How much of it is suitable for agriculture? I should think quite 1,800 acres.
2790. Do you cultivate any of it now? Very little.
2791. What distance are you from Quirindi? Thirty miles.
2792. Is that too far to enable you to cultivate with a profit? Yes.
2793. What is the maximum from a railway station at which a man can profitably cultivate? From 10 to 15 miles.
2794. Is the distance shorter in this district because of the heavy character of the road? Yes; it is very heavy drawing in this district, more especially in wet seasons.
2795. Are there many who have comparatively small holdings in the vicinity of your place? Yes.
2796. Is their land something like yours? Yes.
2797. Do any of them go in for agriculture? No, because they have no inducement to do so.
2798. What does it cost to send wheat from that part of the district to Quirindi? I should think it would cost from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. a bag.
2799. Do you regard that charge as prohibitive? Yes.
2800. You have not grown anything yourself? Only a few acres for hay.
2801. With what result? With very good results. One year I got 2½ tons of hay to the acre; but when the season was dry I got less.
2802. Did you cultivate the plain country or the timbered country? The timbered country.
2803. Is that country regarded as better for agriculture than the plain country? It has not yet had a reasonable trial; but it is supposed to be equal to, and perhaps superior to, the plain country.
2804. Is there a good proportion of agricultural land between Trinkey and Werris Creek? Yes.
2805. Does the good land extend for any considerable distance on both sides of the route of the proposed railway? Yes.
2806. If the proposed railway were constructed would it pay you to go in for agriculture? Yes.
2807. Would agriculture assist your grazing operations? Yes, because it would improve the land.
2808. Do you fatten any stock? Yes.
2809. Would a railway close at hand be of assistance to you in sending away small consignments? Yes.
2810. Do you experience any difficulty in driving your stock to Quirindi? Yes; it costs as much to drive a small flock of, say 100, as to drive 500.
2811. If you were close to a railway, would you frequently send away small consignments? Yes; but under other circumstances we do not trouble about small lots.
- 2812.

- A. Campbell. 2812. Do you care to express an opinion about the suggestion that landowners should contribute towards the reduction of any deficiency? Personally, I should be prepared to make a contribution in recognition of the benefits which I would derive from a railway, and I can speak for a neighbour, Mr. Dickson.
- 12 May, 1900. 2813. Would it be worth your while to pay 1d. an acre towards making up any loss? Yes, for a time, at any rate.
2814. How far would you be from the line at the nearest point? About 5 miles.
2815. Would it pay people within 15 miles to make a contribution? I think it would pay them to make some contribution.
2816. Is there a great desire on the part of the people here to have the railway constructed? Yes.
2817. Will their operations be seriously handicapped if they are not given a railway? Yes. Without a railway very little farming will be done, but with a railway, new industries, such as dairying, will arise.
2818. Will this country be suitable for dairying? Yes, some of it.
2819. What sort of country would be most suitable for dairying? I think the timbered country bordering the plains, and in the winter time, when they produce rich herbage, such as thistles, the plains themselves.
2820. Do the large landowners here prefer to run sheep rather than cattle? Yes; because sheep are more profitable.
2821. That is not an indication that cattle would not do well here? No.
2822. Is there any large area of Crown land in the district which is likely to become available for settlement, or has most of the land here been taken up? Most of it has been taken up about here, though there may be some further out. Mr. Dickson, who is present, has asked me to speak for him. What would benefit me would benefit him.
2823. What area has Mr. Dickson of whom you speak? I think about 3,300 acres, or a little more.
2824. Are the small holdings round you similar in character and possibilities to your own? Yes.
2825. So that in speaking for yourself you are practically speaking for them? Yes.

Richard Kingston, farmer, Spring Ridge, sworn, and examined:—

- R. Kingston. 2826. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the extent of your holding? 180 acres.
- 12 May, 1900. 2827. Do you use the land for cultivation? Yes.
2828. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 60.
2829. Has your land been under cultivation for any length of time? Yes, for seventeen years.
2830. What do you grow? Wheat generally.
2831. What has been your average yield? My average yield has been from 27 to 30 bushels to the acre. I have had as many as 45 bushels, and as few as 16 bushels to the acre.
2832. How do you get your produce to market? I carry it to Quirindi.
2833. And it eventually goes to Sydney? Yes.
2834. What would it cost to convey it to Quirindi? About 5d. a bushel.
2835. Are there many agriculturists near you? Yes, three or four.
2836. What success have they met with? My neighbour, Mr. Barnes, has country similar to my own right through.
2837. Is it ridgy country or plain country? It is ridgy country.
2838. What has been your experience of the ridgy country, as compared with the plain country, for agricultural purposes? I have not seen very much of the plain country worked, except during the last two years, and agriculture has been almost a failure on the plains. The ridgy country stands the drought better than the plain country.
2839. Is most of the country which is fit for cultivation under crop? No.
2840. Is there any considerable area under crop? There would be if the land were available and we had a railway.
2841. Is there a large area of Crown lands not available? Yes; there is a reserve on each side of the plain.
2842. Are these reserves large? Yes.
2843. Is the country fairly good? Yes; most of it is as good as the country upon which I am growing wheat, though some of it is sandy.
2844. If the railway were constructed, would the larger landholders lease their land for agriculture? I believe that a good many of them would.
2845. How much agricultural land would it take to maintain a family? Four hundred or 500 acres; but I live on 180 acres.
2846. Do you think that mixed farming will continue in this district? Yes.
2847. If the proposed railway were constructed, would farmers use it to send their produce to market? Yes.
2848. Would its construction result in increased settlement? I believe that it would.

David Lawrence, saw-mill proprietor, Spring Ridge, sworn, and examined:—

- D. Lawrence. 2849. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your place from here? Four miles, in the direction of Colly Blue, and it is 32 miles from Quirindi.
- 12 May, 1900. 2850. Do you supply timber to the district as far as Werris Creek? I supplied 50,000 feet for the meat-works at Werris Creek.
2851. How long have you been here? A little over seven years.
2852. Have you always been able to keep your mill at work? Yes, fairly well during the last twelve months; the previous year I had a great deal of lost time.
2853. How much land do you hold? I hold 69 acres, under special lease.
2854. Do you cultivate any of it? No.
2855. How far would the railway be from your place? It would be 200 or 300 yards from the saw-mill.
2856. If it were constructed, I suppose it would pay you to send timber to Werris Creek? Yes, or to Quirindi. I have numerous inquiries for timber from Quirindi and from Tamworth; but I cannot compete with the local mills. The price for carriage is 2s. 6d. per 100 feet, which is as reasonable a price as the carriers can draw for, though I have paid as high as 3s.

2857.

2857. Have you plenty of timber? Yes; timber that would keep several mills going.

2858. Is it a good class of timber? Yes. I had a letter from the contractor for the meal-works, in which he stated that the clerk of works considered that our timber was the best on the job. I believe that Mr. Clift, one of the directors, recommended the timber, although he is not a gentleman with whom I am acquainted.

D. Lawrence.
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2859. Do you think that you could compete with other saw-mills if you have cheaper carriage? Yes. They only charge 9d. a 100 feet to carry timber from Boggabri to Quirindi, so that I cannot afford to compete with that timber under present conditions. I had an inquiry for timber for the "Terminus Hotel," at Quirindi, but I could not accept the contract.

2860. What timber do you generally saw? Pine and iron-bark. The very best timber grows in this district. I believe that the construction of the proposed railway would be of benefit to every one out this way. The farmers must find it very hard not to be able to get their wheat to market without paying exorbitant prices. Of course, the carriers' charges are reasonable under the circumstances; but they are too high to allow producers in this district to compete with people elsewhere.

2861. Do the people here seem inclined to go in more largely for agriculture? I think that they would do so if they could get their produce to market more easily. We have splendid agricultural land here—I do not suppose you could get better anywhere.

2862. What is the pine suitable for? For cabinet-work and for ordinary house-building.

2863. What is the thickness of the sap-wood? Two or 3 inches, according to the size of the tree.

Charles Binnie, grazier, Spring Ridge, sworn, and examined:—

2864. *Vice-Chairman.*] Will you make a statement to the Committee of your views in regard to the matter into which they are inquiring? Perhaps I had better begin by giving you the results which we have obtained in this district from our agricultural and grazing operations. During the last two years I have been trying to turn my pastoral holding into an agricultural holding, with varying success, chiefly because of the very bad seasons which we have had of late; but, notwithstanding these bad seasons, I have had a sufficient measure of success to make me very hopeful of the final result when we again get normal seasons. The total area of my secured land is about 12,134 acres, and I hold 2,000 acres of land, which is of little value as regards returns, under annual lease. The cattle now upon the holding number 189; the sheep, 2,618; my horses, 82; and I am also carrying a large number of horses belonging to my tenants. The original "4 D" holding, which was my brother's property and my own, comprised between 18,000 and 20,000 acres. In 1889 our sales of fat sheep were 12,184; of cattle, 85; and of wool, 122 bales; and at the end of the year we possessed 7,900 sheep and 957 head of cattle. In 1895 our sales of sheep were 11,420; of cattle, 280; and of wool, 336 bales. The cattle and sheep were sent to market as fat stock, and at the end of the year we had 18,804 sheep and 130 head of cattle. In 1896 our sheep sales amounted to 29,211, 12,000 sheep being sold as dealers' lines. We sold no cattle that year, but our output of wool was 189 bales; and at the end of the year we had 13,847 sheep and 580 head of cattle. At the present time I am engaged in agricultural operations on the share system, and upon my property there are now seventy-two souls.

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2865. *Mr. Watson.*] Including both tenants and employees? Yes; everybody living upon the place. The total quantity of goods carted from Quirindi in 1898 was 81 tons, and in 1899, 96 tons. During the present year we have imported 32 tons to date. In 1898 we sent away to Quirindi 40 tons; in 1899 we sent away 50 tons; and this year we have sent away 31 tons to date, with a large quantity still to follow.

2866. What does the tonnage to Quirindi represent? A small part of it wool, and the balance agricultural products—wheat and chaff. In 1898 we ploughed up 1,053 acres, in 1899 we ploughed 2,870 acres, and this year we hope to plough 3,630 acres. There are also 800 acres in farms which are ready to let, but which I have not been offering vigorously because of the bad seasons. In 1898 we obtained 800 bags of wheat—the crop that year was almost a failure—and 180 tons of hay; and in 1899 we obtained 4,250 bags of wheat and 636 tons of hay, as nearly as the weight of hay could be estimated. At the present time we have 400 tons of wheat and 300 tons of hay to send away. That hay does not include the hay which is used for the tenants' horses. One farmer, who has ploughed 320 acres of the ridgy land, obtained 1,080 bags of wheat. Part of that crop was almost a failure, while other parts were very good; but the samples of wheat obtained were very promising throughout. I have been asked to quote the following results obtained last year from small areas. The sowings covered a long period, owing to the dryness of the season. Mr. Chas. Baker, who came from South Australia, obtained an average yield of 15 bushels to the acre from 80 acres sown in June and July. Mr. H. Ratzmann, from South Australia, obtained an average yield of 24 bushels to the acre from 30 acres sown on the 23rd June. His land is a black-soil plain. Mr. William Carlyon, from Victoria and Berrigan, had the misfortune to have his crop struck down when it was almost in the bags. He had 250 acres spoiled by an unusually late frost, on the 29th September, and he considered that the crop would have averaged 32 bushels to the acre. However, he cut most of it for hay, and obtained 400 tons; but where the thistle had overtaken the wheat it was not cut for hay. Since 1877 we have never suffered serious losses upon the "4 D" holding from dry seasons. In my fifteen years' personal recollection our biggest loss was in 1895, when 300 old ewes, which were weak after lambing, were killed by a very severe frost, which did terrible damage to stock coming off shears. In regard to the benefits which I hope from the construction of the proposed line to myself personally, I might mention at once the cheapness of carriage for the large amount of wheat which I hope to produce, and an interchange of products which I would benefit from, but which cannot be particularised. As an illustration, I might say that five or six months ago 7,000 wethers were being offered for sale in the Riverina, and if I could have trained them here in economic fashion I should have purchased them. Then, again, on several occasions in different seasons fat stock from "4 D" have been sent to Sydney and sold there, and have then been trucked from Sydney to Melbourne. Now, if we had had the advantage of a cross-country line, we should have saved the buyers' profit, and sent our stock to Melbourne ourselves. Under Federation I hope to gain great advantage if the proposed railway is constructed by trading with the southern market, and for that traffic I prefer the Wellington to the Dubbo connection. When I was in Moree a few weeks ago, making inquiries as to where their chaff and other produce supplies came from, I was informed

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that for the last two years contracts had been let in Orange for chaff, which had to be sent right round through Sydney. If the proposed railway had been constructed, that chaff would, of course, have been sent over here. I have 300 or 400 tons of hay to dispose of as chaff; but I shall find it difficult to obtain a profitable market for it, because of the expense of carriage. If there had been a railway, however, I could have sold it in the western districts at profitable rates. The northern districts are quite apart from the western and the southern districts. At the present time we cannot buy or exchange products with them because of the long distance by rail around through Sydney. West and north-west from Bourke, however, there is a very large market to look to for store stock. We are hardly able to avail ourselves of this market now, because of the distance and expense of travelling to and from it. I am, inclined, however, to think that if the proposed railway were constructed the people of the northern districts would largely avail themselves of it. In dry times it would pay us to take advantage of the starving-stock rates to stock up country here which might be under-stocked. The average rainfall of this district, as shown by the Government map, is upwards of 27 inches. I have heard it asked whether, in view of the big loss which it is said would be incurred by the construction of the proposed line, the people within 10 miles of the road could afford to contribute a penny an acre, and those within 20 miles of the route a halfpenny an acre, towards the reduction of the deficiency. From a business point of view, in order to get the railway, I should be ready to contribute; but, as a taxpayer, I would protest against any contribution being asked for, and for this reason: If I improve my leasehold land, so that it becomes more productive, I must pay a larger land tax to the Crown. If I turned my pastoral land into agricultural land, which I would do if the railway were constructed—and I think the same thing would be done right through the district, seeing the excellent climatic conditions, which you cannot make as you make railways—I should have to pay something more to the Commissioners of Taxation later on. A minor objection to the suggestion that the landowners of this district should contribute towards reducing any deficiency is that many other districts in the Colony are being served by railways for which we, in common with the rest of the taxpayers, are paying, and for which the people of the district served are not specially taxed.

2867. If your land was subjected to a charge for the upkeep of the railway, the Government Appraiser would be bound to deduct the amount of that charge from the taxable value of the land? Yes; but I do not think that that would be considered until we had a Privy Council case over it. That is my opinion from my dealings with the Commissioners of Taxation. Evidence has been given in regard to the possibilities of the timber trade in this district. I know that on the North-western line the timber trade, which was so profitable for many years, is now in a languishing condition for the want of timber to work upon; so that they are now drawing pine 30 miles to a sawmill, and are getting up trees that are practically saplings. The proposed railway, however, would open up a very considerable area of timber country. I believe I have £1,000 worth of matured pine upon my estate, and I would market it if the proposed line were made. I consider that 60 per cent. of the country between Oakey Creek and Werris Creek, a distance of 60 miles, and of which I have a fairly intimate knowledge, is fit for agriculture; and, if the line were made, large areas of land which is now considered only second-class grazing land, and is in many cases not used at all, because of the timber on it, would be put under cultivation, and that would enhance the value of all the land in the district. I have been informed that as many as 10,000 acres of land upon Brecza holding are shortly to be thrown open to settlement, as the result of an exchange, and that land would be within 10 or 14 miles of the proposed line. From the evidence which I gathered on the subject of agriculture before I went into it myself, I learnt that in making a comparison between this district and a district like Berrigan, which is an exemplary agricultural district, that the value of the land there rose in three years from 30s. per acre as pastoral land to £4 an acre as agricultural land. In the Berrigan district the climate is indifferent, the rainfall being only about 17 inches, and the soil weak; so that I am of opinion that it would not stand agriculture for any long period; whereas here farms have been cultivating for twenty-five years, and there has been very little diminution of the productiveness of the ground.

2868. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have farmers been cultivating in this district continuously for twenty-five years without the assistance of manure? They do not know what manure is up here. The percentage of loss amongst crops, too, is exceedingly small. Mr. Kingston omitted to state that he has lost only one crop out of sixteen. With regard to the value of the black soil for agriculture, I desire to say that some of the best yields obtained in this district has been obtained from black soil.

2869. *Mr. Watson.*] Has any attempt been made to test the black soil country for a number of years? One farmer told me that he had cultivated both black and red soils for some years between here and Quirindi, and that if the season was bad he was likely to lose both crops, though he might save something on the ridgy land; but that in a number of years the black-soil country yielded bigger returns than the red-soil country.

2870. The returns from black soil are so large that a man can stand an occasional loss? That is how he argued; but our experience is not sufficient to enable us to say which soil lasts best. The black-soil plains have not been cultivated until recently in this district, and it has been a very vexed question whether black soil is any good for agriculture. Prejudice dies very hard; but the Darling Downs, which are almost wholly under cultivation, are a black-soil district.

2871. Is not the elevation of the Darling Downs greater than the elevation of this district? Yes; and the rainfall there is a little more. I think they had 31 inches about Warwick. I am cultivating four different sorts of soils. The very blackest and heaviest of soils has hitherto given the heaviest crop. That was the crop which I referred to as having been struck down by frosts. I am also cultivating chocolate soil, and the ridgy soil. That soil is very friable. Then there is a stiffer black soil which might almost be called a blue soil, and which has a slightly clayey element in it. On that soil I grew a crop of wheat twelve years ago, which was estimated by farmers at 40 bushels to the acre. I put the crop in to kill the very rank growth that came up and overmastered a lucerne patch that I was trying to establish. I had lucerne established here for twelve or thirteen years, and it would have died from neglect if that would have killed it. Because of the amount of work to be done, we allowed it to go to seed, but it lasted twelve or thirteen years, until, a short time ago, we put the plough through it.

2872. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What sort of soil is it in? The blue-black clayey soil. We have cultivated a small area of rather weak ridgy soil for fifteen or sixteen years. That soil has stood fairly well; but after ten years cropping it showed signs of getting a little weaker, though we seldom lost an entire crop. We grew hay on that land.

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2873. Have you ever tried oats? No; I would not try oats while growing wheat, for fear of getting them into the soil, and not being able to get them out again.

2874. Have you tried maize to any extent? Yes; I had about 14 acres under maize in my orchard during the three dry years 1895, 1896, and 1897. The ground is situated on a hillside, and has a good free loamy soil. The crop on that land averaged 45 bushels to the acre when crops on the low-lying land in the district were failures.

2875. You have not tried maize on the black soil? No. Our roads are in a terribly bad condition after rain. I have seen them so bad that for weeks at a time it has been impossible to take heavy traffic over them, and, sooner or later, as our production increases—and agriculture is stretching out through the district further and further every year—we must come upon our Parliamentary representatives, and ask them to give us roads. It will cost a very large amount of money to make roads through black-soil country, and the Crown will get no direct return from the expenditure, as it would get from expenditure upon a railway. I understand that a very large area of land along the route of the proposed line has already been surveyed for settlement, and that 50,000 acres on the Bomera holding, 50,000 acres on Tinkaramina holding, and 20,000 acres on Queensborough holding will shortly be available for selection, and I have no doubt that every acre, no matter how bad, will be taken up. This land has hitherto been entirely unproductive, and no doubt a small area will remain unproductive, do what you will; but hilly, ridgy land, which, under pastoral occupation often carries no stock at all, will, under agriculture, in most cases, be made productive. The construction of this proposed railway will assist to bring about that change. In my opinion, no railway proposal could be submitted to the Committee which would serve so great a number of people as the proposed line would serve, because it goes beyond mere local interests. A railway from Wellington to Werris Creek would serve people living beyond its terminal points. Notwithstanding this, however, the Commissioners of Railways, while recommending other railway proposals, have condemned this. In reply to their condemnation, I would say that it is impossible to make a climate. The people between Brewarrina and Collarenebri may want a railway; but the construction of a railway in that district could not benefit such a great number of people as the construction of this line would benefit, nor would it tend to alter the value of the land so much. That country is all pastoral country, and can never be anything else.

2876. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you think that the district gets full credit for all the produce that it sends away? I do not know if I can presume to comment upon the official evidence which has already been put before the Committee.

2877. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are quite at liberty to do that? The Members of the Committee have now occupied twelve days in their trip through the district which the proposed line would serve, and, although they have seen a good deal of it, I do not think they have seen it all. They have travelled, too, in fine weather. The Railway Commissioners, however, had the misfortune to meet with extremely bad weather for a start, and on the black-soil plains they got into a terribly heavy storm. I need not remark upon the delays which take place when our roads become wet. Notwithstanding the state of the roads, however, the Commissioners were only three days going through, and, upon their knowledge of the district, so hurriedly obtained, they put before the Committee a full account of its possibilities, and a condemnation of the scheme. I have taken the liberty to go through some of the evidence which has been placed before the Committee by three officers of the Railway Department—Messrs. Deane, McLachlan, and Harper—and I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the contradictory nature of their evidence, and to the contradictions in Mr. Harper's evidence taken by itself. As a taxpayer, and as one who is interested in this proposal, I think I am justified in what I am about to say. Although Mr. Harper holds an important position as an officer of the Government, it must be apparent to anyone who looks through his evidence that the answers he gave when under cross-examination by members of the Committee, on the second day of his examination, are most unsatisfactory. That evidence is a mass of contradictions, and the evidence of the three gentlemen whom I have named will not bear comparison. Mr. Deane makes a small error in stating that the black soil plains are not suitable for agriculture (Question 21). That is still a moot question. Then, in reply to Question 37, he states that he believes "that the owners of land would be very glad to let out the land on the share principle," and that "there is a good deal of Crown land still for sale which would be suitable for agriculture." In reply to Question 42, he says that he believes the district is one which would carry a large population; and, in reply to Question 43, that "the alienated land by no means comprises all the best land." In reply to Question 47, he appears not to know how the Railway Commissioners make up their estimate of traffic. In reply to Question 49, he is of opinion that there would be a greater increase of traffic in an agricultural than in a pastoral district. In reply to Question 53, he agrees to the statement that "there is no population between the stations." That is evidently an error which the Commissioners fell into, since they did not announce their visit to the district, so as to give people an opportunity of coming forward to meet them. In reply to Question 57, Mr. Deane says that the box-tree country is magnificent agricultural country. His evidence, however, differs entirely from that of Mr. Harper and Mr. McLachlan, who voiced the opinions of the Railway Commissioners. Mr. McLachlan says, in reply to Question 87, that the proposed railway would not be of service in the removal of starving stock; but, in reply to Question 147, he says "I know from some squatters that in the last drought the western people found it difficult to find grazing country." Then, in reply to Question 91, he submits a return showing that the number of starving stock shifted during one month—November, 1899—was 68,500, and in his next answer he says, "during the two succeeding months we shifted 300,000. Yet he does not think that the proposed line would be of service in shifting starving stock; and in another place he says that he does not think it would pay owners to shift their stock. He also unwittingly makes a statement in favour of the proposal when he says that drought in this Colony are only partial; and he goes on to point out that while the Bourke district suffered in 1897, the Narrabri district had a good season then, and, the inference is, could have taken in starving stock. He told the Committee that bad droughts occur at Werris Creek; whereas, as a matter of fact, the Werris Creek district has a rainfall of 30 inches, and they do not know what it is to lose stock there. The only use that he could think of for the proposed railway is for the transfer of rolling-stock from the Northern line to the Southern or Western lines. He says, in reply to Question 106, that the Commissioners "do not anticipate any big development in agriculture"; and, in reply to Question 109, that they would prefer a connection between Collarenebri and Brewarrina, though, as I have shown, such a line could not increase the value of the land through which it would be taken. In
reply

C. Binnie.
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reply to Question 118, he says, "I believe there is very little Crown land left," and that the construction of the proposed line would not intensify production. Then I come to one or two answers which are rather vital. He is asked to compare an existing line with the proposed line, and he takes the Blayney-Harden line. In reply to Question 134, however, he contradicts his previous evidence, because he says that the Blayney line has encouraged agricultural settlement, and in his next answer he agrees that there is now more wheat and other produce grown in the district through which it passes. Although the Railway Commissioners say that they do not anticipate much traffic on the proposed line, and estimate its revenue at only £8,586, they admit that the Blayney line, which costs three times as much per mile as this line will cost, now pays working expenses. Mr. Harper states that he thinks that £150,000 would be required for the resumption of land along the route of the proposed line; but I believe that very little would be required for the purpose. Mr. Charrington, who has 7,000 acres of land in this district, and who has authorised me to speak for him, is willing to give any of his land that may be required for railway purposes, I should also be willing to give any of my land, and I am of opinion that most of the people on the first 60 miles of the Werris Creek end of the route would willingly give their land. I am also authorised to say, on behalf of Mr. Charrington, that if the line were made he would go in largely for agriculture. In reply to Question 170, Mr. McLachlan says, that the Railway Commissioners had based their estimate of traffic upon the existing traffic, that is, that they will not take into consideration prospective traffic. In reply to Question 179, he says, "The Commissioners do not anticipate that a development in agriculture would take place if the line were made;" and, in reply to Questions 182 and 183, he states that the three Commissioners drove through the district, and got information from local people. Now, although I have been along the route, I have been unable to find any local person from whom they got information, and the time they allowed for its collection was very limited. Nevertheless, Mr. McLachlan states, in answer to Question 181, "they always make due inquiry." In reply to Question 187, he says that, "they took three days" to make this inquiry. In reply to question 188, he says, that if the officers of the Department give evidence to the contrary of that it would be incorrect. Then Mr. Harper, Question 211, states that he did not think that the line would serve my estate. I beg to differ from him on that point. In reply to Question 213, he admits that, "there is a lot of land on that line which agriculturalists would be glad to get hold of." In reply to Question 211, he thinks that those who at present own the land would go in for agriculture. In reply to Question 260, he says that, although he has been over the country, he cannot give any information as to its character. Yet the day before, in reply to Questions 204 and 211, he does give an account of it. Then, in reply to Question 274, he will not answer when he is asked whether the country "is of such a character that it would carry a large population." Although he has been over the country, he says in reply to Question 276, that there is no good land near Werris Creek. I must leave the Members of the Committee to judge for themselves on that point. In his replies to Questions 290 to 296, he admits that the Moree line, the Cobar line, and the Berrigan-Kinlay line have all exceeded the estimated traffic return. I believe that the traffic estimate for the Moree line was exceeded in the first two months that the line was opened, and those were not the months of the wool season. As another instance of the inaccuracy of the estimates which emanate from the same quarter, I would refer to the results obtained by the George-street tramway.

2878. *Mr. Watson.*] Mr. Harper was not responsible for that estimate? But it came from the same department. These officers are only the Commissioner's mouthpieces. In reply to Question 305, Mr. Harper admits that any squatter will let his land if he can get good farmers to take it. In reply to Question 342, he says that squatters will not send stock to New England, because the grass there is too sour. I need not comment on that answer. Thousands of sheep went to New England during the last drought. Mr. Harper also says that fluke is always there, but that is another mistake. In reply to Question 344, he says that there is no foot-rot there. Again a mistake. In reply to Question 367, he says that he could not advance one valid reason in favour of the construction of the line, and, in reply to the next question, he repeats Mr. McLachlan's statement that the only use the Railway Department would have for the line would be in expediting the removal of rolling stock. I think that if the Railway Commissioners had wanted to damn this line, they could have done it in an artistic fashion. If one reads the evidence of the three officers whom I have named, he will find lots of excuses, but not one valid reason why the line should not be constructed.

2879. *Vice-Chairman.* You anticipate a large increase of agricultural settlement along the route of the line which would afford traffic to it? Yes, and I base that opinion upon the fact that agriculture has been stretching further and further away from the existing lines during the last four years. I know that agriculture is being prosecuted at Tambor Springs, and when I was out there lately, I saw a man carting his wheat from there to Quirindi.

2880. Will you not admit that a large portion of the best land in this district has been alienated? The bulk of the best land has been taken up, and that is only natural.

2881. The success of the proposed line, so far as it depended upon agricultural traffic, would depend upon the attitude taken by landholders along the route in regard to agriculture? Not entirely. There is quite enough land yet to be thrown open to give a sufficiently large agricultural area to make the line profitable. If the second-rate land in the district were brought under agriculture it would produce more than the best land originally taken up under stock.

2882. We have already seen in other districts that the share system, though apparently successful for a time, has not permanently settled population upon the land held under tenure; but that after, at most five years, the farmers had been sent away, and the land has been put under pasture again? There is no secrecy about the system on which I am working. I have spent enough money on each farm to show that I intend the farming on my estate to be a permanent thing. I hope that the farmers who have taken land for five years will keep it, and that their families will succeed them. I hope, too, with fair seasons to increase my agricultural area each year, until the whole of the land that is capable of growing produce is under crop.

2883. I understand that you have been to a considerable trouble in visiting other districts and obtaining information with a view to the utilisation of your land for farming? Yes.

2884. As a result, you intend to establish agriculture permanently on your estate? That is my intention, and, instead of having nomadic and single men, I will have no man that is not married. I let one farm to a single man, but he had it in his lease that he was to get married within twelve months. The bigger the family, the more consideration I shall give.

2885.

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2885. Have you had sufficient conversation with other landholders holding large areas, such as you hold, to be able to say whether they are likely to go in for the same system? Whenever a new thing is introduced into a district it comes in for a lot of adverse criticism, and when I started here most people thought I was utterly mad. Those who scoffed at me most, however, were, six months afterwards, letting their land on the share system. I believe, from conversations I have had with my neighbours, that they are watching this experiment, and I admit that it is an experiment. Although I have seen everything that I could see elsewhere, I have seen no place that promises better as a district for wheat-growing, and already some of my neighbours are following my lead in the share system of farming. I believe that my success would depend very much upon the construction of the proposed railway.

2886. Would you care to give the Committee the details of the agreement made between you and your farmers? Certainly. I clear the land, not for a stump-jump plough, but for a set plough; and I do all the fencing necessary to separate each farm, and to make a little horse paddock for each farmer. Then I give them galvanized iron for their houses, stables, barns, and so on, and they get what timber they require for building purposes in my forest. I also find water on every farm, where possible, by putting down wells; and I provide seed wheat for the first year. I have also helped the tenants, to some extent, with my own horses; but that is not in the agreement. The seed wheat for all other years has to come out of crop. The tenants find all the plant, and all the labour necessary for working the farm, and results are divided equally between tenants and landlord. I handle the seed wheat, taking out of the crop the quantity that has been put into the land, and I put back good seed in the shape of screened wheat, out of which all black oats and foreign grain has been removed, handing over each time as clean and perfect a sample as I can.

2887. What are the terms of the agreement concerning the use of the land between harvesting and next year's sowing? The use of the stubble belongs to the landlord, and the tenants' horses run in the station paddocks when they are not being used.

2888. For how long is the land let? For five years. On the ridge here there are 40 or 50 acres let on the share system, a small holder having let his land to a teamster, or some one of that sort. This side of the Mooki River there is another area let on the share system upon the Hawkesbury Benevolent Asylum land.

2889. What is the average extent of the farms which you let to each tenant? There is one farm of 200 acres, and from that area they increase in size up to 400 and 800 acres. The area of a farm depends upon the means of the tenant to cultivate it.

2890. Would 400 acres give a decent living to a man and his family under your system? I believe so.

2891. Has that system been long enough in operation to have been fully tested? Not locally; but it has in other districts. It was after having seen the system carried out under worse conditions, both as to soil and to climate, that I was induced to begin it here.

2892. What is the cost of clearing dead timber and green timber? It varies very much. In the open box forests I have been pulling down the trees with a traction engine. That costs me from 5s. to 6s. per acre for live timber. Owing to the very bad seasons, however, it has recently become more expensive, because the trees are apt to break off at the level of the ground now. If the ground were moist they would come up by the roots. When the ground is dry this work costs from 10s. an acre up to 14s. Dead timber in open box forest could be cleared, and the roots burnt to a distance of from 9 to 10 inches below the ground, for 10s. an acre.

2893. Would 400 acres be a sufficient area for a farmer to live upon along the route of the proposed line if he had absolute control of it? Yes, where the land was not precipitous and broken, though I cannot speak much of the land south of Oakey Creek. 400 acres of white box forest or good ridgy land and good plain land, not too damp, should keep a family very comfortably if it were cultivated.

2894. Is the district within 20 miles of the proposed line adapted for agriculture only or for mixed farming—I speak of holdings up to 1,500 acres in extent? I believe that if a man was feeling his way it would pay him to go in for agriculture, and I should say that 60 per cent. of the land between here and Oakey Creek would be fit for agriculture.

2895. Do you think that this district could afford relief to districts which were suffering from drought by maintaining their stock? It would no doubt aid, but when the good seasons came the stock would be too valuable to be sent back again, because the nearer stock is to port and facilities for transport the more valuable it is. What I consider is not so much the saving to the individual as the saving to the country at large by the keeping alive of stock during the dry seasons.

2896. How far is your property from the nearest railway station? Twenty miles.

2897. And from the nearest point on the proposed line? The proposed line would run through my property. It is not only the cost of getting produce to market but the delays which tell. Farmers, when they have to cart their produce long distances to a railway station, have to withdraw themselves and their teams temporarily from the work of their farms.

2898. As a rule, it is considered that a farmer who is within 20 miles of a railway station is well served;—do you consider this country so difficult to traverse that that is not near enough here? I should be quite satisfied to re-engage in farming at that distance if I knew that no railway at all was coming here.

2899. I understand that in this district the roads are so bad in certain seasons of the year that 23 miles is too far to go to a railway? Yes; 20 miles in this district is a more difficult and dangerous distance to traverse than it is in some other districts. I have seen teams stuck in the lane here for over a week.

2900. I understand that you wish to produce as exhibits some photographs of the grass that grows here in good seasons? Yes. This grass comes in the summer when we have a fair season, and grows as high as a horse. I do not know its name, though locally it is called kangaroo grass. In the winter time its place is taken by trefoil, crowsfoot, and a herbage known as carrots.

MONDAY, 14 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Werris Creek Railway Refreshment Rooms, at 9 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Samuel Clift, pastoralist, East Maitland, sworn, and examined:—

- S. Clift.
14 May, 1900.
2901. *Vice-Chairman.*] You are the owner of property in this district? Yes; I am interested in the Breeza holding.
2902. What is the area of that holding? It was originally 174,000 acres, but at present we hold about 130,000 acres of secured land.
2903. Any leased land? A little; but the greater portion of our leasehold has been lately alienated.
2904. Does your property begin close to Werris Creek? Yes; close to the railway line.
2905. How far does it extend along the route of the proposed line? The proposed line leaves our land at the Gap, and then comes on to it again past Walhallow and Spring Ridge.
2906. How far is the most distant part of your land from Werris Creek? About 32 miles.
2907. Taking one season with another, what is its average carrying capacity? In very good seasons it will carry a sheep and a half to the acre.
2908. Do you run any cattle on the holding? Yes; but we have only about 500 just now.
2909. Do you regard it as good fattening country for cattle? Yes, first class.
2910. Has it been your practice to fatten a large number of sheep on the run for market? Yes; the year before last we sold 59,600 fat wethers.
2911. Have you any difficulty at the present time in getting your sheep, your wool, or other products to the railway? No, though we have to bring them a long way from the back country into Breeza.
2912. Do you think that, with the construction of the proposed railway, you would be able to get sheep from the drought-stricken districts of the west, and to maintain them, and perhaps fatten them on your country? I am sure of it. If there were a railway to Wellington we could buy sheep down that way, and bring them here to fatten, and in bad seasons our sheep could be moved over that way. It is very seldom that the season is bad in both places.
2913. As a rule, this district does not suffer from the droughts which afflict other parts of the Colony? No.
2914. Would the proposed railway help you to take advantage of the southern and Melbourne markets? Yes, if the prices suited. I have known cattle to be driven from this district to Melbourne.
2915. What advantages would follow to the Colony as a whole, and to this district in particular, from the construction of the proposed railway? The proposed railway would open up the country for agriculture.
2916. Would you go in for agriculture yourself? I commenced last year by letting 850 acres at a place about a mile from Werris Creek. I have had applications for land from two other people, but I have declined to go further until I could see how the speculation would turn out.
2917. What yield has your tenant got from his 850 acres? I only cleared the land last year in time for him to commence ploughing for a wheat crop, and he got about 3,200 bushels of wheat from less than 400 acres, though the circumstances were most unfavourable.
2918. How far do you know the country along the route of the proposed line? I have travelled across the country to Dubbo twice, and I have been to Wellington.
2919. Do you think that that country would carry a fairly large agricultural population if it had a railway? I think that it would; the land is all sufficiently good to grow wheat.
2920. Do you think that the fact that it is mainly held in large areas by private owners would retard the progress of agriculture if the line were constructed? No; because I think that the landholders would be very glad to let their land to farmers on terms similar to those I have given.
2921. It has been stated that, in other districts, the landholders only allow agriculturists to hold land for from three to five years, and that at the end of that time it is used for grazing again;—would that be the experience here? I do not think so. My tenant only asked for a five years' lease, and if all goes well he will get an extension for another five years. I shall make the best use I can of my land, and, so far, it would seem that agriculture pays twice as well as grazing.
2922. What is your opinion of the black-soil country for agriculture? There are different classes of black soil. Some of it is light and friable, and will grow almost anything that will ripen before the hot weather sets in; but the cracking black soil is not so good. Out towards Walhallow the black soil does very well for agriculture; but out past Breeza it does not do well. The best wheat land we get here is the land upon which yellow box or "yellow jacket" grows.
2923. Can you compare the agricultural resources of this district with those of other districts with which you are acquainted? For wheat this district is better than the Maitland district.
2924. Wheat does not grow well on the coast? No; it is subject to rust there.
2925. What are the possibilities of this country for lucerne growing? I do not think you could depend much on lucerne, except in favoured spots, such as the bends of creeks, where the water comes pretty close to the surface, say—to within 10 or 12 feet. Mr. Binney can grow lucerne on his plain, but along the road from Spring Ridge a man got good water in a hole only 3 feet deep.
2926. How many acres of land in this district would keep a farmer in decent comfort? A farmer would require 150 or 200 acres in this district, because he would want ground for his horses and stock, but many live on much less. A man named Purcell has a larger area than that; but the good land on his holding would not comprise more than 100 acres. His yield last year was seven bags, or about 30 bushels, to the acre.
2927. Do you think there is room for the introduction of dairying in this district? Yes; this is a splendid dairying district.
- 2928.

2928. How would it compare with the dairying districts on the coasts? The natural grasses here are quite as good as any on the coast.

2929. At present dairying is not gone in for? Not largely.

2930. Do you think that that is due to the want of railway communication? I could not say that; but once the district through which the proposed railway would go is opened up, all the industries that will pay there will be entered into.

2931. It has been urged that the proposed line would be of advantage to the Colony from a national point of view;—what is your opinion on that point? Some day or other we shall be involved in war, and in that event, if the Hawkesbury Bridge were blown up, we should be unable, without some such connection as the proposed line, to get our troops from New South Wales to Queensland. Then, again, if the Federal Capital were established at Orange, the proposed line would bring the capitals of the other colonies within a reasonable distance of that place.

2932. Are there any commercial advantages which would follow from the construction of the proposed line, such as the interchange of products between the north-western and northern districts and the western districts? New England is a great district for potatoes and all sorts of vegetables; but I do not think that that traffic would affect the railway receipts very much.

2933. Is there much room in New England for starving stock in periods of drought? Yes; when we have droughts they have generally a favourable season, and their country is better in the dry season than in a wet season. They carry more stock to the acre than we carry, and their good country extends over on to the eastern slopes.

2934. Would the proposed line be of advantage in facilitating the transport of stock to New England? Yes; to New England and the northern districts generally.

2935. Has the removal of starving stock been profitable to stock-owners? It is costly; but at any rate it pays to save female sheep. Tens of thousands of sheep are now being brought from Charleville and Hughendon to the coast to be saved.

2936. The Commissioners estimate an annual loss of £18,000 on the proposed line;—could you, as a landowner, afford as a matter of business to contribute towards the reduction of that deficiency as much as you now pay in land tax on all land within 10 miles of the route of the proposed line? I daresay my people would agree to that, but I could not bind them.

2937. Do you think it would pay them to make such a contribution, and would it pay other landholders along the route? I think it would.

2938. That contribution would have to be paid only so long as the line was being run at a loss? Quite so.

2939. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you had any experience in fruit-growing in this district? No; we have only grown a little for our own use; but they get capital fruit at Currabubula, within 8 miles of Werris Creek. Fruit would grow very well out at Spring Ridge, and in the bends of the creek here; but I do not think it would be grown in any quantity.

2940. Would vines do here? Vines have done very well at Currabubula, but they have not been tried out along the route of the proposed line. Apples and pears do not seem to do too well here. The climate appears too hot for them.

2941. Has maize been grown to any extent in this district? No; and in favourable seasons the crops will not average more than 30 or 40 bushels to the acre.

2942. Have you ever drained any of the stiff black soil for the purpose of cultivation? No; but it will drain itself; it is all cracked through.

2943. Is there not a sort of blue clay in that soil? No; the black soil continues right down a long way, though it is more friable on the surface.

2944. You say that crops suffer as the summer comes on? Yes; corn or any summer crop is affected by the heat.

2945. Is it so with trees? No; you can grow trees. Pepper-trees, for instance, grow better here than on the coast.

2946. Is there something in the soil which would account for crops dying in the summer? I presume that the hot weather exhausts the moisture in the soil, and therefore the crops die. In my opinion, the Commissioners' estimate of revenue is lower than is reasonable. If Bomera were made a station it would get the traffic from Coonabarabran and the districts around it, and the proposed line would get a large part of the traffic that now goes to Quirindi, and some of that which now goes elsewhere.

James Scott, farmer, Terrible Vale, sworn, and examined:—

2947. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you any property or holding which the construction of the proposed line would serve? No.

2948. You are not personally interested in its construction? No; except that it offers a possibility of trade along the route.

2949. What prospect is there of trade from this district towards the Western line? I grow chiefly hay and fodder, and I sell it in the local market, so far as I can, though this year I have sent a lot out to Moree.

2950. Would you use the proposed line? There might at times be a demand for fodder in the western districts, and then I could use the proposed line.

2951. What places out west would require your hay and produce? I could not say; but sometimes the season is bad in some localities when it is good in others. For instance, the seasons in the north-west districts have been very bad, while this district has been comparatively favoured. It might happen that we might require produce from the Wellington district.

2952. Are you a large farmer? I cultivate 400 acres or 500 acres each year.

2953. How would you compare the land between Werris Creek and Wellington with that which you cultivate? It is a good many years since I was over it; but, so far as I remember, there is any quantity of good agricultural land there. I believe that if that land were thrown open for settlement, all that is near the route of the proposed line would very soon be taken up.

2954. Do you think that that district would carry a large agricultural population? I do not know that it would carry a very large population, but I think the general run of the land is as good as the land in this

S. Clift.

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J. Scott.

14 May, 1900.

- J. Scott. this district. I have been from Werris Creek to Dubbo, and I have been from Werris Creek to Mudgee, but I have never been to Wellington.
- 14 May, 1900. 2955. Where is your principal market? At present Newcastle is my principal market.
2956. Do you send any considerable quantity of produce to Moree? Yes; there has been a big demand for fodder out there for the past few years.
2957. Is that demand a continuing one? I do not suppose there would be a demand for produce in good seasons.
2958. If the proposed line were constructed, would you anticipate a market in the western district in times of drought? I suppose that we should have our share of the trade if there were a demand for produce out there.
2959. Do you think wheat-growers here will be able to extend their operations when they have to compete in the markets of the world at lower prices than those which rule in this Colony? I think so, if they go about it on a large scale, but I do not think it would pay on small areas.

Michael Joseph Daly, farmer and grazier, Currabubula, sworn, and examined:—

- M. J. Daly. 2960. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that the proposed railway will be of any advantage to the farmers and graziers about here? I think it would be in times of drought.
- 14 May, 1900. 2961. In giving them a chance to supply fodder to the western country? Yes; and in providing them with facilities for the removal of stock in times of drought.
2962. Would you use the line for the conveyance of fat stock to the southern markets? I cannot say; I have had no experience.
2963. Where do you send your fat stock? Towards Sydney.
2964. You usually have pretty good seasons about here? Good average seasons, considering what they get in other parts of the Colony.
2965. Do you have any total failures of crops? We have not had a total failure for many years.
2966. You are generally in a position to supply other districts? We are more favoured than any other district. I have heard people who have been over the line of route say that the country is good; and that if they could get produce away from the district they would take up land there, because the soil is suitable for agriculture.

Michael Henry Ryan, grazier, Walhallow, sworn, and examined:—

- M. H. Ryan. 2967. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you resided at Walhallow? I have been there a little over twelve months, and I am a native of Werris Creek.
- 14 May, 1900. 2968. Are you acquainted with the country on the route of the proposed line? Yes; for a distance of about 60 miles from Werris Creek.
2969. Do you think that a fair quantity of land within the distance that you are acquainted with is suitable for agriculture? Yes. My place is only 13 miles from the existing railway, but I cannot grow wheat at present prices, because of the high charges for road carriage. If the proposed railway were constructed I would put my ground under wheat, and out towards Bomera a great deal of country would be cleared for agriculture; but the people out there cannot afford to clear and cultivate their land now, because of the cost of carriage on produce. Lots of small holders out there have told me that at the present time it is a struggle to make a livelihood, because they can only run a few stock. If they had a railway they would go in for agriculture.
2970. What is the extent of the holdings there? From 320 up to 1,280 acres, if you go back 4 or 5 miles. A lot of land there is scrubby, and is at present lying idle; but if a railway were made it would be got ready for cultivation. There is Crown land there which it would not be worth while to select unless the railway were made.
2971. Are there many very large holdings in the district? Yes; there are a lot of large holdings there—stations carrying 20,000 and 30,000 sheep.
2972. And up to 100,000 acres in extent? Yes.
2973. Do you think that the holders of these stations are likely to bring their land under cultivation? I am sure of it. Some of them out there now have tried the halves system; but it has been a total failure, because of the high rates of carriage.
2974. How much of the land there would be fit for agriculture, and how much for pastoral purposes? So far as I know, it will all be fit for agriculture.
2975. Do the people there carry on mixed farming, or do they go in entirely for grazing? They have no option but to go in for grazing, because of their distance from a railway.
2976. At what distance from a railway would farming be fairly remunerative? After you get 8 or 9 miles away from the railway you are considerably handicapped by the distance.
2977. I suppose a great deal depends upon the nature of the country and of the road? Yes; and the roads out there are very bad. The soil is black soil, and in some seasons you could not get your produce away at all.
2978. Would the construction of the proposed railway create much stock traffic? It would save thousands of starving stock; but the fat stock will come to the line any way.
2979. Do you think that the proposed line would pay? I am sure that it would. No one can estimate the probable traffic revenue, because no one can foretell the results of the encouragement which it would give to small settlers.
2980. What are your principal crops? Wheat and corn.
2981. How does corn grow in this district? Not too well. The season is not wet enough, though sometimes you strike it all right.
2982. How much does it cost to clear land here? About 30s. an acre. I have never cleared any yet, but I know what it would cost. We kill the timber first.
2983. What is the average yield of wheat here? About 15 bushels. You may get 30 bushels one year, and 5 or 6 another.
2984. What is your average yield of maize? That is pretty low; it would not be more than 6 bushels on the average. Some years you get none at all.

2985. Is any fruit grown in your neighbourhood? Yes; Mr. John Perry has an orchard where fruit-trees are doing very well. He grows pretty nearly every kind of fruit. M. H. Ryan.
2986. Are farmers who are living within easy reach of the railway pretty well satisfied with the result of their operations? The people out there know what their land will do; but they have never properly tested its capacity. 14 May, 1900.
2987. Would timber be carried on the proposed line? I am sure that it would.
2988. What kinds of timber grow in the district? Pine and iron-bark. At Trinkey there is splendid iron-bark.
2989. The Railway Commissioners estimate an annual deficiency of £18,000? I do not think any accurate estimate of the revenue of the line can be made at the present time. I only run stock on my land now; but if the proposed railway were made I should also grow wheat, and many others would do the same.
2990. Do you think that any deficiency would be made up within a reasonable time? I am nearly sure of it. At the present time most of the produce grown in the district goes to Quirindi, but if it went to the proposed railway the Commissioners would get 70 or 80 miles of additional carriage.
2991. Would the landholders along the line be willing to contribute something towards the reduction of any deficiency? Speaking for myself, I should be quite willing to do so, and I am nearly sure that all my neighbours would do it.
2992. Does the line run through your property? No; but it would be within a quarter of a mile of my place.
2993. Do you think there would be an inclination to give the land required for railway purposes? Yes, in the case of small holders; I cannot speak so well for large holders.
2994. *Mr. Watson.* Can you explain why it does not pay you to grow wheat at a distance of 13 miles from the main line, when in other districts they can grow it at a distance of 25 and 30 miles from a railway? If I had to pay a carrier something like 6d. a bushel to take my wheat to the railway station I am sure that it would not pay me to grow it, because there would be no profit in the business. Where a man had his own team, so that it would cost him nothing for carriage, except the price of horse-feed, he might be able to grow at a profit. Plenty of my neighbours are on the same footing as myself, in that they have no teams.
2995. I suppose that gradually you will get more capital, and will have teams of your own? Without a railway I may never try to grow wheat, because I may remain satisfied with the income which I make by keeping stock, but the construction of a railway would encourage me to cultivate my land.
2996. Are the roads usually bad between Werris Creek and Walhallow? No, they are fairly good, except in flood-time. Plenty of men who live further from the railway than I do have tried to make wheat-growing pay, but they have not been successful.

Henry Thomas Lucerne, butcher and stock-dealer, Werris Creek, sworn, and examined:—

2997. *Vice-Chairman.* Do you know the country along the route of the proposed line? Fairly well; I have been over about 90 miles of it once or twice.
2998. Would you consider it good country for agriculture? The greater part of the land along the route is fit for agriculture, though some of the land is poor. H. T.
Lucerne.
2999. Have agricultural operations in the district been retarded owing to the absence of railway communication? I feel sure of it. 14 May, 1900.
3000. Has any large number of stock been brought to this district from the Western and South-western districts? No; because the expense is too great; but if the proposed line were constructed very many more stock would be shifted than are now shifted.
3001. Do you think that the construction of the proposed line would save a number of sheep from perishing? I feel confident that it would. I know people who would have shifted sheep this year if it had not been for the expense.
3002. Do you regard the district as a good fattening one? I regard the Werris Creek district as a first-class fattening one.
3003. For large stock as well as for sheep? For all classes of stock.
3004. Are many large stock fattened here? Yes, in good seasons; but it is principally sheep that are fattened here.
3005. Where do you draw your supplies from? From the country within 50 miles of Werris Creek.
3006. Do you get much of your stock from the country between here and Wellington, along the route of the proposed line? Not from further than Yarraman.
3007. Do you consign much stock to the Sydney market? I have not done so during the last two years. The seasons have been irregular, so that I could not buy stock in any numbers.
3008. Have many sheep been brought to Werris Creek from other districts to be kept alive here? No; stock have never been sent here for grass.
3009. Would the proposed railway enable people not only to send stock to the Werris Creek district, but also to send stock to the New England district? Yes. I have been travelling through the New England district a good deal during the last twelve months, and many people have spoken to me about the likelihood of it paying to shift stock from the Western to the New England district.
3010. Do landholders in New England stock their land to its full capacity? Not as a rule, as they do on good country.
3011. Is the New England country sound sheep country? No; in the winter months it is not sound.
3012. Is there much fluke there? Yes; after sheep has been there more than five or six months 75 per cent. of them have fluke.
3013. Do they get foot-rot there too? Yes; but that is not so bad as the fluke.
3014. In what period of the year is the country worst—in a wet season? Yes. From March to the end of July.
3015. Is the unsoundness of that country a great reason for not sending stock there, or would starving stock be there for such a short period that they would not suffer much? In my opinion the unsoundness of the country does not make much difference, because when people shift stock they do it under the belief

H. T.
Lucerne.
14 May, 1900.

belief that the stock will not have to be away long. It would not pay them to keep their stock away for any long period.

3016. Mr. Harper has stated that he does not think that that country would be of much value to starving stock? I think it is a very good resort for starving stock.

3017. Do you think it has paid to transport starving stock from one district to another? Yes; unless the owners leave it too late, and the stock are too weak to travel. The timber along the route of the proposed line would give traffic to the railway. There is pine, iron-bark, and other timber in the district.

3018. Is that timber well within the reach of the proposed line? Yes; it is quite close to it, and I think that in some places the line would go through beautiful pine scrub. The pine that the sawyers are getting in Tamworth, Gunnedah, and other places further north costs them 3s. 6d. 100 feet; so that I am sure that the timber traffic on the proposed line would be very great. I think that the meat works at the Gap would also create traffic from country 15 and 18 miles away.

3019. Why are the meat-works not now working? Because of the drought. This is a splendid district in good seasons. When I started here I could buy any number of fat cattle, prime, for not more than 7s. per 100 lb., and now I cannot buy a fine bullock for less than 18s. per 100 lb.

3020. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed a fairly large population would spring up in the district? I feel sure that the country would be well populated.

3021. How much of the land within 20 miles of the route of the proposed line is suitable for agriculture? I think quite two-thirds of it.

3022. And how much land of average quality would keep a farmer and his family decently? 300 acres I should consider a respectable farm in that district.

3023. Does the good country extend to 20 miles on each side of the proposed line? I have not travelled over it for 20 miles on each side of the route; but I could safely say the good country extends 10 miles on each side. I feel sure that after a time the line would be a paying one. The Moree line exceeded its estimate of traffic in less than eight weeks, and I think that the proposed line would be quite as good after a time.

3024. If you bought stock 60 miles from Werris Creek on the route of the proposed line, would you use the line to bring them here? Yes; I should use the line for all distances over 25 miles. Only last week I trucked stock from Boggabri.

TUESDAY, 15 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Tamworth, at 10 30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, ESQ. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, |
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. |

ROBERT HENRY LEVIGN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Alexander Matheson, farmer, and Mayor of Tamworth, sworn, and examined:—

A. Matheson.
15 May, 1900.

3025. *Vice-Chairman.*] Will you tell us in what way you think the construction of the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek would affect the Tamworth district? One great advantage which I have always thought would accrue to this district from the construction of the proposed line is that it would facilitate traffic between the Tamworth district and the Western district. This is a great fodder-producing centre, and we send a large quantity of produce throughout New South Wales, but more especially to the Western districts of the Colony. At the present time, however, when we send produce out west it has to go first to Sydney and then out along the Western railway. The proposed line could also be used to transport stock to New England. Then, again, a great deal of timber comes to Tamworth. We have several saw-mills here which get their timber from the district which the proposed line would traverse. The line, too, would open up a lot of country which, unless a railway is constructed, must remain undeveloped.

3026. Do you regard the Tamworth district as a highly productive district? I think it one of the most productive districts in New South Wales.

3027. What do the people here grow? Wheat, barley, oats, lucerne, and all similar crops.

3028. Is the area under crop yearly increasing? Yes. At the present time the Peel River Company is throwing open a large area every year or two, and that land has all been taken up.

3029. Is there still a large area available for agriculture not under the plough? Yes.

3030. What markets do you supply, year in and year out? Sydney is our chief market, and we also send largely to Narrabri, Moree, and the Western districts. We have sent stuff to the Riverina.

3031. Is this district like other districts subject to droughts? Yes; but we can always produce something here.

3032. Do bad seasons occur in the Wellington, Dubbo, and Tamworth districts simultaneously? Yes; but droughts have not the same effect here as they have in many other places. Last year, although it was a dry season, we sent hundreds of tons of fodder away to the North-western district.

3033. As a rule, is the pastoral land in this district stocked to its full capacity? Yes, so far as this district is concerned; but starving stock could be sent on to New England. A very large number of stock travel through this district in time of drought.

3034. Is the Tamworth district a good fattening district for both large and small stock? Yes.

3035. Do you anticipate sending much stock from this district out west? It would all depend upon circumstances.

3036. If the Western district had been depleted by a drought would you expect to find a market there for your stock? Yes.

3037. Would the construction of the proposed line open to you the southern and the Melbourne markets? I dare say it would.

3038.

3038. Where does the stock go from this district? We do not usually go in for fattening large cattle in this district. Most of our sheep go to the Sydney market. A. Matheson.
15 May, 1900.
3039. In what direction from Tamworth are the forest reserves situated? All the timber that comes to Tamworth now comes from Boggabri and other places on the North-western line. I understand, however, that there is a large quantity of timber in the district through which the proposed line would pass, and if the line were made the saw-millers here would be able to use it.
3040. What market do the saw-millers here send their timber to? We have three sawmills constantly at work, and they send their timber in all directions.
3041. What wood do they saw chiefly? Pine.
3042. Do they send much sawn pine along the Northern and North-western line? There is not much sent up the North-western line; but sawn timber is sent up the Northern line into the various outlying districts. The mills here are kept going, so that it takes them all their time to supply orders. The great trouble is to get logs to cut.
3043. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What effect would the construction of the proposed line have in increasing the traffic between Wellington and Werris Creek? I cannot express an opinion on that subject.
3044. People would not be likely to send timber from Tamworth to Wellington? No; but timber would be brought to Tamworth from a certain distance along the proposed line.
3045. Have you ever to send starving stock from this district? Not in any great numbers.
3046. Would the proposed line be largely used by passengers going to Victoria for the sake of the shorter route? I think it would be availed of in that way.
3047. Do you think it would create much increase in traffic? No doubt it would open up a large extent of country, and in that way increase traffic.
3048. *Mr. Watson.*] We were told at Wellington that fodder had been sent last year, and some this year, from Orange and Wellington through Sydney to Narrabri and Moree? A gentleman who was here some time ago, who, I think, came from Orange, and who favoured the construction of the proposed line, said that they got a large quantity of fodder from Sydney, whereas if the proposed line had been constructed they could have got their fodder direct from Tamworth.
3049. Do you know if the Tamworth district has been short of lucerne hay this year? No.
3050. Can you explain why a firm in this town has been inquiring at Wellington for lucerne chaff, to be sent round through Sydney? No. I suppose they thought they could get it cheap there.
3051. We were shown a letter inquiring if 100 tons could be supplied? There is any quantity of lucerne hay in Tamworth at the present time.
3052. Where would you expect to find a market for your produce on the Western line—at Bourke, or Cobar? In all those western towns.
3053. The distance from Tamworth, *via* Werris Creek and Wellington to Bourke, would be 442 miles, and the freight on hay, chaff, straw, and so on, would be 11s. 10d. a ton in 6-ton lots; if the hay was sent round through Newcastle, the freight would be 14s. 2d. a ton, or 2s. 1d. a ton more; under those circumstances, could the Tamworth growers compete with the Hunter River growers? I think we could compete with them if the proposed railway were made just as well as we can compete with them now.
3054. In the western district the handicap against you would not be so great as it is in the Sydney market? No.
3055. If there were always large supplies of fodder to be obtained around about Wellington, Dubbo, Orange, and those districts, the probability is that places further west requiring fodder would draw from those supplies before drawing from Tamworth? Yes; but I know that last year as much as we could produce in the district went out to the Moree, Narrabri, and the north-western districts.
3056. Do you anticipate that the proposed line would be used to send fat stock to the southern market, supposing we had federation, and the stock-tax was removed? Yes; and I believe that Tamworth is one of the best districts to be found for that trade.
3057. Do they produce wheaten hay and chaff to any large extent here? Yes. There is very little demand for lucerne chaff here; it is required chiefly for stations where they are feeding sheep. The inquiry at Wellington must have been for some order like that; it could not have been for use in the Tamworth district.
3058. Do they grow oats here to any large extent for wheat and hay? Not to any large extent.
3059. The hay grown here is mostly wheaten hay? Yes. Oats do not do so well here; they are not a very profitable crop.
3060. I suppose they do better in the higher country—up New England way? Yes.

William Silver, engineer and sawmill proprietor, Tamworth, sworn, and examined:—

3061. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you resided long in the district? Nearly twenty years. W. Silver.
15 May, 1900.
3062. Have you formed any opinion with regard to the proposal before the Committee? We have now great difficulty in getting timber at Tamworth. We are getting our chief supplies from Curlewis, Gunnedah, and from pretty well as far as Boggabri. The forests are thinning out somewhat, and we have great difficulty in getting large sized logs with which to execute our orders. The proposed line, will, I understand, run through a large pine district, and at present pine is in great demand. We are sending it to Newcastle, Maitland, and throughout the Colony, and it is asked for even in Sydney. It is a timber which white ants will not touch, and it is consequently very valuable.
3063. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is it chiefly used for? For all building material—flooring boards, ceiling boards, and framing. We are supplying all the Government contracts with this timber because the officers prefer it to any other. There is no better timber for building purposes.
3064. *Mr. Watson.*] You say that it is very difficult to get it about Tamworth? We are handicapped in not being able to get large logs. If the timber-getters had access to the forests through which the proposed line would run we could get an abundance of good logs.
3065. What price do you get for your sawn timber on the trucks per 100 feet? Twelve shillings per 100 feet in the rough, and 14s. per 100 feet dressed, on the trucks.
3066. Is there a considerable quantity of pine still available? I understand that there is an unlimited quantity of pine in the district through which the proposed railway would pass.

3067.

- W. Silver.
15 May, 1900.
3067. We have had evidence that the line would pass through or near to a great deal of timber; but most of it would seem to be iron-bark? Iron-bark is a very necessary timber. We could send timber to Quirindi, to Bingara, to Tenterfield, and to Glen Innes.
3068. Do you deal in iron-bark now? No; because we can only obtain it from Singleton or from Maitland, and that makes it expensive. I have to send now to Allandale for iron-bark. There used to be a great deal of iron-bark in the Singleton district; but the demand for it has been great, and consequently the supply has run out.
3069. So far as the Committee can learn, the greater part of the iron-bark would be more than 60 miles from Werris Creek or more than 90 miles from Tamworth;—would that be too far to bring it? No.
3070. What distance could you afford to haul it? We could certainly afford to bring it 100 miles.
3071. And how far could you afford to haul the logs to a railway station? From 25 to 30 miles.
3072. Would it pay you to bring iron-bark from a place 25 miles away from a railway station 100 miles from Tamworth? Yes; but that would be about the limit.
3073. What do you regard as the minimum size of commercial pine? At the present time the pine we get is not above 12 inches in diameter; but I believe that in the forests that I am speaking of the trees run over 2 feet.
3074. Are you not using logs of less than 12 inches in diameter? Our present minimum is 6 inches; but the minimum ought to be 12 inches.
3075. Do you think it is probable that an export trade in pine will be developed? I think so. There is no end to the value of that timber.
3076. Is not pine rather brittle after being worked up? There is a certain degree of brittleness in it, but when it is put into position in a building there need be no fear of it breaking. It is not, however, a timber which is suitable for heavy strains.
3077. Would you consider timber cut from logs 6 inches in diameter as good as timber cut from logs 12 inches in diameter? Yes. Small timber is now often superior to the large timber, which was probably passed by in the first instance because it was crooked. The Tamworth district is a very central one. We have factories here and large stores, and a great quantity of goods is sent from Tamworth to different parts of the country. If the proposed railway were constructed we should be able to send goods to people living along it.
3078. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is dark-coloured pine considered more durable than light-coloured pine? No; we prefer light-coloured pine. Of course, the older the wood the more lasting it is.
3079. You are aware that generally when a tree is not matured, its timber does not last so long? Yes; but that does not apply so much to pine.

Charles Wane, Manager for Budge & Co., timber merchants, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Wane.
15 May, 1900.
3080. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been in this district? About twelve years.
3081. Have you been occupied in the timber industry all the time? Yes.
3082. Did you hear the evidence of the previous witness? Yes.
3083. Do you confirm in general the statement which he made as to the possibilities of the timber traffic on the proposed line? Yes; and I agree with him in the opinion that the construction of the proposed line would open up a large timber industry. We find great difficulty in getting suitable logs now, and good timber is getting scarcer every year.
3084. The proposed line would enable this and other districts to get a better supply of timber? Yes.
3085. Do you know the country through which the line would go? I have been through the Trinkey scrub.
3086. Is the timber there pine or iron-bark? It is mostly pine, but there is a large quantity of iron-bark.
3087. Of a good marketable size? Yes; the trees there are larger than those we are getting now. The forests from which we are now getting timber have been gone through time after time, so that the timber is getting scarce.
3088. Is pine a timber which will not stand long haulage? Well, on the North-western line they cannot get water to enable them to make a long haulage. We are doing a large and increasing trade, and we cannot under present circumstances keep up with the demand. If we had more logs we could do better.
3089. What markets do you supply? We supply places round Tamworth, Manilla, Barraba, and places on the Northern line.
3090. Do you send timber towards Newcastle? Not very much; we have had to refuse orders because we could not supply them.
3091. Where do those orders come from? From Manilla, from Barraba, and from places round about Tamworth. I suppose that during the last few weeks we have refused orders for 100,000 feet of timber.
3092. Was that because of your inability to get the timber, or because the prices offered were not profitable? It was because of the difficulty in getting full sized logs. We have to send a large quantity of chaff to the log-drawers in many places, and if timber-getters were hauling timber to the proposed line we should send hay and fodder along it.
3093. From your knowledge of the timber through which the proposed line would pass, which would give most traffic to the railway—pine or iron-bark? We use pine more largely than iron-bark, though we should use more iron-bark if we could get it. We have to send down to places near Newcastle for iron-bark now.

Alexander Johnston, auctioneer, Tamworth and Scone, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Johnston.
15 May, 1900.
3094. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is this a good district for sheep and cattle? A very good district.
3095. How does it compare with other districts in the Colony with which you are acquainted? Very favourably. In Tamworth we seem to be able to grow nearly everything.
3096. How would the country on the proposed line compare with the Tamworth country? I think that the country on the proposed line, as far out as Trinkey, is the richest that I ever travelled through. The Namoi country is very good; but I think the Mooki district is better.
3097. Is the land suited for pastoral or for agricultural purposes? For both pastoral and agricultural purposes. Until lately there has not been much agriculture there.
3098. Are the stock transactions between the Tamworth district and other districts of an extensive character? Yes.

3099. Does the Tamworth district suffer to any extent from droughts? Not nearly so much as the north-west country suffers. A. Johnston.
15 May, 1900.
3100. Is there always a good supply of feed for stock here? We have feed here when you will not see a blade of grass in the north-west country.
3101. Is stock ever sent from the Tamworth district to some other district in times of drought? I have known the Peel River Company to send stock to New England.
3102. Did the Company ever send stock towards Wellington or Dubbo? Not for feed.
3103. Is there a good market in Tamworth for the sale of fat stock? Surplus stock is sent from Tamworth to Maitland and to Sydney, and often to other parts.
3104. Does stock come to the Tamworth district from such places as Wellington, Dubbo, and Orange? I am not aware of it.
3105. Tamworth is chiefly an agricultural district? A pastoral and an agricultural district.
3106. Have you a good knowledge of agriculture in this district? Yes.
3107. What are the chief products grown in the district? Wheat is the principal crop; but a great deal of barley is also grown.
3108. Is it sold locally, or is it sent to other places? A great deal of the wheat goes to Sydney.
3109. A considerable quantity of lucerne is grown in this district;—does it find its way to the Sydney market? A great deal of it does, and in dry seasons it is sent along the North-western line.
3110. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it open up a market for the produce of this district? I think so.
3111. What kind of produce would be sent along the proposed line? Wheat and lucerne.
3112. Wheat is largely grown on the Western line? I do not know the country beyond Garrawilla.
3113. Would the proposed railway be largely used for the conveyance of stock? I am sure that it would. It is now a difficult matter to shift stock, because of the want of food and water, and animals have often to die in the paddocks.
3114. From what direction will stock come to the proposed railway? From out towards Trinkey, and from across towards the Namoi.
3115. Would the proposed railway be largely used for the stock traffic? I am sure that it would, especially in dry seasons.
3116. Would not a large number of people still travel their stock? Stock-owners prefer the railway, because it enables them to get stock to their destination more quickly, and I do not think it is more expensive. The losses of stock on the road are very heavy, and it is often difficult to get good trustworthy men as drovers. The iron-bark in the Trinkey scrub is very superior timber, it is of a close grain, and durable; the pine timber is exceptionally good.
3117. Would the timber trade give considerable traffic to the proposed railway? Yes; iron-bark is very dear in this district now, but in the long run, I suppose, it is cheaper than any other timber, being so durable.
3118. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you get timber from the Trinkey district? Yes; there is no doubt about that, we require an immense quantity of pine and iron-bark.

Henry Charles Ison, builder, Tamworth, sworn, and examined:—

3119. *Mr. Watson.* How long have you been residing in Tamworth? About twenty-two years. H. C. Ison.
15 May, 1900.
3120. Do you know any part of the country which would be traversed by the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek railway? I have been through part of it. I had a selection below The Gap, but it is only twenty-seven years since I left it, and I have not been there since.
3121. The Commissioners estimate that there will be a deficiency of £18,000 a year upon the working of the proposed railway;—can you tell us of any traffic which would assist to wipe out that deficiency? I have friends over in Wellington who tell me that if the railway was made there would be a large through passenger traffic. It is too expensive for them to travel round by Sydney to get to this part of the country, so that we never see them here.
3122. Are you aware of any other source of traffic? It would be a great thing for Tamworth if the proposed railway were constructed, because of the timber supply which it would give. The timber which we can draw upon is nearly worked out now, so that we get only small timber. It is very hard to get a log a foot in diameter.
3123. What kind of timber do you chiefly use in this district? The cypress pine.
3124. Do you find it a durable timber? It is very durable for building purposes. Iron-bark, too, is in request; but it is expensive. Ironbark costs £1 for 100 feet, and pine only 14s.
3125. *Mr. Watson.* That is, to buy it here? Yes. The carriage from Maitland is very expensive, and the timber is dear down there.
3126. *Mr. Shepherd.* Do you know anything of the movements of stock in this district? The railway would be of great advantage to the Wellington people, in providing them with facilities for sending starving stock to New England. They could not travel them across.
3127. Is there generally an abundance of grass in this district? Yes; this is a very favoured district.
3128. Is not Wellington also a favoured district? I do not know. The proposed line would also assist. We have land here which has been sold for £50 an acre—lucerne land—and the area of cultivation is increasing so much that it will be necessary to provide some further outlet for the produce. This outlet should be found in the dry parts of the Colony; but at the present time we have to send most of our produce to Sydney, because of the expense of sending it elsewhere. At Sydney it is sold, and then sent away; but this double selling might be avoided. We get oaten chaff from Orange, and we have got it from Victoria; but we have any quantity of wheat and of lucerne, and every year a larger area of land is put under cultivation. There are a lot of grazing properties about here. The Peel River Company have a large estate, and there are other large properties. Most of the land is fit for agriculture, and if there were an outlet for the produce it would pay people better to go in for agriculture than to go in for grazing.
3129. Have you any reason to believe that the construction of the proposed line would encourage the cultivation of larger areas in the Tamworth district? Yes; I have every reason to believe it.
3130. What are the chief productions of this district? Lucerne, tobacco, and wheat. We have exported wheat to England from this district. It would help the farmers here considerably if they could send their lucerne hay on the other lines.

H. C. Ison. 3131. They are growing lucerne, too, at Wellington? Yes; but not to the same extent as at Tamworth. We had a gentleman from Orange who told us that it would be a great boon to the people there if they could get lucerne sent over from this district. I cannot understand why there should be a deficiency on the working of the proposed railway. I have followed the railway from Newcastle. The Northern line goes through more difficult country than that through which the proposed line would pass; but it has always paid. Of course a line cannot be expected to be a success for the first year or two; but the proposed line would pay very well after it had been opened for some time, because, in my opinion, its construction would open up the country, and lead to a larger traffic.

Henry Light Cousins, stock and station agent, Tamworth, sworn, and examined:—

H. L. Cousins. 3132. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you resided here? I have been engaged in my present business for twelve years.

15 May, 1900. 3133. One of the advantages urged in favour of the construction of the proposed railway is that it would be a good stock-carrying line;—from your knowledge of the country, can you tell us in what direction stock would be likely to travel along it? In ordinarily good seasons there is a very large demand for sheep in New England, and stock-owners there prefer the plain bred sheep, because in wet seasons on some stations it is difficult to keep sheep sound. A larger business would be done in those sheep if there were easier access to the western district and to the Riverina district. If places like Bourke and Hay could be brought nearer, a great many people would go there for stock; but it is very difficult to drive stock from those districts here in dry weather.

3134. It is store stock that would be bought? Yes.

3135. For what purpose? To breed from, and to fatten. They fatten stock at Barraba, Quirindi, Bundella, Trinkey, and all those places. We often know of thousands of sheep which we could sell readily in this district if it were not for the difficulty of getting them across. Sometimes sheep could be bought in the drought-stricken districts for 5s. a head and sold here for 7s. 6d. or 8s. a head; but the seasons have been so bad that it has been impossible to drive them over.

3136. Would stock be likely to use the proposed railway if feed were good along the southern stock routes? We do not expect the railway to be able to carry stock, except when it does not pay to drive them. If the season were good, the stock would, as a rule, come by road; but for the last eight or ten years the seasons have been so bad that the proposed railway, if it had been made, would have been very much used.

3137. Would it have been of value in preserving the lives of many sheep which, for the want of it, have perished from drought in the western districts? I think so.

3138. The distance from Bourke to Tamworth would be 442 miles if the proposed railway were constructed, and the cost of trucking a sheep that distance would be 1s. 9d.;—do you think that, even in a droughty year, it would pay to send store sheep here at that price? It would in some instances; but in dry seasons there is a 25 per cent. reduction on rates for starving stock.

3139. The Railway Commissioners tell us that the starving stock traffic is not profitable to them, except indirectly, in that it saves sheep for future seasons? It is profitable indirectly, because it saves a national loss. If the Colony loses 1,000,000 sheep, that is a national loss.

3140. Do you think that the proposed railway would mainly have to rely upon dry seasons for stock traffic? I think so.

3141. Is there any other traffic which the construction of the proposed line will open up? I think a large quantity of fodder would be sent from this district along the proposed line. This district is particularly adapted for lucerne, and lucerne is a good food for starving sheep. It is found better to feed starving sheep with lucerne than with any other hay, because it has a laxative effect, which the oaten and wheaten hay procurable in Bathurst and Goulburn has not. We have sold hundreds of tons of lucerne hay during the last drought to the country on the other side.

3142. Do you know of any inquiries having been made in the Wellington district for lucerne chaff for this district? No. The Wellington district is, in my opinion, similar to our own—not a very dry district, and not a very wet one. Our hay has gone down to Berrigan and to Cootamundra, to Hay, to Corowa, and to other places like that, by way of Sydney; but if the proposed line had been made we could have sent away our produce more directly and more cheaply, and the people who bought it would have been able to use a larger quantity because of the lower price.

3143. Has the feeding of starving stock proved profitable to sheepowners;—are they likely to continue the practice if they have severe droughts in the future? I think so. The demand for fodder was very large, even before the 25 per cent. rise in the price of wool came. If they could afford to buy lucerne hay at Tamworth and take it to Berrigan to feed sheep when greasy wool was worth only 9d. a pound, they can afford to do it very much better now when wool is from 11d. to 1s. a pound.

3144. What sort of stock is fed on this lucerne hay, merely stud sheep? No; the manager of a station near Nyngan told me that for two years he was feeding 46,000 ewes on hay, chaff, treacle, and so on, and that he was cutting scrub for 80,000 more sheep. They found that they had to chance their wethers and to feed their ewes; and I think the same thing was done in a great many other instances.

3145. Do you think that that practice is likely to continue? Yes; especially if the price of wool keeps up. In those days ewes were worth 8s. a head, whereas now they would be worth 15s. Any man with 10,000 good ewes would not lose them when £500 or £1,000 worth of fodder would save them.

3146. How much fodder is allotted to 100 sheep? I think 1 lb. of hay a day will keep a sheep from starving, and perhaps keep it sufficiently strong to travel.

3147. I understand that 11,000 sheep were sold at Tamworth recently? We had 14,000 or 15,000 sheep through the yards last week.

3148. Where were those sheep drawn from, and where were they consigned to? There were 9,000 wethers which had been purchased on the flat country, and were going to New England. The owner thinking Tamworth a good market, offered them for sale. Then 2,000 or 3,000 sheep came in here from Queensland. They were travelling south for sale, but the owner took the opportunity to offer them at Tamworth. There were also 2,000 or 3,000 sheep in the yards which were travelling south from New England. They cannot keep their sheep many years in the New England country, if the seasons are wet, and therefore they send them towards the plains for sale, and buy others on the plains.

3149. Is the New England district subject to fluke and foot-rot? Yes; but in dry seasons things are better. Of course all the New England country is not subject to those diseases.

3150. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed the stock traffic between New England and the plains would be fairly permanent? Yes; in many places the New England people cannot keep their stock more than a couple of years. If they purchase two-toothed sheep, they will hold them for two years and shear them. The animals then will still be sufficiently sound to fatten on the plains, so they send them back there, and buy younger sheep.

3151. Would there be any other traffic along the line? As I have said, we have done a large business in lucerne hay in past years with the southern districts, and I think the proposed railway must increase that traffic. Then, too, lucerne seed is very largely grown here. The railway would also assist the timber trade. We used to get our timber from about Gunnedah, but timber is getting very scarce within 100 miles of Tamworth now. Then the Peel River Company, who own 313,000 acres of land in this district, have commenced to cut up their land, and sell it by auction, at an average price of from £3 10s. to £15 an acre. Of the 313,000 acres there must be 100,000 suitable for agriculture, and I understand that it is the intention of the Company to sell the land as fast as they can get people to take it up. When all this land is sold, Tamworth must become a very large centre.

3152. Do you think that the country on the route of the proposed line is likely to settle a fairly large population, seeing that most of the land there has been alienated from the Crown, and is held in large estates? Yes; if squatters find, as the Peel River Company have found, that they have been running bullocks on land, for which they could get £15 an acre, they will sell the land. I think that as soon as the land is worth cutting up, it will be cut up and sold.

3153. Has not the imposition of the land-tax contributed towards the cutting up of large estates? I do not think so. The land-tax is a very small factor as compared with the present high price of land. Just now there is a very great scarcity of store cattle in the Riverina; though feed there is very good, and buyers are very anxious to get beasts over there from the coast. They have only a few months of a good season to depend upon, and it would pay them better to send animals there by train than to lose the best of the season by driving them there. We have just sold cattle to a gentleman in Wagga who is most anxious to get them across, and at reasonable rates it would have paid him better to take them by rail than to drive them across, though, of course, that would not always be so.

3154. *Mr. Watson.*] Then you always have plenty of produce here? Yes, as a rule. The Nemingah Flat runs out for 8 or 10 miles, so that we can always grow lucerne here, because water is obtainable there within 12 or 14 feet of the surface, and the lucerne roots go right down to it. People can grow lucerne here when it will not grow anywhere else.

3155. *Mr. Aarons*, when giving evidence at Wellington, exhibited a letter from your firm asking for a quotation of 100 tons of lucerne chaff? He wrote asking whether we could dispose of 200 or 300 tons of oaten or wheaten hay, to which I replied that the district was full of it, but that we had that day been asked to quote a price for 100 tons of lucerne chaff, and that if he had that quantity ready I might dispose of it. There is not a large quantity of lucerne chaff cut here, the lucerne being sent away chiefly as hay. The application came to me from *Mr. Doyle* of Werris Creek. He wanted from 100 to 500 tons of lucerne chaff, and I informed him that there was very little lucerne chaff cut here.

3156. The freight of chaff from Wellington, under present conditions, would be 14s. or 15s. a ton? I suppose it would.

3157. Would it not be better to cut the hay into chaff here than to bring chaff all that distance? Decidedly; I asked *Mr. Matheson* what he would supply the order for, and his reply was that he was too busy just then to cut chaff. However, *Mr. Doyle* got an inch of rain and found that he would not require the chaff.

Francis Wyndham, auctioneer, and stock and station agent, Tamworth, sworn and examined:—

3158. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been long here? About fourteen years in my present business. I have been in the district on and off since I was 10 years old.

3159. Are you acquainted with the country along the route of the proposed railway? Yes; I know most of it very well.

3160. What is your opinion as to the probability of there being a large increase in agricultural production in the event of the construction of the proposed line? I think that beyond a doubt there would ultimately be a very large increase. I look upon the district as one of the best agricultural districts in the Colony, and the country is all similar from the Liverpool Plains across to Coolah and Cobborah.

3161. Do you confirm the evidence which was given by *Mr. Cousins*? Yes; I think that in the main he is quite right.

3162. Is there anything that you could add to that evidence? I do not know that there is. He is perfectly right about the quantity of lucerne grown here. It grows on the flats in any season, and whenever there is a drought in the Western or Southern districts there is a great demand for hay. If the proposed railway were constructed we could supply hay to Bourke and places out that way at much more reasonable rates than can be given now.

3163. How many cuttings of lucerne do you get in a year? From five to six. We have the advantage of the Hunter in that the floods here never kill the lucerne, because the water lies on it for only a few hours.

3164. Has the fruit industry received any attention in this district? Very little. Fruit is grown here, but not to any large extent. It is almost impossible to travel stock along the stock routes now, because there is nothing for them to eat, and ultimately the railway must be resorted to get them along.

3165. Do you think that the proposed railway would be used for stock? Yes; in getting stock from the Northern district to Riverina, and from Riverina to New England.

3166. Both Wellington and Werris Creek are districts which are generally well supplied with grass? I look upon them as very similar districts; Wellington is very much like Tamworth.

3167. They would both have to look to the same outlying source for stock? Yes. I think, too, that if the proposed line were made there would be a large traffic in cattle coming from Queensland.

3168. Would the railway be used by small holders? Yes. I am almost inclined to think that at the present day it does not pay to drive stock at all; wherever the railways go the people seem to be sending away small lots of fat stock continuously.

3169.

H. L.
Cousins.

15 May, 1900.

F.
Wyndham.

15 May, 1900.

F
Wyndham,
15 May, 1900.

3169. Do you agree with what has been said about the timber trade? Yes, is the main. No doubt we are very badly off for timber in this district; there is not a good stick growing in the district now. I think that the chief traffic upon the proposed line would be stock traffic. If the Melbourne market were up we could send stock there over the proposed line; under present circumstances we could not take advantage of a rise in prices in Melbourne, because of the cost of sending stock there round through Sydney.

3170. It is estimated that there would be a loss of £18,000 a year on the proposed line;—do you think that the extra traffic that would be created would get rid of the deficiency within a reasonable time? I cannot say that I think the line will pay for some years; but as population increases, as it has done of late, I have not the least doubt that the line will pay. I should be surprised if it paid for the first few years.

WEDNESDAY, 16 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Council Chambers, Armidale, at 10.45 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Charles Graham Wilson, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

C. G. Wilson,
Esq., M.P.
16 May, 1900.

3171. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the district? Over thirty years.

3172. Have you a good knowledge of the capacity of the district, both from an agricultural and a pastoral point of view? Yes.

3173. Would you mind making a short statement outlining your views as to the prospective advantages to be obtained from the construction of a railway from Wellington to Werris Creek, either to the Colony as a whole, or to this or any other district in particular? The direct advantage which I conceive would be gained by this district from the construction of the proposed railway is that that railway would open up the far west as a market for our produce. At the present time our chief market is Sydney, and there we have to meet the competition of New Zealand and other places, so that the prices we get do not pay us, and, as a result, many people in the district are now giving up farming. If, however, we could send our produce to Bourke, and the dry western districts generally, it would be a great advantage to us. During the thirty years I have been here New England has never suffered severely from droughts, and in dry years thousands of sheep and cattle have come here for grass. It would be a great advantage to the people of Wilcannia and Bourke, and that district generally, if the proposed railway were in existence, so that they could use it for sending stock to this district.

3174. How would you describe the district of which Armidale is the centre? It is a very good agricultural district. There is a large area here under cultivation, and a large area suitable for cultivation.

3175. What crops are usually grown? Wheat and oats, and this is the finest potato district in New South Wales. From a national point of view the proposed line will eventually form part of a line through to Broken Hill, and the construction of that line will give us a very much improved mail service, allowing the people of Brisbane to get their English mails twelve or thirteen hours earlier than they get them now. If we wanted to get to Bourke we could save 370 miles by using the proposed line. Armidale, too, is a great centre of education. There are schools of all denominations here, superior to any others out of Sydney, and youngsters come here from Queensland, from Narrabri, and from all parts of the Colony. If we had direct railway communication with Bourke, Wilcannia, and the western district we should get more youngsters from that part of the Colony, because they would come here on account of our healthful climate, and the Armidale schools are well known all over the Colony.

3176. Was any large quantity of produce sent from the Armidale district to drought-stricken districts during the last two or three droughts? A great deal of produce has been sent to places like Narrabri and Walgett.

3177. Have you sent anything to the Western line? No; because the cost of carriage is too great.

3178. Is the traffic in produce likely to be permanent, even during good seasons? I think that in all seasons there will be a great traffic in stock.

3179. I understand that you cannot keep stock long in this district, because the country is not too sound? That is the case. We generally prefer to get our stock from a dry district, and stock going from this district fatten splendidly in a warmer district. People who own country on the Liverpool Plains, or anywhere where the climate is warmer, like to get New England stock, because they fatten quickly; and our sheep-owners, on the other hand, like to get stock from other districts.

3180. Is this regarded as a better district for wool than for fattening? Yes; it is a good district for wool. In the summer months sheep fatten well here; but our winters are severe.

3181. Is the country good for large stock? Yes. During the last two or three years we have topped the market with cattle reared round about Guy Fawkes.

3182. What is your usual market for agricultural and pastoral productions? It sometimes happens, after we have sent produce to Sydney, that we get a debit voucher back, and that is very disheartening. When produce is at a good price we send a great deal to Sydney. We also send a good deal to Narrabri and to Moree.

3183. Do you think that this district could compete with the Wellington district and intervening districts for trade on the Western line? We should get a good part of that trade in times of drought.

3184. What is the rainfall here? Thirty-one or 32 inches.

3185. Is it the custom for pastoralists in this district to stock up to the full capacity of their runs? They do

do pretty well. They never make the provision against droughts here that they are obliged to make in other districts. In average country they generally carry a sheep to the acre.

3186. Then what reserve country is there for starving stock from other districts? There is a lot of country round Guyra and Guy Fawkes, which generally is not stocked at all; but in a dry season it will carry sheep for six or twelve months.

3187. Have you any preference for Wellington or Dubbo as a terminal point? I think Dubbo would suit us better than Wellington.

3188. Why? Because it would give more direct access to the western markets.

3189. Do you not hope to find a market down south and in Melbourne when Federation is accomplished? No. Of course, when Federation is accomplished, the proposed line will give greater facilities for inter-colonial trade. I think that the statement of advantages which was read by Mr. Deane before the Committee in Sydney puts the position as well as it can be put from a national point of view. It is an important thing that we be connected with the Western line, so that there may be two ways of visiting Sydney. The proposed line would be of great advantage in assisting the movement of troops in the event of the Hawkesbury bridge being destroyed.

C. C. Wilson.
Esq., M.P.
16 May, 1900.

William Cyril Higginbotham, farmer and storekeeper, Armidale, sworn, and examined:—

3190. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been residing in this district? Ten years.

3191. Have you a statement to make to the Committee? We are treating the proposed line as a national undertaking. We consider that eventually it will be part of a line going on to Adelaide—the line from Cobar to Wilcannia having been already passed. The distance from Wilcannia to Broken Hill is very little, so that it ought not to be long before we have a line right through to Broken Hill. Such a line would save about 320 miles between Adelaide and Brisbane, and would enable the mails to arrive in Brisbane twelve hours earlier than they do now. That is an important consideration from a business point of view. The proposed line would also save 100 miles in the direct route from Melbourne to Brisbane. Then, too, it would connect important mining centres, such as Cobar, Silverton, Broken Hill, Tingha, Inverell, and Hillgrove. A great many Adelaide men are interested in our Hillgrove mines, and if there were a through railway there would be a good deal of cross traffic. Hillgrove represents more Adelaide money than money from any other place.

W. C.
Higginbotham.
16 May, 1900.

3192. Is the traffic that you allude to passenger traffic? Yes. The absurd figures given by the Railway Commissioners may be easily rebutted. They have put down £3,766 for passengers, parcels, and mails; but the receipts would be very much larger than that. If the railway were constructed our cold-climate products would find a ready market in the western district. It has been said that we shall have to compete with Orange and Wellington; but in my mail this morning I received a communication from a produce merchant at Orange, giving his prices. He puts down potatoes at £2 7s. 6d. a ton in truck loads, or £2 10s. a ton in smaller lots; whereas our farmers would be willing to take from 35s. to £2 a ton.

3193. What would be the freight from this district to Orange? The rate is a difficult one to arrive at, because it is an "up" journey from Armidale to Sydney, and a "down" journey from Sydney to Orange. The rate to Sydney would be about 13s. a ton, and to Orange it would be very much more. The Armidale prices, however, are lower than the Orange prices for every article on his list. He puts down seed oats at 2s. 9d. a bushel and feed oats at 2s. 6d. a bushel, whereas we should be glad to sell for 2s. 6d. and 2s. 3d. a bushel.

3194. What is the freight on oats between Armidale and Sydney? About 5d. a bushel. Onions are put down at £4 10 a ton; but I should be very glad to supply them at £3 a ton. In times of drought, if the proposed line were constructed, produce would find its way even into the Riverina district. The construction of the proposed railway would tend to equalise prices between the Northern and Western lines. Our market now is Sydney and places on the North-western line; but the bulk of our produce goes to Sydney, where it has to compete with the water-borne produce of New Zealand, Geelong, and other places. In Sydney we have really to compete with the markets of the world. Mr. Coghlan, in his "Wealth and Progress of New South Wales," says that New England can produce the finest oats in the Colony, and that there are vast areas here where oats could be grown with the best results. That is so. The average yield of oats in this district is from 40 to 60 bushels per acre. The further you go west the lighter the yield. New England, for the products which she cultivates, obtains the highest yields in any part of the Colony. In the average production of wheat we stand foremost.

3195. What is your average yield of wheat? I think 25 bushels to the acre. Mr. Coghlan puts it at something like 15 bushels to the acre, and that is considerably higher than the yield which he records for any other district. I sent a sample of wheat, which I grew at a place about 2 miles out of Armidale, to the Agricultural Department the other day, and they told me there was no finer wheat conceivable for milling; so that we could do very well if we could only find a market. Our yield of maize is from 40 to 60 bushels to the acre; but I have seen crops which have given more than 60 bushels. We attract farmers here from Victoria, from New Zealand, from Riverina, and from other districts; but after they have tried the district for two or three years they want to get away again, because of the lack of a market. Hundreds of tons of produce are grown that never find a market. Some years back 400 or 500 tons of potatoes were left to rot on one farm alone because there was no market for it. The price of our farming land, as compared with that of other parts of the Colony, is ridiculous. We can get agricultural land here for from £2 to £4 an acre, and there are few places in the Colony where you can purchase first-class agricultural land close to a big city like Armidale at that price.

3196. What are your chief products? Potatoes, hay, corn, wheat, and oats.

3197. Do you send fodder to the north-western district in every season, whether there is a drought or not? Yes; in every season. We look upon the north-western district as a market.

3198. What kinds of produce do you send there? A considerable amount of chaff and oats, and a considerable quantity of potatoes.

3199. We have been told that they send chaff from Wellington and Dubbo to Moree? I was astonished when I heard that. In the Orange list of prices from which I have quoted wheaten and oaten chaff is put down at £2 12s. 6d. a ton; but I think that Mr. Pearson, of Guyra, who will give evidence, will be able to quote it at a lower price than that.

3200. For what products could you find a market on the Western line if the proposed railway were constructed? For potatoes, oats, chaff, and maize.

- W. C. Higinbotham.
16 May, 1900.
3201. Do you not think Orange could supply the western district with chaff? The Orange people are more closely connected with Riverina, where droughts are not infrequent. I think that we should find a market on the Western line in many seasons.
3202. The Orange farmers send large quantities of produce to the Sydney market? We have to compete with them in that market.
3203. What market would there be for your produce in the western district when they had a surplus? The freight on chaff is very light—I think it is only 14s. a ton from Orange to Moree, and our yield, is, I believe, much higher per acre than the Orange yield.
3204. The freight on potatoes from Armidale to Wellington, *via* Sydney, would be £1 14s. 2d. a ton, and *via* Werris Creek direct £1 3s. 11d. per ton? We should not send produce to Wellington or to Orange, but we should expect to find a market out west from Wellington, towards Bourke.
3205. And you think that you could compete with the Orange farmers in that market? Yes; we get from 3 to 6 tons of potatoes to the acre. Last year I cultivated some 15 acres of potatoes, and I am cultivating about the same area this year. I could put 60 acres under potatoes if there were a market for them.
3206. The construction of the proposed railway would encourage the extension of agricultural operations in this district? I believe that it would.
3207. Is that one of the reasons why the people here advocate the construction of the line? Undoubtedly. The first people in the district to take the matter up were the members of the Farmers and Settlers Association, who number 110.
3208. Is there much land suitable for agriculture in this district still available? No, not very much.
3209. Is much of the land held by private owners suitable for cultivation? Yes; but the farmers are abandoning their farms, and are going in for sheep. I could name haphazard six or seven who have recently turned their farms into sheep walks.
3210. What traffic in stock would there be between this district and the Western district? I think that the stock traffic would be considerable if the proposed line were constructed. Drovers pass through this district periodically, and there must always be a considerable number of stock passing through from the western plains to New England. The Railway Commissioners' officers report that fluke exists in this district. It may have existed here years ago; but there has been no fluke during the last three years. Besides, the years in which people want to send stock here are droughty years, and in dry seasons we are always free from fluke. It has also been said that the grass here is sour. If that is so, it is very strange that we can provide the Sydney market with fat stock, and have done so for the last two or three years. It is estimated that the traffic receipts on the proposed line would be £8,586; but that must be only the local revenue; it cannot include the revenue which would be obtained from traffic passing on to the main line towards New England and Moree, or towards west. Mr. Coghlan in his "Wealth and Progress of New South Wales," says that there is no finer climate in the Colony than that of Armidale, and he says that it closely approximates to the famous health resorts in the South of France. All sorts of people are attracted here from different parts of the Colony. Our principal school has some eighty boarders, some of whom have come from the northern parts of Queensland, others from the western plains, others from Narrabri and Moree, and a great many from Sydney. A ladies' school has fifteen out of twenty-five pupils who have come from other districts, and another school has obtained 75 per cent. of its pupils from other districts. Armidale is rapidly becoming a scholastic centre, children being sent here because of the climate. People in the western districts, however, have no facilities for sending their children to our schools. Under present conditions the distance by rail from Dubbo to Armidale is 635 miles. I estimate that if people in the Western district would send their children here there would be an increase of pupils from those districts equal to something like 50 per cent.
3211. Which would suit this district the better, a connection with Dubbo or a connection with Wellington? A connection with Dubbo would suit the New England district better, because it would give us a more direct route to the west; we do not wish to have 60 miles extra carriage for our produce. From a national point of view, too, it would be better to have a connection with Dubbo, because that would give a shorter line between Adelaide and Brisbane. The Railway Commissioners report that they anticipate no benefits from the construction of the line; but they have for years been looking for a line which would carry a heavy traffic from Sydney without crossing the Blue Mountains, and why should not that line go from Newcastle? No doubt heavy traffic, such as sugar, iron, wire, and other things would be sent out to the western district along the proposed line if it were constructed, for the sake of avoiding the zigzag. Then, too, if the Commissioners use Newcastle coal on the Western line, the construction of the proposed line would save them some 90 miles of haulage. Apologies for non-attendance at the inquiry have been sent to me from several people who were to have been here as witnesses. Mr. Scoce, of Uralla, in stating his regret that he cannot be present, says, that the proposed line would give an outlet for fruit, chaff, and potatoes grown in his district, and would also be of value for stock traffic, besides opening up trade generally. Mr. Mackay, of Uralla, also favours the construction of the line; but his business prevented him from attending before the Committee.
3212. Has anybody formed an estimate of the value of the traffic which is likely to be sent over the proposed line? We have been unable to do that. We have been prevented from getting information from the local stationmaster, although Mr. Monteith will give you information about the Guyra traffic. He will show that 8,000 tons have been sent from Guyra within two years, and I believe that not 1 ton would go to Sydney if the western markets were open to us; it would all go over the proposed line.

Richard Wearne Nicholas, farmer and grazier, Tilbuster, near Armidale, sworn, and examined:—

- R. W. Nicholas.
16 May, 1900.
3213. *Mr. Shepherd.* What is the extent of your holding? I have 1,148 acres at Tilbuster, and I also rent land in other parts of the district. I rent 2,500 acres of grazing land at Guy Fawkes.
3214. How much land have you under cultivation? I cultivated 170 acres last year.
3215. What do you grow? Wheat, oats, maize, and potatoes.
3216. What yield do you get per acre? The last four or five years have been rather dry. I have only been here eight years, and I spent twenty years in the Orange district. The yield has averaged from 12 to 30 bushels of wheat to the acre, and from 1 to 5 tons of hay. During the last two seasons the yield of hay has not been much over 1 ton. The yield of oats runs from 20 to 50 and 60 bushels to the acre. I have had as high a yield as 12 tons of potatoes, and as low as 3 tons.
- 3217.

R. W.
Nicholas.
16 May, 1900.

3217. What has been your yield of maize? I have not gone in very extensively for maize. Most of my maize has been grown during the last two or three years, when the seasons have been dry. Twenty bushels to the acre is perhaps as much as I have got during the last two years, and I did not grow any before that time. I have land which in fair seasons would give a yield of 60 bushels to the acre.
3218. Where is your principal market? I have sold most of my produce locally, and I use some of it myself. I have a large butter factory and a large dairy, and consequently I require a large quantity of produce for my own use. I have not sent anything out of the district, though I have sold a good deal of chaff at Hillgrove, and a good many potatoes locally. I have at times sold as much as 50 tons of chaff round about Hillgrove.
3219. Have you had any difficulty in selling your produce? Yes; most of the farmers here have produce to sell, and they compete with each other in the local market. Our only other market is the North-western district. I believe that a great quantity of produce has been sent there, though I have not sent any.
3220. Do you think that in a few years the proposed railway would be self-supporting? Yes; though I do not know that it would be so at the start. I believe that there would be a great demand for New England produce in the west in dry seasons. I lived for twenty years in the Orange district, farming there most of the time, and we could not supply the Western district in times of drought. I was told that last year there were over twenty chaff-cutters and engines going as hard as they could, and they were unable to supply the orders that came in. In such a season we could compete with the Orange farmers. The prices I got in Orange were higher than we can get here. When I was leaving Orange I had about 70 tons of hay and 20 tons of straw to dispose of, and a merchant there told me that he would give me £3 a ton for the lot on the ground. He cut it up to send west from Orange as orders came in.
3221. Is your chaff made chiefly from oats? Sometimes from oaten hay, and sometimes from wheaten and oaten hay mixed. If we cut wheat for hay, it is because of the black oats amongst it.
3222. Do you think this district could compete with other districts along the proposed line for the western trade? Yes; we can grow much better crops here than they can grow in Orange, Springhill, or Millthorpe.
3223. Have you tried lucerne? Yes; and it answers fairly well.
3224. As a rule, do squatters buy lucerne in preference to oats for starving sheep? Yes, where they can get it; but round Orange and Blayney they do not grow lucerne.
3225. What is your opinion of the district through which the proposed line would pass? There is a lot of good country between Wellington and Werris Creek. At Cobborah, Denison Town, Coolah, and Rockgedgiel there is a lot of land suitable for close settlement, but at the present time large areas are in the hands of large holders.
3226. Are you acquainted with the country at any distance away from the route? Just where the railway would go there are some poor patches; but on the whole the country is good.
3227. Does the good country extend back any distance from the Northern line? Yes; especially on the Liverpool Plains.
3228. What is your opinion of the timber along the line? There is some pine scrub, and I noticed one saw-mill on the road, but I cannot speak much about the timber there.
3229. Would the timber trade contribute much traffic to the proposed railway? I think not; but the line would be largely used in carrying produce from this district in dry times, and in the transport of stock. I can show you in the butchers' shops in Armidale beef fattened within 5 miles of Armidale which is as good as any in the Colony.
3230. Has this district been considered a dry one? During the last four years we have had dry seasons; but I have been able to carry on my dairying, and the cattle have done very well. For sheep, they say that the drier the season the better in this district.
3231. How much butter do you make? I milk 100 cows now, and in good seasons I have made 7 lb. of butter to the cow per diem. In one season I made 95 lb. of butter daily from 140 cows, and nearly all of them have been in milk for some time. The construction of the proposed railway would benefit the district. There are large areas of land here which are now idle. I could cultivate 800 acres if I could find a market for my produce.
3232. Is yours good wheat-growing land? Yes.
3233. You are not further from a market than other people? No; but the local price of wheat is only 2s. 2d. a bushel, and it does not pay to grow wheat at that price.
3234. What can you afford to grow wheat for? With improved machinery and implements, one could grow wheat for 2s. a bushel, or perhaps less in good seasons.
3235. What does it cost to grow and harvest wheat? I suppose it would cost about £2 an acre, allowing for the rent of the ground. You cannot work heavy ground as easily as loose soil. A neighbour of mine has six horses in a single-furrow plough; you will see from that that the soil here is very stiff.
3236. We have had it in evidence that clearing has been done in other districts for 8s. 6d. an acre? We could not do it at that.
3237. What would it cost you to plough your land, put seed into it, and harvest for market? In heavy black soil I do not think I could do it for less than 30s. an acre.
3238. *Mr. Watson.*] How would the seasons here compare with those in Riverina and on the Southern line? We do not suffer from droughts here as they do in the places you mention, though we sometimes have dry seasons. Our stock never starve here; they keep in fair condition even in the driest seasons. Of course, if we have a severe winter following a dry season there are sometimes losses in stock; but we can always provide winter feed.
3239. Does it not seem strange that you cannot grow wheat here when the people of Narrandera, who pay within 3d. a ton freight of what you pay, are able to grow it;—one would think that with good land and a fair season you could afford to put the whole of your 800 acres under crop? I find that dairying pays better than farming.
3240. Would the construction of the proposed line give you a better market? Not for wheat; but it would give us a better market for potatoes and chaff in dry seasons.
3241. Is this district suited for potatoes rather than for wheat? Potatoes at £2 a ton pay better than wheat when you can get from 4 to 6 and 8 tons to the acre. We grow what will pay us best. I find that dairying pays better than anything else. Of course, I have to employ a number of hands to do the milking, and to look after the place, and I have to engage in cultivation to keep them employed when they are not at work milking.

John Cameron, farmer and grazier, Morden, Saumarez Creek, near Armidale, sworn, and examined:—

J. Cameron
16 May, 1900.

3242. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been here? I have been here for forty-six years.
3243. How do you think the construction of the proposed railway would affect the stock traffic between this district and the Western district? I think that the construction of the proposed railway would give the farmers in this district an outlet for their produce. At present we have no market, and I have had stuff lying in my shed for two years because I could not sell it. I am almost giving up farming now, and going in more for stock, because I find that it is more difficult to get a market for your produce than to grow it.
3244. Are you worse off in that respect than farmers in other parts of the Colony? No. We grow more than the local demand, and then we have to send our produce to Sydney or to some other place outside the district. I sent 40 tons of chaff to Sydney one year; but it did not pay me, because of the high charges for carriage. When we get to Sydney we have to compete with the markets of the world.
3245. The carriage for produce from here to Sydney is about 11s. per ton;—you could not get a much cheaper rate than that if you were in a position to send away your produce by steamer? I paid 10s. a ton for having my hay cut up, and 15s. a ton to have it trucked and delivered. As a rule, we sell our hay to local men, who cut it into chaff, and then sell it. They are better able to find a market for it than we are.
3246. Do you think that the Hunter River farmers, the Orange farmers, or the Bathurst farmers can compete with you because of their better climate and soil? I am not acquainted with those districts; but, judging by what I hear, I think we get larger crops than they get.
3247. They send their produce regularly to Sydney, and yet the freight that they have to pay is not much less than you have to pay? I only tried it once, and it did not pay me then.
3248. If they could beat you in the Sydney market, they will beat you in the western market, because they are nearer to it? In New England we have a lot of country which, in good seasons, is not sheep country, but which carries sheep well in dry seasons. One year we had, I think, 25,000 sheep in the New England district which had come here from other districts. Drovers of sheep come here every year.
3249. I suppose most of the sheep that come here are driven here? Yes; all of them.
3250. From what direction do they come? From out to the west.
3251. And from the south? Yes.
3252. What route do they take? I think they keep to the north of the route of the proposed line.
3253. Out in the direction of Coonabarabran? Yes.
3254. Do you think that owners of sheep would use the proposed railway? I think it would pay them to do so, because it would prevent the losses which now occur when sheep are driven over a bare piece of country. I believe that such a saving would go a long way towards making up the railway charges.
3255. The experience in other parts of the country is that stockowners will not truck store stock, except at starving-stock rates;—that being so, the Commissioners cannot expect to get much revenue from the stock traffic that you speak of? I cannot offer an opinion on that point.
3256. Would it pay an owner to truck stock from Cobar to Armidale, *via* the proposed line, at ordinary rates, which would come to something like £8 18s. 8d. for 100 sheep, or 1s. 9d. a sheep? I think so; because the losses are not so great when sheep are carried by rail as when they are being driven.
3257. Then, too, the country every year is becoming more settled and fenced, and consequently there is less prospect of getting grass for travelling stock? Yes. It will be impossible to travel stock in the future, because there will be no grass along the roads for them to eat.
3258. Do you fatten any big stock for sale? Yes; some train loads of fat stock have been sent from this district during the last few years.
3259. Is this looked upon as a fair fattening district for big stock? Not for big stock.
3260. Do you think that people in this district and further north would be able to compete in the Melbourne market with stockowners from Queensland, who send their cattle down through Bourke? Only occasionally. Stock are fattening here now better than they did thirty years ago, because the country is getting more civilised. When I came to New England first people were thought mad if they put sheep on country such as that on which I am now running a sheep and a half to the acre. There was nothing but rank grass then, which only cattle would eat.
3261. Have artificial grasses been introduced into the district, or have you to depend upon the native grasses? I have used artificial grasses; but I find that native grasses are better, because they are acclimatised.
3262. What sort of country is this for sheep and cattle? Country that has been well improved will carry from a sheep and a quarter to a sheep and a half to the acre. I am running a sheep and a half to the acre every year, and I sold some animals the other day which were a good size.
3263. Is your land better than the average? No, mine is average land; there are thousands of acres of land round my place which are as good as mine.
3264. Do you spell your land? No; I have only 600 acres, and I run 1,100 sheep, besides cultivating 70 or 80 acres. Of course, I do not run that number always.
3265. How many acres would be required to feed big cattle? About 5 acres to a beast. At Guy Fawkes there is country that at one time was looked upon as useless; but thousands of heads of cattle have since been trucked from it to the Sydney market, and they have brought high prices. If those cattle could be sent direct to Melbourne they would have a chance of competing with the Queensland cattle, but if they had to be travelled to the Melbourne market they would be only store stock when they got to Melbourne.
3266. They seem to have more bad seasons than good seasons out west? Yes; they are always complaining about the scarcity of grass out there. I have sent 800 cases of fruit to Queensland, because I could not find a market for it in this Colony; but if the proposed railway is made it will open up a market for fruit in the west.
3267. How did you send your fruit to Queensland? By rail. I sent it to Bundaberg and to other places.
3268. What kind of fruit was it? Apples and pears. We do not know what to do with them some years, and a lot of the fruit goes rotten. I made bacon of my apples the year before last.
3269. Did it pay you to send your fruit to Queensland? The fruit did not bring high prices; but it was better to send it there than let it rot. I have got as much as 9s. a case for some of my fruit, and I have also made as little as 1s. 6d. a case, after paying carriage. One one occasion, though I got about £40 for my fruit, when I paid for carriage and other charges, the amount coming in to me was only £20.
3270. How far is Armidale from Brisbane? About 365 miles. A lot of fruit is sent out as far as Charleville. I sent a consignment to Rockhampton, but it did not pay.
3271. That was merely an experiment? Yes.

Joseph

Joseph Monteith, farmer, Guyra, sworn, and examined:—

3272. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you here to speak for yourself and for other farmers in the Guyra district? J. Monteith.
I am a practical farmer, and have a good knowledge of the district, extending over seventeen years. Mr. Pearson and myself have come from Guyra. 16 May, 1900.

3273. Will you describe the Guyra district, from an agricultural point of view? It is a very good agricultural district.

3274. Is it similar to the Armidale district? It is better.

3275. What are your principal crops? Potatoes, wheat, and oats.

3276. What yields do you get? We get from 3 to 6 tons of potatoes to the acre in good seasons. The last five years have been very dry: but even this year, which has been the driest of all, people have got over 3 tons of good marketable potatoes to the acre. The general yield of wheat is from 25 to 30 bushels to the acre. I have had 60 bushels, and never less than 25 bushels: but this year the crops did not turn out so well.

3277. Is it good milling wheat? Yes: in a good season it is really prime wheat.

3278. What is your average yield of oats? Between 40 and 50 bushels.

3279. What is the average size of the holdings about Guyra? Most of them are about 640 acres. I have more than that myself; there are 150 acres of my land under cultivation.

3280. Do the people in the district cultivate the greater part of their land? Some of them have a few sheep, and others run large cattle. The cattle do well in good seasons: but the winter is rather cold for them, so that from May until the beginning of November they are generally poverty-stricken. I have been in New Zealand and in Victoria; but I never saw a place where cattle fatten more quickly than they do on some holdings in our district in the summer.

3281. What area is there under crop on your holding? From 80 to 100 acres. The land is chiefly under potatoes.

3282. Do the Guyra farmers complain that they have no market for their produce? I do not say that they have no market: but it is such a poor market at the present time that they find a great difficulty in selling anything.

3283. You grow potatoes chiefly? Potatoes, hay, and oats. The price of wheat has been so low that wheat is not much grown.

3284. Do you find a good market for your potatoes? We do very well when there are famine prices in Sydney and Melbourne. We can grow potatoes at £2 10s. a ton, but when they get lower than that we cannot sell them. Nine or ten years ago we did not sell either hay or potatoes for two years.

3285. How is it that farmers do not go in more substantially for wheat, if they can get from 25 to 30 bushels to the acre? Lately potatoes have paid very well. Land will not stand wheat unless we alternate the wheat crop with a crop of potatoes.

3286. What has been your usual market for wheat? Armidale and Glen Innes, and in two seasons we sent our wheat to Sydney. When wheat is 4s. or 3s. 6d. a bushel we can send it to Sydney, but when it gets below that we cannot do much with it.

3287. What sort of farming implements are used in the Guyra district? The latest and best that you will find anywhere—Massey and Harris, and Martin's implements.

3288. Is that land hard to clear? Yes; what has been cleared has been very difficult to clear.

3289. What market do the Guyra farmers expect out west? The people out west cannot grow what we can grow.

3290. We have it in evidence that potatoes and onions grow as well on the Talbragar as in any part of the Colony, and that district is closer to the western market than the Guyra district? We believe that there is a demand for produce, such as we grow, out west, and that higher prices could be obtained there than we now get.

3291. We have received the following letter from the chairman of a public meeting held at Guyra only yesterday:—

Sir,

Guyra, 15 May, 1900.

At a public meeting held at "Guyra Hotel" it was unanimously agreed to send a letter to the Public Works Committee sitting at present in Armidale on the following:—

Protesting against the proposed line of railway from Werris Creek to Dubbo or Wellington, on the grounds that it would be of no benefit to the farming population of the table-land of New England, if anything a serious injury, the market of the table-land to be west, and that there are no delegates publicly authorised to represent the district.

JOSEPH McMULLEN,

Chairman of above Meeting.

F. T. Goulder, stock and station agent.

J. T. McGovern, hotel-keeper.

Robt. Moore, farmer.

William Stapleton, farmer.

Wm. Beckwith, agent.

E. J. Lackey, storekeeper.

W. M. Stevenson, Guyra.

P. J. Garrahy, Guyra.

C. Smith, farmer.

Henry Heydon, storekeeper.

Matthew Smith, farmer.

The Chairman, the Public Works Committee.

? What I have stated is the general opinion of the neighbourhood.

3292. Does the protest which I have read in any way convey the views of the Guyra farmers? Not in the least.

3293. Is the area under crop in the Guyra district still increasing? Yes.

3294. Is it increasing fast? Yes; new ground is being broken up every year. I think it would be a national gain to have a railway constructed which would shorten the distance between Adelaide and Brisbane. The proposed line would also be of service in transporting stock from the drought-stricken west to New England. During the last few years a large number of stock had come to New England.

3295. Is the transport of the stock profitable to stockowners? I am certain that it is. I know several people who would have used the train if they could have done so. In dry times the stock can get nothing to eat along the stock routes.

3296. Do you agree generally with the evidence which has been given this morning? Yes.

3297. And also with what has been said about the New England country? Yes.

3298. Mr. Harper says that pastoralists on the plains have been very timid about sending stock to New England, because the grass is sour, and fluke is always present? That is not true of the district of late years. Since 1895 we have heard nothing about fluke. No one except one who has lived here can understand

J. Monteith. understand how much the country has been improved by ringbarking. No doubt sheep will not do well here in really wet seasons; but sheep would not be sent here in such seasons, because there would be grass for them elsewhere. Ringbarking sweetens the grass so that sheep fatten twice as quickly on ringbarked country as they do on unimproved country. If there is a ringbarked patch in a paddock cattle will always go there.

George Hargrave, farmer, Armidale, sworn, and examined:—

G. Hargrave. 3299. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you been long in the district? I have been here for the last twenty years, and I have been farming for four years.
 16 May, 1900. 3300. What crops do you grow? Maize, wheat, and oats.
 3301. Have you a satisfactory market? During the last year or two the market has not been satisfactory.
 3302. What is the reason for that? We are over-producing; at any rate, we grow too much hay.
 3303. Do you get as good results from the outside markets as from the local markets? No.
 3304. Is this good agricultural land? Most of the land under cultivation is rich land.
 3305. Would the construction of the proposed railway give you an additional market? I believe that it would.
 3306. You have heard the evidence of a number of gentlemen to-day in favour of the construction of the proposed line;—do you confirm the statements which they have made? Yes, in the main.
 3307. Do you differ from them on any material point? It seems to me that the rates which they would have to charge on the proposed railway to make it pay would prevent us from sending produce along it to the far western districts.
 3308. What do you call the far western districts? Districts are far west as Wilcannia. I think we could send produce as far as Bourke.
 3309. Do you think that stock would be sent from the western district to this district over the proposed line? I think it would pay to send stock here by train rather than lose them.
 3310. Would stock traffic take place only in times of drought? Mainly in times of drought; but people who have had more experience in droving stock than I have had inform me that it pays to send store stock to fattening country rather than to drive them there. I think that store bullocks coming from Queensland, instead of going by the western route, would come this way to get to Orange and to Dubbo.
 3311. Do you consider this good fattening country? Only in the more settled parts.
 3312. Where it has been improved? Yes.
 3313. Have you had much experience in droving stock? No.
 3314. Would people travel store stock rather than send them by train? I think it would pay to send them by train, because of the loss in condition when travelling. I have tried growing root crops here, and I think that there is no other district in the Colony as good as this for the production of mangolds and beet. I have grown 20 tons of beet to the acre, and it is a most fattening food, and one that could easily be sent out to the western districts. We could produce beet here at a few shillings per ton.
 3315. *Mr. Watson.*] If the proposed railway were constructed the freight on hay and produce generally to Cobar would be 14s. 3d. a ton, and to Bourke 14s. 7d.;—could you afford to pay those charges? Yes, in good seasons.
 3316. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are they using mangolds and turnips here for winter feed? Yes; they are coming into use.
 3317. Do you anticipate great benefit from their use? Yes; especially to the dairying industry.
 3318. I suppose there is not much natural grass here in the winter? In an open winter like that which we have had so far, there is good feed; but when winter sets in with a hard frost the grass suffers. I produce a sample of the maize grown on my land.

Richard Pearson, produce merchant, Guyra, sworn, and examined:—

R. Pearson. 3319. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been long in business in Guyra? Fifteen years.
 16 May, 1900. 3320. Do you regard the district as a good one for agriculture? I regard it as a very good district.
 3321. Are the farmers there making money? I cannot say that they have been doing too well; but during the last three or four dry seasons they have been doing fairly well.
 3322. Is that because of a better market, or because they have grown more? Because of a better market; chiefly on the North-western line.
 3323. Has any considerable quantity of produce been sent from your district to the North-western line during the last two years? Yes; I have sent a considerable quantity myself.
 3324. Have you ever attempted to send produce to Sydney? Yes; but, as a rule, with unsatisfactory results. I have sent produce—hay, chaff, and potatoes—as far as Walgett.
 3325. At what price could you send hay to Sydney from Guyra? For £3 or £3 5s. a ton.
 3326. Do you send hay or chaff? Chiefly chaff. As a rule, derrick-pressed hay does not bring a good price in Sydney.
 3327. What could you sell chaff for in Sydney? For about £3 5s. a ton.
 3328. You sent some potatoes recently, I understand, but they did not meet with a good sale? Yes; the returns were not satisfactory. As a rule our Sydney returns are not satisfactory, unless the prices there are at famine rates, as they were two years ago.
 3329. Who are your competitors in the Sydney market? Chiefly the farmers from Tasmania and New Zealand.
 3330. Do you think you can successfully compete with the Orange and Hunter River districts? I think so.
 3331. If the proposed railway were constructed, could you compete in the western market with districts such as Orange and Wellington? I think so, in times of drought.
 3332. We have heard that large quantities of hay and other produce have been sent from those districts through Sydney to Narrabri and Moree? Yes; a large quantity of produce was sent from Orange last year.
 3333. Were your supplies exhausted then? We had no great quantity to send last year. What we had was required in Armidale and Hillgrove.
 3334.

3334. Do you think that people would cultivate larger areas if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes; if they could get an outlet for their produce. R. Pearson.
16 May, 1900.
3335. The western districts would not require much produce in good seasons? Not very much.
3336. Would this district receive sufficient encouragement from the construction of the proposed line if it got a market in the west only on the occasion of a drought there? It would not pay them to increase their cultivation if there was only one dry season in five; but for the last five or six years the drought has been almost continuous.
3337. *Vice-Chairman.*] Does the letter which the Committee received from a public meeting at Guyra represent the opinions of the farmers in that district? No.
3338. It may be taken as representing only the opinions of those who signed it? That is so. There was no public meeting held in Guyra with reference to the matter. The total tonnage of agricultural produce sent from Guyra south during two years was 8,067 tons 18 cwt. 2 qrs.

Michael John Walsh, storekeeper, Walcha, sworn, and examined:—

3339. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you resided at Walcha? For thirty-eight years. M. J. Walsh.
16 May, 1900.
3340. Is there anything you desire to add to the statements which have been made here this morning? We were trying to get a small branch line from Walcha roads into Walcha, and we then prepared the following statistics, which I think will be of interest to the Committee:—

TO THE HONORABLE THE MINISTER FOR WORKS.

Walcha is the most southern town on the New England tableland, and is situated directly to the east of Walcha Road railway station, which is 320 miles from Sydney and 218 miles from Newcastle, and has at the present time a district population of over 3,000 inhabitants.

The area within the trafficable sphere of a line to Walcha embraces somewhere over 1,000,000 acres, of which we would respectfully point out:—

- 322,062 acres are held under freehold and conditional purchase.
- 493,222 acres are held by way of conditional lease.
- 102,000 acres are held under annual lease.
- 8,698 acres are held under settlement lease.
- 6,984 acres are held as homestead selections.

In addition to which a large area is held under occupation license.

The stock returns for 1899 show the following, viz.:—443,000 sheep, 31,000 cattle, 3,027 horses, and 1,196 pigs, which shows a large increase on past years' returns.

The area under and cleared and prepared for cultivation within the above trafficable sphere is estimated at about 12,400 acres, and the average yield per acre for the various crops is—wheat 18 bushels, oats 28, maize 27, and potatoes 4 tons.

The area under artificial grasses is upwards of 4,500 acres.

The revenue derived from lands and miscellaneous items from the year 1890 to June of last year amounts to £165,437, being an average of approximately £17,500 per annum; in addition to this foregoing revenue there is the sum of £1,889 18s. 1d. paid yearly direct to the Treasury for lands in the Walcha Land District, held under occupation and preferential occupation licenses.

The number of letters dispatched from the local post office for the year 1898 was 83,290, and the revenue derived for the same period amounted to £1,100, and for the year 1899 to £1,260, showing an increase of £100.

The number of bales of wool dispatched from Walcha Road railway station for the year ending June, 1899, was 5,862, showing an increase of 2,666 bales over the same period ending June, 1896, and that the return of the number of live stock forwarded from Walcha Road for the year ending June, 1899, shows 34,886 fat sheep, 968 fat cattle, 125 horses, and 96 pigs, which shows a large general increase over previous years. In addition to the above, some 35,000 sheep were trucked to Walcha Road from droughty districts in 1899.

The return of revenue of the Walcha Road railway station for the year ending June, 1899, as compared with the same period in 1895, shows as follows:—Tickets sold in 1899, £1,417 17s. 8d., as against £1,088 15s. 7d. in 1895; goods and live stock in 1899, £4,336 7s. 11d., as against £2,864 1s. 6d. in 1895; or a total revenue in 1899 of £5,784 5s. 7d., as against £3,952 17s. in 1895,—showing an increase of £1,831 8s. 7d. in 1899 over 1895; and that the passenger and goods traffic show the following, viz.:—Number of tickets sold in 1899, 1,506, as against 1,311 in 1895; goods out in 1899, 2,228 tons, as against 1,069 tons in 1895; goods in, 2,020 tons in 1899, as against 1,400 tons in 1895.

There are about 300,000 acres of rich soil within the district that, with the increased settlement produced by the extension of the railway to Walcha, would be cultivated, and thereby bring about additional traffic to the main line which, after deducting working expenses, cannot be put at less than £2,000 per annum. To this may be added a saving on road maintenance of £400, and on the carriage of mails, &c., of about £150.

The passenger traffic would largely expand, there being much to recommend Walcha as a summer resort, but the present 12 miles of coaching from rail are a great drawback to the advent of visitors. This contention is borne out by the part of the petition for the railway to Walcha has been signed by a large number of the leading and other residents of the Tamworth district.

Within 30 miles of Walcha an unlimited supply of magnificent timber is to be found, comprising red stringybark, blackbutt, sassafras and cedar, a large trade being done in the latter, which will be largely increased by railway communication, as the supply is unlimited.

Seeing the large number of bales of wool, fat stock, and goods dispatched and received, and the undoubted expansion of the passenger traffic as set forth, and the saving of something like £300 to £400 per annum in the maintenance of the present road, consider that if a light line of railway were constructed to connect Walcha with the Great Northern Railway it would pay from its inception.

During the last three years some thousands of acres of suburban lands have been thrown open to homestead selection, the whole of which are settled on—supporting twenty families; and besides there are thousands of acres of good land, agricultural and pastoral, which are now of no value to the Crown, but would eventually be taken up if such were thrown open under suitable settlement.

With the advent of railway communication a great impetus would be given to several industries, viz., agricultural, pastoral, dairying, fruit-growing, mining, &c.

3341. How would the traffic that you have spoken of benefit the proposed railway? It is the general opinion of the people of Walcha that the proposed railway would give them a valuable market. They consider that there is too much competition in the Sydney market to make it a good one for them, and the railway charges that they have to pay to get there are considerable.

3342. Is it your opinion that the construction of the proposed line would open a larger market for the produce of the Walcha district? Yes.

3343. What grasses have been laid down in that district? Prairie-grass, blue-grass, rye-grass, cocksfoot, and other grasses. In dry seasons stock come by train to our district from the north-western district; but when they have attempted to drive them by road they have died on the way in thousands. At the present time there are about 40,000 sheep in the district which have come from the lower country.

3344. Is there generally grass to spare for stock coming in from outside? Yes; we sent a good many fat stock from our district last summer, and obtained good prices for them. Stock fatten remarkably well there.

Robert

Robert Brown, pastoralist, Aberbaldie, near Walcha, sworn, and examined:—

R. Brown.
16 May, 1900.

3345. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is your holding from Walcha? It is 13½ miles from Walcha, and 14 miles from Walcha-road.

3346. What is the area of it? 16,000 acres.

3347. What is its carrying capacity? At the present time I have 16,000 sheep on it.

3348. Is any of your land under crop? I have 60 or 70 acres under oats for hay, and I also grow a little wheat, corn, and potatoes.

3349. Which crop suits this district best—wheat or oats? Oats.

3350. Does wheat do well here? Wheat has done very well at times. In two out of three years, when I have tried it, I have had excellent crops. The crop last year was a failure, but the season was very dry.

3351. When you speak of oats being a suitable crop, do you mean for grain or for hay? For both. I had one of the best crops last year that I have seen.

3352. You only grow for your own consumption? Yes.

3353. Where is the chief market for produce grown for sale? I think at Tamworth, and down that way.

3354. One of the reasons urged in support of the proposed railway is that it will enable stock to be transported to New England from drought-stricken parts of the Colony? I lived in the Dubbo district for eight years, and I have brought stock over from there myself. A neighbour of mine buys 20,000 and 30,000 wethers every year. A great many of these sheep would travel by train if the distance were less. Of course, it is out of the question to use the existing lines. I have bought sheep about Dubbo, and as far west as Nyngan.

3355. Is the stock traffic permanent? Yes; a great many people do more in buying and fattening wethers than with breeding. They take a clip or two off the wethers, and then sell them and buy some more.

3356. Do they deal in wethers in that way because of the unsoundness of the country? No; but it pays them better to deal than to breed. During the last four years the country has been very sound.

3357. You do not look upon this as a profitable breeding country? I do not consider it an unprofitable breeding country, because I breed sheep here myself; but it is more profitable, in some parts of the New England country, to deal in sheep in the way I have described.

3358. Do you think that we could anticipate a permanent stock traffic to the proposed line, whether the seasons were good or bad? I think there will be a large traffic.

3359. Are the sheep which are bought and fattened here sent back to the district from which they were drawn, or are they sent to the Sydney market? We send them either to Sydney or to some other market.

3360. It has been stated that the proposed line would be beneficial in providing facilities for the removal of starving stock from drought-stricken districts to New England? Yes; and I believe that it would be an advantage to have the line for that purpose. In the summer we cannot stock this country too heavily. I have had 20,000 sheep on my 16,000 acres until recently. In summer time the more stock you put on the country the better it is. In the winter you have to reduce your stock.

3361. Do you anticipate any other traffic on the proposed line? I think there would be a considerable quantity of produce carried on it, and that it would assist the farmers in these districts by opening up another market for them.

3362. Do they complain that they have not a sufficiently large market now? Yes.

3363. Has the want of a market retarded their operations? Yes; and especially around Walcha in the matter of wheat.

3364. Is there a fairly large area of agricultural land in the district? Yes.

3365. Why does it not pay to consign wheat from this district to Sydney, or to the world's market? Because of the long land carriage. The farmers of this district have to compete with those of the Hunter River district, who have not so far to send their produce.

3366. Do you think that, if the proposed railway were constructed, the farmers of this district could compete with those in the western districts? Yes. I have seen 40 bushels taken off an acre of land in this district. David Green had about 500 bags of wheat this year, and Mr. Steele between 400 and 500 bags of wheat and oats, although it has not been a favourable season for wheat.

3367. In good seasons would graziers drive their sheep across to the Northern line from Dubbo, or would they truck them from the nearest railway station, supposing the proposed line to be constructed? I think that large numbers of sheep would be trucked in any case. If graziers could get their sheep across by train for 6d. or 7d. a head they would sooner truck them than drove them, because the train would bring them across in twenty-four hours.

3368. *Mr. Watson.*] The rate from Nyngan to Walcha Roads would be 1s. 5½d. per sheep? I think that sheep would most likely travel down to the junction before being put upon the train.

3369. *Vice-Chairman.*] But you think that a cross-country railway would be used? Yes; and it would benefit the farmers and pastoralists of New England very much.

3370. *Mr. Watson.*] If graziers only used the cross-country line, the rate would be 10d. a sheep;—would that be cheaper than to drive stock across? It would be easier to use the train. In driving sheep across you might have them three months on the road, and there is always risk of loss when you have stock on the road, especially in summer time, because of the long distances they may have to travel without water. It would be a great convenience to be able to send sheep through in twenty-four hours.

3371. Ten-pence a sheep would not be a prohibitive rate? I do not think so. I would sooner pay for trucking the sheep than have them driven across, because the trucking would save the knocking about that they get on the roads.

3372. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is Walcha a good fattening district? Yes; in certain seasons. We are sending away a large number of fat stock this year.

3373. What do you consider good seasons? The dry seasons are the best here.

3374. Do you agree with Mr. Harper that there is always fluke in the New England country? There are parts of New England where there is always fluke; but in other parts sheep will last as long as they are wanted to last.

3375. Mr. Harper also says that the country is sour? It is sour in wet seasons, more especially in the swamps; but the ridges are fairly good.

3376.

3376. You do not think that there is a large percentage of sour country? I think there is a bigger percentage of sweet country. At the present time I am breeding from ewes which I myself bred four years ago, and I am sending wethers to the market which I bred four years ago. If sheep will give four fleeces of wool, and then go to the market fat, there cannot be very much wrong with them.

3377. Mr. Harper, in reply to Question 236, suggests that a line from Brewarrina to Collarendabri, and the extension of the Coonamble line to a point between the two places, would serve the Northern districts better than the proposed line? I consider that a junction between the Great Northern line and the Great Western line would be of more advantage to the country than anything else. Some years ago I bought 7,600 ewes on the Bogan, and I tried to arrange with the Commissioners to truck them right round through Sydney; but they would only give me ordinary rates, so that I could not afford to do it.

R. Brown.
16 May, 1900.

Edwin Parsons, grazier, Eilerslie, near Guyra, sworn, and examined:—

3378. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your holding from Armidale? Thirty-two miles.

3379. What is the extent of it? 4,000 acres.

3380. Are you grazing sheep on it? Chiefly sheep.

3381. Do you breed sheep? Yes.

3382. Have you been successful with them? Yes.

3383. Have you any disease amongst them, such as fluke? During the last four or five years sheep have been free from most of the diseases that we get in New England in bad seasons. In seasons such as we are getting now nearly every part of the district is sound.

3384. How many sheep are you running? 3,600.

3385. Do you cultivate any portion of your land? Some of it; I would cultivate more if there were a market for my produce.

3386. What is the extent of your cultivation? From 30 to 40 acres.

3387. What do you grow chiefly? Potatoes and oats. We consider that the land in our district is not fit for wheat. We grow oats both for hay and for grain, and we also grow maize.

3388. What yields do you get per acre? As a rule, we get about 40 bushels of oats to the acre, and from 30 to 40 bushels of maize. This is not a really good maize-growing country.

3389. Do you make much oaten hay? I make enough for my own use.

3390. How much hay do you get per acre? From 3 to 5 tons.

3391. And what weight of potatoes? Generally speaking, we get enormous crops of potatoes, though sometimes we have a failure. We get as much as 6 and 7 tons to the acre at times.

3392. Would the construction of the proposed line give you a better market than you have now? I think so; it would open up the Western district for our potatoes and oats.

3393. Are you only waiting for that market to cultivate a larger area? As soon as we can get a market, we shall cultivate a larger area. People holding from 3,000 to 5,000 or 6,000 acres would like to do some farming, if they could do it with advantage; but at the present time there is no profit in it, because there is no market.

3394. How much of your land is fit for cultivation? 600 or 700 acres.

3395. What market have you for your sheep? Our fat stock go to Maitland or to Sydney. In some years we send our store wethers to the plains in the north-west or west to be fattened; but latterly we have been able to fatten them ourselves. With a change of season, however, we may have to sell them as stores again.

3396. I suppose that in the winter it is difficult to keep stock in good condition here? Yes; winter is the worst part of the year in New England.

3397. Do you find that the grass is plentiful in summer? Yes; it is difficult to keep it down in summer; but in the winter we have to reduce the number of our sheep.

3398. In the summer can you lay yourselves open to receive large numbers of starving stock? Nearly every summer we can buy some store stock to carry for a time. The sheep which come up as starving stock go on to waste lands, sour, inferior country which is not used, except in dry years.

3399. What is the average extent of the holdings in your district? From 2,000 to 7,000 acres.

3400. There are no very large estates there? Not just there.

3401. Are many large stock carried in your district? No; the district is chiefly a sheep district.

3402. Have you gone in for dairying at all? Only for own use.

3403. Do you think that the country is suitable for dairying? Not in my immediate neighbourhood, though I think that the country about Guyra would be suitable for dairying. If the proposed railway were constructed, and the Melbourne market were open to us, we could use the line to send fat stock to Melbourne. We could not send our stock there by road, because the distance is so great that they would fall off in condition on the journey.

E. Parsons.
16 May, 1900.

Joseph Scholes, farmer and fruit-grower, Armidale, sworn, and examined:—

3404. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How much land do you cultivate? Between 80 and 90 acres.

3405. Have you resided long in this district? Since 1849.

3406. What is the feeling of the farmers here in regard to the proposal into which the Committee are inquiring? They are very anxious that the railway should be carried out, because they believe that it would give them an additional market for their produce.

3407. Are you of the same opinion? Yes; I think that if we were connected directly by rail with the drought-stricken parts of the Colony it would be of great advantage to our farmers, because we always produce more than this district can consume, and we could look to these other districts for a market for our surplus.

3408. What do you do with your surplus at the present time? Some of it goes to Sydney and some of it to Narrabri, Moree, and the North-western districts.

3409. Is there a continual demand for your produce? Yes; because trucks are constantly taking it into those districts. I was told of a man who was sending produce away at the rate of 20 tons a day. This traffic is, of course, heavier in times of drought than in ordinary seasons, when there is grass.

3410. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed there would be much movement in stock between this district and the Western district? Yes; in dry seasons. There is scarcely a dry season now

J. Scholes.
16 May, 1900.

- J. Scholes. when more or less stock do not come from the drought-stricken parts of the Colony to New England. In the summer-time the growth of grass here is very rapid, but in the winter we suffer, to a certain extent, from the severity of the climate. If the summer months are a little droopy, the growth of grass is so rapid that we can put on almost twice as many sheep as the country will carry at ordinary times; that enables us to take starving sheep and cattle. Of course, in the winter-time we could not carry them.
- 16 May, 1900. 3411. Can you speak of any traffic that there would be on the proposed line besides the stock traffic? There would be stock traffic and produce traffic, and no doubt the stock traffic would create a certain amount of passenger traffic.
3412. Do you think that there would be much traffic from this district to the Southern line by way of the proposed line? At the present time every one going south has to go first to Sydney; but I think that if we had a market for our produce and stock in other directions it would create a certain amount of passenger traffic to those places. Beyond that I do not know what additional passenger traffic there would be. I should like to refer to the fact that sugar-beet grows remarkably well here. Samples which have been analysed by the Government Analyst have given very good results. Turnips, mangels, and other root crops, which would be useful for feeding dairy stock and pigs, also grow well here.
3413. How far have you been successful in fruit-growing here? I have been very successful in growing fruit, but not in selling it. The conclusion I have come to is that the best thing you can do is to turn your fruit into bacon.
3414. Is this a good fruit-growing district? Undoubtedly. All kinds of English fruits grow remarkably well here—plums, apples, pears, cherries, and even grapes, though grapes are better in a warmer climate. Fruit-growing is an industry about which there is a great deal to learn, and one in which young people could take an interest; and no doubt it would be a success here if opportunities were given to get rid of the produce. I have seen apples almost the size of young pumpkins. Jacques' orchard here is a great resort for visitors in the summer-time.
3415. Would the construction of the proposed railway cause more people to go in for agriculture? Yes. At the present time we are over-producing. I have a large shed of hay for which I should be glad to take £2 a ton, although that is a low price. If you send produce to Sydney, the charges are so many that very little profit is left. I think that the proposed railway would give us a good additional market from the west.
3416. If it is constructed will it get a considerable amount of traffic from this district? Yes, a considerable amount of traffic in produce and merchandise of all kinds.
3417. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do not cherries pay to send to Sydney? Cherries are about the best paying fruit we have, and suffer least from disease. We grow very fine cherries in this district.

George Wigan, M.D., honorary treasurer, Armidale Proprietary School, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Wigan, M.D. 3418. *Vice-Chairman.*] It has been pointed out to us that this district offers great facilities for the establishment of schools? Yes. Armidale at the present time possesses more scholastic establishments than public-houses. The Armidale school has been established now for four years, and during that time we have had 154 pupils, who have come here from places 64 miles away and further from Armidale. We have boys at the school now who came from Fiji, others who have come from Toowoomba, Townsville, Mackay, Casino, Wollongong, Muswellbrook, Inverell, and places all over the Colony. If the proposed railway were constructed it would enable boys to come here from the Western district who at present are debarred from coming owing to the long railway journey.
- 16 May, 1900. 3419. Do you think that the excellent climate of Armidale is an attraction? It is a great attraction. The number of Queensland pupils here point to that. There is also a girls' high school here which has been in the hands of the present proprietor for four years. During that time forty-two pupils have come from Brisbane and other places a good distance from Armidale. The average amount paid in railway fares by the pupils of the ladies' school is £50 a year, though school children travel at very reduced rates. The railway fares paid by the pupils of the Armidale boys' school amounted to £130 in 1898, and to £140 in 1899. Then, too, families come here from places like Townsville and Brisbane, so that their children can be educated more cheaply than if they came as boarders. My twenty-four years' experience as a medical man here shows me that people come here from all parts of New South Wales and Queensland, especially in the summer months, for the benefit of their health.
3420. Would Armidale offer greater attractions than Orange to the people in the Western district, supposing the proposed line were constructed? I do not know anything about Orange; but I know that people pass such places as Orange to come to Armidale.
3421. Has the Armidale district other attractions than the climate? There are places here which people can visit with interest; but it is chiefly to benefit by the climate that they come here.

Russell Blaxland, stock and station agent, Armidale, sworn, and examined:—

- R. Blaxland. 3422. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you resided here? I have been in this town for six years, and I have been in the district for over twenty years.
- 16 May, 1900. 3423. There seems to be a good deal of controversy as to whether the New England district would be taken advantage of to any great extent by stock-owners in less favoured districts, supposing the proposed line were constructed? I am almost certain that the Western people would gain a great advantage in the construction of the proposed line. The other day we sold 10,000 sheep from a place the other side of Bourke, and they arrived at Narrabri, about a week ago, 2,000 short. Had we been able to take them across the proposed line, we should have saved very many more. The year before last a number of stock coming from the Macquarie were trucked at Narrabri, and it would have been impossible for them to have been brought here without the railway. I do not know that people would be able to take advantage of the railway if it were not for the starving-stock rates.
3424. The Railway Commissioners state that to carry sheep at starving-stock rates is a distinct loss to them? Now that you can get 10s. a head for store stock it pays to send them by train, even at high rates; but for many years the price of stock coming from a drought-stricken district varied from 2s. 6d. to 5s. a head, and if it paid to shift them at starving-stock rates I am sure that it would pay to shift stock now at full rates.
3425. Do you think that it will be some years before the price of stock will go down again? We make no very great progress here in breeding, and I think it will take three or four years for the Western districts to breed up again.
- 3426.

3426. Is there plenty of land here for starving stock in bad seasons? Yes. I heard one man say that this country was stocked throughout; but, as a matter of fact, on the eastern slopes there is a great area of cattle country which is only adapted for sheep in very dry seasons, and that country will carry millions of sheep in the summer months. R. Blaxland.
16 May, 1900.

3427. Is it used for cattle? In the summer months it will carry both sheep and cattle. The country there is as good as that on some of the best runs that we have in the district, but it is not sound, because it has not been improved. The Guyra district would be splendidly adapted for heavy stocking if it were laid with artificial grasses. I have known 8,000 acres there to carry 16,000 sheep, not in one year, but in two years. We invariably have food for starving sheep in this district.

3428. Where land has been improved to its fullest capacity the presumption is that the holders will put on as many stock as it will carry? In years to come that will be done.

3429. I understand that there is country in this district which in wet seasons is unsuitable for sheep, but which in droughty seasons is available for starving stock requiring agistment? Yes. Only a comparatively small area of country in this district has been thoroughly improved. There are millions of acres in New England which could be made to carry sheep. People talk about the fluke here, but there are parts of New England where you could not produce fluke if you tried, though if you go eastwards it was almost impossible to avoid it, unless the runs are thoroughly drained and improved. Ringbarking has worked marvels here. Our indigenous grasses are not adapted for sheep.

3430. I suppose the high land here can always be drained? Yes; it is only a matter of capital. If we get direct communication with the west, good is bound to come from it; but it is very hard for anyone to show exactly what a line like the proposed line would produce.

3431. In regard to the proposed line, the people at the Wellington end seem to think that they will get a market out in the north-western country, while the New England people think that they will get a market to the west? I think the New England people have very strong rivals in the Wellington people, and farmers here do not take the thing up as they should. They cultivate 50 acres when they should cultivate 100 or 1,000 acres. The Wellington country is as good wheat-growing country as can be got, but farming is not carried out in New England as it should be. The Guyra district is a magnificent agricultural district, though the land costs £3 or £4 an acre to clear, because the timber is chiefly white-gum and peppermint, and will not burn well.

3432. I suppose a man would have to grow a more profitable crop than wheat to be able to afford to spend £3 or £4 an acre on clearing? I think that the wheat crop is a very profitable one here. If the farmers here had gone ahead with the times they would be very much richer than they are now.

3433. Do you think that the construction of the proposed line is justified from the point of view of stock traffic? That is my opinion; and it would open up a lot of very good country.

George Smith, mining manager, Hillgrove, sworn, and examined:—

3434. *Vice-Chairman.*] What effect would the construction of the proposed railway have upon the mining industry in this district? I do not think that it would affect this district; but it might affect the Cobar district. Cobar is one of the best mining centres in the Colony. G. Smith.
16 May, 1900.

3435. How would the line affect Cobar? Miners are not producers; but they consume great quantities of agricultural stuff, and the proposed line would enable them to get it from this district instead of from Sydney or from Orange.

3436. Do you mean food supplies? All kinds of stuff. I think that the line would be a beneficial one to the country generally. Knowing what I do of farming and sheep-raising, I think that it would be of advantage to the pastoral and farming industries of the Colony. The district that the proposed line would traverse is not a mining country; it is all tertiary rock. You might strike coal measures, and you might get a little gold about Coolah and Cobborah. The proposed line would give an outlet into the flat country to farmers in this district, and would assist in the transport of stock backwards and forwards. New England is similar to the Monaro country; but it is a better producing country, and the proposed line would give a direct route from the best mining district in the Colony—Cobar—to the garden of the Colony. I have had as many as 219 men in my employment, and they consume a large quantity of oats, potatoes, and vegetables of various kinds, none of which they grow themselves. South-east of Coonabarabran the line is in coal country, the coal lying under marine deposits.

Sydney Henry Wickerson, journalist, and Secretary Railway League, Armidale, made an affirmation, and was examined:—

3437. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you wish to read a letter to the Committee? Yes. I wrote to the Railway Commissioners, asking them if they would send an official to Armidale to lay statistics before the Committee whereby the benefit to be derived by Armidale from the construction of the proposed railway could be proved, and I received from them the following reply:— S. H.
Wickerson.
16 May, 1900.

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 14 May, 1900.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, asking that a railway officer be sent to Armidale to give evidence before the Public Works Committee on the proposed railway from Werris Creek to Wellington, and in reply to say that the Railway Commissioners have already given evidence in regard to the proposed line.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Mr. Chard, who was for twenty years surveyor to the Armidale district, would have attended to give evidence before the Committee, but he was called away yesterday, and has been unable to get back in time.

THURSDAY,

THURSDAY, 17 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Curlewis Hotel," Curlewis, at 11 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Thomas Henry Hall Goodwin, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

T. H. H.
Goodwin,
Esq., M.P.
17 May, 1900.3438. *Vice-Chairman.*] You were at one time occupied in surveying this district? Yes; I had charge of the county of Pottinger for over ten years.

3439. Will you kindly make a comparison between the Curlewis-Gilgandra, and the Wellington-Werris Creek routes for a railway to connect the western with the northern railway system? The greatest objection that I have to the Wellington-Werris Creek route is that it would require a bridge over the Mooki, and that it would have to pass over a very rotten plain on each side of Spring Ridge. The plain at Spring Ridge is one of the very worst on the Liverpool Plains. Then, too, that line would practically pass through nothing but freehold property from the time it left Werris Creek until it reached the western side of Merrigala Plain. If I were told off to survey a route, the first I would try would be one from Breeza, branching off a short distance on the north-west of the railway station, and running across the ridges known as the White Ridges. That line would pass to the north of Goran Lake, and go thence to Trinkey Scrub, meeting the Wellington-Werris Creek route between Merrigala and Bomera: thence I should go to Binnaway. A line from Curlewis to Gilgandra, however, would probably open up more agricultural country than either a line starting from Breeza or the proposed Wellington-Werris Creek line. I estimate that a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra would open up over 20,000 acres of agricultural country more than the Wellington-Werris Creek line would open up, taking into consideration the country within 30 miles of each route. The 20,000 acres I refer to would be nearly wholly to the north of a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra, and not more than 12 miles from such a line.

3440. *Mr. Watson.*] On what holding? On Wandebar and Ghoolendaddi, and a little on the north-east corner of Bando. The rest of the agricultural land on the Curlewis-Gilgandra route would be equally well served by either the Breeza or the Werris Creek route.3441. *Vice-Chairman.*] How would a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra, or from Breeza to Gilgandra, suit the Spring Ridge district? A line from Curlewis to Gilgandra would not suit that district at all; but a line from Breeza to Gilgandra would pass within 5 or 6 miles of the north end of Spring Ridge.

3442. What is the first general advantage to be urged in favour of a Curlewis-Gilgandra line as against a Wellington-Werris Creek line? A line from Wellington to Werris Creek would pass chiefly through freehold property for the first 30 miles. In my opinion a line from Breeza to Gilgandra should follow a reserved road 3 chains wide as far as Goran. It would then leave the road and run almost in a westerly direction until it struck another 3-chain road running from Curlewis to Tambar Springs. Between one road and the other it would pass through freehold property.

3443. *Mr. Watson.*] For what distance? Speaking from memory, I should say for 10 or 12 miles.3444. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is the land on both sides of the first 3-chain road freehold? No. The Breeza freehold abuts on the road on the south side; but the land on the north side is held under some form of lease, and has only recently been taken up. Twelve or 14 miles out from Breeza it is freehold land right through to the second road, and then until you get to Trinkey bush, another 8 miles.

3445. If there is any advantage in making railways through leased land instead of through freehold land, the Curlewis line would have an advantage over the Breeza line? Yes; though it would be a little longer.

3446. Would the construction of a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra be followed by fairly close settlement in the district through which it would pass? I feel confident that it would.

3447. What is the nature of the country? It is very mixed; part of it perhaps is some of the richest pastoral land in the Colony, and the balance is very good wheat growing land of proved quality.

3448. Does the proposed line pass through much black-soil country? It passes through the narrow part of the black-soil country between the north-west and western lines. At Trinkey bush there is black-soil country for a distance of from 15 to 18 miles.

3449. You are a large landholder in this district? I hold about 15,000 acres freehold and conditional purchase.

3450. Is it partly black soil and partly red soil? Yes.

3451. Have you conducted any experiment with the black soil? Not personally; but when I was surveying I saw many settlers cultivating black soil, and nineteen times out of twenty their labour was wasted, because of the uncertainty of the seasons.

3452. In what way is the black soil country affected by the seasons? In my opinion, the absence of a subsoil renders it totally unfit for cultivation. I have frequently seen a crop 18 inches high, which looked as well as a crop could look; but which after six weeks of dry weather turned brown and dried off.

3453. Then for 16 miles on the Curlewis-Gilgandra line there would not be much farming? No; that land is freehold land.

3454. Do you regard it as good grazing land? It is extremely good grazing land; perhaps some of the richest grazing land in the Colony. I have gone pretty extensively into farming myself; but, rather than put a plough into some thousands of acres of black-soil country which I own, country which requires no clearing, I have gone to the expense of clearing the red-soil forest country, and have never yet obtained less than 17 bushels of wheat to the acre. Last year I had 1,000 acres under wheat.

3455. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What kinds of timber were grown on the land which you cleared? Chiefly box, interspersed with rose-wood, bull-cak, and pine.3456. *Vice-Chairman.*] It has been stated that the construction of a cross-country line would create traffic by reason of the interchange of products between the Western and the Northern and North-western lines which it would facilitate? I do not think that the interchange of products is a matter which

which need be considered at all. My knowledge and observation lead me to believe that the people in the neighbourhood of Binnaway and on the Castlereagh are situated in very similar country to ours, and their products will be the same as ours. I think, however, that a cross-country line would create a great deal of close settlement in the district through which it would pass.

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3457. How many acres would be sufficient to keep a farmer in decent comfort in the country through which the proposed railway would go? My opinion is that, to live comfortably, a settler should have about 2,000 acres, and his attention should not be given to one industry alone. He could combine agriculture and grazing.

3458. Would a cross-country line facilitate the transport of starving stock from the western and north-western districts to the New England district? I think that in times of drought the line would be largely availed of for stock coming from country to the north and north-west of Gilgandra.

3459. Would there be any other traffic besides the starving stock traffic? There would be a great deal of fat stock traffic.

3460. Which way would the fat stock come? The Bando stock would be trucked at Bando and it would come into Curlewis, Breeza, or Werris Creek. The McMasters have a very rich tract of grazing country, and their stock now travel by road; but with railway communication they would be trucked whether the seasons were good or bad. Their stock would go either to the Northern line or to the Western line, whichever was nearer to the place at which they were fattened.

3461. Are the coal deposits in the neighbourhood of Curlewis valuable? They are very extensive; but I can only give you general information with regard to them. There is a pit within 2 miles and 10 chains of Curlewis, which is managed by Mr. Poole, and 6 or 8 miles north of it there is another pit which has been opened by the Gunnedah Company.

3462. *Mr. Watson.* Can you tell us anything of the country between Curlewis and Gilgandra, from an engineering point of view? There are no engineering difficulties to be contended with.

3463. Would you follow the big bend of the Castlereagh from Binnaway, or would you bridge the Castlereagh there? My knowledge of the country ceases 15 or 20 miles beyond Binnaway; but I am inclined to think that the line should strike a point further south than Gilgandra.

3464. And follow the Castlereagh down for some distance? Yes.

3465. On the northern side of the Castlereagh the country seems rather rough? Yes; and to the north of Binnaway the country is barren and sandy. There has been a good deal of agitation for railway connection with Coonabarabran; but, personally, I have never been able to agitate for the construction of such a line. My idea is that the line should go a considerable distance south of Coonabarabran, striking the Dubbo-Coonamble line between Dubbo and Gilgandra.

3466. *Mr. McFarlane.* What would it cost to clear timbered country between Werris Creek and Wellington? Speaking generally, it costs from £3 to £3 10s. an acre to clear timbered country when the trees are living.

3467. Do you clear land when the trees are living? The land which I have cleared was ringbarked in the first instance, and used for grazing for six or seven years, and I then set to work and took out the dead timber. By working in that way you can clear at the minimum cost.

3468. What does it cost to clear timbered land, the trees on which are dead? I got nearly 500 acres cleared for 3s. 6d. an acre. The timber was perfectly dry, and the work was done during a drought, so that the roots of the trees burned clean out. Another patch that I had cleared the same year cost me 17s. 6d. an acre.

3469. What would you consider a fair price? From 7s. 6d. to 10s. an acre for dead timber. The green timber would cost you more.

3470. What is the usual price for ringbarking? From 7d. to 8d. an acre, and perhaps less.

John Joseph Poole, grazier, farmer, and coal-mine manager, Curlewis, sworn, and examined:—

3471. *Mr. Watson.* Do you know the country between the North-western line and the Liverpool Ranges? *J. J. Poole.*
Yes.

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3472. Several suggestions have been made as to which is the best starting point on the North-western line for a railway to connect the Western with the Northern railway system;—can you offer an opinion on the subject? I understand that a line from Curlewis to some point on the line from Dubbo to Coonamble has been suggested. The grazing capabilities of the country through which such a line would pass are equal to those of any part of the Liverpool Plains, and its agricultural capacities are undoubted. Our average yield of wheat is as high, I suppose, as that of any part of the Colony. How far out they are carrying on agriculture I can hardly say, but I believe there are a number of farmers on the Merrigala Creek. Within 10 miles of Curlewis the settlers have increased very rapidly, and are likely to increase still more rapidly. This is bringing more and more land under cultivation.

3473. I understand that you can give us some particulars about the Bando holding? I asked the Bando people to come and give evidence, and I received from Mr. Cobb, the manager, a letter giving particulars of the holding, which I think will be interesting to the Committee. Mr. Cobb says:—

Bando is a freehold property of about 70,000 (seventy thousand) acres, besides leasing from the Government about 16,000 acres, and is the property of Mr. H. C. White, of Havilah.

Stock.—On an average the place carries from 50,000 to 70,000 sheep, besides cattle and horses, but in a very good season a great many more are kept. Most of the stock fattened on this property (which is very widely known as, perhaps, the pick of the country of New South Wales) is sent to Sydney, in trucks, for sale at Homebush. I append, separately, some information re trucking wool, &c., for your guidance. You will, of course, take into consideration the bad seasons we have had of late. Hoping this will be of some use to you.

During the year 1898 there were 50,727 fat sheep and cattle trucked at Gunnedah, for Homebush, from Bando alone, representing about 600 trucks.

Wool.—This same year 814 bales of wool were sent per rail to Sydney; a total weight of 140 tons.

1899.—735 bales of wool, 125 tons. Sheep trucked, 23,587—about 280 trucks.

The years 1898 and 1899 were very bad years, and could not be taken as an average.

As an example: The year 1896 saw 1,360 bales of wool sent per rail; sheep trucked in proportion; and in the year 1892 or 1893, saw 94,000 fat sheep sold from off Bando, most of them going per rail.

In excess of these figures, I have not given weight of other produce going away, such as skins, tallow, &c., and have made no mention of goods arriving here by train to carry on the working of the station.

No doubt stations like that are great feeders to a railway. The farming industry in this district is likely to be a great factor in supplying traffic to the railway.

3474.

- J. J. Poole. 3474. Which country would furnish the more traffic to a railway—that between Werris Creek and Bomera, or that between Curlewis and Bomera? I should say that between Curlewis and Bomera. The country out from Werris Creek to Walhallow, and the Brecza country, is already served by the existing line. Then, too, it is black-soil country, and is not likely to come under the plough. Leaving Curlewis, however, you go through agricultural country from the very start. Then, too, the carrying capacity of the country which the Curlewis line would serve is quite equal to that of the Walhallow or the Brecza country.
- 17 May, 1900. 3475. Then there would be just as much chance of fat stock traffic on the Curlewis line as on the Werris Creek line, and a bigger chance of agricultural traffic? Yes. The Werris Creek line would go over black-soil country until it got to Spring Ridge, and you could get no agricultural traffic from that country. It is difficult to maintain a line on black-soil country. I know that, as an old officer of the Permanent Way Department of the Railways. We always found that it cost 100 per cent. more to keep a line in repair on the black-soil country than it did on red-soil country.
3476. A line starting from Curlewis would pass on the northern edge of the black-soil country? It would pass on the north-western edge of the black-soil country, and would go through red-soil and gravelly country. Then it would touch upon a big iron-bark forest north of Tronkey.
3477. Is there pine on the Curlewis route? I understand that there is an abundance of pine on that route.
3478. Large pine is becoming very scarce around Curlewis itself? Yes.
3479. They seem to be cutting mere saplings here now? Yes; they are cutting down every stick.
3480. Is the small pine taken off forest reserves or off private land? Off the public estate. If a line were taken from Curlewis westward you would have a beautiful natural formation to go over, with easy grades. There is an abundance of timber in the country through which the line would pass, and either gravel or basalt ballast. From here as far as Raby (Bundella), and until you touch upon the auriferous country about Gulgong, you traverse a carboniferous formation. I have brought with me some samples of coal from a property 5 miles west of Curlewis, which I own.
3481. How far from the railway station is the coal-mine which you manage? Two miles and 10 chains.
3482. The mine is connected with the main line by a branch line? Yes.
3483. Where do you find a market for your coal? I am manager for the Centenary Coal and Coke Company, Limited, and the Railway Commissioners are our biggest customers: but I have also sent coal to various private owners at Tamworth, to some gold-mining companies at Uralla, to the Brown's Creek Gold-mining Company, and to a mill at Quirindi. Our private buyers are increasing very fast.
3484. So that your coal is evidently giving satisfaction? Yes.
3485. Do you look upon it as of good quality? I look upon it as coal of very fine quality.
3486. How would it compare for general purposes with Newcastle or Greta coal? The departmental reports speak of it as equal for steam purposes to any coal that they buy.
3487. What is the thickness of the seam in the company's mine? Six feet.
- 3487½. Are there any bands through it? No.
3488. Are there any indications of seams above and below the seam which you are working? Besides the seam which is being worked by the company there occurs a seam 270 feet higher, which is believed by Mr. Pittman to be a continuation of the Black Jack seam which is now being worked at Gunnedah. That seam shows 14 feet of coal, and about 7 feet of it could be worked. The top seam is very regular in thickness.
3489. What depth from the surface is the Black Jack seam? They are all adits.
3490. Are there any other indications of coal in the district? Yes, there are very strong indications of a third seam below that which the company is working. It is pretty evident that there are three seams of a very rich quality.
3491. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What percentage of ash does the Company's coal produce? Five or 5½ per cent. The percentage of ash in the Black Jack coal is 3 or 3½ per cent., and that coal, I think, gives the lowest percentage of ash of any in the Colony.
3492. Have these seams been identified with any of the more generally known seams in the Colony? They are classed with the Greta seam, I believe. I understand that Professor David and Mr. Pittman are agreed that they are connected with the Greta seam.
3493. Are the deposits extensive? I think so. I have discovered the Black Jack seam 5 miles out from Curlewis, and I firmly believe that the coal formation extends as far out as the range near Raby (Bundella), and runs right round at the back of Walhallow.
3494. *Mr. Watson.*] How far is it from here to Bundella? Over 40 miles. I have never found the seasons fail me during my experience of farming here, and I have always had remarkably good crops, compared with the general average yield of the Colony. I have been farming in this district for the last ten years, and the seasons have never failed, and others have had a similar experience. I find that when the box-country is cleared and ploughed, if it is left without being cropped it produces a superabundance of the old fattening herbs, such as crowsfoot, geranium, and others, that we used to have on the plains years ago; so that it will carry more sheep after being ploughed than it would before. Fattening herbs are in abundance on the tops of the highest hills here.
3495. If the proposed railway were constructed, and agriculture followed, the land would carry more sheep than it does now? Yes. They have only just touched upon the resources of the soil here; but they will find out its richness and value later on.
3496. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long is it since you discovered that this herbage came after ploughing? I have been ploughing for ten years, and the herbage has come up every year.
3497. Do these herbs disappear from the ordinary pastures before ploughing? No; but they do not show up so much before the forests were cleared as they do now. We were under the impression that all our natural herbage would die out when the plough turned it over, but we find that it is increasing in strength. The seed must be in the soil, and the cultivation improves the conditions for growing. So much does that natural herbage gain strength after the land has been ploughed that in many places it has stifled the wheat.
3498. Where would you take the line from Curlewis—to Dubbo or to Wellington? I think a line from Curlewis should go to some point on the Dubbo-Coonamble line—say, to Gilgandra. Apart from local considerations, and as a national work, I should be in favour of the Wellington-Werris Creek line.
3499. What do you mean by a national work? Federation is now almost an accomplished fact, and we must take into consideration the conditions of other portions of the continent besides our own Colony, and

and construct lines for national defence, and to give communication between the various capitals. A line from Wellington to Werris Creek would undoubtedly give the most direct route between Brisbane and Melbourne. J. J. Poole.
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3500. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you think that the time has arrived for the building of such a line? I think we might wait another decade before troubling about it.

3501. Do you regard the Curlewis-Gilgandra line as likely to create closer settlement than the proposed line would create. Yes; to my mind the various surveyors have laid out this country in too big areas.

3502. How much land is required in the district between Curlewis and Gilgandra to keep a man and his family? 640 acres, with a system of mixed farming. Old settlers know very well that sheep are very profitable in small lots. To put part of the land under the plough, and to use part for grazing sheep, is the best way to deal with a holding; 2,500 acres makes too big a holding, because people would take up 640-acre blocks, and that would make settlement closer.

3503. How many sheep could a man fatten on 640 acres? If he put half his land under the plough, and stumped and cleared the other half, he could fatten from 320 to 350 sheep on it in the year.

3504. Is it not rather expensive to drive small lots of sheep to a railway? Yes; if you have to drive them any distance.

3505. And is it not difficult to get truck accommodation for small lots which are only sent occasionally? The Department allow you to send away a half-truck load of sheep—that is, 45—and they are pretty punctual in sending up trucks. A sheep to the acre is a very low estimate of the carrying capacity of this land when it is properly dealt with. The country in its natural state is classed as being capable of carrying a sheep to the acre.

3506. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Could a man breed sheep on 640 acres? I think that he could carry 500 ewes and lambs, and fatten the lambs; but he would not fatten the ewes. When you engage in the fattening business you buy store wethers, and sell them when they become fat; and with a good season you can fatten two or three lots in a year. If you breed, you have to keep stud rams. With mixed farming 640 acres of land should return £500 a year at the present price of wheat. I stripped 800 acres last season, and obtained 1,700 bags of wheat. Of that, I sold 1,200 bags to go to London, and I was told that it was some of the best wheat that went. It was some of the "Lota's" cargo.

Frederick James Young, farmer, Curlewis, sworn, and examined:—

3507. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you been residing in this district long? About two years. F. J. Young.

3508. How many acres of land do you hold? A little over 2,000. 17 May, 1900.

3509. How many acres have you under cultivation? This year we expect to have between 600 and 700 acres under wheat.

3510. Is your agricultural land of good quality? It is first-class wheat land.

3511. What is the average yield per acre in an ordinary season? Last year I got a little over 16 bushels of wheat to the acre.

3512. Have you been engaged in farming in any other district? In Victoria.

3513. How would you compare the land there with the land here? The land here is better wheat land than I had in Victoria.

3514. What market have you for your wheat? Our chief market is Sydney.

3515. Is wheat-growing profitable at present prices, notwithstanding the long railway carriage? There is just about a living in wheat-growing, but not much to spare, at present prices.

3516. What else do you grow? I have grown oats.

3517. For grain or for hay? For grain. I have also grown malting barley, and I obtained a very fair sample of grain.

3518. What price did the barley realise? It is worth about 2s. 6d. a bushel in Tamworth.

3519. It has been stated that if the Northern and Western lines were connected there would be a market in the west for the hay and chaff produced in this district? No doubt there would, if that market has not already been overdone. There always seems to be a demand for produce in the west. No doubt the more lines a district is connected with the better its position.

3520. Have you considered the question of railway connection with the Western line? No; I have thought more of a connection with the Southern line.

3521. What advantage would a connection with the Southern line give you? Well, just now I am frequently travelling backwards and forwards.

3522. Would it open up a market for you in the south? I think not, because our natural market is on the seaboard.

3523. Do you know the country between Werris Creek and Wellington? Only at this end.

3524. What kind of country is it that you know? The country, as far as I have seen it, is black soil plains.

3525. How does the black soil country compare for wheat-growing with the chocolate soil and the box country? I would rather have 1 acre of red soil than 3 acres of black soil for growing wheat.

3526. Notwithstanding the expense of clearing the red-soil country? Yes.

3527. What does the clearing cost? My clearing would cost me from 10s. to 15s. an acre. The timber had been ringbarked, and had been dead for some years.

3528. Is it the practice to clear land when the timber is green, or to ringbark the timber first and then to clear it some years afterwards, when it is dead? The most economical way is to wait until the timber is dead before you clear. If you do that, the leaves and some of the wood decay, and go back into the ground again.

3529. Which would be more useful to this part of the country, a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra or a line from Wellington to Werris Creek? I should be inclined to think a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra would serve more people than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek would serve. There are more holders along the Gilgandra route, and I believe more Crown lands to be thrown open for settlement. Without a railway small areas of country out there would be of no value for grazing purposes, and the growing of grain would be impossible.

3530. How far from a railway does it pay to grow grain? I should think within 20 or 25 miles. Even at that distance a man is heavily handicapped.

- F. J. Young. 3531. Would either the Gilgandra or the Wellington line open up to the farmers of this district a new market? I do not value the Western district very much, because it is only occasionally that it would be of use to us, though it would be well for us to have two strings to our bow. I think that there are other districts which are in a better position to take advantage of the Western market than we are.
- 17 May, 1900. 3532. Would districts like Orange be in a better position than you are to supply produce to the Western districts? I think so, because they are nearer.
3533. How do you use the land that is not under cultivation? I graze sheep and cattle on it.
3534. Where do you market them? Most of the cattle which are not sold locally have to go to Maitland or to Sydney.
3535. What area would be sufficient to maintain a family in this district on what you consider good wheat-growing land? Not less than 600 acres.
3536. Would a man have to use the whole of that area for wheat? He would have to put three-fourths of it under wheat, for such an area would be too small for grazing.
3537. Do the small settlers to whom you have referred put the whole of their land under wheat? I do not think so. They seem to have been rather behindhand in this locality until lately; but things are altering now, and they are beginning to pay more attention to wheat-growing. Small areas are of no value for grazing in this district, unless you have facilities which the ordinary man does not possess.

George Henry Peard, farmer, Curlewis, sworn and examined:—

- G. H. Peard. 3538. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the extent of your holding? I represent the firm of H. T. Peard & Sons. We hold 4,600 acres.
- 17 May, 1900. 3539. How long have you held that land? This is our third year there as farmers.
3540. How much land have you under cultivation? We shall have about 300 acres this year.
3541. What stock do you carry? Cattle and sheep.
3542. How many sheep to the acre? A sheep to the acre is a fair average.
3543. And how many acres to a beast, large stock? Eight or 10.
3544. Then a large beast is equal to about eight sheep? Yes, generally.
3545. Have you taken any crops off your land? Yes, two.
3546. What has been your average yield? Last year about 16 bushels to the acres, and the year before slightly more.
3547. Are you cultivating anything but wheat? No.
3548. Have you tried fruit? There were a few fruit-trees around the house, but the position did not seem to suit them.
3549. What sort of timber grows upon your land? Principally box and pine.
3550. What does it cost you to clear the land? From 10s. to 15s. an acre.
3551. That is after it has been ringbarked and killed? Yes.
3552. What is the cost of growing and harvesting a crop? Including seed, something less than 8s. an acre. We have a harvester, and employ our own labour.
3553. If you had to hire labour, what would it cost? Between 10s. and 12s. an acre.
3554. Where is your chief market? Sydney; but we have also sent to Armidale and to Tamworth.
3555. What do you generally get for your wheat? This year about 2s. 2d. a bushel; last year we got 2s. 9d. a bushel.
3556. What does it cost you to send wheat to Sydney? About 5d. a bushel.
3557. Did that pay you? It just about pays us, if we reckon in the advantage that we get by using some of it for stock.
3558. Did you sell your wheat locally this year? No; we got 2s. 7d. a bushel for it in Sydney, or about 2s. 2d. a bushel net.
3559. Are you thinking of trying any other crops here? No.
3560. Are oats grown here? Not to any extent.
3561. Do they do pretty well? Yes.
3562. I suppose the cost of carrying hay to Sydney would be rather great? Yes; I do not think it would pay to send hay to Sydney.
3563. Has lucerne been tried here at all? Yes, to a small extent.
3564. Does it seem to do well? Fairly well.
3565. Is the timber trade here large? Fairly large. There are fifteen or twenty log drawers here at the present time.
3566. Have you noticed the size of the pine logs that they are cutting? Yes; they are cutting very small logs, just now.
3567. Do you think it is wise to cut pine so small? No; I do not think they should be allowed to cut such small pine.
3568. Have you found small logs equal to large logs, as far as the timber is concerned? No; the timber in the small logs is inferior to that in the large logs.
3569. Do you think that the construction of a railway from Wellington to Werris Creek would be of advantage to this district? I do not think that it would make any difference to this district. I think that a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra would be preferable.
3570. Do you think that such a line would open up a market in the west? It would give a get-away for produce, and the means of transport for stock.
3571. Would such a line be largely used for the conveyance of starving stock in dry seasons? I do not know that it would be largely used; but it would be used to some extent.
3572. Have you, generally, a good supply of grass here in the summer? Unless there is a drought the country here is well grassed.
3573. What is the average size of the holdings in this district? I cannot say; but 2,500 acres is the limit for a conditional purchase. The station properties in this district are not large compared with those in the Narrabri district.—I suppose they would carry from 20,000 to 50,000 sheep.
3574. Is there much Crown land here? I think it has pretty well all been taken up during the last three years.
3575. Has there been much extension of cultivation here lately? Yes; the cultivated area has increased 100 per cent. of late years.

3576. Is there every prospect of the cultivation continuing to extend? Yes; 20,000 acres were thrown open on Bando lately, mostly in blocks, for homestead selection and settlement lease. All that land was taken up in one day. I think there were 120 blocks altogether. Now, 20,000 acres more are to be thrown open. G. H. Peard.
17 May, 1900.
3577. *Mr. Watson.*] Were there many applicants for the land? Yes; far more applicants than there were blocks. For some blocks there were thirty or forty applicants.
3578. How do people expect to get a living on small areas here? I do not think they can.
3579. So that if they are to remain there the railway must be brought near to them? Yes.
3580. What is the smallest area upon which a man could live in this district, within 20 miles of a railway? From 600 to 1,000 acres.
3581. Do you think mixed farming, or agriculture alone, is the better way of using the land? Mixed farming.
3582. Would a man who held only 600 acres be able to run enough sheep for market? Yes; he could send his increase to market.
3583. I suppose a man who had 600 acres would cultivate half and keep the other half for grazing? Yes. A man who did that could run pretty well as many sheep on half his land as another man could run on a block the size of all his holding, but uncultivated. There are only a few months in the year when you cannot run stock on your cultivated land.
3584. How long a period is there between the ploughing of the land and the harvesting of the crop? You can keep stock on the land until August, and harvest in October.
3585. Is it usual to put sheep upon a young crop? Yes; because it improves the crop and the ground too.
3586. Does it make the plants stool more? It brings the crop up more evenly; but if the crop were left to itself it would grow too rank.
3587. I suppose it would not do to put large cattle upon a growing crop? No; sheep are much better.

SATURDAY, 2 JUNE, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Telegraph Hotel," Gilgandra, at 4:30 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Alfred Arthur Mudie, commission agent, and Secretary, Gilgandra Railway League, Gilgandra, sworn, and examined:—

3588. *Vice-Chairman.*] It has been suggested that a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra would be a more advantageous one to construct than a line from Wellington to Werris Creek, inasmuch as it would involve less construction, being shorter by 50 or 60 miles, and would open up better country; will you kindly give us your views upon the subject? I only know the country to about Binnaway on the Curlewis route, and to about Denison town on the Werris Creek route. There is some very good country on both lines, but the Curlewis line would tap a lot of country which would not be served by the Werris Creek line; whereas the Cobborah district, which would be served by the Werris Creek line, is near enough to the Western line to be served by it. Coonabarabran is a good farming and fruit-growing district, and a considerable quantity of wool is produced near there, so that a railway would be of great service to that district. It would increase the traffic on a line if it ran nearer to Coonabarabran than the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line would run. A. A. Mudie.
2 June, 1900.
3589. Do you think that Coonabarabran is a sufficiently important centre to justify a nearer approach to it? Yes; they have had two flour-mills there for some years, and that is an indication that the district is a good wheat-growing district.
3590. Will you kindly describe the country on the Curlewis route, as far as you know it? For about 20 miles from Gilgandra the line would pass through somewhat rough country; but selectors who have taken up small patches of it have proved that it is rich agricultural country. It is country that is largely timbered with iron-bark, but some of it is box and budda country. Box, almost without exception, grows upon good soil in this part of the Colony. Of course, some of the iron-bark country is really poor, and some of the country on the first 20 miles of the route was abandoned for years, but now that it is being taken up in small areas, chiefly under settlement lease; it is found to be good agricultural land. It is not rich fattening country, but it is country that stands the dry weather.
3591. How would you describe the soil? It is somewhat of a red soil, with small patches of chocolate soil; red and yellow soils predominate. Further on, again, there is rough country, especially to the north of the line, but between Gilgandra and Binnaway a railway would run through some very good agricultural land. There are some rich patches of black-soil country between the two places, though there are some poor patches too; but, on the whole, there is a very fair extent of good country.
3592. How far is Binnaway from Gilgandra? Forty miles, or a little more.
3593. Do you think that a line should go as close as possible to Coonabarabran? The nature of the country prevents a line from being taken to Coonabarabran; but I think it should go as close as possible to it.
3594. Would it be necessary in making a line to Curlewis to cross the Castlereagh twice? Yes; once at Gilgandra and once further on.
3595. Do you know enough about the country to say if two crossings could be avoided? If you make Gilgandra the junction, you cannot avoid having two crossings.
3596. How would you describe the country north of the big bend in the Castlereagh? There is some rich agricultural and pastoral land along the river. The land within a few miles of Gilgandra, and going towards the mountains, is, most of it, suitable for agriculture, though it is heavily timbered.

- A. A. Mudie. 3597. Is there any rough country there? Yes, some; but it is not particularly rough.
3598. How far north from Mundooran would the good land extend? Sixteen or 17 miles.
- 2 June, 1900. 3599. And how far east and west would it extend along the route of the line to Curlewis? It would extend from the river in this direction about 20 miles, and then it would narrow down a bit on account of the spur of the Warrumbungles.
3600. Would the line to Curlewis open up a market in the north and north-west for produce grown about Gilgandra? The advantage of a connection with the Northern line would be considerable in a dry season, because of the facilities it would give for the transport of stock and of fodder. About Coonabarabran they are able to grow any quantity of fodder.
3601. Do you think that stock would come from the north or north-west across the proposed line to get to Mundooran? The probabilities are that a considerable number of store stock would come to the district, either to be sold here or to be fattened here. During the course of a year a large number of store stock come to Dubbo to be sold, and from there they are distributed to various places to be fattened; but in some seasons it is difficult to travel them, because of the want of grass and of water.
3602. You look upon a line to Curlewis as one which could give relief to starving stock in times of drought by providing facilities for their transport to the northern table-land? Yes.
3603. Would many starving stock be carried along such a line—from places on the Western line or from places north or west of Coonamble? It would depend upon the season. During seasons similar to some which we have recently experienced, a great number of stock would be sent over the line, and it would be of great advantage to stockowners to be able to send them.
3604. Apart from the transport of fodder and starving stock in times of drought, what traffic would there along the line? I do not know the capabilities of the country on the Northern line, nor the nature of the market there; but the Gilgandra district, and the country between here and Curlewis, could grow great quantities of fodder, and if the northern market were a good one, there would be a considerable produce traffic on the line all the year round. A lot of the land between here and Binnaway, which is not yet occupied, is good agricultural land, and would probably be occupied if there were a railway.
3605. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the area of the unalienated land between Gilgandra and Binnaway? I cannot say; but there is a fairly large area in it. I believe that there are 30,000 acres comprised in timber reserves.
3606. Is there any land available for selection? Yes; a fairly large area.
3607. Why has it not been taken up? One great reason is that the old residents of the district do not know the value of it. Settlers have come from Riverina and Victoria, and have taken up parts of it, and they are proving its value as agricultural land; but they do not care to go too far back. With the prospect of a railway coming here, some of it has been taken up only quite recently. The proposed line would be of considerable value in times of drought, in enabling people living along the Western line, at places such as Bourke, to send their stock to the Northern line, and in allowing the people on the Northern line, when the seasons were bad there and good here, to send their stock here. The line would also be used for bringing down Queensland stock. Dubbo is a centre for the sale of fat stock.

Arthur Frederick Garling, storekeeper, Gilgandra, sworn, and examined:—

- A. F. Garling. 3608. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you resided here long? I have lived at Gilgandra for three or four years, and for some years I lived at the foot of the mountains between here and Coonabarabran.
- 2 June, 1900. 3609. Are you acquainted with the country between here and Werris Creek? I am acquainted with the country between here and Coonabarabran for a distance of 50 or 60 miles from Gilgandra.
3610. How would you describe that country? Most of it is agricultural country. In through the mountains it would be fit for grazing, and patches of it would be fit for agriculture, too; but the difficulty would be in getting produce away from there. A line from Gilgandra to Curlewis would go through good agricultural country most of the way. On the other side of Bearbong, and about Yarragrin, there is very good agricultural land. Between Gilgandra and Bearbong there is loamy iron-bark country, and country on which box and budda grow. That country is good agricultural land. It does very well for wheat and for maize, if there is enough rain; but the seasons are not generally good enough for maize.
3611. Does the country you describe extend any distance from the route of the suggested line? From here to Tooraweenah it is the same right through, though you may get a sandy stretch here and there. On this side of Mundooran, too, there is a streak of white ironstone country that would be of little or no good for agriculture; but to the right of that there is some very good country.
3612. Is cultivation carried on in this district to any great extent? Not to a great extent; they are just beginning to go in for cultivation about Bearbong and through there. They seem to be able to grow more maize there.
3613. What yield do they get per acre? Last year I think they got from 15 to 20 bushels of wheat to the acre, although the season was a dry one. The yield of maize averaged from 25 to 30 bushels; but only small areas have been put under maize. Last year they got no maize; but the year before they got fairly good results.
3614. I suppose that during the last five years the seasons have not been good in this district, so that agricultural returns during that time would be below the average? Yes.
3615. Do you think that there would be a disposition among the people between Gilgandra and Coonabarabran to go in largely for agriculture if a line were to be constructed through that district? Yes. The only thing that prevents them from cultivating their land now is their distance from a market. There is a lot of wheat about Bearbong now which people are holding on to in order to see if prices will rise sufficiently to make it worth their while to cart it into Dubbo. It costs them 6d. or 7d. a bushel to send wheat to Dubbo; but if it only cost 1d. or 1½d. they could afford to send it. At present rates for cartage, all they would get for their wheat would be about 1s. 8½d. a bushel on the ground. It is wheat of good quality, and I have had a lot of it turned into flour.
3616. Does the district produce a fair number of live stock? Yes; but they grow wool chiefly, and deal in stock; they have not gone in much for fattening.
3617. I suppose Dubbo is their chief market? Yes.
3618. What does it cost to send wool to Dubbo? About 30s. a ton from round about Gilgandra.
3619. Is the timber in this district pretty good? There is some splendid iron-bark here.

3620. Would there be ample for railway sleepers? Yes; there are splendid forests of iron-bark.
3621. Would the timber trade contribute traffic to a railway to Curlewis? Yes. It would take many years to work out the timber in this district. In through Yarragin there is a little mountainous country; but once you get on to the top of it you can run along fairly well. There are no engineering difficulties there, such as there were on the Mudgee line. They grow a good deal of maize on the Coonabarabran side; but the Gilgandra district has now to get its maize from Sydney, or from the country round about Milthorpe. If the Curlewis line were made, the Coonabarabran maize would come here. At the present time the maize grown about Coonabarabran is almost valueless, because of the cost of sending it away.
3622. *Mr. Watson.*] Is trade increasing round about Gilgandra? Yes, considerably.
3623. What is the inward tonnage of Gilgandra? Last year I imported about 480 tons, and between the 4th March and the present date I have imported 100 tons, or a little more.
3624. Was much of that fodder? Very little of it was fodder; it was nearly all goods. I imported a few potatoes, a little maize, and a few oats; but nothing in the way of chaff.
3625. Besides what you import there is what comes to the local storekeeper? Yes; and what people in the district import directly.
3626. Have there been any developments in the timber industry of late? Three saw-mills have been erected at Gilgandra during the last two months.
3627. Where would they draw their supplies of timber from? The timber comes principally from places lying easterly from Gilgandra, near the route of the suggested Curlewis line.
3628. Where does the timber go to? To Coonamble, to Dubbo, and out towards Bourke and Cobar.
3629. What timber are they cutting now? Pine and iron-bark.
3630. How near to Gilgandra can they get good timber? At the present time they are getting good timber within 3 or 4 miles.
3631. Good big trees? Yes; some of the trees are very big, and a great deal of iron-bark has been carted into Dubbo for bridge work from places quite close to Gilgandra.
3632. Are they getting sleepers about here too? Yes; from country through which a line to Curlewis would pass.

A. F. Garling.

2 June, 1900.

Archibald Campbell Berry, Senior-constable, and Acting Clerk of Petty Sessions, Gilgandra, sworn, and examined:—

3633. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been stationed here? Very nearly four years.
3634. Have you been acting in your present capacity during the whole of that time? Yes.
3635. What is the population of Gilgandra? The population of the town is about 250. In my evidence before a previous Works Committee I gave the population of the district as about 1,400; but my district has since been made smaller. It extends now as far as Berrida Station, about 16 miles west.
3636. Have you noticed any marked increase in the population during the last four years? Yes.
3637. Has there been any increase in the area put under cultivation in your district during the past few years? Yes; a very marked increase.
3638. What do they principally grow here? Wheat, for hay and chaff.
3639. Do they export any wheat? A good deal of chaff goes away from here, and a good deal of wheat is sent to Dubbo. Wheat is also sent to Coonamble, and a good deal of chaff too.
3640. Do many stock come through Gilgandra? Yes, a number of fat stock come through here going to Dubbo, to Mudgee, and to Mundooran. They come through here from the direction of Coonamble, and a few come in from about Tooraweenah.
3641. All kinds of stock? Both fat and store stock.
3642. Does a large number of stock travel in times of drought? Yes.
3643. Where does it come from? Most of it from around about Coonamble; but some from the district between Coonamble and Walgett. Stock come here for grass.
3644. Has there been a drought in this district during the last few years? Last year was our worst; before that we had fairly good seasons.
3645. Has any stock left here on account of the drought to seek food elsewhere? No.
3646. Do you know the country between Gilgandra and Curlewis, along the route of the suggested line? I know the country between here and Tooraweenah.
3647. What sort of country is it? There is some iron-bark country, interspersed with pine and box and budda country. Some of it is good agricultural land.
3648. Is much of it under cultivation? Not a great deal, except at the homesteads. All the settlers grow hay for themselves; but most of them are new-comers.
3649. If there were railway facilities, would people settle on that land and put it under cultivation? Yes.
3650. Do many people in that district live by farming alone? Yes, about Gilgandra.
3651. Have you noticed any increase in the number of farmers during the time that you have been here? A slight increase. Last year there was an increase in the area put under cultivation; but, I think, a decrease in production, owing to the dryness of the season? The farmers here keep a few sheep and cattle.
3652. *Vice-Chairman.*] Has a larger area of land been brought under the plough this year? Yes; more this year than last.
3653. Is the increase a very marked one? No; but still it is an increase; it might amount to 150 acres. Last year there was an increase of more than 300 acres over the cultivation of the year before.

A. C. Berry.

2 June, 1900.

Richard Gware Hitchen, farmer and grazier, near Gilgandra, sworn, and examined:—

3654. *Mr. Watson.*] Are you acquainted with the country between Curlewis and Gilgandra? Yes.
3655. Do you think it would be possible to get a fairly cheap route for a railway to Gilgandra, going in the direction of Tambar Springs? I think so. The country is pretty level until you get out 27 or 28 miles, when you come to the hills; but they are not very high.
3656. Could you go between the higher rises? If you went across to Binnaway you would pass by the tail-end of the mountains. By keeping a little north of Binnaway you get a better run of country.
3657. What is the country like from north of Binnaway to Tambar Springs? It is all level country—scrubby country, with small hills, but no mountains which would require extensive cuttings.

R. G. Hitchen.

2 June, 1900.

- R. G. Hitchen. 3658. What is the country like from Tambar Springs to Curlewis? It is flat country right through.
 2 June, 1900. 3659. How would you describe the land between Gilgandra and Tambar Springs? From here to the mountains, a distance of 27 or 28 miles, it is all good farming land, and a lot of it is good grazing land, too. On the flats a good deal of farming is done; but the land is used chiefly for grazing.
 3660. Would that country continue on to the Castlereagh? Yes; for another 20 miles.
 3661. Is it as good there as along the first 28 miles? No; there are 10 or 12 miles of grazing country—black and red country—kurrajong country.
 3662. After crossing the river, what is the country like in the direction of Tambar Springs? You have 7 or 8 miles of bad country, and then you get box, pine, and budda country; it is all good farming land. The further you get the better the country is. After you get about 12 miles from the river, on the other side it is good farming and good grazing land right through.
 3663. Then, of the total distance, only about 20 miles would be poor country? Twenty miles at the outside.
 3664. Would that poor country be unsuitable for grazing? A lot of it would do for farming; in fact, there are a lot of people who have been farming on it for the last twenty years. It is chiefly iron-bark country; but it is not like the iron-bark country on this side. On this side the iron-bark grows on the flat country, but over there it grows on poor country on which cabbage gum grows. There are seven or miles of that country, and then you get into box, kurrajong, and yarran country.
 3665. Leaving out of account the 20 miles of poor country, would the rest be country suitable for agriculture? Yes; every bit of it.
 3666. Would the same description apply to the land lying any considerable distance north and south of the suggested line? Between Gilgandra and the mountains the good country would extend 30 or 35 miles towards the south, and close on to Calga on the north.
 3667. Then there would be good land on both sides as far as the influence of a railway would reach? You could get 30 miles of good country on each side of the line. Beyond the mountains the land is pretty well all the same until you get between Merrygoen and Digilah, where there is a lot of ironbark country. There are a few people living on that country and farming there. Between Binnaway and Coonabarabran you would not get more than 6 or 8 miles of bad country on the north side of the line before you were back on to the box country again.
 3668. Would all that country be capable of large agricultural development if there were a railway? Yes.
 3669. Could the hilly country 28 miles from Gilgandra be avoided? No; not unless you went pretty well down to Caigan, some distance below Binnaway, to within 15 miles of the route of the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line. Then you would run past the end of the mountains.
 3670. If you crossed the Castlereagh above Binnaway, would you have to climb over big hills, or could you run between them? You would have to cross the hills; but the grades would not be very heavy, because the rise is gradual.
 3671. Would the suggested line be of advantage to farmers here in giving them access to the Northern line? It would be of great advantage to the people on the other side of the mountains in giving them an outlet for their produce.
 3672. Would it provide an additional market for produce grown here? Yes.
 3673. How would the line affect the stock traffic? In times of drought, when people wanted to send stock to New England, instead of travelling them by road and losing a great many they would truck them.
 3674. Does any considerable number of stock go towards Munderooran and Coonabarabran for agistment in droughty years? Yes; stock travels to both places.
 3675. All that hilly country has fair pasturage in summer? Yes; the line would go through splendidly timbered country—country on which both ironbark and pine are growing.
 3676. Is the iron-bark of good quality? A lot of it is pipey, but, taking it right through, there is a lot of good timber, especially on the other side of the Castlereagh beyond Binnaway.
 3677. Is it suitable for market purposes? Yes; a great deal of it is.

TUESDAY, 19 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Charles Lancelot Garland, mining expert, sworn, and examined:—

- C. L. Garland. 3678. *Chairman.*] You are a mining expert? Yes; and a mining investor.
 19 June, 1900. 3679. For some years you were a Member of Parliament? Yes.
 3680. Do you wish to make a statement in reference to the proposed railway? I want to point out to the Committee that some time ago there was a line surveyed from Werris Creek to Wellington, and in a direct line between those two points there is a very important mineral belt which, in my opinion—and I have had a great experience of it—is likely to form quite as important a mineral district as Cobar. But it badly wants a line of railway through there to enable progress to be made. The same applied to Cobar, which is now a very important centre. I noticed on looking at the suggested route to-day for the first time that there is a line shown which goes considerably to the north of Leadville, which is the centre of which I speak. The line, as shown on the map, would really be of no service to that mineral country. The belt of country, taking a straight line from Werris Creek to Wellington, is north of Gulgong, and 50 miles from the Mudgee line. I assume that it would be fully 50 miles. That would involve a longer railway journey to the seaboard than going direct to Mudgee. That is the position of this wonderful mineral country. The chief mine there is the Mount Stewart mine at Leadville. Some seven or eight years ago that

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that mine was opened up, and equipped with large smelting furnaces, and when silver was at a fair value I think the run of the furnace extended over twelve months, during which time no less than 1,500 tons of lead bullion was sent away from the mine to London, and 250,000 oz. of silver. This will show the Committee that the mine is a substantial one. For at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles there are enormous outcrops of mineral lodes, some of which have never had a pick put into them. But every outcrop which I have been interested in developing has been found to contain payable ores. The Mount Stewart mine went into liquidation when the fall in silver took place. At the time I have mentioned we were giving the railway to Mudgee something like 100 tons of carriage a week, having 50 tons of coke sent up per week to Mudgee, and 50 tons of bullion returned from one furnace. We had 50 miles of land carriage, and freight on the railway being very heavy, that made the cost of production so great that we could not carry on in view of the existing price of metal. The mine was then shut down, and the Company which had spent something like £80,000 on the mine went into liquidation. I was the largest shareholder in the mine, and having great confidence in it, I and James Channon, a large mining investor, in Wyalong, bought the mine at public auction, and we have been working it constantly ever since. We have been doing development work since July, 1898, during which time we have spent in wages and stores, £3,778 2s. 6d. My own expenditure in the mine amounts to very nearly £10,000 since it commenced, and, I think, Mr. Channon has spent £5,000. He owns one-third of it, and I own two-thirds. We are opening up large bodies of copper ore. We have one body there over 20 feet wide, and the bulk assays are going between 7 and 8 per cent. of copper. There are also large bodies of sulphide of silver ore, not of a very high grade from 15 to 20 oz. of silver per ton, a little gold, and a little copper. We have also one lode 20 feet wide carrying a very heavy percentage of zinc, which, in view of the developments being made now in the treatment of zinc will become a valuable asset. We have no less than seven distinct lodes within our leases varying from 6 feet to 80 feet wide. I have here the plans of the lode which we are at present working. One lode is 80 feet wide. There is another shown that is 20 feet wide, and there are the works that we have carried out during the last two years. Out of those stopes in the old mine above the 157 feet level, we took out £80,000 worth of metal at the then value, which was shipped to London. The mine is totally untouched between the 157 feet and the 217 feet levels. Below that we have not been; but we purpose sinking to a depth of 500 feet in the ore which is carrying downwards. This portion of the mine is at least half a mile further north than the portion we are working now.

3681. The 80 feet lode? Yes, that is half a mile further south. Then beyond that for a couple of miles south there are large outcrops of gossan ore, so that the possibilities of that mineral belt with railway communication should be quite equal to those of Cobar. What really has thrown the field back is the fact of its being 50 miles from a railway. We could never get carriage at less than 25s. a ton, and it ranged from that to £2 a ton.

3682. Could you give in figures what it means to your company? If that railway were carried through the mine as originally surveyed between Werris Creek and Wellington, we could give the railway at least 200 tons of carriage per week. That, I think, would amount to more than the other line would give.

3683. I suppose you know the character of the trade which is done at Cobar; there is back loading from there;—do you think there would be the same character of trade in this district? Yes; coke would be carried to the mines, and matte or bullion would be carried to the seaboard.

3684. What district do you look to for the treatment of your crude ores, or half-developed ores? We now have three furnaces on the ground, and I suppose about £10,000 worth of machinery; but in order to treat the ore by modern methods, that is by pyritic smelting, we should require similar furnaces to what they have at Mount Lyell, and that would mean considerable expenditure. What we should send away from the mine then would be high grade matte, which would be sent to London or Dapto, or some other place where they deal with high-grade matte. The carriage to the mining district would be the ordinary supplies and coke.

3685. Do you consider that the mineral district there is extensive? Yes, very extensive, although we are the only people who have done any considerable work there.

3686. Could you give any approximate idea of the area of mineral country there? As far as I have examined it on the surface, the mineral outcrop extends between 2 and 3 miles. Extending for 2 miles or more, there are very large mineral outcrops. Those that we have worked vary from 6 feet to 80 feet, and in every one that we have worked, we have discovered payable ores. The old line, as surveyed, was near and parallel to those mineral outcrops, which some day will all be developed and worked.

3687. *Vice-Chairman.*] Those lodes you have spoken of—do the poorest of them run as high as 7 per cent? No. We are opening up some ores which go from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 per cent., but they carry a little gold and a little silver. I think the ore bodies which we have opened up now will average 3 per cent., and 3 per cent. with railway communication would give a profit.

3688. If you had railway communication, what is the poorest ore that you could treat? We could treat the 3 per cent. ores.

3689. Do they include gold and silver? Yes; a little gold and a little silver.

3690. The copper alone would not pay? Yes, it would, with the system of pyritic smelting adopted at Mount Lyell.

3691. What is the value of the ore which is being worked at Cobar now? I am not sure as to the value of the ore there.

3692. You said that this mineral district will be as good as Cobar? I think that Cobar ore runs about 3 per cent., but it also contains a fair amount of gold—2 or 3 dwt.

3693. Does the gold there make the profit? I think the gold there is sufficient to pay, not for the smelting, but for the mining. At Cobar the mine is developed to a depth of 500 or 600 feet. These ore bodies at Leadville have never been touched below 250 feet, and as we go down the gold increases.

3694. Is the surrounding country of much the same character as that around Cobar? No. The country surrounding Leadville is all good pastoral and agricultural land. It is beautiful country.

3695. What is the character of the rock? The bulk of the rock is slate, with diorite dykes coming through it. Where we are working it is chiefly diorite. We are not very far from the carboniferous formation.

3696. Where do you get your coke from? We were getting it from the Purified Coke Company, of Newcastle. I believe they are making very good coke now at Eskbank.

3697. You know that a good deal of coke is sent from Rix's Creek? Yes.

3698.

C. L.
Garland.
19 June, 1900.

3698. If a line were made across from Dunedoo, could you get that coke? Yes.
3699. Would it pay you to bring it that distance? Yes; if we could get it 20 miles nearer to the mine, it would pay us to take it round that way.
3700. Has there not been a railway projected from Werris Creek pretty nearly through Dunedoo? The only line that I know of is the one that comes through Leadville.
- 3700½. Do you know why that was given up? No; I was in hopes that that was the line that was to be carried out, and I wanted to strengthen your hands by giving this evidence.
3701. Is it not a fact that some of the Cobar matte is now being treated at Lithgow? Yes.
3702. Would it be a saving to treat your own matte instead of sending it to England? It would depend on the contents of the matte. I have made inquiries on the subject, and I find that the Lithgow people will not treat matte which has 6 or 7 per cent. of zinc in it. The only way you can dispose of it is to send it Home. The ores we propose to smelt at Mount Stewart have very little zinc in them.
3703. Do the Cobar ores contain zinc? I think they contain very little.
3704. What is the character of the country near Gulgong and Mount Stewart? It is beautiful, agricultural country.
3705. Is it much settled? No; it is too far away from the railway; but there are beautiful, black-soil flats.
3706. How much of it has been purchased by the squatters? Here and there there is a selection on it; but the land is held chiefly by cattle and sheep breeders.
3707. Is it held in freehold? It is pretty well all held in freehold—at any rate, the best of it.
3708. Then that line would pass through private estates all the way? Most of it would pass through private estates. In some portions of the district there is a good deal of Crown land—gold-field reserves.
3709. You are strongly of the conviction that a railway would lead to great material development there? I think so. I might mention that when Broken Hill mines were first discovered I was in Parliament, and I was one of the first visitors to Broken Hill. I was so impressed with the magnitude of Broken Hill that when I came back I tried to get the Parkes Government to make a line of railway direct to Broken Hill before the Silverton tramway was built; but the Government did not take it up. I felt so strongly on the matter that I put a resolution on the subject on the Business Paper of the House, in the hope that I would get it carried; but, unfortunately, very few Members had seen Broken Hill, and very few of them would have known what it was going to be if they had seen it; and I got so little support that I had to withdraw the motion. It will be generally admitted that if we had carried out that railway everything that I said in connection with it would have been justified.
3710. By what route did you propose to go? From our existing lines right through Wilcannia to Broken Hill.
3711. If you had built it, do you not think that South Australia would have made a line to the Border? They could not have touched our territory. We should have concentrated the trade, and we should have had big works established in this Colony. Five years ago this Committee had an inquiry in respect to Wyalong. I have made a study of Wyalong, and I gave evidence before this Committee strongly urging that Wyalong would be a permanent field, and I think that events have justified my predictions, because, as regards the lower level, Wyalong is opening out splendidly. You will find from the records of the Committee that the evidence which I gave has been borne out by subsequent developments. I have, therefore, no hesitation in making the statements which I am making now. If my expenditure gives any weight to my statement, I may point out that I have spent over £10,000 at Leadville, and that I am still spending £60 a fortnight there.
3712. How far is your property from Dunedoo? I have not been in that direction. It is 25 miles from Gulgong. Leadville is not an unimportant place; there are two hotels there, a post and telegraph office, a number of private houses, and a Public School with sixty or eighty attendants.
3713. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you know the nature of the country between Werris Creek and Wellington? Only that portion through which I have travelled from Gulgong to Cassilis.
3714. Could you give a comparison between the country on the proposed route of railway, and that on the other suggested route? No; it might be better where the line is proposed, but I can scarcely conceive of better country for settlement than what I have referred to.
3715. Is it country that will carry a good population? Yes, all round that district.
3716. I notice that is a shorter route than the one now proposed? Yes; it is almost a straight line.
3717. You stated that a Mudgee extension would be much more convenient for you? Yes, inasmuch as it would involve less mileage in travelling to Sydney.
3718. In the event of this line, as proposed from Wellington to Werris Creek, being carried out, do you think that a line would be justifiable to connect Mudgee with the line now proposed? I think so, inasmuch as when you get to Mudgee you just begin to touch country that is fit for cultivation and settlement. Right up to Mudgee the country is very poor. The railway seems to have stopped the moment it touched good country. I think the whole of the way from Mudgee towards the north-west there is really good country, which would warrant a railway being constructed.
3719. What part of the country have you the best knowledge of? From Mudgee through Gulgong, Denison town, Leadville, and Cassilis. I know all that country fairly well.
3720. Is all of it similar to the country at Leadville? Yes. Round about Gulgong the country is a little more undulating; but there is a good red soil, and when you get beyond Gulgong, going towards Leadville, the country is flatter and the soil is deeper. It will grow anything; but you cannot get the stuff to market.
3721. Is it box country? On the hills there is box. It is good cultivable country. There are some little ridges, such as Mount Stewart, which are a little bit rough; but there are patches of those which would grow anything. Fruit grows splendidly there. The district has a good rainfall.
3722. What are the mining prospects? The only people who have carried on any extensive mining there are the Mount Stewart Company. There have been a number of small mines worked in a primitive way, which promised well, but there was not sufficient capital employed to properly develop them. There are many outcrops which would be developed if the railway were made.
3723. Mining to a considerable extent would be carried on at Leadville? Yes.
3724. What have been the largest results obtained so far? When silver was higher than it is now the Mount Stewart Company subscribed £15,000 to open up the mine. They had an overdraft of £4,000 at the

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the bank, making £19,000, and during the twelve months run of the furnace we paid off the overdraft, and paid three dividends, besides doing a lot of developing work.

3725. How long has that company been established? That company was in existence for about four years. It is about seven years since we first started developing.

3726. Did you experience very much difficulty in regard to the cost of carriage? Yes. The cost of carriage was excessive. We were paying 17s. a ton for the carriage of coke to Mudgee.

3727. That is from Newcastle to Mudgee? Yes. Then we were paying from 25s. to £2 a ton for the carriage of the coke from Mudgee to the mine.

3728. What distance is that? Fifty miles. We were paying the same for the carriage of our bullion to Mudgee, and the Government were charging 30s. a ton for the carriage from Mudgee to Sydney.

3729. Would the line you suggest to any extent minimise the cost of carriage? We could start the mine straight away, and make a profit if we had a line running within a reasonable distance of it.

3730. Would that line run from Mudgee or from Werris Creek? From either place.

3731. Which line would be of the greatest advantage? A line from Mudgee would suit us best, as the cost of carriage by that route would be lower.

3732. Would it make a material difference in the cost to send the traffic by Werris Creek to Wellington as compared with the route *via* Mudgee? I do not think it would amount to more than a few shillings per ton extra. It would suit us much better to have the extra mileage by railway than to pay 30s. per ton for road-carriage, and be at the mercy of bad roads.

3733. Would the traffic to and from the mines be a considerable item? Yes, it would be a very big traffic. I had directly and indirectly 500 men working there when the Mount Stewart mine was in full swing.

3734. Can you give us any idea as to what the annual output would be of traffic from the mine to Sydney or Newcastle? I think we could give about 200 tons of freight a week backwards and forwards.

3735. Outside your company would there be any considerable mining operations? I have no doubt that, if we made a profitable enterprise there, the whole line of loads would be taken up, although it is on private property.

3736. You think it would tend materially to develop the mining resources of that place if it had railway communication? Yes. If there had been a railway there the Mount Stewart mine would never have been shut down—it would have been producing to-day. The only thing that shut us down was the cost of transit. We could have kept on, notwithstanding the fall in the price of silver, if it had not been for the road carriage.

3737. I think you said you got coke from several places? We got coke from the Purified Coke Company of Newcastle chiefly, but I think we could get it now for less at Eskbank, near Lithgow, which is nearer.

3738. How would this line answer with regard to getting the coke there? If it went near the mine it would not matter whether it went by Wellington or not.

3739. Speaking as a mining expert, do you think there is a large area of country that would be developed if this line were made? Yes. I think that north of Mount Stewart, towards Cassilis, there is a great deal of country that would be developed.

3740. If the proposed line of railway were carried out, would it in your opinion, open up the country for agriculture also? Yes, it would open up a large area suitable for agriculture. The farmers round there are crippled by the want of access to a market, and beyond a certain radius from the Mudgee line they will not grow anything—they merely keep a few sheep. They say it is the cost of cartage that kills them.

3741. Do you think that if they had railway communication the land in that district that is suitable for agriculture would be cultivated? I have no doubt about it. The Hon. G. H. Cox had a very fine estate at the other side of Leadville.

3742. You stated that a considerable amount of the land where the minerals are is private property? South of Mount Stewart it is private property, held, I think, by Mr. Buckland; but it is all available for mining under the Mining on Private Lands Act. I made arrangements with the owners of the land by which I took up four 80-acre blocks with a view of forming a large company to put something like £50,000 worth of capital into it; but I could not raise the money at the time, so I had to abandon the leases. But I have no doubt that if a railway were made through there, the whole of that country would be worked. I am negotiating for a capital of £50,000 to work the Mount Stewart mine. If I can raise that capital, I have no doubt that we can make that one of the most important mines in the Colony, and with railway communication provided I shall have no difficulty in raising the money.

3743. Would the land which you spoke of as being suitable for agriculture be private property also? There is a gold reserve there which is all good agricultural land. I could not say from memory what proportion is Crown land, and what proportion is private land; but I think that most of the best land in the district has been alienated.

3744. Would the property-owners there subdivide their lands and let them for agriculture if they had a railway? I think there is no doubt of that. The land is really good, and there is a very good rainfall in that district. It is very similar to the land round about Mudgee. A good deal of wheat and maize are grown there. Within 3 or 4 miles of Leadville there is one of the black-soil flats where you can grow almost anything.

3745. It has been stated that the black-soil country wants heavy rainfall for agriculture? They have a good rainfall in that district. We never had any difficulty in conserving water for the furnaces. We conserved 1,500,000 gallons in one dam, and we laid down 2 miles of pipes to a creek.

3746. Is the district through which this proposed line will pass fairly well watered in ordinary seasons? Yes.

3747. There would not be any difficulty in getting water? No; there is no difficulty about water.

3748. Is there any difficulty in getting timber for mining purposes? No; they can get splendid timber for that.

3749. Can you get it near the mine, or have you to carry it far? I think they carry it 2 or 3 miles.

3750. What kind of timber do they use? Chiefly box and hardwood. There is a good deal of pine in the mountains; but we do not use that in the mines.

3751. *Mr. Watson.*] From the feature-map it will be seen that the distance from Leadville to Dunedoo is 9 or 10 miles? Yes.

3752. And the Committee about a year ago, in connection with an inquiry into a proposed line to Coonamble, suggested that it might be taken from Mudgee towards Dunedoo;—do you think that that line would serve the mineral district, which you have spoken of, as well as the surveyed route now before us?

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us? Yes; it would come within 10 miles of that mineral district, and it would serve it much better coming from Mudgee.

3753. It is nearly 30 miles from Mount Stewart to Cobborah, the nearest point on the proposed line? Then it would be absolutely of no use to us. The distance into Mudgee from the mine is 50 miles, and there is a good road. Fifty miles of good road and a shorter distance by rail would be better than 30 miles of bad road, and 100 miles further by rail.

3754. Would there be any great difficulty about carting ore or matte 10 miles, or would you endeavour to get a tramway to your mine? If it were necessary to make the line 10 miles from a big mineral belt like that, if through some engineering difficulty it would be desirable to put a side line in, that might be done; but I think that whenever it is possible to run a line of railway to a mineral belt, it gives a greater certainty of that line paying if that is done, thus suiting both the Government and those engaged in the industry. Take the case of the Cobar line. If that railway had gone right along the line of the lode, which it might easily have done, no doubt most of the mines there would have been far ahead of what they are now.

3755. When that line was made there was only one mine at work? Any geological officer of the Government could have pointed out the value of that line of lode, and how important it was to run a railway along it.

3756. Your suggestion is that, if the line is taken out from Mudgee, it should go as close as possible to Mount Stewart? Yes. I have no doubt that it will pay handsomely then. It is not a field that is up to-day and down to-morrow. It is not a temporary field, such as an alluvial gold-field, but the lodes there are big and permanent, and there is scarcely any limit to the depth to which they could be worked, provided that they could produce their metal at a cheaper rate, and there is nothing that will assist them more than cheap railway communication.

3757. Do you know what they have been paying for road carriage between Mudgee and Mount Stewart? From 25s. to £2 a ton. That takes all the profit off low grade matte, and it makes coke very dear.

3758. Of course you have to pay railway carriage in addition to that? Yes. That class of mining also involves the carriage of heavy metals, furnaces, and very heavy carriage in the way of mine supplies and coke. I think when we opened the furnaces we paid the Government something like £2,000 in freight.

3759. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long is it since the Mount Stewart mines were first opened? It is six or seven years.

3760. Were there a great many men employed there at one time? I think that, directly and indirectly, we employed about 500 men when the mine was in full swing.

3761. Was the mine paying then? Yes; it paid no less than three dividends out of twelve months' production with one furnace, and defrayed a big bank overdraft.

3762. How many men are there employed there now? Only twelve men are at work there now.

3763. How do you account for the falling off? The furnaces were shut down when silver fell from 3s. 6d. down to 2s. 2d. an ounce, and I saw no hope of obtaining a profitable product, in view of our distance from the railway. Then we were shut down for some considerable time under suspension, and silver did not rise again. But I made up my mind that there was copper in that mine, and with what little money we had remaining we went in for development work and discovered copper, but we did not open it up sufficiently to know its value. I then tried to reform the company. I was the largest shareholder, having some 27,000 shares, most of them contributing. I tried to get the shareholders to subscribe more money and offered to take up every share that I was entitled to take up, by reason of my big holding, but they collectively offered us something like £7 10s. One small shareholder said he would take up his proportion, but out of 600 shareholders none would come in, and we were left no alternative but to wind up the company. That was done. We paid what money we had in hand, and the mine was submitted to auction by Messrs. Hardie and Gorman, and Mr. John Howell and myself were bidding for it. Mr. Howell ran me up to £1,750, and then stopped bidding, and so I got the mine. And one of our directors, Mr. Channon, offered to join me and take one-third. That was two years ago. We have been carrying the mine on for two years, and our total expenditure since we started has been £3,779 2s. 9d. We have opened up this copper ore; we find it is payable, and we are opening up large bodies of it. That is why I am so confident of the future of the property.

3764. Where did you get your supplies from? From Mudgee.

3765. I think Leadville is about 71 miles from Wellington? The distance from Mudgee is 50 miles.

3766. Are you acquainted with the country all the way between Wellington and Werris Creek? No, only between Mudgee and Cassilis.

3767. Do you know why the line makes that great curve;—is it not because of the rough country in the direct line? I do not know of any rough country in the direct line. They surveyed a line right through the mine, and that is the line that I thought was going to be constructed. I had some correspondence with the railway authorities when they made that survey, and they never, as far as I remember, stated that there were any engineering difficulties.

3768. You do not know why they have taken that tremendous curve? No.

3769. The direct line there must be a great many miles shorter than the surveyed line? Yes.

3770. Is the Mount Stewart Mine the only one at work at Leadville? Yes; the only one that I know of. There may be other small things there.

3771. Has there been any prospecting there? Yes; there was a mine called the Dynever Mine on which a great deal of money was spent, but the ore obtained was not of a kind that could be treated by smelting. I think the mine was abandoned on that account.

3772. Do you think that, in the event of a railway being constructed in that district, other mines would be worked? I have no doubt that other valuable properties would be opened up.

3773. You said that the copper had been traced for a distance of about 2 miles? The series of outcrops upon which the Mount Stewart Company is working can be distinctly traced for over 2 miles.

3774. Has there been no sinking beyond where the outcrop has made its appearance? Yes. Nearly 2 miles below a small prospecting shaft was put down, and very good assays were obtained. Wherever these outcrops have been followed down we have found a silver lode and other metals.

3775. Have they not come at the true lode? Only in the Mount Stewart Mine.

3776. So there is every prospect of this becoming an extensive mining field? Yes. I have no doubt, if I succeed in obtaining a capital of £50,000, that it will be a very good field.

THURSDAY,

THURSDAY, 28 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Charles Edward Rennie, Chief Draftsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

3777. *Chairman.*] You produce a map showing the tract of influence of this cross-country line, and indicating in that tract the various holdings, and their size and character? Yes. The limit of the tract taken is 20 miles on each side of the proposed line. At the Wellington end, we start halving the space between the proposed cross-line and the existing main Western line until we get 20 miles from the proposed line. Then we continue 20 miles up until we come within the sphere of influence of the Werris Creek to Narrabri line. C. E. Rennie.
28 June, 1900.

3778. The Dubbo-Coonamble line makes the narrowing of your tract extend further north than the Western line? Yes; the Dubbo-Coonamble line has an influence, too. I have allowed for both the main Western line and Dubbo-Coonamble line. On the eastern side, allowance is made for the main Western line, and also the main Northern line at the northern end, tapering off at a point at the Werris Creek junction. Within that area, regarded as the sphere of influence of the proposed line, there are, of alienated lands, 1,429,900 acres; of reserves, 514,300 acres. The alienated land is shown by the blue tint; the reserves are shown by the green tint; and the various kinds of leases—settlement, improvement, and scrub leases—are shown by blue hatching. They comprise 250,800 acres, as follow:—settlement leases, 118,200 acres; improvement leases, 118,100 acres; scrub leases, 14,500 acres. There are 905,300 acres of Crown lands shown by the brown tint. The Crown lands are held as follow: leasehold areas, expiring in the year 1900, 205,700 acres; held under occupation license, 347,700 acres; untenanted, 351,900 acres.

3779. Will you indicate where the largest tracts of unoccupied land are situated? The unoccupied land is distributed fairly well over two-thirds of the area from Wellington, northward. There are two large areas east and west of Mundooran, and there are two large areas just south of Mundooran, both east and west of the line. Those are the two largest areas in one place. Then there is another large area north-west of the line, where it crosses the Dividing Range.

3780. Can you indicate the localities of the timber reserves? There is a large area of forest reserve south-west of Mundooran, and on the verge of the boundary of the affected area. There are about 58,000 acres of forest reserve there. Then there is another large forest reserve adjoining the line, in the parish of Trinkey.

3781. Are they ironbark reserves? I believe the one near Mundooran is. There is also a small forest reserve near the parish of Bundulla. There are smaller forest reserves throughout the affected area.

3782. How much of the Crown lands now held under lease will be available for closer settlement, if required? The leases of the leasehold areas—205,700 acres—will expire this year, and a part of that area will become available. The area held under occupation license is open for settlement, excepting reserves.

3783. Roughly speaking, the greater portion of the tract of country which you have outlined is alienated? I can scarcely say that. The total alienated land is about 1,429,900 acres. The reserves, the leases, and the Crown lands together, amount to about 1,600,000 acres. The reserves and Crown lands together amount to 1,400,000, so that there is a greater area of alienated land of about 200,000 acres.

3784. Practically, one half the area is alienated? About that.

3785. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the total area of land open for selection at the present time? Roughly speaking, about 347,700 acres.

3786. *Mr. Watson.*] That has been open under occupation license for a good time? Yes.

3787. *Mr. McFarlane.*] At what period will the land, which is to be thrown open, be available? The leases will expire about July of this year. It will depend on whether Parliament adopts any special policy with regard to the disposal of the Central Division leases. Ordinarily, after the expiry of the leases, we have the areas examined, and a design prepared for subdivision. Subdivision follows, and the land is set apart.

3788. Are there other leases to fall in some years hence, until about the time when the next batch of leases expires? Practically, all the leases in the affected area will expire this year. Of course, the settlement, and the improvement, and scrub leases, are only for a limited period; but they are mostly for a long period, generally twenty-eight years.

3789. I suppose that we may conclude that the best of the land has been taken up? Naturally.

FRIDAY, 29 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

H. Deane. 3790. *Chairman.*] Since you last gave evidence one of your officers has made a report on an alternative route from Curlewis to Gilgandra? Yes; the report is as follows:—
29 June, 1900.

GILGANDRA TO CURLEWIS.

Memorandum to the Engineer-in Chief, Railway Construction.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,

Sydney, 15 June, 1900.

Sir,

I beg to report that I have examined the country between Gilgandra, on the Dubbo to Coonamble Extension, and Curlewis, on the North-western Railway, with the view of a proposed railway connection between the two places, and I have laid down a route (shown by a green line) on the accompanying diagram tracing. This route, after leaving the proposed station site at Gilgandra, would cross the Castlereagh River at a suitable place on the southern side of Gilgandra township, and, bearing for a short distance in an easterly direction, would cross the main road from Gilgandra to Murrumbidgee, about 321 miles from Sydney by the Great Western Railway; thence, bearing north-easterly, it joins the valley of Wallamburrawang Creek, and follows up this valley (crossing the creek itself at Biralbung) to near where Gundy Creek joins it; crossing this latter creek the line runs up for a few miles on its northern side, and thence, recrossing the creek, bears round to the right till it reaches a small table-land dividing the waters of the Lower Castlereagh from those of Yarragrin Creek. This table-land is crossed in a north-easterly direction, and thence the line, bearing round to the right at the back of old Bibbon station, gradually works down and crosses Yarragrin Creek in an easterly direction, about 1½ mile above McKellar's selection; thence it follows up the valley to the north of Mount Abundance, and, passing over another small table-land, runs down the valley of Myall Creek to its junction with Greenbah Creek, crossing the trial survey—Murrumbidgee to Coonabarabran—at 357 miles; thence the line would follow down the southern side of Greenbah Creek to below where Wangabutt Creek joins it, and crossing Greenbah Creek near Coolamobla Springs, the line would bear northerly for a short distance, and then, turning to the right, recross the Castlereagh River in a north-easterly direction; thence running up the valley of Mow Creek, on its southern side, and passing over the divide between this and Back Creek it would bear easterly and cross Terrawinda Creek just below where Box Ridge Creek joins it; thence bearing north-easterly, the line joins the explored route Bomera to Coonamble, via Coonabarabran, and crossing the main range dividing the waters of the Castlereagh from those of the Namoi at a very low point, it follows this exploration down the valley of Saltwater Creek to near its junction with Bomera Creek, thence leaving it and turning northerly the line crosses Saltwater Creek about 4 miles to the south of Tamba Springs, and follows down the western side of Bomera Creek to its junction with Turrabic or Cox's Creek; crossing this latter creek it bears north-easterly across the Liverpool Plains, and, passing over a small range between these plains and Curlewis, joins this latter place on the Narrabri side of the station at a point about 436 miles from Sydney by the Great Western line, and 283 by the Great Northern. The line itself would be about 121 miles long.

At the second crossing of the Castlereagh I have shown (by a green dotted line) a deviation running up Woolshed instead of Mow Creek; this would probably be equally easy to construct, and help to straighten the general direction. Another improvement might be made by junctioning with the North-western line at Breeza. This, although it would lengthen the line, would do away with the crossing of the range at Curlewis and bring the junction nearer to Werris Creek.

Taking into consideration the broken nature of the country traversed by the proposed route, I do not anticipate there will be any difficulty in obtaining a fairly easy line with a limiting grade of 1 in 60, or possibly better, by increased lengthening and with the use of 10-chain curves. The most expensive works are the two crossings of the Castlereagh River, particularly the one at Gilgandra, where the present road-bridge consists of seven 75-foot timber trusses, with two 30-foot and two 25-foot timber openings at the ends.

Ballast is plentiful, considerable stretches of the country being volcanic, and ironbark suitable for sleepers and smaller bridges is met with at intervals all along the route.

The country passed through is for the greater part eminently adapted for farming purposes, and may be described as follows:—Starting from Gilgandra it is a good, sandy, loam, box; country with alluvial flats of yellow box, apple, and flooded gum, and interspersed with sandy belts timbered with ironbark and pine; this extends up to the edge of the first table-land at the head of Gundy Creek; thence good volcanic country, varying from black and chocolate to a free sandy loam, stretches to Myall Plains, the prevailing timbers being box and apple. Beyond this, and extending up to the summit of the divide between Mow and Box Ridge Creeks, the country varies from poor to fairly good, timbered with box, white or cabbage gum, and stringybark, interspersed with belts of ironbark and a little pine. After passing this divide the country again improves, becoming of a free, sandy loam, the principal timbers being apple and yellow box; this continues to the main divide, when rich volcanic country is again encountered, extending down the valley of Saltwater Creek. After crossing this creek, the soil becomes poor and sandy, and, besides box, ironbark, stringybark, and pine are again met with. This belt only extends for a few miles, the country on the edge of the Liverpool Plains (which are black soil) being of a free, chocolate loam timbered with box, apple, and myall; similar country is met with when approaching Curlewis.

On the whole, I consider this proposal would serve the country it traverses, and the surrounding districts, very well; it comes within 15 miles of the township of Coonabarabran, and is within fairly easy reach of most of the good country on the central portion of the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line.

Another route, which would probably serve even a larger extent of country, would be an extension of the line from Mudgee, via Gulgong, Dunedoo, and Binaway, and stopping within some miles of Coonabarabran owing to the increasing difficulties in the formation of the country towards the end. This route, however, has not been examined in detail.

CHAS. McD. STUART.

The only thing to which I would call attention is that Mr. Stuart reckons that a ruling grade of 1 in 60, or possibly better, would be obtained, whereas, of course, on the Wellington to Werris Creek route we have a ruling grade of 1 in 75. As regards the cost, it is impossible to tell what it would be with any approach to accuracy, but Mr. Stuart thinks it would not be much more expensive per mile than would the Wellington to Werris Creek line. I have a few of the distances for the information of the Committee. From Wellington to Dubbo, the distance is 30 miles; Dubbo to Gilgandra, 40 miles; Gilgandra to Curlewis, 121 miles; Curlewis to Werris Creek, 29 miles. The total distance from Wellington to Werris Creek by that route would, therefore, be 220 miles. From Wellington to Werris Creek by the direct route it is 159 miles 27 chains.

3791. As far as the cross-country connection is concerned, it is about 180 miles from Wellington to Curlewis, via Gilgandra, as against 159 miles from Wellington direct to Werris Creek? The distance from Wellington to Curlewis, via Dubbo and Gilgandra, is 190 miles, as against 159 miles from Wellington to Werris Creek.

3792.

3792. With this advantage: that it would have 74 miles of line already constructed which you could use? Yes. Being a shorter line to construct, of course it would probably be a good deal cheaper in the total. H. Deane.
29 June, 1900.
3793. Would the district around Cobborah, Dunedoo, and Coolah be within the influence of a line from Gilgandra to Curlewis? I should think it is doubtful whether the southern portion of that district would be served. I should think the producers would send their produce to Mudgee—it would be shorter and the carriage by rail to Sydney much less.
3794. Around Cobborah, Dunedoo, and Coolah, there is a considerable tract of good agricultural land? Yes.
3795. Do you think the land between Gilgandra and Curlewis is of as high a quality as that? From what Mr. Stuart says, I should say that it is a similar class of country, where you get really good land.
3796. The good country in those districts seems to lie on each side of the watercourses; the line from Gilgandra to Curlewis would only cut the Castlereagh, and would leave the Talbragar and the southern watercourses practically out of reach? Yes.
3797. Are there any other advantages, from a railway point of view, which the Gilgandra to Curlewis connection affords as against the Wellington to Werris Creek connection;—would there be any difference in working expense? Being shorter, it would probably be cheaper to work, in direct proportion to the mileage.
3798. About what average distance does it keep from the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek line? Thirty miles.
3799. And it practically brings Coonabarabran within easy reach of railway facilities, being only 15 miles from it? Yes.
3800. They would have more watercourses to cross than on the Wellington to Werris Creek line? Yes; and the line would be somewhat rougher, and more up and down.
3801. *Mr. Shepherd.*] And more expensive in construction, I suppose? A little more. I questioned Mr. Stuart as to that point, and he thought it would be a little more expensive, but he considered that if a survey were carefully made it would not come to much more. There would be the bridge over the Castlereagh River, at Gilgandra, an important crossing, and another higher up.
3802. *Mr. Watson.*] The Wellington to Werris Creek line will cost £3,207 per mile;—do you think the alternative line would cost more than another £300 per mile, bringing it up roughly to £3,500 per mile? I could not say without an estimate, but if any one told me it would cost a little more, without particulars, I should reckon on an increase of about 10 per cent.
3803. Allowing that it would cost 10 per cent. more per mile, that would bring the cost of the 121 miles to £423,500 as against £511,000? And then you have to bear in mind that there are worse grades—1 in 60 as against 1 in 75.
3804. Mr. Stuart says that grade may be bettered? Yes; we may even be able to reduce some of the 1 in 75 grades on the submitted line. I do not wish to say anything against the line, but only to point out what are the facts. You have to cross a good many watercourses, and it is much more up and down than the Wellington to Werris Creek route. I think it is possible, if a survey were made, that there would be a greater aggregate of altitude to surmount.
3805. *Dr. Garra.*] There seems to be a *prima facie* case for this line in its greater shortness? No doubt.
3806. Looking at the map it seems that the line from Werris Creek comes very near Mundooran; suppose that instead of going to Wellington we went from there to Gilgandra, through pretty good country, along the valley of the creek, we should have almost as short a cross line from Curlewis to Gilgandra? It would be much the same.
3807. The line you have already surveyed does not cross so many creeks, nor has it so many ascents and descents as the proposed new line? Yes.
3808. That would make a cross-country line worth considering? I am not at all sure what the character of the country would be on the southern side of the Castlereagh. Between Gilgandra and Mundooran, I am inclined to think it is rather rough.
3809. You have no surveyor's report on that part? No. I have no doubt the Werris Creek line could be shortened at the Werris Creek end by touching at Brecza—that is, if you wanted to shorten it.
3810. The Wellington to Werris Creek line, if we are simply intent on a cross-country line, can be shortened without any engineering difficulties? Yes.
3811. We are not shut up with the Wellington route as surveyed, and with the Dubbo route as surveyed? They can be modified.
3812. The survey by Mr. Stuart has, I suppose, only been a light survey? It is only an exploration. He is an officer who is possessed of very good judgment; but there has been no actual survey.
3813. Do the spurs of the Coonabarabran range come down as far as where he would go south of it? There are spurs which run right down, but some of them flatten out. For instance, the divide between the Namoi and the Castlereagh continues right across from the Liverpool Range to Coonabarabran, but it is very flat at some places.
3814. Where your proposed line crosses it is very low? Yes; that is to say, it is low, compared with the surrounding country—about 2,000 feet above the sea. The rise to it is very gradual. From Bomera the rise is very little noticeable.
3815. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you state why the survey from Wellington, which runs through Dunedoo, Coolah, and up to the proposed Wellington to Werris Creek route, was abandoned? On account of expense. It was anticipated that there would have to be a tunnel at the upper end.
3816. That is, crossing between Coolah and the present survey? Yes. The present survey is undoubtedly the cheapest line you can get through the district.
3817. The other day, in giving evidence, Mr. Garland, who is interested in the Mount Stewart mines, put forward that locality as an important one from a railway-traffic standpoint, and thought the line, if it remained, should be diverted so as to go through Leadville, which the previous survey did? If the question of making a cross-country connection is put on one side, the proper way of serving that district would be by an extension from Mudgee through Gulgong, and then towards Dunedoo.
3818. That extension northwards of the Mudgee line would go very close to the district spoken of by Mr. Garland? Yes; I believe you could go right into it without difficulty.

- H. Deane.
29 June, 1900.
3819. Between Gulgong and Dunedoo there seems to be a range running northward, which, apparently it would be advisable to keep on the east side of? I think you get through it, or round it, although I have not any accurate information.
3820. Do you remember how much extra the line, as first surveyed, from Wellington to Coolah, and on to Werris Creek, was to cost, as compared with the present proposal? I do not think it has been accurately determined. A casual inspection of the section, however, will, I think, show that it is far inferior to the line submitted to the Committee.
3821. And would be considerably more expensive? I think so; and the grades are not so good. Between Coolah and the part where the dotted line on the map joins on, there would be some difficulty in getting suitable grades, and there would probably have to be a tunnel.
3822. *Chairman.*] What was the reason the survey from Wellington to Werris Creek was sent on to Werris Creek;—was it because there was a junction there, or was it because the country was easier than that which could be obtained by a direct line to Curlewis? It was considered that Werris Creek would be the proper point to aim at for the Northern line.
3823. For what reason was it looked upon as the proper point? So as to make as short a connection as possible with New England and the north.
3824. But a direct line to Curlewis would shorten the amount of construction? Yes; there would be a difference.
3825. Would it be necessary to have any of the appliances usual at junctions at Curlewis, if you junctioned this cross-country line there? I have no doubt it would.
3826. Would the annual expense involved in providing them be greater than the annual expense involved through the greater length of construction? I do not think you would save anything in annual expense, although the traffic expenses might be less; but I should say that, as regards maintenance and so on, the expense would be pretty nearly as great, on account of the grades and the somewhat more uneven character of the line. Then, at Curlewis, if you made it a junction proper, and did not run your trains right through, you would be bound at the end of a long line like that to have engine-sheds, a turn-table, and all the appliances you have at a junction. If you join at the gap, of course the trains will run right into Werris Creek.
3827. *Mr. Watson.*] Mr. Stuart mentions in his report the occurrence of pine on the more northerly route which he has explored;—could you ascertain the last point at which pine is met with going towards Curlewis? There must be pine not very far from Curlewis, because in travelling along the North-western line I have frequently seen pine brought in there. I think there are some saw-mills there.
3828. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is your opinion of Mr. Stuart's suggestion and the alternative route? It was not Mr. Stuart's suggestion. I think it was suggested by one of the traffic officers that that line might be examined.
3829. I do not think you are in favour of any junction with Gilgandra; you expressed yourself rather strongly against it some time ago? Yes; I was under the impression then that it would be very difficult to cut across there with a decent line; but Mr. Stuart's report shows that a much better line can be got than was anticipated at that time. At the same time it is not so good a line as the other, as you see by the grades, and the up and down character of it, which Mr. Stuart describes. . . By keeping further north, as he does, he gets into the ridgy country, and he has to negotiate that by curving round.

Henry Chamberlaine Russell, C.M.G., Government Astronomer, sworn, and examined:—

- H. C. Russell,
C.M.G.
29 June, 1900.
3830. *Dr. Garran.*] As a general rule, the rainfall diminishes as we go west? Yes.
3831. A line from Werris Creek or Dubbo is a western-going line;—would your figures show a falling-off in a line, as between Werris Creek and Dubbo, sufficient to affect agriculture? It would amount to some inches going west. It would fall off 4 or 5 inches between Werris Creek and Dubbo.
3832. Can you give us the rainfall at points along the whole line? Yes; I have taken the stations a little west and a little east of those two points, and beginning at Molong we have an average rainfall of 30·37 inches; Katella, 27·44 inches; Wellington, 24·09 inches; Obley, 27·66 inches; Dubbo, 23·26 inches; Narromine, 20·10 inches; Wambalong, 27·74 inches; Munderooran, 27·03 inches; Cobruraguy, 24·52 inches; Goolli, 26·08; Coolah, 29·96; Wcetalibah, 23·90; Ulinda, 28·45; Silent Dale, 25·82. You will observe that I am carrying the records towards the north-east over to Werris Creek. Blackville, 30·72; Moan, 28·10; Weblands, 31·60; Gunnedah, 26·47; Tamworth, 28·82; Goonoo Goonoo, 26·63; Wallabadah, 31·29; and Murrurundi, 32·70. You will observe that the rainfall ranges from about 24 to 30 inches going across from Dubbo to Werris Creek.
3833. The lowest figures you have given us are 20 inches for Narromine;—is that enough for wheat? Yes.
3834. And between either Wellington and Dubbo and Werris Creek the rainfall is between 24 and 30 inches? Yes.
3835. That is a good rainfall? Yes; it is a satisfactory rain, and it improves going eastward, as the land rises.
3836. It has been suggested to us to push the line a little further north, and take it from Curlewis across to Gilgandra;—going northward would not make any material difference, I suppose? No; in fact, some of the stations I have named are along that line.
3837. What is the rainfall of Curlewis? That is a little south of Gunnedah, close to Weblands, where the rainfall is 31·60.
3838. What is the rainfall of Gilgandra, north of Dubbo? 27·16 inches.
3839. And as between Curlewis and Gilgandra, we may say that the average is 23 or 24 inches? Yes.
3840. Going north, is there any diminution? Not materially; the diminution going true north is slow.
3841. What is the rainfall for Coonabarabran? 31·06 inches.
3842. Is it the hilly country which brings the rain there? I have not the hills marked on the chart; but, judging by the watercourses, they all run out to nothing in that neighbourhood, and I take it that it must be on high land.
3843. Do you notice whether hills or forests mostly cause precipitation? Forests do not seem to make any difference if they are cut away. For instance, I have had places cleared out in the middle of forests, and I find that the rain is no less than it is outside or in the forests; but rising to an elevation of about 300 feet makes a difference of an inch of rain.
- 3844.

3844. Taking that as an average, is this a district much subject to drought? Not so much subject to drought as places to the west of it. H. C. Russell,
C.M.G.
3845. Some of the witnesses say they have hardly ever had a season near Wellington in which they could grow wheat? I know that the drought affects this part of the country less than it does that further west. 29 June, 1900.
3846. Are there any places further east where it is more severe? Not that I am aware of.
3847. Why has Cassilis a heavier rainfall than Dubbo? Cassilis partakes of the coastal rain on the eastern slopes, and they get a good deal of rain on the Upper Hunter.
3848. Have the easterly gales we have had lately reached as far west as Dubbo? Yes; we have had a great deal of rain over the eastern half of the Colony.
3849. Does the rain get over easier where the range is low and flat? Yes. Speaking generally, the easterly rains do not cross the range at all, except in the Upper Hunter. For some reason—probably a geological one, the material of the mountains being softer—the rain has cut away all the hills on the Upper Hunter, and the main range is lower there than it is either north or south of it.
3850. West of Cassilis the rain gets over the range easily? Yes. They often get the easterly rains, which never reach the western part of the high lands.
3851. Does the rain in this district fall seasonably for wheat? Fairly well. Of course drought will not be limited to any area; but it is less severe here than it is west of it.
3852. So far as droughts are concerned, they will come at any time of the year? Yes.
3853. There is no month in the year which can be said to be drought free? No.

Charles McDonnell Stuart, Supervising Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

3854. *Mr. Watson.*] You have recently been over the country between Gilgandra and Curlewis, and a report which you presented has been handed in. Did you take particular notice of the timber on the route? Yes; taking it right through it is box country, and there are belts of iron-bark scattered through it. There is not much pine; but I think there is a sufficient amount of iron-bark on the line to sleeper it. C. McD.
Stuart.
29 June, 1900.
3855. In the immediate vicinity of the line? Yes; but you will not get many very big sticks in the immediate vicinity.
3856. The ironbark country seems to lie a little away from the line? Yes, on the other side of the Castlereagh, towards Dubbo.
3857. Would the effect of having sufficient iron-bark in the immediate vicinity help to cheapen the construction by saving the carriage of sleepers? I think so.
3858. What about the pine? There is not much of it.
3859. Are they not getting pine now from about Curlewis? Yes; there is a saw-mill there.
3860. Would the railway give access to any great amount of pine some distance out of Curlewis? I do not think so, because most of the pine they are getting at Curlewis is pretty close to it, and in the country through which the line goes there is not much pine to be seen—not close to the line.
3861. You do not think it will have any great influence on the traffic of the line? No.
3862. Did you form any opinion of what it would cost to bridge the Castlereagh twice, taking each instance separately? No; but roughly speaking, I should say it will cost £30,000 for the two.
3863. Do you think the cost of construction, generally, would be very much greater than that of the Wellington to Werris Creek line? It would be more costly on account of those bridges.
3864. Apart from the bridges it would be much similar? Yes. If anything, it would be a little more expensive. You have to cut through so much of the country at right angles to the watercourses.
3865. Is there likely to be any difficulty in getting through the same broken country immediately east of the Castlereagh, where you cross it a second time? Not as much as I anticipated. You can get valleys to run up, which take you over the divide.
3866. Looking at the country generally through which you went, do you think it would be likely to contribute much in the way of traffic in agricultural produce for the line? I think there is a great deal of good agricultural country—above the average.
3867. Leaving out of account the cross-country-connection aspect of the line, there would be some reasonable probability of getting traffic from the immediate vicinity of the line? I think so.
3868. With the additional advantage of going closer to Coonabarabran as a centre? Yes.
3869. Did you obtain any information as to the tenure of the land through which you went? There is not much of it purchased land. There is a lot of country to be thrown open, and most of the land held by squatters is held under lease.
3870. Did you go as near to Coonabarabran as you think it is possible to get in your suggested line? You get within 15 miles of it. Of course it is possible, by a good deal of lengthening, to get closer, without heavy work; but it would mean a very great twist in the line.
3871. The country immediately around Coonabarabran does not contain large areas of good agricultural land? There is more good country about there than I thought there was. The road the Public Works Committee drove over goes through the worst bit.
3872. Anyhow, the good country about Coonabarabran would be tapped by a line going within 15 miles of it? Yes.
3873. In your report you state that grades of 1 in 60 could be obtained, and, possibly, by further exploration, lower grades? Yes; by lengthening out you could probably get a grade of 1 in 75.
3874. Would that add materially to the length? Probably about 5 miles.
3875. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is your opinion of the whole of the line on which you have reported? As a line to suit farmers I think it is a very good line; but I do not think that there would be a great deal of traffic other than farming upon it.
3876. What advantage do you think it possesses over the line which the Committee has already examined? The great advantage is in so much of the country not being alienated. Against that, you do not connect with two junctions already existing, which is a serious drawback.
3877. Do you think the country is equal to the country on the other line? I do.
3878. What proportion do you suppose is not alienated on that line? More than double what there is on the other line. 3879.

- C. McD. Stuart.
29 June, 1900.
3879. Do you think the line would be much more expensive to construct? It would be more expensive per mile, owing principally to the cost of the two bridges over the Castlereagh.
3880. The country itself, exclusive of the bridges, would be equal to the other line? Fully equal to it.
3881. Is it not rather more hilly? It is; but it is very good country for farming purposes.
3882. The timber, you say, is sufficiently good to provide sleepers? Yes.
3883. And the country is better? It is a particularly well-watered part of the Colony.
3884. Taking it altogether, how would the mileage compare with that of the other line? This proposal is 121 miles, and the other is a little over 159 miles, so that there is a saving of nearly 40 miles.
3885. *Mr. McFarlane.*] One of the reasons given for the construction of a cross-line between Werris Creek and Wellington is on account of traffic coming from the Northern line, and using it as a cross-line;—how would the Curlewis connection compare with the Wellington to Werris Creek line in respect of that? I do not think it would compare well. If there is any through traffic people would prefer going from Werris Creek to Wellington.
3886. Where do you think the bulk of the traffic for the cross-line would come from—from the Northwestern or the Northern line? I do not think there would be much traffic further than what the line itself developed.
3887. Presuming there is traffic from the Northern line, in the event of the Curlewis-Dubbo line being constructed, they would have to shunt at Werris Creek, and then at Curlewis? Yes, or run the trains through from Werris Creek.
3888. Would that be looked upon by the Department as an inconvenience? Of course, a double junction is always an inconvenient thing, unless you run from the one junction and run two trains.
3889. What sort of country is there between Curlewis and Gilgandra? It is all good, loamy soil—there is very little plain country. Most of it is open forest.
3890. Does it compare favourably with the country between Wellington and Werris Creek or Dubbo, for agricultural purposes? Yes. It is also equally good for grazing.
3891. According to the map, the line to Curlewis crosses more water-courses;—are they of any importance? No.
3892. Is any of the land subject to floods? No. The watersheds do not extend to any great distance.
3893. Are there any serious obstacles to the construction of the railway? No.
3894. *Chairman.*] Would the cost of the alternative line be very much increased if you attempted to get a 1-in-75 grade? I do not think so, further than that the total cost would be increased by the extra length; but I do not think that the cost per mile would be much more.
3895. In your report you speak of the tableland which you cross a little to the south of Coonabarabran;—is that a serious obstacle in the way of construction? No.
3896. Would you like to offer an opinion as to the amount of good land on the two alternative lines;—which do you think would have the more? I am of opinion that the Gilgandra to Curlewis route has the more.
3897. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is there much settlement on the route? No.
3898. Have you any further information to offer? Only that the junction, not being at Werris Creek, is a serious obstacle for the line. It makes it more of a cross-country line than anything else.
3899. *Dr. Garran.*] If the trains always ran straight on to Werris Creek that would not be of so much importance? No.
3900. If the trains got in at Breeza they would all run to Werris Creek? Yes.
3901. So that that objection would not be of much importance? No.
3902. It would be an objection at the other end, at Gilgandra? Yes.
3903. Breeza, I suppose, is as good a starting-place as Curlewis? Probably better. It is easier of access to the line. You would avoid a small range.
3904. And it would not be much longer? Not very much.
3905. *Mr. Watson.*] Some time ago the Committee suggested that the country out towards Cobborah should be opened up by an extension to the Mudgee line;—do you think that would be an expensive line? The line, as laid out, is an expensive one.
3906. Do you think it could be improved? It would have to be looked into before I could express an opinion. Of course, it could be improved by lengthening out, but you might lengthen too much.
3907. It looks as if a better route for the extension of the Mudgee line northwards would be to keep a little easterly of Dunedoo, instead of making for Cobborah? By doing that you would avoid the bad country before you get to Cobborah. Then, after you cross the Talbragar, you come to two other ranges, and you may be able to work through them.
3908. As far as serving the country generally is concerned, a line a little east of Dunedoo would do as well as one over towards Cobborah? Yes; you would get the valley, and the Talbragar, Coolah and Mount Stuart traffic. I think you would serve as many people.
3909. Assuming that you went a little east of Dunedoo, do you think there would be any difficulty in getting up towards Binaway? That is a bit of country we have never examined. There will be some difficulty, no doubt.
3910. Do you think Binaway would be as near as it would be advisable to go, consistent with economy, towards Coonabarabran? I think so.
3911. Do you cross a second time, with the suggested line, the Castlereagh above Binaway? Yes, about 7 miles above it.

TUESDAY, 3 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

John Haynes, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

3912. *Chairman.*] How long have you represented Wellington in the Legislative Assembly? Between five and six years.

J. Haynes,
Esq., M.P.

3913. Will you favour the Committee with a statement of your views on this proposed Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes; I previously represented Mudgee, in that part of the country; but on the rearrangement of the electorates I stood for Wellington. I have had considerable experience of the various country districts, both in a Parliamentary and in a journalistic sense; and I can say, from my own experience, that I have not found any other district make, in so short a space of time, such remarkable progress or development as the Wellington electorate has during the period I have been the Member for it. That, of course, did not arise from the fact of my being the Parliamentary representative, but from a variety of causes, including the fact of the magnificent rich lands in that portion of the country becoming in part available for settlement. Just about the time that I was elected for Wellington, one very large estate—the Nanima estate—which cramped the development of the town, became, by reason of some financial changes, available for settlement, and in a space of three or four years, I think, every acre of that land has been taken up, and every acre of it fit for cultivation is under cultivation. That is within a small radius of the town of Wellington, and I know that that land under cultivation has given almost phenomenal returns of wheat. The development between Wellington and Bodangora—or as it was known then, Davisville—has been simply remarkable; in fact, it has been very much like what our experience has been in connection with the sudden opening of gold-fields. The whole of the country has been put under the plough, and where I used to see cattle and sheep some years ago there is nothing now but wheat-fields. The town of Wellington, for some reason or other, was up to that time like a tree that was girded with iron. By reason of the estate round about, the development of the town and district was cramped. Whilst on the one hand Orange, and on the other hand Dubbo, developed, owing to the lands there being open, Wellington was to a certain extent cramped; but when this estate was broken up, the development set in, and simultaneously a very large area of Crown lands became available, and I know that no available lands have been twenty-four hours unapplied for in that part; and in the great majority of cases there has been, I suppose, on an average, from ten to twenty applicants, and in many cases very many more, for every portion of the land. Great as has been the area of land rendered available, a very much vaster area of land is now falling in, to the extent, I roughly estimate—within a short distance of Wellington, and which would affect the Wellington and Werris Creek railway—of not much less than 150,000 to 200,000 acres. Every day I have requests from people round about with regard to these areas of land which are falling in under the leasehold system—all the large estates round about, extending out towards Cobborah—and requisitions are being prepared at this very moment to have made available for settlement 40 or 50 miles of country, extending in the direction of Cobborah, which land has been applied for for scrub leases, and has been asked for for ordinary purposes of settlement. I think there are three estates of very large dimensions, the better portions of which would be available for the plough and settlement in small areas by January next. I may say that the tenor of the whole of the requests that I have received from public meetings and otherwise, and also the tenor of the requisitions, is that the areas, which previously were to the utmost extent of the Act, should be reduced to 500 acres each, which fact shows that the district is estimated by the people to be about the wealthiest and the best supplied with rainfall and natural advantages to be found. I may say that one gentleman who came to Wellington about seven years ago, and took up land in the vicinity of Wellington, was a Victorian farmer, who obtained an estate on which he has made a most successful competence. He obtained the estate, he told me afterwards, owing to the dead condition of affairs about Wellington, at about one-third of its natural price. The farmer to whom I refer is Mr. Trevaskis. In one place, which is supplied now by a railway in another direction, but which is a fair sample of the wealth of the district in the locality of this railway, one small station alone last year paid £2,000 for ploughs purchased from one firm alone; and a comparison has been made of the amount of revenue paid by one farmer who became possessed of land which had been previously locked up. I find that a man farming 2,000 or 1,500 acres paid to the Railway Commissioners, in a year, for in and out traffic on agricultural implements and his own produce, more than was paid in the same year by the holder of the large pastoral leasehold area, consisting of 140,000 or 150,000 acres. I may say that all that land is practically of one quality, and I feel convinced that the country right through towards Cobborah, excepting a small portion of it, will be a succession of farms which will require very many railway platforms for the accommodation of the produce. I may say, as indicating the reliability of my statement on this point, that one farm in the district of Wellington, at a place called Maryvale, practically absorbs the whole trucking accommodation of the Railway-station, in consequence of the area of cultivation and the richness of the country. In the vicinity of Wellington—a portion of the country which would be served by this line—farming operations are carried on to the very mouth almost of one of the most stable gold-mines in New South Wales. That is at Bodangara, formerly known as Davisville. Recently a large area of this country was held under various kinds of reserves, and a portion of the railway reserve, extending out from Wellington towards Forbes or Parkes, was, through my instrumentality, at the request of the people, thrown open, and every acre of it was taken up in a single day. For the area of country lying between Wellington and the north, which is now reserved to the extent, I think, of a mile on each side of the railway peg, a great fight has been going on for years, and I know from applications that have been made that the whole of the land will be taken up, extending really right through to Cobborah, and that settlement will grow there. The tenor of all the letters

3 July, 1900.

addressed

J. Haynes,
Esq., M.P.
3 July, 1900.

addressed to me from this great wheat district is in favour of opening up the land. Some time back I opposed the action of Mr. Carruthers, when, as a member of the late Government, he brought in a Bill called "The Lands for Closer Settlement Bill," and I opposed it on the ground that, taking the Wellington district as a sample, there were thousands of acres of land of the best description locked up in various ways. I am justified in my statement by the fact that every acre opened to the people has been taken up, and these great areas are still open for a population which, in every single instance, has been singularly prosperous. I do not think, from my experience, that in any other part of New South Wales so many farmers, taken as a body, have been so signally successful in their operations as have those in the Wellington district. If inquiry from the banking institutions were possible, I think it would be found that the farmers there—the total number almost—have not only redeemed themselves absolutely, but are in a most sound financial condition beyond their previous expenditure. In my opinion a great feature in the recommendation of this railway is the fact that for 20 or 30 miles outside Wellington a stubborn fight is going on amongst the people for the purpose of preventing any sale of the Crown lands in larger areas than 250, or at the outside 500, acres—that is, within 25 miles from Wellington. The Cobborah people have pointed out that there are large areas of reserves which are unnecessary, and which would be rendered immediately available, and the land, I believe, would pay magnificently if served in the way proposed by this railway. I do not see that any evidence has been taken in reference to the fact that beyond Wellington, in the direction of Forbes and Parkes, is one of the most remarkable and wealthy wheat-growing table-lands, I think, to be found in New South Wales—I mean in the direction of Curra Creek, out towards Cumnock—magnificent soil hitherto held altogether against the people, but which is now becoming available for settlement. The remarkable condition of affairs in regard to Wellington is illustrated by the fact that all this land is now being taken up, that the trade of Wellington has more than quadrupled, and that the railway returns are enormous. On one side you find a town like Orange, with vast development, and on the other side a town like Dubbo; and my opinion is that the cramped condition of Wellington is explained by the fact that, from a variety of causes, this land was held intact. On this land near Wellington being made available, we shall have another Dubbo at Wellington, but, in my opinion, a long way more prosperous than Dubbo, because of the better rainfall, the better climate, and so on.

3914. This railway has been put forward, in the first instance, as a cross-country railway to connect the Northern and the Western systems; you seem to regard it as being a railway, the construction of which would be justified from a developmental point of view—the opening up of the country? Yes, a good deal. I confine my remarks up to the present to Cobborah, which is the most distant part of my electorate. I know a good bit of the country also from Werris Creek this way, which, also, in my opinion, is magnificent land.

3915. If the Northern line were not built, do you think it would be a wise thing to construct a line out in the direction proposed for the purpose of opening up that country? I do think so. I think it is a terrible hardship for the people of the west to have to fight such prolonged battles in drought time. We know that in the northern districts, such as the Hunter, where I came from, the Upper Hunter, Armidale, and other parts, there are magnificent rainfalls, and produce is enormously plentiful; and it is a sad thing to find people in the west perishing because of the terrible difficulties in the way of carriage along the ordinary roads. I am positively aware of the fact that some of the station proprietors in the west—even in the direction of the Lachlan—although they have a railway, are, by reason of the distance, situated similarly to the people who would be served by this projected line. I know for certain that, in the face of such prolonged dry weather, they have been unable to master the drought, solely by reason of the fact that, although produce was plentiful elsewhere, it could not reach them except at exorbitant figures.

3916. Do you think that there would be a considerable cross-country traffic in produce in time of drought? Yes. Taking the last seven years of drought, I am certain that there would have been an enormous traffic of produce from the north on any line running between Werris Creek and Wellington.

3917. Taking an ordinary fair season—one in which drought does not appear—what interchange in produce or commodities would there be along the line, then? We are sending, and would send, some of the produce of our district to the far west. Magnificent prices have been obtained by our farmers at Wellington by sales of produce sent to the far west.

3918. Do you anticipate that you would send similar produce across this line if it were built to the Northern line? Yes, I feel sure we should. The Wellington produce has had a very good market in Sydney, and practically there is a competitive market between Sydney and Bourke, so far as Wellington is concerned, and I am quite sure that we were unable to supply anything like the wants of the people of Wellington. It seems to me to be an extraordinary thing that huge loads of produce in bulk should come to the west, *via* Sydney, which, I presume, came from the north—it seems extraordinary that it should come by way of Bathurst, Orange, and Wellington on to the west, when the short stretch of country intervening could be traversed, and the rich northern country could be brought within reach of our torrid areas in the west.

3919. You think then that the produce of the Northern district would be sent across this cross-country projection out to the west? I think a good deal would.

3920. What produce would be sent the other way;—would there be any return traffic? Cattle would travel a great deal. The cattle traffic has been enormous on our railways in that direction. In my opinion the condition of the west beyond Dubbo is that of paralysis, and it appears to me to be chronic. From my experience of affairs out there, I think that the drought conditions have, from some cause or other, become permanent—probably from the cutting down of scrub, or from the fact that we do not store any water. For some reason we have reached a chronic condition of drought there, which is such an affliction that I think some extraordinary steps should be taken to connect these drought-stricken areas with areas that never experience these drought scourges. I know Armidale well, and I see there is a movement there on behalf of the farmers to get a quick means of reaching a market in the west. My experience of the two extremes—of the west and of the New England and Liverpool Plains table-land—tells me that it would be a most statesmanlike and generous thing to provide some readier means than we have at the present time, whereby the people of the west should be relieved from such terrible losses and terrible sufferings. I have recently travelled in the west, on a trip by myself, when I took particular notice of the surrounding districts, and I say that it appears to me that the time has arrived when some extraordinary steps should be taken to save that country.

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3921. You indicated, in your opening remarks, that this line should have some connection—at any rate in the future—to the Blayney-Harden line by constructing another link? Well, it might. It is 30 miles from Wellington to Orange—by a very good grade, except in one or two places which could be altered—and 15 miles further to Blayney; but I am presuming that it might be found possible to run across the Wellington line towards Forbes or Parkes, and in that regard I referred to the tableland of Curra Creek and Burnwood. I have not the slightest doubt that a railway will be eventually required out towards Cummoek and those parts, by reason of the richness of the soil, and the settlement going on there, and the country from Wellington out towards that district is surprising. It is indeed surprising to find, in so short a space of time, such an enormous area of land under wheat cultivation.

3922. You see that there is a fairly large area between the Western line, and the proposed Dubbo-Coonamble line on one side, and the North and North-western lines on the other;—do you think that that large patch of land not now served by railway would be better served by an extension from Mudgee, or by this proposed cross-country line? In my opinion a great country would be served, and great traffic would be developed, if a railway were continued from Mudgee to junction with this line at Cobborah.

3923. You mean to construct the Wellington-Werris Creek line and then have an extension to it from Mudgee? I mean that if the line were constructed from Wellington to Werris Creek it would be wise to have an extension from Mudgee to serve that country. I think that a railway from Mudgee to Gulgong was approved. That is a very rich stretch of country.

3924. Do you think that the construction of the Wellington-Werris Creek line would bring about a material change in the character of the operations going on in that country now? Yes, I feel sure of it. My reason for saying so is this: we have no district south of Newcastle, on the coast or inland, which can provide the distant arid west with the produce which is essentially necessary for the successful working of the west. We have not, for instance, south of Sydney, any district like that of Armidale, Glen Innes, a portion of the valley of the Hunter, nor have we any district like the North Coast. The western district, by reason of its distance, and also by reason of our present railway system, is practically isolate from those rich areas of the country which never have any experience of a year's drought, and I have never failed to notice that the carriage of produce produced a corresponding traffic back in some form or other.

3925. *Dr. Garran.*] Has not the arid west drawn very heavily on all the good country between Orange and Narromine? I do not look upon Orange as being a very productive district in regard to fodder. I think it is pretty well tied up in providing for its own needs. Orange and Bathurst are districts that do not grow anything to any extent beyond that. The development that is going on in our district, from Narromine down, is, in my opinion, for an export trade. The great effort being made now is for the purpose of growing wheat. We make fodder only when the season looks adverse or the market is falling considerably. Then the wheatfields are generally put under the machine and the crop is converted into chaff or fodder.

3926. But has not the great demand for fodder made it pay better to grow hay sometimes, than to grow wheat? Yes: I daresay in drought time it has, but at that time, although it is to some extent against the interests of my district, I say that it is a great handicap for the people of the west to be forced to pay famine prices for produce when it is so plentiful and cheap in other parts of the country.

3927. But has not this demand in the west been part of the cause of the prosperity of Wellington? I do not think so. I do not think that the prosperity of Wellington has arisen in that way at all. There are only some very large farmers, such as Mr. Barton and two or three others, who have, in a sense, catered for the west. Most of the farmers have gone in for wheat-growing.

3928. You say that you had paid some attention to this western country;—do you think it pays better to send the stock to the grass, or to send fodder to the stock? Well, it largely depends on circumstances.

3929. I ask you because it is a much disputed point amongst witnesses we have had—practical men seem to differ? Well, if produce is available at all at reasonable prices, from what I can learn I should say that squatters prefer keeping their stock at home.

3930. We have been told by several witnesses—practical men—that even if we had railways going into the west abundantly, it would be simply impossible for the east to take all the stock from the starving country—that there would not be sufficient room there for grazing them? I daresay that is so. One of the things that has to be considered is where are you going to put them.

3931. Well, if we cannot save the lives of the sheep by sending them to the east, the only way to save their lives is by sending food west to them? A reciprocal arrangement, to some extent.

3932. Well, say, half and half;—will it pay to keep alive the average kind of sheep that are depastured in the west by giving them imported food—I do not say a few stud stock, but a whole flock? I cannot give a definite answer on that point. One very extensive squatter in the Condobolin district told me that they prospered very decidedly when they were able to obtain produce by train, and could feed their flocks.

3933. How far was he from a railway? Not very far—about 10 miles.

3934. Then he had very little cartage? Yes.

3935. He got his produce cheaply? Yes, comparatively cheaply; but the distance it was brought was great.

3936. While, in connection with this cross-country line, one of the recommendations is that it would give access for eastern fodder to the western arid lands, do you know what it would cost per head to get the sheep to where there is feed? I cannot give you definite information on that point.

3937. If it will not pay to take the sheep, there is an end to the trade? The fact is, that a number of the squatters, by reason of the situation, preferred to travel the sheep. I know it paid them enormously to travel them by train, although the difficulty and the cost were great. But the means of quick transit have not been available in this direction. I have not the slightest doubt that, in a dry time, we should see the great bulk of our western stock taken to the north, where the country is good. I knew the district about New England well for many years, and I know that the squatters out in the west, and stock-owners generally, lamented the fact that only certain districts could be reached by rail at all, and they were very sorry that they could not get their stock up to the north.

3938. Take the line to Bourke—all the stations 30 to 50 miles to the west of that line are within easy reach, pastorally speaking, of that railway? Yes.

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3939. They could all have sent their stock, but did they send their stock away and try to save them all? No; because every available portion of country open at that time was taken, but the country that was not available by the railway was not reachable. It would hardly pay them to take them by the present route.

3940. But if the country were already fully stocked with starving sheep that could get there, where was the chance, even if you made a railway, for the rest of the sheep? This line would open up an entirely new area of country, which hitherto has not been of any use to our pastoralists in the west.

3941. Some of the evidence taken by the Sectional Committee shows that a great deal of starving stock was sent from between Wellington and Werris Creek? No doubt; but not nearly so much as might be.

3942. Which country are you referring to as being opened up? Werris Creek. To most people it seems ridiculous to think that it would pay to train starving stock; but it is a fact, nevertheless. But I know that the difficulties in the way of removing stock to the north country from the west, at present, are so great that people have practically given it up. I know that the demand for the lower portions of the Wellington electorate—where there is a pretty good rainfall—on the Macquarie River, has been so great that the holders of land there have made considerable sums of money by reason of the fact that stock could not be taken elsewhere at anything like a paying rate.

3943. Well, if we are going to make the railway to pay, and part of its revenue is to come from starving stock, we have to see that it will pay to take the starving stock? Yes, undoubtedly.

3944. At present, the Railway Commissioners take it at a price that barely covers the cost of taking it? That is true.

3945. So that if they get all that traffic, perhaps there will be no great profit, but only an indirect gain by keeping the stock alive? I do not regard the conveyance of stock by train as satisfactory in regard to the returns.

3946. It appears that this land is so good that if the proposed railway were made an immense area now under pasture would go under agriculture? Yes.

3947. If so, it would not be of much use for starving stock? Undoubtedly. I do not lay much stress on the value of this land as stock-carrying land, but my contention is that the development of farming would be so great that the backwards and forwards traffic on that account would pay the railway. The travelling of stock at a time of drought may occupy the railways, but, in my opinion, it is in itself a condemnation of a system whereby people are located in a place where they cannot feed their stock.

3948. One of the strong arguments put before us on behalf of these railways is that they will be available for starving stock? But I would not recommend the construction of this line on that ground alone.

3949. You recommend the line for the purpose of settling the country with *bona fide* tillers of the soil? Precisely. And I do not think I should be dealing solely with imagination were I to say that if the whole of the land from Wellington to Werris Creek were rendered available for cultivation—the distant parts in rather longer sections in order to combine grazing on a small scale with farming—every acre of it would be taken up within one week; I mean adjacent to the railway, within 10 or 20 miles.

3950. How far from Wellington does this prosperous farming now reach? There is a succession of farms, with a very slight break of brush country, all the way to Cobborah.

3951. How far is that? About 55 miles. A singular thing in connection with this country was, that at the time I went touring the district, after the new arrangement of the electorates, I took one of the persons who is thoroughly acquainted with the locality, and we found ourselves completely bushed by reason of the fact of the opening of so many roads, and the closing and the fencing of different portions; the settlement had become so enormous, and the farms continuous. There is only one other part of New South Wales that, in my opinion, compares with it, and that is the district around Bogan Gate. The settlement out there reminds me of the time of the gold rushes, because it is an unusual thing to see such activity and development in what are called agricultural areas; but this country is one succession of farms, and the farmers are prosperous men, too.

3952. Our evidence generally is to the effect that an agriculturist cannot prosper much more than 20 miles from a railway station—that he ought not to take more than one day to go in, and come out, but you say that the men in your district go 40 or 50 miles? They take different routes. Some of our wheat is carted all the way from Spicer's Creek to Mudgee—that is, from 45 to 55 miles. A great deal of our wheat supplies the Gulgong and Mudgee mills.

3953. How far do farming operations go west of Werris Creek, on that route? A good portion of the district, I should say, from what I can recollect of what I saw when travelling over it on horseback as a newspaper reporter; and I thought then that the country looked capital.

3954. Which would be the better for the district lying between the Western line and the North-western line, at present—to make a cross-country line, or to extend the Mudgee line to the Northern line? I maintain that the Mudgee line must be extended, but I say that an extension from our Western line, at some point or other, is inevitable.

3955. If the Mudgee line were extended, it would go between the other two lines, and it would draw everything from, say, 20 miles north of its terminus, wherever that was? But as far as I can see I do not think that there would be any justification for it at the present time, seeing that a railway has been determined upon between Dubbo and Coonamble. I do not think that any extension beyond Cobborah would pay, because I believe that that is exclusively pastoral country. But the proposed line to Werris Creek keeps within a very well-watered portion of our country. I wish to impress on the Committee the fact that, as the result of farming in these districts, one farmer alone in our district has paid regularly for some years past to the Railway Commissioners, for the carriage of his produce and agricultural implements, although he holds only 1,000 acres, more than has been paid per annum by the holder of the adjoining pastoral leasehold of 130,000 acres.

3956. That is a very strong argument in favour of close settlement in good districts, but you could not do that in a good district? No; and I do not think it would be justifiable.

3957. If the existing railway line serves the purposes of farmers for 20 miles out, and the Werris Creek station serves them for 20 miles out at the other end, it is the middle part of this projected line that would be most useful? Yes, undoubtedly. I do not say that the construction of a railway very much west of Cobborah would be justified by what are called produce returns, because the drought conditions commence not very far out of Cobborah to the west. But the country intervening between Wellington and Cobborah must be served by a railway immediately, because the public cannot stand the handicap they

they have now. The enormous cost of roads is such as to afflict the State treasury with a huge expenditure, and the price of produce is so great, because the cost of carriage is so great. A farmer has to cart his stuff such a long distance, and the country is all volcanic soil, and, consequently, very soft; and the necessary expenditure on roads is very great. I feel sure that, with the exception of a very short interval of naturally barren country—I think it is ironbark country—the whole of the railway line from Wellington to Werris Creek would pass through a succession of farms.

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3958. Another point is that it does not pay at present to make our railways so close to one another? I admit that.

3959. We want to hit the intervening country between our lines as much as possible, and do the greatest good to the greatest number? Exactly.

3960. This line from Werris Creek to Cobborah would run pretty close to a line from Wellington to Gilgandra? Of course the character of the country there is totally different, and the pursuits of the people are different. Beyond Dubbo, except when you get to Narromine, the paying avocations, so far as immediate returns are concerned, cease.

3961. But we are told that we may expect cultivation as far as Gilgandra, at least, if not as far as Gulargambone; the country does not get purely pastoral until we come in sight of Coonamble, almost? There is no doubt that that railway line would serve a district, but it would still leave our portion unserved.

3962. But what I want to know is, would not a line from Mudgee north be more midway between the two lines than the line from Wellington to Mundooran? It would serve an area of country, but I do not think it would pay to go much beyond Cobborah at the present time.

3963. Well, if it would not pay to go beyond Cobborah, why would the Wellington line pay to go beyond Cobborah? I mean in that district. I am keeping pretty well to the rain-fed country.

3964. But if a line were made from Mudgee, or from Gulgong, north, would it not strike the route of this cross-country line somewhere north of Coolah? It would no doubt serve good country, but I do not think that that country is equal to the other.

3965. Would it not open up a much larger area of country than a mere cross-country line would? I do not think so, as regards country that would be fit for cultivation—such returns as we get now from between Geurie and Dubbo.

3966. How far is Cobborah from Dubbo in a practicable way by road? About 50 miles.

3967. Where do the Cobborah farmers send their wheat to now? I think they try to reach Dubbo and different places.

3968. Dubbo is their nearest station, I suppose? Dubbo is one of their stations, but I think that the most of their wheat goes to Gulgong and Mudgee.

3969. Is it not a much longer route to Gulgong than to Mudgee? I think that it is. There is a better market at Wellington.

3970. But there is a shorter railage to Sydney from Mudgee? Yes.

3971. So there would be an inducement for them to go to Mudgee? Yes.

3972. But the country you speak of as being so rapidly settled now would be really served if a line were made from Wellington to Cobborah? Yes—that is one portion. I say that that would pay immediately.

3973. Merely a cocks spur line? Yes, undoubtedly. I think it would be one of the best paying lines in New South Wales.

3974. You know that, as a rule, cocks spur lines do not pay—that they have failed in Victoria very largely? They may have failed in Victoria, but they would not fail in this district.

3975. You think that the line would be so well patronised that it would pay within two or three years? I am certain that it would pay from the opening. It is astonishing how much produce comes from that district.

3976. *Mr. McFarlane.*] In the event of the proposed line being constructed, do you think there would be a large cross-country traffic? I think there would be a great traffic. The system that we have now on one line over that great barrier—the Blue Mountains—does materially hamper the development of the west.

3977. What direction would the traffic principally come from? I think the northern traffic from Queensland and those parts would come down to New South Wales.

3978. Would there be much traffic between the New England district and the Western line? I think so. I am fully convinced that the whole of the development of the west has been seriously hampered by reason of the fact that everything has to be brought down to Sydney from the interior in the north, and then from Sydney out into the west.

3979. Have you a good knowledge of the country between Werris Creek and Wellington? A pretty good knowledge.

3980. What should you class the country generally as? I think that, on the whole, farming and small pastoral work would be carried on.

3981. Do you think that a large proportion of the land is suitable for cultivation? A very good proportion of it is.

3982. Do you think that the opening of the railway would have the effect of placing that land under cultivation? Yes; I think it would. I do not think there are many districts in New South Wales so overrun as Wellington is by people from Victoria and other parts waiting for land. I have been very much disgusted at the fact of men having to spend £25 to £30 in looking for land, and then getting none.

3983. Does that happen frequently in that part? It happens at all times when land is rendered available in the Wellington district.

3984. Do you know the character of the available Crown lands between Wellington and Werris Creek? There are great areas of Crown land available for combined farming, such as is now being carried on in our district—wheat-growing and sheep-raising.

3985. Do you think it would pay to cultivate wheat in that area if this railway were constructed? provided that facilities were given for shipment. Four or five years ago, when I first went to Wellington, the freight charge on wheat was pretty considerable; but the Railway Commissioners undertook to reduce it fully one-third, if not one-half, if we could arrange to have large consignments going at the same time, and I think development is in that direction. At the present time you may see at the Wellington station a most extraordinary state of things—the storage of enormous quantities of wheat that cannot find an outlet

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outlet by reason of the railway arrangements; and in the town of Wellington the sight round about the mill is something painful to any one who knows how development must go on.

3986. What is the principal wheat market at present for the farmers round about Wellington? Sydney, largely. We sold a great quantity of wheat, to be sent to Adelaide, the year before last, I think, and also to be sent to Melbourne. I think that our anticipated return for this year was 600,000 bushels.

3987. Does much produce go to the west? Yes; a great deal, when it pays the farmer.

3988. The proposed line would pass through large areas of freehold land? Yes—that is to say, as far as Cobborah.

3989. And various other places also? It goes through freehold land; but that is in small areas. The line from Wellington to Cobborah, in my opinion, is the portion which would sustain the paying character of the railway line right through.

3990. I am not speaking particularly about the country between Wellington and Cobborah; but in many parts the holdings are large.—do you think if the railway were constructed it would have the effect of inducing the holders of those large areas to subdivide their property into small agricultural areas? That has been the experience so far. Where railways have gone the land has been thrown open and cultivated.

3991. *Chairman.*] Is there anything you would like to add? I should like to say that I understand that a very strong approval of this line comes from the Queensland people in connection with Federal considerations.

3992. Is that in view of the transference of cattle to southern markets? I think there will be a good deal in that. I should like to urge on the Committee the fact that if a glance be taken at the condition of affairs at the present time it will be seen that our trunk line of railway, connecting with the rich areas of the north, being by way of Sydney, and across the natural barrier of this country, the Blue Mountains, is a serious permanent handicap to independent development in the west. Why people should be compelled to use a railway line coming by way of Newcastle, Gosford, Sydney, and the Blue Mountains, when they could come across country from the table-land on the north, to the west, I cannot understand. I could understand the country continuing in that condition if it were necessary, owing to its not having enough population, or sufficient financial strength, to construct the proposed line. But, I think, that this line is justifiable on the ground that it will bring the drought-stricken west into connection with the northern district. Although the conveyance of starving stock on our railway lines may give a certain amount of return for the time being, I think that, to a large extent, it hampers railway development. It, most undoubtedly, affects the pastoral industry in the west, and I do not see how we can get rid of what we suffer from in the west year after year, except by having a new line of railway connecting us as quickly and cheaply as possible with the north. Why the people in the west, who have to fight under conditions not experienced in other parts of New South Wales, should be compelled to use a railway line coming *via* Sydney and the Blue Mountains, is a thing which, on being investigated, cannot justify its continuance. I am not moving in regard to this railway project merely by reason of the fact that I am the Member for Wellington. In cases of this kind I take a much broader view. I say that the condition of the people in the west—Narromine, and those parts—is such that they deserve the most earnest and generous consideration from those who control the affairs of the country, and, in my opinion, there is no means of affording them relief, except by giving them quick communication with the north, in the way proposed. The cost of bringing trains over the Blue Mountains, to the west, is astounding, and, together with the congested state of the traffic, sometimes, is a tremendous handicap. I think that the people of the west, as well as those in the north, have a right to special consideration. Without this line the people in the north are handicapped as much as we in the west are. What market have the people of Armidale and places in that district. I know that the riches of the country round about Armidale are practically undeveloped by reason of the fact that the people there have such a poor market. The people of Armidale and those parts are compelled to compete in a market that is served by the enormously rich district of the valley of the Hunter, and the coastal districts. We have a market for their produce in the west, and it seems to me the most monstrous thing that they should be compelled to send their produce by way of Newcastle, Gosford, and Sydney, when attempting to reach the market in the west. My experience is that produce of one kind is never carried without produce of another kind being obtained for the return journey. It is a huge satire on the railway system of this Colony, as we have experienced during the last five or six years particularly, that a man travelling west should see a continuous succession of costly railway trains carrying starving stock. It seems to me to be a monstrous thing that the railway should be devoted to that purpose, and it is ridiculous to assume that it is not done at the cost of the ordinary running of the railway. To cater for that trade I am sure that the trains are run at a price at which they would not be run for ordinary produce, and I think that that paralyses the whole development of the west. In travelling from Bathurst to Wellington, at every small station where there is a siding you will find a double-engined train-load of stock, and a little later in the day you will see engines running with enormous empty trains to the west. That seems to me to be radically wrong. Any man travelling at the present time—and especially people living adjacent to the railway line, from Dubbo out—sees the condition of affairs in which our people are striving to make a living, which condition of affairs is not creditable to those who manage the public affairs in New South Wales, and which cannot be allowed to continue. People are in such straits there that it is abominable, and it arises from the fact that they are shut out from the oases of the north, which have not had an experience of the drought for the last fifty years, so far as my reading or experience goes. I object to Newcastle being the funnel for our communication with the north just as much as I object to Sydney on the same ground. I think there is no escaping from the fact that the proposed line should be constructed from either Dubbo or Wellington, but in my opinion it should be from Wellington, because the country for one-third of its condition is such as would make the railway line pay immediately from its construction. If one farmer alone is able to sustain the traffic of one railway station outside Wellington, I think the same thing might be expected from other farmers. If it were possible for the Committee to have special reports made on the character of the country, I would be glad, and, if the inquiry does not close immediately, I will deem it my duty, to furnish the Committee with all the data possible in connection with the matter.

John Connelly, storekeeper, Wellington, sworn, and examined:—

3993. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What are you? I was an hotelkeeper in Wellington for about nine years; but I have a little store at Wellington now. I desire to speak in regard to the growth of the town. Being at the "Royal Hotel," I know a lot of commercial travellers, and they often told me they thought it would be a good thing if there were a line of railway from Werris Creek to Wellington, because it would save them a lot of trouble in having to go to Sydney and to come up the Western line to Bourke, and other places where they did business.

J. Connelly.
3 July, 1900.

3994. Have you been long resident in Wellington? Ten years.

3995. Would you kindly make a statement giving your opinion as to the advantages to be derived from the proposed railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? I have been out 15 or 20 miles along the proposed line, and the land appears to me to be very good all through. It is a great farming district, and I know a lot of people who want land there at the present time. In dry seasons a lot of sheep come down from the northern part, where there is no grass or water, and the people lose a lot of the sheep in coming through. Sometimes they get as far as Forbes, and have to be sold there at a very small price, owing to so many dying on the road. The people told me that if they had a railway, and could truck the sheep, they could get them through much more easily and quickly. The town of Wellington has, I think, improved 50 per cent. in ten years, and I honestly think that the proposed line would pay very well.

3996. Are you acquainted only with the country for about 15 miles from Wellington? Fifteen or 20 miles out.

3997. Not beyond that? No. But I have been to Werris Creek once.

3998. You have formed your opinion only from hearsay? From what I have seen myself for 20 miles out, I know that to be very good agricultural country.

3999. You see that 15 miles can hardly be taken into consideration, because that is already served by the line passing through Wellington; you may count 20 miles from Werris Creek and 20 miles from Wellington as being already served by railway; it is the immediate country we want to deal with, and to find out whether it is likely to support a railway or not? In the direction from Wellington to Parkes, I have been about 30 miles along that way, and part of that country is good farming land.

4000. What proportion would you class as good agricultural land within that 30 miles? Three-quarters of it, I suppose.

4001. You have never been right along the proposed line? No.

4002. Do you know anything about Werris Creek? Yes, I have been there; but as far as I could see from the railway, or from the station itself, there seemed to be nice level country for miles towards Wellington.

4003. You have not been along the proposed line from Werris Creek? No.

4004. You know only what you have seen from the train? That is all.

4005. Is there anything else you can think of that would assist the Committee in coming to a decision about the proposed railway? I think it would be a very good thing for the district, and also for the country at large, if we had a railway to get stock even from Queensland to Melbourne. A lot of fat stock comes from that direction in good seasons, and the cattle get poor through travelling by road so far, and it would be better for them to travel by rail.

4006. Are many starving stock sent in dry seasons to the district of Wellington? The year before last there was a great number.

4007. You know what districts they came from? They came from Bourke and places to the north of Bourke.

4008. Have you heard of very many losses in travelling starving sheep long distances? Yes, I have—travelling them along the road.

4009. That is, where there is no feed? Yes.

4010. So with quick transit by railway sheep would often be saved? Yes.

4011. Do you know the country round Dubbo? Not well.

4012. So that you are really able to give an opinion only in regard to something like 30 miles along the line from Wellington? Yes; about 8 miles out there is a very good gold mine.

4013. Have you been any distance on either side of the proposed line? I have been all round that country to about a distance of 15 or 20 miles.

4014. And it is fairly good country for a considerable distance on each side of the line? Yes; and further out it is pretty well all farming country, and there are very good farms, too.

THURSDAY, 5 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY JEVJEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Robert Edward Jones, M.I.C.E., District Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

4015. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand you have furnished reports in connection with the proposed line from Wellington to Werris Creek and other lines? Yes; I reported on the Wellington to Werris Creek line in 1890, and on the alternative scheme—Dubbo to Werris Creek. My instructions were to report on various proposed railways, giving access to the north-western country and cross-lines from Young to Dubbo or Wellington, as the case might be, and on to Werris Creek—in all about 2,000 miles of railway schemes. This work I undertook in 1890, and completed my report in June, 1891. With regard to the Wellington to Werris Creek railway, I had only my own estimate to go upon for a heavier line than is now

R. E. Jones,
M.I.C.E.
5 July, 1900.

E. H. Jones, now contemplated. My estimate was £804,700 for a line 146 miles long. I understand that in regard to the proposal before the Committee the estimate is something over £500,000. My reports on the two lines are as follow:—

M.I.C.E.
5 July, 1900.

Wellington to Werris Creek; length, 146 miles; estimated cost. £804,700*.

Having dealt with the various proposals to connect the Southern and Western main lines, I now come to what may be termed a continuation of this connection to join the northern portion of our railway system. The project under consideration commences at Wellington, proceeds *via* Spicer's Creek, Denison Town, and Coolah, to Breeza Gap, near the junction of the North-western and Northern lines at Werris Creek.

The country passed through for 70 miles is (except a small portion near Cobborah) of a fertile character, much of it fit for the production of cereals. In the neighbourhood of Wellington especially, the soil is deep red volcanic, so suited for wheat-growing.

There is considerable settlement on Mitchell's and Spicer's Creeks, the latter 18 miles from Wellington.

At Dapper or Sandy Creek (29 miles) there is cultivation and several selectors. At 38½ miles the proposed line from Mudgee to Coonamble is crossed, the township of Cobborah being 5½ miles to the west. At 46 Duedoo is reached. It is a township on paper only. The Talbragar Valley is here entered, the river being crossed near Denison Town, an improving place, due, no doubt, to the existence of the Mount Stewart and other silver-mines in course of development, 3 miles beyond the township.

Coolah is reached at 71½ miles from Wellington. A few miles of hilly and rough country are then traversed before entering the Liverpool Plains, where the line passes through the well-known runs, Binna, Oaky Creek, Bomera, Trunkey, &c., on to the North-western line at Ereeza Gap.

The cultivated land ceases at Coolah. The soil on the Liverpool Plains is rich enough to produce almost anything; but there is a lack of permanent water.

At Mitchell's Creek, 7 miles from Wellington, there is a gold-mining company employing a large number of men. The silver-mines too at Mount Stewart appear to be progressing, but the permanency of the field can scarcely be termed proved. There is also an outcrop of coal at several points on the route.

The trafficable area includes 2,717,726 acres, but of this quantity, 1,346,470 would also be served by a line from Mudgee to Coonamble. I will therefore give the two sets of figures:—

Wellington line (sole):—Alienated, 643,584 acres; Crown lands, 727,672, including 151,019 acres reserved.

Joint with a line from Mudgee to Coonamble; alienated, 412,524; unalienated, 933,946 acres, inclusive of 268,159 of reserves.

Cultivated area for Werris Creek line (sole) 3,637 acres, and jointly with the Mudgee-Coonamble line, 4,757 acres.

Population on route, exclusive of Wellington, but including Coonabarabran, 5,000, but, of this number, 3,800 would be served also by a line from Mudgee to Coonamble.

Ballast would not be difficult to obtain.

Sleepers would, however, have to be brought from the iron-bark forests at the back of Cobborah.

No expensive bridges would be needed.

There are objectionable grades of 1 in 40 at several points upon the line, and, although considerable improvement can often be made by a revised survey, in this case I am afraid little can be effected, owing to the hilly nature of the country, especially near Coolah.

With respect to traffic, I apprehend that local requirements, although of an increasing character, cannot be looked upon as likely to produce much revenue. At present, two-thirds of the traffic goes to Mudgee, remainder to Wellington, Quiriudi, and Gunnedah.

Should a line be made to Mudgee, either from Coonamble or Dubbo, it would absorb nearly all the local traffic, being the shortest route to Sydney. On the other hand, if the Coonamble-Muswellbrook scheme were adopted, the trend of traffic would be towards Newcastle.

The value of a cross line to Werris Creek is more especially due to the facilities it affords for intercommunication between the different sections of our railway system, and thus creating increased traffic.

It is a midway connection, thereby insuring a great saving in distance over the existing routes. Taking Wellington and Werris Creek as common points, I find there is a gain of 352 miles compared with the present railway journey, *via* Sydney.

Should the line from Cobar to Broken Hill be made, the Wellington-Werris Creek cross-line would bring Adelaide within 1,439 miles of Brisbane, as against 1,508 by the present route, *via* Melbourne and Sydney, thus giving a saving of 369 miles.*

With respect to Melbourne and Brisbane, assuming the present Harden to Blayney branch be used, the Werris Creek connection would shorten the journey by 143 miles.†

I think there can be little doubt a cross-line would be largely used for the carriage of mails.

It will also be a good stock-carrying railway, and, in time of drought, would afford facilities for the transfer of starving stock from the west to New England and other districts.

The military and strategic value of such a connecting line as the one under consideration cannot be overlooked. It would greatly aid, should occasion require it, in the speedy massing of troops or their transport to any part of New South Wales or the other colonies.

In the event of the Hawkesbury Bridge being damaged by an enemy or otherwise rendered uncrossable, the Werris Creek line would be found most useful as preserving intact the continuity of our railway system.

Dubbo to Werris Creek; length, 155 miles; estimated cost, £812,350.

This line is a competitive scheme to that from Wellington. It, however, starts from Dubbo, a point 30 miles further west.

It follows the valley of the Talbragar for a distance of 35 miles; then passes through poor hilly country, but good for timber, to Merrygoen, where it crosses the Mudgee-Coonamble proposed line.

A new survey is in progress towards Werris Creek which, to give improved grades, takes the line nearer to the Castlereagh River for some miles beyond Merrygoen than as originally laid out. At Westahbah the Liverpool Plains may be considered to be fairly entered upon, so that no detailed description need be given from here to Werris Creek, a distance of about 90 miles. The line being almost identical with that from Wellington for 60 miles.

The country traversed consists of black soil plains with belts of box chiefly, and a series of sandstone ridges of no great height. There are many patches of rich agricultural soil of a red sandy nature; but there is a lack of permanent water, and very little cultivation exists beyond 60 miles from Dubbo.

The quantity of settlement along the route is not equal to that on the Wellington line; but the Dubbo scheme serves the country along the Castlereagh Valley from Gilgandra to Coonabarabran much better, and gives access to very valuable timber reserves amounting to nearly 100,000 acres, containing splendid iron-bark, pine, and other timber.

The mines at Stuart Town would not be well served by this line, and the townships of Denison Town and Coolah, although within the sphere of traffic, would be better suited by the Wellington proposal; but, as before stated, a line to either Mudgee or Muswellbrook would absorb nearly all this local traffic.

The trafficable area of a line from Dubbo contains 3,348,640 acres; but this quantity includes 1,944,945, which would also be served by a line from Mudgee to Coonamble; while the alternative scheme from Muswellbrook to Coonamble would absorb 1,956,686 acres. I think it will be advisable to give the three sets of figures:—

Dubbo to Werris Creek (sole):—Alienated land, 611,120 acres; unalienated, 792,575, including 166,887 of reserves.

Joint Dubbo to Werris Creek and Mudgee to Coonamble:—Alienated, 518,433 acres; unalienated, 1,426,512, inclusive of 329,805 reserved.

Joint Dubbo to Werris Creek and Muswellbrook and Coonamble:—Alienated, 588,464 acres; Crown lands, 1,368,222 acres, inclusive of 281,295 of reserves.

I may remark that here, as also on the Wellington and Mudgee proposed lines, the usual reserve of 1 mile wide on each side of the surveyed routes has been made.

Land under cultivation, 6,890 acres, of which 2,133 may be taken as served by the Dubbo to Werris Creek line alone, the balance being also within the trafficable sphere of the Mudgee scheme.

The

* Note (on revision):—Revised survey reduces this to 355.

† Note (on revision):—Revised, 129.

The population within the sole and joint areas already mentioned number 4,550, exclusive of any within the town of Dubbo already served by existing railway. R. E. Jones,
M.I.C.E.

The stock at beginning of this year was as follows:—

Werris Creek line (sole):—2,087 horses; 7,916 cattle; 695,411 sheep, and 234 pigs. Number of owners, 85.

Joint with Mudgee to Coonamble 4,259 horses, 11,282 cattle, 637,633 sheep, and 949 pigs. 391 owners.

Plenty of ballast exists for first 60 miles, afterwards sandstone from the ridges, &c., on Liverpool Plains until near Breeza Gap, where better stone can be obtained.

The line is well situate with respect to sleepers and girders, as it passes through some iron-bark forests, and is within easy distance of other reserves containing splendid timbers, including iron-bark, box, and pine, which latter is largely used for building and flooring purposes, it being a timber peculiarly successful in withstanding the ravages of the white ant.

The steepest grade will not be less than 1 in 70.

No expensive bridges will be required, and very good grades can be got for the whole distance.

I need not recapitulate the remarks made on the Wellington scheme, with respect to probable traffic, but I would mention that by going from Dubbo the gain in the route from Brisbane to Adelaide is increased to 300 miles, and from Melbourne, assuming the Parkes connection be made, will be 138 miles. It must not be overlooked too, that traffic for Adelaide and the west to the north—the additional distance to be traversed by going from Dubbo to Wellington is rendered more objectionable by the heavy grades existing between the two places, necessitating the division of goods trains at Dubbo. At present I believe a train of forty-five truck-loads can be brought to Narramin, and, but for the objectionable grade (which is being done away with), could also reach Dubbo. Only sixteen loaded trucks can, however, be carried on to Wellington.

The more westerly the line is, the greater the value for the carriage of starving stock. Especially will this be the case, should the great grazing districts of Coonamble and Walgett be opened up by railway, either from Mudgee, Muswellbrook, or Dubbo.

A new market will also be created for the produce of the Warrumbungles and Talbragar districts, thus giving an impetus to farming—whereas at the present the whole of the western district has to depend upon Wellington and Orange for produce.

In addition to mails, this line will bring in a good revenue from timber and stock.

One argument against such scheme as the one put forward is, that the mileage revenue is lost to the existing railway by the creation of a shortened competing route. I think this is, however, a very narrow way of looking at the subject. If it be for the benefit of the people that such a line should be made, the fact that the Government possesses a monopoly, should be no reason why localities should be for ever handicapped through the want of railway communication, which if given, will in itself probably pay, although in a measure at the expense of existing lines.

There can, I think, be little doubt that eventually considerable through traffic will pass over this railway if made. That it will pay for some time to come, I do not think, but with the increased value of a large extent of unalienated land, and the national advantages of the connection between the trunk lines; there may be factors which may cause a favourable consideration of this proposal.

4016. Is the report which you have just read identical with the proposal which the Committee are now considering to connect Wellington with Werris Creek? It serves the same localities and the same townships; but the distance has been increased by the revised survey in order that better grades may be obtained. I understand that the distance has been increased from 146 miles to 160 miles, and the cost has been reduced from £804,700 to something over £500,000.

4017. In view of the reduced cost, would there be a much stronger probability of the line paying now than it would have paid when you made your estimate? I think so. I may mention, however, the Mount Stuart Silver-mines, to which I have alluded, have not turned out a success. The Mitchell Creek Mine is still going well.

4018. What is your opinion of the proposal before the Committee to connect Wellington with Werris Creek, as compared with your survey *via* Coolah? I think it is somewhat better, especially in view of the determination not to make the Mudgee to Coonamble line. It bisects the country better.

4019. Would it serve more country? Yes, in the neighbourhood of Mundooran.

4020. Would it serve Coonabarabran? Yes.

4021. What distance is the line from there? I should imagine that the new line would not be more than 21 miles to its nearest point.

4022. Would that be sufficiently near to serve the interests of the Coonabarabran people? Yes, when going west; but if they wanted to go to Werris Creek to come to Sydney, Bomera would be the nearest point—about 40 miles away.

4023. Had you a good knowledge of this country previous to making your survey? I had nothing to do with the survey. I was the Divisional Engineer of fourteen or fifteen districts in the north-west, including the Coonabarabran and the Walgett districts, so that I have an intimate knowledge of the country.

4024. Is it a class of country which will carry a fairly large population if the lands are thrown open for settlement? Yes; but there are some very large holdings. I think the large holdings would have to be subdivided in order to carry a large population.

4025. Are you referring now to the private lands? Yes.

4026. Are the private lands suitable for cultivation, or are they sufficiently good for grazing purposes to enable smaller areas to maintain a family? The only difficulty is the want of permanent water; otherwise they would. There is no better country in the world for pastoral purposes than that on the Liverpool Plains; nor is there better country for agricultural purposes, if they could get water.

4027. You are speaking particularly with regard to the Liverpool Plains? Yes.

4028. What about the rest of the country between Wellington and the Liverpool Plains? That is good country, and would carry a larger population. Agricultural pursuits would increase if a railway were constructed.

4029. Do you think that if a railway were constructed, those people who own large areas of Crown lands would be induced to subdivide them? Yes.

4030. Have you made any calculation as to the extent of population this country would carry if that were done? I should imagine that, if the country from Wellington to beyond Mundooran were subdivided into agricultural areas, population would increase to double its present extent.

4031. And that would mean increased traffic on the railway? Yes.

4032. The Railway Commissioners make a very small allowance for the increased traffic on the line—some £300 or £400;—do you not think that that is a very small allowance? I think it is too small, considering the magnificent country right up to the Warrumbungles, the produce of which would come to the line. There is magnificent agricultural country under the Warrumbungle Range, and a lot of wheat is growing there now.

4033. Would the proposed line be sufficiently near for farmers to take their produce to it? Yes. They would not go to the Coonamble line.

- R. E. Jones,
M.I.C.E.
5 July, 1900.
4034. What average distance would that country of which you speak be from the line? Do you mean for the purpose of getting to Sydney?
4035. No, but in order to get upon the proposed line? Of course, the Cassilis people would go to it if they wished to get upon the Western line, but not to go to Sydney.
4036. We will presume that the country of which you are speaking is settled by farmers;—in order to get their produce to market, what average distance would they have to travel to reach the proposed line? The limit would be towards Coonamble from the nearest point—Mundooran—35 miles. Beyond that they would go to the Dubbo-Coonamble line. Towards Coonabarabran 30 miles.
4037. Do you think there would be much cross-country traffic on the line if constructed? I am not so sanguine about that item as I was when I made my report.
4038. Do you think the line would be used for the conveyance of stock? Yes.
4039. We have it in evidence that there is a good deal of stock coming to and from the New England district? Yes. Calga station has recently sold sheep in New England.
4040. It has also been stated that it would be used for conveying produce to the north and north-western districts in time of drought? That is so.
4041. Do you think it would be largely used for that purpose? I do not think it would be largely used, but it would be used to some extent.
4042. Have you considered which would be the best connection to make—Dubbo with Werris Creek, or Wellington with Werris Creek? My reason for recommending the Dubbo to Werris Creek line was more because I also recommended a line from Parkes to Dubbo, and from Young to Forbes, and it was, therefore, a continuation of the through connection from south to west, and west to north. I have not recommended it so much on account of its local aspect as on account of it connecting the Western with the North-western line.
4043. If it were purely a matter of connecting the Western and the North-western lines, which, in your opinion, would be the best points to connect—Dubbo with Werris Creek, or Wellington with Werris Creek? In view of the fact that a line from Dubbo to Coonamble is authorised, I consider that the Wellington to Werris Creek would be the better. It would serve a largely-settled country between Cobborah and Wellington. There are the Mitchell Creek gold-mines and a large amount of settlement between the point of junction at Spicer's Creek and Wellington. There is more settlement there than on the same length of the Dubbo line.
4044. How does the country between the junction and Wellington compare with the country between Dubbo and the junction with Spicer's Creek? It is in favour of the Wellington line.
4045. Are there many stock crossing between the North, North-western, and Western lines? They were very limited at the time I made my report.
4046. Do you think, in consideration of the class of country there is between Werris Creek and the Western line which we propose to connect, that if there were stock transactions, the graziers would use the railway or drove the stock? If they wanted to go to Melbourne with fat stock, I think they would use the railway; but if it were a matter of sending stores from one place to another they would not, except in time of drought, when they could not travel by any other means.
4047. The country between Werris Creek and Wellington, and between Dubbo and Wellington, is mostly sheep country? Yes, beyond Cobborah.
4048. In the event of the stock-owners situated between Werris Creek and Wellington having fat stock to send to the Sydney or Newcastle market, would they use any part of the proposed line, or would they travel them? I think they would use the railway.
4049. Do you think that would be a considerable item in railway revenue? It is certainly an increasing item on the railways.
4050. Is the country capable of improvement for pastoral purposes;—is it scrubby or heavily-timbered country? There is only one belt of heavily-timbered country north of Mundooran. There is a bit of iron-bark forest there; otherwise it may be considered as really good country.
4051. Do you think, if the pastoral holdings were subdivided into smaller areas, the railway would carry much additional stock? Undoubtedly.
4052. And if the line were used for the conveyance of fat stock there would be an increase of traffic? Yes. The small holders would use the line more freely than the large holders.
4053. *Chairman.*] Have you had an opportunity of examining the revised survey between Wellington and Werris Creek? No.
4054. You seem to think that the alterations have mainly been made to avoid the stiff grades? Yes.
4055. Can you say, from your knowledge of that part of the country, whether the revised or the old survey goes through the better country? The first portion of it does. It better serves Mundooran, which is an improving place, and it serves Cobborah equally as well as would the other line.
4056. Can you give any detailed information as to the intercepted cross-country traffic, leaving out of consideration the further connection which you propose? Those who had a desire to reach the north-west, or Brisbane, or even our northern towns, would, of course, prefer the shortened route instead of going to Sydney. With regard to goods traffic, I am afraid it will have very little influence, except to bring supplies from Sydney by way of Werris Creek to Coonabarabran and the districts it serves, or *via* Wellington for the first part of it.
4057. Considering this is only one link of a larger connection, what would be the main value of the completed connection—that is, from Werris Creek to Wellington, and then connecting the Southern line? The value, from a national aspect, would certainly be the shortened access between Melbourne and Brisbane.
4058. Do you consider that that is an advantage worth more than £500,000? No; because we get the benefit of very much of that traffic at present.
4059. *Mr. Watson.*] You cross the Talbragar going north-east by the revised survey, and from there on to Merrygoen;—have you been on that portion of the survey? Yes.
4060. How would you describe it? It is very rough. There is a gap which has to be crossed. They had a lot of trouble to cross it with the Dubbo scheme. I was there when Mr. Stawell was making the survey.
4061. So that, whichever of the routes for the cross-country line is adopted, there would be a certain amount of rough country? Yes, and not producing much local revenue.

4062. It has been suggested that a cross-country connection giving practically the same results could be obtained at a much less cost between Curlewis, on the North-western line, and Gilgandra, on the Dubbo-Coonamble line, which is shortly to be constructed;—have you been over that country? I have crossed it at different points, but I have not been over it. I should hardly think that would be such a good line as the other one. It would be more circuitous, and it certainly does not serve such good country. The proposed line really intersects and serves the Liverpool Plains better than any line you could have, and a line to Curlewis would not do that. It would serve Coonabarabran better, but it would take you into very rough country between Bomera and Gilgandra.

4063. It seems that whatever route you take you must get into some rough country;—do you think there would be more on that route than on the present survey? I think so.

4064. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you think the proposed line could be run into Quirindi? That district was explored. The line as surveyed is more direct to get to the north. With regard to the question of revenue, I do not think there would be much in it, but the construction would be greater.

4065. What additional construction would be necessary to take the line to Quirindi? Eight or 10 miles.

4066. Would you advise that it be taken to Quirindi? No. I visited Quirindi, and at the time I made my report the people did not take any interest in the matter. I may state that there is now more settlement in that part of the country than there was then.

4067. Do you mean that there is more settlement between Quirindi and the point where the line crosses? Yes.

4068. Has the settlement increased very much? There is a fair settlement.

4069. If the line went to Quirindi, would it pass through richer agricultural land? Not to any great extent.

MONDAY, 9 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

John Joseph Poole, farmer, grazier, and coal-mine manager, Curlewis, sworn, and further examined:—

4070. *Chairman.*] You wish to make a statement in continuation of your former evidence? Upon leaving Curlewis the other day I had placed in my hands two letters from residents and landowners of the Curlewis district, in which they requested me to inquire into the best means of constructing a railway $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Curlewis, going west. I found, on making inquiry, that it was not possible to construct a railway privately without getting an Act of Parliament, and I was requested to appear again before the Committee. In these two letters these landowners, namely, Mr. Turner, the surveyor, Mr. Young, Mr. Doyle, and myself, offered to guarantee to the Railway Commissioners the interest on the cost of constructing a line 6 or $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Curlewis, in the direction which the line is supposed to take towards Gilgandra. I am authorised to give that guarantee to this Committee. To show you that we have no doubt about the paying capacity of a line, if built from Curlewis in the direction of Gilgandra, we are quite prepared to give that guarantee.

4071. What do you call the $7\frac{1}{2}$ mile point;—is there any name to the locality? It would extend to the boundary of Mr. Young's property, which they call Garrir. It is on the surveyed road. We would have liked to build this line ourselves, but we found we could not construct a line without getting an Act of Parliament.

4072. What rate of interest are you prepared to pay? Four per cent.

4073. *Mr. Watson.*] Did you get any estimate made of the cost of the line for the distance you wished to go? Yes. If we could have constructed the line ourselves it was estimated to cost £1,500 a mile, but I think that estimate would be somewhat under the mark now. After being with Mr. Harper to-day I found that the price of rails has materially increased since I purchased rails for my coal company. He tells me that the price of rails has gone up by about 100 per cent., so that it would cost nearly £2,000 per mile, if we were to construct the line ourselves. I find that there are insurmountable difficulties in our way.

TUESDAY, 10 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor, Statistical Year-books, Government Statistician's Department, sworn, and examined:—

4074. *Chairman.*] You have prepared some statistics in regard to the proposed railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes.

4075. Will you state the limits of the area from which you have drawn the figures? I have taken a distance of 20 miles on each side of the line between Werris Creek and Dubbo, and between Werris Creek

4078. Will you give the agricultural and pastoral statistics you have prepared in regard to the proposed railway from Werris Creek to Dubbo? The return reads as follows:—

W. H. Hall. 10 July, 1900.

AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL STATISTICS. Proposed Railway from Werris Creek to Dubbo.

Table with columns: District, Year, Total area cultivated, Wheat (Area, Yield), Maize (Area, Yield), Other Grains (Area), Hay (Area, Yield), Green Food (Area), Area under (Potatoes, Grape Vines, Oranges, Other Fruit Orchards, All other Crops), Horses, Cattle (Milk cows, Ordinary, including calves), Sheep, including lambs, Swine.

WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D. The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq. JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

The Hon. Francis Bathurst Suttor, M.L.C., sworn, and examined:—

4079. Chairman.] You are a Member of the Legislative Council and Vice-President of the Executive Council? Yes.

4080. You know the nature of the inquiry on which the Committee is engaged? Yes.

4081. It is practically a connection between the northern and western system of railways;—would you care to make a statement of your views on the subject before proceeding into any detail? I was asked to come down here and to express my opinion on the desirability of constructing this line. I do not think it will be necessary for me to touch on the advantages of the line, from a local point of view. I suppose that evidence has been given on that point by many persons perhaps better qualified than I am to express an opinion. But I would like to speak in favour of the line from, perhaps, a more national point of view. I do think it is very desirable to connect this line from Werris Creek to some point on the Western line, say at Wellington.

4082. The main reasons urged in support of its construction are, first, that the line will make a complete connection of the whole railway systems of the Colony west of the Dividing Range; and, secondly, that it will afford facilities for speedier inter-communication between the Northern, Western, and Southern main trunk lines, and will, therefore, tend to create increased traffic;—these two reasons are somewhat general in their character? Yes.

4083. Can you tell us any particular advantage which you think would accrue under these two heads; for instance, what general advantage to the two railway systems of the Colony would follow from the construction of this line? I think, as time goes on, there will be a good deal of traffic between the Northern districts and the Western districts, and the Southern districts right away to Victoria.

4084. Could you specify the nature of the traffic which you anticipate in the near future? To a great extent in stock. For instance, during this last disastrous drought, which we have had in the extreme west,

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west, it is well known that the price of beef has been excessive, and it is very often likely that there is plenty of meat in some parts of Queensland, but that the cattle cannot be got down, because of the impossibility of travelling them through the extremely arid country west of Bourke.

4085. That is practically drought traffic which you are talking of now? Yes. If this line were open perhaps these cattle could come down. The drought is never so universal but that there is grass in some of the districts.

4086. Where do the starving stock from a line west of Nevertire usually go to get grass? For instance, the drought has been very excessive at Nevertire, and all the country west of Nevertire, and they have been depasturing all about Wellington, Dubbo, and Orange, Mudgee, and all the intervening country between Wellington and Mudgee, and Hill End, Bathurst, and right out to Oberon, east of Bathurst. Wherever they could get paddocks they have had them; in fact, for the last eighteen months I have heard of people giving £1 and 30s. an acre for the use of the grass on the land, being almost as much as the land itself was worth.

4087. Do you think that the construction of this line would allow the pastoralists along the Western line, and out past Bourke, to avail themselves of the New England country? I am quite certain it would.

4088. In spite of the very long distance they would have to travel? Yes; I will give you an instance. A very large squatter, Mr. Samuel McCaughey, moved a great number of sheep from the Darling into the country about Cowra, and right up nearly as far as the Snowy Mountains, and he trucked them as far as Dubbo and Wellington. So did some other squatters, and they had to buy feed for them in some of these places, giving them a rest—taking them out of the train for a day or two, and sending them on. If you can shorten the distance by some hundreds of miles by the construction of a cross-country line, it will be of great convenience to squatters in moving stock about. Undoubtedly the railway authorities during a period of drought have been somewhat compensated for the loss of wool traffic by the amount they have received from carrying the travelling stock.

4089. Is there any other traffic which we may reasonably anticipate between the western district and northern district across this line? Yes; a great portion of the fat stock consumed in Sydney and Melbourne comes from Queensland, and if this line were constructed, so that the cattle could be sent direct from the lines north of this right through to Melbourne, I think that more cattle would be sent, and at less cost to the sender, than are now sent. For instance, suppose it is necessary to take cattle out of the trucks. If they are in country like the country between Werris Creek and Wellington, and on further to Blayney, a man can take his cattle out for a day or two, and let them be fed and trucked again, but after you get into the metropolitan area such a thing is impossible. Then I think you may fairly conclude that the greater number of cattle would be sent, perhaps, to Victoria, fattened up in the north in Queensland as soon as the border duties, which now reach £1 a head, are taken off. If they can afford to send cattle, and pay the stock duty, they can still afford to pay the duty in the shape of railway charges, perhaps.

4090. You have mainly indicated the traffic down to the south? Yes. The fat stock would generally tend in the direction of the south. And there would be store stock too, because there is a great demand for store stock in Victoria. When they have this duty taken off at the border under Federation, I think we can conclude that the demand for store stock will be a great deal more than it is.

4091. Will there be any traffic to the north which you can indicate—back loading? Simply in the interchange of stock, which is always going backwards and forwards.

4092. It would be mostly a stock line, you think? That is, taking it from one extreme point to the other. I think, if the line were constructed, the greater part of the country is very fair agricultural land. After the train would leave Wellington, for a good many miles in the direction of Werris Creek—I do not know about the Werris Creek end—it is all very fair white-box country, which is very admirably suited for agricultural purposes, and, from a farming point of view, I do not believe there is any more popular district in the Colony than the Wellington one.

4093. The estimated cost of constructing this line is £511,149, and the estimated revenue is £8,586 against an annual estimated cost of £26,954, leaving a net deficiency of £18,368 per annum; now, do you think the country would be justified, taking into consideration the advantages which you say will flow from this line, in incurring that annual loss; in other words, do you think the time is ripe for constructing the line? I think it is. I think, perhaps, reasons might be shown why a line would so feed other lines and encourage traffic that from that point of view its construction would be justified. Take, for instance, the Mudgee line, which, instead of being a feeder, has been a sucker ever since it was constructed. The line from Wallerawang to Mudgee ends simply in Mudgee. Some time ago, in the Assembly, the question was discussed whether the line to Coonamble should be carried on from Mudgee or Dubbo, and I think the determination was that it should go from Dubbo. At that time I was in the House, and I urged that it would be infinitely better, in the interests of the Mudgee people, to advocate the construction of this line from Werris Creek to Wellington with a connection from Mudgee to that line, and thus it would be giving an alternative route for the Railway Commissioners to utilise for the carriage of goods, and it would also open up country both north and west to the people using the Mudgee line now. I think that would tend to make the Mudgee line pay, and the Mudgee line would also assist in making this line pay, if constructed.

4094. Taking that centre of country which you have indicated about Cobborah and Coolah, which of the two lines—this proposed cross-country line, or an extension from Mudgee—would better suit that district? I think this cross-country line would suit it quite as well as an extension from Mudgee. Of course, if you construct this proposed line, there would be no necessity to construct the Mudgee line further than where it strikes this line west.

4095. Then you would have within rather a short distance of one another practically three lines, namely, the Mudgee extension, the Wellington extension with Werris Creek, and the Dubbo-Coonamble line, none of these being very far from one another;—do you think that country sufficiently good to carry three lines? You could hardly consider them as running parallel.

4096. Not parallel, but fairly close? From Mudgee to this proposed line would be at right-angles practically in the northern portion of it. For a short distance from Munderooran to Wellington it is parallel to the Dubbo-Coonamble line, and then you can hardly call it parallel.

4097. *Mr. Levien.*] Of course, you are talking about starving stock going across this line from Wellington to Werris Creek; but, suppose they had good seasons at both ends for some time to come, would this line pay then at all;—would you support it? The increase of produce generally, and the stock, by reason of the good seasons, would make the line pay, I think.

4098.

4098. There is no population between the two places? There is a considerable number of persons living near Coolah, Cobborah, Mudooran, and Gulgong.

4099. We are told that even giving Blackville in—right from one end to the other—there are only 7,000 people, and they are distributed over some tremendous area in those two places;—how would that line possibly pay at all, supposing there were good seasons? Perhaps you will tell me how far back you go to embrace the 7,000 persons.

4100. Right out to Blackville, which is, I suppose, 30 miles from this proposed railway, and generally within 30 odd miles of it, for that was the area given yesterday by Mr. Hall from the Statistician's Department;—now, how would this line pay, supposing there were good seasons? You are looking upon it now entirely from a local point of view. As to the local traffic, I think if you construct this line, it will be an alternative route from the north of Queensland right away to Victoria, and therefore it will so lessen the distance between the Victorian border and the Queensland border that there ought to be a considerable amount of traffic going directly over these lines which at present is forced to go by way of Sydney. It must materially reduce the mileage by train from Werris Creek, say, to the Victorian border, as compared with the mileage from Werris Creek before to that border by way of Sydney.

4101. Do you know of many stock which are carried by the railway from Werris Creek, or from the border of Queensland, into New South Wales along the railway? I think there will be a general interchange of commodities.

4102. Do you know of any yourself? No; because I do not know much about the railway traffic. I think we may fairly conclude that, in a very short time, there will be a great increase of the traffic between the Colonies—that is, when all these intercolonial duties are taken off.

4103. Are any of the cattle which are brought into New South Wales from Queensland coming through Collarendabri and Moree, and not through Wallangarra? I am only speaking of the Queensland border, because I thought that would embrace all the traffic on the line. Outside Queensland, no doubt, there would be a good deal of traffic between Moree and all those places you mentioned.

4104. But that would come from another line—the Narrabri line? The traffic you speak of would go to Werris Creek, would it not?

4105. Then this line, virtually from Wallangarra to Werris Creek, would be of no use so far as travelling stock are concerned? All that traffic would have to go past Werris Creek.

4106. From Brisbane down to Werris Creek, that line would not carry travelling stock? I do not suppose it would. I only mention Queensland as taking one extreme point. I only say that if this line is constructed from the Queensland border to the Victorian border, the distance must be very materially decreased, say, for through traffic.

4107. Suppose they had good seasons at Dubbo and all round there, they would not want to take their stock to New England, would they? No.

4108. So that the line, as far as travelling stock goes, for drought purposes would be of no use at all? It would not be of much use; but good seasons, I should think, would encourage persons to take up all this land, which is now lying available on each side of the proposed route, but which people say is not taken up, because there is no railway communication. You know there is a great demand for land near a railway. They naturally hug a railway as close as they can, because of the cheap means of transit it gives for their produce and stock.

4109. Do you know anything about the capabilities of the land between Werris Creek and Wellington? I know the land at the Wellington end, but not at the Werris Creek end.

4110. So that you can give no information about the land at the Werris Creek end? No.

4111. How far from Wellington and to how far from Werris Creek do you know the land? I know the land from Wellington out to Gulgong, and as far as Coolah.

4112. The train does not go that way? I am advocating the construction of the other line.

4113. Leaving that alone, how far out from Wellington do you know the country? I do not know the country very far out—only out as far as opposite Gulgong, because Gulgong is east of this line.

4114. It does not go along that line at all—I mean along the proposed line? The immediate route of the line I do not know very much about. I know the country generally to the east of it, and I know it is all good white-box country, and very suitable for agricultural purposes.

4115. Do you give an opinion without knowing the capabilities of the land between Werris Creek and Wellington itself;—do you say the proposed line will pay, without having any knowledge of the exact capabilities of the land itself? I have not been over the land. I have no personal knowledge of the land; but I think many of us know the general bearing of the country from our knowledge of the land in surrounding districts, and from what we have read, and what we know generally of the country.

4116. You do not know what quantity of land is open for settlement? I do not. I told the Committee at the beginning that I did not wish to attend, and I said that I would like to speak generally on the national importance of the line as compared with the local advantages, of which I do not know much.

4117. You have no knowledge of the land itself between Wellington and Werris Creek, except from a national standpoint—as a politician more than anything else? I do not say as a politician.

4118. You know nothing about the capabilities of the land between one point and the other? I know a good deal of the capabilities of the land about Wellington, for I have been in and out of that country.

4119. I am talking of the land from point to point? I have not actually seen the land.

4120. Seeing that this line would be worked at an annual loss of £18,000 to the State, and not having any knowledge of the country itself from point to point, would you, in the face of that, recommend the construction of this railway? I still think it would be desirable to construct this line, because I consider that we should make our communication between the different colonies as short as possible.

4121. No matter what the loss is—because, remember, there is an annual loss of £18,000, as the Commissioners report;—would you, with no absolute knowledge of the country or its capabilities between point and point, recommend its construction? I do not admit absolute ignorance, because I have not been over every line. I recommend the construction of the line, and I think it is desirable if it could be constructed, in view of extending a line from the Mudgee line to this line, and, therefore, giving an alternative route to our own metropolis.

4122. Do you think it would pay? I cannot offer any opinion as to what would pay.

4123. It is stated that there is to be an annual loss of £18,000 on this line;—then, generally, you are in favour of constructing any line which will connect one place with another? I am generally in favour of the

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the construction of lines, so long as they can be constructed at a cheap rate. I do think the more railways we can construct the better, so long as they can be constructed cheaply. And, after all, I believe railways are the cheapest roads you can make. If it is admitted that roads must be made in these districts—if it be a question of making a road or a railway between Werris Creek and Wellington—surely, considering that some road is desirable, a railway must be the cheapest in the end.

4124. Considering that there is no absolute traffic between Werris Creek and Wellington, as far as the ordinary road is concerned, a road would be of no use there, would it? I think, if it be admitted that some roads should be made railways are the cheapest roads to make.

4125. Supposing there is no necessity for a road there, as there is no intermediate traffic between the two places? I think they very frequently make roads to encourage traffic and open up districts.

4126. I am not finding fault with your evidence;—do you know Quirindi? Only from passing through it.

4127. Would you favour a railway running into Quirindi where all the centre of traffic is, instead of going to Werris Creek? If you are constructing this line to lessen the distance in the mileage from one Colony to another, you cannot strike a more convenient place than Werris Creek. The shortest practical route I would advocate between the two different places so as to bring the termini as near to one another as possible.

4128. Would you ignore an important town like Quirindi, and though the only trade is from Werris Creek, would you make a difference of 12 or 13 miles in the length—would you still go to Werris Creek? Yes. If Quirindi be to the east of Mungindi, people coming from the Northern line, or the National line, would have to run down to Quirindi and then go back. I would carry these lines as direct is possible, so that you can shorten the distance between the different colonies.

4129. What trade are we going to strike with Victoria? We want to keep the trade in our own Colony, do we not? We would get the Victorian trade to come over.

4130. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The railways are generally used now for bringing fat stock over a long distance? Yes; but they are used very extensively for moving poor stock too. I suppose some millions of sheep must have been moved during the recent drought, and the freight on fat stock is higher than the freight on starving stock.

4131. They make special rates for carrying starving stock? Yes.

4132. So that, in a good season, the railways would be likely to benefit more in moving stock than in a droughty season? They would get more per head.

4133. If they would have a larger number to move it would pay better altogether, would it not? Any stock they would move in a good season would be all fat stock; but the stock they would move in a dry season would be poor stock moving for grass.

4134. Mr. Levien almost suggested that the trains would be comparatively idle in a good season, and I want to ascertain whether the trains would not be likely to pay better in a good season than a bad one? They would, because the only traffic there in a bad season is in the poor unfortunate animals which are being moved about for grass. In a good season there is a plethora of everything—good grass and more wool. A rapidly increasing number of sheep means an increasing number of bales of wool, and an increased quantity of wool means not only the carriage of wool, but the carriage of all sorts of machinery in connection with wool—rock-salt and everything in connection with the pastoral industry generally. But then I am very much inclined to think that this district is very rapidly developing. It is now one of the most favoured agricultural districts in the Colony. All through these five years of drought they have had good seasons round Wellington the whole time.

4135. And as the freights would actually be higher, it would pay better to carry fat stock than starving stock? But still you would not carry the same quantity of fat stock. The freights are higher; they make special rates for starving stock.

4136. As you have not been over the route of the proposed line from Werris Creek to Wellington, you cannot give any idea as to the carrying capacity of that country? I know a good deal of the carrying capacity of the country for a good many miles out from Wellington. I know the Gulgong country and all round there, and I know the Mudgee district very well.

4137. But that country would help to feed this line in the event of its being opened? Yes.

4138. *Dr. Garran.*] You said that you came here to give evidence at the request of certain persons;—do you know any good reason why those persons could not have come and given their evidence themselves, instead of asking you to be their spokesman? Yes. The Progress Association at Bathurst were anxious that some person should represent them, because, indirectly, this line will benefit Bathurst if constructed. They asked me if I would go and give evidence in Wellington, knowing that I knew something of the Wellington district, and I said I could not very conveniently go there when the Committee was up, but that I would give evidence here if an opportunity were afforded to me.

4139. It is as the representative of that Progress Association that you are here? In that sense.

4140. You are recommending the line as a cross-country line on national grounds? Yes.

4141. We have one cross-country line from Blayney to Murrumburrah;—do you know whether that has been a success? It was a success when it was first opened, but it has not been a success, from the passenger point of view, at all, because the Railway Commissioners apparently have never endeavoured to encourage passenger traffic. You can never hear of anyone coming to the west a second time from Melbourne or Victoria by that line, because the trains are not run for a speedy passenger traffic. I have not studied the time-table before coming here, but I have been frequently told that on one station—Cowra—you have to wait from four to eight hours. I know that a number of my friends have gone there once, but they have never gone there a second time; they say the time-table is so atrocious, and the delays are so long, that they do not go at all.

4142. Do you think the putting on of the stock duty in Victoria was quite sufficient to account for the non-use of that line for stock traffic? I do not know that it was. I think the duty was on before the line was open, if I recollect aright.

4143. The stock duty could not be the reason why this line has been a failure;—some people have said that the duty was off? I am not quite sure of that, but I understand that for the first two or three years after the line was opened it paid very well, and there was a great deal of traffic upon it; but the reason why it has not paid since, I cannot explain.

4144. If that line has not paid, what sufficient reason have we for assuming that a second cross-country line will pay better? Perhaps, if you complete these cross-country lines, and make a very material difference

difference in the length of the line from Werris Creek to the Victorian border, you may feed the Blayney line even. Take the question of fat stock or store stock coming from Queensland. If they ever come by train at all, they never would go all the way round by Sydney.

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4145. I want you to see that the stock traffic which used to go to Melbourne came down the Western line, and then joined on to the Southern line, so that the junction between the Western line and the Southern line was likely to have been useful for stock traffic; but this line will join the Northern line with the Western line, and very little cattle comes down the Northern line—much less than went down the Western line;—if it did not pay to join the Western line with the Southern line, how could it pay in respect to the cattle traffic to join the Northern line with the Western line? I think I am right in saying that it did pay, and paid well, for two or three years; but, of course, for the last four or five years the droughts have been so excessive that a great number of stock which used to come from Queensland have not been coming over our lines.

4146. You admitted some time ago, I think, that the traffic in stock which comes in from Queensland comes in to the west, and does not come down our Northern line? Yes.

4147. If there is very little traffic coming down the Northern line, how can there be a need for a cross-country line to carry that traffic from Werris Creek to Wellington? Because, if you cheapen the expense of sending a beast from Werris Creek to the Victorian border, instead of going *via* Sydney, I think the cattle might go by this line, and then on to the Blayney line as well.

4148. Do not the cattle come from parts of Queensland far west of Warwick or the junction station at the border? Yes.

4149. It is not the Northern line which the traffic takes, because it is not the shortest line to market? This is the only line they can go by.

4150. It is the line which strikes our Colony at Collarendabri, Walgett, Angledool, or some of these places? Yes.

4151. It does not strike it at Stanthorpe? No; but if this line is constructed they can strike the line anywhere. If they find the distance is so materially decreased, if it will pay them to truck their cattle, they will truck them.

4152. Suppose we extend the line to Collarendabri or Walgett, is it likely that the cattle from Queensland will go to the Northern line in preference to getting to the Western line at Bourke or Walgett? Where would you extend your Walgett line from.

4153. Is it not all western cattle which come from Queensland? Yes.

4154. How would making a line from Werris Creek to Wellington get any portion of that cattle? If you are going to send a line from Brewarrina to Walgett, perhaps it might not. That would take the cattle traffic which would go by this line.

4155. Even as it is, Queensland cattle which come by train strike our railway system at Bourke? When they can get through.

4156. According to your evidence, and to the evidence of other witnesses, there is no great quantity of Queensland cattle coming down the Northern railway? I conclude so. I think the majority of the cattle come to Bourke; that is, if they can get through.

4157. There is no particular business to be catered for in carrying cattle from Werris Creek to Wellington or Dubbo? Unless on occasions when the country is so bad, as it is very often between Bourke and the Queensland border, that they could not get through, and then they might get in by this line.

4158. The question is, if it is so bad as that, can they get to the Northern line? Yes.

4159. Sometimes the season is good about Moree when the country is quite impassable about the Queensland border and this side? If they are already at Moree.

4160. They are already provided for? Then they can catch this line.

4161. The line will be open to Coonamble very shortly, and if travelling stock can reach Moree they are not very far off Coonamble;—would they go to the Northern line? The Queensland cattle might come in and strike Moree, but it is a long way from Moree to Coonamble.

4162. As far as it is going to settle land, you say that except in the district round Wellington, you do not know much of the country between Werris Creek and Munderooran? No.

4163. So that you cannot give us any information about the probability of settlement? No.

4164. You do not know how much land is taken by squatters, or how much land is open for free selection? No.

4165. Now, in what particular way is this line to benefit Bathurst? Not directly, I think, except, of course, that any branch line would benefit any of these western towns, because it would give them more direct communication with all the western interior.

4166. Of course, if cattle and traffic of that kind go to Bathurst at all, it would be simply to pass through Bathurst? There is a considerable local demand for cattle in all these country towns.

4167. Is not that demand pretty well satisfied already by being connected with Dubbo and Bourke? There is a good deal of interchange. Sometimes cattle from Bathurst go west, and some cattle from the west come to Bathurst for sale.

4168. Do you not think the interest of Bathurst in that line is rather shadowy? I do not know that it is. I think the better communication you give the people in all these western inland towns, the more direct communication they have with the west—for that is where their market is—the better for the Colony at large. Look at the farmers about Bathurst, Wellington and Dubbo; they do not look upon Sydney as the market for their produce, they look upon the drought-stricken districts in the west as their market.

4169. Those are people who would not buy wheat? They would be.

4170. They would grow wheat? Yes.

4171. *Chairman.*] Is there anything further which you can add? No. I suppose you have not considered the construction of this line in connection with any possible Federal Capital.

4172. If you have any views on that question we should be glad to hear them? On the Western line there are three or four sites, the eligibility of which has been admitted by the Commissioner, I conclude. He has held an inquiry in different places along the Western line—at Orange, Milthorpe, Blayney, Bathurst, and, I think, Wellington too. If the site of the Federal Capital be ultimately chosen in one of these western districts, I think that is a strong argument. I think you will see the most direct line of communication with the different Colonies will be made from that point.

Alexander Wilson, stock and station agent, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Wilson.
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4173. *Chairman.*] You are a stock and station agent carrying on business in O'Connell-street, Sydney? Yes.
4174. *Mr. Watson.*] When you were giving evidence on another inquiry some time ago, you incidentally suggested that, in considering any connection between the Northern line and the Western line, the route from Gilgandra to Curlewis might be inquired into? I did.
4175. Since that suggestion was made, Mr. Harper, Chief Traffic Manager in the Railway Department, has made some inquiries into that aspect, and Mr. C. McDonnell Stuart, of the Railway Construction Branch, has inspected the possible route? So I understand.
4176. Have you had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Stuart's report? I saw the resume of it, and I had a conversation with Mr. Stuart.
4177. You think that Mr. Stuart in his exploration got on to the best line which could be got in that district? I think not, and he is rather inclined to think, after having had it explained by me, that a better line could be got. He only had some four days, I understand, to make the whole inspection, which, of course, was not reasonable in a country like that. He admits that several suggestions I made were leading him to think it is quite possible that a better line than even what he brought before the Committee might be obtained.
4178. Could you indicate roughly where you think his suggested line might be deviated from with advantage? On this wall-map Mr. Stuart's suggested line starts from Gilgandra, and is shown in green tint on the map, crossing the Castlereagh above Binnaway, and then getting on to the explored line from Quirindi to Coonabarabran, and leaving that a little further on across the easy country to Curlewis.
4179. It shows a possible deviation just above Binnaway, following Woolshed Creek in lieu of Mow Creek? Yes.
4180. Will you now suggest your alterations? Starting from the terminal point at Gilgandra, I agree, as far as my observation goes, with the line as indicated by Mr. Stuart that approaches the second crossing of the Castlereagh above Binnaway. Subject to further examination—I know this route, for I have ridden it, almost exactly—I would suggest that an examination be made from the second crossing of the Castlereagh, with a southerly trend towards Binnaway, then making an almost direct line to Bomera, and then keeping about 2 miles to the east of Mr. Stuart's line till you get within about 10 miles of Curlewis.
4181. Do you think that would probably give easier country than a line as sketched by Mr. Stuart? I think so. I discussed that question with Mr. Stuart, because I considered that he has followed not a difficult line of country, but a more difficult line than a great deal of this line I suggest. He is following along a creek, and he admits that, possibly, my knowledge of the country was greater than what he was able to obtain in the time at his disposal, because the only piece of line he knew was the part of the line which follows the Quirindi-Coonabarabran exploration; but he is quite prepared to find on further examination that my suggestion would be a distinct improvement, and probably shorten and cheapen the line.
4182. I presume that once you leave the Castlereagh the second time, going north-east, you enter into country that is, generally speaking, rough for a little distance? When you come up Mow Creek, and get on to the watershed between the Castlereagh and the Namoi, it is about the poorest piece of country on the whole route. Of course, there is one feature of this alteration which would be unfavourable to some extent, in that it brings the line several miles further away from Coonabarabran.
4183. Not so much; but still it would be slightly in that direction? It is only problematical. You see, instead of following the river north towards Coonabarabran, the line follows south-west on the other side, and the station for Coonabarabran would be somewhere near Binnaway on the present main road, or it might be at a small settlement called Warkton, or at another small place, the name of which I do not remember.
4184. Do you think you can get through the rough country immediately north-east of the Castlereagh near Binnaway easier than Mr. Stuart does with his line? That is the only bit of the line from that side of the Castlereagh above Binnaway till you get into the drop of the Namoi that I am not personally acquainted with. I discussed the matter with Mr. Stawell, of the Railway Department, who spent some time in trying to improve the approach to this Warrumbungle Range for these lines, and he told me that the further west you get here the easier it is to cross the range. Of course, the range when you get out to the north is very indistinct; it is only a flat table-land, but he says the more you keep to the west the easier it is to approach the ridge on an easy grade. That was speaking of it as compared with any of these other suggested Werris Creek lines.
4185. Mr. Stuart made a tentative suggestion in favour of Breeza as against Curlewis for a junction? So he mentioned to me. That was first suggested by Mr. Goodwin, Member for Gunnedah, who spoke to me about it when I first propounded this idea of mine. Of course, both Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Stuart, to my mind, are looking at it solely from the railway management point of view—the doing away with the junction station. That is all very well, but we hope that these lines, when made, will develop a traffic sufficient to justify junction stations.
4186. The feeling is that with a junction at Breeza you could utilise the existing workshops at Werris Creek? I quite understand the argument for what it is worth, but, as against that, you will see that that suggestion makes a narrow angle of the line. You have about 15 or 20 miles of railway practically unproductive. If it gets any traffic at all, it is only taking it from the existing line, because all on the south side of the North-western line is a great wet plain in the hands of one proprietor, and with no settlement on it at all, and it is not land suitable for cultivation. The land in the angle between the two lines is thoroughly well served by the existing line. Besides, it must lengthen the line, I should say, by 15 miles, judging by this map. That is an important consideration as against the expense of managing a junction station, whereas, starting from Curlewis, the line is going for the first 25 or 30 miles admittedly through nearly all first-class agricultural land, a great deal of it being under settlement at the present moment.
4187. And starting at right angles from the existing line would draw traffic from either side almost immediately? Immediately. It is better than a right angle, because it is striking off at the curve of a bow. It is more like the three legs of the Isle of Man. There is another point which I am not able exactly to elucidate there, because this map leaves off just where I want it. I think, in considering such lines as this,

this, you ought to endeavour not to drag the traffic away from the local county town. There is a great deal of business which requires people to go into the local town—the Assize town, the Land Office town, and all this kind of thing; and that traffic should be encouraged, and you should not drag people away down a line either to force them to go to Sydney, or Newcastle, or some utterly useless place for the local traffic. If you have the line to Gunnedah, you see this line almost runs on into Gunnedah, the local district town, which is only 9 miles from Curlewis, surely that is an object to be considered. Furthermore, there is the question of the stock traffic. All the country to the north and north-west of this is in fair seasons a great stock-producing country, and runs right in and commands a great deal of the western Queensland stock country. If there are markets to the south, that is the natural line of traffic. I have myself trucked sheep which came from Narrabri at Rylstone to go to Melbourne. Now, if that can be done, surely there are good reasons why, in some seasons, such a line as this might expect to bring a considerable traffic from that direction, and the more you drag that traffic down along V-shaped angles and backwards the less you encourage it.

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4188. So that for stock coming from the North-western line and branches it would be actually a saving to go a little further west, such as a Curlewis connection would mean? An enormous amount. You have only to look at the angle to understand. You have to come to Werris Creek, and then you have to go right back, quite two-thirds of the distance it would be from Werris Creek to, say, Bourera. You see, with my suggestion, how this would commend Gunnedah and all the business out here to pass Bourera. Gunnedah is its local town. To the Assize courts, and Land Board sittings, and many other things, many people have to come in. If you make them go down to Werris Creek and then come back—and perhaps the trains would not be convenient—this line would not be of any use to them, and still they would have the heavy journey across country as they have at present. That appeals to me as a very considerable argument, if the reasons are not very strong to the contrary. Perhaps I may take the liberty of saying here, having heard part of Mr. Suttor's evidence, that he is not as well up in the stock trade as perhaps we might expect him to be, because, lately, store cattle have been trucked from Wallangarra to Wagga and Albury. I saw some of them very poor too. You see store cattle are worth up to £8, £9, and £10 in Victoria, and taking a normal state of affairs it is very difficult to say what traffic might develop on a line.

4189. But that is an abnormal condition? Yes. Australia, especially New South Wales, is more or less abnormal. It is always abnormal somewhere, and that is one reason why this line will be carrying some traffic one way different from what it will do at another time. I mention that matter as Mr. Suttor did not seem to have a good grasp of the subject. He also forgets that in a great deal of this western country in Queensland—that is, north-west of Collarenebri—there are no cattle, it is all sheep. The cattle in Queensland, to which we would have to look for railway traffic, are either on the coast, inside the range, or on the extreme western part of that Colony. The main intermediate country carries all sheep now.

4190. Taking the Queensland cattle that are located towards the coast, is it not likely that they would come down in fair seasons by the various rivers—the Condamine, Warrego, and Culgoa—as far as Bourke, with a view to trucking to Melbourne rather than trucking on the North-western line? No; Moree down to Bingara would be the routes they would come. Take Goondiwindi, take from the main range at Wallangarra, at the range there are no cattle at all till you get as far west as Thargomindah; it is all sheep.

4191. Taking Thargomindah, from the map it would appear as if it is not so much out of the road to make for Bourke or else to go right down? They either make to Bourke or to Broken Hill; but the traffic in cattle is either west to Walgett or it is in about Moree.

4192. Taking the Great Northern line and the north-western branch at Moree, or any extension of that branch, which of these lines would be more likely to attract Queensland cattle which are making for Melbourne? Moree.

4193. In that case the Curlewis starting-point would be better than Werris Creek? Undoubtedly that is the most likely for either cattle or sheep. That is the line of traffic from north to east most likely to have a permanent, continuous, and developing traffic.

4194. Is there much cattle traffic on the North-western line now? Not much, because almost the very last of the cattle country, even what is purely cattle country, is nearly starved out by the late drought. Any cattle country at all suitable for sheep has been converted into sheep country. They can be handled so much more easily in a drought with the possibility of saving them, and they are better worth saving.

4195. Leaving for the time being the saving in cost of construction which your suggested line would mean as compared with the Wellington to Werris Creek line, are there any other advantages which present themselves in favour of it? There is the advantage that you are tapping fresh country every mile of the way, and you are not competing with any existing line, and you are drawing traffic from both sides of it.

4196. Would not two of these points apply equally to the Wellington-Werris Creek line? No.

4197. That is, that you draw traffic from each side, and that you go through good land? No; as I shall explain. You have the same objection at both ends of the Wellington-Werris Creek line as I indicated the suggested deviation to Breeza would have. You will go off at a sharp angle, and you will get no traffic on that line till you get quite past Pine Ridge.

4198. You will get traffic from Pine Ridge? From my knowledge of it, you will get no traffic unless in a very wet, flooded season, when the roads are impassable. You will get no traffic from the Quirindi side of Kickerbil—I know that country well, as I used to have a place further on there—because people not immediately on the line, if they have to go some distance to the railway, would prefer to go from there to a considerable town on the main line where they could do other business than to go a shorter distance to a local line with one town and, perhaps, detention at the junction, and then get into another train to arrive at their destination.

4199. The latter involving much greater railway haulage? Yes; for instance, it is 22 miles by road from Quirindi to Kickerbil. Kickerbil would, I fancy, be 11 or 12 miles from any principal siding on the proposed line. They would prefer to go 22 miles to a main line station in most of the cases, and the traffic certainly would. You see there is the saving of extra haulage.

4200. How far would you have to go on from Werris Creek on the proposed line before you began to tap new trade? Of course, you will get a little close to the line. People will, of course, make use of it. You will get none, except they can just step on to the line.

- A. Wilson. 4201. Why? There will be almost no traffic that the railways do not get, till you get to Spring Ridge on the proposed line.
- 11 July, 1900. 4202. From Spring Ridge right on? You would gain very little till you got past Collie Blue. Of course after that you would get it on both sides. All this country south of the proposed line towards Quirindi, is all large grazing freeholds, and mostly land only suitable for grazing.
4203. Does that apply to the land through which the line goes before you get to Spring Ridge from Werris Creek? Yes; to a great deal of it with only odd patches of exceptions, in fact, till you get to Bomera or near the range.
4204. *Dr. Garran.*] For the first 20 miles along this line from Werris Creek a very small proportion of the country is agricultural country? It is not good agricultural country.
4205. *Mr. Watson.*] The country generally is held in large holdings? Almost entirely in the hands of six or eight persons. Moreover, when you get a little further on the traffic is all fenced in on the south by the main Liverpool Range. There are only one or two stations here which run up, you can only have one station to draw on for traffic at all. When you pass by Bundella you are on the other end of the run, for the top end of that holding is on the top of the Liverpool Range. The same with Moredevil and all the holdings along there that run through the plains. There is only one holding between the railway line and the top of the ridge till you get to Dempsey's, which is on the very top of the range almost.
4206. From Dempsey you continue on up to Weetalibah and Ulinda towards the Castlereagh? Yes.
4207. Referring to the country from Binnaway to Merrygoen on the proposed line, how would you describe its character? Of course you strike a patch of the worst country on the whole route there, in fact it is mostly very poor from where this bend begins to develop near Binnaway, till you get quite close to Talbragar at the back of Cobborah. That is the worst patch of country anywhere about there.
4208. For a distance of how many miles? About 50 miles.
4209. Going on from Cobborah again, you approach the influence of either the Dubbo-Coonamble line, or the main Western line? Yes; you have the same sharp-faced approach here, instead of a blunt approach. If you get the traffic here you are probably robbing the main Western line of it.
4210. That applies to the western side of the proposed line? Yes.
4211. On the eastern side, so far, there would be no competitive line unless the Mudgee line were extended? Yes.
4212. The country from Cobborah into Wellington is good? It is nearly all good agricultural land; there are only odd places which are not good.
4213. Taking the country through which the proposed line goes generally, and that through which your suggested line would go, which do you think would have the smaller proportion of bad land? My proposal.
4214. How would you describe the country through which your proposed line goes, you having been over the greater part of it, I understand? I know it all pretty intimately, except the 15 or 20 miles I explained on the other map, east of the second crossing of the Castlereagh.
4215. Will you now describe the rest of the line? Starting from Gilgandra, for the first few miles it is rather hard-timber country; it is agricultural land, but of rather inferior quality. Then, as you approach the Wallamburrawong Creek, the quality of the land improves. There is a considerable patch of volcanic soil, and that extends more or less all the way till within a short distance of the second crossing of the Castlereagh. Then there is the bit I am not personally well acquainted with, but I know it is fair to good grazing land, and a great deal of it is very good agricultural land. I am not speaking from my personal knowledge. I know from the owners of properties the description of this land. From there to past Bomera a great deal of it is really good agricultural land. From below Bomera, there would be about 15 miles of heavy black soil of the Liverpool Plains, and then really good agricultural land the rest of the way into Curlewis.
4216. How is that land on the Curlewis line generally held? Most of it is in the hands of small holders—holders under 10,000 acres, and a large proportion of it is still Crown land, or has been recently settled under the present Land Act. The only large estate which the line would skirt—it would not traverse it—is Bando.
4217. I understand that a number of settlement leases and other forms of close settlement have been thrown open there very lately? Within the last twelve months there has been quite an area of the part of Bando which I suggest the line should go through, taken up under settlement lease, and I believe some more are about to be taken up. That is one reason, amongst others, why I suggest Mr. Stuart did not keep enough to the east. He has kept too close to Tambar Springs, and too close to the edge of a long range of low hills. I might mention, too, that when you do get away from the Liverpool Range here on the proposed line, this patch of country between Coolah and the proposed line is almost entirely unproductive. One or two large holdings there were deserted for the last two or three years. The holding, Bothero, which used to run 30,000 sheep, was absolutely denuded of stock.
4218. It is very rough country? It is very poor country. If you get down to Denny Kinnie there are several other poor miserable holdings which do not make a living for a family.
4219. Would your description of the land, through which your suggested line runs, apply for any distance on either side, north and south? Yes; I mean it to apply to a considerable area of country on both sides. I have described it on the line. If I go near a range, as you do over this range at Tambar Springs, that is not very serious, it is only for construction purposes that he may be so near—you pass no country within 10 or 15 miles which is unproductive.
4220. Where you cross the Castlereagh the second time, immediately north-east of Binnaway, would you call that good country? No. There are small patches—and that is what I said—just near Binnaway. There is the patch a little north of Binnaway and up M'ow Creek. Still, although it is not attractive sheep country; a great deal of it is good agricultural land. It is grass-seed country; it is coarse sandy country. In some places, where it is hard soil, it is iron-bark, and where it is more sandy and loamy, it is white-box or pine and apple tree. Of course, this deviation would require to be considered, in view of the accommodation to Coonabarabran. That is only a detail, and no doubt it will be taken into consideration.
4221. Your line generally, though whether Mr. Stuart's route is adopted, or whether your suggested deviation is adopted, would go much nearer Coonabarabran than the proposed line? I think, perhaps, about 15 miles nearer; it depends upon how the survey panned out.
4222. So that you are still of opinion that your suggested line is much superior to the proposed line from every aspect? From the national point of view, I think so. I saw Mr. Deane's evidence, where he gave

gave it a very short shrift in his earlier report, and before Mr. Stuart was sent out, and spoke very disparagingly of the rough country and the expense it would be. Mr. Stuart practically endorses everything I have said, and it shows—although it is a broken country—it is not a difficult country, because you do not attack any main range, and you avoid nearly all the minor leading ranges. You skirt them; you do not go jumping up and down over the banks of the country. In fact, Mr. Stuart says that the estimate would be very reasonable if it were not for the two long bridges over the Castlereagh, that that addition adds so much to the general cost, and he admits that my first contention, which, of course, was based simply on local knowledge, would, very probably, prove correct; that it would prove that there is a difference of 50 miles between the two lines. At present he makes it out to be 40 miles.

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4223. *Mr. Hyam.*] How far would Coonabarabran be from the nearest point on your suggested line? It would be not nearer than 15 miles, and not further than 20 miles, allowing for the different surveys which might be made.

4224. How many miles of that country south-east of Coonabarabran would it have to go through? I do not think more than 8 or 10 miles.

4225. You have been through it? Yes. As it happens Mr. Stuart has almost adopted a line of route I travelled a couple of years ago on a business errand. I went a little out of my way to pick up some of the features I had in view for this line, and I found that he has much more closely followed the route I travelled than I had anticipated.

4226. According to your opinion is that country good for anything at all? There is no country on that route which is not good for something—I will not say that there is not 500 acres, because even the richest country contains patches of poor land.

4227. Do you not think that there is a considerable extent of country there which is not good for agriculture or grazing? No; I do not think there is a patch of 500 acres of what I would call bad country. Of course a great deal of it is bad sheep country, but some of it is very good agricultural land.

4228. It is some years since I went through that country, but it struck me at that time that there was a very considerable extent of that heavy, bad country? If you travel right from Coolah or Binnaway into Coonabarabran you would follow along the top of a ridge. For the last 15 miles into Coonabarabran you would be just on the top of a bad ridge.

4229. Your suggested line is east of that? It is endeavoured to keep to the east of this very bad bit.

4230. *Chairman.*] All your evidence is, of course, proceeding on the assumption that it is desirable to construct either of these lines? That is so.

4231. I think you know the details of the finance of the line? Roughly.

4232. The Railway Commissioners anticipate a loss of £18,000 with local rates, and £20,000 with through rates; could you indicate any other sources of traffic or revenue besides the one you have already indicated, namely, the cattle traffic? I cannot indicate that either of the lines is likely to pay for some time to come. I am very definitely of that opinion; but, if it is a choice of evils, I claim that my line will be the less evil, and a greater prospect of good.

4233. *Dr. Garran.*] Your line will be 40 miles shorter, and therefore less capital will be involved in it? Yes.

4234. *Chairman.*] You think it would open up a larger area per mile of this agricultural country? Distinctly, because the good country on the Wellington-Werris Creek line is almost entirely held in large holdings, and is country which is not likely to be opened up for a long time to come.

4235. Whereas on your suggested line you think there is considerable room for closer settlement? It is developing every month. I think any close inspection would go to prove that.

4236. From your general knowledge of the operations of the railways and the country, can you indicate any benefit, apart from opening up this country, which would accrue from connecting the Northern line with the Western line? Of course, there must be an advantage. It happens sometimes that the run of traffic, say of stock, is all on the Northern, or the Western, or the Southern line—at least a great preponderance of it. I know it has been, in some instances, a great convenience that the Commissioners could work the rolling stock from the Western to the Southern lines, or *vice versa*, without hauling them to Sydney, because, of course, they must keep a certain standard of supply on the different lines ready for the ordinary traffic.

4237. That is just about the only reason which the Commissioners urge in favour of the line, and they do not seem to think much of that either? That is a saving and an advantage to the country which does not come out in any returns. If they haul that traffic at a loss—if they haul the trucks, say, from Blayney to Sydney, and have to haul them back to Harden again—of course, it is an addition to the working expenses, but it cannot be particularised very well. But they admit at times that they have had great savings in that respect. There is another point of this cross-country drought traffic to which I do not attach a great deal of importance. See the advantage of this line as compared with the Werris Creek line, because, as the last witness told you, the Wellington district does not suffer from drought. I agree with that up to a point. It does not suffer like the western country; but the country which wants to be relieved is the country all west of Narrabri, Moree, and Dubbo. You see this line gives a good opening to do that, and if a good season is on in New England, or down about Orange, they have a choice of routes, and they never would want to send sheep from Wellington to New England. From nowhere here would they ever send their sheep in a drought to New England; they might once in ten or fifteen years. I am speaking of the great tract of sheep country in towards Coonamble; that will not be helped in any way. They will be in direct communication with New England by my route, and at a great deal shorter distance than by the other connection.

4238. *Mr. McFarlane.*] One of the arguments in favour of connecting the two lines is that with a cross-country line conveying stock, say, from Queensland to the Melbourne market, and also for passenger traffic, it would be much nearer than by going round, *via* Sydney, to Melbourne or Adelaide, in the event of the cross line being continued. In the event of that being done, people coming from Brisbane, or stock coming from there, by your proposed connection between Curlewis and Dubbo or Wellington, they would have to change at Werris Creek from the Northern line, and there would be another junction at Curlewis, instead of taking the straighter course at Werris Creek going due south? A junction does not necessarily mean a change.

4239. It would mean a great inconvenience? I do not hesitate to say that any expectation of a through express traffic from Queensland to Victoria by any of these routes would be absurd.

- A. Wilson. 4240. That is put forward by a number of witnesses? I do not put it forward. I would not expect to get any material return from any through passengers. It might be a different question if the Federal Capital were put here, as Mr. Suttor suggested. So far as we can see at the present time, as regards any probability of a through passenger traffic from Queensland to Melbourne, I would not attach any importance to it.
- 11 July, 1900. 4241. How would it affect the stock traffic? I have explained that I claim very considerable advantages for my proposal in the way of stock traffic either from the north to south as fats, or from west to east as stores.
4242. I quite understood the advantage which you pointed out, but I am speaking now of Queensland stock? I do not think the Commissioners would be justified in building very largely on any through traffic in Queensland stock on either of the lines.
4243. You think it would not be sufficiently large? They will get it at times, but it is a very inconvenient and uncertain quantity. I see no prospect of it being a regular trade.
4244. Would you consider it an argument sufficient to be considered in connecting the Western with the Northern line? You could allow a certain guess system that you would occasionally earn something from that traffic, but no business man could reduce it to a business calculation at all—at least, I do not think so—and I think I have a pretty good idea of what it might develop into. You could not say that there would be 10,000 cattle and 100,000 sheep. There might not be 10,000 sheep and 100 head of cattle in six months. I am speaking of what you might call the through traffic from different parts. Of course, the local traffic can be fairly estimated; I mean that through traffic from away up beyond Tamworth or beyond Narrabri. Coming down and crossing over on this line, and going away through Blayney or anyway there is a mere guesswork, but it will happen occasionally. Sometimes considerable numbers will come for a few weeks, and sometimes almost nothing will come for a year or two. It will be very irregular.
4245. *Chairman.*] Is there anything else which you would like to add? No.

WEDNESDAY, 18 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

George Charles Yeo, draftsman, Stock Branch, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

- G. C. Yeo. 4246. *Chairman.*] You have brought the stock statistics in reference to the proposed railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes.
- 18 July, 1900. 4247. Will you kindly indicate the area from which you have drawn the statistics? Starting from Wellington, it runs practically north to Coonabarabran, and branches across in a direct line to Werris Creek, and on the south-eastern side it follows the Coolaburragundy River to Werris Creek.
4248. At about what distance is your area, keeping on each side of the route of the line after it leaves the terminal points? The centre is about the widest part; on the north-west it will be between 40 and 50 miles, and on the south-west it will be about 30 miles—that is, down towards Cassilis.
4249. You have allowed for the influence of the existing lines? Yes; I have divided the area between the existing lines and the proposed line equally.
4250. Is there any special name for this district? Not that I am aware of. It embraces the biggest part of what we call the Coonabarabran sheep district.
4251. Will you be good enough to read the return which you have prepared? It is as follows:—

NUMBER of Sheep and Cattle depastured in area affected by proposed railway Wellington to Werris Creek.

		1898.										Sheep.
Cattle.	9,405	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	815,623
		1899.										
	9,243	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	796,219
	Clip for 1898	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12,225 bales.
	„ 1899	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11,940 „

There was a drift of stock from the north-west through Coonabarabran for the last two years of 850,000 sheep and 85,000 cattle.

4252. I suppose you are not able to go back any number of years and show what increase has taken place? I can go back to the year 1896 and give you the increase, not particularly in that portion, but in the sheep district including that portion, which will give you an idea of the increase in the same area.
4253. Will you read the statement which you have prepared? It is as follows:—

Stock Returns.

Year.	Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.
1896	6,139	16,084	1,012,008
1897	6,056	14,406	942,461
1898	6,132	13,692	993,974
1899	5,768	11,809	833,576

4254.

4254. That, of course, has been due to the continuation of bad seasons? Yes; owing to the drought. G. C. Yeo.
4255. We can take it that the figures which you have given us for this special area about the line do not represent by any means the full capacity of that country? No, if I had gone further back—to the year 18 July, 1900. 1896—they would have improved considerably.
4256. Can you state what relation the present amount of stock bears to the whole amount which could be carried by that country in a fair season, and in what proportion? No more than that return shows. It shows that in 1899 there were 796,219 sheep, and in 1898, 815,623 sheep.
4257. Do you think that that district would stand, in a fair season, twice the number of sheep? No; it would not stand that. In 1896 that district—that is, the Coonabarabran district—carried 1,000,000 sheep, and in 1899, 863,000 sheep. Of course, there has been a falling off since 1896.
4258. *Mr. Levien.*] 1896 was a good season? It was.
4259. And I suppose the previous seasons had been good? The seasons previous to 1896 were good too.
4260. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the quality of the sheep in that district a fair average of the New South Wales sheep, or do you know nothing about that matter? I do not know anything about that.

THURSDAY, 19 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	}	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.		ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.		

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Wellington to Werris Creek.

Simeon Phillips, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

4261. *Chairman.*] You are Member of the Legislative Assembly for the electorate of Dubbo? Yes; and I have resided in Dubbo for twenty-two years. S. Phillips, Esq., M.P.
4262. You have a fair knowledge of the surrounding country? A very fair knowledge. 19 July, 1900.
4263. Since this proposal was remitted to the Committee a rival connection starting from Dubbo has been placed before our notice;—the cross-country connections really only differ in route as regards the part from Dubbo to Murrungundi, and the part from Wellington to Murrungundi;—can you give us an idea of the relative character of the two connections as far as Murrungundi, with respect to ease of construction? I believe the line would be more easily constructed from Dubbo than from Wellington. I am better acquainted with the country between Dubbo and Murrungundi than the country between Dubbo and Wellington, about which country I know very little, except in the immediate vicinity of Wellington.
4264. Would you say that the country in the immediate vicinity of Wellington is more undulating than that near Dubbo? Yes, very much more difficult country, I should say.
4265. How would you compare the two sections of country with respect to their agricultural possibilities? I know there is a large amount of agriculture between Dubbo and Murrungundi.
4266. Is it all and suitable for agriculture? Yes.
4267. It has also been suggested that this cross-country connection, if built, might in the future be extended further south;—from which point would the cross-country connection be more easily extended, from Dubbo or from Wellington? Certainly from Dubbo.
4268. For what reason? I have formed that opinion largely from the reports of Mr. Jones, who made a very elaborate survey and report, and who, I see, has given evidence in this inquiry.
4269. Do you think the fact that the Dubbo-Coonamble line is about to be constructed is an argument against joining Werris Creek with Dubbo rather than with Wellington? I cannot see that it affects the question. It appears to me it would be an advantage from a railway point of view.
4270. In what way;—on account of the running-sheds? To have running-sheds, trucking-yards, and so forth.
4271. Looking at the map, and presuming that this line were constructed, and that the future extensions became necessary, from which point would the future extension south-west open up the most country not now served by railway from Dubbo or Wellington? I know the map pretty well. I have been looking at a smaller map, and I should say that an extension to Dubbo would open up more country.
4272. Is that the reason why the Condobolin line and the Western line are rather close to one another near Wellington? From Dubbo it serves a larger scope of country going down, not already served by railway.
4273. Is there any detail information which you could give us as to the general scope of this inquiry? I should like to point out that a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek would probably afford a larger passenger traffic. Dubbo is a very large centre. In that town two Circuit Courts and four District Courts are held during the year, and the Central Land Board sits in Dubbo.
4274. Which includes Wellington? Yes. Another important fact is that coal has been discovered at Ballimore, which is 22 miles distant from Dubbo, on the proposed line. Mineral springs also exist at Ballimore. These mineral waters are very well known in the whole of the colonies, and are now largely used in Sydney, under the name of Zetz Spa waters.
4275. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How far would it be from Wellington? Taking the surveyed route from Wellington, I do not know how far it would be as compared with the surveyed route from Dubbo; but I think it is nearer Dubbo.
4276. *Chairman.*] Where do the supplies of these mineral waters come to the railway now? To Dubbo. In the report which Mr. Jones made in 1891, he favours the construction of a line from Dubbo to Werris Creek in preference to a line from Wellington to Werris Creek, and after summing up the conclusions which he has arrived at, he ends with this remark: "I am, therefore, compelled to favour the rival route from Dubbo." But I should look upon a line going from Dubbo to Werris Creek as more of a national line than a line from Wellington would be, for the reason I have already stated—that it will get away from Dubbo much more easily than it can from Wellington. 4277.

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4277. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you favour the route from Dubbo to Werris Creek in consequence of there being less engineering difficulties in the way? That is one of the reasons; but as I have already stated, I think it will get away from Dubbo much more easily for further extensions.

4278. By bringing the line from Dubbo you would increase the distance to Sydney? Yes, by the distance between Wellington and Dubbo—about 28 miles. I do not think you understood my reply to the other question.

4279. Possibly not? One of the reasons which I regard as making Dubbo a better terminus is that the future extension which must take place to Parkes, Forbes, Grenfell, and Young will be more easily constructed from Dubbo than from Wellington.

4280. I am glad you mentioned that matter, because I was going to speak about it;—where would you propose that the line from Parkes to the Western line should junction? There is a difference of opinion as to that—either at Dubbo or at Narramine.

4281. I have been over that country a good deal;—do you not think that to junction with Dubbo would be rather costly, for there is no doubt that it will have to come some day? I do not think it is as costly to junction from Dubbo as it would be from Wellington.

4282. From Narramine it would be less costly? Yes, as it is nearly all level country. From Narramine to Peak Hill it is almost level country.

4283. You think that with the possibility of the railway from Parkes to junction with the Western railway it would be desirable to make Dubbo the terminus of the proposed railway from Werris Creek? Yes.

4284. Do you know anything of the country on the route you advocate, say within 30 or 40 miles of Dubbo? Yes.

4285. Is it good land? It is nearly all good land.

4286. Agricultural land? First-class agricultural land. In fact there is a good deal of agriculture going on now to within Murrungundi, which is the point at issue, as far as this terminus goes.

4287. How far is it from Dubbo? It is 35 miles from Dubbo on the proposed route. After leaving Murrungundi, the lines from Wellington and Dubbo are identical.

4288. *Mr. Levien.*] You know nothing about the country between Werris Creek and Wellington? I know part of the country between Wellington and Murrungundi.

4289. Of course you would sooner have the line going to Dubbo? Certainly; but I have given reasons already, in reply to the Chairman, why I think it should go to Dubbo.

4290. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you know the country about Mundooran? Yes; I have been there.

4291. In going to Dubbo, would you not take the line nearer Mundooran than you would by going to Wellington? Yes.

4292. Is not the country about Mundooran very poor? There is some poor country, but there is also some very fine country about Mundooran.

4293. The line is slightly shorter to Dubbo than to Wellington—by 2 or 3 miles? According to Mr. Deane's report, it is 2 or 3 miles shorter *via* Dubbo, being 159 miles.

4294. Have you been along the whole line? No; I know the country between Dubbo and Murrungundi and about there, and Cobborah, and Mundooran, and so on.

4295. Have you not been any further along the line? No.

4296. You know the country pretty well within 15 or 20 miles from Dubbo? Yes.

4297. Is the country equally suitable for a railway from Dubbo as it is from Wellington;—is the country as easily worked for a railway? I should say so.

4298. I understood it was rather more hilly from Dubbo? I think it is easier country—not so hilly.

4299. There is a portion of it which I know is very poor and very scrubby, because we were taken that way at the time we went over? Perhaps you only kept to the road.

4300. We did not go far off the road, but out Mundooran way; we did go off the road a good bit;—do you know the country about Gilgandra? Yes.

4301. What do you think of a line striking in at Gilgandra instead of Wellington;—it would shorten the distance very considerably? Although I know the country about Gilgandra, I do not know the route which a railway would take.

4302. If you will look at the plan, you will see that it would considerably straighten the line? It would.

4303. But do you know the country very well? I know the country about Gilgandra, and between Dubbo and Gilgandra, but not this cross-country between Gilgandra and Curlewis.

4304. There has been a suggestion to run a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra, which would considerably shorten the distance;—do you think that would be as convenient? I could not say, because I do not know the country.

4305. It would be a little longer round for travellers; but it would be a much shorter line to construct? That would be a line from Curlewis to Gilgandra, and from Gilgandra to Dubbo.

4306. Yes, of course, the line from Dubbo to Coonamble is not constructed yet; but it is likely to be built shortly? Yes; but that leaves out the question of the extension to the southern line.

4307. What is your principal recommendation in favouring this line, what advantages do you think would be gained by it chiefly? I have read a large amount of the evidence which has been given to the Committee, and I agree with a number of the witnesses in the reasons which they give in favouring this line, which are all summed up by, I think, Mr. Jones, in this way, that there would be a large amount of traffic from starving stock in times of drought—and there is no doubt that the railway would develop a large amount of traffic—and that there would be a largely increased amount of agriculture.

4308. Do you think it would be likely to induce much passenger traffic? I think that would have to come.

4309. It is connecting, of course, two main lines? Yes; and there is the fact that it shortens the distance to Melbourne, Queensland, and South Australia, which, I think, justifies one in saying it is a national line, especially if you extend it to the Southern line, and make that connection to Young, taking in Parkes, Forbes, and Grenfell.

4310. You are in favour of the construction of this line, but you prefer to connect with Dubbo in preference to Wellington? Yes.

4311. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is there much traffic at the present time between Murrungundi and Dubbo? I think there is a good deal of traffic.

4312. As regards the settlement you spoke of, which town do the settlers mostly trade with, or send their produce to—Dubbo or Wellington? I believe they do the greater part of their trade with Dubbo. I know many people who bring their produce to Dubbo, and do their business with Dubbo.

4313. Would that produce be for Dubbo alone, or would it go there for transmission to some other market? I could not say. Under certain conditions they might be sending it further west, or down the line.

4314. The question whether, in times of drought and so forth, the bulk of that traffic coming to Dubbo along the proposed line would be sent towards Sydney, or would go in a westerly direction, would have rather an important bearing as far as Dubbo is concerned in this inquiry? I think that is a question of conditions obtaining at the time.

4315. In times of drought, I suppose the tendency would be to send out westerly? Yes.

4316. Is there much wheat grown in the locality you are speaking of between Dubbo and Murrungundy? There is a good deal of wheat grown, and there will be more grown.

4317. Is that wheat grown for the Sydney market, or is it sent to Dubbo to be milled? At Dubbo there is a large mill to which, I daresay, some of it has gone, and some of it may be sent on.

4318. In receiving goods by the main line, do they receive them through Dubbo? I think so. Their trade relations, as far as I know, are with Dubbo.

Thomas Brown, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

4319. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the proposal before this Committee to construct a railway from Wellington to Werris Creek? Yes.

4320. Will you favour the Committee with a statement of your views on that proposal? I may inform the Committee that I became interested in this matter about three or four years ago. The Condoulin electorate, I may premise my remarks by stating, is rather an extensive one. It goes to within 7 miles north of Parkes, joins the Harvey Range, runs out in the direction of Dubbo, and comes within 2 miles of Narramine, and west towards Nymagee, and on to the Lachlan. Between Parkes and Dubbo there is a considerable amount of settlement, mining and agricultural, and an agitation was started there to get the benefits of railway communication by the extension of a line from Parkes to Peak Hill. In dealing with this matter, I found that there was a disinclination on the part of the Department, and on the part of the Railway Commissioners, to work short spur lines such as that would be, being a line of 30 miles. I also knew that some years previously there had been an agitation to connect all these main trunk lines by an inland link line, as it is termed. I thought this agitation had practically been dead, for several reasons, for some years, and I considered that it would be a good idea to revive it—that the time was opportune to do so. At the deputation which I introduced to the then Minister for Public Works, Mr. Young, it was asked for by the Peak Hill Railway League, and they simply confined themselves to asking for an extension to Peak Hill from Parkes; but I had induced several other centres, such as Parkes, Alectown, McPhail, Tomingley, and Narramine to join in this deputation. The Minister's reply to the Peak Hill representation was not very favourable, for the reasons I indicated; but upon a wider scheme being put before him he intimated that he thought it was one that he might give consideration to. Subsequently I had considerable correspondence with the Department on the matter as the outcome of Mr. Jones' report, made, I think, in 1891. I first placed before the Minister the desirableness of constructing a line from Parkes to Dubbo, and from Dubbo on to Werris Creek; but I found there was a difficulty with respect to the country lying between Tomingley and Dubbo. It is rather broken country; it is not hilly country. What are known as the Sappa-Bulgas cross this line of country. It is a continuation of a broken line of country extending from between Parkes and Molong out, forming the Harvey Range for a part of the way, and, as it gets further out, it tails off, or levels down across the Western railway between Narramine and Dubbo, and goes on towards Gilgandra, out in that direction. As I have described, this country is rather poor, and, whilst it presents no very great engineering difficulties, it is an expensive piece of country, and that induced me to suggest to the Department the advisableness of carrying the railway to Narramine. The country between Tomingley and Narramine is splendid agricultural country, being level all the way, with no engineering difficulties whatever. My first proposition on that was to go to Narramine, and thence in a direct line to Werris Creek; but it was pointed out to me that a considerable expense would be entailed in bridging the Macquarie and ana-branch—the Coolbaggie, I think, it is called. That induced me to submit to the Department the desirableness of using the present line between Narramine and Dubbo, and extending from Dubbo to Werris Creek. The Member for Dubbo, Mr. Phillips, and several residents of Dubbo, joined in that proposition, and it was before the Minister, Mr. Young, and also his successor, Mr. Lee, and we understood—at least I understood—it was a likely line to be submitted by the then Government. No doubt the Wellington-Werris Creek extension, as it was an alternative or rival scheme to this one previously, was also considered in this connection. As soon as the present Government came into office, Mr. O'Sullivan announced his intention of submitting the Wellington to Werris Creek extension, although he indicated to Mr. Phillips and myself in the House that if there was any evidence brought which could show that the other line was a better line, it would be open to this Committee, and afterwards for the House, to consider that. That is pretty well the extent of my connection with this proposal. I am very well acquainted with the country lying west of Dubbo and Parkes and Forbes and all through that way; and I have some slight acquaintance with the country round Mudgee, round Dubbo, and round Wellington; but my personal acquaintance with the principal part of the country traversed by this proposal is very limited. It is more a matter of what I have gathered by conversation with people who have lived there and travelled over that country. I think, in considering an extension of this kind, consideration should be given to the question of how it will serve intercolonial interests, also to the question of what advantages it may offer in times of warfare, in providing safe means of moving troops from one portion of the Colony to the other; and, further, to the question of how, as a developing line, it will open up the country lying between these branch lines, and acting as feeder to these branch lines in different directions. With respect to the national aspect of this question, a line constructed as proposed would have the effect of shortening the distance between Brisbane and Melbourne by about 150 miles, I think; and between Brisbane and Adelaide, by 500 miles, I understand. As the populations of the colonies increase, and now that Federation is an accomplished fact, this should be kept strongly in view. One great purpose it will serve, no doubt, will be to facilitate

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the rapid transit of European mails, which is a matter of very great consideration; and (probably it can serve that purpose as far as Adelaide is concerned; but in the event of this transcontinental railway extension being made which is spoken of, it will even afford greater facilities in connecting the different capitals by way of Broken Hill, and Cobar, and Dubbo, or by way of Broken Hill and Condobolin, if that line be taken in hand. Then, with respect to the military advantages, whilst it may be contended that there is no apparent need for that, there is no certainty as to when that need may arise, and when it does arise it is too late then to prepare for it. If other advantages are sufficient to induce the construction of a connecting link like this, which may not be all that may be desired, this should have some weight in considering these other advantages. So far as our communication is concerned between Newcastle and Sydney, it lies practically along the coast, and is liable to be intercepted by an enemy at several points, and particularly where the line crosses the Hawkesbury. This proposed link-line would obviate any disadvantage arising from that, and would enable the troops to be shifted from any one point in the colonies to another, very readily and very safely. I think that is a point which might well receive consideration. Now, with respect to the possible developments to arise from the construction of a line of this nature. At the present time all our railway systems converge to Sydney. There is no other means of railway communication between the Northern main trunk line and the Western line. Between the Western line and the Southern line there is a connection by way of Blayney and Harden. The result of this centralisation is that there has not been that amount of intercommunication between these several districts which otherwise would have taken place, and which will take place if this connection is made. The distances between them are very great, and the difficulties of travelling over these distances, from the absence of proper roads and so forth, are also very great; and between these main trunk lines, as your evidence discloses, lies good agricultural country that could be opened up by an extension such as this. If that agricultural country were opened up, this connecting link would act as a feeder to the main trunk lines, both in the direction of getting produce to Sydney and also in the direction of taking produce further west, or north, or south, as the case may be, and also in shifting stock. The possibility of opening up this country can only come about by railway extension, and the question is whether it is advisable to make that extension on the same plan as the present extensions have been made—that is, intersecting the country at right-angles, or by a cross-line of railway. I think the cross-line of railway has much to commend itself in preference to continuing the policy of extending the lines at right-angles from Sydney, or the junctions of railways leading to Sydney. After you get over the high broken country caused by the Dividing Range, you get into flat, level country. It tails off, and you get into what is known as the wheat zone of the Central Division, extending, you may say, from the Murray right through to Young, Forbes, Parkes, Peak Hill, and Dubbo, and on towards Werris Creek. In addition to the wheat-growing capabilities of this country there are also mineral belts intersecting it in the line of this proposed railway. There is a belt of mineral country extending from Young, or even from further south, but for the purposes of this connection we will take it from Young, through Grenfell, Forbes, Parkes, Allectown, Peak Hill, McPhail, and Tomingley. It may extend further north, though so far there has been no development; but there has been sufficient development at these places I have named to show that it is likely to be a permanent belt of mineral country. So far, the principal mining they have done has been largely alluvial, and that has been practically worked out, but attention is now being given to the lodges and the reef formation. I might say that one reason why the development in these respects has not been carried to the extent to which it might have been done is that the country is peculiar, in that the mineral formation lies in broken belts, and it is possible to get on one of these formations and have very good returns, and for it to suddenly cut out with very little indication of a continuance. That has led many miners to suppose that they have got to the end of it, but later prospecting shows that that is not so, and that there is every indication to point to the fact that this is a permanent belt of mineral country. Another thing I would like to point out in connection with this mining aspect is that in the line of country, about Peak Hill at any rate, after you get below a certain depth you come to extensive bodies of ores of rather low grade, but very refractory, and the trouble has been to treat them; in fact, up to very recently there has been no payable method known to those who were working the ores by which they could be treated. But Mr. Taylor, who is well known in the Mines Department, has taken the Peak Hill property in hand, and has introduced some new and later scientific methods of treating the ores, and I understand from those who are interested in the mines there that the experiments—for they can only be called experiments so far—conducted under his supervision have proved eminently successful, and that there is every hope now that this problem will be solved. If it is solved it will mean a very extensive mining development, which will bring considerable carriage to the railway, because it is a development which can only be carried on by means of smelting, and the carting of matte and so forth backwards and forwards on the railway, or a mining development very much similar to that which obtains at Cobar, and which has resulted in making the Cobar extension payable. That is one aspect which, I think, should be taken into consideration in dealing with lines of this nature. Now, there is this question,—Which is the best point on the Western line to make this connection from—Wellington or Dubbo, or some other point? I am satisfied that if a connection is made with Wellington it will serve the interests west, which should be taken into consideration, and also the general interests very much less than a connection with Dubbo, or a connection with a point even further west from Dubbo. My reason for expressing that belief is that a connection with Wellington will mean that the other line—a line lying further west, extending between Dubbo, and Parkes, and Young—will be largely cut out, and it will mean the concentration of traffic lying further north, particularly out towards Werris Creek and beyond that on the main Western line now as far as Blayney, and absolutely from Blayney across to Harden, and that way. I would like to point out to the Committee what this will mean. It will mean that the traffic in using this line between Wellington and Blayney, and between Blayney and Harden, will have to incur very serious grades, which is always a great advantage in the cheap and efficient working of traffic. I have some information here relating to this matter. I do not give it as being absolutely correct, but the Committee can check it with the official information obtainable from the Department; and if it is checked, I think you will find that it is a fairly correct statement of the position. West of Narramine the country is very flat, and the grades are 1 in 80, and I think it is only at very few points where it does come to 1 in 80; the general ruling grade is greater than that. Between Narramine and Dubbo the grade increases, because of that patch of broken country that I indicated as extending from east of Parkes out along the Harvey Range, and the Sappa-Bulgas, and on that road. The result is that an engine can draw sixty vehicles over a line west of Narramine, but

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from Narramine to Dubbo a reduction has to be made to forty vehicles, though the difficult country between Narramine and Dubbo is not very considerable, and I understand that the Railway Commissioners are now reducing it, and that the line west from Nyngan may be reduced to a uniform grade at a very little cost.

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4321. *Chairman.*] One in 70 is the heaviest grade there? Yes; that from Dubbo to Wellington is very much similar. I think the same train-load can be taken, but from Wellington to Mullion Creek, I am informed, there is to be found the roughest and most difficult patch of country on the Western line—say, west of Bathurst. The ruling grade there is 1 in 40, and the engine-load, I understand from information I have received from the Department, is nineteen trucks, and from Mullion Creek to Blayney it will be increased to forty-three trucks, for the ruling grade there is better. But I understand that the undulating nature of the country over this length between Wellington and Mullion Creek is such that it cannot be hoped to reduce it to anything approaching the grade west of Narramine, except at very great cost; and that is a matter which should be taken into consideration. Then, again, on the Blayney and Harden line I find that the ruling grade is also about 1 in 40, and that the train-load is eighteen trucks, and that extent of country through there is also very undulating, carrying those very heavy grades, which means that their reduction must cost an immense sum before they could be brought to that point which will approximate to the country west of Narramine. Against that, supposing this connection is made which I have advocated, carrying the line to Dubbo and thence to Narramine, and from Narramine across through Peak Hill to Parkes, utilising the line already constructed from Parkes to Forbes, and carrying an extension across from Forbes to Grenfell, which would serve for present purposes at any rate, you will get a grade quite as easy as that west of Narramine, because you are there in a flat country. That will mean that, having carried your connecting link from the Northern line across to Dubbo, by adopting this extension further west you would have a very easy grade; whereas if you constructed the line from Werris Creek to Wellington, as proposed, you would have these very heavy grades which I have indicated, and which the country can only hope to eliminate at a very great expense, amounting, I suppose, to more than the expense of constructing this other, and little longer, line I have indicated. Besides, as I have stated before, the possibilities of agricultural development, and of mineral development, will go a long way, if not wholly, towards meeting the cost of the construction of this line itself. I believe it will meet the cost of constructing it at a very early date, because the country between Parkes and a point from Tomingley to Narramine has practically only been settled within the last fourteen years, and the settlement has been very rapid, and has yearly become closer and closer. The development in the direction of mining, as well as in the direction of wheat production, is very great. I know that in the country lying west of Peak Hill, extending out to Bullock Creek, there is now a considerable wheat production, and that the farmers, although they are removed from railway facilities to distances varying from 40 to 60 miles, have this year shipped their wheat to London, and sold it there, as the most profitable market for them. They consider they have done reasonably well; they have done better by shipping to London than by selling in Sydney, so far as the returns enable them to judge. That is being done at the present time, and this cross-country railway will very materially assist in developing that country on the lines I have indicated. I do not think there is much more that I could add to my statement as showing my reasons for supporting this other extension. Since this matter has been brought up, I have given some little consideration to the question of making a connection between Curlewis and Gilgandra, and I think there is a lot that can be said in favour of that connection. First of all it will mean very much less cost, because the construction of the line between Gilgandra and Dubbo is already authorised, and that can be used. Then, again, the country that is proposed to be served largely by this connection between Werris Creek and Wellington will either be served by this other connection further north, or if not served by that connection, can be better served, in my opinion, by carrying the line from Mudgee on towards Coonabarabran to junction with the cross-line at some point where it will anticipate this extension out. That will be readily seen, I think, from your chart, because supposing you carry the line from Werris Creek down to Wellington, as you propose, from about Cobborah to Wellington you are running at a very sharp angle on the proposed Mudgee extension, and one would very largely entrench on the other; whereas if this other line were constructed, if it were sent further west or north-west, there would not be that competition between the Mudgee extension and the link-line; it would intersect at right-angles, and this through line would also serve the Dubbo interests, and could still be made the link-line by carrying it on to Wellington, and on through there. It would certainly have the disadvantage of making the journey longer; but against that, there would be the reduced cost of construction, and also the intermediate country to be served. It would better serve the intermediate country, I think, lying between Dubbo and Wellington, by the considerations I have indicated, than an extension from Mudgee on towards Coonabarabran. So far as I am acquainted, there has been some movement in the direction of stock and fodder to the northern districts in times of drought; but the facilities have not been such as to invite any very large traffic in this direction. In 1898 there was a very severe drought up in the northern parts of the Colony—from Narrabri up towards Moree, and out that way—and very heavy losses in stock resulted. When that drought broke up there was a demand for stock for restocking purposes. Several buyers came down into the Forbes and Condobolin districts with a view of purchasing stock there; but they informed me that they were not able to make any purchases—not that the stock there did not suit them, not that the prices did not suit them,—but because it was difficult to get stock to their runs or farms out in the north. The dry state of the country made it impossible to travel stock across country from Dubbo through there at that time, and the long distance from Forbes or Parkes to Sydney, and thence back to these points I have indicated, debarred re trucking, and little or no trucking was the outcome of that condition. If this line had been constructed then, I am satisfied that a considerable shifting of stock would have taken place for the purposes I have indicated. Of course, there is always this liability in the west of a general drought and a partial drought. Very often, when there is a great scarcity in the central part lying out west from Dubbo, and west from Forbes and Parkes and Condobolin, there may be a fairly good season south, or a fairly good season north, and a connecting link line, such as this, would serve a good purpose in either shifting starving stock to places where there was grass, or in bringing fodder to them. I think that is all I can place before the Committee that seems to have any bearing on this question.

4322. *Mr. Watson.*] Your contention, then, is that the line from Parkes to Narramine is justified on account of the good country through which it would pass? Yes; it would pass through level country—

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through country that is splendidly adapted for wheat-growing. The undulating country is practically identical right through. There is the same class and the same character of country. There has been no proper survey made; but I asked Mr. O'Sullivan, the present Minister for Public Works, to give me an estimate of the difference in cost, and, as the result of exploratory surveys, he informed me that the distance between Dubbo and Parkes would be about 74 miles, and that the line is estimated to cost about £256,000; and that the distance between Narramine and Parkes is about 62 miles, and the line is estimated to cost £212,900, showing a difference in length of construction of $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and a difference in cost of £43,100. I am inclined to think that is the maximum—that, when the surveys come to be made out, the cost of the Narramine-Parkes line will be less than that—because it is very flat country.

4323. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is it flooded country? No flooded country. The country between Narramine and Alectown, by Peak Hill way, is very flat. The country between Alectown and Parkes is a little undulating; it is a little heavier country. It is not hilly, with one or two exceptions, and that is taken into consideration in the Dubbo estimate.

4324. *Mr. Watson.*] That is at the rate of £3,500 a mile, which is rather heavy? I am inclined to think the Department's estimate is the maximum. I think there are three small watercourses between Peak Hill and Narramine, and one or two between Peak Hill and Alectown, but there are no engineering difficulties connected with them at all; they are very narrow, being not more than 20 feet across.

4325. You think, then, it is likely that, within a reasonable time, a line will be constructed between Narramine and Parkes, or somewhere in that direction? I do. I understand that Mr. O'Sullivan, the Minister, has that under consideration now; in fact, I introduced a deputation to him in October last, since this matter has been remitted to the Committee, and he promised to remit this other line to the Cabinet for reference to Parliament and to this Committee on its own merits.

4326. Your contention is that the Committee, in arriving at their decision on a cross-country line, should keep that extension towards Parkes in view all the time? Yes; for the reasons I have indicated.

4327. And, making any cross-country line, so that it should harmonise with that extension? Yes.

4328. Assuming that you had a cross-country line either from Curlewis or from Werris Creek, which do you think would be the general direction of stock and other traffic;—would there be a necessity in regard to stock to get east or west when they arrived at the Western line, say at Dubbo or Wellington;—suppose they went to either point, which would be their objective, east or west, suppose they were coming from Werris Creek? That would largely depend on circumstances. If there was a severe drought out west, the tendency of stock would be to go east; then, when a better season came, or a change came about, and there was feed out in the western parts, they would travel back again.

4329. Taking the stock coming the other way, from which direction would that cross-country line be mostly used to draw stock—from east or west? I am inclined to think it would draw the most stock from the west, because the west is more liable to drought than the eastern portions.

4330. The presumption is that it would suit the stock traffic best at that rate to have a connection as far west as possible? Yes.

4331. Do you think that would operate equally well in regard to the agricultural produce that came off the country through which this line would go, the objective there being the sea? I think it operates similarly with respect to agriculture, but not to the same extent. The further east you go, the more broken country you come upon, and hence the rainfall is larger. The area of country available for agricultural purposes is not as large as the area of country lying further west, and you have less broken country, and hence you have a lighter rainfall; you have good agricultural country, and the wheat production largely depends on the season. A very wet season is a bad wheat season in the Eastern districts, and a drier season is a good wheat season east, and a bad one west.

4332. If you have an ordinary season in the country lying between Werris Creek and Dubbo or Wellington, whichever objective you have, the wheat that is taken from there will require to be taken to the seaboard in as short a distance as possible? Yes.

4333. Do you think the taking of the line further west from a point of junction with the Western railway will be any great disadvantage to the wheat-growers on the route? I think the wheat-growers lying between Wellington and Werris Creek would be best served by the extension from Mudgee.

4334. Would not that proposition be rather against a cross-country line in the meantime? But then, again, when you go out a little further west, you get a certain area of country served by that cross-country line, but lying nearer to the seaboard from, say, Werris Creek. The wheat on that route would travel *via* Werris Creek towards the seaboard. Then, coming further west you get another trafficable area of country which will be served by this cross-country line, but the nearest point to the seaboard will be *via* Dubbo, and it will travel *via* Dubbo. It will take the nearest and the cheapest route.

4335. Do you think, if a cross-country line were made from Curlewis to Gilgandra, and the Mudgee line extended in the direction of Merrygoen, and possibly towards Coonabarabran in the same way, there would be sufficient traffic over both lines, including the cross-country and local traffic? I do not know that I am competent to give a reliable answer to that question; but I would be disposed to think so, because there is a big belt of country lying between Mudgee and this point of junction which can only be served for wheat-growing purposes—and I understand it is very good wheat-growing country—by an extension that way. The effect of that extension would be to increase the wheat production within the sphere of that line, whereas the effect of the cross-country line would be to increase the wheat production within its particular sphere. Of course, there would be a point, supposing they joined, where both would operate one against the other, and no doubt, in that case, the Mudgee extension would have the preference, because it would mean the shortest route to Sydney.

4336. That is, as far as wheat is concerned? Of course, the wheat-producing area does not extend any very great distance from a railway. Whilst you have wheat-producers growing wheat at 40 or 60 miles away, they are very heavily handicapped. Within about 20 miles is a fairly reasonable distance.

4337. *Mr. Levien.*] You would not think it would pay them to take wheat 60 miles? Wheat-growing at a greater distance than 60 miles is made payable by being combined with pastoral pursuits, sheep-farming, and so forth, and it is found, out west anyhow, that those holders, large and small, who combine agriculture with grazing stand better. The experience out west of Peak Hill has been that very often a very bad stock-year is a fairly good wheat-year, and *vice versa*. That has occurred within the past two years. The year before last was a very bad stock-year, and a fairly good wheat-year.

4338. How far are they off the train? There are settlers at Bulbodney who are combining wheat-growing with sheep-farming, and they are 75 miles from the nearest train point.

4339.

4339. Does that pay them? They are adopting that as a means of making a living, and I have been told by settlers who are a considerable distance away that in the last year they grew wheat and sent it to Sydney, and if they had had it on their farms when the bad part of the season came later on, they could have made more money out of their wheat for stock-feeding purposes than they could have got for it in Sydney.

T. Brown,
Esq., M.P.

19 July, 1900.

4340. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What would the carriage rate be for 75 miles? It varies; it is pretty considerable. In the drier time it is less than in the wet time. Of course, at present there are farmers out there with wheat on their hands who would be very glad to get it into market; but it is impossible for them to get it in, because the roads are so bad.

4341. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is there not some idea of constructing a line from Bogan Gate to the Bullock Creek? Yes.

4342. That is a line approved of by the Commissioners, I believe? I understand it is. It is an agricultural line.

4343. Is there not a prospect of that line joining with the Western line somewhere about Nyngan? Possibly; the present proposal is only to Buldodney.

4344. That is Bullock Creek, I presume? No; Buldodney is a settlement about 40 miles further north than Bullock Creek.

4345. How far is Buldodney from Nyngan? About 75 miles, I think.

4346. I thought there was some idea of connecting Bogan Gate and Nyngan? At present there is a petition amongst local settlers further on, asking for an extension from Trangie to Dandaloo, which will possibly mean a connection with Buldodney, which is about 20 miles from Dandaloo.

4347. Do you not think that would bring the line from Parkes to Narramine and the line to Bullock Creek rather close together? No.

4348. It would come through Trundle? It would. The line from Parkes to Narramine is almost a due north and south line. The line that you refer to—Bullock Creek to Buldodney—starts on the Condobolin-Parkes line, about 20 miles west of Parkes, and it runs in a south-westerly direction. The nearest point between these two points is at Bogan Gate and at Parkes, and the further you travel along the further apart they get.

4349. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the maximum distance they keep apart? From Trundle across to the nearest point of the Parkes-Peak Hill line would be, at the least, 40 to 45 miles.

4350. *Mr. Hyam.*] Trundle is about 35 miles from Parkes? They generally speak of it as about 40 miles.

4351. In districts where agriculture or mixed farming is carried on, how close do you think these lines running parallel to each other should be kept apart? I should say that lines of this nature may be constructed profitably at an average distance of about 60 miles. If built further than that apart it would leave too big a distance towards the centre point of the road to work it profitably.

4352. You think a man can grow wheat and cart it to a railway station or market 30 miles away? I think so. Some of the men out there are carting their wheat 60 or 70 miles; but, of course, they are largely induced to go in for wheat growing for the purpose of assisting the stock, and also with the view of railway extension.

4353. Do you not think the railway, if it came from Curlew to Gilgandra—considering that the Gilgandra to Dubbo line is sanctioned—would be a cheaper and better route than the one proposed from Werris Creek to Wellington? I certainly do.

4354. Do you know the country between Curlew and Gilgandra? No. I only know the country from information I have gathered from those who produce, and ought to know it well from travelling over it. I do not know much from any personal experience I have had. The reason why I mentioned that extension was, not so much from the supposed nature of the country, but because of the lesser cost of construction and the possibilities of serving a certain part of the country by means of a connection from Mudgee out.

4355. With these cross-country railways made, I suppose it would throw a great deal more land into cultivation? Speaking from my own knowledge of the country between Nyngan and on towards Grenfell, it would, and I should suppose it would have the same effect with respect to the country further north. Of course, that largely depends on the fitness of the country for agricultural purposes.

4356. *Chairman.*] To sum up your evidence, it means that, given the necessity of constructing this line, its ultimate connection with the Western line should be decided upon the question of which direction will, in the future, be best to extend it to the south-west? That is one of the points.

4357. And you think, if it is to be extended to the south-west, a connection with Dubbo would more easily lend itself to the development of that south-western country than a connection with Wellington? Yes; I am satisfied it would more readily lend itself to the development of the country, and that it would better suit the traffic interests beyond, because of the easier grade which may be obtained in that new connection.

4358. *Mr. Levison.*] Do you know anything at all about the country between Werris Creek and Wellington? I have been a short distance out from Wellington.

4359. How far out? To Bodangora.

4360. Have you ever been to Werris Creek? No.

4361. You know nothing about the country from Werris Creek out? I do not know the country at the Werris Creek end.

4362. You know neither one point or the other, and yet you favour the line? My reasons for favouring the line are not so much the immediate country lying between the two points as other considerations.

4363. Do you know anything about the country between the two points? I know the country round Wellington, and also round Dubbo.

4364. Do you know anything of the country between Werris Creek and Wellington? Only that part of the country near Wellington.

4365. How far out from Wellington? I suppose I have been out 10 or 12 miles.

4366. After you get that distance, you do not know whether it is black-soil country, loamy country, or sandy soil; or whether there is scrub or anything else;—you know absolutely nothing of the country itself between those two points, except for 10 or 12 miles out of Wellington? Not as the result of personal knowledge.

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1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLAN,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

NARRABRI TO WALGETT, WITH BRANCH TO
COLLARENDABRI.

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

Printed under No. 13 Report from Printing Committee, 27 September, 1900.

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

- * The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
- * The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
- The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
- * The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

- * WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
- JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
- ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
- JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

[* On 14th June, 1900, the Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, having accepted the office of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, retired from the position of Chairman and a Member of the Committee. Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Vice-Chairman, was elected Chairman in the place of Mr. TRICKETT, and the Honorable ANDREW GARRAN was chosen as Vice-Chairman. On 4th July, the Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM was elected to the vacancy on the Committee caused by the resignation of Mr. TRICKETT.]

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Narrabri to Walgett, and branch to Collarendabri.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM NARRABRI TO WALGETT, WITH BRANCH TO
COLLARENDABRI.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed railway should be constructed; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

PROCEEDINGS LEADING TO THE PRESENT PROPOSAL.

1. The question of railway connection between Narrabri and Walgett, the Committee are informed in the official statement put before them, has been before Parliament and the country for many years, the movements in favour of it having commenced in the year 1880. The country which the line would serve is described as one of the finest pastoral districts in the Colony, and includes a large area of good agricultural land. But both graziers and farmers have hitherto laboured under great disadvantages, through having no means of conveying stock and produce out of the district except at much loss and inconvenience, as there are practically no metalled roads owing to the difficulty and great cost of making them. In exceptionally favourable seasons the district has the advantage of water carriage by means of the Darling and Barwon rivers, but such favourable conditions are so intermittent and uncertain that for all practical purposes this mode of traffic may be left out of consideration. The suggestions as to the route for the railway have been many and various, including a line from Nevertire *via* Warren and Coonamble, from Dubbo *via* Coonamble, and from Mudgee *via* Coonamble. In 1897 a line of railway from Narrabri to Pilliga, and a line from Woolabra to Collarendabri, were referred to the Public Works Committee, who dealt with the former as a railway from Narrabri to Walgett, and, though negating both, suggested a railway from Narrabri to Eurie Eurie, and, if necessary, thence on to Walgett, and a railway to Collarendabri from a point on the Narrabri-Eurie Eurie line about 315 miles from Newcastle. These suggestions placed the route of the two lines to the north of the Namoi River, and left the township of Wee Waa some 8 miles distant from the nearest possible railway station, a circumstance that led to representations from the residents of Wee Waa and the surrounding districts, which resulted in the Minister for Works approving of the line keeping to the south side of the Namoi as far as Wee Waa, and the submission of the present proposal to the Committee.

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE.

2. Commencing at the west end of the Narrabri West Railway Station, the line would proceed more or less parallel to, and south of, the Namoi River to Wee Waa, where it would cross the river, and follow a course generally parallel to Pian Creek to within about 20 miles of Walgett, where, after passing through Eurie Eurie, it would terminate at the northern side of the Namoi River about a mile and a half from the town, and 356 miles 72·45 chains from Newcastle.

The branch to Collarendabri would leave the line at Burren, 50 miles 23·186 chains from Narrabri West, and proceed north-north-westerly to Thalaba Creek, and thence, after crossing the creek, follow generally the county boundary between Denham and Banarba, and, crossing the Barwon River, reach Collarendabri at a distance of 353 miles 38·90 chains from Newcastle.

The country traversed by both lines is flat, and the works would be light with easy grades, but a bridge of considerable size would be required over the Namoi River at Wee Waa, and some heavy work of the same kind would be necessary at the end of the Collarendabri branch line in crossing the Barwon River and its confluents. The latter works could be avoided by terminating the line, for the present, about 11 miles short of Collarendabri. To save expense the level parts of the line, more especially near the Namoi River, would be so constructed as to be below extraordinary flood level.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

3. The Railway Commissioners, who traversed both routes, state, in their report, that having regard to the character and prospects of the country, both districts are deserving of railway communication; but, in their opinion, the best interests of the producers and of the country generally would be served by connecting Walgett with Coonamble, as they recommended in 1889, and constructing the line from Narrabri to Collarendabri *via* Wee Waa. They estimate the annual cost of both lines at £26,836, which comprises £13,966 interest on capital outlay at 3 per cent., and maintenance, traffic, and locomotive expenses £12,870; and the traffic revenue at £13,014—merchandise and live stock £8,779, and passengers, parcels, mails, &c., £4,235. The estimate of cost, however, is based on the price of rails being £5 5s. per ton. Taking the price at what it is now, £7 10s. per ton, the annual cost would be £27,975—interest on capital, £15,105, and maintenance, traffic, and locomotive expenses, £12,870—and the difference between that amount and the estimated revenue, £14,961.

ESTIMATE OF COST.

4. The estimated total cost of the line from West Narrabri to Walgett, the price of rails being calculated at £7 10s. per ton, is £316,286, or £3,019 17s. 8d. per mile; and of the branch line to Collarendabri, £187,273, or £3,669 11s. 6d. per mile.

The estimates of cost of construction have been prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief in sections, as some parts of the line are more expensive than others. The line from Narrabri to Walgett, for the first 29 miles 60·82 chains, is estimated to cost £3,018 per mile; for the next 20 miles 42·366 chains the cost is £2,860 per mile; and for the remainder of the distance, 54 miles 36·269 chains, £3,081 per mile. The estimate in connection with the first 31 miles 52·70 chains of the branch line to Collarendabri is £2,729 per mile; for the next 8 miles 38·02 chains, to what is designated in the evidence and on the plans as point A, situated on the near side of the Barwon River, opposite Collarendabri, £4,988; and for the last portion of the distance, 10 miles 72 chains, £5,375. The expensive nature of this last section is due to the liability of the country in the locality to floods, and the necessity for heavy bridge work over the Barwon River.

THE

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

5. In the inquiry carried out by the Committee they took evidence in Sydney, Narrabri, Narrabri West, Wee Waa, Burren, Collarendabri, Walgett, Coonamble, and Newcastle. Four members of the Committee left Sydney to examine witnesses in the country, and to inspect the land along and in the vicinity of the proposed lines. Their inquiry was opened at Narrabri on the 18th May, and continued there, and at Narrabri West the following day, a large number of witnesses giving evidence.

On 21st May the Committee, accompanied by an engineer from the Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, left Narrabri, and, dividing into three parties, in order to see as much as possible of the land along and in the neighbourhood of the route, travelled to Wee Waa, where they arrived at 3 p.m. Half an hour later they met in the local court-house, and sat examining witnesses, with an interval for tea, until a quarter-past 9 p.m. At 8.30 the following morning the Committee left Wee Waa for Burren, a distance of 25 miles. Rain had recently fallen, and more threatened, with the prospect of bad roads across the black-soil plains. Dividing again, two members of the Committee proceeded to the north side of the Namoi River to examine some of the country along the route for a railway from East Narrabri, between Wee Waa and Tulladunna, while the two other members visited Sandy Hook and a number of homestead selections between Wee Waa and Pilliga. Burren Station was reached by one portion of the Committee at 7 p.m., the other members, in consequence of rain and the bad condition of the roads, being detained at Rossmore, where they arrived at 6.30 p.m. The following morning a number of witnesses were examined at the "Burren Hotel."

Burren being near the point of junction of the proposed railways, the Committee again divided, and the roads being practically impassable to vehicles, Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, and Mr. McFarlane proceeded on horseback to Collarendabri, *via* Merrywinbone, to inspect the route of the proposed line to that town, and to take evidence, while Mr. Shepherd, accompanied by the railway engineer, travelled by special coach to Walgett, in the vicinity and along the route of the Narrabri-Walgett line.

Following the route of the railway to Collarendabri, Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, and Mr. McFarlane travelled through Burren and Merrywinbone holdings to the "Avondale Hotel," 20 miles from Collarendabri, where they arrived at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Shepherd, leaving Burren, kept about 8 miles to the north of the surveyed line to Walgett, crossing the route of the branch railway to Collarendabri at Old Burren, and thence proceeding to Gorian station, 12 miles from Burren, where he arrived at 5 p.m. The following day the Collarendabri portion of the Committee, keeping to the travelling stock route, which is also the route of the proposed railway, reached Collarendabri at 2 p.m., and the same afternoon examined a number of witnesses, and inspected the site for the railway bridge over the Barwon River, about 2 miles above the town, and that of the station yard. Mr. Shepherd, leaving Gorian at 9 a.m., and travelling from 2 to 6 miles from the route for the railway to Walgett, reached Cryan station, 14 miles from Gorian, at 5.30 p.m. On Saturday, 26th May, evidence was taken from witnesses at Collarendabri, and Mr. Shepherd, continuing his inspection of the Narrabri-Walgett route, travelled from Cryan station close to and along the route to Walgett, where he arrived at 10.30 p.m. On Monday, 28th May, he was joined at Walgett by Mr. Dick, Mr. Watson, and Mr. McFarlane, who travelled from Collarendabri *via* Mercadool and Eurie Eurie. The following day, evidence was taken from a large number of witnesses at Walgett, and the Committee then left for Coonamble to obtain evidence with regard to connecting Walgett by railway with Coonamble, as suggested by the Railway Commissioners.

INSPECTION OF THE COUNTRY.

6. The inspection of the country between Narrabri and Wee Waa showed the Committee that the land was very suitable for carrying sheep, with a fair proportion fit for agriculture. Those members who visited Sandy Hook and some homestead selections between Wee Waa and Pilliga, found, on one selection, hay

hay from a crop that they were informed had yielded about 3 tons to the acre; on another a considerable area was under cultivation; and on a third a crop of wheat was growing very satisfactorily. From about 10 miles from Wee Waa, towards that township, a number of holdings, averaging about 600 acres each, had recently been taken up on each side of the "Cleared Line" or main road.

Wee Waa appeared to the Committee to be a township deserving of consideration in relation to any railway proposed to be constructed in its direction. Compared with most country townships it is of considerable size, with a population of something over 700, and it is an important business centre. The inspection of the country between Narrabri and Wee Waa convinced the Committee that the route on the south bank of the Namoi was preferable to that on the north bank, for on reaching the northern side of the river it was found from the flood marks on the dead timber that, with the exception of the land on the banks of Tulladunna Creek, which is a little higher than any other, the country for some miles northwards past Tulladunna is subject to flood, and that to give Wee Waa access to a railway station in the neighbourhood of Tulladunna Creek would necessitate the construction of at least two bridges, and a viaduct, over the creek and a large warnambool. On both sides of the river, in the neighbourhood of Tulladunna, the land, in regard to the nature of the soil, is similar in character, but on the southern side it is a little higher and not so subject to flood.

Between Wee Waa and Burren the country consists chiefly of black soil plains, valuable as pastoral land but not so suitable for agriculture. In places grapes can be grown easily and of excellent quality. The average sheep-carrying capacity of the land is a sheep to three acres.

For the first few miles beyond Burren the land is subject to flood from the overflow of Burren Creek, and from that point onwards, to Walgett or Collareendabri, the country may be described as first-class pastoral land with patches suitable for agriculture, if the rainfall could be relied upon. A large proportion of the land may be said to be very suitable for orange and vine culture. Agriculture, as far as it has been tried, has produced fairly good results, but nothing beyond that required for home use has been attempted. The wheat grown has been cut for hay. The irregular nature of the rainfall—common to this part of the Colony—makes cultivation very uncertain. One season may show a satisfactory result, while in another the wheat is pinched off and comes to nothing. Irrigation with artesian water is talked of, and, in the neighbourhood of bores which are supplying water, is now being carried out. This may give an impetus to cultivation sufficient to place it on a permanent footing. The whole of the country affected by the two proposed railway lines is within the artesian area, and while, in the districts which would be served by the railways, there are several Government bores in existence, a number of others are about to be put down.

LAND AREAS AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED RAILWAYS.

7. According to the figures placed before the Committee by the Chief Draftsman of the Department of Lands, there are, within a distance of 20 miles on each side of the line to Walgett, 1,165,000 acres of alienated land, 463,700 acres of reserves, 491,000 acres of settlement and homestead leases (which include 192,300 acres, homestead leases, Western Division), and 774,800 acres of Crown lands. Of the Crown lands, the tenure of leasehold areas expired in relation to 81,600 acres in July last, that of 19,000 acres will expire in December, 1902, and that of 79,000 acres in 1918. Under occupation license 353,900 acres are held, and 241,300 acres are untenanted.

Among the reserves is one large forest reserve comprising 98,000 acres, south of Narrabri, and on the border of the area influenced by the proposed railways.

The areas of land in connection with the branch line to Collareendabri are given as follows:—Alienated land, 412,700 acres; reserves, 103,600 acres; settlement and homestead leases (including 167,160 acres, homestead leases, Western Division), 270,200 acres; and Crown lands, 203,000 acres. Of the leasehold areas, the

the tenure relating to 22,000 acres, in the Central Division, expired in July last, and that of 128,000 acres, in the Western Division, will expire in 1918. 53,000 acres are held under occupation license. No land within the area is untenanted.

Taking the two lines together, the leasehold areas which have recently become available for settlement, and those which will be available in 1918, amount to 329,600 acres.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

8. The traffic prospects in connection with the two lines are, in the opinion of a majority of the Committee, satisfactory. The estimate of the Chief Traffic Manager, upon which the Railway Commissioners base the figures in their report, gives the traffic on both railways as amounting to £13,014, of which sum he expects £7,681 to come from the Collarendabri branch. The details are:—

Proposed railway, Narrabri West to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.							
Wool, goods, and stock	...	...	...	...	...	...	£8,779
Coaching, mails, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,235
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	£13,014
Proposed railway, Narrabri West to Collarendabri, leaving Walgett out of consideration.							
Wool, goods, and stock	...	...	...	...	...	...	£5,494
Coaching, mails, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,187
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	£7,681

Statistics supplied by the Stock Branch of the Department of Mines and Agriculture represent the number of bales of wool produced in the district in 1898 to be 37,770, and the traffic in stock through Walgett and Collarendabri, in the same year, as 720,000 sheep and 41,500 cattle.

It is very probable that the official estimate will be found considerably below the actual traffic. At least it is noticeable that it exceeds the estimate of working expenses, and that is a feature which the Railway Commissioners regard as justifying them in approving of the construction of both the railways. Railway communication will considerably diminish the losses of stock from drought, for sheep can then be easily removed to New England and other localities where feed is procurable, and with the saving of stock the production of wool and the sending of fat sheep to market must largely increase.

A railway through the district during the last two or three years would have saved large numbers of sheep which, through the want of means for removing them or for getting fodder to them, died. Unless in a good season, it is impossible, under present circumstances, to send sheep to market or to other districts, and the evidence forcibly points to a considerable railway traffic in this direction. Increased production, as well as the carrying of passengers and goods, will also result from the closer settlement which the construction of the railways will assist in bringing about.

OUTLET FOR THE NORTH-WEST BORDER AND SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND TRADE.

9. Nothing appears more certain from the inquiry than that the proposed railways will draw traffic from a considerable area of the north-western border districts of New South Wales and from a large part of Southern Queensland, the natural outlet for the trade of which is Narrabri or Moree. The Southern Queensland traffic will be the more assured from the fact that the Queensland Government has removed the export duty upon wool grown within 30 miles north of the New South Wales border.

THE DISTRICTS TO BE SERVED.

10. The part of the Colony which would be more or less within the influence of the proposed railways extends north and north-west as far as Mungindi, Goodooga, and Angledool, near the Queensland border, and comprises some of the finest pastoral land, especially for fattening purposes, in New South Wales. That portion of the land which has been alienated has been well improved, and all of it, in ordinary

ordinary seasons, produces large quantities of wool and fat stock. In the hotter months of the year the climate is severe, but the winter, the early spring, and the autumn are described by residents as perfection. The want of rain is sometimes injurious to the occupiers of the land, but the district quickly recovers from the effects of a dry season. Between Narrabri, Walgett, and Collarendabri the records of the Government Astronomer show the annual rainfall to be from 26 to 27 inches at Narrabri to between 19 and 20 at Walgett and Collarendabri. West of Walgett the country is more subject to drought than to the east. The stock in the district at the present time, within the area that would be affected by the railway from Narrabri to Walgett, taking the Departmental figures for 1898, is given as 1,538,000 sheep and 17,133 cattle, and within the area affected by the line to Collarendabri, which would include a portion of that to which the Narrabri-Walgett statistics refer, 980,000 sheep and 14,000 cattle. These figures do not represent the full carrying capacity of the districts, but only the stock which have survived the effects of the recent severe drought.

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

11. The condition of the people in the districts to be served furnishes a strong reason for providing them with railway facilities, if it can be done with any prospect of the lines producing a fair return from the expenditure. Cut off, as they are, by a distance of over a hundred miles from the nearest railway, with practically no roads, and subjected to a trying climate, they live under circumstances of considerable discomfort and hardship. Owing to the climate, the storekeepers find it impossible to keep large stocks of perishable articles, and they cannot renew their stocks quickly because of the difficulties experienced by teams in travelling over the roads. In dry weather it has taken teams from six weeks to two months to reach Walgett from Narrabri, and in wet weather they cannot travel at all. There is consequently, at times, in the towns and on the stations a condition of things bordering upon that of famine.

Progress of any kind is much hindered, for there is nothing to encourage the settler to do more than is necessary for him to obtain a living. If he send a lot of fat sheep to find a market, they fall away in condition so much that they become stores by the time they reach their destination. His wool may be stuck up on the roads or stranded in the river for weeks or months. If he were to attempt agriculture or fruit-growing upon anything like a large scale he could not get his produce away. Outside his own energies there is nothing to stimulate him to improve his position or assist in the progress of the district. The estimated population which would be affected by the railway to Walgett is 6,240, and that by the line to Collarendabri 2,060.

CLOSE SETTLEMENT.

12. Most of the holdings in the Walgett-Collarendabri districts are large, but the smaller ones are increasing in number, for as the tenure of the leasehold areas expire the land is readily taken up in settlement leases. The area of 2,560 acres, without railway communication, is regarded by some persons as rather small to permit of profitable occupation under the climatic and other conditions which surround the settler in this part of the Colony, and an increase to 5,000 or 6,000 acres is considered to be advisable. Small areas and little or no capital mean, it is said, an early abandonment of the holdings, or their sale, the latter proceeding bringing about what settlement leases are intended to prevent, viz., the aggregation of land into large estates. With railway facilities, however, the smaller area should be profitably worked.

SHORTENING THE COLLARENDABRI BRANCH.

13. The possibility of terminating the Collarendabri branch line for the present at point A, and thereby saving the cost of constructing 10 or 11 miles of the most expensive portion of the railway, is a matter that the Committee think should receive consideration. The idea of stopping there is not favourably viewed
by

by the people of Collarendabri, who naturally wish the railway to be constructed to the town, but except in very wet seasons the shorter line would meet traffic requirements, and in time of flood the interruption—which would relate chiefly to stock movements—would only be temporary. The saving effected would amount to £58,591.

COONAMBLE TO WALGETT.

14. The route for connecting Walgett with Coonamble by railway provides for a line about 69 miles in length, and is a continuation of the surveyed and authorised line from Dubbo to Coonamble on the western bank of the Castlereagh River. After passing Coonamble and crossing the river a few miles beyond the town, it follows the high country between the river and Bullarora Creek, and goes through Bullarora station until it crosses the creek. From that point it proceeds direct into Walgett, terminating on high ground between the cemetery and the town. The estimated cost of the line by this route is £222,000 or £3,212 per mile, a high rate, due to the extent of flooded country that has to be crossed and to the expensive character of some of the bridges required. For this railway connection neither the people of Walgett nor those of Coonamble show any noticeable desire, and the inquiry carried out by the Committee does not represent it as preferable to the proposed line from Narrabri West. For 25 or 30 miles beyond Coonamble the country will be served by the Dubbo-Coonamble railway, and further out, according to the evidence, the traffic would most probably go to the Great Northern Railway, upon which the rates for wool are lower than those on the Western line. The distance from Walgett to Sydney, *via* Coonamble, is 15 miles shorter than that *via* Narrabri, but the cost of constructing the two lines, Coonamble to Walgett and Narrabri West to Collarendabri, would be £54,238 higher than that of constructing the line from Narrabri West to Walgett with a branch to Collarendabri, and the length of line to be constructed would be 14½ miles greater, as will be seen from the following figures:—

Cost of Construction.

Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.		Coonamble to Walgett, and Narrabri to Collarendabri	
Narrabri to Walgett	£316,286	Coonamble to Walgett	£222,000
Branch to Collarendabri	187,273	Branch to Collarendabri	
		from Burren Junction ...	£187,273
	£503,559	Narrabri to Burren Junction	148,524
			335,797
			£557,797

Mileage.

	miles	chains.		miles.
Narrabri to Walgett	101	59.45	Coonamble to Walgett	69
Less Narrabri to Burren Junction	50	23.18		
	54	36.27		

CONCLUSION ARRIVED AT.

15. The Committee have arrived at the conclusion that it is expedient the proposed railways should be constructed. The chief matter to decide was the question whether the line to Walgett should go from Narrabri or from Coonamble. The Committee are of opinion it should go from Narrabri, for the reasons that the district will be better served by adopting that route, the existing drift of trade will be maintained, Walgett will be 87 miles nearer the seaboard than it would be by way of Coonamble, producers will be within easy reach of the large meat works at Aberdeen, and will have available to them as markets Maitland and Newcastle as well as Sydney, and the scheme can be carried out at much less cost than the other.

The Wee Waa route from Narrabri West is preferable to that on the north bank of the Namoi, from the nature of the country, the saving in distance, and the importance of Wee Waa itself; and there is no difference of opinion expressed in the evidence with regard to any other portion of the line to Walgett, except in respect of the arrangement by which the Walgett railway station will be situated

a mile and a-half from the town. That, however, is necessary to having the station site on land not subject to flood; to continue the railway into the town and erect the station there would cost, the Committee are informed, at least £25,000, and the station would have to be built on piles to raise it above flood-level.

Whether the line to Collarendabri should, for the present, terminate 11 miles from the town is a question, as already mentioned, worth considering; but, taking the two lines as a whole, the evidence, including that representing the opinions of the Railway Commissioners, is favourable to the construction of the railways as submitted; and in view of this, and of the results that have followed the opening of the Narrabri-Moree line, the Committee are of opinion that the construction of both railways may be safely recommended.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

16. The resolution passed is shown in the following extract from the Committee's Minutes of Proceedings:—

Mr. Levien moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out as far as Walgett.”

Mr. Dick seconded the motion, *pro forma*.

Mr. Hyam moved,—“That the motion be amended by omitting the words ‘as far as Walgett.’” The amendment was passed on the following division, upon the question “that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the motion.”

Ayes, 3.	Noes, 4.
Mr. Shepherd,	Mr. Dick,
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Watson.	Mr. Levien,
	Mr. McFarlane.

Dr. Garran moved,—“That the motion be further amended by adding the words ‘up to the point of the Burren junction.’”

The amendment was negatived on the following division, upon the question “that the words proposed to be added be so added”:—

Ayes, 2.	Noes, 5.
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Dick,
Mr. Watson.	Mr. Shepherd,
	Mr. Hyam,
	Mr. Levien,
	Mr. McFarlane.

The motion, as amended, was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Hyam,	Dr. Garran,
Mr. Levien,	Mr. Watson.
Mr. McFarlane.	

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 19th September, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM NARRABRI TO WALGETT, WITH BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.

WEDNESDAY, 25 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] I believe you attend to-day, not only in your own capacity of Engineer-in-Chief, but also on behalf of the Under Secretary for Works, who is unable to be present, and that you produce the usual official statement in regard to the proposed railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with the Branch to Collarendabri? Yes; I will read it:—

H. Deane.
25 April, 1900.

RAILWAY FROM NARRABRI TO WALGETT, WITH BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly on 12th December, 1899, for the Committee's consideration, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri."

The question of railway connection between Narrabri and Walgett has been before Parliament and the country for many years, the movement in favour of the connection having commenced in the year 1880.

The country which the line now proposed will serve has been recognised generally as one of the finest pastoral districts in the Colony, and as comprising a large area of the richest agricultural soil. But both graziers and farmers have hitherto laboured under great disadvantages through having no means of conveying stock and produce out of the district, except at much loss and inconvenience.

Practically there are no installed roads throughout the district, owing to the difficulty and great cost of making them through the heavy black soil. In times of drought teams suffer from want of water, while, on the other hand, even a moderate fall of rain renders it impossible for teamsters to travel until the roads are again dry.

It is true that in favourable seasons the district possesses the advantage arising from water carriage by means of the Darling and Barwon rivers, but such favourable conditions are so intermittent and uncertain that this mode of traffic may for all practical purposes be left out of consideration.

In spite of all such disadvantages and difficulties, the district has continued to grow in wealth and importance, and there has been, consequently, a steady agitation in favour of its being provided with railway facilities. From the year 1884 up to 1897 large and enthusiastic meetings have every now and again been held throughout the district, railway leagues have been formed at the various centres of population, and deputation after deputation has waited upon the different Ministers for Works, all with the object of obtaining the desired railway.

The suggestions as to route have been many and various, comprising, *inter alia*, a line from Nevertire *via* Warren and Coonamble, from Dubbo *via* Coonamble—which was the route recommended by the Railway Commissioners in 1889—and an extension of the Mudgee line, *via* Coonamble, to Walgett.

Finally, at the instance of Mr. Secretary Young, Parliament, in August and December, 1897, respectively, referred to the Public Works Committee the duty of considering and reporting upon the expediency of constructing—

- (a) A line of railway from Narrabri to Pilliga, and
- (b) A line of railway from Woolabra to Collarendabri.

These two proposals were in due course submitted to the Committee, who, after an exhaustive investigation and inquiry, both by the Full Committee and by Sectional Committees, came to the conclusion that it was not expedient that either of the proposed railways should be carried out. (*Vide* Reports dated 23rd June, 1898.)

The Committee, in considering the Narrabri-Pilliga line, dealt with it as a proposal to construct a railway from Narrabri to Walgett, as they could not believe it was ever seriously contemplated to stop the line at Pilliga for any length of time. They realised that the objective point must be Walgett, and that the construction of a line from Narrabri to Pilliga would certainly carry with it an extension to Walgett.

In order to clearly understand the course adopted by the Committee in dealing with these two separate proposals, it may be helpful to quote from the Sectional Committee's Report the following explanatory note:—

"It is usual, in dealing with any work referred to the Committee for consideration, to consider its merits without special reference to any other work; but in the two cases which have been referred to the Sectional Committee for inquiry, it was apparent to the Full Committee, before the local investigations took place, that the two works might possibly merge into one. This view was strengthened as the Sectional Committee obtained fuller information. They determined to consider the question of the development of the country which, possibly, would be affected by a line from Narrabri to Pilliga, and from Woolabra to Collarendabri, as being so intimately connected that it was possible to deal with the whole matter in a single report."

H. Deane.

25 April, 1900.

It will be seen from the foregoing extract that the general question of providing the Walgett district with railway facilities has already been investigated by a previous Committee. The conclusions they arrived at were embodied in resolutions passed by the Committee, as follows:—

- "(a) That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient that the proposed railway from Narrabri to Pilliga, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out; but they suggest a route by which a railway would go from Narrabri to Eurie Eurie, and, if necessary, thence on to Walgett."
- "(b) That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient that the proposed railway from Woolabra to Collarendabri, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out; but they suggest a route by which a railway would go from Narrabri towards Eurie Eurie, and, at a point about 315 miles from Newcastle, proceed in a north-westerly direction to Collarendabri."

The consolidated line thus suggested by the Committee would, as compared with the two separate lines submitted for their consideration, effect a saving of about forty (40) miles in length, and of a sum approaching £100,000 in cost of construction.

The route suggested by the Committee lay wholly to the north of the Namoi River, and thus left the township of Wee Waa some eight (8) miles distant from the nearest possible railway station. The residents of Wee Waa and surrounding district, being strongly opposed to such an arrangement, have approached the Minister on the subject, both by petition and deputation, and represented the injustice and injury which their district would suffer if the line to Walgett were to be constructed without taking Wee Waa on the route.

They have pointed out that the country on the northern side of the Namoi was, for a considerable distance out from Narrabri, already served by the Narrabri-Moree line, and consequently no new traffic would be gained on the north side; that the route *via* Wee Waa would tap great forests of superior iron-bark and pine timber, thus developing a large and permanent timber trade; that the line would be on high land, clear of all flood waters; that timber suitable for sleepers and gravel for ballast were obtainable close to the route; that it would be some 10 miles shorter than the route on the northern side; that the population along the south side of the river was steadily increasing; and that the line would follow the existing natural trade routes from Narrabri to Walgett and Collarendabri.

In view of these strong representations, the Minister approved that the line to be submitted to the Committee should be kept to the south side of the Namoi as far as Wee Waa.

3. The official description of the line is as follows:—
(Length—main line, 104 miles 59·45 chains; branch, 51 miles 2·72 chains. Estimated cost—main line, £316,286, or £3,920 per mile; branch, £187,273, or £3,670 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.)

This line begins at the west end of Narrabri West station, at 252 miles 13 chains from Newcastle, and proceeds more or less parallel to and to the south of Namoi River to Wee Waa. Here it crosses the river, and follows a course generally parallel to Pian Creek to within about 20 miles of Walgett, where, after passing through Eurie Eurie, the line terminates at the northern side of the Namoi River, at 356 miles 72·45 chains from Newcastle.

The branch to Collarendabri leaves the line described at Burren at 302 miles 36·18 chains from Newcastle, and proceeds north-north-westerly to Thalaba Creek, after crossing which it follows generally the county boundary between Denham and Banarba, and, crossing the Barwon River, reaches Collarendabri at 353 miles 38·90 chains from Newcastle.

The country is flat throughout on both lines, and the works light with flat grades; but there is a considerable bridge required over the Namoi at Wee Waa, and some heavy work of the same kind at the end of the branch crossing the Barwon River and its confluents, which latter would be avoided if the branch were stopped for the present about 11 miles short of Collarendabri.

To avoid expense, the levels of parts of the line, more especially near the Namoi River, are kept below extraordinary flood-level.

The following is the report of the Railway Commissioners upon the proposed railway:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 2 December, 1899.

Proposed Line of Railway, Narrabri to Walgett and Collarendabri.

In accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act of 1888, section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

Distances and estimated cost (exclusive of land and compensation) furnished by the Engineer-in-Chief for Construction—

1. Narrabri West to Walgett, 104 miles 59 chains	£290,732
With branch to Collarendabri, 51 miles 2 chains	174,822
	£465,554*
2. Narrabri East to Walgett, 111 miles	£303,835
With branch to Collarendabri, 51 miles 2 chains	174,822
	£478,657*
<i>Estimated annual cost—</i>	
1. Narrabri West to Walgett and Collarendabri:—	
Interest on capital outlay at 3 per cent.	£13,966
Maintenance, traffic, and locomotive expenses	12,870
	£26,836
2. Narrabri East to Walgett and Collarendabri:—	
Interest on capital outlay at 3 per cent.	£14,360
Maintenance, traffic, and locomotive expenses	12,870
	£27,230
<i>Estimate traffic revenue—</i>	
1. Narrabri West to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri:—	
Merchandise and live stock	£8,779
Passengers, parcels, mails, &c.	4,235
	£13,014
2. Narrabri East to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri:—	
Merchandise and live stock	£9,230
Passengers, parcels, mails, &c.	4,382
	£13,612

The traffic estimate is based upon an extension of the through rates on all but special class traffic, and that of expenditure on a tri-weekly train service.

After having traversed both routes and given the most careful consideration to the proposal now before us, we consider that, having regard to the character and prospects of the country, both districts are deserving of railway communication, but would respectfully suggest that, in our opinion, the best interests of the producers and the country generally would be served by connecting Walgett with Coonamble and constructing the line from Narrabri to Collarendabri along the south bank of the Namoi River as far as Wee Waa, and thence across the river to Collarendabri.

In this connection we suggest the advisability of a reconsideration of the route after leaving Wee Waa, with a view to it being determined whether it is possible to make it more direct, and thus reduce the cost of construction.

It will be observed that the Railway Commissioners, while they consider the Walgett and Collarendabri districts entitled to railway communication, still adhere to the opinion they expressed in 1889, and recommend the connection of Walgett with Coonamble.

It is evident, however, that the great preponderance of local opinion is in favour of junctioning with the north-western line at Narrabri, which would provide direct communication with Maitland and Newcastle as well as with Sydney. Geographically the proposed line would seem to belong to the northern system, and Newcastle has always been regarded as the natural outlet and shipping port for all the northern and north-western parts of the Colony, while Maitland for the last fifty years has been their principal trade emporium.

* NOTE (on revision):—These estimates are with rails at £5 5s. per ton, and are therefore incorrect.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM NARRABRI TO WALGETT, WITH BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.

I have the original report of the Railway Commissioners and the books of reference and plans which I put in, and also the compilations of the parish maps. The longitudinal section is not quite finished.

H. Deane.
25 April, 1900.

2. Have you a statement in reference to the expenditure? I do not think you want an estimate of the line leaving East Narrabri. The one submitted is the West Narrabri line. It is a more costly line and longer than the other. This railway proposal is arranged in parts. The first part is from Narrabri West through Wee Waa, across the Namoi, to junction with a line running on the north side. Part No. 2 is that intermediate link up to the point where the line to Collarendabri branches off, and part No. 3 goes on to Walgett. Part No. 1 of the branch to Collarendabri, is that portion from the junction of the main Walgett line to junction with the line previously submitted from Woolabra. Part No. 2 goes from the same point to a point marked A on the near side of the river, opposite Collarendabri, where it is proposed to stop the line to avoid crossing the river. Part No. 3 is from point A to Collarendabri.

3. Do you hand in particulars of these lines? Yes; I hand in detailed estimates of the expenditure on the line starting from Narrabri West, and connecting with Walgett and Collarendabri. The line that I am proceeding to give the Committee an estimate of crosses the Namoi at Wee Waa, then junctions with the more northerly deviation, and proceeding to Walgett.

WEST NARRABRI TO WALGETT, *via* WEE WAA AND EURIE EURIE.—Part No. 1.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway, 29 miles 60·82 chains in length, with 60 lb. rails. Ruling grade 1 in 100. Sharpest curve 15 chains radius.

New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inch T.O.'s; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	£
Earthworks	6,956	5	0	234
Timber bridges	9,836	0	0	331
Bridge over the Namoi River	4,227	0	0	142
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing and road diversions	1,700	0	0	57
Permanent-way materials, rails taken at £5 5s. per ton	18,536	14	0	623
Freight	4,948	13	0	166
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £3,055 7s. 8d.	15,757	5	2	529
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting, at 4s. = £2,619				
Sleepers, at 2s. 9d. = £10,082 17s. 6d.				
Station works, including sidings	3,551	13	4	119
Station buildings:—Passenger station, £300; waiting-shed, £120; platforms, £288; goods shed and platform, £360; loading banks, £312; station-master's cottage, £294; 20-ton weigh-bridge, £252; 5-ton crane, £216; trucking-yards, £648	2,790	0	0	94
Water supply	1,500	0	0	50
Gradient and mileage posts	491	0	0	17
Telegraph	491	0	0	17
Miscellaneous	1,000	0	0	34
Cost of works	71,785	10	6	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	10,767	9	6	362
Total cost	£82,553	0	0	2,775
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton	7,261	0	0	.....
	£89,814	0	0	3,018

WEST NARRABRI TO WALGETT, *via* EURIE EURIE.—Part No. 2.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway, 20 miles 42·366 chains in length, with 60 lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100. Sharpest curve 15 chains radius.

New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inch T.O.'s; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	£
Earthworks	4,831	17	0	235
Timber bridges	3,036	10	0	148
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	1,370	0	0	67
Permanent-way materials, rails taken at £5 5s. per ton	12,791	8	0	623
Freight	3,794	0	0	185
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £2,107 15s. 2d.	11,840	19	11	577
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting, at 4s. 6d. = £2,145 6s. 9d.				
Sleepers, at 3s. = £7,537 18s. 0d.				
Station works, including sidings	3,672	11	4	179
Station buildings:—Waiting-sheds, £360; platforms, £288; station-master's cottage, £294; goods shed and platform, £360; loading banks, £312; 20-ton weighbridge, £252; 5-ton crane, £216; turntable, £600	2,682	0	0	131
Water supply	1,500	0	0	73
Gradient and mileage posts	338	15	0	17
Telegraph	338	15	0	17
Miscellaneous	500	0	0	24
Cost of works	46,696	16	3	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	7,004	3	9	341
Total cost	53,701	0	0	2,617
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton	5,069	0	0	.....
	£58,770	0	0	2,860

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

H. Deane.

WEST NARRABRI TO WALGETT, *via* EURIE EURIE.—Part No. 3.

25 April, 1900.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway, 54 miles 36·269 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100. Sharpest curve, 15 chains radius.

New fastenings; new 4 ft. 6 in. T.O's.; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
	£ s. d.	£
Earthworks	11,143 2 6	204
Timber bridges	6,445 15 3	118
Bridge over the Two-mile Warrambool	5,432 0 3	100
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	3,250 0 0	60
Permanent-way materials, rails taken at £5 5s. per ton	33,918 7 6	623
Freight	10,539 16 8	194
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £5,590 9s. 10d.	34,042 7 4	625
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting, at 6s. 3d. = £7,487 10s.		
Sleepers, at 3s. 1½d. = £20,964 7s. 6d.		
Station works, including sidings	12,002 10 0	220
Station buildings:—Passenger station, £1,147; waiting-sheds, £600; platforms, 833; station-masters' cottages, £1,001; goods shed and platform, £600; loading banks, £953; trucking-yards, £2,283; 10-ton crane, £467; 20-ton weighbridge, £230; carriage-shed, £267; engine shed and pit, £933; coal stage, £227; barracks, £1,000; turntable, £667	11,258 0 0	207
Water supplies	2,000 0 0	55
Gradient and mileage posts	898 9 6	17
Telegraph	898 9 6	17
Miscellaneous	1,500 0 0	28
	£134,328 18 6	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	20,149 1 6	370
	£134,478 0 0	2,838
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton	13,284 0 0	.....
	£167,762 0 0	3,081

WEST NARRABRI TO WALGETT, *via* WEE WAA AND EURIE EURIE.

Summary.—Rails taken at £7 10s. per ton.

Part.	Description	Length.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
	m. c. m. c.	m. c.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	252 13 to 281 73·820	29 60·820	80,814 0 0	3,017 18 10
2	281 73·82 „ 302 36·186	20 42·366	58,710 0 0	2,839 14 4
3	312 36·186 „ 356 72·455	54 36·269	167,762 0 0	3,080 17 2
		104 59·455	316,286 0 0	3,019 17 8

I will now read the estimate of the branch to Collarendabri:—

NARRABRI TO WALGETT.—BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI—Part 1.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway, 31 miles 52·70 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100. Sharpest curve, 15 chains radius.

New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inches T.O's.; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
	£ s. d.	£
Earthworks	6,708 2 6	212
Timber bridges	3,560 1 3	112
Bridge over Pian Creek at Old Burren	1,521 0 0	48
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	1,830 0 0	58
Permanent-way materials, rails taken at £5 5s. per ton	19,719 18 9	623
Freight	6,127 18 4	194
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £3,250 9s.	19,792 12 9	625
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting, at 6s. 3d. = £4,353 2s. 6d.		
Sleepers, at 3s. 1½d. = £12,189 1s. 3d.		
Station works, including junction and sidings	4,149 13 4	131
Station buildings:—Waiting-sheds, £240; platforms, £264; loading banks, £312; trucking-yards, £648	1,464 0 0	46
Water supply	1,500 0 0	47
Gradient and mileage posts	522 7 10	17
Telegraph	522 7 10	17
Miscellaneous	1,000 0 0	32
Cost of works	68,418 2 7	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	10,262 17 5	324
	£78,681 0 0	2,486
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton	7,724 0 0	.....
	£86,405 0 0	2,729

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM NARRABRI TO WALGETT, WITH BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.

NARRABRI TO WALGETT.—BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.—Part 2 to Point A.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway, 8 miles 38·02 chains in length, with 60 lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100. Sharpest curve, 15 chains radius.

H. Deane.
25 April, 1900.

New fastenings; new 4 ft 6 in. T.O's.; $\frac{1}{2}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated cost.	Average per mile.
	£ s. d.	£
Earthworks	2,545 0 0	300
Timber bridges	2,829 17 3	334
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	505 0 0	95
Permanent-way materials, rails taken at £5 5s. per ton	5,281 19 0	623
Freight	1,376 1 3	162
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £870 2s.	5,298 10 9	625
$\frac{1}{2}$ ballasting, at 6s. 3d. = £1,165 12s. 6d.		
Sleepers, at 3s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. = £3,262 16s. 3d.		
Station works, including sidings	7,286 16 8	860
Station buildings:—Passenger station, £312; waiting-shed, £120; platforms, £295; Station-masters' cottages, £604; goods shed and platform, £375; loading banks, £319; trucking-yards, £1,573; 10-ton crane, £438; 20-ton weighbridge, £263; carriage shed, £250; engine shed and pit, £875; coal stage, £213; turntable, £625; barracks, £1,000.....	7,262 0 0	857
Water supply	1,560 0 0	177
Gradient and mileage posts.....	139 16 9	17
Telegraph	139 16 9	17
Miscellaneous.....	500 0 0	59
Cost of works	£34,964 18 5	.....
Engineering and contingencies 15 per cent. (nearly).....	5,245 1 7	619
Total cost	£40,210 0 0	4,745
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton	2,067 0 0	.....
	£42,277 0 0	4,988

NARRABRI TO WALGETT.—BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.—Part 3—Point A to Collarendabri.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway, 10 miles 72 chains in length, with 60 lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100. Sharpest curve, 15 chains radius.

New fastenings; new 4 ft. 6 in. T.O's.; $\frac{1}{2}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
	£ s. d.	£
Earthworks	6,993 15 0	642
Timber bridges	9,202 13 9	644
Bridge over the Grawan Creek	4,678 1 6	429
Bridge over the Barwon River	9,557 9 0	877
Level Crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions.....	392 10 0	36
Permanent-way materials, rails taken at £5 5s. per ton.....	6,789 19 6	623
Freight	2,302 0 0	211
Plate-laying, at 1s. 2d. = £1,119 1s. 4d.	6,814 7 7	625
$\frac{1}{2}$ ballasting, at 6s. 3d. = £1,498 15s.		
Sleepers, at 3s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. = £4,196 11s. 3d.		
Station works, including sidings	637 3 4	58
Station buildings:—Waiting-shed, £120; platform, £132; loading bank, £156	408 0 0	37
Gradient and mileage posts.....	179 17 0	17
Telegraph	179 17 0	17
Miscellaneous.....	500 0 0	46
Cost of works	£48,635 13 8	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	7,295 6 4	669
Total cost	£55,931 0 0	5,131
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton.....	2,660 0 0	.....
	£58,591 0 0	5,375

NARRABRI TO WALGETT.—BRANCH TO COLLARENDABRI.

Summary.—Rails taken at £7 10s. per ton.

Part.	Description.	Length.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
			£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	<i>Point A.</i>			
	m. c. m. c.	m. c.		
1	302 36·186 to 334 8·886	31 52·70	86,405 0 0	2,729 3 1
2	334 8·886 ,, 342 46·906	8 38·02	42,277 0 0	4,988 8 9
	Total to Point A	40 10·72	128,682 0 0	3,206 6 2
	<i>Point A to Collarendabri.</i>			
	m. c. m. c.			
3	342 46·906 to 353 38·506	10 72·00	58,591 0 0	5,375 6 5
	Total, Branch to Collarendabri	51 2·72	187,273 0 0	3,669 11 6

- H. Deane.
25 April, 1900.
- With regard to that portion of the estimate which is Part 2 to point A, 8 miles 38 chains in length, I wish to point out that the terminal station is included, because if the line stopped at point A all the terminal arrangements will have to be placed there.
4. *Mr. Watson.*] I do not quite understand these figures; Mr. Dick and I have been figuring out the increased price of rails, but the result we get does not tally with these figures;—I understand that £30 per mile must be added for an increase of 5s. in the price of rails? Yes.*
5. These estimates were originally based on rails at 5 guineas? Yes.
6. The difference between that and £7 10s. is 45s; that would mean £270 per mile multiplying 30 by 9? Yes.
7. The figures do not seem to be quite correct; for the 104 miles from West Narrabri to Walgett I make the difference over £28,000; the difference shown in these estimates between £290,732 and £316,286 is only £25,554;—there should be a greater increase in the cost than is represented by this £316,286? I will look into that. It looks as if there is something that requires explanation.
8. *Mr. Levien.*] The country up to Walgett is pretty level all the way? Yes; but you have to dodge about a good deal to keep on the driest ground.

THURSDAY, 26 APRIL, 1900.

Present:—

THE HON. WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

- H. McLachlan.
26 April, 1900.
9. *Chairman.*] The Railway Commissioners are favourable to this proposed connection with Walgett and Collarendabri? Yes.
10. Although at the outset it will involve a loss of nearly £14,000 a year? Yes. I think you have had the report of the Railway Commissioners on the subject, in which they say that, owing to the character and prospects of the country, both districts are deserving of railway communication.
11. Are they guided in that by the opinion that that country will very largely develop the population, and that its production will increase? They are guided to some extent by the country as it exists. There is considerable settlement and considerable trade there already.
12. Many lines involving a loss they do not recommend, but this they do recommend;—considering the loss which they have to face, how are they induced to recommend the line? On general principles. You will recollect when they first started by reporting on these new lines they made a report to the Committee, many years ago, in which they stated that if lines would pay working expenses, and afford reasonable prospects of development, they thought that, in the interests of the country, they were worthy of consideration.
13. And where the lines were not of too expensive a character as regards their formation? Yes; that report was practically on pioneer lines.
14. The Commissioners indicated by their report that there is a further connection to Walgett by way of Coonamble? Yes.
15. Would you give the reasons for that? Their recommendation in regard to the Coonamble to Walgett line is one which they have made consistently every time they have reported upon that district. One advantage to start with would be, that as you are getting a line to Coonamble you can reach Walgett with the least construction; I think the distance is only 68 miles.
16. Sixty-eight miles, as against 105 miles? Yes, so that the cost of construction would be considerably less; and they consider that a line by way of Coonamble would much better divide the country. They do not think that the line should be made from Narrabri to Walgett, and to Collarendabri. They would rather see the money spent upon a line that would better divide the country going up from the western side, that is from Coonamble. They think that that country will be opened up some day. They are hopeful of seeing a railway go from Mudgee.
17. As regards the character of the country, and its future prospects, I suppose that these two lines go through similar country? Practically through pastoral country. I believe Mr. Jones, the District Surveyor, when examined in regard to the proposed Pilliga railway, said his idea was that the Coonamble to Walgett country looked slightly better than the other. The Commissioners saw him in regard to the opening up of that western country, and that was the opinion they gathered from him.
18. Between the two projects there is this difference, that if a line came into Walgett *via* Narrabri West, it would have Newcastle as a shipping port;—if it came in by Walgett and Coonamble, it would come to Sydney as a shipping port? Yes.
19. Have you in your mind the two distances—Walgett and Newcastle *via* Narrabri, and Walgett to Sydney *via* Coonamble and Dubbo? The distances from Walgett to Sydney *via* Coonamble, and from Walgett to Sydney *via* Newcastle, would be about the same; but if they went to Newcastle alone the difference would be about 100 miles less to that port.
20. Are you able to say whether the bulk of the goods and wool from Walgett, at present, go to Newcastle, and are shipped from there? The greater portion comes by rail to Morpeth and Newcastle, then most of it comes on to Sydney.
21. By train? Most of it comes by sea.
22. It reaches Sydney? Yes.
23. I suppose they bring it from Newcastle by steamer because it is cheaper than bringing it by rail? Yes.
24. Even with the extra handling involved? Yes.

25.

* NOTE (on revision).—The totals are correct; the difference of 5s. per ton is under £30.

H.
McLachlan.
26 April, 1900.

25. Then, if we come from Walgett by Coonamble and Dubbo to Sydney, would that entail a heavier amount of freight for wool than is charged at present by way of Newcastle? I am not quite sure. I do not know that there would be very much difference. I may say roughly that the distance from Sydney to Walgett *via* Dubbo and Coonamble, is about 448 miles, and the distance from Walgett to Newcastle is about 355 miles.
26. Why do you favour the connection by way of Coonamble? For the reason I have already mentioned. In the first place you would save a great deal, as far as construction is concerned, the distance being so much shorter, if you make the line to Coonamble. Then the Commissioners think that it opens up the country better, and as a matter of fact the bigger part of the trade, although it may go to Newcastle or Maitland, is really to and from Sydney.
27. Then, with regard to the Collarendabri connection, have you any decided opinion as to whether it would be better to go on from Walgett to Collarendabri, or to make a connection from Narrabri to Collarendabri? The Commissioners' idea is that it would be better to go from Narrabri to Collarendabri.
28. That is a part of the country which should be connected by way of Walgett? Yes.
29. If we were to make a connection with Walgett by way of Coonamble, would it not be practicable to make a connection from Narrabri to Collarendabri—a more straight line than is indicated on the map? Yes; the Commissioners recommend that. They say, "We suggest the desirability of the reconsideration of a route leaving Wee Waa, with a view to being determined whether it is possible to make it more direct, and reduce the cost of construction."
30. Then that means really that the bend in the Collarendabri connection is necessitated by the present proposal by reason of its being the fork that goes off to Walgett—if that were done away with it would make it more direct? Yes.
31. If that line from Narrabri to Collarendabri were constructed, would it be a competitor to any great extent with the Moree line? Yes, it would get some of the business that goes to Moree. Still, the Commissioners would not like to say that that the district should not have a railway.
32. Is it a wide stretch of country which has long been regarded as worthy of better communication? Yes; there is a very big pastoral district around Collarendabri, and there is very good pastoral country to the north.
33. We have before us a proposed connection with Pilliga: I suppose that, with a direct line from Coonamble to Walgett, that place would be left out in the cold, would it not? Yes. The Commissioners in 1895, I think, in looking at the merits of Pilliga, could not recommend it for railway construction on its merits.
34. Any of these projects starting out from Narrabri in that direction, have they not generally had Walgett as their objective? I think so; even though Pilliga was spoken of as a terminus, I think it was with the idea of getting on to Walgett.
35. Looking at the map, it would seem that it would be a considerable advantage if we could straighten that line from Narrabri to Collarendabri? Yes; the Commissioners think so.
36. Do you know whether if this line went more to the north, and avoided that curve, you would get into a better class of country for construction? I could not say that. As far as the bend is concerned, I do not think that would matter much. The extra cost in connection with the line to Collarendabri is due to the expensive nature of the work within 10 miles of the town, which would be common to both. A lot of flood country has to be crossed. That is the reason why the Commissioners recommended that the line should go to Wee Waa; it was to avoid the flood country on the northern bank.
37. This line of railway is regarded as one of our light lines, but its cost of construction averages £3,675 a mile;—that is rather a large amount? Yes; that is due, I believe, largely to the 10 miles near Collarendabri, and the Commissioners, when reporting on the line originally, suggested that it might be wise to stop short of that 10 miles to avoid the flooded country.
38. But even on the main line the cost is estimated to be £3,020 a mile;—we were hoping to get these surface lines constructed at a cost of something over £2,000 a mile; but the main line seems to be a little beyond the estimate for a surface line? It is a matter for the engineers to explain. Probably the high cost is due to the flooded country.
39. The line from Narrabri to Moree is of the same character as the contemplated lines to Collarendabri and Walgett, is it not? With this exception, that you have more flooded country to deal with on the line to Collarendabri.
40. The Narrabri to Moree line was started as a surface line;—has it been necessary to spend very much in the way of ballasting and improving that line since it was first constructed? We have spent some money on increased waterways and in strengthening the line. I think that in one case about £4,000 was spent.
41. You have not in your mind how much per mile has been spent in improving the character of the line? No; but I can get that information.
42. You say that this country between Narrabri and Collarendabri, and Narrabri and Walgett, is country more liable to floods than that from Narrabri to Moree? I think that would be the explanation of the increased estimate.
43. *Mr. Dick.*] Do you keep any return of the destination of the wool after it arrives at Newcastle? No, of course we know where it comes from, but not exactly where it goes to.
44. You have no record of the quantity sent straight away from there to the home market, or to Melbourne or Sydney? I know that the direct shipments from Newcastle in 1898-9 amounted to 47,000 bales.
45. Has that trade been increasing during the past few years? No; it has been decreasing. In 1892 and 1895 the quantity exported from Newcastle was 58,000 bales. In 1898-9 the quantity was 47,500 bales; so it is rather a diminishing quantity.
46. That reduction would be largely due to the persistent drought? No; I think it is due to the wool sales being held in Sydney.
47. Could you give us the quantity of wool sent away from Sydney? No. The quantity sent from Sydney would be larger, but, perhaps, that would not be a fair comparison, because the extension of the railways would bring more to Sydney. Last year there was a falling off, but the year before there was an increase. If you take 1894 as against 1899, I think you will find a big increase, due, to some extent, to the extension of the railways. We had a decrease of 80,000 bales this season; that is spread over the whole system, and included the three seaports, Morpeth, Newcastle, and Sydney.

H.
McLachlan.
26 April, 1900.

48. Could you supply us with figures as to the inward trade to the north—Narrabri, and places like Walgett and Collareendabri? I can tell you the total receipts at those three stations. The quantity of wool received at Darling Harbour last year was 418,000 bales; at Newcastle, 63,000 bales; at Morpeth, 82,000 bales. Practically, the whole of that Morpeth wool would come to Sydney. Last year 10,000 bales were sent from Narrabri to Morpeth, the exact figures being 10,990. That is for the six months ending 31st December, practically covering the wool season. During the same time the quantity received at Newcastle, from Narrabri, was 6,968 bales.
49. Have you any figures in regard to the inwards traffic from Sydney and Newcastle to that district? Roughly, the inward traffic for three months into Narrabri was from Sydney, 344 tons, Newcastle, 347 tons; Morpeth, 490 tons. The bulk of the trade, although going to northern stations comes from Sydney.
50. Would that Morpeth business come from Sydney? It would practically; there might be some fodder included in it; but, I think, the greater part of it would be Sydney business.
51. There seems in that district, not only according to the report of the Railway Commissioners, but also according to the deputations that periodically come from there to Sydney, to be a general consensus of opinion amongst the people that the railway connection should be made with the Northern line;—do you think that much weight should be attached to that as indicating the course that trade is likely to follow? As far as Newcastle and Maitland districts are concerned, I know that the people there strongly urge a connection from the north. Narrabri is rather indifferent as to the connection. I saw one report on a meeting held there in which they did not seem to be anxious at all to have the line extended, and Walgett, I understand, would be quite satisfied to have the connection from either point.
52. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is there any grain growing at Narrabri? None of those districts grow grain to any extent.
53. There is no grain grown on the line at all? A little is grown at Narrabri. I had the returns extracted from the *Statistical Register*, and I could submit them to the Committee. Grain is not a factor in the traffic.
54. Are you personally acquainted with the route of the line? No, I have not been over it.
55. You are only acquainted with the traffic from the reports sent in? That is so.
56. It is anticipated that there will be a large increase in the traffic if the line is constructed, is it not? The Commissioners anticipate that the products of the district will increase.
57. *Mr. Leven.*] Pilliga is an old defunct town, is it not? It is a small town.
58. I suppose that Wee Waa is a growing place? It is a promising little town.
59. *Mr. Watson.*] Is it anticipated that this line will bring any fresh traffic to the railway? The Commissioners think it will.
60. In what way? The small settlers for instance will go in for fat stock. At present a man with a small holding cannot arrange to send small drafts of cattle 100 miles by road. The construction of this line will lead to closer settlement, and the development of the district.
61. Is there any land along the route fit for agriculture? The Commissioners do not anticipate much development in agriculture. It is a long way from the market, and the country will more likely be devoted to pastoral purposes.
62. Do the railways now get all the traffic of that district? Yes; they get the existing traffic.
63. Do you think that that prospective increase, through the closer pastoral settlement that you anticipate, will be sufficient to make the line, within a reasonable time, a paying line? I should not like to say that. I think it will be a considerable time before the development will be such as to enable the line to become a paying one.
64. A thing which strikes me as peculiar is that the Commissioners practically recommend the railway to Walgett and Collareendabri, although it will serve only a pastoral district, and would be run at a very heavy loss, without causing any large diversion of trade towards the railway system, but a little while ago they absolutely objected to a proposal to make the railway to Wilcannia, which would involve a similar loss, but which had the advantage of bringing on to the existing lines freight which does not now reach them? As far as I recollect, the Wilcannia line would not even pay working expenses, but these lines will.
65. The total loss on the Wilcannia railway would not be much more than the loss in this case, and that line would bring more traffic on to the railway system, but the lines now proposed will bring no new traffic, all the traffic from the district is brought down to the railway now, yet the Commissioners recommend these lines? The character of the country is much better than anything between Cobar and Wilcannia; the country along these lines is capable of closer settlement, but it is estimated a line from Cobar to Wilcannia would involve very heavy loss, even upon working expenses. Both the lines now proposed are expected to pay more than working expenses.
66. If they run through country only fit for pastoral production, there will only be a moderate increase in the traffic? The Commissioners look at the line from a State point of view. They do not tie themselves down to the commercial aspect entirely.
67. It seems that they have a softer spot in their hearts for the people round Walgett and Collareendabri than they have for the people further out west? Because the country is so very much better.
68. Assuming that a railway was constructed only to Walgett, could it be said that the people of Collareendabri, being concerned only in pastoral products, would be very badly hampered from want of railway communication? I should not think they would be, but the Commissioners think that the district between Collareendabri and Narrabri is entitled to railway communication.
69. If we take the line from Narrabri to Walgett, where would the extra traffic come from to pay for a branch line? It would not return a profit, but the Commissioners think that the traffic would be sufficient to pay working expenses.
70. It does not seem that there would be any great disadvantage to the people of Collareendabri in getting their wool down to Walgett if the line were constructed to that point;—and if there is no agricultural land to open up, is it worth while to make a branch line to Collareendabri? The Collareendabri people, no doubt, would be a long way better off in having to send their produce only 50 miles than they are now.
71. *Dr. Garran.*] Have the Commissioners ever considered the extension of a line from Moree to Collareendabri? They have from Woolabra.
72. Not from Moree? No.
73. You see we have made a line to Inverell from Moree, and it was stated, when that proposal was under consideration, that it would provide a very good market out west? Yes.

74. A line from Coonamble to Walgett could be made fairly cheaply, could it not? Yes.
75. But a line from Narrabri to Walgett cannot be made so cheaply? No. I think a cheaper line would be from Coonamble to Walgett. The distance from Walgett to Narrabri is 50 per cent. more than from Coonamble to Walgett. That would mean a big saving to start with. The Commissioners have never given an estimate, but I dare say that if you seriously entertain the question they would look at the traffic of the two districts. They think the matter deserving of consideration.
76. If a line were made from Coonamble to Walgett, the Collarendabri squatters would be very well off would they not? Much better off than they are at present.
77. Fifty miles is nothing for a squatter? It is not a great deal.
78. What I am thinking of is, that as it is a pastoral country, the Collarendabri people would be better off for agricultural supplies by having the Inverell products sent to them than they would be if they had to get supplies from Dubbo? I do not quite follow that.
79. Supposing a line from Coonamble to Walgett was made to Collarendabri, people would get their agricultural produce then from Dubbo, or between there and Orange? Yes.
80. Would they not be better off at Collarendabri if they could get produce from Moree? From Dubbo to Collarendabri would be about 200 miles. I do not know that there would be a great deal of difference between Inverell and Collarendabri.
81. If the Moree and Collarendabri line were made, the Collarendabri trade in wool would go down to Newcastle, which is its present port? Yes.
82. And we should have a line all the way from Inverell to Collarendabri? Yes.
83. Would that not be a very good thing for the Inverell people? Yes, it would give them a better western market.
84. And would it not be a good thing for your line to Moree? You would have this handicap with regard to Collarendabri that the two sides of the triangle would be naturally greater than the base, and as their business would be very largely with the seaport, that would be a further handicap to them. I dare say it would be far better for the Collarendabri people to have the proposed line to Woolabra, as it would bring them near to Inverell and the hill country. They would be able to get into the New England district so much more easily.
85. I am considering the possibility of a line from Coonamble to Walgett being approved of, as the Commissioners wish;—then, that being so, would not the best extension be from Moree to Collarendabri rather than from Narrabri to Collarendabri? I would rather myself, although I do not think it has been considered by the Commissioners,—give them the Woolabra line. It would be better for the Inverell country, and better for enabling the Collarendabri people to reach the coast.
86. That would not prevent the Inverell produce from going to Collarendabri? No; I think it would still go there.
87. Do you know whether a line from Woolabra would be on higher and drier ground than a line from Moree? I think it would be on higher ground until you get within 10 miles of Collarendabri.
88. There is no country much more level than the country we are now considering;—if the cost of this pioneer line is nearly double what pioneer lines are supposed to cost, that is not satisfactory? No.
89. The question is, can we accommodate the district and avoid the boggy ground? I think the question was considered by the Committee dealing with the proposed Pilliga line. They went over it, and the conclusion arrived at was that it was better to go from Collarendabri to Narrabri. I think they made a special report on that in 1894 or 1895.
90. *Mr. McFarlane.*] With regard to the trade at Collarendabri, is that an extensive trade? A good deal of pastoral business comes through there.
91. And I suppose a considerable amount of goods traffic? General goods.
92. Have the Commissioners considered this aspect of the question;—as Inverell and Moree will soon be connected by rail, would it suit the trade better to have a connection with Moree instead of Narrabri? I was explaining to Dr. Garran that the principal trade is to and from the coast. You would rather handicap the Collarendabri people by making them travel two sides of a triangle.
93. I am speaking of a connection with the district of Glen Innes? The Commissioners have not taken that into their calculations at all.
94. Do you not think that in years to come there will be a connection at Glen Innes? I think it is a long way ahead.
95. If that were done, would it not be much to the advantage of the Collarendabri people to have direct communication with the seaboard? It would still be a long distance. From Collarendabri to Moree is, I think, 100 miles: from Moree to Inverell, another 100 miles; from Inverell to Glen Innes is about 50 miles, and it is 100 miles from Glen Innes to Grafton, making altogether 350 miles.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

96. *Mr. Dick.*] You have already indicated that in your opinion a connection between Coonamble and Walgett would be preferable to one from Narrabri to Walgett? I think that the matter before you is the question of a connection between Narrabri, Walgett, and Collarendabri. I will read my report to the Commissioners on the subject:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY—NARRABRI TO WALGETT AND COLLARENDABRI.

1. Narrabri West to Walgett; estimated cost, £250,732; length, 104½ miles.
2. Narrabri West to Collarendabri; estimated cost, £311,076; length, 101 miles.
3. Narrabri West to Point "A"; estimated cost, £255,145; length, 90½ miles.
1. Narrabri East to Walgett; estimated cost, £303,835; length, 111 miles.
2. Narrabri East to Collarendabri; estimated cost, £324,179; length, 107½ miles.
3. Narrabri East to Point "A"; estimated cost, £268,248; length, 96½ miles.

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had very careful inquiries made as to the probable traffic on the proposed lines, and the estimates are as follows:—

Proposed railway, Narrabri West to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.	
Wool, goods, and stock.....	£8,779
Coaching, mails, &c.	4,235
Total	£13,014

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Proposed railway, Narrabri East to Walgett, with branch to Collareendabri.	
Wool, goods, and stock.....	£9,230
Coaching, mails, &c.	4,382
Total	£13,612
Proposed railway, Narrabri West to Collareendabri, leaving Walgett out of consideration.	
Wool, goods, and stock.....	£5,494
Coaching, mails, &c.	2,187
Total	£7,681

As far as my personal inquiry has gone, I am strongly of opinion that it is desirable that any extension in the direction of these towns should be from Narrabri West through Wee Waa, as being naturally on higher ground it would be more suitable for railway construction, and it would also possess the advantage of being 6 miles less in length and costing upwards of £13,000 less in construction. Practically, all the services which could be expected to be rendered by a railway on the north bank of the river could be expected to be rendered by one on the south bank, *via* Wee Waa.

In connection with these estimates I may point out that a reduction of £941 has been made on account of the difference between the rates from Moree and those proposed from Collareendabri for traffic which would be diverted from the former line; but I have allowed full credit for the whole of the Walgett traffic, although when the river has been practicable a large quantity of goods and wool has found its way to and from this district, *via* Bourke, on which the Main Western line secured published rates. This state of things was in a large measure due to the high rates of road carriage between Walgett and Narrabri as against steamers' freight and rail charges Bourke to Sydney, and *vice versa*. Since 1894-1895 season, however, the river has not been sufficiently navigable to be regarded as a competitor; and as a railway at Walgett will command the traffic under such circumstances, I have given the project full credit.

As the question has been raised as to the extension of the line to the township of Collareendabri by submission of an alternative scheme terminating at point marked "A" (*see* plan), about 10 miles distant from Collareendabri, the matter might fairly be considered as to whether it is desirable to build this expensive section of line or whether, by some deviation, it might be possible to cross the river at some intermediate point between Walgett and Collareendabri for the purpose of future extension towards Angledool.

97. Where does the trade of Walgett and Collareendabri now go to as a rule? At the present time, with no river, it goes north into Narrabri; but I would suggest to the Committee that the evidence which was obtained by them when they were investigating this matter in connection with the proposed extension from Narrabri to Pilliga should be carefully considered, as well as the evidence in connection with the proposed line from Woolabra to Collareendabri.

98. Is the character of the country between Narrabri and Walgett similar to that of the country between Narrabri and Moree? I should think, generally speaking, that it is. Which route are you speaking of?

99. The route through Wee Waa? Yes; it is practically the same kind of country.

100. In the case of the line from Narrabri to Moree, the original estimate of the traffic has fortunately been exceeded? Not by very much.

101. Do you think there is any likelihood of similar results being obtained from the construction of these lines? I should like to think so; but I do not expect we shall get the Queensland trade.

102. Where does the inward trade from Walgett to Collareendabri come from? That depends on the condition of the river.

103. Is it not almost universally taken along the Northern line from Newcastle and Sydney? If you will refer to the evidence which I gave in reference to the Pilliga line, you will find a complete return in reference to the river given there (Question 438, report on proposed line, Narrabri to Pilliga). Since then the condition of the river has been unfavourable to navigation.

104. Could you give us an approximate estimate of the amount of revenue to be obtained by this proposal by charging local rates instead of through rates? I think you could add about 20 per cent. to the present estimate.

105. At present the through rate would mean practically 50 per cent. of the total annual cost of the railway;—do you think that local rates would bring it up to 65 per cent.? You can generally add about 20 per cent., assuming that the trade can be realised.

106. Do you think that if this railway were constructed to Walgett the river would be a serious competitor with it? I always regard the Darling as a very serious competitor with the railways. I have always emphasised that when giving evidence on the subject before this Committee.

107. Is it not a fact that when you have got a river no wool has gone past Bourke? The railway exists at Bourke for the purpose of carrying it.

108. You say you always regard the river as a serious competitor; well, you have had good rivers there since the railway was constructed, and no wool has passed Bourke? The information you have in regard to the Narrabri to Pilliga line answers that I think. You will find that when there was a river the railway existing at Bourke was a very serious competitor as far as the business between Walgett and Narrabri was concerned.

109. You draw wool from there to Bourke, then down to Sydney? Yes; and, of course, wool will be drawn now by reason of the construction of a line to Brewarrina, which will tap a great deal of the district which a line to Walgett will serve. The line to Coonamble would touch some more of the district which a line to Walgett would serve.

110. Would any wool from Collareendabri pass Walgett, then go to Sydney instead of being sent from there to Sydney through Newcastle? If it were to be realised upon in Sydney, and there were a river, I think it might be.

111. In spite of the longer distance? That would depend upon the rates established in connection with the competition between South Australia and Victoria.

112. The distances from Walgett to Newcastle and from Walgett to Sydney are practically 345 miles in the first instance, and 439 miles in the second? Yes.

113. Do you think, if it is the intention of the growers to get their wool as speedily as possible to the seaboard, they would send it *via* Brewarrina or Bourke rather than through Walgett? In connection with the proposed extension from Narrabri to Pilliga, I mentioned that the great bulk of that wool did not come to Newcastle at all, either for export or sale; it comes on to Sydney.

114. Could you say what the rates would be for 345 miles to Newcastle as against 439 miles from Walgett to Sydney? There would be about 12s. a ton difference in favour of Newcastle.

115. What are the ordinary rates per ton to Sydney by boat? Thirteen or 14s. a ton. I thought to expedite the proceedings of this Committee by referring to the evidence given before, when the matter

was under consideration, because the circumstances have been somewhat abnormal during the last two or three years in regard to starving stock. The normal conditions may be regarded as those which prevailed in 1897, when the inquiry was made.

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116. After the construction of the line from Moree to Inverell, would not the Inverell and Collarendabri people be better served by another connection from Collarendabri to Moree than by one from Collarendabri to Narrabri? I do not think so. The engineers would tell you that that country is absolutely impracticable; it is all watercourses.

117. With regard to reaching Walgett by any of the lines, you hold that Coonamble is the proper place to start from? Yes.

118. Will you give your reasons for holding that opinion? I expressed the opinion before, that the connection should be made further west. The whole of that northern country is very good fattening country, but, like the rest of New South Wales, it is subject to drought. With a line built from Brewarrina to Collarendabri, and connecting with Glen Innes, you have a connection with the New England district and the Northern line, and you give the people the alternative of using either market.

119. That would involve a connection between the North-western line and Collarendabri? Decidedly, assuming that the Committee decide upon that extension, a practicable route for the relief of the western country will be between Brewarrina and Collarendabri. It will enable them to exchange products from the northern district and the west and north.

120. Are we right in assuming that you advocate the construction of a line from Narrabri to Collarendabri however the line to Walgett may be connected? I do not know whether I would go so far as that. In my report I said it should be to a point where you would get the most suitable river crossing. I do not mean to say that Collarendabri itself is deserving of a railway; it is only a town with a very small population. You will notice from the report to the Commissioners that I have suggested that the matter should be looked into as to whether some more suitable spot could not be found in the district.

121. Do you think it would be better to make a connection from Woolabra rather than from Narrabri West? No; I do not think the same advantages would be given. In the first place, you have got settlement at Wee Waa, and a very progressive settlement too. If you start from Woolabra the Wee Waa people will be left in the position that they are in to-day.

122. Do you think a more direct route from Wee Waa to Collarendabri could be found than the one indicated on the map? I do not know.

123. Do you know enough about the proposal to say whether that bend in the line is due to the fact that it was designed to reach both Walgett and Collarendabri? I think it is for the purpose of getting higher ground.

124. *Mr. Levien.*] From Wee Waa and Pilliga to Walgett is the mail route, is it not? Yes.

125. Have you been along that line? Yes.

126. What sort of country is it between Wee Waa and Pilliga? A good deal of it is of very indifferent quality. There is a good deal of flooded country.

127. Is it very low along there? Yes; the north bank of the river is undoubtedly the best.

128. Then which line do you most favour yourself? I am strongly in favour of the south bank of the river.

129. That is round by Wee Waa and going up right away to Collarendabri? Yes; as far as the extension to Wee Waa is concerned, it could be got on the south bank, and the country through which it would go would not be too objectionable. It is a matter, however, which I think might be fairly left to the Public Works Committee to determine which of the two is the better route.

130. Both of these routes would be better country far than that going round by Pilliga to Walgett? Absolutely there can be no doubt about that whatever. I also wish to emphasise this: That Wee Waa deserves to be served; it is a progressive town with settlement of a good class about it.

131. There is a good deal of agricultural land there, is there not? Yes.

132. They are all good stations in that district? Yes. Hence the reason for recommending the extension to Collarendabri.

133. I suppose you do not know whether there is much land yet to be thrown open for selection along there? No.

134. *Mr. Watson.*] Taking the line first from Narrabri towards Walgett, is there any agricultural country on the route? That is a matter of opinion. Some of it is under agriculture; but there is no large area available for agriculture as far as I know.

135. Is there not agriculture about Wee Waa? Some small areas on the river bank.

136. Do you think the rainfall and the soil are such as to encourage agriculture in that direction? They have had plenty of opportunities for it lately, in view of the number of starving stock they have had there; but they have not gone in for it to any extent.

137. If you have not formed any opinion as to the agricultural possibilities of the district, you are relying for traffic upon the pastoral industry? Yes.

138. If your estimates are only based upon pastoral products, you do not anticipate a large increase of traffic consequent upon the construction of the railways? No.

139. Do you anticipate a diversion to the railway system of traffic which now goes some other way? Probably we should get some of the Southern Queensland traffic, which now goes *via* Brisbane, and I think that from that area we shall get a great deal of fat stock traffic. There is no better fattening country in the whole Colony than the country north-west of the Barwon. During the last two or three years the people there have had their time of trouble, but I have known the time when we have been drawing all our supplies from there.

140. Would a preferable outlet for fat stock from Southern Queensland be towards the Northern railway line, then to the south, to get to the Melbourne market? I do not think they would attempt to get to the Melbourne market. I think the markets of Newcastle and Sydney would absorb all the stock that they could send. To-day, I think the Aberdeen people are operating in country where they can save a good deal of travelling to reach the railway line.

141. You think there would be some increase or diversion of trade to our existing lines, of trade that goes elsewhere now? Yes; it is one of the pastoral lines that I should look to very hopefully for good prospects. There is a good deal of close settlement along the Barwon right up to the Queensland Border. The people there have been unfortunate during the last three or four years; but I believe the country has good possibilities before it.

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142. It would seem that the Commissioners favour the projected line from Coonamble towards Walgett, as against one from Narrabri to Walgett;—can you say why? I think their motive would be to enable the produce or stock to be removed from the west to the north, as circumstances may require; the further extension from Brewarrina to Collarendabri, and a connection from Walgett may be considered, then you have a lot of western area brought within easy connection with the Northern line. It is a big scheme.
143. Assuming that you have only pastoral country to deal with, there does not seem any reason why you should have two termini so close together as Walgett and Collarendabri? No; that is the view which the Commissioners have taken. The distance between Collarendabri and Walgett is 45 or 50 miles. Collarendabri being the more northerly place, it would serve more country to the north. The Walgett country would be served to a large extent by the line between Byrock and Brewarrina. A line from Dubbo to Coonamble would serve the district south of Walgett, so that Walgett will be served by lines from at least two sides, and you are considering a third side.
144. According to what you have just said, in your view the line from Narrabri to Collarendabri ought to be the main line, and any subsequent project to Walgett ought to wait? I do not know what are the engineering difficulties, but from my knowledge of that country, I should say that if an extension is to be made to the Queensland Border, it should be made from Collarendabri, if a good crossing over the river can be found.
145. Taking Narrabri as the starting-point? Yes.
146. Looking at the map before us, and leaving out of account the desirability or otherwise of reaching the Northern line, it would look as though the line from Walgett to Narrabri and on to the Northern line would cut the country better than any other? Yes; the country immediately north of Brewarrina is one of the best fattening districts that we have in New South Wales.
147. It seems to me that taking the Byrock to Brewarrina as an existing line, and looking at the existing line to Moree, the best way of cutting up the richest pastoral country would be to run from Coonamble to Walgett, then on to Collarendabri without connecting Collarendabri with the Northern line? I do not consider that the best plan. I consider that in view of the Brewarrina line being under construction, and the Wilcannia line having been recommended by this Committee, and considering the general requirements of the Northern district, the connection when required will be better established between Brewarrina and Collarendabri, as serving a better district than that referred to.
148. In that relation you would require a connection between Collarendabri and the North-western line? Yes; that is contingent on the line to Collarendabri being carried out. The best connection that could be established between the western and northern system would be from Coonamble to Walgett, and a line from Brewarrina to Collarendabri, when the time has arrived for this connection.
149. I cannot see where the Coonamble to Walgett line is necessary to give a connection with the north and north-western system? It is only a more direct connection—that is all.
150. But you still have the disadvantage, even with the network that you suggest, of having a line to Walgett, and another at Collarendabri, all pastoral country within less than 50 miles of the railway? I assume that the question would not have been submitted to you if it had not been considered necessary that they should have the railway.
151. Every man naturally thinks that a railway is necessary against his own door? I think the Commissioners have sufficiently emphasised what their views are as to a line in the direction of Collarendabri.
152. Are we justified in taking it as your opinion that lines in pastoral country such as that are not likely to pay within a distance of 50 miles? No; I do not think that I could conscientiously tell the Committee that this line will pay. Of course, the Moree extension was extended into country purely pastoral.
153. Moree has a great stretch of country on two sides, to which it acts as a depôt? Yes.
154. The Collarendabri line would take traffic which would otherwise gravitate towards the Walgett line, and *vice versa*? Yes; they would affect each other. And the line to Brewarrina would take some of the Walgett business.
155. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been more than once into that district? Yes, several times.
156. When did you first visit the district? I think in about 1882.
157. And when was the last time? In December, 1899.
158. Did you notice any great improvement in the district? Yes, I noticed a great deal of closer settlement going on; but it is only fair to the people who are settlers there to say that they have had a trying time during the last couple of years owing to drought. I do not know under the circumstances any town in New South Wales that showed more distinct improvement than Wee Waa did. That was under very adverse circumstances. I could not find any improvement in Pilliga, and Collarendabri did not show much improvement.
159. Was there any cultivation going on? They have patches of lucerne and other cultivation on the banks of the river.
160. The report says that the graziers and farmers have been labouring under disadvantages—"farmers" must mean cultivation of the soil? A man there calls himself a farmer if he puts in 5 acres of wheat.
161. What must the great improvement chiefly consist of? Of closer holdings and the great number of people holding sheep.
162. Do you think that the construction of the line would induce any agriculture? I should not like to say that, because I do not think the people are prepared to tackle the business during such adverse seasons. It would enable the smaller holders to carry their sheep more successfully through a period of drought than they have hitherto been able to do.
163. If the soil were suitable for agriculture they would not need a railway to encourage them to pursue that industry? No, we do not expect revenue from that source.
164. The land is reported to be equal to almost anything in the country? It is the best fattening country in New South Wales.
165. Is it chiefly occupied with cattle or sheep? With sheep chiefly.
166. What is the quality of the timber there—is it suitable for railway purposes? I do not think so.
167. I notice that, in the estimate of the cost of the railway, the charge for the sleepers is put down at a little more than the charge in other districts? Sleepers are getting more expensive.
168. What is the increased tariff expected to consist of? It would consist of the possibility of being able to carry stock, instead of having to sacrifice them, as they have had to do during the last two or three years. In the past the holdings have carried stock very heavily, but the clips of wool have gone down from 800 or 900 bales to 100 bales.
- 169.

169. It seems that the estimated return from the traffic is only about 50 per cent. of the estimated cost? Yes; but the Commissioners have felt bound, in the interests of the country, to recommend the line. They have been in the district and seen the hardships that those people have had to suffer through being without railway communication, and they submitted it to the Ministry for their consideration. J. Harper.
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170. I suppose the Commissioners favour the construction of this line, believing that it will very largely increase the traffic? The Commissioners are, of course, in favour of developing the country.
171. Has this part of the country suffered very much? Yes, very severely.
172. Have they been short of water in that district? They have been short of everything.
173. *Chairman.*] You do not think that either of these extensions to Walgett or Collarendabri will bring in any new traffic? No. Beyond, as I have said, the result of enabling people to carry stock, which to-day they cannot carry.

FRIDAY, 18 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Narrabri, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Albert Ernest Collins, storekeeper, and Mayor of Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

174. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you resided long in this district? Eighteen years. A. E. Collins.
18 May, 1900.
175. What is the population of Narrabri? 2,189 is the population of the Narrabri municipality, and the population of Narrabri West municipality is about 600. The capital value of the ratable property in Narrabri is £146,750, and the total value for ratable purposes is £15,817 8s. Within the municipality there are 531 buildings, inclusive of business premises.
176. Is Narrabri the centre from which supplies are sent to the district out towards Walgett and Collarendabri? Yes; Narrabri has always been looked upon as the centre and natural channel for all the business of that district.
177. Does either Walgett or Collarendabri receive supplies by river when there is sufficient water for the steamers to come up? I believe that Walgett occasionally receives supplies by river when the Barwon is in flood.
178. But the general trend of supplies is from Narrabri to the west and north-west? Yes.
179. Is the amount of business done with Walgett and Collarendabri fairly large? Yes. A good deal of business is done by the people of Walgett direct with Newcastle and Maitland, but it comes through Narrabri, and Narrabri supplies all the intermediate and surrounding country.
180. Is the district which would be served by the proposed railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri, one which is of growing importance? Yes.
181. Is it regarded mainly as a pastoral district? As a pastoral and agricultural district. If there were a railway through it agriculture would increase there.
182. Is it difficult under present conditions to get supplies from Narrabri to Wee Waa, Pilliga, Walgett, or Collarendabri, in some seasons? In bad seasons it is difficult because of the heavy state of the roads.
183. Is the district one in which good roads can be made? No. I should think it would be almost as cheap to make railways as to make roads in that district.
184. Is any hardship experienced because of the difficulty in getting supplies at certain seasons? Yes.
185. Is there much black-soil country along the present line of communication? Yes; it is nearly all black-soil country.
186. Has any attempt been made to make a good road? Only at particular spots.
187. Is that because the making of a road would involve great expense? I think so.
188. How much of the land would be available for agriculture if a railway were constructed? The land on the northern side of the Namoi is nearly all fit for agriculture, and only wants railway communication to develop it.
189. The proposal referred to the Committee carries the line on the south side of the Namoi as far as Wee Waa, at which point it would cross to the north side? I wish my evidence to support the construction of a line starting from Narrabri proper, and keeping on the northern side of the Namoi, first, because there are large vested interests in Narrabri which I think should be considered, and, secondly, because Narrabri is not provided with proper loading and unloading facilities at the railway station here, and we have, therefore, to cart our supplies from Narrabri West, a distance of 3 miles. If the line were started from Narrabri our station arrangements would be improved, and a larger number of people would be benefited.
190. But you think that your difficulties would be increased if the line were taken along the south side of the Namoi? Yes. We have repeatedly made a request to the Railway Commissioners to have proper facilities provided for loading and unloading at Narrabri; but they have put us off each time because of the uncertainty as to the starting-point of the line to Walgett. They have promised us that as soon as that matter is decided they will give us what facilities are required. It was suggested by a deputation which waited upon the Secretary for Public Works some time ago that, if the line started from Narrabri West, the station buildings there would be very suitable for a junction station; whereas, if the line started from Narrabri, new accommodation would have to be put up; but I would point out that in any

A. E. Collins. any case we shall want more suitable station buildings and better appliances for loading and unloading at Narrabri itself.

18 May, 1900.

191. Most of the business houses and the business premises of people connected with the forwarding and receiving of goods have been built in Narrabri proper? Yes.

192. No large business house has been built at Narrabri West? A few business houses have been built there.

193. You urge that this large business centre would be still more handicapped than it is now if the proposed line were taken from Narrabri West? Yes. A line from Narrabri West would divert business from its natural channel.

194. Could the inconvenience from which you suffer be got rid of in any other way than by the construction of the proposed line on the northern side of the river? The Railway Commissioners do not want the expense of maintaining two large stations, and, seeing that the largest vested interest is at Narrabri, and not at Narrabri West, I think that we should have the main station here. Then, too, there is very little settlement on the southern side of the Namoi, between Narrabri and Wee Waa, while the country on the northern side is thickly populated.

195. Would not the construction of a railway on the northern side of the Namoi leave Wee Waa out altogether? The railway would go within 3 miles of Wee Waa; and Narrabri was left 3 miles from the line for years, until the railway was taken on to Moree and we had to pay extra cartage for that distance.

196. Is there a bridge over the river at Wee Waa? Yes; an ordinary traffic bridge.

197. Which is larger, the population of Wee Waa or the population settled on the northern side of the Namoi, between Narrabri and Wee Waa? The population now living on the country between Narrabri and Wee Waa, on the northern side of the river, is not so large as the population of Wee Waa itself; but there is a lot of country there which should be made available for small settlement, and it is small settlement that we wish to encourage.

198. Would not the same remarks hold good as to the land on the southern side of the Namoi? No; the land on the southern side of the river is totally unfit for settlement. It is scrubby country, and the expense of making it useful for settlement would be too great. The Government have offered it almost for nothing; but people will not take it up.

199. How would you describe the country on the north side of the river as far as Wee Waa? It is magnificent pastoral country. There is no better country in the Colony.

200. What is its average carrying capacity, taking one year with another? I should think a sheep to the acre.

201. Is much of it suitable for agriculture? I think that the greater part of it is suitable for agriculture.

202. What is the character of the holdings there? There is a good deal of leased land there which is shortly to be thrown open for settlement, and it will be cut up into small holdings. That land is situated on Boolcarrol and Edgeroi holdings. The revenue obtained by a line on the north side of the river would be about £600 a year more than the revenue obtained by a line on the south side of the river, and the additional cost would be only £13,000; so that the difference in revenue would be equal to about 5 per cent. on the difference in cost.

203. Has the progress of Narrabri and the immediate district been fairly rapid during the last ten years? Yes; it has been very rapid, and it is increasing, because of the amount of agriculture that is taking place. Ten times as much cultivation has taken place during the last five years as took place formerly, and the more the district is opened up by railway communication the more the cultivation will increase. I am of opinion that almost every acre of the land on the northern side of the river is suitable for cultivation. It has been said that the team traffic from Collarendabri always came along the southern side of the river *via* Wee Waa; but I would point out that almost the whole of that traffic generally comes through Narrabri itself, and not through Wee Waa and Narrabri West. When the river is high the teams from Walgett come along on the southern side because there is no bridge at Molly. There are large areas of land on the southern side of the river which have been capitalised at 13s. 4d. per acre as settlement leases; but, although they have been open for selection for a very long time, they have never been taken up. That land is within about a mile of Narrabri West. Nearly all the land on the southern side of the river has been thrown open for selection; but it has not been taken up, and I do not think it would be taken up, even if the Government offered a bonus to those who took it up.

204. What about the land on the northern side of the river? It is taken up as soon as it is thrown open.

205. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the nature of the traffic from Walgett and Collarendabri to Narrabri? It is chiefly wool and fat stock.

206. Is much farm produce sent in? No; except in the immediate vicinity of Narrabri.

207. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the produce traffic largely increase? Yes; I think that wherever there is a railway agriculture is bound to progress.

208. Do you think the construction of the proposed railway would open up a large area of land for agriculture? Yes; if it were taken through the right country. If the line is kept on the north side of the river agriculture will increase there; but the conditions on the south side of the river are unfavourable to agriculture except a small patch on the river.

209. *Mr. Watson.*] The Railway Commissioners seem to favour the connection of Walgett with Coonamble rather than with Narrabri;—have you any opinion to offer on that subject? I think that Walgett should be connected with Narrabri. Narrabri is the natural channel for all the traffic from that district, and for all the Narrabri West traffic.

210. The opinion of the Railway Commissioners is that a line from Coonamble to Walgett would serve the Colony better? I have never considered the question of extending a railway from Coonamble to Walgett; but I know that Narrabri has always been the natural channel for the Walgett traffic, just as Newcastle is the natural port for this district.

211. Do you think that the Walgett people have a greater desire to go to Newcastle than to any other port? I cannot say. They are agitating for a railway; but I do not know if they care whether it comes from Narrabri or from Coonamble.

212. I suppose they would be glad to get the line which would give them most facilities to export? Yes; and a connection with Narrabri would give them Newcastle as well as Sydney for a port.

213. Is the rainfall in the Narrabri district sufficiently regular to make agriculture successful here? Yes. We are just coming to the end of a five years' drought; but people have obtained some very fine crops here even during the drought. We have had just enough rain to do the crops good, though we

have

have not had sufficient for grazing purposes. I do not think better crops could be grown in the Colony than we had here during the last twelve months, although the season has been bad for grazing. Some very fine oranges and lemons have been grown here this year. A. E. Collins.
18 May, 1900.

214. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you any orchards of any extent? Yes.

215. What kinds of fruit are grown here? I think that almost any kind of fruit would grow in the district. Oranges and lemons grow very well here, and no finer grapes are to be obtained in the Colony.

216. Do they grow stone fruits here? Yes; peaches, apricots, and plums grow very well,

217. Do people grow fruit for market at all? The fruit industry is gradually developing here, and I think that in a few years it will be a very important factor in the trade of the district. Grapes are very largely grown here.

218. Have they tried wine-making here? Yes, and it has turned out very successful. All our orchards are on the northern side of the river.

219. Do all those who are growing fruit here seem to be satisfied with their results? Yes; they are all doing well. A railway from Walgett, *via* Coonamble, to Sydney would leave Walgett as far from Sydney as if it were connected by rail with Narrabri; but a connection with Narrabri would give it access to Newcastle as well as to Sydney.

220. Which route would serve the Walgett people the better? I think a route giving them access to two seaports.

Walter Scott, Crown Lands Agent and Clerk of Petty Sessions, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

221. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you inform the Committee what Crown lands will shortly be available for settlement on the northern side of the Namoi, in the vicinity of the suggested route for a railway to Walgett? Between 50,000 and 53,000 acres within 30 miles of Narrabri. W. Scott.
18 May, 1900.

222. How far north of the surveyed route does this land extend? Roughly speaking, for 5 or 6 miles.

223. And how far south of it? About the same distance.

224. What Crown lands are available for settlement on the south side of the Namoi, between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? I do not know the total area available there, but it is very large. I do not think more than 15,000 acres have been selected on that side of the river.

225. Is the balance of that land mostly held under lease? Most of it is waste land. It has been advertised, and the annual value has been put down at £1 for 1,000 acres for improvement lease; but I think only two of these leases have been taken.

226. How are the people doing who have taken up that land? I do not know; but the land that has been taken up has been leased as a sort of standby in dry seasons, to provide scrub and a little water for the sheep.

227. Can you give us any information as to the land which has recently been thrown open for selection on the northern side of the river? I do not know that any land there has been thrown open lately.

228. Is most of that land held by conditional purchasers? Yes; and there are one or two settlement leases there. Two or three blocks of land there were thrown open in 1896, and they were rushed.

229. Are the conditional purchases on the northern side of the river being held by the original selectors, or have they been transferred? I think that the original selectors still hold them, subject, perhaps, to mortgages. Most of the selectors there seem to me to be pretty well to do; they have got on very well since I have been here, and I have seen a good deal of them.

230. Into what sized blocks will the 50,000 acres to which you have referred be subdivided? Towards the river I think that land will be cut up into blocks of 400 or 500 acres for homestead selection.

231. Further back the blocks would be larger? Yes. I think the land further back will be taken up under settlement lease in areas of, perhaps, 2,000 acres.

232. How many selectors are there residing on their own holdings on the north side of the river, within 30 miles of Narrabri? Forty-one.

233. When the 50,000 acres are made available for settlement, how many more selectors will there be on the land? It will depend upon how the land is cut up. I think that part of it will be divided into homestead selections and part into settlement leases.

234. Can you not form a rough estimate as to how many blocks there will be? I think about fifty or sixty. If all the land is made available for homestead selection, the number will be very much greater.

235. In addition to the land held by selectors, there is a certain amount of freehold property in the larger estates? Yes.

236. How many large estates are there in the district that we have been speaking of? Edgeroi holding and parts of Killarney and Boolcarrol holdings are situated in that district.

237. Has any scrub land been offered for improvement lease on the northern side of the line? About 40 miles out, and at some distance from the suggested route, some land was offered in that way.

238. Under what conditions was it taken up? I think that 5,000 acres there were leased for about £6 a year.

239. Has the land on the south side of the river any good timber on it? Yes.

240. What kind of timber? Ironbark. There is good timber from 15 to 20 miles out from Narrabri West.

241. Has most of the good ironbark been cut out? No.

242. Do they still obtain sleepers there for railway contracts? Yes.

243. Would any additional traffic come to the line in the carriage of sleepers if it were taken out that way? I do not think so. The timber goes out more to the south-west, and I think that the carriers would continue to haul it to Narrabri West.

244. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is there much pine in this district? Yes.

245. Is it largely used? Yes.

246. Is there any regulation as to the size at which it can be cut? Yes.

247. Has any attempt been made to prevent the cutting of small trees? There is an officer here whose duty it is to look after that matter.

John Stoltenberg, farmer and grazier, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Stoltenberg.
18 May, 1900.
248. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the size of your holding? About 1,200 acres. It is situated about 4 miles from Narrabri.
249. How much land have you under cultivation? About 250 acres.
250. What crops do you grow? Wheat, barley, and corn.
251. What yields do you get? When I first tried the black-soil country, I put 2 acres of it under wheat, and 2 acres of it under barley. That was in 1892, and I got 90 bushels of wheat, and the yield of barley was also very good, but I did not register the quantity. In 1897 I put 22 acres under wheat for seed, and I got 765 bushels, and I put 20 acres under wheat for hay, and got 56 tons. From 2 acres which I put under corn that year I got 106 bushels. In 1899 I put 205 acres under wheat, 145 acres being cropped for grain. From that I got 440 sacks of grain, and a lot of grain was left on the ground by the stripper. From the 60 acres which I cut for wheat I got 145 tons of hay.
252. What is your opinion of the district generally for agriculture? I believe that it is a very good district.
253. Do you think that the average yields here are equal to those which you have got? Where the land is well worked the yield must be about the same.
254. Are you trying any crops besides those which you have mentioned? I have tried turnips and potatoes. During the first year that I grew them I got turnips nearly as big as pumpkins, and everyone seems to buy them well.
255. Have you tried fruit-growing? Yes.
256. What has been your experience in grape culture? I do not know that the black soil is very good for grapes.
257. What kinds of grapes are you growing? Both wine and table grapes.
258. Do you think that fruit can be grown successfully in this district? Yes.
259. Where do you find a market for your fruit? The Farmers' Union disposes of it.
260. Do you believe that a railway from Narrabri to Walgett would be a success? I dare say that it would. I think that a good deal of wine and fruit and vegetables could be sent out that way.
261. The interest you would have in the construction of such a line would be in obtaining a larger market for your produce? Yes.
262. Have you a ready sale for the wine that you make here? Yes.
263. Are you able to supply the demand, or do you generally run short? I generally run short.
264. It is your intention, I suppose, to enlarge your vineyard in order to meet the demand? Yes.
265. What kind of wine do you make? Red wine and white wine.
266. What grapes do you chiefly use? Hermitage, Reisling, Madeira, and table grapes.
267. Do you grow any grapes for colouring purposes? No; there is enough colour in the Hermitage grapes.
268. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Which, in your opinion, is the more suitable for agriculture, the red or the black soil? There is not much red soil here. My soil is black soil. I have seen some red soil which is very good.
269. Which do you consider more suitable for cultivation? The red soil is the more loamy. I daresay that it will grow better potatoes than the black soil; but I believe that for wheat the black soil is the better.
270. What kind of black soil have you? Mine is plain country.
271. Is there much similar land in the district? Yes; all the land in the direction of Wee Waa is similar to it.
272. Does the black-soil country stand a drought as well as the red-soil country? I think so. For a wheat crop it holds the moisture well if it is cultivated.
273. What do you think it is best suited for? For wheat, barley, oats, or anything like that. I get better results from the soil here than I used to get on the Hunter.
274. What is your average yield of wheat per acre? Last year the frost nipped it a good deal, and about half of it was blighted; but I think the average yield is from 30 to 40 bushels. I have had as many as 45 bushels from an acre of wheat.

John Butler Brake, farmer, and Chairman of the Farmers and Settlers' Association, Deep Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- J. B. Brake.
18 May, 1900.
275. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been engaged in farming pursuits in this district? I have been doing a little farming since 1878; but I have only been farming, in order to make a livelihood, for the last seven years.
276. How many acres do you hold? About 340 acres.
277. How do you use your land? For agriculture and for grazing.
278. Is your holding near the proposed railway? No; it is south-east from Narrabri.
279. Have you a knowledge of the country along the proposed route? Yes; I know the whole of that country.
280. Do you hold good agricultural land? Yes.
281. Will your land grow a variety of products? Yes.
282. What crops are best suited to the soil and climate of this district? Wheat and vines.
283. What results have you had from them? Last year we got a little more than five bags of wheat to the acre, and what we stripped for other people averaged about the same yield. That yield, however, was a very low average for this district; but we had a very severe frost in October which nipped all the tops.
284. Do you cultivate black soil or red soil? It is a mountain drift that we are cultivating. We are nearly on the last creek going west that has that mountain drift. There are about 10 feet of soil, with a gravel formation underneath.
285. Is your land of a kind that will stand a drought? Yes.
286. What is your annual rainfall? About 25 inches, according to Mr. Russell. Last year it was about 19 inches.
287. Have you had any experience with red soil? I have seen good crops of wheat grown on black soil on the edge of Galathera Plain, by a man named Morris.

288. How would you describe the country on the north side of the Namoi, between Narrabri and Wee Waa? On the river bank there is a red, loamy soil for a few miles. Then you get more into swampy country, where the creek overflows. J. B. Brake.
18 May, 1900.
289. Is there a large area of agricultural land on that side of the river? Yes.
290. Is the swamp land good pastoral country? Yes; some of the finest in New South Wales. Going due north from the Namoi the country is all the same as far as the Moberly River, a distance of about 60 miles.
291. Could that country carry a large population? I do not know what it would; the rainfall is too meagre.
292. What area of land there would be sufficient to maintain a family? I do not think that less than 2,000 acres is sufficient in this district. A man wants to be able to carry stock as well as to cultivate. I think a man ought to be able to make £1,000 on his place.
293. How many acres would maintain a family if the land were used solely for agriculture? I do not think a man could live on agriculture alone in this district; he should go in for mixed farming.
294. Is the country much the same in the direction of Wee Waa? Yes. In 1889 I saw as beautiful crops on Pian Creek as I have seen anywhere.
295. Would your description of the country between Narrabri and Wee Waa apply to the country as far out as Walgett and Collarendabri? Yes; it would apply to the country as far as the Barwon. On the other side of the Barwon you seem to get a different sort of soil.
296. How would you describe the country between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? For about 3 miles back from the river frontage it is myall country, but further back it is a sandy desert, with brigalow growing on it. The country continues similar as far as Brigalow Creek, about 13 miles below Wee Waa. On one side of the creek is brigalow country, and, on the other, ironbark country. You can do nothing with that country; it is a mass of melon holes, and hardly good grazing country.
297. Is it occupied to any extent at the present time? I do not think there are a dozen inhabitants on the south side of the river between Narrabri West and Wee Waa, and the number is not likely to increase.
298. Would the construction of the proposed railway cause a great deal of settlement to take place? A line on the north side of the river would go through the cream of New South Wales. The country there is as good as the far-famed Liverpool Plains.
299. If the railway were constructed there would a considerable area of that country be put under wheat? I think so.
300. At what distance from a railway station could a farmer grow wheat? It would depend upon the price of wheat.
301. Supposing the price were 2s. 6d. a bushel? Then it would not pay a man to cart it very far, if he had to send it by rail to Sydney.
302. What market have you for wheat? We have the local market; but our principal market is out west towards Walgett. All the produce that is not consumed in this district is taken by team in the direction of Walgett.
303. Is the western market a large one? Yes; and it is our only outlet for produce.
304. Would you over-supply that market if more people went in for wheat-growing? Yes, we could over-supply it.
305. Where would your market be then? In that case we should have to send to Sydney or to Newcastle.
306. Would that pay? It does not pay at the present time; but if freights were reduced it might pay, just as it pays to send produce there from other parts of the country.
307. *Mr. Watson.*] What do you pay per bushel to send wheat from Narrabri to Sydney? It costs about 5d. a bushel for cartage and commission.
308. And you say that 20 bushels to the acre is a low average here? Yes.
309. Do you know that people cart produce 20 miles to a railway station in the South-Western district, and pay the same railway rates as you have to pay, although their average yield is only 10 bushels to the acre? I should like to know how long they will be able to keep on doing that. The areas under cultivation here are smaller than the areas under cultivation in the districts you speak of, but the larger the area the cheaper the cultivation. The men who have been growing wheat here are men who cultivate small patches, and who get their living as teamsters. When the road traffic ceases, they commence to cultivate their land. However, agriculture is gradually developing in this district, and a very large area will be put under wheat within the next ten years.
310. How is the agricultural land round about Narrabri held,—is any large area of it locked up in large estates? I believe so.
311. We have been informed that there are only forty-one settlers on the northern side of the river within 30 miles of Narrabri? The chances are that those settlers occupy the whole of that country.
312. The explanation is not that there is not much land fit to be taken up? No; because that country is splendid.
313. Is the land all pretty well cultivated now within 10 or 15 miles of Narrabri, along the suggested railway route on the northern side of the river? I do not know that anyone is cultivating land there. I think they have been making a better living out of grazing. It is such beautiful grazing country that the people there can make more by grazing than by agriculture.
314. If a railway were taken through that land would the people there go in for agriculture, or would they stick to their grazing? I think that, as the people get educated, they will combine grazing with agriculture. Where you cultivate you can run more sheep to the acre than where you do not cultivate, and in times of drought you have straw and other waste to fall back upon for feed.
315. For what distance towards Walgett would the average rainfall justify cultivation, assuming the land to be all fairly good? I was four years on the Barwon, and we had two splendid seasons there. I saw some wheat grown there which was as fine as I ever saw in my life; but of late the rainfall has not been sufficient.
316. How far west do you go before you get beyond what is a fair rainfall? I think that the Barwon would be the extreme western limit of the agricultural country, though the wheat I saw growing on the other side of the Barwon in 1889 has not been surpassed by anything we have grown here. Of course that was a splendid season. The country on the other side of the Barwon would be as good wheat-growing

- J. B. Brake.** growing country as you could have, if the rainfall were sufficient. The 1890 flood sent the water out to a distance of from 60 to 80 miles, and there was an average depth of from 2 to 6 feet all over the country. I do not think 2,000 people could find dry ground to stand on in any ordinary flood. I was there for three months, and never turned a wheel.
- 18 May, 1900.
317. Does it take a long while for a flood to go down? Yes.
318. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the membership of the Farmers and Settlers' Association? There are sixteen members; but the Association has only recently been formed.
319. Do you belong to the Farmers' Association? Yes; it is a co-operative association for selling produce.
320. What business is done by them? From £60 to £100 a week. The fruit season is the time that most business is done.
321. From what extent of country do the members of the Association come? Members of the Association may belong to any part of the Colony; but they mostly come from within 50 miles of Narrabri.
322. Have their agricultural operations been fairly successful in this district? I could not say; they are practically only starting. There are some fairly large holdings, and some very small ones.
323. Do you think that the farmers here are up to date in regard to implements and machinery, or are they a bit backward? I think that they have been backward.
324. With better implements, do you expect to see larger areas cultivated? Yes.
325. Would the construction of a railway along either the north or the south bank of the Namoi stimulate the progress of agriculture in this district? I think so.
326. Which line would stimulate agriculture the more, a line on the southern side of the river or a line on the northern side? A line on the northern side of the river. Three miles back from the river there is not much land on the southern side that you could cultivate.
327. Would the agricultural land on the northern side of the river extend back 20 miles? It is all similar country right through to the Mehi, a distance of 60 miles.
328. Does the rain here fall at the right time of the year for crops? The year before last we obtained a good crop with only 5 inches of rain.
329. As a general rule, does the rain fall at suitable times for wheat? Yes. The wheat becomes ripe here in October, and it is very seldom that we do not have a thunderstorm by the tenth of the month.
330. Do the farmers of the district seem anxious to cultivate larger holdings? They seem satisfied with what they have been doing. Men who have been settled here for thirty years are still on the same holdings.
331. Has there been any combination amongst the farmers of the district to get together a large consignment of wheat for export? Yes.
332. Had you anything to do with the last two consignments that were sent away? Some produce went from this district.
333. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What class of farming implements do the farmers here chiefly use? Until the last two seasons they have been in a very small way; but recently combined harvesters, cultivators, strippers, and six-furrow ploughs have been brought into the district. Formerly the harvesting was done with reaping-hooks and sickles.
334. Is it expensive to clear land here? It greatly depends upon whether the timber has been ring-barked. If it has been ringbarked for a number of years you can burn it off; but if it is green it costs a great deal to clear. Ten acres of green timber cost me £100 to clear.
335. What can you get ringbarked timber cleared for? About 30s. an acre.
336. Is the land here thickly timbered? A lot of it is.
337. Anyone who took up land with the intention of cultivating it right away would have to incur a considerable expense in clearing it? Yes; but out to the west there is very little timber to contend with.
338. It saves expense to ringbark first? Yes; and I believe it improves the land too.
339. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you had an opportunity of testing the lasting qualities of the different soils here? I am cultivating a paddock now off which we recently took 20 bushels of wheat to the acre, and that ground has been growing wheat without a change of crop for twenty years.
340. What formation is it? There is about a foot of red loam on the top, and a clayey subsoil.
341. Have you had an opportunity to compare the lasting qualities of that soil with the qualities of the black soil? I believe that the black soil is inexhaustible as a crop producer.
342. Do you find it a more lasting soil for cropping than the red soil? I believe that the black soil is inexhaustible as a crop producer.
343. You find it a more lasting soil for cropping than the red soil? Yes. If it can be left to the weather after it has been worked it will fall to pieces like ashes. At Boggy Creek, where we have been cultivating for twenty years, there is as fine soil as you could wish to put a plough in. The only trouble is that after rain everything on the black soil grows too rank.
344. Is the black soil superior to the red soil? Yes, if you do not get too much rain. The black soil here is very strong. I have seen grass growing near the town so high that you could tie it across a horse's back.
345. Is the black soil generally free of timber? Yes.

Richard Ford Jenkins, Road Superintendent, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

- R. F. Jenkins.** 346. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you know the district which the proposed railway would serve? Only as far as Pilliga and Bulyeroi.
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347. What roads are there leading from Narrabri towards the western limit of your district? There is a road leaving Narrabri, and running along the northern side of the Namoi until it crosses at Molly, about 7 miles out, from which point it keeps on the south side of the river until it gets to Wee Waa. Another road goes out from Narrabri West, and keeps on the south side of the river, and a little to the south of the first road, as far as Wee Waa. Then there is a road from Wee Waa to Pilliga and Walgett, and another road from there to Pian Creek. In dry weather the traffic uses the road which crosses at Molly; but when the river cannot be crossed because of freshets or floods the traffic uses the other road.
348. Which road does the Collarendabri traffic use? A road *via* Boolcarrol and Bulyeroi. That road keeps on the north side of the river all the way, joining the Wee Waa road about 5 miles out from Narrabri.

349. Would it cost much to make a good approach from Wee Waa to a point on the northern side of the river, distant about 3 miles. It would cost a good deal.
350. £1,000 a mile? Not as much as that; £700 or £800 a mile.
351. What is your opinion as to the relative value, for agricultural purposes, of the land on the north and south sides of the river within 20 miles of Narrabri? I think that the land on the southern side of the river is practically worthless, while the land on the northern side is very good. The expense of clearing the land on the south side would be so great that people would not make anything of it.
352. How far does the good land on the north side of the river extend? With the exception of small belts of scrub, it extends as far as Collarendabri.
353. How far are the timber forests in this district from the route of the proposed railway? The timber comes from a district about 20 miles distant from either Narrabri or Wee Waa.
354. What sort of timber is that? Ironbark and pine.
355. Is there an extensive tract of timber country? Yes, of ironbark country.
356. Is the timber of good quality? It is of fair quality; but it is not as good as the ironbark further south.
357. Is it good timber for piles? I have had difficulty in getting piles over 35 feet in length and 12 inches in diameter at the small end.
358. Would there be plenty of ironbark for railway construction? Yes, any quantity of it.
359. Would ballast be easily obtained for a railway? No; there is no ballast to be got.
360. Is there any ballast near Narrabri? There is the Woolabra gravel, which is the best, and there is some fairly good gravel about Narrabri. It seems to me that if the line were taken on the south side of the river it would be bordering country which is of very little value, and have only a narrow strip of good country on the other side of it; whereas, if it kept on the north side of the river, it would have good land on each side of it. Then, too, the southern route would not be much nearer to the timber country than the northern route.
361. Do you think the disadvantage of leaving Wee Waa out of direct communication with the railway is more than counterbalanced by the advantage to be gained by going through the richer country on the northern side of the river? I certainly think that it is.

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Arthur Herbert Farrand, Inspector of Stock, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

362. *Mr. Watson.*] How would the construction of the proposed railway from Narrabri to Walgett *via* Wee Waa affect the stock traffic to Narrabri? The stock on the south side of the river between Narrabri and Wee Waa number about 20,000 sheep, while on the north side, within the area which would be affected by a line on that side of the river, there are 150,000 sheep. The country on the north side of the Namoi, out to the Thalaba Creek, is all good country. The Thalaba Creek is about 35 miles in a direct line north from Wee Waa. On the south side of the river, along the frontage between Narrabri and Wee Waa, there are about 25,000 acres of good country, and the balance is scrub land. I have had considerable experience in dealing with scrub land. For ten years I was managing holdings which comprised a great area of scrub land, for banks and other companies, and I have never known anyone to go on to that kind of country who did not come off it insolvent. I consider that the land from Narrabri West to Wee Waa, with the exception of 25,000 acres mentioned above, is virtually useless to the present generation, because it could not be used without a rabbit-netting fence, and it would cost about 4s. an acre to kill the scrub and make it available for grazing. After another three years another 3s. an acre would have to be expended in cutting down the scrub again. I think they will have the same experience on the Bogan. Immediately the large box timber is killed, suckers come up, and these can only be got rid of by grubbing them out. After you have gone to all that expense, you have only second-class grazing land. So far as farming is concerned, no one but a madman would attempt to farm such country, because the initial expenses are so great that by the time a man has got his land ready for cultivation he would have expended as much per acre as would have purchased far better land in a better district, and he would be in possession of soil which would only stand cropping for a very limited number of years.
363. At Wee Waa the proposed line crosses to the northern side of the river;—what is the country like between Wee Waa and Walgett? The country from Wee Waa to Walgett, on the north side of the river, is black-soil plains, with occasional belts of timber; but it is all first-class grazing country.
364. Would the timbered land be fit for cultivation if it were cleared? Yes.
365. How would you regard the black-soil country from an agricultural point of view? Mr. Charles Reid, of Forbes, was the only man in that district who made money at farming, and he cultivated the black soil on the edge of the Grawlin Plain. Then Cannon Brothers, of Wallanbillan, on the Bogan, who were neighbours of mine, ploughed up 200 acres of a black-soil plain without taking out more than half a dozen stumps, and they got about 30 bushels of wheat to the acre off that land.
366. Was that in an average season? It was in a fairly good season, but they got their crop in very late. I do not know what other crops they got. Mr. Reid cultivated the black soil successfully for ten years to my knowledge.
367. Do you think that the black soil between Wee Waa and Walgett is suitable for agriculture? A large part of it is.
368. How would you differentiate between what is good and what is not good? The swampy country is not suitable for agriculture, but there are large belts of timbered country running through the black-soil country. The soil in the timbered country is not so stiff as the black soil generally, and is first-class agricultural soil.
369. It has been suggested that a branch line might be taken from Burren to Collarendabri;—would the land between Burren and Collarendabri be similar to that between Wee Waa and Walgett? I can only speak generally of that country. I believe that it is similar to the country towards Walgett.
370. Is the land beyond Wee Waa heavily stocked? It is heavy, stock-carrying country.
371. What has been the recent experience in connection with it? During the last three years the people out there have had a very bad time.
372. Does the annual rainfall rapidly diminish as you go towards Walgett? I do not think there is a great difference between the annual rainfall of Narrabri and Walgett.
373. Do the plains out towards Walgett require more rain than is sufficient for the district around Narrabri? From Wee Waa right through to Walgett the country is all about the same.

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374. That country has recently suffered more from drought than the country immediately around Narrabri? Yes; but we had a break in the drought. We had one good fall of rain which they did not have.
375. In an average season what stock will that country carry? About a sheep to an acre and a half.
376. Do they go in largely for fattening? Yes; it is the best fattening country I have seen in the Colony, and I know New South Wales fairly well.
377. Is it as good as the Liverpool Plains? I think it is better. We have the same spring as they have; but in the winter there is such a large quantity of herbage that stock fatten more rapidly than in the spring.
378. They have a more regular rainfall on the Liverpool Plains? They may have better seasons generally; I am speaking of the fattening qualities of the country.
379. If a railway were taken out towards Walgett, would agriculture be largely entered upon in that country, or would people continue to use it for breeding and fattening stock? I think that agriculture has got a fair start within the last two years, and people have been so successful that they are likely to increase their cultivation.
380. Has most of the land between Narrabri and Walgett been alienated? A great part has been alienated, including what is held under settlement lease.
381. Are the holdings there very large? There are a great number of settlement leases. As the leasehold areas fall in they are taken up under settlement lease. Beyond Wee Waa there are a number of people holding from 8,000 to 10,000 acres who are fairly well to do.
382. Has any considerable area of the country out that way been secured by large holders? The large holders in that country are people holding up to 10,000 acres, and a few stations which contain still larger areas. Beyond Wee Waa there is a large area of Government land to be cut up for settlement.
383. Do you think that people holding 10,000-acre blocks would go in largely for agriculture if there were a railway nearer to them? I think there is every prospect of it, judging by the way in which the people have increased their area of cultivation round about Narrabri during the last three years.
384. Where does stock travel from Collarendabri and Walgett? There are three main routes coming into Narrabri—from Walgett, Collarendabri, and Moree.
385. Do large numbers of fat stock come here from Queensland? I think that more of the Queensland stock goes to Moree, but the stock from further out west comes to Narrabri.
386. Does pretty well all the travelling stock that goes to Walgett come towards Narrabri to be trucked, rather than to the Western line? Nearly all of it comes to Narrabri. Narrabri is either the first or the second trucking station in the Colony.
387. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it carry store stock, or would the traffic be confined to fat stock? Store stock will not use a railway except in times of drought.
388. I suppose fat stock would sooner use a railway than travel? Yes; owners get advice of the state of the market, and want to send in their stock quickly.
389. The Railway Commissioners favour the construction of a line from Coonamble to Walgett, and of another line from Narrabri to Collarendabri? I think that it would be better to take the railway from Narrabri to Walgett. By doing that the Walgett people would obtain a connection with Newcastle as well as with Sydney. Then, again, if Walgett were connected with Coonamble, all the traffic to Sydney would have to be brought across the Blue Mountains, which is a very great drawback.
390. The mere crossing of the mountains is no great difficulty? I should think it would interfere with the railway traffic. As a rule, people sending stock from here leave two or three truck-loads to be disposed of at Maitland.
391. Is there any essential difference between the land between Wee Waa and Walgett and that between Coonamble and Walgett? The land is good in both districts.
392. The Railway Commissioners think that their proposal would parcel out the country better, and give the pastoralists the best facilities for reaching a market? I have always thought that the Mudgee line should be taken further.
393. Would you take that line on to Walgett? I should prefer a line from Narrabri to Walgett.
394. The proposed Collarendabri branch makes rather an acute angle with the proposed Walgett line;— is there any other way in which a branch could be taken to Collarendabri? The Collarendabri branch would get a great deal of traffic from the country lying to the north of it, and out towards the Queensland border.
395. Do you think that the traffic in that country would go to a line to Walgett if there were no branch to Collarendabri? It would drift either to Walgett or to Moree.
396. Would a line to Walgett, in conjunction with the Moree and the Brewarrina lines, reasonably serve the traffic of the north-west district? The traffic in that district would certainly drift to the three points you have named; but I think that the country to the north of the route of the proposed Collarendabri branch merits the construction of a railway.
397. It would seem wasteful to construct a branch line if you could collect all the traffic on the main line? I think that if the branch line would pay it would be a reasonable thing to construct it. It is all good country from Burren to Collarendabri.
398. Has that country a fair rainfall? Yes.
399. Then you favour the construction of a line from Narrabri to Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri? Yes; I think that the Collarendabri branch would pay.
400. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is much stock sent from this district to the meat-works on the Northern line to be frozen for export? Yes; a lot of stock goes from here.
401. Is that traffic likely to increase if the proposed railways are constructed? Yes; I think it will increase very much. They buy very heavily in this part of the country for the meat-works.
402. Do they go in for large stock there? Not very much; it is principally sheep country. They get their water almost entirely from wells.
403. With fair seasons there would be considerable consignments of fat stock from this district for export? Yes; except in times of drought. There are two men who are kept busy in this district buying for Richards and Son and for the Aberdeen Company.
404. How does the average clip of the district which would be served by the proposed railway compare with that of other parts of the Colony? Very favourably. The average weight of a fleece would be about 6½ lb.

405. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You say that you find the black soil here superior to the red? For grazing purposes.

A. H.
Farrand.

406. Do you find that the country on which no timber is growing is inferior to that on which timber is growing? The plain country is sweeter for grazing than the timbered country. Until the stock have eaten out the plain country they will not go to the timbered country.

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407. What sort of grass grows in the district? Trefoil is the principal herbage.

408. Which soil do you find best for cultivation—black or red? Very little of the black-soil country has been cultivated. I have not seen much cultivation in this district; farming here has only received an impetus within the last three years. As far as the country on the south side of the river is concerned, I would point out that it is proposed to construct a rabbit-barrier fence from Yarraldool, down by Comeby-chance, to Narrabri West, to shut out this scrubby land which is infested with noxious animals of all kinds. Rabbits are becoming very thick there, and we want to shut off that country as being useless, and only a trouble to the district.

409. Who is paying for the erection of that fence? It is being erected by the Government, and land-owners are subscribing. The people on the north side of the river are subscribing £2,000.

George Gregory, senr., farmer, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

410. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your place from Narrabri? It is 6 miles above the town.

411. What is the size of your holding? At the present time I hold about 324 acres of freehold.

412. How long have you been residing there? I have resided forty years in this district.

413. How much land have you under cultivation? About 35 acres at the present time. I sold the farm on which I had my largest area of cultivation.

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414. What has been the result of your farming? I grow wheat, barley, corn, and potatoes, and I keep a few sheep. On the average, I have lost one crop in twenty years, and I have got from 25 to 30 bushels of wheat to the acre each year. My other crops have been similar. We very seldom miss a crop. If we lose the early crop of corn we generally make it up with the late crop, and if we lose the late crop we generally make it up with the early crop.

415. What kinds of fruit do you cultivate? Apples, pears, peaches, grapes, nectarines, and nearly all descriptions of fruit.

416. Do all those fruits do well? Yes; this is a great fruit-growing district. I have seen the finest fruit grown here that I have ever seen in the Colony.

417. What kind of soil have you got? Some black soil and some chocolate soil; most of it is chocolate loam.

418. Do you find it all equally good? Yes; but the black soil is stronger and more durable than the chocolate soil, and it gives heavier crops.

419. Have you any distance along the route of the proposed line of railway? I have been to Walgett and Collarendabri. On the north side of the river the land is all good.

420. For what distance from the route of the proposed line? From the Namoi pretty well to the Thalaba it is nearly all good country. Nearer the river the soil is stronger and heavier than it is further out; but out on the plains there is as good agricultural land as you will find anywhere, if it is properly used.

421. To what distance along the route of the proposed line does the good country extend? I think pretty well to Walgett.

422. What proportion of the land would be fit for agriculture? I think at the very least a person might use two-thirds of that land for agriculture, and the balance of it would be fit for grazing. I should not like to undertake agriculture on the south side of the river, because I think that by the time I got the land ready to cultivate it would have cost £4 or £5 an acre, and it would not stand cropping for more than two or three years. It is a spewy kind of country, and that sort of country will never stand cropping for any length of time. In a wet season you can hardly go on it. There are patches of good country on the river bank on the south side; but they are very small.

423. What is the country like beyond Wee Waa and south of the route of the proposed railway? On the whole, it is inferior.

424. All the way to Walgett? Yes; pretty well.

425. How much of the land between Wee Waa and Walgett would be fit for agriculture, and how much for pastoral purposes? I do not think one-twentieth of the land would be fit for agriculture.

426. Is any of it useless, or would the whole of it be fit for pastoral purposes? Plenty of it is useless, unless you spend a lot of money on it. Without ringbarking it is altogether useless, and no one will take up the land to improve it.

427. Is there any good timber on the useless land? Not within a long distance of the river.

428. What kind of timber is there? Pine and ironbark; but the best timber has been picked out. The scrub is mostly brigalow, and it is very thick, and the ground is full of melon holes.

429. Do you think that the proposed railway would be self-supporting within a reasonable time? Yes, if it is taken on the north side of the river, but not if it is taken on the south side. It has been said that the line would have to be built on piles if it were taken on the north side of the river: but I think that a 4-foot embankment would carry the railway anywhere from Narrabri to Walgett, except through the creeks and gullies.

430. Would the construction of the proposed railway assist you in any way? No; it would be of no benefit to me.

Herbert Leigh Walker, auctioneer, Farmers' Union, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

431. *Vice-Chairman.*] What are the objects of the Farmers' Union? The farmers of the district join the union by paying a certain sum per annum, and the whole of their produce, or a fair proportion of it, is brought to the union sheds for sale by auction on Tuesdays and Fridays, and on other days of the week it is sold privately. There are two sheds in which the produce is stored. The returns are made up once a week, and Friday is pay-day. The average payments out for the last nine months have come to about £60 per week.

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432. How long has the union been in existence? Six or seven years.

433. Have agricultural operations progressed satisfactorily in the district during that time? They have progressed wonderfully during the last three or four years.

434.

- H. L. Walker. 434. Do you think the increase will be as rapid in the near future? More rapid.
- 18 May, 1900. 435. Are the farmers of the district, on the whole, progressive, and ready to adopt modern methods in agricultural operations? Yes. They have been going in extensively for machinery during the last two or three years. One farmer has invested £500 in machinery during the last three or four weeks.
436. Do many of your clients live further than 10 miles from Narrabri? Yes; I have sent stuff out 40 or 50 miles.
437. Have those who lived more than 20 miles from Narrabri been handicapped by the want of speedier means of transit? Yes.
438. Would the construction of a railway on the north side of the river lead to an improvement of conditions? I think that a railway on either side of the river would increase the prosperity of the district.
439. Then you differ from those who say that there is no good land on the south side of the river? I am speaking of the district about here.
440. What kinds of produce are brought in by the farmers week by week? We start our sales first with butter; then come eggs, bacon, vegetables—including cabbages, cauliflowers, pumpkins, potatoes, and other kinds—poultry, corn, chaff, and we shall shortly have bran and pollard to sell.
441. Is most of this produce sold for local consumption? Ninety-five per cent. of it is sold for local consumption. I am also doing a large turnover in wheat.
442. Is that in connection with the union? Apart from the union, and in connection with the union; but in connection with the farmers. The wheat is grown locally, and is sold for export.
443. What market do you expect to find for wheat if large areas are placed under crop? We can sell it in Walgett, Collarendabri, Pilliga, Millie, and the western districts.
444. I suppose any surplus would be sent to Newcastle or to Sydney? Yes. There has been a very large consumption of wheat here.
445. Can you supply wheat or flour to places further west than Walgett or Collarendabri? Not further than Walgett. My wheat has been carried mostly by Wright, Heaton, & Co., and Pigott, Martin. I have supplied them, and they have supplied the back country. I have sent wheat to Millie, Glen Roy, and all that district. Only yesterday I sent away very nearly a ton. We can grow the finest vegetables produced in the Colony in this district.
446. Can you beat the Chinese? The farmers here can beat the Chinese. Last year the Chinese had to come to us for vegetables. We have grown cauliflowers weighing as much as 26 lb., and cabbages weighing 28 lb.
447. Do you dispose of the whole of your stock by auction? Yes.

Burnett Morris Cohen, grazier, near Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

- B. M. Cohen. 448. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What area of land do you occupy? About 7,300 acres of conditional purchase, conditional lease, and freehold.
- 18 May, 1900. 449. Do you run sheep or cattle? Principally sheep, but I have a few cattle.
450. What have been the results of your operations? For the last five or six years things have been pretty bad; before that we had fair seasons. We have not been half stocked for the last six years.
451. That is on account of the drought? Yes.
452. Do droughts frequently occur? I have been here about fourteen years, and the seasons were fairly good up to within five or six years ago.
453. What would be the carrying capacity of the improved land? In a good season we could not overstock the country, and in a bad season we could not carry anything.
454. Take an ordinary season? About a sheep to 1½ acre.
455. How would the other station property there compare with yours? All the land on the north side of the river is about the same in quality.
456. What is the character of the country on the south side of the river? It is useless country; I know that to my cost. Last year I started about 3,200 sheep on the road to Coonabarabran. The drover told me that the country was good; but when he got about 20 miles up Bohina Creek he said there was no water further on. He had the sheep there for five weeks, and in that time I lost 1,800 through the rottenness of the grass. He brought me 1,400 back.
457. Is any of the land on the south side of the river suitable for agriculture? I did not see any that is. I went 20 miles up the creek, and I was quite satisfied; I did not want to go any further.
458. Your station is 25 miles from Narrabri? Yes.
459. Do you send your wool to Narrabri? I send it through Narrabri to Newcastle.
460. What does it cost you to send it to Narrabri? In good seasons, about 1s. per cwt., and in other seasons, from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per cwt.
461. Have you any knowledge of any other district? I think this would be as good a district as any in the Colony if it got the same seasons. I have been out on the Macintyre, and I had a small place at Werris Creek; but this country is better than the country at either of those places.
462. What is your idea of the country on the north side of the river for agriculture? I think that in a fair season the plain country will grow anything. I have not done any cultivation myself, but some of my neighbours have. They have got very good crops of hay. One of my neighbours has got a crop of hay each season for the last five years, notwithstanding the drought. Another man that I know only harrowed the ground and got a crop of hay.
463. If a railway were constructed to Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri, would the country through which it passed support a farming population? I think so, if the seasons were good; but the best of country is no good for agriculture if it does not get rain.
464. Have you been out as far as Walgett? I do not know much about the country more than 22 or 23 miles out in that direction.
465. Would the railway be much used for sending fat stock from Walgett or Collarendabri to the Sydney market, or to any other market? I am sure that it would.
466. Does much store stock travel from those places through Narrabri? Yes; a good deal.
467. Would store stock use a railway? No; because I do not think it would pay to send them by train; but, with fat stock, the sooner you get the animals to market the better.

468. If the railway were constructed, would there be a considerable increase in the traffic? I think so. As soon as there is any land thrown open for settlement lease north of Narrabri there are forty or fifty applicants for it. B. M. Cohen.
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469. Have you any knowledge of the leased land which will shortly be thrown open for selection? Yes; there is a lot of it within the 22 miles that I have spoken of.
470. Is it land which would attract settlement? Yes; it is very good land—timbered land and black-soil country. It is all cut up into areas of 600 acres or thereabouts, and if the line were kept on the north side of the river it would go through a lot of it.
471. Do you think that all that land will be taken up? I think so, judging from the way in which other land has gone.
472. What sized block would maintain a family, with mixed farming? A man would want about 2,000 acres, I think.
473. But a much smaller area if he went in for agriculture alone? Yes. I heard it said this morning that in a wet season wheat grows too rank on black soil; but it would not grow too rank for hay. I consider the country on the south side of the river useless, and there are very few settlers there.
474. *Mr. Watson.*] To take the line on the north side of the river would be to increase its length? Only very little. It will depend upon the position of the platforms as to whether people will be able to use the railway when it is built. Every one will want to get to the line at the nearest point.
475. Would you go in for agriculture to any extent if the line were made? I think I should.
476. How near would the line be to your property, if it were kept on the north side of the river? At one point it would go within half a mile of my land, and a platform on the travelling stock route would be 5 or 6 miles away. It would not pay to grow grain on my land now, because it would cost 6d. a bushel to send it to the railway station, and the carriage might come to as much as 7½d. and even 9d. a bushel.
477. Would it be an advantage to you to be able to get your fat stock away in small lots? Yes. At the present time you cannot afford to send away fewer than 500 sheep at a time, and they may all strike a bad market; but if you could send them in in small lots some of them would be sure to hit a good market. The country would be used to better advantage if stock could be sent away from it more frequently, and in smaller lots.
478. The Commissioners estimate that there will be a loss of about £13,000 a year on the working of the proposed lines;—would it be worth your while to guarantee a contribution towards getting rid of that deficiency? I do not see why the Government should come upon us for a guarantee when railways have been built in other parts of the Colony without them. If the people in the district through which other non-paying lines were run made any contribution to get rid of the deficiency I should be willing to do likewise, but not otherwise.
479. As a pure business transaction, would it be worth the while of the landowners here to make a contribution in order to obtain the line? If other landholders fell in with the arrangement I should not stand out.
480. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where do you generally get your supplies from? From Narrabri.
481. Not direct from Sydney or Newcastle? I used to get them direct, but I find it cheaper now to buy them in Narrabri. The Commissioners make a reduction to storekeepers for truck loads, and therefore the storekeepers can supply us more cheaply. A question was asked about growing grapes on black soil. At my place I have a few vines on black soil, and they do very well, although they are right out in the middle of the plain.
482. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you favour the construction of a line from Narrabri East to Walgett, or from Narrabri West to Walgett? I think the line should start from Narrabri East, because such a line would go through very good country, whereas a line from Narrabri West would go through bad country.
483. You would save something in carriage if the proposed railway were constructed;—do you not, then, think it fair and reasonable that you should be asked to contribute something towards the reduction of any deficiency on the working of the line? I do not agree to that; but if the other landholders fall in with the arrangement I shall also do so. What with one tax and another we are very nearly working for the Government.

Charles Alexander Ross, Member of the Local Land Board, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

484. *Mr. Watson.*] How far does the Local Land Board district extend from Narrabri? In an easterly direction it goes about half way to Boggabri, to a place called The Rock, and in a westerly direction to Come-by-chance, about 15 miles from Pilliga. C. A. Ross.
18 May, 1900.
485. Does it comprise a considerable area of the land which would be served by the construction of the proposed railway? Yes; it takes in two-thirds of it.
486. How would you describe the land in the direction of Walgett? On the north side of the river the land is of uniform quality almost the whole way. Here and there it is black-soil country, with occasional patches of red soil, and there are places where the ground is lightly timbered with coolabah, or heavily timbered with belar. On the south side of the river the country is sandy and very poor, for a distance of about 11 miles. Then on to Wee Waa there is a fringe of good country near the river, with an average width of about 2 miles. That country has all been alienated. The country to the south of it is sandy country, and heavily timbered, and the same description would apply to most of the country on that side to a little below Pilliga.
487. Would your description of the country on the northern side of the river apply to the country between Burren and Collarendabri? Yes; it is all similar country.
488. What is the carrying capacity of the black-soil and coolabah country? I managed a station on black-soil country for a period of twenty years, and I think that country is capable of carrying a sheep to an acre and a half. It has recently been carrying a sheep to an acre, but I think that is overstocking it. For thirteen years I carried a sheep to an acre and three-quarters in all seasons, but the country was very good.
489. Is most of the country out that way secured, or is any large proportion of it held under lease? A number of the leases are falling in now. Some of the land has already been cut up for settlement, while other leases which have been determined have not been gazetted yet. All the leases in the Central Division fall in this year.

- C. A. Ross.
18 May, 1900.
490. Will any considerable area of land become available for settlement? Yes; a large area.
491. What rent has been paid by the pastoralists? On first-class country the rental has varied from 3d. to 4d. an acre on the north side of the river between Narrabri and Collarenebri.
492. Do you expect the construction of the railway to result in an increase of cultivation in this district? I cannot speak on the subject of agriculture, because I have seen very little of it, though what I have seen has been fairly successful.
493. Would the railway be of use to stockowners in enabling them to get fat stock away? There would be a large increase in the fat stock traffic. No owner will drive fat stock now, when he can send them by train.
494. Would the line pick up fat stock from Queensland? The Queensland border is only 60 or 70 miles distant from Collarenebri, and you would get all that traffic there. At Walgett you would get the traffic from the Narran, the Culgoa, and the Birrie country, which is good fattening country.
495. Is that country used for large stock? No; it is nearly all sheep country, though it used to carry large stock.
496. I suppose that it is of advantage to save only a few miles in the travelling of fat stock? Yes; except in the very best of seasons stockowners seem to prefer to truck fat stock to market.
497. Would the line be of any advantage to starving stock? It would be of enormous advantage to the Walgett people at the present time in enabling them to get their starving stock away.
498. I suppose starving stock could only be sent away at reduced rates? That is so. A good deal has been said about timber. I was seven or eight years in the timber trade in Narrabri, and I think that the quality and value of the timber on the south side of the river has been overrated.
499. Do you mean that the good timber has been cut up? The best of the timber for a distance of 20 miles from Narrabri has been taken. I never found that there was any market for any of the timber outside the district.
500. Not even for ironbark? No, except for railway sleepers. I never sent any timber away, though I have imported all sorts of hardwood from Brisbane Water, and other places, for sale here.
501. Why did you not send timber away? The ironbark here is very little good for sawing, because there is so much waste in it, and the pine will soon be almost a thing of the past. It was a great mistake to allow it to be used for fencing in the first instance, and even now it is cut indiscriminately, without regard to the restrictions. I used to make protests, when I was running a sawmill, against people cutting immature timber which should have been allowed to grow.
502. Then you would not look upon timber as a probable source of revenue to a line on the south side of the river? I should not. I do not think it would be a source of revenue at all.
503. Would any considerable number of people be inconvenienced if the line were kept on the north side of the river? I do not see that anyone would be inconvenienced, except the people at Wee Waa. There is very little settlement on the south side of the river between Narrabri and Wee Waa.
504. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is it from Narrabri to the source of the timber supply? You cannot get any timber worth having within 20 miles. When I commenced sawing, in 1881, I could get timber within about 7 miles.
505. Twenty miles is rather a long way to haul timber? They are hauling timber 20 miles at present; but another 5 miles would make the distance too great. According to the regulation, they should not cut trees of less than 12 inches in diameter, but they do not keep to the regulation.
506. Is this timber cut on Crown lands? It is mostly cut in the forest reserves, and a special royalty is paid for it.

Edward Hart Wall, grazier, near Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

- E. H. Wall.
18 May, 1900.
507. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is Wollongabba from Narrabri? Eight miles. The proposed railway, if taken on the north side of the river, would go right through it.
508. What is the area of it? About 2,300 acres, and the area of the stud paddock is about 600 acres. I had other properties out there, but I sold them.
509. Do you know the country which would be served by the construction of the proposed railway? Yes; I have known it for many years.
510. What is its average carrying capacity? In a good season you could put on two sheep to the acre, and in other years about a sheep to an acre and a half. I think we could always carry a sheep to an acre and a half; but nearly all of us have overstocked, and have been carrying more than that. At the present time I have one and a quarter sheep to an acre, and, of course, I have very little grass in consequence. Until three or four months ago I had two sheep to the acre.
511. Do you agree with what has already been said about the land on the south side of the river? I know a good deal about that land, because for the last two or three years I have rented about 20,000 acres of it. About two and a half years ago I stocked it with cattle, but when I mustered, ten months ago, I was 325 head short, and I have only heard of two of them since. At the present time I have cattle starving, and I am selling them for whatever they will bring; but, although I am paying rent for the place that I speak of, and it is fenced, I would not put a beast on it. That property runs up Bohina Creek for a distance of about 15 miles, and a railway on the south side of the river would go through it.
512. Have you ever tried farming on any part of your holding? Some years ago we had a drought, but my brother, who has a place about 20 miles from here, told me to send four bags of wheat to his place, which he had sown, and which turned out to be one of the finest crops of wheat in the district. My brother put men on to cut it with reaping hooks, and he had the hay stacked up; but as he did not understand farming, the work was not done properly, and the result was that the whole stack rotted. Then last year, at Wollongabba, one of my men ploughed up a hard, dry patch of ground and sowed a crop of wheat in it, and I reaped about 30 tons of hay, which is in my shed now. I think that any part of the plain country would grow almost anything if there were rain. I have large oranges on my trees at Wollongabba at the present time.
513. Would you go in for agriculture if there were a railway? I cannot promise to do that, because I do not understand much about farming; but I would do a certain amount of cultivation. Last year I paid £860 for hay to save my stock, but it would not have cost me nearly so much to grow more hay than I bought. I intend, in the future, to grow a crop of hay, and to stack it away in the paddocks.
514. Where do you usually consign your fat stock? To Homebush and to Maitland.
515. Do you send any to Aberdeen? Not unless they come and buy from me.

516. Do you get your supplies locally? I buy some in Sydney and some here, but most of them here.
517. If the proposed railway were constructed, small settlers would be able to send away small consignments of fat stock at frequent intervals, which their distance from the railway at present precludes them from doing? Yes; if they had trucking-places nearer their holdings they could send away a truck load at any time.
518. That traffic would be a source of revenue to a railway? Yes; it would be of great advantage to a railway.
519. Do you regard the country out towards Walgett and Collarendabri as good grazing country? Yes; it is all splendid country. I think that a line should be constructed to Collarendabri. One witness spoke about a railway being a cheaper thing to make than a road. I think it would be nearly as cheap. I lived on the north side of the river for a time, but the road there was so heavy that we had to send out rations on a packhorse. On the south side of the river, however, people can always get along. I have property at Wee Waa, at Narrabri West, and at Narrabri, and though I would sooner lose £1,000 than have the railway go through my Wollongabba paddock, I think that the line should be kept on the north side of the river, and if it is kept on that side of the river it will go through my paddock. It has been said that a line on the north side of the river would be more expensive than a line on the south side; but if the line is taken on the south side of the river they will have to build two bridges for it, and that will cost nearly as much as it would cost to make a railway from here to Boolcarrol. At Bohina Creek the bridge would have to be nearly a quarter of a mile long. That is a great sandy creek over 200 yards wide, and a great force of water comes down it at flood-time. Then there would be another very expensive bridge to build at Wee Waa. It has been said that the country on the north side of the river is flooded at times; but I never saw it in such a state that a man could not ride from here to Boolcarrol. It is not the water that keeps people from travelling here; it is the sticky nature of the soil. No doubt the people about Wee Waa will give evidence in favour of the line being taken to Wee Waa, because that would suit them; but they would also be served by a line on the north side of the river. There are 30,000 or 40,000 acres of land on Gundemaine holding which are to be thrown open shortly.
520. Is that land which can be cut up into small farms? Yes. With mixed farming an industrious man could make a good living on 640 acres of that land, and there is no comparison between the land on the north side and the land on the south side of the river. I believe, too, that you have heard the truth about the timber. It is not a matter which should be considered at all.

E. H. Wail.
18 May, 1900.

Theodore Morath, saw-mill proprietor, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

521. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been here? I have been a resident of Narrabri since 1865, and a saw-mill proprietor since 1876.
522. What kind of timber do you generally use? Mostly pine; but some apple-tree and some iron-bark.
523. Where is your market? The local market. I have got price lists from Sydney, and I find that the price of Richmond River pine and of New Zealand pine is about the same as we sell our pine for. I have had letters from Newcastle to know what I could deliver pine at the railway station for; but I knew that it was of no use to make a quotation, because they could get it more cheaply down there.
524. Does your timber come from Government land or from private land? Most of it from Government land.
525. How far have you to cart it? From 20 to 25 miles out from Narrabri West, and from 15 to 20 miles from the foot of the mountains. Of course, you can get saplings and rubbish a little nearer.
526. What is the average size of the timber you get? They are not supposed to cut trees of less than a foot in diameter, and nine out of ten of the logs are from a foot to 1 ft. 3 in. in diameter.
527. Do you consider the small timber equal to the larger timber? No. In a very small tree the sapwood rots quickly.
528. Is ironbark still plentiful in the neighbourhood of Narrabri? Ironbark for sawing is very scarce, and we have to go a long way to get it. Most of it is very faulty, and we have to throw half of it away. I have logs in my yard now that have been there for three or four years, and they are not worth cutting up. A person who is not a practical man may go through the scrub and see a patch of timber that looks splendid; but you will find when you come to fell them that many of the trees are hollow. I have cut timber that was solid at the butt, and solid again 12 or 15 feet up from the ground, but hollow in between. In my opinion a dry season stops the growth of the trees, and the timber rots. Then rain comes, and the trees commence to grow again. Some people commenced to cut timber for a bridge here; but they had actually to buy timber in Singleton to finish the contract. There is no market for ironbark here, except for Government work. The ironbark that is good is very good. I have had timber from down the country; but it is not half as hard as our ironbark.
529. Is much improvement going on in Narrabri? Yes. When I first came to Narrabri it was a very small town, but it will be a very big town.
530. Are you kept pretty busy at the saw-mills? Sometimes; but the work is very irregular. Sometimes we have more than we can do, and at other times we have nothing to do at all. A lot of timber is sent to Moree and out that way from here.
531. Is there a plentiful supply of timber within 20 miles of the route of the proposed railway, on the same side of the river? There is no timber within 20 miles of that line. There were two mills out there, but I think they have been closed. Seven years ago my teams went out from the railway line to the country behind Molly, while the Wee Waa teams were working this way, until they finally met, so that there cannot be any timber worth cutting, except for railway sleepers. You cannot get good timber for other purposes anywhere but at a long distance from the river.
532. Is the timber good beyond Wee Waa? There is good timber beyond Pilliga.
533. Would the timber trade create traffic for the proposed railway? The proposed railway would not be of the slightest benefit to the timber trade, because we could not get timber any nearer to the line than it would be to Narrabri West. The scrub really runs in the direction of Baradine. If you made a railway there, you would get some revenue from the timber traffic for a year or two; but after that the timber would be cut out.

T. Morath.
18 May, 1900.

- T. Morath.
18 May, 1900.
534. Are you in favour of the construction of the proposed railway? I do not think its construction would affect me at all, because I would not get timber any cheaper.
535. Do you own land in the district? I own about 130 acres and some town allotments here, and I also hold a conditional purchase of about 100 acres on the Moree line. I have about 12 acres under cultivation in the town, to provide hay for my own use.
536. Do you find the soil productive? Yes; it grows a very good crop of wheat. I have had from 2½ to 3 tons of hay to the acre. I believe that the line will pay if it is taken through good country. Even if it does not pay it will increase settlement. If it is taken through barren country you cannot expect to get any benefit from it.
537. Do you think that, on the whole, the construction of the proposed line will benefit this district? Yes; it will benefit the district more than it will benefit the town. People living on the black-soil country find it very difficult to travel in wet weather, so that a railway would be of great convenience to them. Then, the summer months are very trying to women and children in this district, and if there were a railway they could get away to Armidale, or some cool district. Many people cannot stand the jolting of the coach. I do not consider that the country outside Narrabri and Moree is fit for a white family to live in during the hot weather. A railway would be of advantage to pastoralists, in enabling them to get their sheep away in a time of drought.

Charles Martin, forwarding agent, Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Martin.
18 May, 1900.
538. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been in business here? Seventeen years; ever since the railway came here.
539. How would you class the country between Narrabri and Walgett and Collarendabri, for pastoral purposes? It is good country. I think it is as good as any country, except the Liverpool Plains, and it compares very favourably with that country.
540. From what direction does traffic come to Narrabri? From Collarendabri and Walgett. The Collarendabri traffic comes in through Boolcarrol, or around by Burren.
541. What is the nature of the traffic from Walgett—fat stock? Yes. All the district that we are speaking about is sheep country; there are no cattle stations here.
542. Is there any considerable traffic from Narrabri into that district? Yes, especially for Walgett.
543. General merchandise is sent out there, I suppose? Yes.
544. Has that traffic materially increased during the seventeen years that you have been in business? Yes, very much. I followed the train from Murrurundi to Willow Tree, Quirindi, Tamworth, Gunnedah, and on to Narrabri, and I think there is more traffic now from Narrabri than there used to be from Murrurundi when the railway stopped there.
545. Do you think that there would be a similar increase of traffic if the proposed railway were constructed? I do not think that the increase would be so great, because there is not so much country beyond.
546. The line could not go further west than Collarendabri? There are no towns further on; it is all pastoral country.
547. Would the country between here and Walgett carry a good population if railway facilities were given? Yes; on the Pian Creek side, from the Namoi right out to Collarendabri.
548. What is your opinion of the country on the north side of the river as compared with that on the south side? There is no comparison possible. The country on the south side is scrubby country, until you get to Come-by-chance, when it begins to open out. Below Wee Waa, and out towards Pilliga, the country is covered with coolabah, pine, and a good deal of ironbark.
549. Which line would get most traffic—one from Narrabri East to Walgett, or one from Narrabri West to Walgett? A line from Narrabri East, because it would go through more settlement.
550. And through more land fit for settlement? Yes. There is no good land between Wee Waa and Narrabri, except for occasional patches, whereas, on the north side of the river, the whole of the country is good, and all of it is settled.
551. Would it carry a large population? I am sure that it would.
552. Will the Crown land that is shortly to be thrown open for settlement be selected? Yes; it will be rushed.
553. When the proposed line is constructed will there be a material increase in the traffic of the district? Yes.
554. Do you endorse what has been said about the desirability of making the proposed railway? Yes.
555. Does the Collarendabri traffic come through Wee Waa to Narrabri? No; it comes through Boolcarrol.
556. *Vice-Chairman.*] At all times? Carriers who lived at Wee Waa would go through there and out by Burren, but 90 per cent. of the traffic would come through Bulyeroi and Boolcarrol.
557. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do the supplies that you send to Walgett and Collarendabri come from? From Sydney, Newcastle, and Maitland, and flour from Tamworth. Most of the goods come from Sydney. A lot of wool is sent from this district to Newcastle.
558. *Mr. Watson.*] Does it afterwards go to Sydney, or is it shipped direct from Newcastle to England? It goes to England. I think that all the wool-growers who ship direct send to Newcastle.
559. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is sold in the Colony goes to Sydney? Yes.

SATURDAY, 19 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Narrabri, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

John Bissett Brodie, station manager, Boolcarrol, sworn, and examined:—

560. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is Boolcarrol station from Narrabri? It is 30 miles north-west from Narrabri. If the line is made on the northern side of the Namoi it will go through Boolcarrol. J. B. Brodie.

561. What is the extent of the holding? Roughly speaking, 100,000 acres.

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562. What is its average carrying capacity? That depends entirely on the seasons. In very good seasons we carry a sheep to an acre and a half, and in particularly good seasons even more; but in seasons like the present we cannot carry a sheep to 20 acres.

563. How much of your holding is secured land, and how much is leased land? There are about 50,000 acres secured, and 50,000 acres leased.

564. What difficulties do you labour under at the present time in the matter of road carriage? Our wool and other traffic all comes or goes to Narrabri, and we labour under no exceptional difficulties, except when floods or droughts make travelling almost impossible.

565. Where do you send your wool? *Via* Narrabri West to Newcastle, and from there it is shipped to England.

566. What are your views with respect to the proposal to connect Walgett and Collarendabri by rail with Narrabri? My impression is that the best line would be obtained by going out from Narrabri West to Wee Waa, crossing the river there, and then going along the Pian Creek road until you come to the point where it is proposed that the Collarendabri line should branch off from the Walgett line.

567. The witnesses yesterday were almost unanimous that the land on the south side of the river was not fitted for settlement; but that on the north side there was already a considerable amount of settlement, and a considerable area of good land suitable for agriculture? I do not know about the land on the north side of the river being suitable for agriculture; but it is the best pastoral land. If there is ever to be settlement on the southern side of the river it will have to be small settlement, and there will never be small settlement there without a railway. The timber which grows on that side might enable small holders to get enough capital to commence agriculture with, but whether they would make a success of agriculture it is hard to say.

568. What leads you to the opinion that the railway should be taken on the southern side of the river? Because on the northern side of the river a vast area of the country is subject to floods.

569. Is it all flooded country on the northern side of the river? Yes, pretty well; from Greenbar to Kelaher's.

570. How far do the flood-waters go out from the river on the northern side, in an ordinary flood? All the country is flooded. I understand that it is suggested that a railway station might be put somewhere on the Tulladunna Creek; but there is not enough high ground there for a railway station. There is only a narrow piece of land on the bank of the creek which is above even ordinary floods, so that there would not be enough dry ground for trucking-yards.

571. Would it be any great disadvantage to Wee Waa if the railway were taken 3 miles away from it? Yes; the Wee Waa people in that case would require to have a bridge made across the river in order to give them access to the railway station.

572. There is a bridge across the Namoi at Wee Waa now? Yes; but it is on the road to Collarendabri, whereas the railway station site at Tulladunna is in quite a different direction.

573. To what depth is the land on the northern side of the river covered by water in an ordinary flood, and how long is it before the water gets away? One of the chief anabranches of the river breaks out just above Tulladunna. We have to remove our stock as soon as we hear that the water has broken over at Gunnedah, and to take them about 6 miles towards the head station before we can consider them safe.

574. Does it take long for the water to go off the land again? Sometimes the water remains on the land for weeks, and at other times for only a few days. In a very wet year, like 1890, the flooded country is under water for months.

575. What is the average depth of the water on the flooded country? In many places it is up to the tops of the fences. Near Tulladunna the water would be about half a mile wide and about 5 feet deep in a flood; but all the country is more or less under water for miles back towards Greenbar.

576. Has Boolcarrol any business connection with Wee Waa? Very little; all our business is done with Narrabri at the present time.

577. The Departmental route keeps the line back from the river on the northern side;—looking at the plan do you not think that on that route the railway would be kept out of the reach of flood-waters? It would be on dry land 20 miles out from Narrabri East, though, if there were heavy rains in the ranges, the creeks would break over and flood even a part of that country.

578. After you get 20 miles out, for what distance would the line go through flooded country? For 11 or 12 miles, until it reached Pian Creek, though there are patches of high country here and there.

579. On the southern side of the river, is the land free from flood as far as Wee Waa? Yes; Wee Waa is the natural capital of the district out there. Before the railway came to Narrabri Wee Waa was the recognised capital of the whole district, because of its central position. The roads diverge from there in all directions, and the Police Magistrate used to live there. I think that near Wee Waa the land is better adapted for a railway station than any of the land on the northern side of the river. In my opinion

J. B. Brodie. opinion the Railway authorities could not find a suitable railway-station site on the northern side of the river, opposite Wee Waa. Roads go out from Wee Waa to Narrabri, Pilliga, Pian Creek, Collarendabri, Boolcarrol, and Moree.

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580. *Mr. Watson.*] Whichever route is taken, there will be some flooded country to go through? Yes; but there is more flooded country on the northern side of the river than on the southern side. Wee Waa will always be approachable in any season, whereas we have many seasons when a station on the northern side of the river, near Wee Waa, would not be approachable, unless high viaducts were constructed to give access to it. Mr. Surveyor Little proposed bringing the railway within 2 miles of Boolcarrol head station, and he thought that he could get the line from there through to Pian Creek; but in high floods that country would all be under water. A good many of the settlers there have now in times of flood to remove their stock on to country belonging to Boolcarrol. The higher patches of land were purchased very early, because they afford safety to the sheep. They are box ridges, and were bought by Mr. Moseley when he owned Boolcarrol. My brother has selections down towards Pian Creek, and there is not an acre in his place where the water is not over the sheeps' backs in flood-time. A selector named Hardy, whose land lies close to the route of Mr. Little's proposed line, has not an acre of dry ground in anything like high floods. His stock would have to come on to our land then.

581. *Vice-Chairman.*] Have you to cross the flooded country to get into Wee Waa from your place? Yes; we should have to cross a good deal of it.

582. But you have stated that Wee Waa would always be approachable? I mean by the railway. There would be no stoppage of railway traffic if the line were taken to Wee Waa, though during floods Wee Waa would not be approachable from the northern side of the river.

583. *Mr. Watson.*] Would a station at Wee Waa suit the people to the west and to the south? Yes. Wee Waa would suit them as well as any other place. If a station is made at Wee Waa the Boolcarrol wool and sheep will have further to travel to it than to a station at Tulladunna; but once the wool was on the drays the extra distance would not mean much. Our nearest distance to the proposed railway would be 9 miles if the line kept on the northern side of the river, whereas from Wee Waa we are distant about 12 miles by the direct route, or about 15 miles if we had to go round by the bridge. I think that a station at Wee Waa would suit the district better than a station at any other place.

584. *Vice-Chairman.*] If the line were taken on the south side of the river, and close settlement took place on the north side, the settlers on the north side would be shut off from railway communication? Yes, in times of flood; but at other times they could go either to Wee Waa or to Narrabri.

585. Could the river be crossed between Wee Waa and Narrabri? Yes; there are one or two points at which it could be crossed.

586. Would a railway on the north side of the river attract more traffic than a railway on the south side? I do not think there would be much difference.

587. You think that what traffic would go to one line would go to the other? I think that most of the traffic from the country between Narrabri and Wee Waa would come to Narrabri, unless it could get to a railway station at some nearer point on the proposed line. If there were a bridge there would be no difficulty in getting across from the north side to a railway station on the south side.

Charles Wall, hotelkeeper and grazier, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

C. Wall.

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588. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you resided long in this district? I have known the district nearly thirty years, and I have been living in it for twenty-two years.

589. Do you think the proposed railway should be taken on the northern or on the southern side of the Namoi as far as Wee Waa? I think there is far better country on the northern side of the river than there is on the southern side. The land on the northern side is all rich land, and is suitable either for agriculture or grazing. There is very little flooded country there, though there are a few swamps. I think that the land on the northern side of the river would support ten times as many people as the land on the southern side would support. The land on the southern side is scrubby country, only fit for wallabies, except for a few strips along the river, and it is more subject to floods than the land on the northern side.

590. Does the water go out any great distance from the river in flood-time? In a very heavy flood like that of 1890 it goes out a long way; but you can always ride through it, and it soon runs off. I rode from Narrabri to Moree in a day and a half in 1890, when the flood was at its highest, and in no place was the water up to the horse's belly. You do not get on to any flooded country until you get below Tulladunna.

591. What is the country like between Wee Waa and Collarendabri? Until you get out a little from the river the country is pretty low. The ridgy parts are high country.

592. Is the land good there? Yes. All the country from the Namoi to the Mehi is good land. I have been over all of it.

593. Is the rainfall sufficiently regular out about Burren to encourage men to go in for agriculture there? There is not much difference between the rainfall there and the rainfall here. We have grown crops down on the plains close to Greenbar. Last year we got a very fine crop. The first crop that we sowed was the finest I have ever seen. That wheat was grown out on a plain which, according to Mr. Brodie, is flooded country; but I have never seen it flooded. I have heard of sheep being shifted away from the river frontage on the other side of Wee Waa, but I have never heard of sheep being drowned on the country Mr. Brodie was referring to. We never had any sheep drowned there, and we never had to shift our sheep.

594. Where is your place? This side of Greenbar. The company had sheep through all those paddocks in 1890, but none were drowned. A few days after the rain ceases all the water is gone, except what remains in the swamps, and you could ride through them.

595. Would you say that the country from Burren to Walgett is fair country? All of that country is very fair. On the south side of the river, however, the country is not good, though down by Come-by-chance it opens out a little, and you get away from the scrub.

Albert Robert Stafford, storekeeper, and saw-mill and flour-mill proprietor, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

596. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How do you think the country on the north side of the river compares with that on the south side? I endorse Mr. Wall's comparison. The floods on the north side of the river are not so great as those on the south side, and the land on the north side is very much superior to that on the south.

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597. Does the good country extend for any considerable distance from the route of the proposed railway? On the north side the country is all good.

598. For 20 miles? Yes.

599. And on the south side? A narrow fringe close to the river is very good; but the rest of the country is scrubby and useless.

600. What about the timber on the south side? I can speak about the timber, because I have been running a sawmill here for four years, and I have cut about 80,000 feet a month. Ninety per cent. of the pine which I have cut has come from the mountains to the north of Narrabri. I can obtain logs from there more cheaply, and of a better quality, than from the south side. The nearest good timber to Narrabri, on the south side of the river, would be about 20 miles from Narrabri, and about the same distance from any point on the proposed line from Narrabri to Wee Waa. The pine there is just as near to Gunnedah or Boggabri as to Narrabri, so that there is no chance of its being sent from Wee Waa. Teams have gradually gone back from the different railway stations, until now the good timber is about the same distance from each of them.

601. Is the supply nearly exhausted? It is practically exhausted within 20 miles.

602. Would the construction of the proposed railway enable you to procure timber more easily? No, because the timber is nearer Narrabri than Wee Waa, or any point on the proposed line between Narrabri and Wee Waa. There is no timber beyond Wee Waa. With regard to ironbark, I have a mill 20 miles from Narrabri, out in the ironbark country. I have been forced to put a mill there, because of the great waste in haulage if ironbark is sent in in the rough. We consider that we lose 30 per cent. of every log that we cut.

603. From defects in the timber? Yes. That timber costs 17s. per 100 feet on the railway at Narrabri, and the timber at Singleton costs 12s. on the railway there; so that it is impossible to export ironbark from Narrabri to other places along the line.

604. You can only cut ironbark for local use? Yes; and ironbark could not be used in this district for building purposes, even if it were the same price as pine, because it is subject to destruction by white ants.

605. I thought ironbark was exempt from the ravages of white ants? On the plains it is almost impossible to keep them out, except from pine. There is no possibility of an export trade in timber from either Narrabri or Wee Waa.

606. What is your opinion about the proposal to construct a railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri? I think such a line would be very successful, and should induce close settlement. There can be no doubt about the quality of the land through which it would pass, both for agriculture and for grazing. Between Narrabri and Wee Waa there is a very large area of land to be thrown open for settlement, and I think that that land will be settled upon very closely, and will be used for agriculture. I think it will be taken up in small areas.

607. What do you call a small area? From 640 acres to 1,000 acres. I think it will be very easy for a man to make a good living by agriculture on 640 acres on the north side of the river, if he is close to a railway. A wheat crop only occupies the ground for four or five months of the year, and during the balance of the time the farmer could run as many sheep on his holding as he could carry on the whole area, if he did not cultivate. I am farming 640 acres just outside the town, and I found last year that I could carry as many sheep when I farmed the land as I could without farming at all.

608. In what direction is your farm? It is about 3 miles south from Narrabri.

609. Then you are already well served by the railway? Yes. Mr. Harper informed the Committee that there was no grain grown at Narrabri; but that is not so. About three years ago we had to import seed; but this year I estimate that we have grown 100,000 bushels of wheat, and I anticipate that next year we shall obtain just double that quantity. This wheat is grown on land similar to that through which a railway on the northern side of the river would pass. It costs very little to put that land under cultivation. It can be ploughed for from 2s. to 2s. 6d. an acre. I am having my land ploughed under contract for 2s. an acre.

610. What do you pay for ploughing, sowing, and all other operations, up to harvesting? It costs me 5s. or 6s. an acre for everything, including seed. The ploughing costs me 2s. an acre, I finding the plant; the seed costs me 2s. 6d. an acre, and harrowing 1s. an acre. The cost of harvesting is very difficult to estimate; but I would put it down as 5s. an acre, on the average, for everything, including bagging.

611. With what yield? With our average yield of 25 bushels to the acre.

612. Then the whole of your operations would cost 10s. 6d. an acre? Yes.

613. Do you think 25 bushels is a fair average yield for the country on the north side of the river? I think that it would be a low average. Up to three years ago the average size of the areas cultivated was not more than 20 or 30 acres; but now we have several farmers who are cultivating areas of 300, 400, and 500 acres. They are mostly cultivating on country similar to that on the north side of the river.

614. What is the average size of the holdings about here? From 100 to 200 acres.

615. Are the farmers able to get a fair living on holdings like those? Yes; but not by growing wheat. They live largely by growing vegetables and small produce, such as is sold by the Farmers' Union. They are all close to the town. If people lived any distance away from the railway they could not go in for wheat-growing. The country here is so good for grazing that unless it is made easy for people to go in for agriculture they will continue to use their land for grazing purposes.

616. What is a fair distance from a railway at which to grow wheat? Any distance from which a man may go to the railway station and back again to his home in a day.

617. *Vice-Chairman.*] What market would the agriculturists of this district have for their produce if they went in extensively for agriculture? There would be a local market out in the west as far as the railway would take their produce. All the flour that my mill can turn out would go that way; any surplus production would no doubt go to Newcastle for export. It has been stated that the Railway Commissioners estimate that there will be a loss of £13,000 a year on the construction of the proposed railway.

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railway. In my opinion, if the country is occupied by small settlers between here and Wee Waa that will give a very large return to the line. The Railway Commissioners say that they do not anticipate much agricultural development in this district; but I consider that they have not allowed enough for agricultural traffic. If the line were taken on the north side of the river, and closer settlement followed, a great part of the estimated loss in the working would be made up by the traffic within 30 miles of Narrabri, whereas if the line is taken on the south side of the river there will be no traffic within that distance. Mr. Harper also stated that the country from Narrabri to Walgett on the south side of the river was as good as the country between Narrabri and Moree, but it certainly is not as good. A witness stated yesterday that a farmer should be able to make £1,000 a year by cultivating his land. Well, men have been making nearly that sum by pastoral pursuits, so that there is hardly any inducement to go in for agriculture under present conditions.

618. How far west from Wee Waa is the rainfall sufficiently good for the prosecution of agricultural operations? I think that nearly all the land as far as Walgett and Collarendabri is suitable for agriculture; but the rainfall becomes 3 or 4 inches less as you go west.

619. Is it more than 20 inches right through? I believe so. In this district the best rain comes just when the crops want it. I have been here for seventeen years, and I have only known of one failure during that time. Three or four persons have experimented with the black soil country during the last year or two. A man named Hunt harrowed in 40 acres of ground last year, and his return was about 36 bushels to the acre. Two other people, named Dickson, have had 110 acres under cultivation in black soil country, and they sent nearly 190 tons of chaff to Sydney. Then, a man named Watson, living a little further out than Wee Waa, had 40 acres under cultivation last year. I wanted to sell him a binder, but he said that the wheat was 6 feet high, and would not go through a binder. He estimated it at $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons to the acre. This year he has put in 100 acres, and he says if that is successful, he will put in 1,000 acres.

620. Is that land subject to floods? It is ordinary, black-soil country.

621. Was it timbered country? I think not; it is plain country. People were induced to cultivate that country because of the cheapness with which it can be cultivated. Cultivation improves the ground, and, even if the crop is a failure, you get something to feed the stock on. If the railway were taken on the south side of the river, nearly all the country on the north side would be cut off from railway communication, and consequently people would, to a great extent, be prevented from growing produce, because of the difficulty of getting it to market.

Andrew Brown, farmer, near Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

A. Brown.
19 May, 1900.

622. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is your farm near the route of the proposed railway? No; it is 9 miles from it. I am closer to the Moree line.

623. Do you cultivate a large area? At the present time I am cultivating about 130 acres.

624. What is the area of your holding? 1,096 acres.

625. Are you growing wheat? Yes. In 1897 I obtained 28 bushels of wheat to the acre.

626. Had you the same area under cultivation then? No; I had a smaller area under cultivation at that time. I have been increasing my cultivation every year. In 1898 I only got 14 bushels to the acre, because the season was a very dry one, and last year I only got 16 bushels to the acre.

627. Do you consider such crops profitable? Yes.

628. What is your opinion of the country along the route of the proposed line? I have been through the country to Wee Waa, and as far as Walgett, but not along the route of the proposed line. I consider that that country is good country.

629. Is it similar to the country that you are cultivating? Part of the country which I am cultivating is similar to that between Narrabri and Walgett.

630. If the proposed railway is constructed, will people go in for cultivation to any large extent? Yes.

631. Do you think that the land is suitable for wheat-growing? Yes.

632. Would you extend your agricultural operations? Under existing circumstances I intend to increase my area of cultivation, and no doubt the proposed railway, if constructed, would give me a larger market out Walgett way.

633. How many acres in the district we are speaking of would be sufficient to support a family? 640 acres—if the land were used partly for farming and partly for grazing.

634. Which do you consider the best soil in this district? I believe that the black soil is a lot the stronger, and far heavier crops have always been obtained from the heavy black soil than from any other soil.

635. Does black soil stand a drought as well as chocolate soil? Yes, with me.

636. Do you think that the Crown land would be taken up for agricultural and pastoral purposes if the proposed railway were made? I do.

637. Do you endorse generally the evidence which was given yesterday? Yes; generally speaking, I endorse Mr. Stafford's evidence. I have been a carrier, and have carried from Walgett and from Collarendabri. I consider Mr. Stafford's description of the ironbark timber in the district a very true one. I endorse what he has said about the waste in an ironbark log.

John Lehaine, junr., grazier, near Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

J. Lehaine,
junr.
19 May, 1900.

638. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is your holding from the route of the proposed railway? It would be about 5 miles from the proposed railway if the line were taken on the north side of the river.

639. What is your opinion of the proposal into which the Committee are inquiring? The country on the north side of the river, commencing about 7 miles out, has been surveyed in blocks of about 600 acres. It is good grazing land and is suitable for farming, some of it being plain country, and some of it country which is timbered with box and rosewood. I have grown barley, vegetables, grape vines, and fruit trees on my land. I have been living in the vicinity of the route of the proposed line since 1880, and I know the country well on both Edgeroi and Boolcarroi holdings. The country between Gunnidgera Creek and the Namoi is more heavily flooded than is the country on the north side of the Gunnidgera Creek. From my place to Wee Waa is 17 miles; but I have to go on sufferance through private land, and in the winter time,

time, if it is wet, I cannot get there with sheep. If the railway were taken on the south side of the river I would send my stock to Narrabri to be trucked, rather than send them to Wee Waa. I know the country on the south side of the river well, having, in 1898, taken up about 4,000 acres, which I considered picked land, and for which I paid £2 a section under annual lease. I had 4,000 sheep there for a time, but I left with only 2,400, which I trucked to New England. Most of that country is sandy, and the cost of clearing the best of it would be from £2 to £5 an acre. Even then it will not last long, as there is very little soil. I do not own land in either Narrabri or Wee Waa.

J. Lehaine,
junr.
19 May, 1900.

640. What is the area of your holding? 9,400 acres. My father and I were partners, and we divided a holding of over 13,000 acres. The division was made in 1894. In 1897 I sheared 27,151 sheep, and sold 4,848. In 1898 I sheared 6,324 sheep and sold 2,000, and in 1899 I sheared 7,837 sheep, and sold 858 sheep and 130 bales of wool.

641. Where do you send your fat stock, as a rule? To Sydney; but I very often sell to the Aberdeen works, and to Mr. Richards, of Riverstone.

642. Would the construction of the proposed railway facilitate the sending away of small consignments of live stock? Yes. When I send sheep away I send nine or ten truck loads; but if the railway were nearer to me I should send two or three truck loads.

643. Would it be an advantage to many people to be able to send away small consignments? Yes; it would be an advantage to everybody. Farmers could send away half a truck load of sheep or pigs or other stock, at any time, if they were close to a railway.

644. Where the route of the proposed railway cuts the main stock route—about 23 miles from Narrabri—is the land well out of the reach of floods? Yes.

645. You are of opinion that if there were a railway station at Wee Waa it would be difficult for people living out towards Boolcarrol to send stock there to be trucked, in times of flood? Yes. They would have more difficulty in trucking their stock at Wee Waa than in trucking at a station on the northern side of the river, particularly if yards were at the place where the line crosses the main stock route, and it would suit people north-west of Boolcarrol well.

John Riddle, Member of the Local Land Board, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

646. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you resided in the district long? Very nearly thirty-three years.

647. Can you offer any opinion as to the desirability of constructing the proposed railway;—which side of the river do you think it should be taken? I prefer the northern route, as passing through better country than a line on the south side of the river would pass through. The country on the north side of the river is first-class agricultural land—good wheat-growing country. Some of the best wheat-growing land we have is black-soil country. I think, too, that a line on the north side of the river would keep mostly on high ground.

J. Riddle,
19 May, 1900.

648. What would be the effect of the construction of a railway upon production, and, consequently, upon traffic? I think that a line on the north side of the river would get a great deal more traffic than a line on the south side. On the south side of the river there would be no traffic at all. It is nothing but a dense scrub between Narrabri and Wee Waa. I think that a railway to Wee Waa would be very valuable.

649. Do you think that the country is sufficiently good to justify the construction of a railway? Yes; the country on the northern side of the river.

650. Do you think the construction of a railway from Burren to Collarendabri is justifiable? Yes.

651. Is the land likely to be largely placed under cultivation if a railway is constructed? I think so, within a short time.

652. What is it that prevents immediate development? If there were a railway I think the land would be opened up by agriculture. People are going in for agriculture now to some extent, although they are so far from a market that the cost of carriage is very great.

653. Are the larger landholders around Narrabri going in for agriculture themselves, or are they letting out the land to others who desire to farm it? I think there is a tendency that way. For years to come the production from the country on the south side of the river, between Narrabri and Wee Waa, will be nothing. I have been living in the country that we are speaking of ever since 1867. I was living on Gundemaine in 1870, during the floods. The proposed railway would go through part of that land.

654. It has been stated that the country between Greenbar and Kelahor's is subject to flood? There is not very much flooded country there. In a very high flood the river sometimes spreads out a little, but the floods are not serious.

655. Would the floods interfere with the trucking of stock? Only at times, when travelling would be altogether impossible. After you pass Wee Wee the line goes through country which I saw under water seven or eight times in one year. By adopting the northerly route you escape that country.

656. Have you cultivated any of the black-soil? Yes; and I find it very good soil for wheat.

657. Are you cultivating plain country? It is black, tenacious clay—myall country.

658. Has your experiment turned out well? Very well, indeed. The land grows splendid crops of hay and good crops of grain. It is more difficult to work than the red soil, but it lasts longer, and it will hold moisture longer.

659. Are crops more frequently burnt off on black soil than on red soil? No; not so frequently. My experience is that the black soil country will grow wheat when the crops are burnt off the red soil.

660. Which soil lasts the better under cropping? The black soil. I think you could get crops from the black soil for thirty years. Recently a considerable area of land on Edgeroi has been resumed, and has been cut up into small holdings.

661. Since 1895? Yes. The northern route passes through part of that land. The only recommendation that the southern route has is the existence of timber on the south side of the river; but there is not very much timber between Narrabri and Wee Waa; it is further west and south-west, a long way out from the line. As a matter of fact, the northern route would be nearer the timber; but within a year or two there will be no timber at all within many miles of Narrabri.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Narrabri West, at 2:45 p.m.]

John Gately, storekeeper, saw-mill proprietor, and Mayor of Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Gately.
19 May, 1900.
662. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the district? Nearly twenty years.
663. How would you compare the country on the north side of the river with that on the south side of the river, first, with regard to its agricultural and pastoral capacities, and, secondly, with regard to its liability to flooding? The land on the northern side of the river is better pastoral country than that on the southern side; but I think that the southern side of the river is more suitable for agriculture than is the land on the north side of the river. So far as I know, the land on the south side of the river, along the route of the proposed line, is entirely free from flooding, while I am given to understand that the land on the north side of the river is greatly subject to floods, and more particularly near the site of the proposed railway station, opposite Wee Waa. I believe, too, that the land on the northern side of the river has already been alienated, while that on the south side of the river is pretty well all Crown land. If the railway were to be taken on the south side of the river, its construction would create a great deal of settlement.
664. On which side of the river is there the more settlement now? On the south side of the river.
665. It has been stated that country on the south side of the river has been thrown open for settlement, and has not been taken up; what is the reason for that? I think that the areas offered were too large.
666. What was the average size of them? Some of them were about 20,000 acres in extent; they were quite unsuitable for small settlers.
667. Has cultivation been carried on to any extent on the south side of the river? To a very fair extent at the Wee Waa end, but not to a great extent at this end, though 4 miles from here a 20-acre farm yielded 80 tons of hay last season.
668. Is it a fact that the good land on the south side of the river is confined to a narrow strip which follows the course of the river? No; in my opinion there is better land 6, 7, and 10 miles from the river than along the river bank.
669. What is the width of the good land on the south side of the river? In some places the good land is wider than it is in other places, because here and there the sand-beds run right into the river.
670. Is the land on the south side of the river more heavily timbered than that on the north side? Yes. Some of the finest ironbark and pine in the Colony grows on the south side of the river.
671. Is it not necessary to go more than 20 miles to get good timber now? No; we are getting good timber within 7, 8, and 10 miles. Of course, there is timber 20 and 30 miles out, but all the good timber within that distance has not been cut out.
672. What is the average diameter of the pine logs that are cut within 6 or 10 miles of the river? From 10 to 15 inches.
673. What is the character of the ironbark country which you go through? It is very fair. Of course, the best of the ironbark is being cut out, but there is plenty of it out in that direction. I think that about 200 men are getting their living in connection with the timber industry now.
674. Is the ironbark suitable for railway sleepers? Yes: we are sending sleepers from here to Warialda, and all up the Northern line.
675. Is there enough softwood on the south side of the river to give traffic to a railway? Yes; there is sufficient pine and other timber to give traffic to a railway, in connection with building operations out west.
676. Can you find any market for your timber down south? I have often been asked to quote prices, but I have sufficient trade here. I send most of my timber to Moree.
677. The route on the northern side of the river cuts the main stock route from Boolcarrol, 22 miles out from Narrabri;—if the railway were constructed on the south side of the river, would stock continue along that route to Wee Waa, and be trucked there? Mr. Thompson said that he would go to Wee Waa, because in wet weather he could not get his stock to the station on the north side of the river.
678. Can they get to Wee Waa from Boolcarrol when they could not get to a station on the northern route? In the evidence which he gave before the Railway Commissioners he said that he could get to Wee Waa at any time.
679. *Mr. McFarlane.*] It has been stated in evidence that the ironbark on the south side of the river is of a very inferior character, and that only short lengths of it are suitable for mill purposes, because it is pipey;—is that a fact? I do not think so. We are supplying the Railway Construction Branch at the present time with timber which is very good. We are also sending piles to Warialda for them.
680. It has also been stated that it is subject to the attacks of white ants? I never heard of it.
681. Is the country on the southern side of the river very heavily timbered? In places it is heavily timbered.
682. Would it be costly to clear it for agriculture? Not very costly. I have made application for 200 acres, and I am willing to clear it and to cultivate it.
683. Do you consider it better for agricultural purposes than is the land on the north side of the river? Yes.
684. What sort of soil is it? Red and chocolate, loamy soil. A great deal of it is of a sandy nature.
685. Have you had much experience in agriculture? A good deal.
686. Which is the better for agricultural purposes, the black soil or the chocolate soil? I think the chocolate soil. I do not believe in the black soil to any great extent.
687. Which stands the drought the better? The chocolate soil. The black soil opens up too much in dry seasons.
688. Have you had any experience in cultivating the black soil here? No; but a few years ago Mr. Buchanan cultivated a large paddock on the other side of the river, and I am sure that the experiment was a failure.
689. What crops would the land on the south side of the river be best adapted for? For wheat and for oats.
690. Would the construction of a railway from Narrabri to Walgett open up a large area of land for agriculture? I think so.
691. Do you think that when the land in the district is thrown open for settlement it will be applied for for farms? I think so. On the south side of the river the land is nearly all in the hands of the Crown, and it may be alienated at any time. I have no doubt that if the railway were taken on that side of the river

river people would take up the land there; but I do not know that there is an acre on the north side of the river which has not been alienated. The line on the north side of the river would run through Killarney holding, which is already accommodated by the Moree line. It would also run through Edgeroi holding, and that station, too, is accommodated by the Moree line. There may be a few settlers on the northern side of the river; but the construction of a railway there would not accommodate very many; whereas, on this side of the river, if you include Wee Waa, it would be a convenience to 1,000 people, excluding the population of Narrabri West. Then, again, on the south side of the river, the land is always free from floods, and you can get good timber very close to the route of the proposed line. I believe that there is splendid timber within 10 miles of it. You also save 10 miles by keeping on the south side of the river. If the line is taken on the north side of the river people living beyond Wee Waa will have 10 miles further to send their produce for all time. The 10 miles that I speak of are made up of seven miles additional construction, and the 3 miles between Narrabri and Narrabri West. The people of Pilliga say that they will patronise the railway if it come to Wee Waa, but that if it go on the northern side of the river they will not use it because the rates will be too high. I am satisfied that if the railway is kept on the south side of the river there will be a good many settlers there before very long. I have it on good authority that there is some splendid land out at the back where the timber-getters have been. Men accustomed to agriculture say that 10 or 12 miles out there is some of the finest land you can get in the Colony. Then, at Narrabri West, there are all the conveniences for a junction station. The people who should really have a say in this matter are the people of Wee Waa, and the people west of Wee Waa, not the people of Narrabri or Narrabri West. I would also point out that the railway-bridge over the Namoi, near Narrabri, was only built for light traffic, and would not carry heavy engines.

J. Gately.
19 May, 1900.

Charles Parker, hotelkeeper, Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

692. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided in the district long? Somewhere about twenty years. I came here before the railway was opened to Narrabri. C. Parker.
19 May, 1900.
693. What is your opinion of the country on the south side of the river, between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? It is high and dry and free from floods, and there is any quantity of timber on it—ironbark, box, pine, &c.
694. Has that timber any market value? Pine and ironbark are always valuable timbers.
695. What is the country like for agricultural and pastoral purposes? It is very good. I have seen several crops growing on it within 10 miles of Narrabri West, and along the route of the proposed line.
696. Is it expensive country to clear? No.
697. Is any of it used for agricultural purposes at the present time? Yes.
698. To what extent? Thirty or 40 acres are about all that is under cultivation in any holding. There is a farm out on Bohina Creek, which belongs to Mr. Malone, of Narrabri. Ten years ago it was nothing but a dense pine scrub, one of the most barren places a man could put his eyes on; but since he has cultivated it he has obtained first-class crops, and fruit-trees have grown splendidly there.
699. What crops has he grown? He has grown wheat, oats for hay, maize, potatoes, and pumpkins—as good as I have seen growing on the banks of the river.
700. What distance is he from the river? It is 4 miles from here to the creek, and he is 4 miles up the creek from the river.
701. How far is his land from the route of the proposed line? Between half a mile and a mile.
702. Is there any large extent of similar country? Yes.
703. How far south from the line does it run? About 25 miles up the creek it is really good land—land which is fit for anything. There is a farm up the creek 6 miles from here, and they have had as good crops of wheat there as you will see anywhere. They had one crop 5 or 6 feet high. They have also grown some of the finest vegetables that I have seen.
704. How would you compare that land with the land on the north side of the river? I imagine that it is far superior for agriculture to the country on the north side of the river.
705. Is it as good for pastoral purposes? No.
706. If it were cleared, would it be as good? If it were cleared, I believe that, for pastoral purposes, it would be as good, if not better, than the land on the north side of the river, because it will carry grass when there is no grass on the north side of the river. The people on the north side of the river, in bad times, send their sheep to the scrubby country on the south side of the river.
707. How is it that the land on the south side of the river has not been alienated? When this district was occupied every one was going in for grazing, so that the land on the north side of the river was taken up first. The land on the south side of the river has been surveyed in blocks too large for a man with a small capital to take up. A man with only £200 could not take up 10,000 acres or 20,000 acres and comply with the conditions as to ringbarking, fencing, and clearing.
708. How much of that land would you consider sufficient for the maintenance of a family by agriculture? I think that if a man had a 500-acre block it should be quite sufficient for him.
709. Do you think he could make a good living on it? A first-class living.
710. Do you think that the land is sufficiently good for people to settle upon, with a railway? Yes; if the Government cut it up into small enough blocks. The smallest block that has been offered on the south side of the river is about 7,700 acres, I believe.
711. What sort of soil is there on the south side of the river? A red, sandy loam.
712. And on the north side? There it is all black soil.
713. Have you had much experience in farming? A good deal, off and on.
714. Which is the better suited for agriculture—the black or the red soil? The red, sandy soil; it holds the moisture better, and stands droughts better than the black soil.
715. It has been said that there is no timber within 20 miles of the proposed southern route suitable for mill purposes? There is any quantity of pine within 10 miles of Narrabri West, and they have been cutting ironbark in the district for railway purposes for the last ten or twelve years. I do not say that you could get a pile 50 feet long within 10 or 12 miles of Narrabri West; but there are piles 30 feet long lying in the yard now, which came from places within 18 or 20 miles of Narrabri West.

- C. Parker. 716. How far would the pine be from the route of the proposed railway? In places it would not be 2 miles off the line.
- 19 May, 1900. 717. And the ironbark? The ironbark might be a little further off, but not much. You touch on pine, ironbark, and box country, off and on, right through to Wee Waa.
718. It has been stated that the ironbark in the district is of inferior quality? I have seen a good deal of it in the yards, but I have not heard any complaints about it. There is very little in the forests which the timber-cutters do not use either for sleepers, for girders, or for piles.
719. Where is the land that you are farming? On the north side of the river, between Narrabri West and Narrabri.
720. What results have you obtained during the last few years? I have grown very good wheat for hay, and I have grown maize. The soil will grow anything.
721. Have you at any time suffered from droughts? Yes.
722. Have you an irrigation plant? Yes.
723. Do you find it satisfactory? Yes.
724. Where do you get your water? From a well.
725. What yield of wheat have you had? I never gathered a crop for grain; but I have had as much as 4 tons of hay from an acre.
726. With irrigation? No; without it.
727. Has irrigation been a marked improvement? Yes; I have irrigated 5 or 6 acres of garden, where I have fruit-trees, melons, and pumpkins growing. Things like that will not do without water.
728. Do you think that if the railway were taken to Walgett it would create much closer settlement? I have every belief that it would.
729. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What crops have you irrigated? Fruit-trees, maize, barley for green feed, potatoes, pumpkins, and other vegetables.
730. What kinds of fruit have you grown? Oranges, peaches, lemons, quinces, and plums.
731. Have you had satisfactory crops? Yes.
732. When you speak of chocolate soil, do you mean red soil? Red, sandy loam.
733. Which soil is the best for agriculture—black-plain soil, red soil, or the dark soil on which timber grows? The red, loamy soil.
734. *Mr. Watson.*] You say that the land on the Bohina Creek is very good? Yes; and there is always plenty of water there. When there is no surface water you can get water in the sand.
735. At what distance does the good land run back from the creek? In places it runs back 3 miles.
736. Is it better than the average country down towards Walgett? There is creek land down there that is quite as good.
737. Is the bulk of the land between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? Yes. There is some good box forest land, which is the best land for cultivation. Out at Yarry Lake there are miles of forest country, and the land would be splendid for agriculture if it were cleared.

Lewis Snelling, timber contractor, Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

- L. Snelling. 738. *Mr. Watson.*] You have had very extensive contracts in connection with the construction of branch railways? Yes; and for the Railway Commissioners. We have delivered about 400,000 sleepers in the Narrabri West yard within the last five years, and a very large quantity of bridge timber.
- 19 May, 1900. 739. What timber is there on the southern side of the river between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? The timber there is not very large, but for railway purposes it is unusually good. The late Mr. Eddy had a very good opinion of this timber, and I have known him to send timber from Narrabri West round to Bathurst. We cannot get large timber here very well.
740. How far back have you to go for large timber? We have to go 40 miles back for some of it. We are supplying the Public Works Department with timber 30 feet 6 inches, and 12 by 12. I think that the construction of the proposed railway would be of great assistance to the timber-getters, and timber would come to it, not only to be drawn to places in the neighbourhood, but to be sent all over the Colony.
741. What kind of timber? Ironbark. Ironbark is used mostly for sleepers. Mr. Bishop Lyne informed me that between Narrabri West and Pilliga he had driven through magnificent ironbark forests lying within 5 or 6 miles of the route of the proposed railway.
742. Do you mean within 5 or 6 miles of the route of a line to Pilliga? Yes.
743. You have not been through this country yourself? No.
744. How far are your sleepers sent now? Our sleepers come from places 18 or 20 miles from Narrabri West. If the line went nearer the forests the timber-getters would not have to draw the timber so far.
745. The best timber has been cut within 18 or 20 miles of Narrabri West? Yes.
746. Would a line to Wee Waa go nearer to the places from which you are now drawing timber than Narrabri West? I understand so. Mr. Bishop Lyne said that it would go near some large supplies of ironbark.
747. We have been informed that most of the ironbark for some distance from Narrabri is pipey, and that when it is being worked up there is a great deal of waste? I do not think that that is the case. The timber here is small in comparison with the ordinary ironbark; but it is unusually suitable for railway work. It grows very slowly, and is very hard. I do not know that it would be altogether suitable for mill purposes; but for sleepers and small railway timber it is very suitable. I think it is a mistake to say that it is soft or pipey. The Narrabri forest has always been a favourite source of supply with Government Departments.
748. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is it a fact that a good many of the sleepers for the Narrabri-Moree line came from Wyong? No; I supplied every sleeper for that line in the Narrabri West yard. We have supplied 90,000 sleepers here for the Moree to Inverell railway, and we are supplying 50,000 up at Warialda.

John Joseph Morris, carrier, Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

749. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you any land outside of the town? A little.
 750. Do you cultivate any of it? About 12 acres.
 751. What do you grow on it? Wheat.
 752. What is your return from it? I have not had a return from it yet; it is still in the stack.
 753. How far out from here is your land? About a mile. It is on the river bank between Narrabri and Narrabri West.
 754. Where do you chiefly carry to? To Collarendabri and to all the northern districts as far as the Queensland border.
 755. What do you chiefly carry? Station produce, and flour, tea, sugar, and supplies generally.
 756. I suppose the supplies come mostly from Sydney by rail? Yes.
 757. What is the rate of carriage from Narrabri West to Collarendabri? At the present time it is about £5 or £6 a ton. I am not now engaged in the carrying business.
 758. What is the country like between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? The country on the north side of the line is that which is traversed chiefly by teams going to Collarendabri, there being no bridge at Molly, where the road on the south side of the river crosses.
 759. Is there much agricultural land on the north side of the river? Very little. In my opinion that country is not adapted for agriculture.
 760. What proportion of agricultural land is there? There is any quantity of good land there, but the seasons are too dry for agriculture.
 761. Would 10 per cent. of the land be fit for agriculture? I think not.
 762. Is that country highly suitable for pastoral purposes? Yes; it is best adapted for pastoral purposes.
 763. What is its carrying capacity? It is generally supposed to carry about a sheep to the acre.
 764. Is there any good timber on the north side of the river? Not that I am aware of.
 765. Would the good country extend any distance from the route of the proposed line? Yes; 100 miles.
 766. What is the country like on the south side of the river? It is higher than on the north side.
 767. Is it more thickly timbered? Yes. There is no timber on the north side.
 768. Is it good country for agriculture? Part of it is.
 769. Is there a greater proportion of agricultural country on the south side of the river than there is on the north side of the river? Yes, a much greater proportion.
 770. Would half the land within 20 miles of the route of the proposed railway, on the south side of the line, be suitable for agriculture? About one-third of it would.
 771. Would the balance of it be good for pasture? Some of it is not very good land. The low land is swampy, but it would do for pasture.
 772. Where does the good timber commence on the south side of the river? Some of the timber-getters go out 3 or 4 miles, while others go out from 10 to 20 miles.
 773. Can they get good timber within 3 miles? The best timber has been cut out.
 774. How far would you have to go for good timber? Twenty miles from Narrabri.
 775. What is the country like between Wee Waa and Collarendabri? It is principally black-soil plains, with patches of box.
 776. Is the country similar on both sides of the proposed line from Wee Waa to Collarendabri? Yes.
 777. Is it chiefly black-soil country? Yes.
 778. Is it good agricultural country? I would not like to take it up for agriculture.
 779. It is good pastoral country? Yes.
 780. Is it well timbered? Portions of it are, but the timber on it now is hardly good enough for fencing purposes.
 781. Is the country between Wee Waa and Walgett fairly good for pasture or agriculture? Yes, on the north side of the river. It is black-soil country, with occasional, small, sandy ridges.
 782. What about the country on the south side of the river? That country improves as you get further out.
 783. Would the construction of a railway to Walgett with a branch to Collarendabri increase settlement? Yes.
 784. Do you think that country would be largely taken up by small farmers? In small portions. The land from Wee Waa to Pilliga is still better than that from Narrabri to Wee Waa, with the exception of one belt of brigalow; it is more adapted for small farms.
 785. Do any of the settlers now complain of the expense of carriage? Those out in the back country have been complaining for some time past. I consider that they have wanted a railway for years. I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of the construction of a railway from Narrabri West out in that direction, even if it is only to assist the timber trade. From Narrabri West to Wee Waa and on to Pilliga, Baradine, and Coonabarabran, it is all one belt of ironbark and pine. The sleepers which have been delivered in this yard for years past have all come from there. I have heard it said that the white ants attack our ironbark; but my experience is that white ants will attack any kind of ironbark. White ants will attack any timber which is laid on the ground. They will attack both ironbark and spotted gum.
 786. *Vice-Chairman.*] Is not the timber that you speak of as near to Boggabri or Gunnedah as to Narrabri or Wee Waa? It is not as close to Gunnedah as it is to Wee Waa. There are patches of ironbark close to Gunnedah, but the best timber has been cut years ago.
 787. Was there ever any traffic along the railway line from Gunnedah or from Boggabri? Yes.
 788. Where was the timber consigned to? I could not tell you.
 789. Does the timber still go down the line? Yes. There has been a sleeper depôt at Emerald Hill, this side of Gunnedah. There is a belt of timber—the Trinkey Scrub—30 miles from Gunnedah, which is not connected with the belt to which I have already referred; but parts of the forest to which I have referred are quite as good as the Trinkey Scrub.

John Goodyer, hotelkeeper, farmer and grazier, Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

790. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you resided in this district? About twenty-seven years.
 791. Do you corroborate the evidence of previous witnesses? To a certain extent.
 792. On what points do you differ from them? My knowledge of the route of the proposed line does not

J. J. Morris.

19 May, 1900

J. Goodyer.

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not

J. Goodyer.
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not reach much further than Wee Waa. In my opinion the country on the south side of the river is much better for railway purposes than that on the north side of the river. If the line were taken on the south side of the river it would open up a great forest of timber which extends from Narrabri West to Pilliga, and it would also go through land which is better adapted for cultivation than is the land on the north side of the river.

793. What width of good land is there on the south side of the river? The good land extends 20 miles back from the river. You will find patches of country which are not good, but most of the land is suitable for cultivation.

794. Why has it not been settled upon so quickly as the land on the north side of the river? The land on the north side of the river is more adapted for grazing.

795. Do you think it is a fair statement of the agricultural possibilities of the land on the north side of the river to say that 25 bushels of wheat to the acre is an average crop on large areas, year in and year out? I should feel inclined to contradict the statement that that is the average yield.

796. What average yield might be expected from the land on the south side of the river if it were cleared? From 18 to 20 bushels to the acre.

797. How would you describe the soil on the south side of the river? It is a close, alluvial soil, and will not crack. It lies closer, and is more adapted for cultivation than the land on the northern side of the river.

798. What is the average cost of clearing land on the south side of the river? I have seen a lot of land cleared on the south side of the river, and I have known the work to be done for 15s. an acre.

799. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you mean where the timber is dead? Where there is both dead and green timber.

800. *Vice-Chairman.*] Would it be a fair description of the land on the south side of the river to say that it would cost so much to clear that, by the time a farmer had cleared it, he would find very little profit in his agricultural operations? I do not think so.

801. Have you cultivated any large areas on the south side of the river? I have cultivated about 50 acres annually.

802. Does the soil stand continuous cropping? Yes, fairly well.

803. Which is the better soil in that respect, the black or the red? The red.

804. Which soil stands drought the better? The red soil.

805. It is better in every way? Yes.

806. Why is the country on the south side of the river not so well adapted for grazing purposes as the country on the north side of the river? Because of the timber on it.

807. *Mr. Watson.*] It does not pay to clear land for grazing purposes? That is so.

808. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that 20,000 acres on the south side of the river which have been thrown open as an improvement lease have never been taken up;—why is that? Because the Government will not classify the land and make a reduction for the extra labour which would be required on it. I do not consider that the land on the north side of the river is adapted for cultivation at all; it is heavy, black soil which is only fit for grazing, and in dry seasons it cracks and lets the moisture out.

809. Why has the land on the south side of the river not been put under the plough before this? Because of the thickness of the timber, and because the Government has asked the same price for it as for land naturally clear of timber.

John Langley, saddler, Narrabri West, sworn, and examined:—

J. Langley.
19 May, 1900.

810. *Mr. Watson.*] How would the construction of the proposed railway affect the district generally through which it would pass? I know the country fairly well from here to Wee Waa, and thence to Walgett, but I know nothing of the Collarendabri district. I think that the route from Narrabri West to Wee Waa, on the south side of the river, would be the most suitable one for a railway, because the ground there is high and dry; there is a good river frontage, and the line would be on the borders of a good timber forest.

811. There is a good frontage on both sides of the river? The frontage on the south side is better than that on the north side of the river. It is 22 or 23 miles from Narrabri West to Wee Waa on the south side of the river, and, on the average, there are 6 miles of good country between the railway route and the river—some of the best agricultural country that could be ploughed up. The soil is good, red loam. Mr. Schwager has made an experimental farm on some sandy country on the south side of the river, and in a very dry season he has been able to grow vines, wheat, cabbages, and cauliflowers. He is right in the middle of a pine forest.

812. Do you corroborate generally the evidence of previous witnesses with reference to the character of the country between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? Certainly.

813. How would you class the land 6 miles back from the river? I would class it as good land.

814. Is it as good as the land nearer the river? No; the river frontage is superior to it.

815. Is the land that is more than 6 miles back from the river suitable for cultivation? Certainly.

816. Is it red soil? It is more of a sandy loam.

817. What kinds of timber grow on it? Pine and box. At Yarry Lake, 13 miles from Wee Waa, the carriers were feeding their horses for weeks in the box forests during the dry seasons. Mr. Campbell, of Cubbo, has had a great deal of stock on Terradelbi, about 12 miles from Yarry Lake.

818. Would the Terradelbi country be influenced by the construction of the proposed railway? No; I only referred to it to show that the country back from the river is good country. The stock I speak of is still there.

MONDAY, 21 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Wee Waa, at 3:30 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Laurence Brennan, pastoralist, Wee Waa, sworn, and examined:—

819. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is your holding from Wee Waa? Two miles.

820. I understand that you have a statement to make to the Committee with regard to the railway proposal into which they are inquiring? Yes. There are 25,000 acres of land between Narrabri and Wee Waa, on the south side of the Namoi, which, in my opinion, are quite equal to the best land to be found upon the Lower Namoi. The land I speak of commences at Wee Waa and extends up the river as far as the Molly crossing. A railway from Narrabri West *via* Wee Waa, to Burren, would serve that land, and would provide a shorter route than any other line that could be made to Burren. Such a railway would be of use to the people of Pilliga district, and to the people between Wee Waa and Pilliga. It would also give assistance to the timber trade. On the northern side of the river there is no timber which can be used for building purposes, and on a great deal of the land there is no timber at all. People out Collarendabri way would be glad to get timber from the district behind Wee Waa for building purposes and for fencing, and a railway on the south side of the river would get a great deal of timber traffic. I should like to point out that it would cost more per mile to make a railway station at Tulladunna accessible to the people at Wee Waa, and to the people in the district generally, than to construct a railway from Narrabri West to Wee Waa. If the railway were taken on the north side of the river from Narrabri East, in wet seasons the traffic from Wee Waa and the south side of the river would have to go to Narrabri West, because the flooded state of the country between Wee Waa and Tulladunna would prevent people from getting to Tulladunna either with fat stock or with produce. The population between Wee Waa and Narrabri, on the north side of the river, is not so great as that between Wee Waa and Narrabri West, on the south side of the river. The following return gives the names of the various land-holders within 6 miles of Wee Waa on the south side of the Namoi, and the areas of their holdings. Altogether, there are 38 land-holders, and they occupy 22,364 acres:—

L. Brennan.
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Name.	Area.	Name.	Area.
	acres.		acres.
J. M. Robertson, "Womera"	1,700	W. Murphy, settlement lease	1,600
Mrs. Lynch, homestead selection	843	Allan MacKenzie, conditional purchase	660
W. Ryan, homestead selection	868	Archie MacKenzie	450
Hamilton & Sons, Moleyn, conditional purchase	2,000	J. Graham	320
George McFarlane, " "	1,600	W. O'Brien	70
W. M. Maxwell, "The Willows" " "	3,120	L. Brennan	800
W. Graham " "	800	M. Smith	10
J. Wallace, homestead selection	500	J. Collins	38
A. Wallace, " "	500	J. Graham	38
— Perrot, " "	500	Mrs. Self	38
G. Ryan, " "	500	G. Wilde	38
F. Gallagher, " "	500	W. Wilde	22
A. Lane	500	B. Harris	640
J. Pullen	500	J. Russel	160
J. Hawthorn	321	J. Ryan	100
S. Lewis	362	J. B. Brodie	200
— Roden	500	Mrs. MacKenzie?	300
J. Luckey	389	J. Smith	37
A. Boggs	500		
C. Hall, freehold	340	Total	22,364

821. You have not included town allotments in that list? No; all the holdings mentioned in that list are outside the town boundary. On the south side of the river, and within 4 miles of it, but 15 miles from Wee Waa in the direction of Narrabri, there are 304 horses, 316 cattle, and 10,360 sheep depastured. From Narrabri to Pilliga and below Pilliga, as far as Bungle Gully, on the south side of the river, there are depastured 506 horses, 4,677 cattle, and 206,992 sheep.

822. How far back from the river does the country upon which they are depastured extend? At Bungle Gully you are 10 or 15 miles back from the river.

823. How far is Bungle Gully from Pilliga? About 30 miles. The land on the north side of the river, between Narrabri and Wee Waa, is first-class pastoral land; but I think that, under present conditions, wheat-growing would not be profitable there, because there are districts with a better climate and nearer to market, with which this district could not compete. The town of Wee Waa comprises property valued at from £70,000 to £80,000, including public and private improvements. A very small number of persons would be inconvenienced by taking the railway on the north side of the river from Narrabri East to Tulladunna, and that smaller number of persons would have a full railway service if the line were brought on the south side of the river from Narrabri West to Wee Waa.

824. What distance would the people on the north side of the river be from either Narrabri or Wee Waa? At the furthest point they would be about 14 miles from either place. I take it, however, that the people mainly to be served by the construction of the proposed railway are the people out towards Burren and Collarendabri, and a line on the south side of the river would give them a shorter and better route than a line on the north side of the river. It was first proposed to take the railway from Narrabri through Wee Waa

L. Brennan. Waa to Pilliga, and it was afterwards thought that a line on the north side of the river would be cheaper, because it would save the construction of a bridge over the Namoi. Further investigation, however, shows that a line on the south side of the river would be the cheaper. I was on a deputation that went to Sydney to urge the extension of the railway from Narrabri to Wee Waa. The Sectional Committee of the Public Works Committee who investigated the Pilliga proposal reported that the line could not be kept on the south side of the river further down than Wee Waa, but that they would recommend the construction of a line as far as Wee Waa, if it could be taken across the river there, and carried on through Burren to Collarendabri without too heavy an expenditure. If it were shown that the expenditure would be too heavy, they would recommend the construction of the line on the northern side of the river. Some persons who gave evidence in favour of the construction of the railway on the northern side of the river opposed the construction of a railway crossing at Gully Point when we wanted a deviation of the line from Narrabri to Moree, towards Wee Waa. The Narrabri evidence at that time was directed to show that the safe route from Narrabri to Moree was the direct route. I have no property in either Wee Waa or Narrabri West. My only personal interest in the railway is the share which I would have in the general prosperity of the district which would be brought about by maintaining the strength of this town. We have good public buildings here—a good post and telegraph office, a new police station, and a public school. I hold 3,000 acres on the north side of the river which would be within half a mile of the railway station, if the railway were kept on that side of the river, whereas I have only 800 acres on the south side of the river, and that land would be 2 miles from the nearest point on the railway, if it were brought on the south side of the river. I do not think that the public buildings in Wee Waa would be kept up so well if the railway did not come nearer than 2 or 3 miles to the town, because it would take away from Wee Waa the traffic which properly belongs to the town. There is a big watercourse between Wee Waa and Tulladunna, and at Tulladunna you have half as much water as you get in the Namoi, so that a railway station there would be useless to us in wet seasons, unless the Government went to a considerable expense in providing access.

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825. Several witnesses have stated that there is a larger area of flooded land to be crossed on the southern side of the river than would have to be crossed on the northern side of the river? In my opinion that statement is not correct. I believe that a line on the south side of the river would have less flooded land to cross than a line on the north side of the river. Such a line would cross the flood-waters of the Namoi at the narrowest place, going in the direction of Burren. Unfortunately, my own ground is within the flooded area, and there are 3 miles of water there during an ordinary flood. It is all flooded country from the river at Tulladunna for some miles back.

826. It has also been stated that there is a larger area of ground suitable for agriculture on the north side of the river than there is on the south side? I think that the land on the north side of the river is about the worst in the district for agriculture. The flooded land is of no use at all for agriculture.

827. How would you describe the country within 20 miles of the northern bank of the Namoi, between Narrabri and Wee Waa? It is first-class pastoral land, but there is a large extent of it which is of no use at all for agriculture, though there may be some pretty considerable patches which could be cultivated.

828. What sort of soil is there? The greater part of it is sticky black soil—soil that dries up and opens out.

829. Have you had any experience of agriculture on the black soil? I consider that the black soil on the Namoi is not of much use for agriculture, though the red, chocolate, and lighter soils may be cultivated. I have put in five crops on the black soil, and I have had three failures. Those crops were put in within the last six years. The two crops that I got were only half crops.

830. What is your opinion of the country on the south side of the river, as far as its agricultural possibilities are concerned? If wheat will grow in this climate there are patches of red soil and timbered country there which would suit wheat.

831. What proportion of the land 20 miles from the river on the south side would be fit for agriculture if it were cleared? One-fourth or one-fifth of it. There are 25,000 acres there of first-class pastoral land, and one-fifth of the timbered country appears to me good wheat-growing land, supposing the climate to be one which would suit wheat.

832. *Mr. Watson.*] Is the one-fifth that you speak of suitable for agriculture, apart from the good pastoral land? Yes. The pastoral land is as good as any on the northern side of the river.

833. *Vice-Chairman.*] What traffic passes through Wee Waa now? Pretty well all the traffic from Collarendabri, and the traffic from Pilliga, Burren, and all the country down to Walgett. The line from Narrabri to Moree passes through land between Killarney and Moree which would be better suited for wheat growing than any of the land on the northern side of the river, and until that land is used for wheat growing it is very unlikely that wheat will be grown on the land on the north side of the river.

834. If the line were constructed on the north side of the river what course would the Pilliga traffic take in wet seasons? It would go to West Narrabri, because I do not think it could get to the railway at any other point. If the line were brought on the south side of the river to Wee Waa, the Pilliga traffic could come to Wee Waa, because the road from here to Pilliga is practically above flood-level.

835. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway would be likely to develop settlement? Yes.

836. What kind of settlement? The timbered country on the south side of the river would probably be readily taken up if a railway were brought close to it, and I think that that country is only suitable for agriculture.

837. Would the country on the south side of the river be absolutely cut off in bad weather from a railway on the north side? Yes, practically, unless macadamised roads and traffic bridges were made between Wee Waa and Tulladunna. The traffic 10 miles east from Wee Waa would go to Narrabri West.

838. So that you think a line on the north side of the river would not draw traffic from country on the south side of the river, between Narrabri West and Wee Waa? It would only draw traffic from that country to a very slight extent, if at all. In dry seasons some of the traffic from that country might go across to Tulladunna; but in wet seasons it would have to go to Narrabri West, because it could not get to a line on the northern side of the river at such times.

839. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Would settlers on the north side of the river have any difficulty in getting to a line on the south side of the river? A traffic bridge 2 miles up from Wee Waa would enable most of the settlers

settlers on the northern side to come to Wee Waa, and in dry seasons there are many places where they can cross the river without a bridge. To give them access to Wee Waa in all seasons it would be necessary to build another traffic-bridge above Wee Waa; but such a bridge would not give the Wee Waa people ready access to Tuiladunna, because it would require them to go 2 miles up the river on one side and then come down 2 miles on the other. Mr. Cohen, Mr. Lehaine, Mr. Wyatt, and other people out there would require a traffic-bridge to enable them to go to Wee Waa in wet seasons.

L. Brennan.
21 May, 1900.

840. Has any of the country on the south side of the river been cultivated? There are small patches of cultivation in different parts.

841. What has been the result of the cultivation there? Heavy crops of wheaten hay have been obtained, and some fruit has been grown.

842. Whereabouts is the timber that you have spoken of? It is some miles out to the south; part of it lies in the direction of Pilliga, and part of it is south from Wee Waa.

843. *Mr. Watson.*] Why has not the land on the south side of the river been more freely taken up in the past? Everyone preferred the plain country on the north side of the river for pastoral purposes.

844. But since the railway has been brought to Narrabri it seems curious that that land should not have been taken up? For 10 miles out from Narrabri West the country is very barren, and forms part of an abandoned run. The Bohina Creek country is barren; where the timber grows in raw sand the soil is no good.

845. Do you know Malone's place on Bohina Creek? Yes. He has the best place on Bohina Creek, a sandy loam which is very easily worked, and pretty good in dry seasons. It gives a few crops. I have had experience with similar country elsewhere.

846. Does the country improve as you go towards Wee Waa? Yes. Mr. Malone's land is just a little bit on the banks of the creek.

847. I understand that a number of the landholders whose names appear in the list that you have read are only recent selectors? Yes; they have come to the district within the last few months.

848. Was the land open to selection long before they took it up? I think it was land in the leasehold area of a run. It was not open to any form of purchase before they took it up.

849. Were there many applicants for it? Yes, and I think that nine out of ten of the small blocks that were offered close to Wee Waa were taken.

850. Do people intend to grow wheat on these small areas? Yes.

851. Could they afford to cart their grain into Narrabri West? I think they believe that the railway will come very close to them. Wheat-growing has not been a success in this part of the country. When an attempt was made to start a co-operative flour-mill in Narrabri, the people of Narrabri did not invest in it, and there is no flour-mill in Gunnedah. In my opinion, not much confidence is to be placed in the Narrabri district as a wheat-growing district.

852. What is your rainfall? About 25 inches a year; but we do not get it at the right time. Then, too, the evaporation in this district is greater than that in a district like Young.

Stephen Dempsey, selector, Pilliga, sworn, and examined:—

853. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in this district? Yes; I have been here about twenty years. S. Dempsey.

854. What is your opinion of the railway proposal? I should like to see a railway brought from Narrabri West through Wee Waa. Such a line would give us a shorter route to market by 10 miles than we should get if the railway were kept on the northern side of the Namoi, and it would thus make our rates of carriage lower. 21 May, 1900.

855. How does the country on the north side of the Namoi compare with that on the south side? The country on the north side of the river is very subject to flooding.

856. Is it good pastoral country? Yes.

857. Is it suitable for agriculture? I do not consider it suitable for agriculture, though parts of it may be so.

858. It is mostly plain country? Yes; heavy, sticky, black soil.

859. Which is the best soil for agriculture in this climate, the black soil, the red soil, or the chocolate soil? I consider that the red and the chocolate soils are the best. I do not think the black soil is any good at all for agriculture.

860. Does it not stand the drought as well as the red soil? No.

861. How would you describe the country on the south side of the river? It is not so good for pastoral purposes as the land on the north side of the river, but it is much better for agriculture.

862. Is it heavily timbered? Yes, it is very heavily timbered.

863. What is your opinion of the pine and box country on the south side of the river? There is a lot of heavy sandy country close to Narrabri West; but as you get towards Wee Waa you come into a chocolate soil.

864. Would that country be expensive to clear? It would be pretty expensive to clear.

865. Why is there not more settlement on the south side of the river? I think that is because people find it too expensive to take up that land. In former times if you wanted to select it you had to pay the same price for it as for the plain country, and for pastoral purposes no one would take it up when he could get plain country. Agriculture was not thought of then.

866. How many acres of land do you occupy? 7,000 acres where I am living.

867. What kind of country is it? Principally open, black plains.

868. What has been the result of your operations? I have grown wheat there; but I find that it will grow better on the sandy box ridges than on the black soil. I have a cultivation paddock on a ridge which was very heavily timbered with box. I cleared it, because I thought the black soil was no good for agriculture. Some time afterwards I tried the black soil, and I found that in a very good season I could grow a crop in it; but that in a season when there was only a small rainfall it would not produce anything.

869. Do you cultivate much of the red soil? About 5 acres. The place that I am speaking of is 33 miles from Wee Waa.

8. Dempsey. 870. Is it similar to the red-soil country on the south side of the river, between Wee Waa and Narrabri West? It is somewhat similar to it, but I should think the soil would be stronger.
- 21 May, 1900. 871. Do you consider the red soil on the south side of the river, between Wee Waa and Narrabri West, suitable for wheat? A great deal of it is; but there are places where I think the soil is too sandy for wheat.
872. How much of the country there, within 10 miles of the river, would be suitable for agriculture? About one-fourth of it.
873. If a railway were constructed, would people be induced to take up that land for wheat-growing? I feel nearly sure that they would.
874. Have you a good knowledge of the country between Pilliga and Burren? Yes.
875. What sort of country is it? It is mixed country. There are a good many red and chocolate box ridges, and there is also a large area of black-soil plains all the way from the river up. From the river to Pilliga it is very heavy black-soil country.
876. Given railway communication, is it country that could be settled upon? I do not think that it wants railway communication to induce settlement. All that is wanted is to have the land thrown open. If 610 acres were to be thrown open for selection to-morrow there would be forty applicants for the block.
877. How many acres of the land on the route of the proposed railway would maintain a family under agriculture? I do not think people would make a living on the country that I am speaking of by agriculture, though they could grow hay in places. Some years I get a crop, and some years I do not.
878. Is that because of the scantiness of the rainfall? I think that has a good deal to do with it.
879. How many acres of the pastoral country between Pilliga and Burren would it take to maintain a family? I do not think less than 5,000 acres would maintain a family.
880. *Mr. Watson.*] Yet people take up 610-acre blocks in this district? They do so in the expectation of being able to get more later on.
881. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you know the country on towards Collarenebri? Yes; the country is somewhat similar all the way out.
882. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the traffic of the district be largely increased? I do not see that there would be much additional traffic between here and Collarenebri, because all the traffic there is has to come this way now; but there might be a little more traffic if the country were made available for closer settlement.
883. What is the carrying capacity of the pastoral country? Taking one year with another, I think you want about 3 acres to a sheep.
884. Does much stock travel from different places in the district in the direction of Narrabri, along the route of the proposed line? Yes. There are three roads from Wee Waa—one to Collarenebri, another on the north side of the river, and another on the south.
885. Does most of the traffic come through Wee Waa now? I think it all comes through Wee Waa.
886. How would the construction of the railway on the north side of the river affect Wee Waa? I think it would injure Wee Waa, because it would leave Wee Waa 6 or 7 miles away from a railway station.
887. Which would be the most convenient site for a railway station to people living 15 or 20 miles from Wee Waa—a place on the north side of the river, or Wee Waa itself? I think that Wee Waa would be the most convenient site for a station. I do not think the Pilliga people would have anything to do with a railway on the north side of the river. If the line were made on the north side of the river, I think the Pilliga traffic would all go to Narrabri West.
888. How far is the good timber in this district from the proposed railway? I think the best ironbark is about 15 miles from Wee Waa.
889. And how far from Narrabri? It must be 20 miles from Narrabri.
890. If the railway were taken to Wee Waa, would the timber be put on the train here? Yes; because most of the ironbark grows in country on the Walgett side of Wee Waa.
891. What is the quality of that ironbark? I have never had much experience in working ironbark; but I have heard it well spoken of, and it is used for railway sleepers at Narrabri West. The further you get from Narrabri the better the timber becomes.
892. *Vice-Chairman.*] Does a small grazier find it as expensive to send small consignments of fat stock to a railway as to send large consignments? Yes.
893. Would it be possible for a man who had 640 acres near to a railway to periodically fatten and send away small consignments of stock? Yes.
894. In that way would the railway create a traffic that could not exist without it? Yes.
895. Is the country between Pilliga and Burren tolerably good fattening country in fair seasons? Yes.
896. Would a sheep to 3 acres be the carrying capacity of the greater part of the country to be served by the proposed railway? I should say so.
897. How many sheep do you run on your 7,000 acres? I consider that my place will not carry more than 4,000 sheep; but I have my land fenced into small paddocks, and it is a little better than the general run of land in the district. It was appraised at 30s. an acre.
898. *Mr. Watson.*] Would not the Pilliga people be likely to use the proposed railway somewhere near Burren? I do not think so. The people whom I came here to represent say that they would not.
899. Their traffic would continue to go through Wee Waa, even if the railway were brought to Burren? Yes.
900. Would it pay them to drive stock to Narrabri West if there were a railway station at Tulladunna? I think so.
901. Why? I could get a man to drive my stock from Narrabri West, and truck them there, for almost as little as I would have to pay to have them driven to Tulladunna, and by doing so I should prevent the sheep from being knocked about in the trucks, and I should save something in railway carriage. By trucking stock from Wee Waa a great deal of knocking about in the trucks, by reason of shunting operations, as well as 10 miles of railway carriage, could be saved.
902. Do the Pilliga storekeepers now get their goods *via* Narrabri West? Yes; the leading storekeeper at Pilliga told me that if the railway were taken on the north side of the river he would still bring his goods from Narrabri West by team.
903. Would he rather bring his goods 60 miles by team than pay 34 miles of railway carriage and bring them only 40 miles by team? Yes; he said so. He considers that in bad seasons he could not bring goods from Tulladunna at all, because of the flooded state of the country between Wee Waa and Tulladunna.
- 904.

904. Can the Pilliga traffic get through to Narrabri West more easily on the south side of the river than on the north side? Yes; in 1890 I had to travel on the south side of the river to go from my place on the north side of the river into Pilliga. I live within 12 or 15 miles of the proposed line to Burren. S. Dompsey.
21 May, 1900.
905. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the average weight of your fleeces? Five pounds or 6 lb. is the average weight.
906. How many sheep will give a farmer a fair living? I think a man ought to run between 4,000 and 5,000 sheep, and then he does not want too large a family.
907. Out of 4,000 sheep how many could a man sell to the butcher each year? If he bred a couple of thousand every year he would have that number to sell, supposing the drought did not kill them.
908. How many paddocks have you? Ten.
909. I suppose you feed and spell alternately? Yes.
910. Is it usual in this district to divide up runs into paddocks? Yes.
911. And do most of the station-owners feed and spell alternately? Yes; most of them try to spell their land occasionally.
912. I suppose you have very little scrub with which to feed your sheep? Very little. I came here as a representative of the Pilliga people, who told me that they would much rather see the railway come into Wee Waa than see it constructed on the north side of the Namoi, because they are of opinion that a line on the north side of the river would be of very little use to them.
913. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Are they anxious for the construction of this line? They would like to see a railway made to Wee Waa.

Walter William Richard Holcombe, grazier, Weetawaa, sworn, and examined:—

914. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What extent of country have you? About 30,000 acres. W. W. R.
Holcombe.
21 May, 1900.
915. Do you use the land exclusively for grazing, or do you carry on farming as well? We do a little gardening, and I have done a little farming for our own use.
916. Have you got a satisfactory yield from your crops? I have generally got a good crop of hay when I have grown wheat, but it is some years since I grew any wheat. I let some wheat stand for grain, but it seemed to take the rust.
917. Do you consider the country suitable for agriculture? Some of it would be, but it would require irrigation. With irrigation, I think all but the very low country would be suitable for agriculture.
918. What proportion of your 30,000 acres would be suitable for agriculture if you could irrigate the land? About half of it; but it would be very expensive to irrigate it.
919. Is it timbered country? Yes.
920. What kind of timber grows on it? Coolabah, chiefly.
921. Have you had much of it ringbarked? 5,000 or 6,000 acres.
922. What number of sheep are you running on it? About 22,000; but at the present time some of them are away.
923. I suppose that if the land were all rung it would carry more? Yes; but the ringbarking does not make so much difference in the flat country as it does on the ridges.
924. How long have you been here? I have been living on my present holding for twenty-two years.
925. Whereabouts is your land? It is on the north side of the Namoi, but it lies south of both the proposed northern routes, and about the same distance from each.
926. Is much of your land freehold? A lot of it has been held over twenty years, and is nearly freehold.
927. It is all secured? I have about 27,000 acres of secured land. The rest of my land is held under annual lease.
928. What is the country in the neighbourhood of your holding like? A good deal of the high country along the line would be fit for agriculture. After the line leaves Wee Waa it gets on to high country, and runs down Pian Creek, and a lot of that land would be fit for agriculture, though the lower swampy ground would not. The high ground on the banks of creeks and watercourses would be fit for agriculture; but while it pays better to graze sheep people will not go in for agriculture.
929. Is the country out as far as Burren of the same description? Yes; it is all about the same.
930. Would the construction of the proposed railway induce settlers out there to go in for agriculture? I think it would. I think that the halves system would be largely adopted.
931. Would you be disposed to adopt it? Yes. I shall put in 100 acres this winter as a trial. Latterly I have cut clover and grass for hay.
932. I suppose you are rather too far from a railway station to go in for agriculture? I shall grow hay for my own use.
933. How far are you from Narrabri? About 32 miles.
934. Is the road there fairly good? Our sheep are reared and fattened on black-soil country, and when they are travelled away from the run they do not eat the first day out, and on the next three days they have to go through a sandy scrub in which there is nothing for them to eat, going on the south side of the river. If we take them to Narrabri, on the north side of the river, the journey is a day longer, and they have to travel through mere lanes the whole way.
935. If the proposed railway were made, would you use it for sending your sheep away? Certainly. Whether the line is made on the north side or on the south side of the river, I shall use it; but if it comes on the north side of the river, it will add 6 miles to the distance which the sheep will have to be driven to get to it.
936. Would the proposed railway be of great advantage to small holders? I think it would be of great advantage to them. We could often pick out 100 or more fat sheep, and send them away if there were a railway close at hand; but it does not pay to drive so small a flock a long distance to a railway.
937. Which line would suit you the better—the one on the south side, or the one on the north? The line on the south side of the river would suit me better than the one on the north, because it would give a railway station at Wee Waa, and would make the journey to market shorter for the stock. If the line were taken on the north side of the river we should have to pay more freight for our sheep, and probably 4s. or 5s. a ton more for our goods. Before the bridge at Wee Waa was built we had to go to Narrabri along the north side of the river, and the track was sometimes impossible.
938. Which line would open up the more country, and bring in the larger revenue? I think a line through Wee Waa. There is a lot of country on the south side of the river which would not be convenient

W. W. R.
Holcombe.
21 May, 1900.

convenienced by the construction of a line on the north side of the river. I believe that there are 25,000 acres of good land on the south side of the river which could be used for farming, or for anything else—land lying between Molly and Wee Waa. I know some of the land which has been farmed there, and I do not think there is much better country in the district. There is also a large extent of scrubby country there which would grow wheat and fruit, and I have seen corn growing there too. About two years ago I saw some corn and pumpkins growing on Mr. Schwager's farm, and, although the weather was very dry, they were doing well. The country on the north side of the river, however, would be very well served by a line on the south side, because, if there were a bridge over the river, the people on the north side could very easily come to the line on the south side.

939. It has been estimated that there will be a deficiency of something over £13,000 a year; on the working of the proposed line;—do you think that that deficiency would be wiped out within a reasonable time by the additional traffic which the line would create? I think that it would. There would be a holding to nearly every 2 square miles of country, within five years, if the railway were constructed, and there would be a vast amount of traffic then. A great deal of wire would be brought into the district, and timber and many other things would be sent away from the district.

940. Would you be willing to make a contribution towards reducing any deficiency? Yes.

941. Would there be a general willingness to make such a contribution? I think so; but, of course, if people can get out of contributing they will do so. I think that it would be a fair and reasonable arrangement.

942. Have you had any experience of fruit-growing? Yes; I have grown oranges, grapes, peaches, and most of the ordinary fruits, and they all do well.

943. Is your orchard an extensive one? No; I have only about 6 acres. Small holders can hardly live in this district without a railway to enable them to send away small consignments of sheep.

George McFarlane, grazier and farmer, Sandy Hook, sworn, and examined:—

G.
McFarlane.
21 May, 1900.

944. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the area of your holding? 1,600 acres.

945. How long have you resided in the district? Since 1841.

946. What cultivation have you carried on here? I have grown hay.

947. What yields have you got? I have only been on my present place a short time, and we have had very bad seasons. I do not know what the crop was.

948. Have you had experience in agriculture in any other part of the district? Yes; a little out beyond Pian Creek, about 30 miles from Wee Waa.

949. What was the result of your operations? I only cultivated 5 or 6 acres; but I grew some splendid crops of hay out there, though I never weighed them.

950. What kind of country are you holding? Brigalow and oak country.

951. Is it country that is valuable for agriculture if it is cleared? Yes.

952. What is the nature of the soil? It is chocolate soil.

953. Do you expect good results from this country when it is cleared? Yes.

954. Is there much similar country on the south side of the river between your holding and Narrabri? Yes; a great deal of it. The country has been measured out in 5,000, 7,000, and 17,000-acre blocks; but a man with a small capital could not do anything with it, and a man with means would not look at it. If a man of small means could take what he wanted of that country and work it, a great deal more of it would be selected.

955. How many acres of that kind of land would be sufficient to give a farmer and his family a decent living? 500 or 600 acres.

956. What is the average cost of clearing the scrub land which you occupy? It costs about 1s. 6d. an acre to get it ringbarked, and you could not get any of my land burnt off and cleared for less than 4s. 6d. an acre.

957. How long did you leave your timber, after ringbarking, before you commenced to burn it? It was ringbarked when I bought the property, about two years ago. Some of the timber has been ringbarked eight or nine years, and some of it only two years.

958. Do the trees throw up suckers after being ringbarked? The oak will not do that, but the box will. The brigalow country grows splendid grass when it is ringbarked. It is better land than that on the other side of the river.

959. Do you propose to devote any large part of your holding to agriculture? Yes; I have about 150 acres cleared ready for the plough.

960. What do you intend to sow in it? I intend to grow wheat.

961. Do you think that a man could make a living by agriculture on 640 acres of such land? I think so.

962. Would you recommend mixed farming in the district if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes; it is 12 miles to Brigalow Creek from Wee Waa, and then you are in the ironbark country. There is some splendid ironbark there for sleepers.

963. How much of the country between Wee Waa and Narrabri, 20 miles back from the river, would be fit for agriculture? More than half of it.

964. How much of the land on the north side of the river would be fit for agriculture? Not very much, except the box country. The coolabah country and the black-soil country are neither of them good for farming. It is cracky, sticky ground that we cannot do anything with by farming. I do not think one-third of it would be fit for farming.

965. Is the country on the south side of the river more likely to be closely settled than the country on the north side? Yes; it would be taken up if it were measured out in smaller areas.

966. *Mr. Watson.*] If a man took up that country to-day, and fenced it in and ringbarked it, how long would it be before he got a return for his expenditure? I ringbarked 120 acres at the back of my paddock, and in twelve months there was as good grass there as on any other part of my run.

967. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you think that scrubby country quite suitable for agriculture? Fully half of it is.

968. You at one time held property on the north side of the river, but you sold that, and took up land on the south side of the river? Yes. There was a drought, and I was forced to sell, because I could do no good with the land. Then I bought a place on the south side of the river.

969.

969. Do you think that red soil or chocolate soil resists drought better than black soil? Yes. There is a red soil, however—a red soil on the plains—which is no good at all, but the chocolate soil on which the scrub grows is good for anything.

G.
McFarlane.

21 May, 1900.

970. Does it resist drought better than the black soil? Yes, a great deal better.

971. Will it stand repeated cropping? I think so, from what I have seen of it. I have never had a great deal of experience in farming. The land I now hold is better drought-resisting country than that which I previously held on the north side of the river. It does not crack so much.

William Hockan, grazier, Rossmore, sworn, and examined:—

972. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the area of your holding? 9,350 acres.

W. Hockan.

973. Is it secured land? Yes; and I have 2,000 acres of leased land.

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974. What is the average carrying capacity of your run? After the drought we have gone through, in which our natural grasses have been almost exterminated, it is almost impossible to say; but we are taxed on the basis of a sheep to an acre and a half.

975. Taking good seasons with bad seasons, is that a fair estimate of its carrying capacity? I think it is rather an over-estimate, but we stock up to that.

976. Is there any land on your holding which, with the rainfall you usually have, is suitable for agriculture? About one-third of the land between Wee Waa and my place, and within 10 miles of the travelling stock reserve, is suitable for agriculture.

977. What proportion of the land on towards Collarendabri would be suitable for agriculture? From the 26 to the 38-mile peg it is coolabah country—that is, pastoral country; but from the 38-mile peg to about the 60-mile peg the land would all be available for agriculture.

978. Do you mean 60 miles from Wee Waa? Yes.

979. Is the rainfall out there sufficiently good for agriculture? Judging from my personal knowledge of the country, I should say that they would get about two crops in three. From Merrywinbone to within 5 miles of the Barwon, it is high, sound country.

980. Would you go in for agriculture to any extent if the railway came close to your holding? Yes; I should cultivate 500 acres to-morrow if I could get a market for the produce. I have 63 acres under crop now.

981. Have you obtained satisfactory results from your cultivation? Since 1881 I have lost about one crop in three.

982. Under such conditions, would a man be justified in going in for agriculture on a large scale if the railway were built close to his land? If a man started when the season was bad, so that he lost his first crop, he would want enough capital to be able to hang on until he could grow another.

983. May we anticipate an increase in fat stock traffic if the proposed railway is made? Yes, because with a railway more fat stock would be sent away by small holders. It does not pay a man to drive a small flock of sheep 70 or 80 miles to a railway station; but if he were close to a line he would often send away small consignments.

984. Even if agriculture were not entered upon, you think there would be an increase in the production of the district, and a consequent increase in railway traffic? Yes. The country requires development, and a greater conservation of water. You cannot expect to increase the agricultural traffic for some years, for the simple reason that the people who are in the district now have not the means, after the terrible straits which they have gone through, to purchase agricultural machinery.

985. What would they do if there were a railway? Undoubtedly, if a railway were constructed there would be a big increase in the traffic from the district.

986. Would the railway be of any advantage to people situated like yourself, in enabling them to get fodder from more favoured districts, in times of drought? Yes; and it would be of immense advantage in assisting us to get stock away.

987. Where would you look for grass? As a rule, the only places where we can look for grass are the scrub lands on the south side of the river, and the New England country.

988. Do you send your stock to New England? I have not done so, but my neighbours have. I wish to state that it would be almost utterly impossible for people living out west to get their stock to a railway on the north side of the river.

989. Would there not be a station out near Rossmore? Yes; but it would be of no use to put sheep on the trucks there if the train could not travel in towards Narrabri, because of the flooded state of the country.

990. At Tulladunna? In wet seasons there is no such place as Tulladunna. The flood-water breaks over the land at the 277-mile peg on the proposed route, on the northern side of the river, and one stream goes to the east of Boolcarrol, and the other to the south of it. On the north side of the river the line would have to cross about 20 miles of flooded country. I have known this country since 1865.

991. You think it would be better to take the line on the south side of the river? Yes; it would be accessible there, whereas at times it would be impossible to get to a line on the northern side of the river.

Joseph Wall, grazier, Apple-tree Clump, sworn, and examined:—

992. *Vice-Chairman.*] Are you in favour of the construction of the proposed railway? Yes, if it start from Narrabri East, and keep on the north side of the river.

J. Wall.

21 May, 1900.

993. Why? Because such a line would go almost entirely through Crown lands. Personally, I do not care much where the line goes; but the Crown land on the south side of the river is of very little value.

994. How does the land on the north side of the river compare with that on the south side? In my opinion the land on the north side of the river is better than that on the south side.

995. What experience of agriculture have you had in the district? I have grown crops on my land, but I kept no record of the yield. If the season is at all favourable grain will grow in that part of the country. I have known the district for thirty-three years.

996. Did you only put in one crop? That is all for grain; several for hay. The land had been harrowed the year before, and the crop was put in practically under the harrow. If the railway were kept on the north side of the river there would be an important station at the crossing on the Boolcarrol Road. Mr. Maxwell has a large shed there, and as many as 50,000 sheep have been shorn there.

997. Could not the wool be brought to Wee Waa? No; it would be less costly to take it to Narrabri.

Albert

Albert Coppleson, storekeeper, Wee Waa, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Coppleson. 998. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been in the district? About thirteen years. I have been living in Wee Waa about ten years.
- 21 May, 1900. 999. How do you get your supplies? I get them by road through Narrabri West. Ten years ago the importation of the town of Wee Waa amounted to 240 tons in the twelve months; but last year it amounted to about 1,600 tons, and the trade is increasing every year.
1000. What is the increase due to? To the closer settlement in and about Wee Waa.
1001. Is the population of the district increasing? Yes, and the population of the town too. When I first came here the population of Wee Waa was about 150; but now there are nearly 1,000 people within about 2 miles of the town. People used to be in the habit of sending to Narrabri or to other places for their supplies, but of late years they have been buying their supplies in Wee Waa. Apart from that, however, the traffic to and from the district has increased.
1002. Do you think that the increase will continue? Yes, if we get a railway. There are a good many industries which might be started in and about Wee Waa.
1003. What rate is charged by teams to bring goods from Narrabri West to Wee Waa? All classes of goods are charged for at the same rate. Our cheapest rate is 1s. a cwt., while, in very dry weather, when the carriers have had to feed their animals, or in wet weather, when it has taken longer to make the journey, we have had to pay 2s. a cwt. About 1s. 4d. a cwt. would be the average rate.
1004. Is there much traffic from Wee Waa to Narrabri? Yes, a good deal. A large quantity of wool goes through Wee Waa, and a great deal of timber. Only last week I noticed loads of timber being carted through Wee Waa to Narrabri. A great many people are employed in the district in getting timber both for sleepers and for the saw-mills.
1005. Are there any saw-mills at Wee Waa? Yes, one; and there are two or three out at Pilliga.
1006. Do you favour the extension of the railway from Narrabri West or from Narrabri East? From Narrabri West. If the railway is kept on the north side of the river, and a station is made at Tulladunna, it will not pay the Wee Waa people to use the line, because the station will be about 6 miles from here, and it would suit us better to bring our goods right through from Narrabri West, and thus save the railway freight. I know the whole of this district pretty well, and I have travelled from Wee Waa to Narrabri, to Moree, and to Collarenebri.
1007. Have the droughts had a serious effect upon the district, from a business point of view? No; our business is constantly increasing, though it has not increased with a rush lately.
1008. Notwithstanding the drought of the last four or five years, the district has gone ahead? Yes.
1009. If good seasons return, do you anticipate a greater increase in business? Yes. If we had a railway I think that agriculture would be entered upon in the district to a greater extent.
1010. Do you think that the land is sufficiently good for agriculture? Yes. A good many people have come from long distances and have taken up land here only lately. I believe that about twenty-three blocks were thrown open only a few months ago, and people who are competent to judge thought it good enough to take up in blocks of something like 500 acres.
1011. What do the small farmers in this district do with their produce? Some of it is sold locally. I have bought locally-grown hay and chaff. The people who have settled here lately have taken up the land with a view to farming it.
1012. Is the produce which you have purchased consumed locally? Yes; and I have also to get produce from the New England district to send out north.
1013. Is there not a sufficient quantity grown here to supply the district? No.
1014. Is it only in times of drought that there is not a sufficient quantity grown to supply the district? Yes.
1015. Do you think that, with railway facilities, people would go in more for cultivation? Yes.
1016. What market would they use when they were over-supplying the local demand? There is a good market in the district between Wee Waa and Collarenebri.
1017. Would Walgett be a market for produce too? Yes.
1018. Is not that country similar to this? As far as Pilliga the country is similar; but I have not been as far as Walgett, though I have been up in the direction of Collarenebri and Mungindi.
1019. Do you think a railway here would pay within a reasonable time? If a line were constructed to Wee Waa it would pay for that distance.
1020. Are most of the people of Wee Waa in favour of the extension of the railway from Narrabri West? Yes, pretty well all of them.
1021. *Vice-Chairman.*] Would it be a positive disadvantage to Wee Waa, if the railway were kept on the north side of the river? Yes, it would wipe the town out, though, of course, a number would try to hang on.
1022. If a railway were constructed through Wee Waa, would this become a fairly large distributing centre? Yes; Wee Waa would supply all the settlers down towards Pilliga, and out towards Burren, Bugilbone, and Merah.
1023. *Mr. Watson.*] The rate on third-class goods from Sydney to Narrabri, a distance of 352 miles, would be £8 10s. 3d. per ton, and to Tulladunna £9 1s. 7d.;—would it not therefore be cheaper for you to get your goods sent to Tulladunna, and to cart them from there, than to get them sent to Narrabri West and cart them from there? Carriers charge not only for distance but also for the time spent in loading and unloading; and therefore we should have to pay nearly as much to bring goods from Tulladunna as to bring them from Narrabri West.
1024. If you paid anything less than 9s. a ton from Tulladunna you would save money;—do you not think that you could get your carting done for that? I do not think so; I should have to put on teams myself.
1025. There would be no back loading? No.
1026. What back loading is there now? Most of the teamsters take back timber and wool.
1027. When there is back loading you get lower rates? Yes. We must try and land goods here as cheaply as storekeepers doing business, say, in Narrabri, could deliver them at Pian Creek. As regards the merit of the two proposals, I should like to say that although there are some settlers living on the north side of the line, most of the land there is within the Edgeroi holding. Settlers who are living on the eastern side of that holding send their produce to the Moree line, and the holders of Edgeroi are having a woolshed built on

on that line, and their homestead is there. Other settlers on the north side of the river are not more than 14 or 15 miles from the existing railway, while those who are not served by the existing railway would be only 12 or 14 miles from the proposed railway on the south side of the river. If, on the other hand, the line were kept on the north side of the river it would wipe out Wee Waa altogether. I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the evidence of Messrs. E. H. Wall and Murat, given in 1893, against the proposal that the line should be taken *via* Gurly Point to Moree.

A. Coppleson.
21 May, 1900.

1028. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Why would a line on the north side of the river wipe out Wee Waa? Wee Waa is an established town and a fairly good trading centre? If the railway come here it will become a still bigger centre; but if the railway keep on the north side of the river we shall be unable to compete with the Narrabri storekeepers for the Pian Creek traffic, because it would cost us more to land our goods there than it would cost them. We should have to bring our goods from Tulladunna to Wee Waa, and then bring them back to Tulladunna, and that would kill our trade, so that it would not pay business people to remain here.

1029. What would it cost per ton to do that? At a low rate it would cost, on the average, about 15s. a ton. If flour were £8 10s. a ton landed at Tulladunna, it would cost 15s. more to bring it to Wee Waa, and, if we wanted to supply a man at Burron, another 15s. to take it back to Tulladunna, in addition to the railway rates from Tulladunna to Burron. It would, therefore, cost a man at Burron £1 10s. a ton more to buy flour at Wee Waa than to buy it at Narrabri. I have paid the Government as much as £350 for an acre of land in this town; but I have been afraid to enlarge my premises, because I do not know what will be done about the railway, and we have all been in a state of uncertainty about the matter for a number of years. If it were not for that uncertainty, Wee Waa would be a bigger town than it is, although it has made great strides of late years.

1030. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you noticed any increase of late years in the number of farming implements required in the district? Yes. Up to five years ago there was no inquiry for such implements, but now the inquiries increase every year.

1031. Is there an apparent disposition on the part of the farmers to adopt newer kinds of implements? They are only just commencing to go in for the newer kinds of implements, but there is a great demand for them now.

Ernest Albert Anniversary Holcombe, settlement lessee, Wee Waa, sworn, and examined:—

1032. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where is your property? On the Merah holding, on the north side of the river, 20 miles below Wee Waa.

E. A. A.
Holcombe.

1033. How much land do you hold? 3,000 acres.

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1034. Are you carrying on grazing there? Yes.

1035. How long have you been there? For four years. Before that time I was in the Walgett district. I have been at it ten years altogether.

1036. How many sheep do you run? I have 1,700 at the present time.

1037. Is your land ringbarked? Yes, all of it.

1038. What kind of timber was growing on it? Belar and coolabah.

1039. Have you been engaged in the timber business at all? No; but I have had a fair amount of experience in getting timber for my own use in other ways. You will find very good ironbark about 12 miles from Wee Waa, south-west and west.

1040. Is the forest an extensive one? Yes; it extends for a great distance. There is more ironbark there than I know of in most districts.

1041. Would the timber in the district contribute extensively to the traffic of a railway? I think timber would be brought to the railway from that part of the district. They could get it to Wee Waa more easily than to Narrabri or to Boggabri.

1042. How far is it from Narrabri? About 30 miles.

1043. How long do you think the timber there is likely to last? It all depends upon how it is used. I have worked amongst it getting posts and building material, and I know that it is timber which is suitable for railway requirements.

1044. Is the silver-leaved ironbark between Narrabri and Wee Waa as good as the ordinary ironbark? No; it is not considered good timber at all. It is the narrow-leaved ironbark that is useful. The silver-leaved ironbark is generally pipey, and not so big as the narrow-leaved ironbark.

1045. *Mr. McFurlane.*] Is it the red or the grey ironbark that you use? You will get both out there; but it is chiefly red ironbark.

1046. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are there many selectors out your way? Yes.

1047. What is the average size of their holdings? From 2,000 to 3,000 acres.

1048. What kind of land do they hold? Red-chocolate soil, which is good farming.

1049. How much of your land would be suitable for cultivation? I can safely say that half of it would be.

1050. Is there a disposition on the part of the settlers in your district to go in for agriculture? I think that people on small holdings will have to go in for agriculture, because they have not sufficient land to make grazing pay. It is only by cultivating your land that you can save your stock when you are away from the railway line.

1051. Would you feel disposed to go in for agriculture? Yes.

1052. At the present time it would not pay you to grow produce to send away? No.

1053. What number of sheep are you able to fatten and dispose of in a year? We never have many to fatten. I go in more for breeding, myself, and I do not send many away. I usually run from 1,800 to 2,000 sheep, and I can sell my stock better locally as stores.

1054. *Mr. Watson.*] Is your country good for fattening? Yes, splendid.

1055. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is it expensive to drive stock from your land to the railway station? Yes; it is too expensive to make it profitable to send small lots away; but if we had a railway we could often send away a small lot.

1056. Is much stock moved from this district in dry seasons? Yes.

1057. In what direction? This year stock has been going to Moree and to New England, and also on to the scrubby country. I have a lot there myself.

- E. A. A. Holcombe.
21 May, 1900.
1058. Would the starving stock traffic be a source of revenue to a railway? Yes. A railway would provide the only means of saving stock.
1059. Is there any good pine in the forests that you have spoken of? About 16 miles out you will find pine. The good timber has been cut out just around the town by the local sawmills, so that they have to go from 16 to 20 miles for good timber now.
1060. I suppose at that distance from Wee Waa the pine has not been cut much? It has hardly been cut. You find pine more down about Pilliga.
1061. What would be a fair-sized holding for the support of a family in your neighbourhood? I have 3,000 acres, and I can support a family well on that area. You can do very well on from 2,000 to 2,500 acres.
1062. But a railway would assist you considerably? Yes.
1063. If there were a railway you could put part of your land under crop? Yes; and I should be able to send away some fat stock occasionally.
1064. Are you acquainted with the country as far out as Collarendabri? No, but I know it as far as Walgett.
1065. What is the country like between your place and Walgett? It is principally black-soil, coolabah country, with belts of loamy soil. It is the loamy soil that we generally use for agriculture, and our houses and gardens are generally situated on that soil.
1066. Are the red and the chocolate soil superior for agriculture to the black soil? Yes; we all use the red or the chocolate soil for agriculture, because they do not crack.
1067. If we have been informed that the black soil gives better returns, and lasts twice as long as the red soil, would you say that the information is incorrect? I think that it is. The black soil grows the best pasture; but it is not the best agricultural soil. With regard to the feeding of stock, I have found that the cost of fodder, and the various charges for carriage, and so on, make it too expensive. The only thing that would help us is a railway.
1068. Which route would you favour for a railway from Narrabri—that on the north or that on the south side of the river? That on the south side of the river. That is the way all the traffic goes now, to and from Walgett. I cannot see that the construction of a railway on the northern side of the river would benefit very many people, whereas if the line were taken on the southern side of the river it would be of advantage to some hundreds.

Arthur George Lane, homestead selector, Wee Waa, sworn, and examined:—

- A. G. Lane.
21 May, 1900.
1069. *Mr. Watson.*] Where is your holding? A mile and a half from Wee Waa.
1070. What is the area of it? 500 acres.
1071. How long is it since you took it up? I took it up in September last.
1072. Was the timber on it green then? Yes. I think it originally formed part of the Wee Waa holding.
1073. Were there many applicants for the land? Yes, two or three.
1074. What sort of land is it? Part of it is red chocolate ground, and part of it is black soil. About 200 acres of it are chocolate ground.
1075. Is the chocolate ground heavily timbered? Yes.
1076. What sort of timber is there on it? Ironbark, pine, box, and brigalow. I have a lot of it cleared ready for the plough, and it would have been ploughed but for the wet weather.
1077. Have you had previous experience of farming? I have not had much previous experience in farming.
1078. How do you expect to make a living on your land—mainly by agriculture? Yes.
1079. Where do you expect to get a market? I expect to send some of my stuff to Walgett if the railway is made there, and what I cannot get rid of in that way I shall send towards the coast.
1080. When you took the land up did you think you would find a local market for what you grew, or did you expect to have to send your produce to Narrabri? I intended to send some produce to Narrabri West.
1081. What did you expect to have to pay for cartage there? £1 a ton when the roads were good, and more at other times.
1082. Did you expect to find a fair demand locally for hay? I did not expect to be able to get rid of very much locally.
1083. I understand that quite a number of selections have been taken up recently? I think that the day I selected my piece about ten blocks were taken up.
1084. If all of these selectors go in for agriculture they will soon exhaust the local market? Yes; in anything like a decent season.
1085. Do you think that the proposed railway would assist you in getting rid of your produce? Yes, if it came from Narrabri West; but if it came from Narrabri East it would be of no assistance to us at all, because it would cost us as much to cart produce to Tulladunna as to cart it to Narrabri.
1086. Is there much land between Wee Waa and Narrabri West as well suited for agriculture as your land is? Yes; for from 10 to 12 miles on this side of Narrabri the land is all good for agriculture.
1087. It improves as it gets to Wee Waa? Yes.
1088. What would you contract to clear land similar to your own for? From 15s. to £1 an acre.
1089. Did you grub out your timber? I burnt it off and grubbed it out. There was a good deal of dead timber amongst it.
1090. Is there much timber similar to yours still to be thrown open? Yes. Out towards Yarry Lake the country is all the same.
1091. How far is Yarry Lake? Ten or 12 miles from the proposed railway.

Charles Peter O'Rourke, hotelkeeper, Wee Waa, sworn, and examined:—

- C. P. O'Rourke.
21 May, 1900.
1092. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long did you carry on operations as a saw-miller in this district? Between four and five years.
1093. What kind of timber did you deal with mostly? Mostly with pine.
1094. Did you saw ironbark? Yes.

1095.

1095. Where did you get your supplies from? The pine came mostly from Cuttabri, down towards Drilool, about 16 miles away; and from Brigalow Creek, about 14 miles away. There is more ironbark than pine on Brigalow Creek.

1096. Is the pine practically cut out now within 15 miles of Wee Waa? There is none within 15 miles of Wee Waa; but from Cuttabri Creek to Baradine, and right on to Coonabarabran, it is all pine-bearing.

1097. What is the nearest point, on the route of the proposed railway from Narrabri West to Wee Waa, to the pine forests? I think that Wee Waa would be the nearest point, or somewhere near Round Swamp, which would be about 15 miles by Yarry Lake.

1098. Would one have to go 14 or 15 miles from the proposed line in order to get suitable pine? Yes. You might get odd loads at a shorter distance, but you would have to go out some distance to get a good supply.

1099. Where is the good ironbark now grown? On Brigalow Creek, and from a point 14 miles south of Wee Waa, right on to Coonabarabran.

1100. We have been informed that the ironbark of the district which would be served by the proposed railway is inferior, being as a rule hollow, with 30 per cent. of waste in each log;—is that your experience? No; there is ironbark within 3 or 4 miles of Wee Waa which is hollow, but they call it bastard ironbark; it is a short-leaved ironbark; but the ironbark on the Brigalow Creek has a long leaf, and is very sound.

1101. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What variety of ironbark is it? I only know the two varieties—the short-leaved ironbark and the narrow-leaved ironbark.

1102. If a railway were brought to Wee Waa would that timber be sent out west? I think that Wee Waa would advance if the railway were brought here, and the people out west must get their pine either from this district or from the Pilliga district.

1103. Have you consigned any timber, either sawn or in logs, to Narrabri? Yes; to Gately's mill and to Stafford's mill, and I have sent sawn timber. I have sent a lot of timber to Collarendabri.

1104. Do you endorse the evidence which has been given to-day with respect to the advisability of constructing the proposed railway on the south side of the line? Yes.

Archibald MacKenzie, grazier, Wee Waa, sworn, and examined:—

1105. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good general knowledge of this district? Yes; in pretty well all directions.

1106. Will you describe the country between Wee Waa and Narrabri? Along the cleared line it is sandy, scrubby country.

1107. What would that country be like if it were cleared? Some of it would be very good.

1108. For agriculture, or for pastoral purposes? It would be good country if you could keep the native dogs off it.

1109. Is it country that would be settled upon to any extent if railway communication were given to it? A lot of it is; but parts of it are no good at all.

1110. Is the country between Wee Waa and Walgett similar to that between Wee Waa and Narrabri? On the south side of the river it is somewhat the same.

1111. Is there much scrubby country? Yes, down towards Pilliga.

1112. What is the best soil for grazing land? The black soil.

1113. Does the clearing of scrub country greatly improve the land? Yes; the scrub land is no good unless it is cleared.

1114. How does the cleared land compare with the plain country? Some of it is nearly as good as the plain country.

1115. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the country around Yarry Lake? Yes.

1116. And do you know the country between Wee Waa and Schwager's? Yes.

1117. How does the country out towards Yarry Lake compare with that between Wee Waa and Schwager's? It is about the same; but there is more belar and pine.

1118. Is it good country? Very good country.

1119. How far south of the cleared line is Yarry Lake? About 7 or 8 miles from Round Swamp.

1120. Then the Yarry Lake country would be within the influence of the proposed railway? Yes.

1121. How far south of the cleared line is ironbark to be got in any quantity? For railway purposes.]

1122. Yes? About 14 or 15 miles from Round Swamp.

1123. Would it be closer to the line at any other point? No.

1124. Is there good pine within about the same distance of the railway route? Most of the pine from that part of the district has been drawn towards Narrabri; but you could get pine within about the same distance of the railway route.

1125. How far do they draw timber now? From 20 to 25 miles.

1126. Fourteen or 15 miles is not too far to draw timber? No.

1127. So that there is a good deal of timber still standing which would be within the influence of the proposed railway? Yes. Coming towards Wee Waa you get ironbark within 12 miles.

1128. Do you think that Wee Waa is the nearest point to which any quantity of timber would be drawn? Yes.

Sydney Powell, grazier, Pilliga, sworn, and examined:—

1129. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the extent of your holding? About 13,500 acres, including what is held by one of my sons.

1130. What is the carrying capacity of the land? There is such a difference in the seasons that it is difficult to say; but on the average it will carry a sheep to 2½ acres.

1131. What advantages would you and the people of Pilliga derive from the construction of the proposed railway;—what effect would the construction of the line have upon settlement in that district? The construction of a railway from Narrabri West to Wee Waa would be greatly to the advantage of the people living in my neighbourhood. I have been in consultation with them over the matter for several months, and no later than Saturday they asked me to advocate the construction of such a line, as it was hopeless to expect that a line would be constructed to Pilliga.

C. P.
O'Rourke.
21 May, 1900.

A.
MacKenzie.
21 May, 1900.

S. Powell
21 May, 1900.

- S. Powell. 1132. Do you regard the construction of a line on the north side of the river as unlikely to serve the interests of Pilliga? Yes.
- 21 May, 1900. 1133. Would the people of Pilliga use a railway station at Burren? No; they say that they would sooner come to Wee Waa.
1134. Why would Wee Waa be more serviceable to them than Burren? I should make Wee Waa my terminus, except in cases of emergency.
1135. Is the country easier between your place and Wee Waa than between your place and Burren? I do not know that it is any easier. The people going from Pilliga to Burren would have to cross the Bugilbone Creek bridge, about 8 miles from Pilliga, and from the crossing to Burren would be another 14 or 15 miles, or 22 or 23 miles altogether, whereas from Pilliga direct to Wee Waa the distance is only 37 miles.
1136. Do you corroborate the evidence which you have heard here to-day? I do. I was in Narrabri in 1890, and I travelled from Narrabri after the water had begun to recede, but it took me three days to get home. I passed through water at Tulladunna and Boolcarrol for a distance of 3 or 4 miles, so that it looked like a perfect sea.
1137. What depth was the water there? The depth varied, so that sometimes the water came up to the horse's fetlocks, and at other times to the saddle flaps. I could see by the marks on the trees that the water had fallen 9 or 10 inches before I got there; and I should have been afraid to venture through, only for a guide.
1138. Tulladunna is the place at which it is proposed to construct a railway station? I believe so. I have no doubt that in bad weather such as that of last week, the road from my place to Burren would be very heavy.
1139. In bad weather, could you get to Wee Waa as quickly as to Burren? If I came along the south side of the river, but I should have to go 20 miles around to get across. I live on the north side of the river.
1140. Could people living on the south side of the river get to Wee Waa as quickly as to Burren? Yes; even the people on the north side prefer to travel along the road on the south side of the river in wet weather. That road is more sandy and easier to travel in wet weather, because it is free from flood, but it is very heavy in dry weather.
1141. Is the country between Pilliga and Burren more liable to floods than the country between Pilliga and Wee Waa? There is not much of it flooded, unless the flood is very high, but there are swamps and low places where I have had my horses bogged to the bellies.
1142. Then the travelling generally is heavier towards Burren than towards Wee Waa? In some places, though the road, where possible, follows the high ground.

Cornelius Kelaher, grazier, Pian Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Kelaher. 1143. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How much land have you? With the members of my family, I hold between 5,000 and 6,000 acres.
- 21 May, 1900. 1144. What number of sheep have you? About 3,000.
1145. How long have you been on your present holding? Eighteen years.
1146. What is your annual production of wool and stock? I have sent away from sixty to seventy bales of wool a year, and in favourable seasons I sell from 1,000 to 1,500 fat sheep.
1147. Do you carry on cultivation at all? Yes, a little.
1148. What is the extent of your cultivated land? About 5 acres.
1149. Do you cultivate wheat chiefly? I tried wheat one year, oats another year, and corn another year.
1150. How did the various crops succeed? I got the best crops I ever saw in my life there. The wheat was almost as high as myself, and I never saw better ears of grain. I was reared on a farm at Singleton, and I never saw a better crop on the Hunter than I saw on Pian Creek. The same remarks apply to my oat crop and to my corn crop.
1151. Have you gone in for fruit-growing at all? A little; I never saw better grapes grown than grow there.
1152. What proportion of your land is similar to that which you have been cultivating? Very nearly every acre of it is as good.
1153. Would you go in extensively for agriculture if the proposed railway were made? I intend to go in largely for agriculture.
1154. Would many of your neighbours do the same? They seem all inclined to go in for agriculture, more or less, but my experience is that sheep pay better than farming. I have done better since I took to grazing.
1155. Are many sheep moved about this district in bad seasons? Yes, a great many; I have had to move some of my own. Many sheep are trucked at Narrabri and sent to Guyra.
1156. Have you had many losses in moving sheep? Yes; we have lost heavily in driving them.
1157. At what rate will poor sheep travel? Sometimes you are very lucky if you can get them 3 miles a day. They are dropping every mile.
1158. Would you avail yourself of the railway, if one were near at hand, to move your sheep in times of drought? Yes. If we had had a railway years ago it would have saved me a lot of money. Then, too, in good seasons there would be many more stock sent away. I should often send away two or three trucks of sheep to Maitland or to Sydney if there were a railway here; but it does not pay to drive small lots, and the sheep afterwards get poor, and perhaps die.
1159. Do you carry any large stock? About five head of cattle, and five or six horses.
1160. Do the cattle on your run do well? Splendidly; it is very fattening country.
1161. Has the whole of your land been ringbarked? It is nearly all plain country; but there is some coolabah country, which would be better if it were thinned.
1162. Is your soil chiefly black soil? We have black soil and chocolate soil.
1163. What kind of soil are you cultivating? I have tried both. My grapes are growing on black soil, and they are doing wonderfully well.
1164. There seems to be a prejudice against black soil for cultivation? Yes; it is said that it cracks too much; but I have tried both it and the chocolate soil. I find that oranges do much better on the black soil.
- 1165.

1165. Are not some kinds of black soil more clayey than others? Yes. Some black soil does not crack so much as other black soil does; it is a sort of loamy soil.
1166. Have you drained your ground at all? No; I have never even trenched it.
1167. Do vegetables do well with you? Yes; I have grown cabbages that you would have to get an axe to cut—that is the black preserving cabbage. I am in favour of bringing the line from Narrabri West. If the line is brought from Narrabri East, people living to the west of Wee Waa will have 10 miles additional haulage to pay for all time, which means so much less profit on our wool and produce, and so much more money for our stores. I have laid out some hundreds of pounds in Wee Waa, and for that reason I should like to see the town go ahead. I think it would be very wrong to saddle the people living between Wee Waa and Collarendabri with 10 miles of unnecessary haulage. I am sure, too, that a line on the south side of the river could be constructed more cheaply than a line on the north side. What Mr. Powell said about the flooded state of the country on the north side is quite correct. I have had to swim my horses there occasionally.

C. Kelaher.

21 May, 1900.

WEDNESDAY, 23 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Burren Hotel," Burren, at 3 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Robert Darvall Barton, grazier, Burren, sworn, and examined:—

1168. *Vice-Chairman.*] How is your property situated with respect to the proposed railway? The proposed railway would pass through my leasehold. R. D. Barton.
23 May, 1900.
1169. What is the area of your holding? I have got about 60,000 acres, leasehold and freehold. There are 14,000 or 15,000 acres of secured land.
1170. What is the average carrying capacity of your land? Before answering that question I would ask what do you mean by carrying capacity;—do you mean simply capacity to carry sheep and keep them alive, or capacity to keep them in such a condition that they will grow wool and increase.
1171. How many sheep will your country carry, one year with another, taking your latter definition of carrying capacity? During the last few years it has been able to carry fewer sheep than formerly. Fifteen years ago when I came here I gave evidence before the Local Land Board that the country would carry a sheep to 3 acres; but, during the last year or two, I have been rather inclined to think that it takes more than 3 acres to carry a sheep. I still hold to the opinion, however, that, on the average, taking the seasons as they come, right through, a sheep to 3 acres is fair stocking.
1172. Where do you consign your wool and other products? To Sydney, *via* Narrabri West.
1173. Do you ever experience any difficulty in getting your produce away? Yes, on many occasions; either because of droughts, or because of floods. When there is a drought, there are no teams, and in wet seasons the roads become practically impassable. If I sent for supplies to Narrabri to-morrow it might be six weeks or two months before I got them.
1174. Do these difficulties happen every year? Not every year; but we have rain, on the average, more than once a year, and if you wanted to get supplies up, or to send wool away at that time, you could not do it.
1175. Do you consider the country which you hold, and the adjacent country, good fattening country? Yes; it is the best in the Colony.
1176. What difficulty have you in getting fat stock to market at the present time? At the present time there is never a blade of grass on the travelling stock routes between here and Narrabri, and I estimate that sheep lose 10 lb. in weight in going from Burren to Sydney.
1177. Does this risk of loss prevent the sending of consignments to market? It does.
1178. Is the country so good that you could fatten more than one consignment of sheep per annum if you had speedy communication with Sydney? Yes. We can fatten all the year round, winter and summer; but we require a railway to send the stock away.
1179. Would your remarks about your own land apply to your neighbours' land? Yes; to the whole district through which the proposed line would pass.
1180. Have any small holdings been taken up recently in this district? Yes.
1181. With railway communication, would small holders be able to send away small consignments of fat stock at intervals during the year? The same thing applies to large holders as to small holders in that matter. I have a small consignment of fat wethers on hand at the present time, but I could not pay a drover to take them to Narrabri, because it would cost too much. A drover would take 2,000 sheep for the same money as 500.
1182. Which way would you like to see the railway brought from Narrabri, on the north side of the river or on the south side? In my opinion the line should come on the south side of the river, *via* Wee Waa; but it does not matter to us on what side it comes, so long as we get it.
1183. Do you think there is likely to be any agricultural development in the country between Wee Waa and Burren? No, not the least.
1184. Is it because the land is not suitable for agriculture? Yes; and because there is no market in which to get rid of your stuff when you have grown it.
1185. With a railway to Walgett and Collarendabri, would there not be a market out west for locally-grown hay? Yes; but it would hardly be worth considering, from a commercial point of view. When there is rain, and grass follows, there is never any demand for fodder out west, and it would be ridiculous for us to grow produce in competition with the Hunter River farmers and the farmers round about Gunnedah. As for supplying the country out west, we should be having a drought when they were having one.

- R. D. Barton. 1186. Do you think that the distance from the seaboard is too great to enable you to successfully compete with your grain in the markets of the world? I think so; and I think that the crop which we should get once in five years would not pay us for putting it in. This is essentially a grazing country, and I hold that, as graziers, we require, and can support, a railway far better than as farmers.
- 23 May, 1900. 1187. What sized holding would be sufficient to maintain a man and his family in decent comfort in this district? That depends very much upon what the man will be satisfied with. No doubt a man could make a living on 5,000 acres; but if he gets on well in that area he will, before very long, try to increase his holding to a very much larger one.
1188. Is land always available for that? Not always; but if I wanted to buy your shirt, and I offered to you more than you could get another one for, you would probably sell it.
1189. Have any experiments for conserving the natural grasses as hay been successful in this district? Last year I conserved the natural grasses, and also cultivated 25 acres of wheat for hay. I have cultivated one paddock for the last ten or twelve years, and I have had three crops during that time, but not one of them would have yielded grain, because they were all pinched.
1190. I suppose you selected the best agricultural land on your holding to cultivate? Yes. The piece I speak of is 12 or 13 miles from my house, and it was selected because it was the best I could get. My object in growing hay and conserving the natural grasses is to have a reserve of fodder in the event of another drought, such as that we have recently passed through, occurring.
1191. How often during a period of years would you be able to cut a large quantity of grass for hay? During the last two years we could have done it, and I should think it could be done two years out of three. We generally get a spring.
1192. How does the natural grass keep as hay, and what is the quality of the hay? I cannot tell you how it will keep, but, as for its quality, I would sooner have it than any other hay I have grown.
1193. What grasses have you conserved? Trefoil, "parsnip," "carrot," a little crowsfoot, and other native herbage. You can get twenty or thirty different species of herbage in one handful. The trouble with crowsfoot is that it is rather too succulent to dry into hay.
1194. Have any of your neighbours carried on similar experiments? Mr. Brodie, the manager of Boolcarrol, is the only person I know who has gone into it to any extent.
1195. Where do you consign your wool? Sometimes to Sydney, and sometimes to Newcastle for direct exportation to England. I think that the district deserves a railway, because it is one of the best pastoral districts in the Colony. We have been very much neglected in the past. All we have got from the Government is a by-weekly mail and a telephone line, erected after a combined movement on the part of a few of us around here, and the giving of a guarantee.
1196. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think it is necessary to take the railway both to Walgett and to Collarendabri;—the Railway Commissioners estimate that there would be a yearly loss of £13,000 on the working of the two lines? I cannot contradict the figures of the Railway Commissioners; but I cannot see how there can be that loss. Probably the estimate of traffic has been made in a time like the present, when the country is not a quarter stocked. We have nothing like a sheep to 3 acres in the district now. There are times when we can carry more than a sheep to the acre; but there are also times when we cannot carry any sheep at all, because we do not get enough rain to make the grass grow. If we had a few good seasons, however, the probability is that the figures of the Railway Commissioners would be found to under-estimate the traffic. If I had plenty of capital, I think I should not mind guaranteeing a railway as I have guaranteed the telephone line. Walgett wants a railway, and Collarendabri wants a railway, and if the proposed line is constructed, we shall have a trunk line for both towns for more than half the distance, and only 50 miles of branch line will be required. That arrangement makes the construction much less than would be necessary if two separate lines were made—one to Walgett and the other to Collarendabri. Had the railway originally come down from Narrabri through Wee Waa, and then on to Moree, we should have had a railway before this, and at a much smaller expense.
1197. Is there enough traffic from the country beyond Collarendabri and Walgett to make two railways pay? Judging from the traffic that passes Burren from Walgett, and that which passes Boolcarrol from Collarendabri, I should think that there is ample to justify the construction of two railways.
1198. The Railway Commissioners suggest that a line might be taken to Collarendabri from Narrabri, and another line to Walgett from Coonamble? I lived in the Coonamble district for ten years, and I have been in this district some fifteen years, and thirty-five years ago I was in this district managing Gurly station, so that I am thoroughly acquainted with every inch of the country between Burren and Coonamble, as well as with the district round about Walgett and along the Barwon, and out to the Queensland border. The country down the Castlereagh from Coonamble is certainly excellent pastoral country, and requires a railway as much as we do; but the question is, should the country between the Castlereagh River and the surveyed line to Walgett be left without a railway. This country is practically comprised by the frontage on each side of the Namoi, and it is all good country.
1199. A line from Coonamble to Walgett, and another from Narrabri to Collarendabri, would apparently divide the pastoral country well? I think so. There would be a distance of about 80 miles between the two lines.
1200. What is the country like in that 80-mile stretch;—south of the Namoi, below Pilliga, is not some of the country unproductive? Until you come to Come-by-chance the country on the south side of the river is not very good.
1201. Should you consider a man too far from a railway if he were within 20 or 25 miles of one? I think that a man should be satisfied to be within 30 miles of a railway; but, of course, others might not be of the same opinion. As to whether the railway should be taken to Walgett from Coonamble, or from Narrabri, that is a question for the Committee to answer.
1202. Would a line to Walgett catch the more northerly traffic that now comes to Collarendabri? No doubt the traffic would go to the railway, either at Walgett or at Collarendabri.
1203. A railway to either place would catch all the more northerly traffic? Yes. People will go to the nearest railway, wherever it is.
1204. If the railway were taken from Coonamble to Walgett, and another line were made from Narrabri through Wee Waa to Collarendabri, could the Collarendabri line be given a more direct route than that at present surveyed? From my long experience of the district, I say that the line that is now surveyed is the cheapest that could be constructed. Any other line would pass through a great deal of flooded country, and, if you tried to bring a railway more to the north, you would lose the traffic of Pilliga and places lying on the north side of the Namoi, but on the south side of the proposed line; although such a
line

line would come nearer my woolshed. Any deviation would not save more than a few miles, and the more northerly route would not serve as many people as would be served if the route already surveyed were adopted, while the cost of construction would be more if the surveyed route were altered.

R. D. Barton.
23 May, 1900.

1205. Do you think that if Collarendabri were the only objective the present surveyed route would be the one to follow? Yes. I think that a line following that route would serve more people than any other. I have heard no one object to the proposed route. The people on the north side of the Namoi, who, I thought, would have opposed it in order to get the railway brought closer to them, are in favour of it; but if you took the line further to the north the people to the south would complain that they were being left too far away.

1206. Is the whole of your 60,000 acres black-plain country? Yes. It is similar to the country the Committee have seen.

1207. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is the country between Burren and Collarendabri, and Burren and Walgett, similar to what we have already seen? Yes.

1208. Is the timbered country, when cleared, equal to the plain country? It depends on the timber. The belar country, when cleared, or when the timber has been ringbarked and killed, is better than any other. I have small patches of belar, and there are small patches of it all through the plain country. The belar is very easily killed, and if you ringbark it the country on which it grows will carry more stock than the natural plains. When the timber is killed the country is like virgin soil, and the saltbush and natural herbage come up most prolifically.

1209. Would the same remarks apply to box and pine country? No; if you ringbark that country you will probably get a very strong growth of grass-seed.

1210. Which would obtain the more traffic, a line to Walgett or a line to Collarendabri? I think it would be six of one and half a dozen of the other. To Narran, from either Walgett or Collarendabri, is about 60 miles. The bulk of the wool comes from that country, and from the Birrie, the Balloon, and other rivers, right up to the Queensland border. That wool passes Burren and Boolcarrol, and could come through either Walgett or Collarendabri. The carriers follow whatever route has the better feed on it, and the traffic would go to whatever place the railway went to.

1211. Would there be much cultivation between Wee Waa and the Barwon? There are patches of country similar to that of Mr. Hocken, at "Rossmore," Long Point—sandy loam with a few box trees on it. It would probably grow very good crops, but the climate is against agriculture. Our rainfall here is insufficient, and the rain does not come at the right time. You must have rain to come at a time when it will fill the ears, or otherwise the crop will all pinch up. In my opinion, agriculture in this district is more precarious than wool-growing.

1212. Would the traffic of the district increase if a railway were made? Certainly. One has only to look at the railway returns for any district to know that. If you make a railway to any place the traffic increases.

1213. Would the increase in traffic be caused by additional settlement? There would be a good deal of additional settlement, and people would travel about more if there were a railway. The probabilities are that with a railway we should utilise our land more than we are doing now.

1214. Is there much land here available for settlement? Yes, a great deal. Nearly all the leased land will be thrown open for settlement next July.

1215. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think that the renting of the travelling stock routes is desirable? It is most undesirable. I took a great deal of trouble some years ago to bring the matter before the Government, so as to have the stock routes kept open to the public; but they are in the same condition now as they were before. It is due to the state of the stock routes that there is such a loss in stock travelling between Burren and Narrabri. The burrs which are growing up everywhere should be cut down. We keep our own land in good condition; but in many instances I am afraid to buy sheep, because, by doing so I should have my land overrun with burrs.

1216. Are there any other instances in the district, besides your own, where people go in for cultivation? Most of us have a few acres on which we try to grow something.

1217. What success have the others had? About the same success as I have had.

1218. Have you tried the cultivation of fruit to any extent? Yes. The district is as good a district for fruit as you can have, if you irrigate the land. The soil suits grapes especially well.

1219. Do you think that if a railway were constructed people would be induced to go in for fruit-growing? They would certainly grow grapes.

1220. Has any attempt at wine-making been made in the district? I fancy that Mr. Walter Holcombe makes some wine. You cannot surpass the grapes grown in the district, and I suppose good wine could be made from them.

1221. Do you think that the partial success that you have had in agriculture would deter others from cultivating on a large scale, even if they had a railway? I do not know. I should attempt agriculture on a large scale to-morrow if I knew that I could sell my produce.

1222. You think that growing wheat for grain is not likely to be a success in this district? Yes.

1223. It would never pay to grow it for hay for export? No.

1224. Would a railway be largely used for the removal of stock? If we had had a railway here within the last two or three years we could have saved millions of sheep which have since died. I sent 5,000 sheep to Narrabri by train; but at Breeza I took out of the trucks only 2,200 live sheep, and I had to pay for the burning of the rest. If I could have put those sheep into the train, within 20 miles of the paddock, while they were fresh, they would have gone down all right; but during the fortnight's travel from Burren to Narrabri they had nothing to eat. Other sheep that I have trucked I have fed on hay before putting them into the train. If I had the railway here I could put sheep into the train in as good or better condition than they are in when they are fed on hay.

1225. You attribute your losses, I suppose, almost entirely to the want of feed on the travelling-stock routes? Yes.

1226. Is there much large stock in this district? Not at the present time. A few years ago all this country was cattle-country; but we found that cattle would not pay on land that the Government wanted 30s. an acre for.

1227. In what seasons of the year do you suffer most from want of feed? From December until the winter time—if we get no rains in February.

- R. D. Barton. 1228. Where do you send your stock for grass? It all depends upon where the rain has been.
 1229. What do you pay per ton to get goods brought from Narrabri? At the present time, £3 a ton.
 23 May, 1900. I have paid £2 and £3 a ton for the carriage of my wool, but about £2 a ton is the usual rate for back-loading. In the drought of 1898 and 1899 I imported £400 worth of produce, which cost me £7 or £8 a ton delivered here; but it would not have cost half as much if there had been a railway.

James Cousins Duncan, hotelkeeper and grazier, Burren, sworn, and examined:—

- J. C. Duncan. 1230. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in this district? Thirty-seven years.
 1231. Is it a good pastoral district? From fair to good; some parts of it are better than others.
 23 May, 1900. 1232. Do you endorse in the main what Mr. Barton has said about the district? Yes.
 1233. He stated that, in his opinion, it is not suitable for agriculture;—is that your opinion? Yes.
 1234. Is it that the land here is not sufficiently good, or is it that the rainfall is insufficient? Some of the and is good enough; but the rainfall is insufficient. If you get one crop in three you are very lucky.
 1235. Do you hold any considerable area of land here? 6,500 acres, on the north and south sides of Burren Creek.
 1236. Have you occupied it long? I have held part of my land for twenty-one years, and the rest of it for nearly eighteen years.
 1237. Do you run many sheep? Not a great number. Until four years ago my partner, Mr. Hocken, held the reins. We have carried, on the average, a sheep to 2 or 3 acres.
 1238. Is that the full carrying capacity of your land? Yes; during the last four years. I have seen this country when you could not overstock it, and I have seen it when you could not carry a sheep on 100 acres. At the present time I am carrying 4,000 sheep on about 9,000 acres, under starvation conditions.
 1239. Is the country generally similar to that which you occupy? Yes; it is all about the same.
 1240. Is your land all plain country? No; I have some belar and some coolabah country.
 1241. Is that country equal to the plain country when it is cleared? I think that the belar country is better when it is cleared. It is only of late years that we have started ringing the belar; but belar country, when the timber has been rung, is the best carrying country I have seen; though ten years hence it may be the worst.
 1242. Is there much belar country? A good deal in this district. You can hardly find a run that has not a little of it.
 1243. Have you ever tried agriculture? Yes.
 1244. With what success? My first experiment was to throw the seed into the ground, and it stopped there. I got no crop. Last year I got a very light crop. I ploughed 11 acres.
 1245. Do you know the country between Burren and Collarendabri, and between Burren and Walgett? Yes.
 1246. Is it good grazing country? Yes; it is all good grazing country.
 1247. Is it mostly plain country? It is what you might call mixed country—plain, and open box country. On the Collarendabri route there is open coolabah country.
 1248. If the Crown land in this district is thrown open for settlement, and a railway constructed, will it be taken up? Wherever you throw open a piece of land there are hundreds after it. Mr. Barton spoke about the stock routes being withdrawn from lease. I lease a stock route here, and so do many others, and I think it is no use withdrawing the land from lease until someone is appointed to look after the stock routes, and to keep the burrs down. In some places now a carrier cannot walk alongside his team, because of the burrs. I think that the reserves should be withdrawn from lease, and a caretaker appointed to see that they are not eaten out by loafing sheep. If the Government cannot afford to pay caretakers, let them charge us so much for the sheep that we travel.

James Joseph Burrell, settlement lessee, Merrywinbone, sworn, and examined:—

- J. J. Burrell. 1249. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the extent of your holding? 2,560 acres.
 23 May, 1900. 1250. How would the proposed railway, if constructed, affect this district generally? I think it would materially assist us. It would give us a chance to get our sheep away in time of drought, and to bring up provisions.
 1251. What capital value was placed on your settlement lease? Thirty shillings an acre.
 1252. On that you pay 1½ per cent.? Yes; my annual rent is 4½d. an acre, or £48 a year. I think that without a railway, £1 an acre is enough for the land. We are paying too much now.
 1253. Would it be worth 30s. an acre, if you had a railway? I should be satisfied to pay that for it then.
 1254. Do you think that the Crown land in the district would make a similar increase in value, if a railway were made? Yes.
 1255. How far back from a railway would graziers and settlers be assisted by it? Twenty or thirty miles; and extending to the Barwon River.
 1256. Are there many settlers in this district just now? On the Merrywinbone holding alone there are twenty-five settlement lessees.
 1257. Do they all hold the same area as you hold? Some of them hold a little more, and some a little less. Then there are eleven in the Moree district, on the other side of the Thalaba Creek, and nine or ten in the Walgett district.
 1258. All within what distance of the route of the proposed railway? Ten or 12 miles.
 1259. Do you regard the land here as fit for agriculture? It is all good agricultural land, but the climate is against agriculture here.
 1260. Is it your intention to confine your operations solely to sheep? Yes; it would be impossible for me to do otherwise. I might put in a few acres on the off-chance of getting some hay.
 1261. You would not be likely to grow for grain? No; I have had experience in farming in some of the best agricultural districts in the Colony, notably at Wellington and at Mudgee.
 1262. You do not think the rainfall here seasonable for grain crops? No.
 1263. To within what distance would a railway benefit settlers? I should think it would benefit people from 20 to 30 miles back.
 1264. Are there any large areas within a reasonable distance of the proposed railway, which might be made available for settlement leases, if it were constructed? I think that the Mercadool leasehold is to be thrown open shortly. I do not know if the whole of the Orel and Merrywinbone land is to be thrown open,

- open, but I understand that there are 80,000 acres to be thrown open shortly on the Burren, Gorian, Mercadool, and a portion of the Avon Downs holding. J. J. Burrell.
23 May, 1900.
1265. How far would some of that land be from the proposed railway;—20 miles? Not quite so far as that.
1266. Do you agree generally with the statement made by Mr. Barton as to the possibilities of the country to be served by the proposed line? Yes; I thoroughly agree with what Mr. Barton said. I should like to refer to the disadvantages that we are under at the present time. I want seed-wheat, but it will be six or seven weeks before I shall be able to get it out from town, because of the heavy state of the roads after the rain which has just fallen. This rain comes on top of a drought. Week in and week out we are always at a disadvantage.
1267. Can a man make a living on 2,560 acres in this district at so great a distance from market? It is a struggle.
1268. How many sheep should you be able to carry in an average season? Very nearly a sheep to the acre to make a living; but I cannot carry as many as that at the present time. It is of no use for a man with 2,560 acres of land to try to make a living in this district, if he cannot carry a sheep to the acre.
1269. Is your land superior to the average land? It is about the same. The man with a small area of land tries to carry as many sheep as he can.
1270. Are the settlement lessees here generally desirous of having the railway? Yes.
1271. Do you think that people will be able to make a living on 2,560 acres without a railway? No.
1272. *Vice-Chairman.*] Do you consider your country fattening country? Yes.
1273. If there were a railway should you be able to send many small consignments of fat stock away by it? Yes.

Gerard Loder Herring, grazier, "Rose Lea," sworn, and examined:—

1274. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the area of your holding? 10,150 acres. G. L. Herring.
23 May, 1900.
1275. How many sheep do you carry? I have only had my present holding eighteen months. Last year I had 1,600 sheep, and I employed three men to cut scrub for them. Now I have 3,600 sheep, and I employ two men to cut scrub.
1276. Have these men been cutting scrub all along? No; I only started them at scrub-cutting two months ago.
1277. Is your holding thickly timbered? There are about 600 acres of belar on it, and I have some coolabah country; the rest is plain country.
1278. When all the timber is ringbarked, will the carrying capacity of your country be increased? I do not care about ringing the belar, because I feed my sheep on it. It keeps them alive, though it is not good for them.
1279. Is your run well watered? Yes, I have three wells on it.
1280. What depth are they? A little over 100 feet.
1281. Do they give you as much water as you require? Yes.
1282. Have you been sufficiently long in the district to be able to say what your prospects are? I have been dealing in sheep since 1890. I had a place close to Wee Waa in 1890, which I sold.
1283. What is your opinion of this part of the country for agriculture? It is no good at all for agriculture. A man might grow a bit of hay; but bush hay would be just as good as any wheaten or other hay that he could grow. Horses eat bush hay before they eat any other, as long as it is not grass hay. Herbage hay is better than any hay you can buy. We never have grass in the early spring here, only herbage.
1284. And do you reap the herbage? Yes; we cut it at the end of the spring. We have grass if we get rain after Christmas.
1285. For how many months in the year are you able to run sheep without cutting the scrub? It all depends on the seasons. Sometimes you can run sheep all the year round without cutting anything for them.
1286. Would there be sufficient water in your wells to allow you to try irrigation on a small scale? No; it takes me all my time now to water vegetables, and a few fruit-trees.
1287. What vegetables do you grow? Cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuces, and turnips. They all do well with plenty of water.
1288. Do you use manure with them? Yes, I have given them manure—ashes principally.
1289. Have you tried fruit-trees? There are a few which I have kept alive.
1290. Does a railway afford great facilities for travelling stock? If I had had a railway at the commencement of the drought I could have sent away 300 or 400 sheep as fat stock. As it was, when I sent them in they were so poor that they did not pay for the driving.
1291. If you were within 15 or 20 miles of a railway I suppose you could send away half a truck-load or a truck-load of sheep at a time? Yes; I could send away fat lambs then. We cannot send away fat lambs now, because they fall away so much on the road.
1292. I suppose even fat sheep suffer a good deal on the road? Yes. I had to send some fat sheep nearly 60 miles, and my instructions to the drover were to drive them as fast as he could, and to truck them straight off, because at that time there was not a bite for them between my place and Narrabri. He took them in in five days.
1293. Is there any good timber between Burren and Collarendabri? No.
1294. Is there any good agricultural country there? No; there might be an occasional patch where a man could grow an odd crop or two of hay, but I should not call it agricultural land. Before the rain fell I offered carriers 3s. 6d. a cwt. to bring horse feed out from Narrabri. I only had a little over 2 tons to bring out; but, after the first fall of rain, the roads got so bad that no carrier would bring it, and I am left with only a few bags of chaff for all my horses. If there had been a railway I could have got my produce out. I agree with the evidence which Mr. Barton has given in regard to the district generally.
1295. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do the people in this district favour the construction of a line on the north side of the river or a line through Wee Waa? I think that a line through Wee Waa would be the better; but I do not think the people here care what route the line takes so long as it comes here.

Alexander Donaldson, settlement lessee, Merrywinbone, sworn, and examined:—

1296. *Vice-Chairman.*] How far is your holding from the nearest point on the route of the proposed railway? From 1½ to 2 miles; my land lies to the west of the railway route. A. Donaldson.
23 May, 1900.
1297. What is the extent of your holding? 2,560 acres.
1298. How long have you held that land? Three years. 1299.

- A. Donaldson. 1299. Did you anticipate that a railway would come near your holding when you took it up? Yes.
- 23 May, 1900. 1300. Did that belief influence you in the determination to take it up? Yes.
1301. Without a railway could a man make a fair living off 2,560 acres in this district? I think that the land is good enough, but the rainfall is too little. There has been practically a drought all the time I have been here. Under present conditions the holdings are hardly large enough to support a family.
1302. Did many people apply for land when you took up your lease? There were twenty-five blocks balloted for, and there were 109 applicants for the land.
1303. We understand there are still some 80,000 acres to be thrown open for settlement;—do you anticipate that that land will be equally sought after? Yes.
1304. What direct advantages should you reap from the construction of the proposed railway? I believe that the construction of the line would increase my net income, because I should live more cheaply if there were a railway. It would cost me less to get up my supplies and to get away my produce and my stock, and it would give me more opportunities for sending away fat stock. At the present time a man cannot send away a small lot of fat stock, because it costs too much; and in any case there is no feed on the stock routes.
1305. As a rule, a man lives pretty well up to his spending power, so that if you could get up your supplies more cheaply you would probably get up an additional quantity? Yes.
1306. If there were a railway, and the season were good, how many consignments of fat stock could you send away in a year? If a man had 2,000 wethers he might make them into small lots if there were a railway.
1307. Have you to fatten all your stock at one time, or do you spread the fattening over five or six months of the year? The grass only lasts a certain number of months, so that we are compelled to fatten all at one time. I have old feed on my run now nearly a foot high, and still the sheep are starving. They will not eat it.
1308. Do you corroborate the evidence which has been given by the other witnesses? I cannot speak from personal experience; but I believe that the land here is good enough for agriculture if it is irrigated. I think that if the Government went in for water conservation, and enabled this land to be irrigated, it could not be beaten for agriculture; but I have not heard of any practical farmer who has come into the district and given it a proper trial.
1309. Have you had any experience in irrigation yourself? No.
1310. What areas are there in this district available for irrigation? Artesian water would have to be used. With regard to what has been said about the condition of the stock routes, I think that if any landowner or drover were given power to impound loafing stock it would do away with the necessity for appointing caretakers.

William Cussen Cormie, grazier, Mercadool and Merrywinbone, sworn, and examined:—

- W. C. Cormie.
23 May, 1900.
1311. *Mr. Watson.*] What area of land do you hold? 2,560 acres conditional purchase and conditional lease.
1312. How long have you been on the land? A little over five years.
1313. Where do you send your produce? To Sydney, *via* Narrabri.
1314. What freight do you pay on goods coming from Narrabri? From 4s. to 4s. 6d. a cwt.
1315. And what do you pay to send your wool away? About the same.
1316. How far are you from the route of the proposed railway? I am 6 or 7 miles from the route of the Collarendabri branch.
1317. So that the line would assist you in getting stock and wool away and in bringing goods back? Yes; and it would assist a great number of selectors near me.
1318. Is much of your land suitable for agriculture? It would be if the rainfall were sufficient.
1319. Would it be wise to risk a grain crop? It would not.
1320. Would it be wise to risk a hay crop? In some seasons; but you would not get a crop every year.
1321. Do you agree with the evidence which has been given to the Committee to-day? Yes.
1322. Have you anything to add? I should like to add that about 90,000 acres on the Mercadool holding will shortly be thrown open for settlement lease, and that about 40,000 acres on Gorian holding will also be throw open.
1323. Would the Government be likely to get a higher rental for that land if the proposed railway were made, than it would get without it? I hope not. It takes us all our time to pay our rent now. The railway would certainly be an advantage to us; but I do not think we should have to pay more rent for it. I consider that we should pay less than we are paying now.*
1324. Do you think that there would be a greater demand for the land if the proposed railway were made? I believe that there would.

William Green, selector, Burren, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Green.
23 May, 1900.
1325. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the size of your holding? 2,560 acres.
1326. How long have you occupied it? About thirteen years.
1327. How many sheep have you carried, on the average, during that time? Taking one year with another, I can carry 1,600 sheep, keeping them in good condition. I might keep 2,000 sheep on the land, but they would be starving at times.
1328. Do you corroborate the statements you have heard as to the agricultural and pastoral possibilities of the district? Yes; my opinion is that you cannot beat this district for grazing, and that for agriculture it is as good as you could find under the sun, if there were some certainty about the seasons.
1329. How often could you get a crop in this district? About three times out of five.
1330. Hay or grain? Hay.
1331. You do not think that the district would carry a large agricultural population;—what will be grown will be for home consumption? Yes, to help us through droughty seasons. I think the line should be brought from Narrabri West through Wee Waa, because I do not think it would benefit so many people if it were taken on the northern side of the river. The people on the northern side are within a reasonable distance of the Moree line. A line on the south side of the river would serve the Boolcarrol country as well as the country on the south side of the river. If we had a railway we could shift our stock in droughty times, and save them, but when sheep have to be driven a hundred miles without food the greater number of them die on the road.

FRIDAY,

* NOTE (on revision):—I did not quite understand Question 1323; if the railway were constructed it would make the land more valuable and the Government would get higher rents, but I think the areas should be increased from 2,560 acres to 4,000 or 5,000 acres.

FRIDAY, 25 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at "Tattersall's Hotel," Collarendabri, at 3:30 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Edmund Brennan Loughnan, J.P., Honorary Secretary, Railway League, Collarendabri, sworn, and examined:—

1332. *Vice-Chairman.*] You have a statement to make with regard to the proposal into which the Committee is inquiring? I think I could not do better than repeat the evidence and statistics which I gave when a Sectional Committee visited Collarendabri to inquire into the proposal to construct a railway from Woolabra to Collarendabri. That evidence is as follows:—

E. B. Loughnan, J.P.
25 May, 1900.

ANY information I have to give is from statistics gathered by me as Secretary to the Railway League, which will be substantiated by witnesses. We wish to bring under your favourable notice our claim for railway extension to Collarendabri, with a view to a further extension later on to the Queensland border *via* Angledool. In support of our claim we wish to point out the following facts:—That the part that would be served by the railway we advocate to Collarendabri would embrace an area of about 200 miles in length, by about 80 miles in breadth, catching the whole of the New South Wales trade to the Queensland border north of Angledool, none of which is served by the Narrabri-Moree line, and which, without railway communication to Collarendabri, will still continue to go to West Narrabri. Starting from Millie, skirting the northern boundary westward of Malaraway, Minna Minane, Mungyer to the Gwydir River, down the course of that river westward to the Collymongle boundary; thence northwards along the eastern boundary of Collymongle, Caidmurra, and Wirrah runs, to Mungindi; thence westward following the Queensland-border-line to the western boundary of Brenda station; then southward along the eastern boundaries of Brenda, Denman, Dumble, Bangate, Grawin South, Llanillo, and Dunglear, to the Barwon River; thence following that river to the north-east to a point opposite to the western boundary of the Eurie Eurie leasehold area; thence crossing the Barwon and following the southern or south-western boundary of Eurie Eurie leasehold area to and along the southern boundaries of Mercadool, Cryon, and Gorian; thence from the south-eastern corner of Gorian in a straight line to Millie, the point of commencement. [Except in certain seasons these boundaries would fairly include the area from which revenue could be obtained on wool or general goods, inwards and outwards; but a considerably larger area might safely be included (including the town of Walgett) in the matter of passenger traffic or stock for trucking.] That the area named contains, at a low estimate, 2,701,394 sheep, giving, also, at a low estimate, 40,515 bales of wool, and an approximate tonnage of 6,752 tons, with a return loading equal to 2,195 tons. [Boatman station (Queensland), 190 miles from Collarendabri, sent wool through Collarendabri. This is not included in above estimate. It is largely worked with Wirrah, and has 125,000 sheep, 5,000 cattle, and 300 horses—1,500 bales, 250 tons.] That this line would be the shortest, driest, cheapest, and most practical route to the Queensland border. That the whole of the country passed through is rich country, for either agriculture or grazing, especially the latter, and is already thickly populated with thriving selectors, who being well-to-do, and having built comfortable homes, show thereby their *bona fides* and intention to remain. That the route, as surveyed, is readily drained into the Thalaba Creek, from which creek abundance of water is obtainable along the line. That at Collarendabri, the Barwon being dammed by a bar of rocks, gives a magnificent sheet of permanent, good water for all purposes, while abundance of good gravel is obtainable, suitable for ballasting purposes, a short distance from the town. That, should the Government extend the line, in the future, to Angledool and the Queensland border, there is nearly equally good country from Collarendabri to Angledool, with two Government bores equally dividing the distance. That a through line this way, as proposed, is certain to divert much of the Southern Queensland traffic to New South Wales, as this is its natural outlet. With reference to this matter, I would draw your attention to a notice which appeared in the *Queensland Government Gazette* in December last [1897], which I will read:—

"It is hereby notified for general information, that, under the provisions of section 8 of 'The Railway Border Tax Act of 1893,' permission has been given to the owners of woolsheds situated within the area between the southern border line of the Colony and a line parallel thereto, and 30 miles north thereof, to convey the wool shorn at such sheds across the border without the payment of the tax provided by the said Act."

That, again, favours our getting the wool from a great many stations in Queensland. The statistics which I am about to hand in have been gathered by myself in reply to letters and forms sent to each landholder in the district, the majority of whom are within New South Wales, asking them to give certain information.

INFORMATION showing justice of claim for railway extension to Collarendabri. This information is subject to the alterations in tenure incidental to the occupation of the land.

Name of Owner.	Nature of Holding.	Number of Sheep (approximate).	Number of Bales.	Approximate Tonnage.	Route.	Back Loading.
J. W. Pearce	Wemit	2,000	40	4	Narrabri	tons. 1
Commins Bros.	Burren Burren	20,000	380	60	"	15
Sheriff and Grant	Bairkine	8,500	165	30	"	6
J. R. Lomax	Wirrah and Caidmurra	90,000	1,000	150	Monby	} 50
"	Boatman (190 miles from Collarendabri).		1,120		Narrabri	
Burrowes Bros.	Bunna Bunna	80,000	1,120	182	"	30
Barrett Bros.	Maryvale	3,000	40	6	"	12
C. Sinclair	Moongulla West	16,000	223	33	"	16
Mort & Co.	Piangobla	20,000	244	40½	"	7
"	Moomin	3,000	60	10	"	5
Fulton and Champion	Eurool	8,800	117	17½	"	5
W. G. Ferris	Gerongra	10,000	150	30	"	10
J. Tyson	Gundabluie	60,000	1,000	200	"	50
F. Ludlow	Iffley	5,000	78	11½	"	5
J. K. Mackay	Cryon	30,000	500	100	"	15
J. R. Walker	Mogil Mogil	7,000	110	19	"	20
A. M. L. & F. Co.	Dunumbral	80,000	1,330	220	"	40
Kirby Bros.	Thalaba	10,000	125	22½	"	5
A. Bloomfield	Mount Brandon	6,800	91	13	"	9
E. Cameron	Morven Vale	6,500	70	13	"	2
J. Daley	Long Swamp	3,000	35	5½	"	2
T. J. Sherwin	Nullawa	24,000	310	50	"	10

E. B. Loughnan, J.P.
25 May, 1900.

Name of Owner.	Name of Holding,	Number of Sheep (approximate).	Number of Bales.	Approximate Tonnage.	Route.	Back Loading.
Exec. Bishop of Newcastle	Brenda	70,000	879	144	Narrabri..	tons. 20
J. C. Amos	Burrenbah	4,000	70	9 ³ / ₁₆	"	2 ¹ / ₂
J. N. Campbell	Dunglear	110,000	1,600	320	"	30
— Strang	Moomin Plains	7,000	100	20	"	10
— Smith	Oncagidgee	5,000	72	13	"	10
— Kirby	Thalaba	5,000	135	22	"	7
(Alchrist, Watt, & Co.	Llanillo	55,000	1,204	194	"	47
Exec. Newcomen	Angledool	87,000	1,030	240	"	45
W. F. Lord	Barragon	2,000	29	4 ¹ / ₂	"	3
J. Kirby	Buddha Grove	7,000	90	14	"	10
— Picton	Oakwood	1,400	19	3	"	10
	Currawillinghi	60,000	800	160	"	30
	Mnggrue	6,000	122	30	"	3
A. A. McVicars	Eulalie	5,000	96	28	"	3
J. W. Pearce	Collymogle	80,000	1,280	213	"	30
J. W. C. Langhorne	Merrywinbone	140,000	2,240	373	"	45
	Mungyer	60,000	960	160	"	25
A. M. L. F. Co.	Mercadool	80,000	1,280	213	"	25
— Glass	Eurie Eurie	40,000	640	106	"	20
— Barton	Burren	40,000	640	106	"	20
	Well station	15,000	240	40	"	8
J. Shearer, senior		5,000	80	13	"	5
J. Shearer, junior		3,000	48	8	"	2
G. Shearer		4,000	64	10	"	5
G. Banks		4,500	75	10	"	16
H. Timmins		9,000	144	24	"	5
— King		3,000	48	8	"	5
O'Neill		3,000	48	8	"	3
— McDunnell		3,000	48	8	"	2
— Hooley		2,400	35	5 ³ / ₁₆	"	2
Barrett Bros.		4,000	64	10 ⁴ / ₁₆	"	4
— Jackson		2,000	32	5	"	2
D. J. C. O'Connell		6,000	96	16	"	4
Brittin Bros	Sherwood	4,000	64	10 ¹ / ₁₆	"	4
H. M. Gair	Habnarrey	11,000	176	29 ³ / ₁₆	"	10
— Fleming	Bangor	1,700	27	4 ¹ / ₁₆	"	2
T. Howley	Stony Crossing	5,500	88	14 ¹ / ₁₆	"	4
J. Jennings	Pine Ridge	1,000	16	2 ¹ / ₁₆	"	1
Robertson and Frater		9,000	144	24	"	4 ¹ / ₁₆
Loughnan Bros.	Homebush	20,000	320	53 ⁷ / ₁₆	"	6
— Moore	Coreoran	2,000	32	5 ¹ / ₁₆	"	2
	Noondoo					
	Yerranbah					
	Gubbie					
	Bullamon					
A. P. Co.'s stations	Nareen	1,000,000	16,000	2,666 ¹³ / ₁₆	"	160
	Neenie					
	Dareel					
	Gnoolamon					
	Wilga					
Collarendabri						560
Angledool						500

About 19,000 bales passed over bridge at Collarendabri.

About 11,000 bales lie between Collarendabri and Mungyer, extending south to Eurie, Cryon, Gorian, and Burren.

About 4,500 bales lie south-west of Collarendabri, at present taking other roads, but certain to drain to Collarendabri:—

Name of Owner.	Name of Holding,	Number of Sheep (approximate).	Number of Bales.	Approximate Tonnage.	Route.	Back Loading.
Muckerawa						22,000 sheep.
Mildool						2,500 sheep.
J. F. Stinson	Invermay	3,200	51	8 ¹ / ₂	Narrabri..	2
T. Clark	Gamalsally	6,472	99	16 ¹ / ₂	"	5
Miss McDonald		3,000	48	8	"	1
		5,000	80	13	"	2
W. Flexman	Derskford	1,300	21	3 ¹ / ₂	"	2
— Parry		3,000	48	8	"	3
Binnie Bros.	Nardoo	15,000	250	41 ¹ / ₁₆	"	10
M. Lynam	Summerfield	1,000	16	2 ¹ / ₁₆	"	1
J. P. M'Donald	Bronte	2,750	44	7 ³ / ₁₆	"	2
P. Champion	Belltopper Plains	3,020	48	8	"	2
W. Moore	Cleveland	4,500	72	12	"	2
B. Proctor	Abedoar	2,222	32	6	"	2
W. Reardon	Clylie	1,000	16	5 ³ / ₁₆	"	1
W. R. Reardon	Airlie	1,000	16	5 ³ / ₁₆	"	1
Thos. Rolls	Mollie	1,900	31	5 ¹ / ₁₆	"	1
T. H. Ruttley	Cryon	1,020	16	2 ¹ / ₁₆	"	2
Shaw and Sons	Fernlea	1,961	32	5 ⁷ / ₁₆	"	2
T. Scriven	Cleveland	3,918	64	10 ¹ / ₁₆	"	3
H. G. Scott	Collybidgelah	3,366	54	9	"	3
L. B. Sweet	Numdadool	1,050	16	2 ¹ / ₁₆	"	2
A. G. Thorn	Cryon	1,100	17	2 ¹ / ₁₆	"	1
J. Tyson	Bangate	74,695	1,195	199	"	20
T. Welsh	Bexley	1,700	27	4 ¹ / ₂	"	1
F. Adams	Myambia	5,000	80	13 ¹ / ₁₆	"	4
Brown Bros.	Derrima	9,455	152	25 ¹ / ₁₆	"	10
Bucknell Bros.	Yarrawa	22,800	352	58 ¹ / ₁₆	"	10
Chas. Dunn	Stanley	2,990	48	8	"	2
Bruce Bros.	Dumindi	4,225	67	11 ⁵ / ₁₆	"	3
M. Carter	Melbourne Park	3,106	49	8 ¹ / ₁₆	"	2
W. Corrine	Plew Eden	1,500	24	4	"	2
T. T. Fripp	Sherwood	2,048	32	5 ³ / ₁₆	"	2

Mr. B. Benson, of Brouda station, in writing to me, says that about 70,000 sheep on the Queensland run, shorn in New South Wales, will come this way. I have also letters from managers inside the Queensland country, whose statistics are not given in the returns which I have put in. The managers of Llanillo and Dunglear state that they will send their wool this way, provided that the line is carried through. I may mention that the Sectional Committee inquiring into the Moree line made the following observations:—

"The Sectional Committee came to the conclusion, that if the whole area of country in this railway question is to be properly served it can only be done by two lines—a northern line following the route submitted to the Committee, and a western line following the driest belt or country, which is apparently south of Thalaba Creek, and eventually reaching Collarendabri. Any attempt to deviate from the direct route, they say, 'will entail a permanent disability on the northern trade without conferring a fully compensating advantage on the western trade.' They were of opinion, that in view of the importance of the western trade, it would be well if a full exploration and survey should be made of the country towards Collarendabri, apparently the best place to start a survey from, being a point between Narrabri and Edgeroi, thus utilising the bridge which will be constructed over the Namoi on the direct route."

With reference to the statistics I have put in, I may mention that the Merrywinbone return of wool is 2,240 bales. That was the return in the year in which the statistics were obtained. Since that year a great deal of the land has been thrown open, and taken up by selectors. Consequently, there may be a discrepancy between Mr. Langhorne's figures and the statistics.

Since that evidence was given, the Queensland Government have taken off the export duty of £2 10s. upon wool, and, consequently, at least 30 miles of the country on the other side of the Queensland border would, we contend, send traffic to the proposed railway. The Woolabra line, however, has not been sanctioned, and it is now suggested that a line should be brought from Narrabri to Burren, with a branch to Collarendabri and another to Walgett. If the Walgett line is made, it will, of course, take some of traffic which we claim for the Woolabra line; but, if it be not constructed, the Collarendabri to Narrabri line will get almost all the traffic that would have gone to the line from Woolabra to Collarendabri. A great deal of settlement which has recently taken place on Oreel holding was not mentioned by me in my former evidence; but the settlers there are well-to-do and comfortable if the seasons permit of it, and they would furnish a considerable amount of traffic to a railway. In dealing with the statistics which I have given, it must be remembered that the terrible drought, which I hope is now over, in which 60 per cent. of our sheep were lost through want of railway communication, has, for a time, considerably reduced our production.

1333. Do you, as the Secretary to the Railway League here, care to express any preference for either the proposed line or the Woolabra to Collarendabri line? My instructions from the league are to express no opinion at all as to where the line should come from, but to express a strong desire for railway communication, and to leave it to the Committee and to Parliament to decide upon the route. I have received several letters from gentlemen who would have liked to be present to give evidence at this meeting, but who are unable to attend because of the difficulty of travelling, in the present state of the country. Mr. Sinclair, of Moongulla, writes to say that his "horses are unfit for the trip—no grass, and no horse feed. The latter has been costing me £10 per ton, for carriage; but at present I am unable to get it at any price, and I am only one out of many who are in the same fix, and that not for this year only, but for several years past." Then Mr. Sherwin, of Nullawa, who is Chairman of the Angledool branch of the Collarendabri Railway League, writes, "Owing to the fearful drought, and not having horses fit to travel, it will be utterly impossible for me or other residents to attend at Collarendabri to meet the Committee or give evidence." He goes on to say that the evidence given before the Sectional Committee two years ago, "is much accentuated by this fearful drought. We have now to pay carriage at the rate of £10 per ton from Narrabri to Angledool, which rate is ruinous, especially when you have to feed horses to do absolutely necessary work. This winter will pretty well decimate the sheep that survived previous years' droughts." Other letters in the same tenor have reached me.

Stanley James Greenaway, settlement lessee, Oreel (Merrywinbone) holding, and representative of the Thalaba Farmers and Settlers' Association, sworn, and examined:—

1334. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the area of your holding? 2,560 acres.

1335. How far are you from Collarendabri? Twenty-six miles. Oreel was the furthest of three stations, Oreel, Merrywinbone, and Poekateroo, owned by one firm. When they took over the three stations they shifted the principal homestead to Merrywinbone, and the three holdings are now locally known as Oreel.

1336. Have you been long in the district? I have spent my life in the district between Narrabri, Walgett, and Collarendabri.

1337. What is your land like? It is first-class grazing land; but the rainfall is limited.

1338. Is any of it suitable for agriculture? I have heard numbers of Victorian farmers say that they consider it first-class agricultural land, and several of them are beginning to cultivate areas of 50 or 60 acres.

1339. For grain or for hay? For hay. We have no railway to make grain-growing profitable.

1340. Are the seasons such as would give you decent results if you grow grain? I believe so, though I cannot speak from experience. I have lately seen such magnificent returns of hay, and such good cars on the wheat, that I am inclined to believe that this will ultimately become a wheat-producing district. During the last three years, although we have had most awful droughts, ram has always come at a time when it would do wheat good, and it has seemed to me that the seasons of late, although so bad for stock-raising, would have been good for agriculture.

1341. What is the carrying capacity of your district in average seasons? I have prepared the following statement, which I think might be of interest to you in connection with your inquiry:—

There are now in residence on Oreel holding 110 settlers.

The approximate distance of their holdings from the proposed railway line would be from 1 to 10 miles on the south side and from 1 to 15 on the north side. The sheep depastured on their holdings would total 250,000 to 300,000 in fair seasons. The tonnage of wool would be about 700 tons. The number of fat stock trucked to Sydney would be about 40,000 a year.

The total acreage of their holdings would be about 350,000 acres, exclusive of roads. Railway communication with the seaboard would, no doubt, have the effect of placing a large amount of this land under crop.

During the present year the pastoral leases of Boulterol, Bunna Bunna, Collymungle, and one or two other small places, expire. The total area is about 250,000 acres in all. The greatest distance of any of this land from the proposed railway line would be 30 miles on the north side—two-thirds would be within from 1 to 15 miles from the line. Practically, the whole of this 250,000 is suitable for occupation in small holdings. During the past three years settlers on Oreel have lost at least 180,000 sheep. With railway communication the greater number of these sheep would have been trucked to where pasture was obtainable.

E. B.
Loughnan,
J.P.

25 May, 1900.

S. J.
Greenaway.

25 May, 1900.

S. J.
Greenaway.
25 May, 1900.

There is similar settlement to that on Oreel, Mungyer, Collymongle, and Mercadool holdings, and a large number of the settlers on those holdings will be served by the proposed Collarendabri line.

1342. When you speak of 110 settlers, do you mean 110 holdings? I mean that 110 men have taken up land on Oreel, and are now in residence on their holdings.

1343. Do you think that, if there were a railway, small landholders would send away fat stock more frequently than they do now? I am certain of it. Even during the recent drought there have been times when 200 or 300 wethers out of a flock of 700 or 800 could have been trucked away if there had been a railway. The owners would have been glad to get rid of them, but they could not stand the expense of sending them to Narrabri.

1344. Does it occur during a drought that patches of country will get showers, giving them a little grass on which the stock will fatten, while the country generally is bare? Yes; that is the effect of local thunderstorms. I have seen high grass at some places, and no grass at all only a chain or two away.

1345. Then it might happen that there would be fair grass in parts of the district but none upon the stock route? There is never any grass on the stock route.

1346. Would a railway be of more assistance to small holders than to large holders? I believe so, because small holders would very often like to realise on a few sheep. It is generally considered good business to be able to sell your fat stock on the ground, and station-owners can frequently do that, because a buyer will come from Sydney to inspect 7,000 or 8,000 sheep when he would not come to inspect 200 or 300. Some two years ago we had 1,200 or 1,300 wethers to sell; but the Aberdeen Company's buyer did not think it worth his while to come up specially to look at them. Mr. Langhorne, however, had several thousand sheep to sell, a little later on, and when the buyer came up to inspect them he also inspected ours; but we had to deliver our sheep at Narrabri, whereas, if we had had a larger flock, we should have secured the same price for them on the run.

1347. What rate do you pay on wool from your place to Narrabri? We have paid 2s. 6d. and 3s. a cwt. I am speaking also for my brothers, J. and H. Greenaway.

1348. Do you get stores up at the same rate? Sometimes; but as a rule back loading is dearer. During the last three years the rates of carriage have varied from 2s. 6d. to 5s. 6d. a cwt.

1349. Have the people who have taken up settlement leases here done so with the intention of depending upon grazing for a living? Yes; but the dry seasons have caused them to change their minds, and I believe that as they start with agriculture others will follow them.

1350. Do you think that with a railway a man could make a decent living on 2,560 acres in this district? Not by grazing.

1351. Could a man put his land to a variety of uses whereby he could make a living on such an area? A railway would add greatly to his opportunities; but I consider that the man who intends to make a living by grazing should be able to run about 3,000 sheep.

1352. Then he should want about 5,000 acres? Yes.

1353. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How far is your holding from the route of the proposed line? About 7 miles.

1354. What class of country is it? It is open country.

1355. How does it compare with the country generally between Collarendabri and Burren? It is a little above the average of that country, I think, but it is all similar country.

1356. Would the same remarks apply to the other settlement leases? Yes; though some of the blocks would have a little more timber on them than others.

1357. Have droughts been of frequent occurrence during your thirty-three years' residence in this district? Yes; I believe that, on the average, we have as many droughty seasons as good seasons, and perhaps a few more.

1358. Has the last drought been excessive as compared with others that you have known? I believe that it has been the worst that I have known.

1359. Would it have affected agriculture as much as grazing? I think that the light rain which has fallen from time to time would have suited agricultural operations better than grazing. It made wheat grow for hay where it would not make grass grow.

1360. Is it your opinion that, with a railway, a large area of land in this district would be placed under agriculture? Yes; that is what I have heard from Victorian farmers who have come to the district.

1361. Do you think that there would be a sufficient market for agricultural produce grown in this district? I think there would be a market for hay, but there would be no market for wheat, unless we had railway communication with the seaboard. At the present time there is always a shortage of produce. The people round the artesian bores have never grown enough produce to satisfy local wants.

1362. So that produce has to be imported into the district? Yes; and the importation will have to continue, unless we increase our cultivation. Thousands of tons of produce have been brought into the district during the last two or three years.

1363. Where does most of the wool now sent from the district go? To Narrabri West.

1364. Would there be much traffic from the north and north-west to feed a railway? There are a great many stations out there which would give very material assistance to a railway. Wool comes this way from as far as Brenda. In 1895, 640 loaded teams of wool went over the bridge at Collarendabri.

Joseph William Cook Langhorne, grazier, Oreel (Merrywinbone) holding, sworn, and examined:—

J. W. C.
Langhorne.
25 May, 1900.

1365. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the area of your holding? There are 70,000 acres of secured land, conditional purchase, and freehold, and about 35,000 acres of leasehold.

1366. How far is your holding from Collarendabri? The run comes right down to the Barwon, near Collarendabri.

1367. What is the carrying capacity of your land? About a sheep to an acre and a half.

1368. Is it open country? Fairly open country; more of it is plain country than timbered country.

1369. Have you resided long in the district? I have been in the district since 1875, and I have been fifteen years at Collarendabri.

1370. Is your holding similar in character to the land between Collarendabri and Burren? Yes.

1371. Do you experience much difficulty in getting your wool to the railway? Yes, very great difficulty.

1372. To what railway station do you send it? To Narrabri West.

1373. What is the average cost of cartage there? I have never paid more than £2 10s. a ton for the cartage of my wool; but I have paid as much as £4 10s. a ton to have goods brought from Narrabri. The average rate would be from £2 10s. to £3 per ton, in good seasons.

1374.

1374. Do you send your fat stock to Narrabri? Most of them go to Narrabri; but I sometimes send stock to Wallerawang.

J. W. C.
Langhorne.

1375. Do you send away large numbers of stock? Of late years I have not sent away many; but formerly I used to send away a great many.

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1376. It has been stated that small settlers experience considerable hardship in not being able to send small consignments of fat stock to the Sydney market, owing to the expense of driving;—do you suffer in the same way? To some extent; but the hardship is more accentuated in their case. They have a few sheep which are fat, and fit to go to market, and by sending them away they would relieve their holdings and leave more feed for those that are kept; but the expense of driving them to the railway station is often too great, and so they keep them until they become poor, and can only be sold as store stock. If there were a railway they would send away small consignments of fat stock and small parcels of hides, skins, and tallow. With a railway they would get full prices for their produce; but when they have to sell small parcels to the dealers they only get half the money they would otherwise get.

1377. If there were a railway here should you use it to send away stock to Sydney? Yes, always. I should not attempt to drive stock past a railway station.

1378. Would others do the same? I think so.

1379. Is there much traffic in store stock between Collarendabri and Narrabri? Yes; and from places lying west and north of Collarendabri. The stock goes from Collarendabri, through Oreel, Burren, and Wee Waa, to Narrabri, and thence to the Muswellbrook market. When the main stock routes are practicable, upwards of 200,000 sheep travel through the district per annum, and cattle as well.

1380. If the country were in good condition, would store stock leave the railway, or would they travel along the stock route? If the country were in good condition store stock would travel along the stock routes, but fat stock would be sent by train.

1381. And in times of drought? All the store stock would be trucked then. If there had been a railway, 75 per cent. of the losses which have occurred in this district during the last eighteen months would have been saved, because the sheep would have been sent to the hilly country, where there was food.

1382. That traffic would only occur in times of drought? Yes; that is the only time when any but surplus stock would be sent out of the district.

1383. Is this district fairly well watered? Yes.

1384. Do you think it will produce crops? I am fairly convinced that it will. I think that a great deal of it is good wheat-growing country. There is a patch of land on the right-hand side of the road, about three miles from the "Avondale Hotel," than which I have not seen any better for wheat-growing.

1385. Have you done any cultivation yourself? I have grown a little hay for home requirements.

1386. Would the construction of the proposed railway induce closer agricultural and grazing settlement? I do not think smaller areas will be taken up than those which have already been subdivided, but I think that selectors will combine agriculture with grazing. I do not think that agriculture by itself would pay here.

1387. What area would maintain a family in this district in comfortable circumstances? I think a man wants 5,000 acres at the very least to maintain and bring up a family.

1388. Using the land for pastoral purposes? Yes; but it would pay him better to go in for mixed farming, and it would be better for the country.

1389. How do you account for the scalded country? It is higher ground than the rest, and the surface-soil has been blown off it by the continuous action of the wind.

1390. Do the scalded areas increase? I do not think so.

1391. Are the people in this district unanimously in favour of the construction of the proposed line? I believe that they are.

1392. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that the route of the proposed line is as good as might be obtained if a line from Narrabri to Collarendabri were all that was aimed at? I think so. If the line were taken further north, it would shorten the distance; but it would get into a large area of low-lying country.

1393. Do you think that the district is sufficiently productive to be able to support two lines of railway? I think that it could support one line better than two. My opinion is that Walgett should be connected with Coonamble. If the Walgett line is constructed, with a branch to Collarendabri, the traffic will be divided between the two lines; whereas, if the Walgett line is not made, the whole of the traffic will come on to the Collarendabri line.

1394. What is a fair distance to leave between railway lines in pastoral districts such as this? Sixty or 70 miles. That would bring every property within 35 miles of the line.

1395. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where do you consign your wool? As a rule, to London from Newcastle.

1396. In times of drought, where would stock be sent from this district? To the New England district.

1397. Do you think that the New England district could accommodate all your stock;—it has been pointed out to us that the limit of their accommodation was reached last year? Possibly it was; but the worst seasons we have here are the best seasons in New England. For three or four months in the year you could run three or four sheep on an acre of land in New England, and that is generally the state of the country at the time when we are wanting relief here.

1398. If the proposed railway were constructed, should you fatten and send away any larger number of sheep than you send away now? Yes. Instead of sending away sheep as stores it would be more profitable to send them away fat, if there were a railway.

1399. Have you consigned any fat sheep to the Aberdeen meat-works since you have been in the district? Yes.

1400. What loss of condition takes place in the sheep in travelling to the nearest railway station? I consider that the loss in condition between my holding and Aberdeen would average from 4 lb. to 5 lb.

1401. In seasons of drought would fodder be brought into the district by the proposed railway? Yes; in large quantities. All the holdings round here have to feed a certain number of their animals with artificially grown fodder. I have been feeding my horses for the last two months, and the carriage costs me more than the produce itself.

1402. If the river were full, should you send your wool away by steamer rather than by the train? No; I should use the train.

1403. Is the river likely to be a serious competitor to the railway? No; because it would require a very great

J. W. C.
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great deal of locking and damming to make it navigable. When it is in flood, the steamers have to rush up here and back again to avoid being stranded, and unless you have your wool waiting on the banks they cannot take it. I do not think that the river will ever be navigable without a series of locks and weirs.

1404. How is the country affected by flood between the river bank and a point on the surveyed line about 11 miles from Collarendabri? In an exceptionally high flood, such as that of 1890, all the country would be under water from the Grawin to the nine-mile peg.

1405. To what depth? The depth would vary from a few inches up to 3 feet.

1406. How long would the water remain on the land? A very short time. It would run off in a few days.

1407. Would it be necessary to provide fairly extensive earthworks or a viaduct to carry the line over that piece of country? I think it would be necessary to provide a viaduct, and to make arrangements for the water getting away.

1408. What would be the maximum length of the viaduct that would be necessary? I should say that a mile and a half would be sufficient, apart from a bridge over the Grawin.

Charles Edward Brown, homestead lessee, Bundaborina holding, sworn, and examined:—

C. E. Brown.
25 May, 1900.

1409. *Vice-Chairman.*] Where is your land? It lies 12 miles west from Collarendabri, on Bundaborina holding.

1410. Will you give us the benefit of your knowledge of this district? I know all the homestead leases down the river, west and south-west from Collarendabri, and I know the holdings, such as Dunumbral.

1411. How does that country compare with the country between Collarendabri and Merrywinbone? It is nothing like as good; it is very inferior country, and it would take 3 or 4 acres of it to carry a sheep.

1412. Are 10,000 acres sufficient to enable a man to make a living in this district? Yes, if he improve his land. The country on the other side of the river is heavily timbered.

1413. What benefits do the homestead lessees there hope to reap from the construction of the proposed railway? We pay from 3s. to 4s. a cwt. to send our wool to Narrabri now, and from 4s. 6d. to 5s. 6d. a cwt. to bring back stores.

1414. Have the difficulties of travelling prevented you from taking advantage of a favourable market? Of course, our wool is sometimes delayed, and last year, if there had been a railway, I could have trucked my sheep to New England and prevented great loss.

1415. Do you corroborate what has been said by previous witnesses as to the gain which they would make by sending their stock away by train? Yes; I have often had to sell fat sheep as stores because I would not take the risk of travelling them to Narrabri. I inspect a great many sheep for other people. I come from near Moree, and I inspect for Mr. Moses, Mr. Black, Mr. Glennie, and other stationholders there. I see some thousands of sheep during the year, all of which go away from here as stores.

1416. Do you corroborate what Mr. Langhorne said about the possibility of opening up a larger market for fat stock if a railway is constructed? Yes. The Aberdeen people send out men to buy stock from us; but they have paddocks in which to spell their stock after the journey. I think that the fat stock from the western district would be a tremendous item in the railway traffic. It is a great wheat-growing country out west, with red and chocolate soil.

1417. Is there much of it? There is a great deal of it along the edge of the "Bully"—a name given to a box and budda scrub in the district.

1418. Is the rainfall out there sufficient for wheat? No; the average rainfall at Dunumbral station is about 21 inches.

1419. How much of the land there would be available for wheat-growing if the proposed railway were constructed? The Bully, which is considered the worst grazing country in the district, is said to be good wheat-growing country.

1420. Do you know anyone who has experimented with it? Mr. Seymour has experimented with similar country at the Moongulla bore.

1421. *Mr. Watson.*] It has been suggested that, in view of the great expense of railway construction on the last 11 miles of the route from Collarendabri, the district would be sufficiently served if the line stopped about 11 miles short of the town;—would such an arrangement serve the district reasonably well? I think it would serve the district better to bring the line on to Collarendabri. Eventually it would have to be brought to the town. A line stopping at the point to which you refer would serve the stock traffic; but it would leave us a long way to bring our fodder.

1422. Would it seriously handicap the people of the district if the line were left there? I think that the town would move to the terminus of the railway if there were water there; but I believe that there is no water there. I think that 1890 was the first year for thirty years in which the flood-waters stretched out as far as that point.

1423. But the warrumbools are frequently filled in times of ordinary floods? Still, I do not think it would be practicable to stop right outside the town. To do such a thing would be to kill Collarendabri altogether. We depend entirely upon the river for our water supply, and I do not think a sufficient supply for a town would be obtained at the point at which you suggest the line should stop. In my opinion, the vested interests of Collarendabri should be considered. Then, too, if the Government spent any money on terminal station arrangements out there, it would be wasted when the railway was brought on to Angledool.

1424. Would there be any difficulty in getting stock to the railway line at that point? In wet seasons we could not get stock there. Thousands of sheep would be sent from this district as fat stock if the proposed railway were made; but they now have to go away as store stock.

1425. *Mr. McFarlane.*] If Collarendabri were connected with Narrabri, and Walgett with Coonamble, which line would be the more convenient for people living further out west? As far as Dunglear, 47 miles from here, I think traffic would come to Collarendabri. Everything from the northern and western country must come here. All the wool from that part of the Colony comes through Collarendabri now, though during the last twelve months I think some of it has gone to the Moree line, because there has been no feed on our stock routes.

1426. What is the country like between Narrabri and Moree? It is very rich, flat, black-soil country—similar to this, except for two or three stony ridges.

1427. The Moree line has exceeded the expectations of the Railway Commissioners;—do you think similar results would follow the construction of the proposed line? Certainly. C. E. Brown.
25 May, 1900.
1428. Do you think that it would drain as much country west and north of its terminal area? I believe that at Collarendabri the railway will tap a larger area of country than it does at Moree, and the number of small holdings—homestead selections, conditional purchases, and settlement leases—is increasing every year in this district.
1429. Would the construction of the proposed line cause closer settlement? Yes. Every block that is thrown open for selection between Collarendabri and Narrabri is eagerly ballotted for.
1430. Will the land be taken up whether a railway is constructed or not? I think so, because there is no land of a better character available elsewhere.

Alfred Blomfield, homestead lessee and selector, near Collarendabri, sworn, and examined:—

1431. *Mr. Watson.*] What area of country do you hold? 15,000 acres. A. Blomfield.
25 May, 1900.
1432. How far is your holding from Collarendabri? It is 8 miles north-west of Collarendabri.
1433. How long have you been in the district? I have resided here constantly for twenty-six years.
1434. What would be the effect of the construction of the proposed railway on the district generally? It would confer great comfort upon the residents, and it would save many hundreds of us from ruin. If we had had a railway in the past, people could have saved their stock from starvation more cheaply by sending them away by train than by supplying fodder with which to feed them.
1435. How does the country north and north-west from Collarendabri, towards the Queensland border, compare with the country through which the proposed line would come? Part of it is equal to it, but other parts are not so good. Taking one run with another, I think that the carrying capacity of that country is equal to the carrying capacity of the country on the south side of the Barwon. The wash from the red conglomerate soil in the Bully scrub is good country, but the Bully itself is not good. The Bully country stretches from below Walgett to somewhere above Mogil Mogil.
1436. Where does the Narran traffic come now? Through Collarendabri and Narrabri.
1437. If the railway came to Collarendabri, and also to Walgett, where would that traffic go? To Collarendabri. The cross road to Walgett is almost impracticable in wet weather. It comes from Angledool to within 4 miles of Collarendabri, over hard soil; but, going on to Walgett, there is low country to be crossed.
1438. Then, if the line were taken to Walgett and not to Collarendabri, that country would not be served? No; the traffic would still go through Collarendabri to the nearest railway station.
1439. In what direction will the traffic from Southern Queensland go after Federation is established? I think it will come through Collarendabri. The country towards Dolbey and St. George is fearful black-soil country, and very difficult to travel over, while, coming this way, you have red-soil country, upon which it is easier to travel; so that the greater part of the traffic from that district will come here in any case. One of Mr. P. G. King's managers in Queensland told me they could afford to send their wool this way, notwithstanding the export tax which had then to be paid, because of the less knocking about it got. Then, too, a lot of the traffic that now goes to Moree would come to Collarendabri if the railway were brought here. What people have to consider in this country is, not so much where is the nearest point on the railway, as which are the best roads. The district would be served by a railway, even if it stopped 11 miles out of Collarendabri. I saw the floods of 1864, 1876, and 1890, and I think that $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile of viaduct would not be sufficient. It would be useless to put in earthworks. There are two places where you could put in earthworks, for a total distance of about a mile; but the remainder of the distance would have to be covered with viaducts. Plenty of settlers in the district would be glad to send away 200 or 300 sheep at a time if there were a railway. I have some sheep now which I would send away at once if there were a railway, but which I cannot send away under present circumstances. Then, in dry times, we are always importing fodder, and we shall never grow as much as our stock will require, so that the fodder traffic on the railway will always be considerable. Wheat would grow better here than oats, barley, corn, rye, or anything else. I have tried all of these crops during the last twenty years, and I have known wheat to give a yield of 60 bushels to the acre in certain seasons.
1440. *Vice-Chairman.*] Can you generally get a fair crop of hay? Yes. I put a crop in every year, no matter what happens, and I have got fair crops occasionally, but only one heavy crop in five years. I have been sowing crops for the last twelve years.
1441. How many total failures of crops have you had? Three. I think the proposed line would pay, and the people want it. If we do not get a railway, the district will always be a miserable, mean place, in which men can only make a hard living. I wish to add that ballast would be obtainable for the line at no great distance.

SATURDAY, 26 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at "Tattersall's Hotel," Collarendabri, at 10:30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq., VICE-CHAIRMAN.

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Francis Kirby, grazier, near Collarendabri, sworn, and examined:—

1442. *Mr Watson.*] What is the area of your holding? 7,680 acres. F. Kirby.
26 May, 1900.
1443. How many sheep do you carry on it? In usual seasons, about 5,000.
1444. What would be the effect of the construction of the proposed railway upon the district? It would be of great advantage to the district in giving us facilities for getting our stock and wool away, and in other directions. 1445.

- F. Kirby. 1445. Would it be of value to you in assisting you to save your stock in times of drought? Yes; it would enable us to send the stock to places where the animals could get food.
- 26 May, 1900. 1446. Have you lost many sheep yourself? No; we got most of our sheep away in time. We travelled them for agistment to Gunnedah, and then, as the dry weather continued, I drove them on to New England, and sold them there.
1447. If the proposed railway were constructed, New England would be the district to which starving stock would be sent? Yes; you can usually get food there in dry seasons.
1448. How do you regard this district from an agricultural standpoint? I think that with a railway it would be a very good district, judging from what I have seen in Riverina. I think that the land on the north side of the river would be better for agriculture than that on the south side of the river; but crops could be grown on the south side of the river.
1449. In what months of the year do you usually get rain? Our heavy rains generally fall in the period of the year between January and March, or April.
1450. Do you usually get enough rain later on in the year to keep a wheat crop growing? Yes. During the nine years that I have been here I have known good rains to fall in June, and as late as August and September—splendid rains for the crops. Almost every year we have had some rain in those months.
1451. We have been informed that there is a very large area of country on the north side of the river, extending into Queensland, which would be served by a line having its terminus at Collarendabri? That is so.
1452. Would the proposed railway drain traffic from as far as Mungindi? Yes.
1453. Would it also attract traffic from Queensland, from the direction of St. George? Yes.
1454. If the Queensland railway were brought to St. George, where would the traffic go? I think even then a great deal of the Queensland traffic would come this way, because the railway mileage to Brisbane would be about the same as to Newcastle, and the steamer freight to Sydney would be less from Newcastle than from Brisbane. All that wool is usually sent to Sydney to be sold.
1455. Sydney is the great wool market of Australia, and her shipping facilities are greater than those of Brisbane? Yes; in many instances owners have found it cheaper to pay the Queensland export duty on wool than to send their wool to the Queensland railways.
1456. Do you find it difficult to dispose of your fat stock under present conditions? Yes.
1457. What is your usual outlet for fat stock? They are driven to Narrabri and trucked from there to Sydney or Aberdeen.
1458. If the proposed railway were made, could you in a good season deal with more stock than you deal with now? Yes; at the present time we cannot afford to send away small lots, and even in the best of times stock lose in condition by being driven to Narrabri.
1459. If the railway were brought to Walgett and also to Collarendabri, to what line would the more traffic go? I think that the greater part of the traffic from the country to the north would come to Collarendabri.

John Francis Kirby, grazier, near Collarendabri, sworn, and examined:—

- J. F. Kirby. 1460. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How much country do you occupy? I hold, in partnership with my brother, 14,000 acres—three conditional purchases and two settlement leases.
- 26 May, 1900. 1461. Is it good sheep country? Yes; since 1894 we have carried, on the average, 6,600 sheep; but up till 1896 we had only 7,500 acres.
1462. I suppose that in good seasons the land would carry more? Yes; for the last five years the seasons have not been too good. Our country is open or lightly timbered, with coolabah and belar.
1463. Do you send fat stock and wool to market? Yes; *via* Narrabri West, to Sydney.
1464. Do you send away a large number of fat sheep? We have not done so of late years; but previously we have sent away a good many.
1465. Have you been inconvenienced by not being able to send away small lots of fat sheep? Yes; and there is also a loss in sending away stock at all, because of the bad state of the stock routes. As soon as there is any grass on the stock routes the lessees turn their sheep on them, and eat it all off; so that the stock routes are like a desert for travelling sheep. If they were kept solely for travelling stock they would be much more use to us.
1466. During the past drought have you suffered much from want of grass? Yes; a good deal at different times.
1467. Have you had occasion to send your sheep elsewhere for food? No; but we should have sent them away if there had been a railway.
1468. Is it within your knowledge that a large number of sheep have gone to other districts for feed? Yes; at the present time I have 5,000 sheep in New England. I got them away five months ago, when they were in good condition. If I had left them a little later I should not have been able to send them away at all.
1469. Do stock usually go from this district to England in times of drought? Yes; to the country beyond Moree—to Warialda, Inverell, and Tenterfeld. We can generally get feed there when we have a drought here.
1470. Would the proposed railway be used for transporting starving stock to other districts? Yes; very greatly, when there was no feed in this district.
1471. And it would be used for the transport of fat stock? Yes.
1472. Have you ever tried agriculture? Last year I put about 5 acres under wheat and the crop gave about $\frac{3}{4}$ ton of hay to the acre.
1473. Last year was very dry? We had good winter rains, but the weather, previous to putting in the crop, had been dry.
1474. Do you consider this good wheat land? Parts of it are in ordinary seasons. On the average, you would get three fair crops in five years.
1475. I suppose it is the insufficiency of the rainfall that makes the country unsuitable for agriculture? Yes.
1476. How does your land compare with that between Collarendabri and Burren? It is all similar country.
1477. Is much of the land along the railway route suitable for cultivation? There is more land in the direction

direction of Burren suitable for cultivation than there is in the immediate neighbourhood of Collarendabri. The land on the north side of the river is more suitable for cultivation than that on the south side, because it retains moisture longer. J. F. Kirby.
26 May, 1900.

1478. What is the country like north-west from Collarendabri? It is fair grazing country, as far as I know, but there is more scrub there than on the south side of the river. The scrubby country, if improved, would be good grazing country, but at the present time it is comparatively useless. The soil is good enough for anything.

1479. Is it suitable for agriculture? Yes; the timbered country is more suitable than the open plain country.

1480. Would stockowners generally use the railway for the conveyance of stock to Sydney and elsewhere? Yes, I think so, because stock lose so much in condition by being driven, even in a good season.

1481. Would the construction of the proposed railway bring more population to the district? Yes, if more land were thrown open for settlement.

1482. Has all the available land been occupied? Yes; it is over-occupied.

1483. Is there much Crown land within a reasonable distance of the proposed railway which could be made available for settlement? I believe that there is a good deal still to be thrown open.

1484. When it is thrown open, will it be taken up and settled upon? I think that it will be taken up immediately.

Wyndham Dallas Bruce, homestead lessee, Gundabluc holding, sworn, and examined:—

1485. *Mr. Watson.* Would a railway to Collarendabri be of any value to the people in your district? Undoubtedly. W. D. Bruce.
26 May, 1900.

1486. Where do you send your wool and produce at the present time? Until the last two years I have sent it to Narrabri; but recently I have sent it to Moree, because there has been more feed on the Moree route.

1487. How far are you from Moree? Ninety-eight miles, by road.

1488. If the proposed railway were constructed, it would pay you better to send your wool to Collarendabri? Yes; we are only 42 miles in a northerly direction from Collarendabri, and the road here is a comparatively good one, whereas it is utterly impossible for us to get to Moree in wet weather.

1489. For how many miles, east and west, along the Queensland border, would traffic be brought to Collarendabri? From places all along the Queensland border, between Angledool and Mungindi.

1490. Would the Angledool traffic come to Collarendabri rather than to Walgett? Yes; because the track into Collarendabri is better than that to Walgett.

1491. What is the distance from Angledool to Walgett? Between 80 and 90 miles.

1492. And to Collarendabri? About 60 miles. I should say the traffic would come to Collarendabri from country lying 30 or 40 miles beyond the Queensland border in the direction of St. George.

1493. If the Queensland railway were brought to St. George, would the traffic that you speak of still come to Collarendabri? Yes; at present some of it goes to Yuilbar, and thence through Brisbane to Sydney. Most of the holders there sell their wool in Sydney.

1494. Could they afford to pay a little more to send their wool more quickly to Sydney? Yes; a lot of them are within 100 miles of Collarendabri.

1495. Are they further than that from Yuilbar? Yes; they have to go about 160 miles to get to a railway station now.

1496. How is the land near your place held—mostly under pastoral lease? Under homestead lease and pastoral lease.

1497. Have the resumed areas been pretty generally taken up by homestead lessees? Yes, every inch of them as they have been thrown open. It is fair country, but it wants improving.

1498. Is it mostly timbered? Two-thirds of it is timbered, and the rest of it is open plains. It is patchy country. In between Moonie and the Barwon the country is inferior; but out towards the Narran there is beautiful country.

1499. Would the Narran traffic come to Collarendabri? Yes, it comes here now.

1500. Are you able to get rid of fat stock? No, because we are too far from a railway, and there is never any feed on the stock routes.

1501. So you confine yourselves to breeding? Yes; but I suffer great losses through the native dogs, which eat a great many lambs; and the high rates of carriage make it impossible for me to get up wire-netting. I have been paying 5s. a cwt. for carriage lately, and I have paid as much as 8s. 6d. a cwt., which just about doubles the price.

1502. If you were able to wire-net your run you would probably increase its carrying capacity? Yes. I have lost about 6,000 grown sheep during the last five years because of the dogs. The Gundabluc people are netting their holding.

1503. What area of land do you hold? I hold 10,000 acres, and my brother holds 10,000 acres adjoining; we work the holdings jointly.

1504. If you had the two holdings netted could you deal with the dogs? I am sure of it. They come in on the Queensland side, and no sooner do I get rid of one batch than another appears.

1505. If the line stopped about 11 miles short of Collarendabri, would it serve the people living out towards the north? In ordinary dry times it would do well enough; but in times of flood we could not send stock there; and if we were caught by a big flood there would be no place near the railway where we could keep our sheep.

1506. Would access be impossible in other than big floods? The water would not be very deep. I have been over that country in a boat during flood-time, but we had to keep to the channel all the way. In 1890 there was an unusually big flood.

1507. What depth of water is there over that piece of country in flood-time? You can ride over the country in ordinary floods, except that for about a quarter of a mile, where the Warrambool is, there is a dip.

1508. If the railway were brought to Collarendabri a viaduct would be required there? Yes, though there is not much current there. A great number of fat sheep would be sent from our part of the country if we had a railway. Last year I had some sheep which were as fat as whales, and which would have fetched splendid prices in Sydney, but I could not get them away.

1509.

- W. D. Bruce. 1509. Is there any likelihood of agriculture out your way? Yes.
 26 May, 1900. 1510. Is the rainfall sufficient? Yes, in ordinary winters, for hay crops, and even for grain. I have grown several small crops of hay, and I am going to put in a big patch this winter. Any of the red soil will grow wheat.
 1511. What is your usual rainfall? About 16 inches; but in a good season we get over 20 inches. During the last year or two the rain has fallen at a very bad time for grass; but if we had had crops in they would have grown.

William Henry Wordsworth, J.P., storekeeper, Collarendabri, sworn, and examined:—

- W. H. Wordsworth, J.P.
 26 May, 1900.
1512. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in Collarendabri? Between eight and nine years.
 1513. Where do you get your supplies from? From Sydney and Newcastle, through Narrabri West.
 1514. What do you pay for cartage from Narrabri West? In a good season, 2s. 6d. a cwt., and we have paid as much as 5s. a cwt. The rates rise in dry seasons.
 1515. What quantity of goods do you get up every year? I have brought up as much as 350 tons in a year, but a good deal of that was produce.
 1516. Do the other storekeepers in the town get up goods in the same way? Yes.
 1517. How much would they get up in a year? I think that the others would get up about as much as I get. In ordinary years, about 300 tons would be the total tonnage for the town.
 1518. Do you send much from Collarendabri to Narrabri? Wool, skins, and tallow go from Collarendabri to Narrabri West.
 1519. How would it affect the town if the proposed railway stopped 10 miles short of the river? People could not continue in business at Collarendabri with a railway 10 miles off, though they might, if the railway were only 2 or 3 miles off. When carriers have a load on, they will carry it 50 miles for the same price as they would carry it 10 miles: the probability is that we could bring goods from Bulyeroi for the same price as from a terminus 10 miles back from the river. At Moree they charge 1s., and 1s. 6d. per cwt. for only 2 miles of cartage. In my opinion, Collarendabri would fade away if the railway were kept 10 miles back from the river. Such an arrangement would be ruinous to the vested interests here.
 1520. Do you think that the flood country within 10 miles of the river could be traversed by a railway without great expense? I think that only about two or three long culverts would be necessary, as there is no current, except in a very high flood.
 1521. How long have you resided in the district? Over eleven years.
 1522. I believe that the flood of 1890 was exceptionally high? Yes; the highest we have had for thirty years.
 1523. How was the country 10 miles back from the river affected by that flood? I do not think that the water would have gone over an ordinary railway embankment, except in the two places that I have mentioned. The next highest flood was that which occurred in 1893 or 1894, and on the highest day of the flood I sent my cart out over the country that we are speaking of with only one horse. The cart got back safely, although there two men in it, and it had to go through the water.
 1524. Then you do not think that there is any serious difficulty in the way of carrying the line right into the town? No.
 1525. Do you do much business in the country west and north-west from Collarendabri? We do a good deal in the country within 30 miles north and north-west, and we very often do trade with Angledool.
 1526. Do the other storekeepers do a similar amount of trade, or does their trade extend further towards the Queensland border? No; they do not go any further.
 1527. Where does the country just south of the Queensland border trade? The trade of that country is done with Angledool. The Angledool trade district borders our trade district.
 1528. Would the Angledool traffic go through Collarendabri if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes; there is no possibility of that trade going to Walgett.
 1529. Is the trade of the district increasing year by year? Since I came to Collarendabri eight or nine years ago the district has improved tenfold. The small holdings were just beginning to be occupied when I came here.
 1530. Has there been any marked improvement in the town since you came here? Yes, nearly all the new business premises have been improved. The hotels have been enlarged, and there has been great development. If it had not been for the last four or five years' drought this would have been a very important centre.
 1531. Have the settlement and trade of the surrounding district increased? Yes.
 1532. Have you reason to believe that this progress will continue? Yes; people on the land are to a great extent people with money.
 1533. If Collarendabri were connected by railway with Narrabri, and Walgett with Coonamble, where would the traffic from the north and north-west come? To Collarendabri. That is the natural route for that traffic, and there is no reason why it should be diverted. Angledool is further from Walgett than it is from Collarendabri, and the country between Angledool and Walgett lies low; whereas that between Angledool and Collarendabri is, with the exception of one or two narrow swamps, good country for travelling over.
 1534. If both Collarendabri and Walgett were connected by railway with Narrabri, from what districts would the Collarendabri branch attract traffic? I think that if the railway were brought to Walgett, and no railway were made to Collarendabri, Angledool goods would still come to Collarendabri, because the rate would be about the same.
 1535. For what distance towards Walgett would people use the Collarendabri line? Traffic would come to the Collarendabri line from close about Eurie Eurie. The Mercadool trade is Collarendabri trade at the present time, although the Walgett people claim it for their railway.
 1536. Would the construction of the proposed railway settle more people on the land? Yes, and a good number of people are now waiting for land to be thrown open.
 1537. How far to the west and north-west of Collarendabri would there be settlement which would give traffic to the proposed railway? Traffic would come to Collarendabri from within a few miles of Mungindi, and from places 40 or 50 miles beyond Angledool.
 1538. *Mr. Watson.*] Would the construction of the proposed railway draw traffic from the southern part of Queensland towards Newcastle and Sydney? Yes. When I first came to Collarendabri a great deal of

of the St. George loading used to pass through here and through Mogil Mogil; but when the line of railway was taken to Eulabah much of that traffic was cut off. A line to Collarendabri, however, would draw a great part of it back in this direction again. If the Walgett branch were not constructed, a great deal of traffic which had not been credited to Collarendabri would come here, and the saving of expense in construction would probably make the line pay from the beginning. The Mercadool traffic, the Cryon traffic, and the Eurie Eurie traffic, must come to the Collarendabri line, even if a railway is constructed from Coonamble to Walgett. Mr. Harper, when he was here, admitted that a good deal of traffic had been credited to Walgett which naturally belongs to Collarendabri, and we considered that if the Walgett branch is not made the Collarendabri branch will pay from the start.

W. H.
Wordsworth,
J.P.
26 May, 1900.

1539. If you were a speculator, which line would you make? The line to Collarendabri, because the construction would be less, and Collarendabri is a more central point than Walgett at which to catch traffic. A line from Narrabri to Walgett would not catch any of the Collarendabri traffic.

1540. Would it not catch it at Burren? No; a team loaded with wool would not stop at Burren, but it would go straight into Narrabri West.

1541. Does the road traffic from Collarendabri go *via* Burren or *via* Bulyeroi? *Via* Bulyeroi. Carriers would take traffic from Collarendabri to Narrabri West at the same price as to Burren. They have taken goods for less money to Angledool than to Collarendabri, and they have repeatedly accepted the same rate for Angledool as for Collarendabri. The number of sheep which we take as a basis upon which to estimate the traffic of the proposed line was fixed upon before there was any small settlement in the district; so that I think Dr. Loughnan's figures should be increased by 30 per cent.

1542. Do you think that in good seasons small holdings will carry more sheep than large holdings? Undoubtedly.

1543. Is the river likely to prove a serious competitor with the railway? No; it could never compete with a railway to Collarendabri. The steamer has been to Collarendabri only four times since I have been here; it came up in 1890 as a speculation, and twice it was specially chartered by my partner, and once by our own firm. Had it not been specially chartered it would not have come up.

1544. What price did you pay for carriage on the steamer? Wool was taken from Mogil Mogil to Bourke for £3 a ton.

1545. I suppose the steamer also brought goods up? Yes, from Bourke. It would be impossible to send wool from Collarendabri to Adelaide by river, because the water falls too rapidly.

1546. What did you pay to bring goods up from Bourke by steamer? £2 10s. a ton. There are three rocky bars below Collarendabri that make the river impassable above Walgett in most seasons. When the steamer did come here it was at a time when the roads were impracticable; but if the railway had been here there would have been no necessity for the steamer to come.

Charles Seymour, hotelkeeper, Moongulla bore, Angledool Road, sworn, and examined:—

1547. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you offer any opinion as to the direction which the Angledool traffic will take if the railway be brought to Walgett and also to Collarendabri? I think it would come to Collarendabri; it comes here now.

C. Seymour.
26 May, 1900.

1548. Is the traffic from that part of the country in any way large? Yes; it is heavy traffic. A line to Collarendabri would tap the Australian Pastoral Company's land. The company carry nearly 1,000,000 sheep on their land, the greater part of which is in Queensland.

1549. Where does their wool go now? Nearly all of it comes this way.

1550. You do not think it likely that any of that traffic will go towards Walgett? I do not think so; a little of it goes through Mungindi to Moree, but it would come to Collarendabri if there were a railway here.

1551. Can it at the present time reach the railway at Moree more quickly than at Narrabri? Part of the land is nearer to Moree, but all the traffic would come to Collarendabri if the railway came here. If the line were made to Collarendabri, traffic would come here from close on to Goodooga. Everyone wants to send his wool in the direction of Newcastle.

TUESDAY, 29 MAY, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Walgett, at 10.30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Thomas Clarke, J.P., Secretary, Railway League, Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1552. *Vice-Chairman.*] I understand that you have a statement to read to the Committee? Yes; it is as follows:—It has been resolved by the residents of Walgett and district that the question of route of a railway from the main system to Walgett shall not be interfered with by them, the question of route being left entirely in the hands of the Government; hence I am not considering the cost of construction or maintenance, but will only furnish you with an estimate of traffic which must accrue to a line constructed to Walgett, no matter what direction it may take. From returns furnished me in 1898, which was an ordinary year, I find that in the district served by a station at Walgett there were 1,504,341 sheep, 7,610 cattle, 4,072 horses; that 22,069 bales of wool were produced, which weighed about 4,518 tons.

T. Clarke,
J.P.
29 May, 1900.

T. Clarke, J.P.	tons.	There were sent away about 258,600 fat sheep, and the tonnage received from south was 2,305
29 May, 1900.	tons.	My estimate of earnings would be as follows:—
		2,305 tons of goods from Sydney, at £1 16s. per ton... .. £4,140
		4,518 tons of wool, at £1 3s. 9d. per ton 5,365
		2,873 trucks sheep, at £2 5s. per truck 6,464
		100 trucks large stock, at £2 5s. per truck 225
		*Mails—104 miles, at £20 per mile 2,080
		Coaching—1,500, at 17s. 8d. per head 1,325

Total £19,608

No Queensland wool or stock is included in above. Mr. District Superintendent Jones estimates 950 tons of wool from Queensland, which, at £1 3s. 9d. per ton, is ... 1,128

Making a total amount of £20,786

I will now explain how I arrive at these figures. Some time ago I sent out circulars to every resident in the district, and the majority of them replied. Where the answers were missing, I obtained the information from the Pastures and Stock Board. The estimate of wool, fat sheep, and large stock I have made up in this way: The tonnage received in Sydney is made up from the circulars, and from returns furnished to the League last November by the storekeepers of Walgett. My estimate shows the wool got from 1,504,341 sheep. The total number of sheep in this district in an ordinary season is about 2,000,000; 4,518 tons of wool from this number of sheep is not an over estimate. I say there would be 258,600 fat sheep trucked from Walgett in 2,873 trucks. This estimate must be largely increased in the event of a railway, as the greater facility for landing stock on a poor market would be an incentive for small holders to fatten. I am only estimating 100 trucks of large stock, which must be considered very small in a district like Walgett. I am of the opinion, which is shared in by all the principal experienced men of the district, that, in a very short while after the opening of the line, Walgett will be one of the largest trucking stations in the Colony. I would here invite your attention to the sworn evidence, before the Sectional Committee, Narrabri-Pilliga proposal, of the late Mr. B. S. Martyn, a man of very large experience in stock. He stated:—"I may add that Walgett is a great stock centre. The travelling stock generally follow the water, and if there were a railway station here it would be largely availed of for trucking stock. I was an agent in Wee Waa for several years, and I know that several mobs of sheep which came there from the Walgett and the Narran districts started as fatts, and were sold as stores." When the Railway Commissioners were in Walgett Mr. Martyn stated most emphatically that in his opinion Walgett would be one of the largest trucking stations in the Colony. Now, as regards the mails, we are receiving about 20 cwt. of mails here every week, and for this the Post Office would be charged £20 per mile. My estimate of the passenger traffic is based upon returns made by the police for the year 1899, which are as follow:—

Walgett Police District	1,672
Angledool	380
Goodooga	481
Comborah	301
Carinda	397
Total	3,231

Leaving out Goodooga and Angledool, we should be justified in estimating the population that would use a railway station in Walgett as 2,370, and could credit ourselves with one single fare for each unit. I have put it down at 1,500, which you will, I think, admit is a very low estimate. The district served by a railway station at Walgett would be: Commencing at Walgett, running due south to Combogolong; thence south-west to Carinda; thence north to the Narran; thence along that river to Angledool; thence south-east, through Dunumbral and Dungalear, to Mercadool; thence south to the boundary of Eurie Eurie and Kercargo; thence west to the line from the point of commencement. This embraces the area covered by the following large holdings:—Ulumbie, Euroka, Combogolong, Wangrowaly, Warren Downs, Brewan, Mourabie, Boorooma, Gingie, Llanillo, Dungalear, Mercadool, Eurie Eurie, and Bangate. Now, in regard to the river, the most sanguine supporter of the river Barwon, as an antagonist to a railway, states that the river has been navigable seven times in fourteen years. If that is a fact, can any person look upon such an irregular mode of transit as an actual competitor with a railway. A line built *via* Narrabri would be in length, to Newcastle (which I look upon as the natural outlet for the produce of this district) 353 miles, and to Sydney, 455 miles. Produce sent *via* the river, thence per rail from Bourke, would have over 300 miles of river carriage, and then 503 miles of trainage, against a total carriage of 455 miles to Sydney, or 353 miles to Newcastle. The river Darling was not navigable for four years continuously in the early eighties, and this may occur at any time in the future. I would invite your attention to the evidence of Mr. Webster, Conditional Purchase Inspector, given before the Sectional Committee when they were inquiring into the Narrabri-Pilliga proposal: "I desire to say something with regard to the river traffic. I have known the river since 1882. In that year I went to a station below Bourke and was handed bills of lading for shearing supplies, which were received four years afterwards. I may state that on the boat carrying the supplies there was timber, which was intended for the building of an hotel in Bourke for a Mr. Huggins. The timber was so long coming up that he bought the "Royal Hotel," and spent most of his money before the timber arrived. From 1882 to 1886 there was really no river which you could depend upon." I can corroborate the statement of Mr. Webster. At the time he mentioned I was bookkeeper to Mr. Huggins at the "Royal Hotel," Bourke. I also desire to direct your attention to the following extract from the report of the Public Works Committee, on the proposed construction of locks and weirs on the river Darling:—"For the past fourteen years the Darling River has been navigable on an average for half the year; the boats passing up and down stream free from toll and without serious delay. Various rates of freight are quoted, but a reasonable estimate, with easy navigation, may be stated at 20s. per ton. The quantity of freight is, approximately, 10,000 to 12,000 tons between Brewarrina and Bourke, with very little intermediate traffic. Most of the traffic of the district reaches the railways at Bourke or Byrock,

* *Vide* evidence of Mr. Jos. Clarke, of G.P.O., on Narrabri to Mores line.

Byrock, and any increase in the revenue returns of the Great Western line, would be the result of leakage from the Northern systems. The inhabitants of those districts most interested in obtaining the readiest way to market object to the proposal on the following grounds:—(1) Because it will only provide for a portion of the produce of the district. (2) Because stock (one of the greatest products of this pastoral country) cannot use it. (3) Because the time occupied in transit will be greater, and the cost heavier, than by direct railway communication between Brewarrina and Byrock." Also this extract from Mr. H. G. McKinney's report: "The great drawback to river traffic on the Darling, and to settlement on the river, is the uncertainty of transit.

The river is frequently not navigable for long periods, and this naturally adds materially to the cost of river traffic, and renders it more or less untrustworthy. What applies to Brewarrina also applies to Walgett." In the event of the river being seriously looked upon as a competitor with a railway, I would invite your attention to the fact that there still would be no get-away for stock, which must be a source of considerable revenue to a railway, also to the great risk attached to the water carriage of wool, and the increased insurance. The anticipation of this proposed line being a payable one is proved by a perusal of the profits earned by the Werris Creek to Narrabri line, and the Narrabri to Moree. The former, in 1891, showed a profit of £907, in 1892 of £9,432, in 1893 of £14,000, and in 1896 of £10,488; the Moree line paid from the start. In speaking of pioneer lines the Railway Commissioners state:—The two latter lines indicate a good prospect, more particularly the Narrabri-Moree line." To prove the prosperity of our district I would point to the financial healthiness of our local institutions. The Pastoral and Agricultural Association takes rank with such towns as Dubbo, Forbes, Glen Innes, Hay, Junee, Moree, Orange, Temora, and Warren. The School of Arts is also in a flourishing condition. The Hospital ranks with the like institutions in Armidale, Corowa, Scone, Wallsend, Wyallda, Windsor, and Young. The amateur and professional race clubs are both in a healthy condition. In considering the claim of this town to railway communication, I would respectfully point out to the Committee that there are public buildings in Walgett worth at least £30,000, and a short while ago about £3,000 was laid out in putting them in thorough repair. If a railway were constructed to any other town in this direction, and Walgett left in the cold, it would not only destroy the private vested interests, but would render the public buildings useless. Referring to the anticipation of trucking: In my opinion the whole of the Queensland traffic in stock, when crossing near Brenda or Heeble, would come to Walgett in preference to any other town. At the inquiry into the Narrabri-Pilliga proposal, I put in, as evidence of this, the sworn declarations of seven drovers, worded as follows:—"I am a drover; I have frequently taken stock from Queensland, from the districts on the border, to the railway for carriage to market in Sydney; I know the various stock routes from the border to Narrabri; I am of opinion, the result of my experience, that the routes from Goodooga and Angledool, to Walgett, *via* Wilby Wilby and Weetalibah respectively, are the best for stock to travel, owing to the greater facilities for obtaining grass and water on the road; I am further of opinion that a trucking station at Walgett, connecting with the line at Narrabri, would be available of to a greater extent than one in any other locality in the district. And I make, &c." The following is a statement prepared by the C.P.S., Walgett, for the information of the Railway Commissioners when they were here last November:—"In the Central Division, Walgett has about 3,000,000 acres of land, a great portion of which, about 1,000,000 acres, will become available for some class of settlement under the Act of 1895. In the Western Division of Walgett there are about 5,000,000 acres under pastoral and homestead lease, representing about 211 holdings under homestead lease, an average of 10,000 acres per lot, whilst 340 persons hold 4,774,342 acres under pastoral lease. Nearly every form of settlement has been availed of in this district since the initiation of the new Land Act in 1895. The following are some of the results: Settlement leases since 1895, 114, of an average of 2,500 acres, in all 285,000 acres, with permanent residence; homestead selections, 20, of an average of 1,200, in all about 24,000, with permanent residence; conditional purchase and alienation carrying residence since 1875, 400, representing about 500,000 acres, excluding the amount taken up by squatters in exchange, &c. In 1898, 171,607 acres were made available for conditional purchase. Little, if any, is now remaining to be taken up under that tenure. The following is the return of revenue received at the Crown Lands Office, Walgett, for the year 1899:—

	£	s.	d.
Annual lease	257	15	2
Auction sales	106	16	8
After auction sales	59	11	0
Conditional leases	3,823	14	5
Conditional purchase	5,890	5	8
Homestead lease	74	16	8
Homestead selection	111	4	11
Settlement lease	2,022	6	3
Lease fee stamp duty	17	0	0
Miscellaneous	181	15	0
Total amount collected	12,545	5	9
C.P.S. collection	714	15	0
Grand total	£13,260	0	9

The total amount of revenue from this office would exceed £20,000 if the money sent direct to the Treasury were included for payments payable to this office. If the total land revenue for this district were taken, including pastoral, homestead, and other forms of large leases, for which payments are only made to the Treasury, it would exceed £50,000 per annum. The Walgett district is the central office for electoral work of no less than seven divisions, running to the Queensland border on the north, Curribric and Missington on the west, Gundabluie on the east, and Willie on the south.

1553. Where is most of the wool that goes from this district consigned to? Most of it to Sydney.

1554. Where do you draw your town supplies from? Most of our supplies come from Sydney, but we get a great deal from Newcastle.

1555. The Railway League does not commit itself to any opinion as to the merits of the respective routes by which Walgett may be reached? That is the attitude taken, not only by members of the League, but also by the people of the district. Several public meetings have been held, at which that determination was arrived at.

T. Clarke,
J.P.
29 May, 1900.

T. Clarke,
J.P.
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1556. What is your private opinion as to the best way of reaching Walgett? My opinion is that the railway should be brought here, from Narrabri West, on the south side of the Namoi River, and that the next best route would be from Narrabri East, on the north side of the Namoi, straight into the town. If the line is brought from Narrabri West, the terminus, according to the present scheme, will be a mile and a half from the town; but in my opinion the railway could be brought straight into the town for an extra expenditure of £5,000, and unless the Government bring the railway right into Walgett there will be a great deal of agitation to have it extended, so that ultimately it will have to be brought here. Narrabri for years agitated for a railway into the town, and eventually got it; and Yass, which was left off the line, at last succeeded in getting a tramway.

1557. A connection with the Northern line gives Walgett a port 100 miles nearer than it would get one by being connected with the Western line, and the advantage of being able to send its produce to both Newcastle and Sydney? Yes.

1558. You spoke of small holders being able to send consignments of fat stock away more frequently if there were a railway;—why cannot they send them away now? In a season like this, if a man started to drive 100 fat sheep to Narrabri, they would be store sheep when they got there. Besides, it costs almost as much to send away a small flock of sheep as to send away a large one. Most of our travelling stock routes are eaten down, even in good seasons, because they are generally leased to the holders of the adjoining runs.

1559. Do you regard this as a good fattening district? Experts state that this is one of the finest fattening districts in New South Wales, and, therefore, in the world.

1560. Do you think that with the construction of the railway to Walgett there would be an increase in the number of stock fattened for export? Undoubtedly. Mr. Benn, of the Aberdeen meat-works, could give you valuable evidence on that point. He buys almost all of his stock in this district, and trucks them from Narrabri.

1561. Which would be the most convenient and accessible district to send starving stock to from this district? New England.

1562. The Railway Commissioners anticipate a loss of £13,000 per annum on the line to Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri;—if both lines were made, which place would get the larger amount of stock traffic—Walgett or Collarendabri? Walgett. The sworn affidavits of the seven drovers of whom I have spoken, all of whom have had from seven to twenty-five years' experience, state that those drovers, if they had to bring stock from Queensland, would rather bring them *via* Wilby Wilby and Comborah to Walgett than by any other route.

1563. We were informed at Collarendabri that nearly all the traffic from the Queensland side, between Angledool and Mungindi, now comes through Collarendabri? I think that most of the travelling stock from the district north of Angledool come this way.

1564. We were told that on the road to Collarendabri the country is comparatively high and dry, and that between Angledool and Walgett the land is more subject to floods? I doubt it very much. Since 1893, scarcely any water has lain on the ground at all, and only in 1890 were the roads impassable because of floods. In almost any kind of season there is plenty of grass and water on the Wilby Wilby track.

1565. Would a line from Narrabri to Collarendabri, and another from Coonamble to Walgett, attract a larger quantity of traffic than the proposed line? I do not think so.

1566. Would a line from Coonamble to Walgett attract more traffic from the western country than the Walgett line? I do not think so. I think the traffic that would not come to Walgett would go in any case to Coonamble, or to the Brewarrina-Byrock line. The manager of Brewarrina assured me that his wool would come from Walgett, but I doubt if it would go to any intermediate station.

1567. Do you anticipate any development of agriculture in this district? Yes; by the use of artesian water.

1568. But you would not expect much agricultural traffic on the railway? No; but I would point out that the most profitable lines in the Colony are those that run through purely pastoral country.

1569. How close together is it justifiable to construct railways in purely pastoral country? The Railway Commissioners will never allow for traffic from a district more than 25 miles from a proposed railway.

1570. Would there be enough purely pastoral traffic to keep going both the proposed line to Walgett, and the proposed line to Collarendabri? I think so; but Walgett has far greater claims to a railway, by reason of the wealth of the town, its great private and public vested interests, and for other reasons, than Collarendabri. Walgett has always been looked upon as one of the largest centres in the Western district. If Collarendabri is to be taken into account at all, it is because of the Queensland traffic which she grasps, and, with Federation, that traffic may cease to come here.

1571. The Railway Commissioners suggest that Walgett should be reached from Coonamble;—would that be a disadvantage to this district? It would be a disadvantage to us, in that we should have to wait at least another decade for our railway. Before the line can be extended from Coonamble, the Public Works Committee must report to Parliament upon the proposal that they are now considering, and before any fresh proposal can be referred to the Committee the House will have expired by effluxion of time; then, before another proposal can be submitted, we shall have to overcome a great amount of opposition from people in the northern districts, who look upon Walgett as their private property. I am quite satisfied to have a railway from Coonamble, or from any other place from which you choose to bring it, if you give it to us within a short period. At the last inquiry I stated that if the Committee chose to send a person here to analyse the traffic of the district, uncontrolled by the Government, he would find that a line to Walgett would pay from the jump, even with a railway to Collarendabri, and another to Coonamble. As far as Mr. Harper's figures are concerned, it should be remembered that Mr. Usher, who compiled them, came here, and all he did was to have a little talk with us; but exact information cannot be obtained merely from speechmaking.

1572. But Mr. Harper says that he knows where every bale of wool in the district goes to? I am very sorry to contradict him, but I can show that his statement is hardly reliable. For instance, one man in this district uses a Sydney name, and brands his wool "G.M. over Forest Lodge," and he sends it to the railway one year, and down the river another.

1573. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you resided in Walgett? Seven years.

1574. During your residence here have you noticed any marked improvement in the town or district? Yes; especially in the amount of settlement which has taken place under settlement lease.

1575. Would the land that you speak of as about to be thrown open for settlement be influenced by the construction of the proposed railway? Some of it would, I know.

1576. Would the greater part of the 1,000,000 acres, to which you have referred, be better served by a line from Narrabri than by a line from Coonamble? I could not tell you from memory. I am informed that the whole of the land on each side of the Namoi is to be thrown open for selection, shortly, under settlement lease. I know that there are 97,000 acres on Mercadool holding which are shortly to be thrown open. Nearly all the leases fall in this year.

1577. Has much Crown land been thrown open for settlement during your residence here? Yes.

1578. Has it been eagerly taken up? Yes.

1579. You stated that you did not think agriculture would be extensively carried on in this district except by the use of artesian water;—in times of drought is there any difficulty in obtaining produce from other places? Yes.

1580. What rates of carriage are paid between Narrabri and Walgett? The rates fluctuate, but lately as much as £6 and £6 10s. a ton has been paid. They went down to £2 a ton once, but that was only for one or two loads. £3 a ton is a fair average.

1581. Are the rates highest at times when you want produce most? Yes; because those are times of drought.

1582. Is there any considerable trade between Newcastle and Walgett? I have no personal knowledge of that trade.

1583. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What are the smallest areas taken up in this district? There are some homestead selections of 640 acres close to the town.

1584. How is that land used? Some of the holders grow hay, and I think that ultimately they intend to go in for agriculture properly, but since they took up the land the seasons have been so droughty that some of them have not been able to reside on their selections at all.

1585. What is the average carrying capacity of the country about here? About a sheep to 3 acres.

1586. Is it possible for a man to make a living on 640 acres here, taking everything into consideration? I do not think so, and I do not think that any more of these small blocks will be thrown open. About twenty of them have been taken up, altogether.

1587. What is the smallest area that would be likely to support a family here? 2,560 acres; but a proper-sized block would be at least 5,000 acres in extent. I think that every acre in this district is suitable for agriculture.

1588. Do you consider the land around Walgett that is subject to floods suitable for agriculture? Yes. Residents of the Hawkesbury have told me that a flood there does them a power of good.

1589. How frequently is the land submerged? Close to the river the land was submerged in 1893, but not since.

1590. At what time of the year do you generally get rain? Our heaviest rains fall in January or February.

1591. What is your average rainfall? About 20½ inches.

1592. Do you generally get enough to manure your crops? Yes, if we get our average rainfall; but in some years we have only had 10 and 11 inches.

1593. At the present time there is no inducement to go in for agriculture here, because there is only the local market to supply? Yes.

1594. *Vice-Chairman.*] Walgett has not yet been incorporated? Not yet. If the railway were brought here it would be an inducement to incorporation, because it would enable us to bring material here cheaply for the improvement of our streets.

1595. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has the Railway League considered the advisableness of guaranteeing the Government against any loss on the proposed line? No.

1596. Do you think that those who would benefit by the construction of the line would be willing to pay an amount equal to what they pay in land tax towards the reduction of any deficiency? I think so. I think they would be glad to promise to do so, because they believe that the line would pay from the jump. The Byrock to Brewarrina line is only 60 miles from the Byrock to Bourke line, and if both those lines will pay a line to Walgett would pay. I do not believe a man in the district would be called upon to pay one penny towards making good a deficiency on the working of a line to Walgett.

Isaac Collins, sheep farmer, near Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1597. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What area of land do you occupy? With my three sons, I occupy 21,000 acres, about 11 acres of which are conditional purchase land and conditional lease land, while the rest is held under annual lease.

1598. How far is your place from Walgett? It is about 10½ miles down the river, in the direction of Brewarrina.

1599. How many sheep will your land carry in average seasons? I have had 10,000 on it, but at the present time I have only about 3,500 or 3,600. In a very good season an acre and a half will carry a sheep, but in some seasons it takes 6 or 7 acres to keep a sheep. It is very hard to say what the average carrying capacity of the land is, because the last five years have been so dry; but I dare say it might be put down as a sheep to 3 acres.

1600. How long have you resided in the district? Nearly eleven years.

1601. Have you a good general knowledge of the district? Yes.

1602. Do you know the district between Walgett and Narrabri? Yes.

1603. Will you describe that country? In places it is fairly good. It is good sheep-carrying country in good seasons.

1604. How would you compare it with your own land? It is as good as my land, and some of it is better. If we could get rain at the right seasons country like that which I occupy would carry a larger number of sheep.

1605. Do you send many sheep to market? I sent 2,300 fat sheep away last. By the time they got to Narrabri, a distance of 140 miles, sheep that had left as fat stock were only stores. If we had a railway here, a man in a small way could send away small consignments and he would get quick returns, and in that way he would keep out of the storekeepers' books. If we do not get a railway here many of the small

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- I. Collins.
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- small men will have to go, because everything is so dear here. The storekeepers have to pay high rates to the carriers, and, consequently, the farmers have to pay high prices to the storekeepers, so that a poor man has to work hard all the year round to make ends meet.
1606. Where do you send your fat stock? To Sydney, through Narrabri. If settlement-lease men could send away two or three truck-loads of sheep at a time, it would be of great advantage to them to do so.
1607. If the proposed railway were constructed would everyone who was sending fat sheep to market use the railway? Yes. It would have to be a very good season to make it worth anyone's while to use the stock routes. People would be very foolish not to use the railway.
1608. Do you send away much wool? Yes, to Sydney. I have sent away as many as 130 bales in a good season. What I want are quick sales and ready money.
1609. Did you suffer very much from the late drought? I lost half of what I had. I lost about 4,000 sheep, and I was about 100 bales of wool short.
1610. Did you make any effort to send your sheep away to other districts during the drought? It was of no use to try to do so. A man keeps his sheep back thinking rain will come, until at last it is too late to move them.
1611. Did many other people lose as heavily as you lost? Yes, all my neighbours lost in the same way.
1612. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it be used in times of drought for sending starving stock to more favoured districts? If the railway had been here last season I should have sent my sheep away instead of letting them die in the paddocks. Every man who has stock would use the railway to send them away in times of drought.
1613. Which route would you prefer, that from Narrabri or that from Coonamble? It does not matter to me where the railway comes from; a line to Walgett is all that I want.
1614. But would not one route be better for you than another? It is immaterial to me which route is adopted.
1615. Have you done anything in the way of agriculture? Not yet; but my neighbours have. A man close to me has grown a very nice crop.
1616. Do you think that the land is suitable for cultivation? There is plenty of land here which is suitable for cultivation.
1617. If the railway were constructed, would people here be induced to go in for agriculture? Very likely. Several settlement lessees in my neighbourhood could have sent away two or three truck-loads of fat sheep at the beginning of the season if there had been a railway; but, as it was, they had to keep the sheep back until they lost them.
1618. It has been stated that a considerable area of Crown land is shortly to be thrown open for settlement;—if that land is similar to the land you occupy will people take it up? Certainly; but Walgett is so far from Sydney that 2,560 acres make too small a holding for farming. Blocks of 5,000 acres are required.
1619. Would a 5,000-acre block maintain a family? Yes.
1620. Where were you living before you came to this district? In Riverina.
1621. How does that country compare with this country for sheep farming? I think that this country is as good as the Riverina country. If we have rain here, no matter at what time of the year, grass or herbage of some sort will follow; but in Riverina, if rain comes between the seasons, not a blade of grass follows.
1622. Will this land carry as many sheep to the acre as the Riverina land will carry? Yes, if not more. Taking one season with another, I think it will carry more. I used to do a little wheat-growing; but more for chaff than anything else.
1623. Which line would suit this district the better, one from Narrabri or one from Coonamble? A line from Narrabri will enable us to send our starving stock to the New England district.
1624. Where do starving stock go now? Mostly through Narrabri to the New England district; but some of them have travelled to the Moree district, because there has been rain there.
1625. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the average weight of a fleece with you? From 6 to 8 lb.
1626. Are the sheep in this district liable to any disease? No.
1627. Have you much scrub on your holding, upon which you can feed sheep? No. I had a little; but it has all been used. I have had very hard times during the last few years.
1628. Have you a garden? I had a beautiful lot of fruit-trees; but they nearly all died in the drought.

Horatio William Smith, selector, near Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

- H. W. Smith.
29 May, 1900.
1629. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the extent of your holding? 2,560 acres.
1630. How long have you been in the district? Nearly eight years.
1631. How many sheep have you? At the present time a little over 700.
1632. Is that the full capacity of your holding? No. I had never shorn fewer than 2,000 sheep until last year, when I sheared about 1,800.
1633. Have you lost others through the drought? Yes.
1634. Will your run carry 2,000 sheep? Until last year it carried 2,000. I do not buy and sell.
1635. What number of fat sheep do you send away? None.
1636. What kind of pasture have you? Mine is principally plain country, slightly timbered with coolabah and white wood. Mitchell grass, blue grass, and saltbush grow on it, and herbage in the winter.
1637. Do you feed and spell alternate paddocks? Yes; three-fourths of my country is spelling now.
1638. Where do you send your wool? To Sydney, via Narrabri.
1639. What is your opinion of the country between Narrabri and Walgett? From Walgett to Wee Waa the country cannot be excelled as grazing country; but beyond that a great deal of it is flooded country.
1640. Is any of the land between Walgett and Wee Waa fit for agriculture? I think it is all fit for agriculture, judging by the crops that I have seen growing in the district; but, unfortunately, just when the crops need rain, at the end of September and in October, we generally get a dry spell. Of course, artesian water could be used to get over that difficulty to a great extent.
1641. If the line came from Narrabri, would you sooner see it brought on the south side, or on the north side

side of the river? I think that a line coming from Narrabri East would come through better country ^{H. W. Smith.} than any other; but it would not pass through Wee Waa.

1642. How would you describe the Collarendabri country? As far as I have been in the direction of ^{29 May, 1900.} Burren it is similar to the country round here.

1643. Have you tried cultivation at all? Not yet; but I am making a start this year.

1644. Have you every hope of being able to make a fair living on 2,560 acres? I have done so up to the present, and I hope my condition will improve if a railway comes here.

Charles Speight Haigh, storekeeper, Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1645. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you resided long in the district? Over five years.

1646. Then you have had an opportunity of observing and experiencing the difficulties which the residents labour under by reason of the want of railway communication? Yes; in the first place, our climate is of such a trying character that we cannot keep large stocks of perishable articles, because they go bad in the stores. Now that the district is becoming so thickly populated by small holders, if we had 50 or 100 points of rain now and again, during a few weeks, the teams find it impossible to travel, and that brings about almost a state of famine. A little while ago people here were offering 25s. a bag for chaff to feed their horses, and animals were starving. I had three teams stuck up 37 miles from the town at the time; but I could make no use of the produce. I had there about 12 tons of grain, and if I had been able to bring it into Walgett I could have sold it for 10s. a bushel, and people would have been very glad to buy it; but when it came here it was practically unsaleable, because grass had grown, and people did not want it. In good seasons chaff and produce are nearly useless here. People will not buy produce, and horses will not eat it then; and it is consequently a dead loss to the storekeepers. With regard to the river, it has been stated that we do not want a railway here, because we have water communication; but the river is simply a snare and a trap to us. When the water has risen sufficiently to enable a steamer to come up here, it is too late to send to Sydney to order goods to be sent to Bourke, to be put on board the steamer. When the water is high enough here for us to think about sending for goods, there is no water at Bourke; and when the water gets down to Bourke there is none here. Last time I risked it, I had to send waggons to Boorooma to bring the goods from there. The steamer people will not guarantee to deliver at any particular time.

1647. What freight do you pay from Narrabri, on the average? From 2s. to 6s. a cwt.

1648. What is the steamer freight? About £2 10s. a ton from Bourke, I think. I have three teams always employed, and very often I employ two other teams as well.

1649. How far does your trade area extend from Walgett? Speaking for our own business, it goes back as far as the Narran, 58 or 60 miles from here. Our trade also goes a long way down the Barwon, and down the Castlereagh towards Combogolong and Coonamble. Then we go north-easterly as far as Cryon, and as far as Mercadool.

1650. Does any of the Angledool traffic come this way? I have frequently supplied people in Angledool.

1651. If the Federal Government locked and weired the river, could goods be brought here more cheaply by river than by train? Not unless the Federal Government also abolished the differential rates to Bourke. I hope that whatever route is adopted the railway will be brought right into the town. It will be a very serious injury to Walgett if the terminus is left a mile and a half away.

1652. Is there any way in which the engineers could avoid the extreme expense of construction which is necessary to bring the railway into the town? I do not know; but we want a railway into the town.

1653. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you noticed a general advance in the town and district since you have been here? Our customers have increased in number; but, unfortunately, one year has been worse than its predecessor, and that has militated very considerably against business. If we got one or two good seasons I think the capability of the district would astonish people. I have been told that this district is particularly suitable for the breeding of sheep and the production of wool.

1654. And you think that a railway would greatly improve your conditions? Yes; especially if it is brought into the town. That would suit both business people and the people of the district.

1655. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you get most of your supplies from? We get nearly everything from Sydney.

1656. Do you do much trade with Newcastle? We only get butter and biscuits from Newcastle, and we sometimes get flour from Tamworth.

1657. Would it not be of advantage to Walgett to have the Newcastle as well as the Sydney market? Yes; we should then have two ports instead of one; but Sydney is the only port I use.

John Young Bell, grazier, near Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1658. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is the area of your holding? 10,240 acres.

1659. What is its average carrying capacity, taking good and bad seasons together? A sheep to an acre and a half, taking the average for ten years.

1660. Is the land that would be served by the proposed railway good pastoral country? Yes.

1661. What is your opinion of it from an agricultural point of view? Nearly the whole district is really first-class agricultural land. I have been farming in the district on a small scale for the last nine years, and I have got as much as 3 tons of hay to the acre.

1662. How many failures have you had? Only one total failure; but two of the crops were not very good, owing to dry seasons.

1663. Would you expect, on the average, worse or better results than you have obtained during the last nine years? The last five years have been worse than the average season, and, therefore, I think my average crop, taken over a long period, would be better than I have been getting.

1664. Do you irrigate your land? I have started to irrigate it. I irrigated a small piece last year; but I consider the land first-class agricultural land, even without irrigation.

1665. Is it possible to irrigate any large area in this district? Yes; by the use of artesian water. The country is extremely level here.

1666. If there were a railway, what crops could be profitably grown here? Wheat, and I think almost any other crop that is grown in the Colony. I believe that this would be a splendid tobacco-growing district.

C. S. Haigh.
29 May, 1900.

J. Y. Bell.
29 May, 1900.

- J. Y. Bell. district. I have had a good deal of experience in tobacco-growing, and I am sending for seed now to give this country a trial.
- 29 May, 1900. 1667. What is the largest area that you have had under crop, and what has been the best yield from it? Sixty-five acres is my largest area, and I got about 60 tons of hay from it; but that was one of the worst crops that I have had.
1668. Are your results such as to lead you to increase your area? Yes; and I am now cultivating 200 acres.
1669. What market do you expect to find for your produce? Only the Walgett market at present.
1670. If there were a railway to Walgett, could you grow grain for export? I think we could. I produce a sample of the wheat which I grew last year. I have always been growing for hay; but last year some of the crop was a little on the ripe side before I gathered it in. I intend putting in 1,000 acres next year, and I am about to order £850 worth of machinery.
1671. How would you describe your soil? Most of the land that we are farming now is black soil, but we have farmed the red soil too.
1672. Which is the better? I think that the red soil is safer than the black. It stands a drought better; but in a good season, or with irrigation, the black soil is the better.
1673. What crop do you propose sowing next year? Wheat, oats, and maize or Indian corn. I have seen Indian corn grown on the Castlereagh, and a very good crop came.
1674. What are the possibilities of the district for fruit? I have seen some very fine grapes grown close to my place on about an acre of ground. I have had a good deal of experience in grape growing, though not in this district. My father used to make a good deal of wine in the Albury district, and I think that this would be a good wine district. There is a Chinese garden close to my place where really first-class fruit is grown.
1675. Is the district suitable for small holdings with mixed farming? Yes.
1676. What would be a fair-sized holding for the maintenance of a family here, supposing there were a railway? About 2,560 acres. A man could do on less; but I consider that the area I have named would enable anyone to make a really first-class home. I know men in the district who have done well on 2,560 acres simply by grazing. They started with very little money, but, notwithstanding the severe droughts which we have had, they are in a good position now.
1677. But mixed farming would be safer? Yes; I am satisfied of that.
1678. *Mr. Watson.*] Would you say that the rain falls here at seasons that would suit wheat? Yes, generally; but in some years it is patchy. During my nine years' experience, enough rain has fallen at the right time, except in two or three seasons.
1679. Would the rainfall generally be sufficient for a grain crop? I think so, if the land were properly farmed; but there are not many first-class farmers in the district at present. When I first came here people told me that I should not be able to get a crop at all; but I tried 8 acres, and I got a splendid crop.
1680. I understand that hay and chaff have occasionally been at very high prices here? Yes; the lowest price at which I have sold chaff is £6 a ton.
1681. Then how is it that more produce has not been grown here? I am one of the oldest selectors in the district, and up to the time of my coming here the land was held by squatters, who told us, because they did not want selectors to come here, that the soil would not grow wheat. I know that some of those squatters had been most successful with small areas, but they would not continue growing for fear that other people should find it out. Since I have discovered that wheat can be successfully grown here, a great many other selectors are going in for it. I know about a dozen within 15 or 20 miles of my place who are cultivating from 40 to 50 and 60 acres.
1682. If the railway were made, could you grow hay in competition with a more favoured district, such as the Hunter? If I could get £2 10s. a ton for all the hay I grew, I should give up sheep-farming and go in solely for agriculture. I have 5 acres under lucerne, and the crop which I have irrigated has been a very good one, so that I am extending the area to 20 acres this year.
1683. How do you irrigate? From the Telloora bore, on the Coonamble-road. It is a Government bore; and I think it has the biggest flow in the Colony.
1684. What is the depth of the bore? 1,540 feet.
1685. What do you pay for the water that you get from that bore? 6s. 8d. a week. The flow was estimated at 6,000,000 gallons. I could have the whole of it; but I have never been able to use more than one-third of it. I should have to pay about £2 10s. a week if I used the whole of it. An arrangement was made with Mr. Boulton that seventeen selectors could take the whole flow by paying £2 10s. a week for it.
1686. If there were a railway, would it pay you to grow crops by irrigation? I am sure that it would. This is a very hot climate, so that you can grow crops here nearly all the year round, and the extra crops which you obtain from irrigation would more than pay for the expense. We irrigated 15 acres twice, occupying two days in the work on each occasion, and we only had one-third of the flow. It did not take as much time to irrigate on the second occasion as on the first. If land is worked regularly, and is not allowed to get too dry, it will not require so much water.
1687. Have you been irrigating sufficiently long to know whether the artesian water will have a bad effect upon the soil? I cannot say what effect it will have upon the soil.
1688. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How do oats succeed here? We have only tried oats twice. On one occasion the crop was not very good, and on the other occasion Algerian oats proved a success.
1689. Do you irrigate by flooding, or with drains? With drains.
1690. How often do you find it necessary to irrigate in dry weather? Last year was a very dry season, but we only found it necessary to irrigate twice, and in many years it would not be necessary to irrigate at all.
1691. How long have you been growing lucerne? We only put in the lucerne last year.
1692. How many cuttings have you had from it? We cut it once, and then let the sheep run on it for about three months. Now it is fit to cut again.
1693. Where have you had experience in tobacco-cutting? About Albury.
1694. Is it not generally considered that alluvial lands are the best for tobacco? Yes; but this soil is very rich and strong, and I think that with water it will grow tobacco. The only thing that might go against

a tobacco crop is the climate ; but I think that the climate will suit, because we are not very subject to frosts here. J. Y. Bell.

1695. What kinds of fruit grow here? Grapes, peaches, figs, apricots, oranges, and other fruits. I do not think that apples are a success. 29 May, 1900.

1696. Is fruit grown chiefly by irrigation? Yes.

1697. Are you quite satisfied with the results of your experiments so far? Yes ; I think that with railway communication the raising of pigs would be a very profitable industry in this district. I am quite satisfied that there would be no difficulty in raising pigs here, because of the trouble that we have in keeping down wild pigs. If we had a railway to Walgett we could make a lot of money by fencing off the warrambools and keeping them for pig-breeding ; but, without a railway, pig-raising is out of the question, because we should have too far to drive the animals to market. Then, if we had a railway, grazing could be carried on more successfully. In a good season we have more grass than we want. I have seen grass as high as a sheep's back ; but, owing to the uncertainty of our seasons, I have been afraid to put more stock on to the land. If there were a railway, however, I could put on two-thirds more stock and fatten them ; and if the season turned out a dry one I could truck away the fattest sheep, 100 or 200 at a time. This is the finest country that I have seen for the raising of fat lambs. We have lost very heavily on several occasions ; but we should not have lost if we had had a railway. In 1897 I had about 300 fat lambs, and they were inspected by a first-class man, who valued them at 10s. a head on the ground ; but, as it did not pay to drive away so small a lot, I had to keep them until they died. I have also had fat bullocks and cows, which I should have liked to send away, but which I have had to keep until they died from want of food. We have had great losses, which would not have occurred had there been a railway, because in dry seasons we could send our animals elsewhere for grass. The stock routes become bare before any other part of the country, so that it is impossible to use them for sending sheep away. The value of the sheep which have died in this district during the last three or four years would be equal to the cost of building a railway to Walgett. I am quite sure that if all the pastoral leases in the district were thrown open for selection, and we had a railway to Walgett, every block would be taken up. That would give the railway a better chance of paying. Up to the present time several large areas of land have been thrown open here, and in most cases the blocks have been balloted for, and there is not now a block in the district open for selection. The land is sought after by farmers, some of whom have come from Riverina and Victoria ; and I know of at least seventy or eighty farmers who are in Victoria at the present time waiting for an opportunity to take up land in this district. A man named Butler is going into farming on the share system with myself and my brothers. He comes from Victoria, and has done a lot of farming there, and he is quite satisfied that he can do better in this district than in Victoria. The uncertainty of the river has been a curse to the district. During my nine years' residence here the river has been of no use to me. During the first one or two years that I was here I brought up goods by steamer ; but they cost me 7s. 6d. or 10s. a ton more than they would have cost if I had had them brought here by team, because they would have to be unloaded at Brewarrina. Since that time I have never used the steamers. I do not think that the river will ever compete with the railway. If there were a railway to Walgett I should not use the river, even if the steamer people undertook to carry my wool to Bourke for nothing, because at Bourke my wool would be further from Sydney than it is at Walgett.

Robert Moyses, Inspector of Stock, Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1698. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you held your present position? I have been in the Walgett district about twenty months. R. Moyses.

1699. Have you a statement to make to the Committee? I have a few returns here. At the end of 1897, the number of sheep in the district was 1,901,243, and at the end of 1898, 1,538,030, showing that the loss for the year was 363,213. In 1899, there were 1,038,186 sheep, showing a further loss of 479,844 in that year, or a total loss for the two years of 843,057 sheep. Those sheep died during the drought, and at present prices they would be worth £421,528. The loss of horses and cattle in the same period was about 50 per cent. 29 May, 1900.

1700. Do you think that those losses could have been averted if there had been a railway? I am of opinion that if there had been a railway, we should have saved 70 per cent. The stock routes have been in such a terrible state that it has been utterly impossible to travel sheep. People started felling scrub for their stock, and when the scrub was cut out, they had simply to let the sheep die.

1701. Did any of the stock-owners travel their sheep to other districts during the drought? Yes.

1702. In which direction? Principally the New England, though a few flocks have gone to Mendooran, and in that direction.

1703. I suppose the number of horned stock in the district is not very large? No ; we consider the district capable of carrying 2,000,000 sheep, but at the present time we have only 1,038,000.

1704. So that you are considerably understocked? Yes ; none of the holdings are fully stocked at the present time.

1705. What is the grazing capacity of this district? On the average, 3 acres will carry a sheep.

1706. Have you had experience of other districts? Yes ; I know the Macquarie district, the Dubbo district, the Walgett district, the Wilcannia district, and other parts of the Colony.

1707. How does this district compare with those that you have named? I think that it is one of the best in the Colony ; it is by far the soundest district that I have been in.

1708. Is it a good fattening district? Yes ; a splendid district.

1709. In ordinary seasons, are a large number of fat sheep sent from this district to Sydney? Yes ; about 250,000 a year.

1710. In what direction, do they mostly go? In good seasons they generally travel to Rylstone, to Mudgee, and to Wallerawang, but a large number of fat stock are bought in this district by the Aberdeen Company, and they are trucked from Narrabri.

1711. In what direction do most of the fat stock for the city market go? If they can travel, they go *via* Conamble, Mendooran, and Conabarabran ; but in a bad season, they are glad to take the train at Narrabri.

1712. If the railway were brought to Walgett, would it be used by the owners of fat stock to send sheep to market? Yes.

- R. Moyse.
29 May, 1900.
1713. It has been stated that holders of fat stock have experienced considerable difficulty in getting rid of small consignments? Yes; I have often heard that complaint. I have seen sheep in good condition, which it would not pay an owner to send away, unless he could put them directly on to the trucks. Fat stock belonging to small holders are generally bought by people who are making up a large flock to send away. In good years most of the Queensland stock comes through the district on their way to the southern markets, and to the Hunter. The estimated traffic through Walgett last year was about 2,100 horses, 10,800 head of cattle, and 510,000 sheep. Those figures are taken from the permits granted.
1714. Which way were those animals passing? Backwards and forwards through Walgett.
1715. Is there much traffic in store stock? Yes, a good deal.
1716. With what other districts has this district stock transactions? The Walgett district is expected to supply most of the New England country, and people living up the Macquarie come this way for store stock. Buyers come here every year.
1717. Do most of the transactions with store stock take place between people in this district and people in the New England district? Yes.
1718. *Mr. Watson.*] Would store stock use the proposed railway in any but times of drought? They would not use it if they could get grass.
1719. But fat stock would be put into the train? Yes.
1720. *Mr. McFarlane.*] And starving stock? Yes.
1721. *Mr. Watson.*] Does your district include Collarendabri? Yes.
1722. With a terminus at Walgett and another at Collarendabri, which line would attract most of the stock traffic from Queensland and the northern part of this Colony? The Walgett line. There are two stock routes from Brenda—the Lightening Ridge route and the Wilby Wilby route—and they both come here; whereas there is only the 60-mile track to Collarendabri.
1723. It has been stated that between Angledool and Walgett the track traverses a good deal of flooded country? Both tracks are alike. On the Collarendabri side of Angledool there are about 30 miles of low country, and both tracks are pretty wet in a good season.

Abraham Falstein, storekeeper, Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Falstein.
29 May, 1900.
1724. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been here? I have been in the district since 1889, but I have not always been storekeeping; some of the time I have been hawking.
1725. Then you have a pretty good knowledge of the district, I suppose? Yes.
1726. What is the country like between Walgett and Collarendabri? In wet weather the river track is a terribly bad one. The country is low, and it is bound to be flooded whenever the river rises. Sometimes the flood-waters of the Barwon spread out to within 4 miles of Mercadool holding. They did so in 1893.
1727. Is the district a good one for pastoral or agricultural pursuits? Yes; one of the finest districts I have been in. I have a knowledge of South Australia and Victoria; but this district will compare favourably with any part of Victoria that I have been in. Of course, there are areas of country near the river which are not suitable for agriculture; but 6 or 7 miles from the river the country is splendid, and along the route of the proposed branch line to Collarendabri there are some very large areas suitable for closer settlement. The land there is so good that after 3 or 4 inches of rain the grass grows very high.
1728. Were you ever engaged in agricultural pursuits in Victoria? No; but I have seen a great deal of agriculture. I have travelled throughout Europe, and I know pretty well the ideas and the customs of the farmers there.
1729. Are the people in this district satisfied with their lot? Yes. I have not known anyone to become insolvent in this district for the last six or seven years; but in other districts, if there is a drought, it is ten to one that people become bankrupt. There have been no such failures in this district.
1730. What extent of country do you supply with stores? I go south as far as Castlereagh, towards Coonamble, and north-east as far as Cryon.
1731. And you find people well able to meet their engagements? Yes; except in dry weather. I think that the proposed railway will pay from the start, just as the Moree line paid. They did not think at first that that line would pay.
1732. Do you find any great difficulty in getting stores here? Yes.
1733. Do you buy in Sydney chiefly? Yes.
1734. How long does it take you to get goods from Sydney? In this dry weather it has taken one of our teams six weeks to come from Narrabri, and last year on many occasions it took nearly two months. It is very hard upon storekeepers to have goods so long on the road.
1735. What freight do you pay? We have paid from £2 to £6 a ton, but on the average we pay about £4 a ton from Narrabri. It is simply folly for us to rely upon the river here. Even if locks and weirs were made it would be of no use to us, because it would cost us more to bring goods up the river *via* Bourke than to bring them direct *via* Coonamble or Narrabri, and we want to get them delivered here as cheaply as possible. It has been said that our cattle and sheep go New England way, but they only go there in the summer time, and very often, after they have been away six months, they come back with footrot and fluke. There are plenty of other places besides New England to which we could send our sheep—places such as the Wellington and Dubbo districts. In the winter New England would be of no use to us at all.

Robert Henderson Duncan, homestead lessee, Narran Point, near Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

- R. H.
Duncan.
29 May, 1900.
1736. *Mr. Watson.*] What area have you? 10,240 acres.
1737. How many sheep do you run? I have about 2,900 now.
1738. Is that your usual number? I have rather more now than I should have, considering the seasons. I am trying to keep them in hope of more rain.
1739. In an average season what will your holding carry? About a sheep to 3 acres.
1740. Is it open country? No; it is pretty scrubby country.
1741. Have you improved it? I have ringbarked it all, with the exception of some coolabah scrub, which I do not know how to kill.
1742. What effect will the construction of the proposed railway have on the district in which you are living?

living? It will benefit it in many ways. At the present time we are considerably taxed in getting our wool away; there is no certainty about the river. Last year I sent some of my wool down by steamer, and six weeks after it left I sheared some more sheep, and their wool, which went to Narrabri, reached Sydney before the wool that left by the steamer. The steamer got stuck up at Brewarrina, and had to unload there.

R. H.
Duncan.
29 May, 1900.

1743. I suppose that if the railway were brought to Walgett you would send all your wool by it? Yes.

1744. Is any fattening done in your district in good seasons? I do not think there is better fattening country in New South Wales, and sheep grow very large there. I have killed merino wethers which weighed 100 lb., and it is an ordinary thing in good seasons to kill a sheep weighing 80 or 90 lb. I produce a sample of some chaff which I grew at my place and cut for my horses.

1745. Do you regard your land as suitable for agriculture? It would require to be cleared, because it is nearly all timbered land; but in any ordinary season I believe that a man could grow a good crop on it.

1746. Have you tried it for wheat? I have grown wheat, chiefly for hay, for the last seven years.

1747. What results have you obtained during that period? Three years ago I got 7 tons of oaten hay, without irrigation, off a little more than an acre and a half. A good many of the people in the district who saw the crop told me that it would have yielded over 60 bushels of oats to the acre.

1748. What results have you had with wheat? Unfortunately, we have generally had hot winds just when we wanted cool weather for the wheat to mature in. I have tried different sorts of wheat, and the wheat which I find best suited for this part of the country is the White Lamona.

1749. Do you regard the district generally as suitable for agriculture? In two years out of three you can get a crop.

1750. Then why have people not grown more hay here? There has not been much population. When I came to Walgett, eighteen or nineteen years ago, they told me that all the land on the Barwon was secured. It was all surveyed in small blocks for the stations, as a blind to keep settlers out.

1751. But since 1884 there has been a lot of settlement here? Yes. They told me when I came here that I would never be able to grow anything; but I got a small engine to water the garden, and I found that I could grow almost anything by using water. I have grown cabbages up to 23 lb. in weight, and I have grown oranges, citrons, peaches, nectarines, plums, bananas, cherries, apples, and pears with irrigation. The pears were as fine as have ever been grown out of Sydney. If a man looked after his land he could grow nearly anything with a little care. In a good season he could grow an abundance of hay.

1752. If there were a railway would there be a market elsewhere for hay? Yes. There are different places to which a man could send produce. There might be a bad season in Brewarrina, or at Narrabri, or at Coonamble.

1753. Is it not more likely that any markets for produce would be out towards the west rather than towards the coast, where farmers are already established? I dare say there would be a good market out west; but in good seasons it is not difficult to get a good crop here, though in bad times it takes a man all he knows to get a crop to grow.

Charles Neam-Vaughan, storekeeper, Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1754. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been in the district? Twenty years.

1755. What is the financial condition of the district at the present time? It is about as sound as that of any part of New South Wales.

1756. Can you give us some idea of the rate of progress here during your time? The district has progressed very considerably since I have been here. A large amount of settlement has taken place since land has been made available for it, and I have no doubt that when more land is made available settlement here will increase very rapidly. Each time that land has been thrown upon it has been rushed.

1757. Would the district be attractive to small settlers if there were a railway? Yes.

1758. Would it be so without a railway? Not to the same extent. Without a railway the settlement will be a settlement of graziers rather than of agriculturists; but with a railway there will be a good opening for agriculturists.

1759. What area would a man require here for the maintenance of himself and family? For grazing, he would require larger areas than are now allotted for small holders. I dare say 640 acres would enable a man to make a living if there were a railway, and he cultivated his land, and had also a grazing lease.

1760. What are the main lines of traffic to and from Walgett? Hitherto the traffic has gone to the nearest point on the railway line, and it will always do so. Narrabri, being the nearest railway station, the traffic has always gone there.

1761. Will the construction of the Byrock to Brewarrina line have any effect upon the Walgett traffic? I do not know that it will, unless it affect the traffic from the north; but a railway to Walgett should attract the greater part of the traffic from the country towards Goodooga, Angledool, the Rirrie, and the Bokhara. My trade connection has been out in that direction, and I have a branch at Angledool; but the difficulties of getting goods there leaves the place almost in a state of famine at times. I had a letter to-day stating that they are quite out of sugar, and a few weeks ago they had not a bag of flour, nor any sugar there. The rate of carriage to Angledool from Narrabri is now about £10 a ton, the freight on flour being £1 a bag, which is more than the flour cost to buy. A great many of the goods that I send to Angledool come through Walgett, and would come to Walgett if there were a railway.

1762. You do not think that Angledool would be supplied from Collarendabri? My store would not, because there would be very little difference in cartage, and the road from Narrabri *via* Walgett, would be better than that from Collarendabri.

1763. Where do you get your stores? From Sydney; but we get biscuits from Newcastle, and sometimes we get flour from Dubbo and Orange. I have had goods three months on the road between Narrabri and Walgett, and I have goods now at Narrabri which have been there since 11th April waiting for despatch, so that it is hard to say when they will reach me. Recently, I endeavoured to get up about 40 tons of stuff by way of Bourke; but I found that it was impossible. Trade is considerably hampered by the want of facilities for transport. As to the nature of the soil in the district, I am satisfied that it will produce almost anything, whether fruit or grain. I have a little garden at the back of my private residence, and almost every kind of fruit grows there—quinces, figs, English mulberries, lemons, and oranges. The soil will produce anything if it has moisture; but without a market there is no inducement to

grow

C. N.
Vaughan.
29 May, 1900.

C. N.
Vaughan.
29 May, 1900.

grow anything. The Chinese pay £3 or £4 an acre for land which they rent on the banks of the river, and still make a good living. The land that they rent is part of the park, and the money that they give us is spent in improving the park; but they are liable to be removed at twenty-four hours' notice. The Government has decided, I understand, to put down a bore within half a mile of the town, and I consider that the production from the surrounding land will amply cover the interest on the outlay.

Andrew Essex Scott, pastoralist, Gingie, sworn, and examined:—

A. E. Scott.
29 May, 1900.

1764. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What area of land do you occupy? I hold something over 100,000 acres of leasehold and 18,000 acres of purchased land. I also hold land under annual lease; so that my property comprises about 150,000 acres.

1765. How many acres does it take to maintain a sheep? About four.

1766. Is the country between Walgett and Narrabri similar to that which you occupy? Yes, parts of it are; but my land is not so good as the land down Narrabri way.

1767. Do you send away much wool and fat stock? More wool.

1768. Where do you send your wool? We sell some of it in Sydney, and we send some of it to England, from Newcastle or from Sydney.

1769. Do you send much to Newcastle? In some years we send nearly all of it to Newcastle, and in other years we send it to Sydney. Sometimes we send it to Sydney for sale, and then, if prices do not suit, we ship it home.

1770. What you have sent to Newcastle has been for direct shipment? Yes.

1771. Do many of the station-owners deal with their wool in that way? Several of those around here do. If I send through Bourke I ship from Sydney, and if I send through Narrabri I generally ship from Newcastle.

1772. Do you send many fat stock to the Sydney markets? I generally sell off the shears. I seldom send fat stock to Sydney.

1773. If the railway were brought to Walgett, should you send fat stock to Sydney? Yes, in a season like this, when I wanted to get rid of them, though, generally, I have no difficulty in disposing of my sheep, because they are a good breed, and people buy them.

1774. Where do you get your station supplies? From Sydney, *via* Narrabri, or else *via* Bourke.

1775. Do you send away much wool by river? Sometimes, when the steamer is running.

1776. Would you continue to do so if the railway were brought to Walgett? I should choose the cheapest route.

1777. What do you pay to send wool to Bourke? If they do not trans-ship at Brewarrina, about £2 10s. a ton. I pay about £6 10s. a ton through to Sydney.

1778. Which line would suit you the better—the Coonamble-Walgett line or the Narrabri-Walgett line? Personally, the Coonamble line, because we have a station in the Coonamble district, near Warren; but in times of drought I dare say the Narrabri line would give us the better get-away for our stock.

1779. Which line would suit your Walgett property the better? The Narrabri line; but I do not mind where the railway comes from.

1780. How long have you lived in this district? Twelve years.

1781. Do you frequently have droughts such as that which you have experienced recently? Yes.

1782. Have you tried agriculture? Yes, in a small way.

1783. Have your results been encouraging? They were not.

1784. Is that because of the poorness of the soil? Because of the insufficiency of the rainfall.

1785. Would the land be good enough if the rainfall were greater? Yes. At a time like this, when the rates of carriage are so high, we have great difficulty in getting goods up from Narrabri, and you cannot possibly send sheep away, because there is neither grass nor water on the stock-routes. If there were a railway, we could send our sheep to places where there is better feed.

1786. Have you, in the past, sent stock to other districts for feed? Yes. When my father had the station, it happened to be a better season round Bourke way, and at Nyngan, than here, and we had stock at both places; but, generally, the season is good in New England when it is bad here, and New England is the usual place to send stock to in times of drought.

1787. Is the Crown land which is shortly to be thrown open for settlement good grazing land? Some of it is; but I should not say that all of it is, of course I am referring to the Central Division.

1788. Is it land of such a character as would induce people to take it up for pastoral purposes or for cultivation? I think that some of it is, but I do not consider the rainfall sufficient for cultivating.

George Matthews, grazier, near Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

G. Matthews.
29 May, 1900.

1789. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been in the district? Over forty years.

1790. What is the extent of your holding? Nearly 13,000 acres.

1791. How many sheep have you on your land? It is doubtful whether I could muster 3,000 now.

1792. How many do you carry, on the average? Not more than a sheep to 4 acres, on the average; but in a good season I could carry more.

1793. Is your country up to the general average? Portions of it are very good; but some of it is not good.

1794. We have been told that some of the properties here will carry a sheep to 2 acres? Yes; in a good season.

1795. Is yours fair average country? Yes; except for the timber.

1796. Have you cultivated any of your land? No.

1797. What market do you find for your wool and your sheep? Sydney.

1798. Do you send *via* Narrabri? Yes.

1799. Do you ever find any difficulty in sending away small consignments? Yes; and just now it is impossible for me to get my stock away at all.

1800. If you had a railway you could often send away small lots? Yes, and that would pay me well; but sheep which I could have sent away, if there had been a railway, have died during the drought.

1801. I suppose that is the case with many others? Yes; and I am afraid that some unfortunate people will never recover from their losses

1802. The travelling stock routes in this district are generally pretty bare? Yes; because those who rent them keep them eaten down. G. Matthews.
1803. You do not approve of the leasing of the stock-routes? I do not. The reserves should be placed in the hands of the stock inspector. If they are thought to be too big, they might be reduced; but all except travelling stock should be kept off them. Then, tanks should be made at suitable places. God knows, we have unemployed enough. If there were a railway we could send our stock away without using the stock-routes. 29 May, 1900.
1804. How would a railway assist the people in this district? It would give us greater facilities for transport. In 1869 I had my wool lying in the shed from October until the following May before I could get it away, and then I paid £1 a cwt. to send it to Morpeth, and £1 a cwt. to get my rations brought up. Many a time, if there had been a railway, we could have sent our stock out of this district to districts where they could have got something to eat. It is seldom that we are troubled so much as we are at the present time; but now no man can save his stock.
1805. Which line would you prefer—one from Narrabri or one from Coonamble? Undoubtedly the line to come from Narrabri. That has been the route the traffic has taken for the last forty years.
1806. How should you describe the country on each side of the proposed route? On the Pian Creek side it is black-soil country, but on the other side the soil is of a sandy nature.
1807. Is it all good for pastoral purposes? No.
1808. What proportion of it would be good? The land on the Pian Creek side is the best; but after you pass Pilliga there is some country which is as good as one could wish for. From Narrabri to Pilliga there are belts of really first-class country.
1809. What way should the line be brought out from Narrabri? From West Narrabri direct to Wee Waa. If any other route is adopted the Government will be throwing money away. No one can imagine the terrible losses that we have had to undergo during the recent drought. I have had men cutting scrub for the last eleven months; but if I could send my stock away to some place where they would get food, it would be to my interest to do so.
1810. Should you use the railway to send stock away? Undoubtedly. The Walgett Progress Committee wish the Public Works Committee to take into consideration the claims of Walgett to have the railway continued right into the town, as they consider that it would be extremely disastrous to both private and public interests if it were left some distance away. On the last occasion, when the Members of the Committee discussed the railway proposal, they unanimously agreed to leave it to the Government to decide by what route the railway should be extended to Walgett.

Charles Edward Colwell, settlement lessee, near Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

1811. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the area of your holding? 2,560 acres. C. E. Colwell.
1812. How long have you been in occupation of it? Since 1896. 29 May, 1900.
1813. Were many other settlement areas thrown open when you took up your land? About seventeen—seven or eight on Euric Eurie, and some on Youenbah.
1814. What is the carrying capacity of your land? My experience is that it will not carry more than a sheep to 3 acres.
1815. Have you been able to carry as many as that during the drought? No. I was forced, through the want of water, to start 500 or 600 on the road. They were nice young sheep and most of them fat; but the stock route was so bad that when I got 20 miles out I found it impossible to go any further. I was then offered 8s. 6d. a head for them, and I accepted that price rather than run the risk of losing the sheep altogether.
1816. How long ago was that? A little over twelve months ago. Last shearing I brought up another little lot, so that at the present time I have about 800.
1817. Is any of your land suitable for agriculture? Yes; but the crops are not reliable. You may put a small crop in this year, and it may be very successful; but next year if you put in a larger crop it may be a total failure. I believe, however, that with irrigation agriculture could be carried on with great advantage.
1818. Did you and others who have taken up settlement leases take them up with the intention of using them for grazing? Yes.
1819. Do you think that a man can make a living on 2,560 acres? Not without a railway.
1820. If there were a railway you could use your land to better advantage? Yes, and we could risk carrying more stock, because if we got pinched we could send away some to more favoured parts of the Colony. It has been almost impossible to get stock from Walgett to Narrabri during a great part of the year in recent seasons. Then, if there were a railway, we could in good seasons send away small consignments of fat stock; but it does not pay us to put small consignments on the road; so that our stock are often kept in the paddocks until they become poor again, and we lose heavily.
1821. How does the country between Coonamble and Walgett compare with that between Narrabri and Walgett? It is much the same, I think.
1822. Where should you like the line to come from? From Narrabri, because it would then come nearer to my place, and it would also serve a lot of Crown land on the Mercadool side, the lease of which will expire shortly.
1823. Would it be of advantage to this district, in dry times, to be connected with the New England district? Yes. Everybody makes for New England in dry times.
1824. We have been informed that a large number of stock have gone to Munderoran for agistment? That may be so; but, of course, all the stock cannot go there.
1825. Would the country between Munderoran and Coonabarabran afford you relief in the summer time? Yes; there is permanent water there, and it is very suitable country for the purpose. I lived in Coonamble before I came here, and I am of opinion that we are more entitled to a railway than are the Coonamble people, because our difficulties are greater than theirs. The nature of our soil is such that if a few points of rain fall it becomes almost impossible for us to get along, and prices become intolerably high. The supply of edible scrub here is becoming very short, and it is only a matter of a few years when, if the railway is not made, a great many of us must leave the district. I have lost very heavily myself, and I am heartily sorry that I came here.

William

William Vanstone, hotelkeeper, Walgett, sworn, and examined :—

W. Vanstone. 1826. *Vice-Chairman.*] How long have you been living in this district? Since 1880; but during part of that time I lived at Goodooga. I have been contracting and sheep-farming in the district, as well as hotel-keeping.

29 May, 1900.

1827. Do you corroborate generally the evidence which you have heard concerning the desirableness of making the proposed railway? Yes from Coonamble; when I was living in the Goodooga district we used to try to send our fat stock to Dubbo, *via* Coonamble, because the stock route going in that direction was the best that we could use, and Dubbo was nearer to Sydney than any other trucking station; and I think that if the proposed railway is made the stock from that district will come to Walgett to be trucked. Goodooga and Angledool are both within about 90 miles of Walgett. We want a line that will bring us as close to Sydney as possible. All the stock on the other side of the Culgoa would come to Walgett to be trucked, in preference to Brewarrina, because Brewarrina is 513 miles from Sydney by rail, and Walgett, *via* Coonamble, will be only about 434 miles. A line from Walgett to Coonamble would be shorter than a line through Narrabri to Sydney. In dry times a lot of stock go to Mulooran, Coonabarabran, and out in that direction for feed. I sent some wethers that way myself, and sold them at Mulooran. I should like to mention that Walgett is very badly off for timber. There is no timber nearer than Come-by-chance, and there are no sawmills along the Narrabri route.

1828. *Mr. Watson.*] How do the grazing capabilities of the Mulooran and Coonabarabran district compare with those in the New England district? They are about the same.

1829. Would it be of as much use to you to be connected with the Mulooran district as to be connected with the New England district? There is not so large an area of country out Mulooran way as there is in New England; but, otherwise, the conditions in the two districts are similar. Both places are very cold in the winter-time.

Terence Francis Fagan, coachbuilder, Walgett, sworn, and examined :—

T. F. Fagan. 1830. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long in the Walgett district? Over nine years. I think that this district has great claims to consideration in the matter of railway connection. There are no macadamised roads in the district, and it would cost more to construct a road than to make a railway. Without good roads, transit is so uncertain that it is very difficult to send produce from the district, or to bring supplies here.

29 May, 1900.

1831. Do you experience much difficulty in your own business? Yes; I have often to pay for material before it comes to hand.

1832. Where do you get your material? From Sydney, from Maitland, and sometimes from Newcastle. We can get timber at Pilliga; but it is not very suitable.

1833. I understand that there are some forests of ironbark lying about 20 miles away from either Narrabri or Wee Waa? Yes; but that ironbark is not suitable for wheelwright's work or for coachbuilding. It can be used; but it is not like the coast timber. If you are driving with wheel-spokes made of it it will sometimes split off.

1834. Which is the cheapest timber for you to get? I get my timber from Sydney dressed, and therefore I have less to pay in carriage. Rough, undressed timber costs me nearly as much as dressed timber coming from Sydney.

1835. Do you use the pine that grows about here? No. It is good timber for house building, but it is not suitable for coachbuilding.

1836. Is the Richmond River pine superior to it? Yes. I use Richmond River pine, kauri, and American timber, all of which come from Sydney.

1837. Which route do you prefer—the Narrabri or the Coonamble route? Either will suit me, so long as we get railway communication quickly. With a railway, I think this will become a very flourishing district. If the land were thrown open for permanent occupation we should have a mixed agricultural and grazing population which would be of great benefit to the country.

1838. Have you done anything besides coachbuilding in this district? Yes. During the last three years I have been assisting my brother on a settlement lease, and I know that, notwithstanding the bad seasons, he has made a good profit off his land—more than I can make at my trade.

1839. During your residence here, have you noticed any substantial improvement in the town and district? Before the drought a considerable improvement had commenced. Business has always been sound here.

1840. Is it increasing? Not lately, in our business. Stock have been so poor that vehicles are little used now.

1841. Would the construction of a railway materially improve the condition of affairs? Yes; by enabling small settlers to send to market small lots of sheep. I have heard people complain that they have had fat stock, which would have brought £1 a head in the Melbourne market if they could have been sent away, die in their paddocks. Stock cannot be sent from here, because of the bad state of the stock routes. The people of this district are entitled to a railway, and a railway is the cheapest road that could be made here.

Archibald Edward Park Skinner, stock and station agent, Walgett, sworn, and examined :—

A. E. P. 1842. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been in Walgett? Eleven years.

29 May, 1900.

1843. What are your views in respect to the railway proposal? It has been the unanimous decision of the Walgett people to leave the question of route entirely in the hands of the Government; but it is my private opinion that a line from Coonamble to Walgett would serve the district and the Colony better than a line from Narrabri to Walgett.

1844. What advantages do you expect from the construction of the proposed railway? Walgett would be a very large trucking centre if the railway came here. Most of the stock from central Queensland come through Goodooga, or Brenda, to Walgett, and then go towards Nevertire, Mudgee, or Rylstone. Last year fully 30,000 head of cattle passed through Walgett.*

1845. Do stock deteriorate much in travelling to Narrabri or to Coonamble? Yes, very much, even when the roads are good.

1846. I suppose most stock go from Walgett to Narrabri? In a good season most fat stock go to Rylstone or to Mudgee to be trucked to Homebush; but in a bad season the shortest route is adopted.

1847.

* Note (on revision).—My reply to this question was intended to apply to the extension from Coonamble.

1847. Are small settlers here unable now to send away small consignments of stock? Yes; a man occupying 2,560 acres would run about 1,000 sheep, most of which would be ewes and lambs. He might have 100 or 200 fat wethers, but it would be too expensive to send such a small lot by road to market.

1848. Is it usual for small holders to club together in sending away stock? No; because there is always a difference in the quality of the various flocks, and it would mean drafting at Homebush, and perhaps entail dissension.

1849. Is it usual for people to buy up small lots to make up a large flock to send away? Yes; we have been depending to a great extent upon the buyers for the Aberdeen meat-works, and Mr. Richards, of Sydney; but owners have to take lower prices for stock sold on the ground than they would get if they sent to Sydney.

1850. To what districts are starving sheep sent from this district? Chiefly to New England; but owners hold their stock in the hope of rain coming, until it is often impossible to get them to the railway.

1851. Would a railway to Walgett be largely used for the conveyance of fat stock and the removal of starving stock? Yes.

1852. Do you think that the railway should be brought from Narrabri or from Narrabri West? I think it should start from Narrabri West and come through Wee Waa. By doing so, a number of river crossings would be avoided, and the route would be shortened.

1853. Where does Walgett get its timber from? I think that most of it comes from Come-by-chance and Pilliga. If there were a railway to Walgett, produce grown in this district would be sent out to country lying to the north-west and west, where there is a smaller rainfall than we have, and where there are fewer opportunities for growing it. The railway would make Walgett the centre of the team traffic, and waggons bringing in wool and other station produce would take out fodder. I have seen four crops taken off a paddock in one year at Boorooma. Those crops were irrigated with water from the river.

1854. How long have they been growing lucerne there? For several years. They have about 10 acres.

1855. *Mr. Watson.*] With the removal of the stock tax, Queensland stockowners may again endeavour to find a market in Melbourne;—do you think that it would be of advantage to them in that case to have railway connection from this district to the Southern line? Yes.

1856. Do you think that such a connection would induce more traffic than a connection with the Northern line? Yes; because it would be of advantage to cattle from southern and central, and even from northern Queensland. Our districts cannot supply the demand for cattle.

FRIDAY, 1 JUNE, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Coonamble, at 10:30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (VICE-CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, | JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

George Charles Arthur Cobb, forwarding and coaching agent, Coonamble, sworn, and examined:—

1857. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been long in this district? Thirty-two years.

1858. In connection with our inquiry into a proposal to construct a railway from Narrabri to Walgett, it has been suggested that a better route for reaching Walgett would be obtained by continuing the railway from Coonamble to Walgett;—can you give us particulars as to the traffic which now goes from Coonamble in the direction of Walgett? Yes; but the question arises, would not the Narrabri connection serve the Walgett people better than the Coonamble connection. The principal station between Coonamble and Walgett, which would send wool to Coonamble, would be Wingadee. The wool and back loading from that station amount to about 500 tons per annum. Bullarora is the head station of Wingadee holding, and is about 30 miles from Coonamble, and about 18 from Come-by-Chance. Then, there is Warrigan, or Combogolong. Last year was a bad year, but in an average year the traffic to and from that station would amount to about 120 tons. The woolshed is about 4.5 miles from Coonamble and about 30 from Walgett. Then there is Bundy, the traffic to and from which station would amount to 25 or 30 tons per annum. That station is about 18 miles from Coonamble.

1859. Does any station beyond Combogolong send its wool this way? No.

1860. What about Euroka? The traffic from that station goes to Warren or to Walgett. If the Barwon is up, the Brewon wool is generally carted to the river, and sent by steamer to Bourke, and thence to Sydney. On the direct line to Walgett there are practically only two stations, Bullarora, or Wingadee, and Warrigan. Eastward of the suggested line there are a few stations, but their traffic would be very little, and from the west of the proposed line very little traffic would come. Stations lying east of Coonamble send their produce to Quirindi. Quirindi is not the nearest point on the railway line for them, but it is the cheapest place at which to truck, because the rates on the Northern line are lower than those on the Western line.

1861. Where does the wool from Terrembone go now? To Dubbo.

1862. That station would be 12 or 15 miles east of the suggested line? Yes; and about the same distance from Coonamble.

1863. Are no goods sent through Coonamble to other stations than those which you have mentioned? No.

1864. Narrabri is nearer to Walgett than any station on the Western line? Yes; Bullarora is 130 miles from Narrabri, and about the same distance from Dubbo.

1865. Will the railway from Dubbo to Coonamble compete for the Walgett trade at all? Not against the Northern line, because the rates on that line are lower than those on the Western line. I can send wool to Newcastle from Bullarora, through Come-by-Chance, and along the Northern line, more cheaply than by using the Western line. The Railway Department allows a big rebate on wool consigned to Newcastle

A. E. P.
Skinner.

29 May, 1900.

G. C. A. Cobb.
1 June, 1900.

G. C. A. Cobb. Newcastle for shipment outside the colonies—something like 17s. a ton. They seem to want to divert some of the trade to Newcastle. The rate for road carriage is the same from Walgett to Narrabri as from Bullarora to Dubbo.

1 June, 1900.

1866. Do you know anything of the passenger traffic? There is very little traffic between Coonamble and Walgett; it would not average one passenger a week.

1867. Can people reach Walgett more quickly from Narrabri? The Narrabri road is that which is used by the travelling public at the present time, because the distance from Narrabri to Walgett is less than that from Dubbo to Walgett, although the road is not so good. If the line were brought through Come-by-chance or Pilliga the stations which I have mentioned would be better served by it under present railway arrangements as to freights than by a line from Coonamble to Walgett.

1868. From Come-by-chance, Burren would be the nearest point on the proposed railway? Under those circumstances I do not think there would be much difference between the two routes for the wool that we have been speaking about.

1869. *Mr. McFarlane.*] If a line were made from Narrabri to Collarendabri, and another line from Coonamble to Walgett, would the line to Walgett draw all the trade from that district? It would draw all the Walgett traffic, and all the traffic from the country on this side of the Namoi.

Donald Fletcher, President, Coonamble section, Dubbo-Coonamble Railway League (Coonamble), sworn, and examined:—

D. Fletcher. 1870. *Vice-Chairman.*] What is your opinion of the suggested extension from Coonamble to Walgett? I think that a line from Narrabri to Walgett would serve a much greater number of people.

1 June, 1900.

1871. Is the general drift of trade between Narrabri and Walgett or between Coonamble and Walgett? Between Narrabri and Walgett. Walgett has been connected with the Northern line ever since the district was occupied.

1872. From how far in the direction of Walgett would a line to Coonamble draw traffic? From about Combogolong, 40 miles away. The Coonamble line would not draw much traffic from the country to the north, because that traffic would go to the Northern line. A railway to Coonamble would serve the country lying 25 or 30 miles beyond Coonamble as well as a line from Coonamble to Walgett would serve it; but the traffic from the country further out would go to the Northern line in any case, because that would be the shorter route to the seaboard.

1873. How should you describe the country between Coonamble and Walgett? It is tip-top grazing country. For the first 30 miles is really good dry country, but, further on, towards Walgett, the country is very liable to floods.

1874. Does the flooded area extend to any distance east and west of the suggested railway route? For 15 miles on the west side of the route the country is flooded by the Castlereagh, and half the country for 30 miles at the Walgett end is subject to flood. All the polygonum country is flooded country.

1875. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do the sheep eat the polygonum? It would keep them alive.

1876. Does the water lie on that country for any length of time? Sometimes. If it were flooded now, it would not be dry until the spring.

1877. Are you in favour of the extension of the railway from Coonamble to Walgett? The Coonamble Railway league has not considered the matter. All we want is a connection between Coonamble and the Western line.

1878. Do you think that the connection is a desirable one from a national point of view? I think that Walgett is entitled to a railway; but, in my opinion, the line should be extended to Narrabri. When the line is made from Dubbo to Coonamble, if another is made from Narrabri to Walgett, and Coonamble is connected with that line, and Inverell with Glen Innes, the Northern, Southern, and Western lines will all be joined up by a fairly straight connection, and stock from the drought-stricken districts will be able to resort to either the New England or the southern table-land. From Inverell to Glen Innes is only about 40 miles, and the connection is one that would pay.

1879. *Mr. Watson.*] The Railway Commissioners suggest that the railway should be extended from Coonamble to Walgett, and that another line should be taken from Narrabri to Collarendabri, as they think that that arrangement would split up the country better;—do you think that the country between Walgett and Collarendabri would give enough traffic to make two lines from Narrabri pay? I should not think so, at the present time.

1880. Would you make the line from Narrabri to Walgett, or from Narrabri to Collarendabri? I think I should adopt a middle route.

1881. Do you think that it is necessary to go a little north of Walgett in order to catch the Queensland traffic? I think that you would catch the Queensland traffic as well at one place as at the other. Whichever line you build I think it would get all that traffic.

1882. Do you think that there would be enough traffic for a line from Narrabri to Collarendabri, and another from Coonamble to Walgett? I do not think so, at the present time.

1883. Is it not a fact that whatever way you approach Walgett you have to go through a considerable area of flooded country? I do not think that there is so much flooded country between Burren and Walgett as between Coonamble and Walgett; but you must go through some flooded country, in any case.

1884. Do you think that the Walgett district is suitable for wheat-growing? I think so. I think you can grow wheat anywhere on this side of the Barwon.

1885. Would it be of advantage to prospective agriculturists in the Coonamble district to have a railway in the direction of Walgett? Yes.

1886. In dry seasons would Coonamble be more likely to have a sufficient fall of rain for wheat than Walgett? I think so. The rainfall in the country south and east of Coonamble is generally better than that at Walgett.

1887. So that it might happen that there would be no feed out Walgett way when there was plenty round Coonamble? Yes; but it would not happen often. During the last two years there has been feed pretty well all the time in the country 10 miles south and east of Coonamble; but, on the other hand, in 1877, when we had no grass at all, they had fairly good feed round Walgett. According to statistics, we have a couple of inches of rain more per annum than they get at Walgett.

Thomas William Medley, Inspector of Stock, Coonamble, sworn, and examined:—

1888. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you been stationed in this district long? Fifteen years last March.
 1889. Can you give us any information as to the movements of stock between Coonamble and Walgett? During last year not much stock came this way because of the drought, but stock from Queensland generally come this way through Walgett.
 1890. Fat stock, or stores? Stores, generally; but fat stock come this way from Walgett.
 1891. Where do they go to? To Dubbo.
 1892. On their way to Sydney? Yes. Store stock from Queensland come through Walgett to Coonamble, and either branch off here to go to Muswellbrook, or else they go to Dubbo, or through Warren, towards Victoria.
 1893. Where do the starving stock generally go? Most of the starving stock in this district have gone in the direction of Cobar and Dubbo.
 1894. It has been stated that a great many of them have gone to Munderooran? Yes; that is in the same district.
 1895. Is the movement of starving stock very large, taking one year with another? I suppose 150,000 sheep have gone to that district each year during the last two years.
 1896. Do large numbers of fat stock come this way from Walgett? Not very large numbers. Some go from Narrabri to Muswellbrook.
 1897. Where do the greater number go? Through Coonamble, I think; but I have no way of ascertaining what number of stock goes to Narrabri, except by what I hear from the drovers.
 1898. Is there much movement of stock from this district in the direction of Walgett? No.
 1899. How should you class the country lying in the direction of Walgett? I only know it as far as Combogolong. Some of it is very good country, but most of it is flooded country.
 1900. Is it good grazing country? Yes; most of it is very good.
 1901. If a railway were constructed from Coonamble to Walgett, would it be used on all occasions for the conveyance of stock? I think it would be used in times of drought, but not when there was good feed on the road.
 1902. Would people travel fat stock rather than send them by rail? Many people do, when there is good feed on the road, unless the lots are very small, say, from 500 to 1,000. Of course, when stock get to Dubbo they must take the train, because there is no feed along the roads there.

T. W. Medley.
1 June, 1900.

* William Pedley, cordial manufacturer, Coonamble, sworn, and examined:—

1903. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you ever been engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits? Yes, within 10 miles of Coonamble.
 1904. How should you describe the country between Coonamble and Walgett? It is good country, and is suitable for mixed occupation. From Coonamble, as far as Bullarora, there is a lot of good agricultural country—red-soil country.
 1905. Is the rainfall in this district sufficient for agriculture? I know a man out that way who has been able to grow something during the last two years, although the seasons have been so bad. He has 10 or 12 acres of wheat which he cuts for hay, and he occupies some land about 30 miles from here.
 1906. What is your opinion about the suggestion to extend a line from Coonamble to Walgett? I think that the steamers on the Barwon would compete with the railway in good seasons.

W. Pedley.
1 June, 1900.

Henry Lyons, representative of Wright, Heaton, & Co., Coonamble, sworn, and examined:—

1907. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you give us any information as to the trend of traffic between Coonamble and Walgett? The only traffic from Coonamble in the direction of Walgett is that which goes to Bullarora and to Combogolong.
 1908. Whence do the stations north of Combogolong get their supplies? From Narrabri, I believe. It is about 125 miles from Narrabri to Walgett, and about 175 miles from Dubbo to Walgett.
 1909. From how far towards Walgett do you collect wool? Only from as far as Combogolong.
 1910. East and west, how many miles does the wool come to Coonamble? From about Terambone, on the eastern side. The wool from the country out west goes either to Dubbo or to Warren.
 1911. Will the construction of the line to Coonamble make any considerable alteration in the wool and goods traffic? I do not think so, except that much of the traffic which now goes to Warren would come this way.
 1912. If the line were continued from Coonamble to Walgett, would it attract much traffic from the country out west? Not much; the stations are all small on the western side.
 1913. Would it be nearer for them to go northwards to Walgett than to come to Coonamble? It would be nearer to come to Coonamble.
 1914. Is the country on the western side of the Coonamble-Walgett route barren country? No; it is pretty good country, though much of it is flooded country.
 1915. Do the only practicable roads run in the direction of Warren and of Coonamble? I believe so.

H. Lyons.
1 June, 1900.

Charles McDonnell Stuart, Supervising Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1916. *Vice-Chairman.*] In their official report on the proposal to construct a line from Narrabri to Walgett the Railway Commissioners suggest the extension of the line from Coonamble to Walgett; will you kindly give the Committee a short description of the route which such an extension would follow? Such an extension would be a continuation of the surveyed and authorised line from Dubbo to Coonamble, which keeps on the western side of the Castlereagh River. It would pass Coonamble, and cross the river a few miles beyond. Then it would turn northerly and take the high country between the Castlereagh River and Bullarora Creek, going through Bullarora holding until it crossed Bullarora Creek, and thence direct

C. McD.
Stuart.
1 June, 1900.

C. McD.
Stuart.

1 June, 1900.

direct into Walgett, finishing on the high ground which lies between the cemetery and the town proper. The following is a detailed description of the route:—

DESCRIPTION OF COONAMBLE TO WALGETT LINE.

Extracts from Mr. C. O. Burge's Reports.

This is a continuation of the line from Dubbo to Coonamble, and begins at 371 miles 14·418 chains from Sydney, crosses Curramie Creek at 371 miles 46 chains; thence down the centre of driftway from 372 miles to 372 miles 76 chains. At this point the line becomes parallel to the Castlerengh River, which is about 24 chains to the north-east, and, turning sharp, crosses the river on the square. At 375 miles 32 chains reverses, and takes a N.N.E. direction, the surveyed line from Mudgee *via* Coonamble to Walgett junctioning with it at 378 miles 11·588 chains. The road from Coonamble to Terambone is crossed at 381 miles 16 chains. Bullarora, or Merrimbah, Creek, is now followed on its western bank for many miles; Sandy Creek crossed at 391 miles 28 chains, and the main creek at 393 miles 69 chains, the eastern bank being now followed, crossing Gunyillah Creek at 397 miles 20 chains, down to the intersection of the Terambone Creek at 406 miles 77½ chains, the line being partly on a 3-chain road.

At 409 miles 23 chains the line enters on T.S.R. No. 1,748, and, with the exception of about 2 miles, where a bend is cut off at 424-425 miles, this is occupied up to 435 miles 21 chains. In this length, Bungle Gully, Shepherd's Creek, and Cambadoon Creek are crossed at 411 miles 33 chains, 423 miles 47½ chains, and 434 miles 61 chains respectively. The line enters the township of Walgett at 439 miles 16½ chains, crossing corner of Police Paddock, and running parallel to, and between, Dewhurst and Arthur streets, at 2 chains from the former; ends at Myall-street at 440 miles 15·20 chains.

The estimated cost of such a line is £222,000, or £3,212 per mile, the length of the route being about 69 miles. The cost is somewhat high, owing to the extent of the flooded area which would have to be crossed, and the expensive character of some of the bridges.

1917. How much of the line would pass through flooded country? I could not tell you exactly, without seeing the section; but I think there is as much flooded country on that route as on the route of the proposed line from Narrabri, *via* Wee Waa and Burren, to Walgett; but I do not think it would be as troublesome as the country between Eurie Eurie and a point within a mile and a half of Walgett on that line.

1918. *Mr. Watson.*] If the Narrabri to Walgett line were taken right into Walgett instead of stopping a mile and a half out of the town, how much extra would it cost? Approximately, I should think it would cost at least £25,000, because nearly the whole distance would have to be bridged.

1919. *Vice-Chairman.*] Has a detailed survey been made of the Coonamble to Walgett route? A revised trial survey has been made of that route.

1920. *Mr. Watson.*] Which route passes through the larger area of flood country—that from Narrabri West to Wee Waa or that from Narrabri East to Tulladunna? I think that there is about the same length of flood country to be crossed on each route. The Wee Waa route would require the construction of a bridge over the Namoi; but that expense is more than compensated for by the saving in distance.

1921. The Railway Commissioners suggest that in the event of Walgett being connected with Coonamble, the route of the proposed line to Collarendabri might be straightened? I think that if it were it would have to go through country which is more heavily flooded than that which it now passes through.

1922. So that, if you were surveying a line to serve Collarendabri only, you would still keep the westerly curve which is shown on the map? Yes.

1923. Can you offer any opinion as to the extent of the floods which occur in the country between Collarendabri and the place marked "Point A" on our map, about 11 miles from Collarendabri, and on the east side of the Barwon? From memory I should say that about 6 miles of that country is flooded to such an extent as to require the construction of a lot of bridge-work for the carrying of any railway across it.

1924. Does the estimate of the cost of continuing the line from "Point A" to Collarendabri cover the cost of bridges over the Barwon and the Grawan? Yes.

1925. Is it proposed that the terminus of that line shall be on the western side of the Barwon? Yes; but the cost of the terminal station is included in the estimate of the section ending at "Point A."

FRIDAY, 22 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Thomas Henry Hall Goodwin, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

1926. *Chairman.*] You are a surveyor by profession? Yes.

1927. Will you give your experience of the country proposed to be served by the proposed railway? During my career as a surveyor I worked for ten years in the counties immediately to the south of the Namoi River—the counties of Pottinger and White. During that period I was constantly travelling through those counties, and I acquired a great amount of information in regard to them. The county of White is generally considered poor country, but, in my opinion, there are very large areas within that county admirably suited for the production of cereals.

1928. Could you indicate to the Committee what relation the county of White bears to the proposed route—how near it is to it? The proposed line passes through it. The line dividing the counties of White and Pottinger starts 12 or 15 miles south of Narrabri from the Namoi River, and, running in a westerly direction, it strikes the dividing watershed, and follows that in a southerly direction.

1929. You were saying what you thought of the land? This land until recently was looked upon as having rather a low value, but within the last three or four years a considerable amount of agriculture has been successfully carried on about the south-east corner, and on the eastern boundary, of the county of White. There are certain large areas within the boundaries that can be set aside as valueless.

1930. What part of the county are they situated in? They are scattered through it, and composed principally of sand, but I feel convinced that by the expenditure of labour and capital very considerable areas will, within a few years, be brought under cultivation, and, in my opinion, nothing would stimulate agriculture more than keeping the proposed railway line to Walgett on the south side of the river. I might point

T. H. H.
Goodwin,
Esq., M.P.

22 June, 1900.

point out that wheat is a product the growers of which cannot afford to carry any great distance to a railway, but wool has a much greater value, and can be carried longer distances.

1931. Do I understand you to say that you advocate the construction of this railway along the south side of the river for the whole distance? My knowledge of the district does not extend as far down as Walgett, but I should propose that the railway should cross the river about half-way from, or a little nearer to, Narrabri.

1932. You would go as far as Pilliga before crossing the river? No; I would cross before getting to Pilliga. I would take the proposed line straight from Narrabri to Wee Waa, then across the river as shown on the map.

1933. Do you know the country north of the river? Yes.

1934. How should you describe that? The land on the north side of the river, from a grazing point of view, is probably the richest land in the Colony, or it is equal to any, for grazing purposes, but not for agricultural purposes.

1935. Would you agree with the statement that, from Narrabri to Wee Waa, the land on the south side of the river is better than that on the north, for agricultural purposes, though inferior from a grazing point of view? Yes.

1936. Do you know the point to which the settlers will focus? I have never lived in that district; but I know from living in adjoining districts that more settlement would take place if the railway is made on the south side of the river than if it is made on the north side.

1937. Do you think that, under Federation, we could expect to get a good deal of Queensland trade? Yes, a good deal of the southern Queensland trade.

1938. The previous Committee had two proposals referred to them—one for a railway from Woolabra, through from Narrabri to Walgett. They thought the wants of the district would be best served by a line which would be common to both these places—Walgett and Collarendabri, over a point near Burren Creek, then out from there in a fork to Walgett and Collarendabri;—from your knowledge of all that country west of the Narrabri to Moree line, do you think that is a suitable method of dealing with the trade likely to arise from that district? I do.

1939. It has been suggested that Walgett might be connected with Coonamble;—could you offer any opinion as to the respective merits of the two connections—Walgett and Narrabri, as against Walgett and Coonamble? I could only say that the Walgett connection, from the time the district has been inhabited, has been with the Hunter River, and, as far as I can judge, the residents of that district still prefer their old connection to being connected with Coonamble. I recollect when the Walgett supplies went out by teams from the Hunter River, and the people of that district have never severed the old connection. The tie seems to have strengthened with time, and the people now have a very decided objection to having a connection from Walgett to Coonamble.

1940. Leaving out personal predilections, which do you think would open up the larger amount of good country—a railway from Coonamble to Walgett, or from Narrabri to Walgett? I am not in a position to speak with any force in regard to the country between Coonamble and Walgett.

1941. But you regard the country between Narrabri and Walgett as some of the best grazing country in the Colony? Yes; on the north side of the river.

1942. We have had some rather conflicting evidence about the timber, which I believe is mainly in the county of White;—would you give your own idea of the character of the hardwood to be obtained in that country? It is the best patch of ironbark I have seen over the range, in New South Wales. I, perhaps, may have seen a smaller patch of longer timber at Trinkey; but in the county of White there is an immense forest extending for miles, and timber in it equal to anything growing on the coast, but not so long. Some of the railway people tell me that it is better than the coast timber, because it is of slow growth, and is harder and more durable.

1943. Suitable for all railway purposes? Yes.

1944. Could you state whether it would be necessary to go a long distance from the line to get it? No; as a matter of fact they are cutting timber there now.

1945. How far would they have to draw it? I do not know the exact locality that they are working in. The timber could be got within a very few miles on this side of Narrabri. Thousands of sleepers have been got there.

1946. Is there any large area of pines which would be available for building purposes, within easy distance of the line? There is scattered pine in many places. The southern part of the county of White is principally covered with pine, but that is getting a good distance back from the proposed line.

1947. *Dr. Garran.*] Would there be justification for making one line from Narrabri to Collarendabri and another from Coonamble to Walgett, so as to open both routes? I think probably there would be; but I prefer the Narrabri-Walgett connection.

1948. I suppose the Walgett people themselves are the best judges as to the best connection with their township? Yes.

1949. Although their natural connection was with Newcastle, circumstances may have changed since the railways have been constructed? I should certainly say that the people there are the best judges of the connection that would suit them.

1950. In the dry seasons there is a large trade in forage and produce from the country further south, up into the dry squatting country, and it may be a question whether Walgett and the country beyond could get its supplies best from Dubbo and Orange, or from Werris Creek and the Hunter River? We are producing forage in immense quantities north of Werris Creek.

1951. Between that and Narrabri? Yes.

1952. How near to Narrabri? Within 10 or 12 miles, and all the way above Werris Creek.

1953. Is Narrabri about the furthest limit of the area for the growth of forage? No; I think that in any of the timber countries wheaten hay can be produced, except where it is too sandy.

1954. When the timber is cleared off? Yes.

1955. Will all that forest country be good forage country? It will.

1956. Have you seen any of that land put under forage? Yes, and it grows very well indeed.

1957. In dry seasons as well as in wet? Yes.

1958. In several inquiries which the Committee have had on their hands lately, the great question has arisen as to whether it would pay better to send sheep to the food or to send food to the sheep, in dry seasons; what is your opinion? It depends entirely on the kind of food you refer to. If you refer to the natural grasses, it is the practice to send the sheep to the grass. If you refer to forage, chaff, and bruised oats, you take the food to the sheep.

1959.

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1959. All these railways to the west have been more or less recommended to us on the ground that in dry seasons starving stock can be sent to the east? Yes.

1960. Have you looked into that question? I have.

1961. Do you think there is room in the ranges and in New England for the starving stock? During the past two years nearly all the stock for a little distance below Narrabri for 30 or 40 miles to the west of Moree have been on the table-land of New England.

1962. How came there to be room;—did not the New England people use their land? Yes; but what would be a favourable season to us in the low country would be unfavourable to the people of New England. They suffer from excessive moisture, which causes foot-rot and other things. They have so much moisture that the grass makes very little headway. In a dry season, when we are starved out owing to the scarcity of rain, in New England, as a rule, they have enough to produce their forage supply.

1963. So that in dry seasons they have in New England an increase in the natural forage, therefore they can receive stock from the west? Yes.

1964. That has been done to a large extent? Yes.

1965. Will that apply to the country on the Darling River; could they send their stock across? No, there is a limit to it.

1966. Could you draw the line where the limit is? I should say that the limit would probably be this side of the Barwon.

1967. Then if we make a railway to Collareendabri or Walgett, that would be about as far as it will be useful for starving stock? In my opinion it would be. There is one point in connection with that, that although the stock at Collareendabri may be starving, the country may be good along the Namoi.

1968. Suppose you had a run a little to the westward of Collareendabri, and you wanted to send your starving stock away in dry seasons, it would be more to your purpose to have Collareendabri connected with Narrabri, from where you could get to the New England range, than to be connected with Coonamble? It would be.

1969. Because there is no country down there to send to? They have sent stock down to Mundooran and Coonabarabran, but not in nearly such numbers as went to New England.

1970. The New England Range is really their stand-by? Yes.

1971. For that particular purpose it would be most useful for the squatter to be connected with the northern line? Yes.

1972. In any case, I suppose, you would like to see the railway pass through Wee Waa? Yes.

1973. We are told that it is a very thriving township? I do not know that it is a very thriving place.

1974. But it ought not to be left out? I think the line should cross the river just below Wee Waa.

1975. Do you think the scheme of having a bifurcation there is better than having two separate railways—one from Narrabri and one from Woolabra? I do. I think it will meet the requirements of the district, and cost considerably less money.

1976. You see the line marked on the map, from Moree towards Inverell, now being constructed, we have been given to understand that the market for the Inverell people really lies to the west, not to the east; is that so? It is, in my opinion.

1977. Would it be out of the way for the produce of that district to come south to Narrabri, then to go up again to Collareendabri? There is a very large area north of Moree which appears not to be noticed at all. There is something like 50 miles of magnificent grazing country there; but it is unfit for agricultural purposes.

1978. Would it be better for the Inverell people to have the line to Moree extended to Collareendabri? It is very low country there; but, I think, the day is fast approaching when we shall have an extension from Moree in a north-westerly direction.

1979. But not to Collareendabri? No, it is all flat country out there.

1980. Suppose we make this line to Collareendabri from Narrabri, will it pay the Inverell people to send their stuff to Moree, and down to Narrabri, then up to Collareendabri? I think they will be shut out by the farmers living nearer.

1981. Then Inverell will not find a market at Collareendabri? No.

1982. There is no doubt that the squatters beyond Collareendabri and Walgett will gain very largely as regards facilities for getting provender, if the line be made? Undoubtedly, it will also be a great relief to them in getting their stock away in times of drought.

1983. Have they a good market for produce? Yes.

1984. Is that district north-west of Collareendabri a good squatting district? Yes, it is very rich grazing land right up to the Queensland border, and right round to Yetman (on the McIntyre).

1985. And it is all fully stocked? The large paddocks are being subdivided annually, and their carrying capacity is increasing.

1986. That is, supposing there is grass? Yes.

1987. If there is no grass, what then? Then they have to send the stock away to New England, or into Queensland.

1988. How far do you think it would pay to take food to the stock? That is a thing of which I have had no practical experience. I have heard of some taking it hundreds of miles by train.

1989. How much would it cost in a year? I have not fed stock artificially.

1990. The question has been raised whether the cost would not amount to the value of the sheep? I have never fed artificially, and I should be very sorry to try it. I think the sheep would eat their heads off.

1991. Does that district grow a kind of grass that you can cut in a very dry season and make hay of? Yes.

1992. Does it make nutritious hay? I never saw it used extensively. It seems very good hay.

1993. If we are going to keep that country always fully occupied, we shall have to contrive some method of keeping the stock alive;—the question is, would a railway to the west facilitate the process of keeping the sheep alive? Yes. I have seen various parts of the country so dry that nothing could travel along the road. When I was surveying the Mount Browne-road, the mail-coaches had to be taken off and the mails carried by camels, it being impossible for horses and cattle to travel over the roads.

1994. If a man keep stock too long on a run in a dry season, he cannot get them away at all? No, he cannot get them away by road; but if there were a railway he could.

1995. *Mr. Levien.*] You have been a resident up north for a number of years? Yes.

1996. The trade from that district has always been from Walgett to Maitland? Yes. I have spent all my life, with the exception of four years, between Newcastle and Walgett, and the trade has always been as you say.

1997.

1997. We have been told by Mr. Morgan, of the *Dubbo Dispatch*, that, originally, this trade always started from Maitland, and went right up to Walgett;—is not that correct? Yes; that bears out my experience.

1998. Being a surveyor for many years, as you have been, and having a thorough knowledge of the whole district, which way should you say the railway ought to go? I say unhesitatingly that, in my opinion, it ought to go from Narrabri to Walgett.

1999. Can you give an opinion as to which side of the river it should go on? It should keep on the south side of the river, at least as far as Wee Waa.

2000. It would go in the direct line of the old route of trade from first to last? Yes.

2001. And those old towns ought not to be deserted? I think it would be a pity to see them cut off.

T. H. H.
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Esq., M.P.

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Bishop Lyne, Conditional Purchase Inspector and Forester, Narrabri, sworn, and examined:—

2002. *Mr. Watson.*] You are engaged in the Lands Department as a conditional purchase inspector? Yes.

2003. And also as forester? Yes; forester and inspector of prickly-pears.

2004. You have been living at Narrabri for a considerable time? For five or six years.

2005. In the course of your work you would have plenty of opportunity of making yourself acquainted with the general character of the land in the district? Yes.

2006. The proposal before the Committee involves the construction of a line of railway from Narrabri West through Wee Waa to Walgett, and from Burren to Collarendabri; in regard to the first portion of the route to Wee Waa, there is considerable difference of opinion locally, some saying that the line should start from Narrabri East, and keep to the north of the Namoi, and some distance north, also, of Wee Waa; they suggest that as an alternative route to the one to the south of the Namoi;—can you express any opinion as to the advisability of either route, having in view the character of the land? Knowing the circumstances of the case, I have often thought the matter over, and I have invariably come to the conclusion that to serve the best interests of the country the extension should be from West Narrabri.

2007. Keeping on the south of the river to Wee Waa? Yes. The area immediately to the south of the Namoi, and also to Coonabarabran, and from there extending west towards Coonamble, has been very much under my observation, on account of the very large timber trade that is going on there, employing, at present, as it perhaps will for two or three years to come, up to 200 men. I have, on several occasions, made reports in reference to timber in that forest, and I have always held that the timber there is of great extent and of great value, particularly the ironbark, for railway construction purposes. There is also an extensive area of cypress pine, which is distributed along the whole of the distance down to Pilliga. This is valuable timber, used for building purposes, chiefly, on account of its being proof against white ants.

2008. Could you say how much nearer you would get to the main part of that forest by the construction of the proposed line, than the nearest point it is accessible from now? Yes. At the present time the principal roads extend south and west from Narrabri West, and the timber is brought in a distance of from 25 to 30 miles. There is a very large timber reserve running parallel with the river, comprising 225 square miles. At present the timber that is accessible is only on the eastern end of that reserve, and to touch the reserve you have to go 20 miles out from Narrabri West. The extension of the railway to Wee Waa would really open up the whole of that reserve, and make it accessible for timber supply. I may mention that, independently of that reserve, I have reported at times upon the quantity of timber there is outside the reserve, on Crown lands; and I have expressed the idea that the reserve probably ought to have been extended considerably in the first instance, because there is really better timber off the reserve, in places, than on it.

2009. You stated that the cutting of timber extends 24 to 30 miles south of Narrabri West;—how far from Wee Waa to the south-west would the present drawing of timber extend? For railway purposes it would not approach that at all at present.

2010. How far south-west would it be cut at present from Wee Waa? None can be obtained in that direction at present. If the railway were extended to Wee Waa, I can safely say the timber would be cut out south-west for a distance of not less than 40 miles, on account of the very best part of the timber being in that neighbourhood; that is on the reserve extending toward Baradine, and out below Wee Waa in the south-west.

2011. How much closer to that do you think you would get with the railway? Sixty miles from Wee Waa closer than at present, if the line is constructed to Wee Waa.

2012. You think it would give access, then, to another 30 miles of timber? I think it would give access to an area 30 miles broad by from 45 to 50 miles long.

2013. Then, with respect to the timber which is on that country, it has been alleged that the ironbark is of a poor description—pipey, and unfit for milling purposes, though fit for sleepers? I cannot understand such evidence being given. I have had a lot of experience in the Dubbo forest-country as well as that, and, whilst I admit that in all forests of the kind there is pipey timber, there is in that forest a great proportion of sound timber equal to that of any back forest that I know of. It is the best back-country forest that I have ever known for timber. Of course, young timber is not as good as old timber. If anybody use young timber that is exposed to the weather, the sap in it must naturally cause it to give way at an early date, as compared with old timber.

2014. It would seem, then, that the demand is overtaking the supply of pine, at any rate, because on the North-western line, at present, they seem to be cutting very small trees? Yes; all the available area has been cut out to a considerable extent, and they have now to take logs which formerly they would not have touched.

2015. Then there is a great demand for pine for building purposes, in the back country, generally? Yes. I know that in one yard in Narrabri there are 5,000 logs, and they were cutting them as fast as possible.

2016. Should you like to venture an opinion as to whether the land within a reasonable distance of Narrabri West has been fairly cut out of pine? Only to the south and west, extending, perhaps, about 20 miles to the south, and about 15 miles to the west. There are some excellent pine trees along the cleared road going to Wee Waa.

2017. Would it be fair to say that the available timber, within the distance that it would pay to cart it to Narrabri West, has been largely cut out? Yes; there will have to be some arrangement made so that a higher rate will be paid for the carriage than is paid at present, because they have to go further back for it.

2018. According to that, if you do not by some means get a better price for the timber, to allow higher rates to be given for the carriage, or afford some means by rail of getting towards the forest, the supply will

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B. Lyons. will fail, as far as freight on the existing railway is concerned? Yes; no doubt. Something will have to be done. The Railway Department is endeavouring to make up for the difference by altering the kind of timber which they will accept. During the last few years the whole of that area has been made valuable again through the alteration in their specifications, which permits round-backed sleepers to be used where previously they would use only squared timber. Pipey timber also, which, under the old system, was passed over, is now available.

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2019. So that timber that was previously passed over as useless will now be made available? Yes. Perhaps 50,000 or 100,000 sleepers have already been supplied from that area. Last week a contract to supply 65,000 sleepers of that kind of timber was entered into at Narrabri.

2020. Is there such a decided preference shown for pine, as against imported timber, for building purposes, that there is always likely to be a demand for it? I am satisfied that nothing will take its place out in the west, in the way of timber for building purposes. The demand for it is constantly increasing.

2021. Would that timber find an outlet westward as well as eastward of the proposed line, supposing a line were constructed from Collarendabri to Walgett? I could hardly estimate the quantity, but there would be a demand when there is a possibility of getting the timber away to the west. There are two or three mills working at Pilliga, and the whole of their timber goes out west. They cannot get it away in bad seasons, and they have orders now which they cannot complete.

2022. In regard to the forest reserves you spoke of south-west from Wee Waa, of course a royalty would be paid on that timber? Yes; and after the 1st July there is to be a royalty on all timber that is cut on Crown lands or forest reserves. I made an estimate with reference to this last contract of 65,000 sleepers at Narrabri West. The royalty on that timber would come to £1,340.

2023. They charge no royalty, but only a license-fee to each of the sleeper-getters? That is a mistake. There are different classes of reserves. Those to which you are referring are known as class C. The contractor there pays 10s. a month for a license, and under that license he can issue to his men 100 or 200 certificates to cut timber.

2024. Does that apply to all reserves? No; only those under class C.

2025. With regard to the land south of the cleared road from Narrabri West towards Wee Waa, do you think that if that were improved generally it would be of any value for settlement purposes? Yes, for small holders. There are patches where, perhaps, the largest area of land available for wheat-growing would not exceed, in one block, 3,000 acres. The portions that are valuable for small settlement are areas along the creek. There are numberless creeks along there, and there are flats all along for 30 miles towards the river Namoi. Those are valuable, under certain conditions, for farming on a small scale. For instance, a timber-getter will establish himself with a small family, and in his spare time will carry on farming operations, and form a home for his family, where he has water available. All that area is known to have subterranean water. It is wonderful what has occurred there within the last twelve months. People were under the impression that you could not obtain water by sinking for it; but the settlers in that part all sink wells, and they invariably get good water at a depth of 35 or 40 feet.

2026. You spoke of new settlers coming there;—has there been any marked increase in the number of settlers? The amending Land Bill, introduced by Mr. Carruthers, gave opportunities for homestead selection, and I think that in the last patch there were something like twenty taken up about Wee Waa. The other settlement in that part has only been scattered; but I think that every one of the settlers has a well.

2027. Do you consider that the country between Narrabri West and Buena Creek is suitable for settlement of any description,—it seems to be rather lower in average quality than that between Buena Creek and Wee Waa? Yes, that is quite right. Within a radius of a few miles from the cleared line there is a growth called the brigalow which will make that country difficult to handle. There are barren sand ridges, and it is very hard to say whether they will be available for settlement. Further up Buena Creek you get into far better country, and a great portion of it has been reserved. Settlement has never had an opportunity there,—the land has been a forest reserve; but, as it is now being cut up, I am certain that when it is made available for settlement thousands of acres will be taken up. People might say, "Why has there not been a greater desire to get it, up to the present?" But people up there have common sense, and when they have good land on the north side of the river, it is very few who will not exhaust their chances before trying the south side.

2028. The good grazing land on the northern side has no timber on it to speak of? No, it is very open country.

2029. Consequently, it requires no great capital to work it? It has apparently been used at all times for grazing.

2030. Whilst on the southern side a man would have to improve the land, and spend something considerable in that way before it would be of much value? Yes. I think that explains what I have said as to the chance of settlement, because the land is in an altogether unimproved state at the present time. I am confident that it is good land, and will be made use of for settlement when the opportunity is given.

2031. Do you know the country called Yarra Lake? Yes.

2032. Is that west from Buena Creek? It is.

2033. Is it good country there? I could show you very bad country there, and a considerable area of very good country. It is wheat-growing country.

2034. How far will that be from the supposed route to Wee Waa, on the cleared line? From 7 to 10 miles. There is good wheat land between Yarra Lake and the line, within 3 or 4 miles; and nearer than that there is good land.

2035. Taking the land between Wee Waa and Buena Creek from Narrabri West, what would your opinion of that be from an agricultural point of view? It is about 4 miles from Narrabri West to Buena Creek. That is a very mixed piece of country. On the frontage you get the Scaldy Plain, and then pine and box, and then you get into a few ridges of nasty heath and sand, and then into the belar country. There is a considerable area directly south from that, which is known as Dungeon Belar, it is so thick.

2036. From there on how do you describe it from an agricultural point of view? In many places there is very good wheat land, but that is where the pine and the box are, and the chocolate soil. Ten miles out of Wee Waa, south of that, it is not such a good class of soil; but it is very fair wheat land. I consider that some of the land I have just referred to is really good; you might call it first-class farming land. There are some large flats about 15 miles from Narrabri, towards Wee Waa, and out south some hundreds of acres of box flats. South of Wee Waa there is some good country.

2037.

2037. Why would it be more expensive to the people of Baradine to go to Narrabri West than to go to Wee Waa; the distance would seem to be much the same? From Narrabri West towards Baradine, along the Buena Creek, and to the south-west, the traffic is impeded from the fact that there is much sand on that road, and that is a great consideration as to the loading.

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2038. The roads you speak of towards Wee Waa would go over a better traffic route? Yes; it is a harder class of country. What I have attempted to show in my evidence is that the fact of that railway being extended from Narrabri West to Wee Waa would increase the available area for the purposes of timber-getting, by a breadth of from 25 to 30 miles, and a length of from 55 to 60 miles.

2039. Coming back to the quality of the land, it was stated by some witnesses, who gave evidence in the district, that the land between Narrabri West and Wee Waa was absolutely useless—you do not agree with that? No. I say that there is good land for small settlement. At the Buena Creek crossing, on a farm which has been cleared there since I went to Narrabri, as good results have been obtained as from any other farm in the district.

2040. Taking everything into consideration—the timber and the quality of the soil—you think that the best route for the railway would be from Narrabri West towards Wee Waa? I have no feeling in the matter at all: but I say that the extension of the line from Narrabri West to Wee Waa will be of vast benefit in opening up an extensive area of country which at present is not available for settlement. It will not only do that, but it will largely increase the work for workmen in connection with the forests, and it will give them a great opportunity of establishing themselves permanently there.

2041. When this forest is cleared, will the land be worth much for grazing or for agriculture? Yes; it will be ordinary country for those purposes.

2042. It is not first-class land? No; but I would venture to say that the chocolate soil is first class for wheat-growing. There seem to be properties in that soil favourable to the production of first-class wheat.

2043. *Dr. Garran.*] Will it be best fitted for grazing or for tillage? I think some portions will be best for tillage and some for grazing.

2044. During your inspections of conditional purchases, you saw a great many different selectors;—on what sort of soil in that district do they seem to thrive most? A soil that has not been referred to at all so far in my evidence—that is, the soil on the Deep Creek, to the east of Narrabri, where there are rich deposits.

2045. Alluvial soil? Yes.

2046. That seems to answer best? Yes; I do not think it can be surpassed in any part of the Colony.

2047. What is the next best? The next best is the chocolate soil with a slight mixture of sand, the reason being that it has not a tendency to bind round the vegetation in hot seasons, after a thunderstorm.

2048. The sand keeps it open? Yes.

2049. What is the third best soil? The third is the same soil without the sand.

2050. *Chairman.*] Will you favour the Committee with your opinion as to the character of the soil on the north side of the river? My opinion of the country to the north of the Namoi is that, as grazing soil for fattening purposes, it is not surpassed in New South Wales.

2051. What is your opinion of its agricultural capabilities? I believe we shall live to see crops growing there, but it will not be by the present holders of the land. When I say that, I should like to explain in this way—that the changes are remarkably rapid at present in connection with the means of cultivation; and not only that, they are bringing out a new kind of cereal. Take wheat: It is quite possible that the old varieties of wheat will not be a success in that country; but the new variety, which is known as the Stienwieden, &c., which come to maturity with great rapidity, might make an enormous area valuable for wheat-growing which is not valuable for that purpose now. That country may be brought before the public in the same way as other country has been, owing to the easy means of putting large areas very quickly and cheaply under crop. In the ordinary way, there would be a risk in connection with the crop, but in the future it may be that the risk would become very small, because of the light cost of getting the crop in. I think the soil is so rich that in a moderate season it would produce wheat, and, with an ordinary rainfall, it would always produce hay.

2052. Do you think it necessary to obtain a special kind of wheat to bring that part of the country under cultivation? Yes. I do not think the settlers there now have in view any idea of cultivating for export.

2053. *Mr. Watson.*] That is because they are doing too well at grazing now? It surprises me, considering the seasons, that they are not all bankrupt on the best land, but they produce their fat stock when those in other parts of the country cannot. At this season of the year the grass and the herbage grow rapidly, and on all that big area there is water for a certainty at a certain depth. When they have a good fattening season it enables them to make such a lot of money that they can stand unfavourable seasons afterwards. I might mention that I think the country to the south of the Namoi is well suited for fruit-growing. I have seen excellent fruit grown in the gardens there.

WEDNESDAY, 27 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Wallace Webster, Conditional Purchase Inspector and Forester, Walgett, sworn, and examined:—

2054. *Chairman.*] Will you indicate the limits of the district you had under your charge as conditional purchase inspector? From Carinda, on the south, to the Queensland border, north; the Narran River on the west, and Come-by-chance on the east.

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2055. That district practically includes the whole of the country which the proposed railway is likely to drain? Yes.

2056.

- W. Webster. 2056. I believe you are at present engaged in superintending the erection of a rabbit-proof fence;—will you give some details in regard to it? Yes. I am engaged on an extension of the rabbit-proof fence from Mungindi, running south to Yarraldool—to a point a little north-westerly of Pilliga; and from there following the main road south of the river, south of Wee Waa, to the railway station at Narrabri West. I am now preparing specifications for that, and before I did so, I picked the route, and traversed the country some miles south of the Namoi. The fence was, in the first instance, erected at the request of the Queensland Government and the residents of the Moree district, to protect them from the spread of rabbits from the west. The rabbits were working from the Bourke district, and eastward from the Western district. We stopped at the Namoi River, but the Moree residents considered that they would like to have the scrub country, which is south of the Namoi, fenced off. That is generally considered to be vermin-infested country, and a shelter for rabbits and wild dogs. The residents have subscribed a considerable amount towards the erection of that fence. Our fence really follows the northern boundary of the scrub country. In picking the line for the fence, I tried to avoid as much scrub country as possible. At the same time, I have recommended a line about 5 miles south of Wee Waa, which takes in a considerable area of that reported valueless country. I recommended it for the reason that I considered it was good agricultural country, and that I took in as much as possible without deviating the line too much, believing that the small settlement which is going on there would keep down the vermin.
2057. How long did you live in Narrabri? I was stationed there for two years.
2058. Do you know the country from Narrabri, on each side of the river, east to Wee Waa? Yes.
2059. Will you describe the character of the country on the south and north of the river? The country on the south side from Narrabri to Wee Waa, between the road and the river, is of heavy soil. It is very rich, pastoral land and good agricultural land, and it is fairly clear of timber. South of the road it is very heavily timbered with pine, box, and ironbark. Although there are some spots in it of very poor soil—box swamps and raw sand—the country will grow cereals, grain, root-crops, and fruit. For instance, near Bohena Creek, cultivation has been carried on with success. I have spoken to several old Victorian farmers who have taken up homestead selections south of Wee Waa, of 400-acre blocks, and they seem to be very hopeful of making a good thing out of crops. The ground for grazing, south, is what is generally termed a little sour, and is not fit for fattening like the north side of the river; but it would carry, when cleared, as much store stock as would the northern side, but it would not be suitable for fattening. Again, the south side of the river is open for settlement, and I think suitable for farms of 400 to 500 acres. The northern part—north of the river—is very rich grazing country, but not so reliable for a cereal crop as is the southern side, with the same rainfall. Why I say that is because in the north of Victoria, and in the extreme west of New South Wales, farmers seem to thrive better, and produce better crops for cereals, on the light rather than on the heavy land, with a light rainfall. In the west we always grow a good hay crop on sandy soil. For instance, near Wilcannia, and north of Wilcannia, very good crops have been grown on the light land, but you would not think of putting the same crop in on heavy land.
2060. On which side is the greater quantity of alienated land? I think the northern side is mostly alienated.
2061. Then there is more room for closer settlement on the south side of the river? Yes; it is nearly all open for closer settlement south of the road.
2062. Do you think the construction of a railway is likely to stimulate the taking up of land along the route? I think that is the reason most of the land has been taken up—in anticipation of the railway being constructed.
2063. We have had some conflicting evidence as to the amount and quality of the timber south of that part of the line as far as Wee Waa;—have you had any experience of the timber in that part of the country? Only in travelling through the country, looking for a line for the rabbit-proof fence.
2064. What is the amount and quality of the timber obtainable south of line? From what I know, and from what I have seen of it, I should say that there is a great future for timber-carters. There is also good pine up to the road, and there is a lot of pine there which, in the future, will be of great use for building purposes. It is also found towards Pilliga, for more than 6 miles south of the road. In the Walgett district, however, I have had to report many people for only partially residing on their ground, because they could not bring their families there on account of the want of building timber.
2065. Does Walgett itself suffer from the difficulty of obtaining timber? From a scarcity of timber, and from a difficulty in obtaining it, on account of the cost of cartage.
2066. Do you think that, with the construction of a line from Narrabri to Walgett, there would, for some time, be a considerable traffic in timber? I think there would be a fair amount of timber traffic there.
2067. Mainly for local requirements? Yes, for local requirements in the Walgett district.
2068. Starting from Wee Waa, could you give a general description of the country, first along the route to Walgett, and then along the proposed branch to Collarendabri, say, for 20 miles on each side of the proposed line from Wee Waa to Walgett? From Wee Waa to Walgett, on the south side of the proposed line—between the Namoi and the proposed line—the country consists of black soil. It is rich grazing land.
2069. Could you compare it with grazing land in any other part of the country with which you are acquainted? Taken as a whole, I should say that it would always carry a sheep to 2 acres.
2070. Would you call that very good pastoral land? Yes. I might say that I consider that the whole of the Walgett district, unimproved, will carry a sheep to 3 acres. That is double the carriage of the unimproved land in the Bourke district. North of the proposed line, the average would be similar to that on the south side.
2071. Do you know the country within a radius of about 40 miles of Collarendabri? North and north-west, and west and south of Collarendabri, it would carry a sheep to 3 acres without ringbarking.
2072. Do you think that is country which is likely to be closely settled, from a pastoral point of view? I think it should be closely settled.
2073. Will you describe the country towards Narran Lakes? North-west from Walgett the country is a little richer than the other portion to which I have referred. Possibly it would carry a sheep to 2½ acres without ringbarking.
2074. Then you look upon the great bulk of the country, which the proposed line will serve and drain, as being good pastoral country? Yes. I might add that the country north of Collarendabri has been improved by ringbarking, which will add considerably to the estimated carrying capacity.

2075. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the district which you look after suited to mixed farming? I think it is more suited to grazing than to agriculture. W. Webster.
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2076. And the close settlement we are to look forward to is a number of moderately-sized grazing farms? Yes; in the Walgett district.
2077. What population could be carried on grazing farms? There is a great diversity of opinion on that matter. I think that in this part of the country settlement leases of 2,000 acres are too small for grazing. The people, however, say that I have an exaggerated idea of the extent of country a person could live upon.
2078. Your idea of a small grazing farm is 2,000 acres? 2,000 to 2,500.
2079. Should there be an average family of five people on 2,000 acres? Yes.
2080. And the produce would be pastoral produce? Yes.
2081. It would not be a mixed produce for a railway? I think it would be mostly wool and stock that would have to be depended upon.
2082. Is it equally fitted for cattle and sheep? Yes.
2083. So that whichever pays the better can be grazed there? Yes.
2084. Has the custom shifted from time to time from cattle to sheep, and sheep to cattle? The reason why the cattle are not kept in that district is that you cannot very well keep cattle and sheep together, on account of the necessity of making provision for water.
2085. Has it ever been a cattle district? It was, when it was first taken up.
2086. Has it ever shifted back from sheep to cattle? No.
2087. For the reason you have given? Yes.
2088. Is the grass as suitable for cattle as for sheep? Yes.
2089. During the late dry weather has that district suffered very much from the drought? Very much.
2090. Has it suffered as much as the Bourke district? I think quite as much, for large stock.
2091. Has the drought lasted year after year as it has done on the Darling? I have been in the district for two years, and have had to carry every bit of horse-feed I have used.
2092. I suppose the country is looking very well at present? Not west of the Barwon, where they only had a small rainfall.
2093. Is the country looking well around Walgett? It was not when I left it, but I believe it is now.
2094. Has the quantity of sheep very much fallen off during the last two years, in consequence of the drought? I could not say, but I should think one-half the sheep have been lost.
2095. That would make a great deal of difference to the railway in the quantity of wool carried? It would.
2096. So that there is always a risk in making a railway through a pastoral district like this, especially when you may get a couple of years' drought, which will reduce your returns by one-half? Yes.
2097. As far as the present season has gone, have the squatters in that district imported feed to any extent? They have for their horses, but not for their sheep.
2098. Have they sent their sheep anywhere in search of grass? Yes; mostly to New England.
2099. Did they send them to Narrabri to the railway? I think they mostly went to Narrabri; but I could not say with certainty.
2100. Do you know what it costs per sheep to get grass in New England? No. The pastoralists make their own arrangements.
2101. What proportion of sheep in the district were sent eastward? I think the pastoralists would have sent them all if they could have got them away.
2102. What proportion was sent? I could not say.
2103. Did as many go as died for want of food? I could not say.
2104. In dealing with this proposal, one important matter to be considered is what will be the utility of a line going west, either in fetching sheep to the grass, or in taking fodder to the sheep;—I want to know what has been the experience in connection with the last drought in the district? My experience of what I have seen, and of what I know as an old station man—I went through a drought in 1885 on the Barwon, and lost 30,000 sheep—is that when you want to get the sheep away you cannot.
2105. That is because you stay back too long? But you never know when you are going to have the rain, consequently you hang on.
2106. Supposing a line were made to Walgett or Collarendabri, would it pay the squatter west of Collarendabri to bring food to his sheep? I think it would.
2107. Do you know what it would cost per sheep to feed them on imported fodder? No.
2108. I presume you have not heard the settlers discuss the question? No.
2109. Supposing the Committee were to agree to only one of these lines—to Collarendabri or to Walgett—which of the two is the more important? I think they are both equally important. My experience of Walgett is that it is just as much a back-block town, for cost of living, horse-feed, and so on, as is Milparinka, and more so than is Wilcannia.
2110. It is a much larger town than Collarendabri? Yes.
2111. Is it more of a commercial centre? Yes, at present.
2112. If both lines are made, which will bring the more wool from the north-west? I should say that the Collarendabri line would bring most of the Queensland wool. With regard to the New South Wales wool, I think the two would be about equal.
2113. Either place would suit the north-west people equally well? It would not suit the Walgett people.
2114. But would a line to Walgett suit the north-west people as would one to Collarendabri? Yes.
2115. So that, as long as the north-west people get one or other of the lines it would not be very material to them which they got? I do not think so.
2116. Would the Queensland traffic be tempted to Walgett? Of course a lot which would now come to Collarendabri would probably go to Moree then.
2117. So that we should not lose it? I should think not.
2118. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You have spoken of the different classes of soil on the south and north side of the Namoi, near Narrabri;—what is the character of the soil on the northern side of the river? It is generally heavy, red and black soil.
2119. What is it like on the south side of the river? It is black first, and then inclines to sandy loam.
2120. Which class of soil in that part of the country do you consider best for grazing purposes? The heavy soil on the north of the river.

- W. Webster. 2121. And for agricultural purposes? For agricultural purposes I should prefer the loamy soil.
2122. That is what is known as the chocolate soil? Yes, and anything loamy.
- 27 June, 1900. 2123. Taken together—agriculture and grazing—which stands the drought the better, black or chocolate soil? For grazing I should say the heaviest soil will stand the longer.
2124. Would it stand a drought better than the lighter soil? The lighter soil would stand the drought better for store grazing. It would retain the moisture better; but for an average season I would prefer the heavy soil.
2125. What about a drought such as these districts have experienced during the last few years? Then, the light soil would beat the heavy soil.
2126. The light soil is more reliable for a country suffering from drought than is black and heavy soil? Yes.
2127. What is the water supply like in the country from Narrabri to Collarendabri or Walgett? From Narrabri, and about the country south, to somewhere near Pilliga, there seems to be plenty of water to be had in wells at a shallow depth; but from there to Walgett the country is badly watered, and will have to depend on bores.
2128. Have many bores been put down recently, or are many in existence? There is one 10 miles south of Walgett. That is the only bore south of the Namoi. There is one about 20 miles north-east from Walgett—at Eurie—which has been put down lately.
2129. In times of drought, do stock suffer to any large extent for want of water? That has been the great drawback to that part of the country this year.
2130. Is that a more important consideration than want of grass? No; I think the want of grass is the most important. If you have grass you can generally provide water by sinking for it.
2131. How would you class the country between Narrabri and Walgett as a fattening country? From Narrabri to Pilliga, south of the road, there is only store country.
2132. What about Collarendabri? It is all fattening country there. I think it is rather better country there than immediately south of the Namoi to Walgett.
2133. Is the whole of that country alienated? No; there is a lot of country coming from Come-by-chance to Walgett, and, south of the road, of that scrub country, which is not alienated. There is a good deal of unalienated land south of the Namoi.
2134. I suppose it is occupied? Yes, by pastoral tenants; and it is being subdivided for settlement lea.
2135. Will the settlement leases soon be thrown open? Yes; many of them are being kept back until we get the rabbit-proof fence up, so that we can recover the value of the boundary.
2136. When these blocks are thrown open, do you think they will be readily taken up for settlement? Most decidedly.
2137. Will that mean a larger population settling on the country? Yes. It means a family, probably, on every 2,500 acres. At present, under the occupation licenses, there are only four or five men working on a station of a large area.
2138. What is the usual area held by the stations? They vary very much about there. They may be 40,000 or 50,000 acres, but I could not say positively.
2139. You consider that a fair average? Yes.
2140. When the stock-owners about Walgett and Collarendabri fatten their stock, by which route do they send them to market? They generally pick the route for feed. Generally they send them to Narrabri; but sometimes, if the roads are good, they send them south. It depends on the condition of the stock route.
2141. Is any difficulty experienced in travelling fat stock to Narrabri? Of course there has been a great falling off during the last two years.
- 2141½. If the line of railway, as proposed, were constructed, do you think it would be used for the purpose of sending fat stock by rail? Decidedly.
2142. Do you think the whole of the fat stock would be carried by rail? I do not say the whole of it; but from all the small holdings a great deal of stock would go. That would relieve the holdings of the stock upon them, and would, of course, increase the carrying capacity of the country a good deal.
2143. If the railway were constructed to Walgett, would the stock-owners put their stock on the train at Walgett, or travel them to Narrabri? They would put them on the train.
2144. Do you think the line, if constructed, would be used to a large extent in times of drought, such as those we have experienced lately, in sending starving stock to other localities? Most decidedly.
2145. Do you think that would be of material benefit to the stock-owners in the north-west? I think it would.
2146. Have you any knowledge of the country between Walgett and Coonamble? Only about half way.
2147. In that half way, how would you compare the country? The country from Walgett to about half way is generally heavy, and, as you get nearer to Coonamble, it opens into a red, lighter country.
2148. Would that country be similar to the country between Wee Waa and Walgett to Collarendabri? I think that the country, as you approach Coonamble from Walgett, is of better quality than south of Wee Waa.
2149. Which do you think would serve the Walgett people and those in the immediate neighbourhood—a connection with Narrabri or with Coonamble—that is when the railway is extended as far as Coonamble? I think that as long as the Walgett people get a railway from one place or the other it will suit them.
2150. Is there much trade between the north-west and Newcastle? I think most of the trade comes that way. The goods for the whole of the Walgett district come through Walgett from Narrabri—I suppose that means from Newcastle.
2151. Is much wool carried from Walgett and the surrounding district to Newcastle, to be shipped there? I could not say.
2152. What classes of marketable timber are to be found in the district? There is no marketable timber. From Baradine to Walgett there is no pine. On the Castlecreagh there is some, but very little.
2153. We have had evidence with regard to the existence of ironbark and pine scrub near Narrabri? There is a fair forest reserve of pine near Wee Waa. There are also good pine further south, and good pine forests south of Pilliga.
2154. Is there much marketable timber? The greater part of that pine is marketable for building purposes.
2155. Is the locality of the timber of which you are speaking such that if a line of railway were constructed it would be used for bringing the timber to market? Of course the timber from the Baradine district would probably go to Wee Waa.
- 2156.

2156. Do you think that would be a large item in the way of freight? I think it would be a fair item.
2157. Where do the supplies of fodder come from in times of drought? For Walgett it mostly comes from Narrabri. The freight is £6 a ton from Narrabri to Walgett at present.
2158. Is there any reason why the country suitable for cultivation is not put under cultivation to meet a contingency such as a drought? Of course in the Walgett district there is an uncertain crop on heavy ground, and there is really no market for a crop of wheat in Walgett, except in a drought year.
2159. Farmers do not consider it worth while to cultivate, seeing that the only time they will have a profitable sale for their produce is during a drought? That is really how the matter stands at present; but of course everyone is now considering the advisableness of putting in crops for their own use in a drought season.
2160. Looking at the district as a purely pastoral one, how much country would the proposed line serve on either side of it? A distance of about 30 or 40 miles.
2161. Do you think, if a line were constructed to Collarendabri, it would catch any considerable portion of the Queensland traffic? I think it would catch a great deal of it. Of course, it all depends on the Queensland freights.
2162. And to the west and north-west, do you think there would be a large amount of traffic any distance from the line? It would take in the traffic as far as the Narran, pretty well.
2163. If it were decided to construct only one of the proposed lines—to Collarendabri or to Walgett—which do you think would do the larger amount of good, or serve the larger amount of area, having in view also the traffic from Queensland? Taking Queensland into consideration, I think the Collarendabri line—that is if there were a railway to Coonamble to serve the south of Pilliga.
2164. Has there ever been a serious attempt to make roads across the plain? No; you could not make roads across. There is no metal, or anything with which to make them, in that part of the country.
2165. I suppose the people engaged in carrying have experienced great difficulty in crossing the plains in wet weather? It simply means that you are apt to stick. That is my experience even in a light buggy.
2166. *Mr. Watson.*] You have stated that the country some distance west of Weo Wan, and along the proposed line, is looked upon only as a pastoral country yet;—do you think it is likely that pastoral products would ever give a sufficient return to make two lines pay when they are so closely together as these would be? I think they would.
2167. The Railway Commissioners' estimate shows a loss of £13,000 per annum, assuming that both lines are constructed:—do you think there would be a sufficient expansion, because of the construction of the lines, to give any probability of the interest and working expenses being paid on both? Without a knowledge of railway matters, I think they should pay interest on the cost of construction.
2168. We generally assume, in regard to railway construction, that, in agricultural country, 20 to 25 miles is about the limit of distance at which it pays a man to carry wheat to a railway; a man, however, can carry wool a greater distance without making it unprofitable;—assuming that you were safe in building lines for agricultural country within 40 miles of each other, you think you are equally safe in attempting to do it in pastoral country? Of course there would not be so much revenue.
2169. In this instance it is proposed to run a branch at an acute angle, and the furthest distance between the two lines would only be something under 50 miles? That is so.
2170. That is not a great area from which to draw pastoral produce? If you were certain of crops you could draw wheat further than that. In Victoria I have carted it 60 miles.
2171. I suppose the prices were better than the average? You could do it on 2s. 6d. a bushel.
2172. But, in this instance, as far as we can ascertain, there does not seem to be much probability of any great wheat production in that district? Of course, with a railway there will be a certain amount, but I do not think it is a thing to rely upon.
2173. So that, for railway traffic, you would have to rely practically on pastoral production? I think so. Walgett, of course, is more agricultural than Collarendabri.
2174. I think you stated that Coonamble is more so than either of them? Yes. As you go south, there is a greater probability of agriculture.
2175. If you had your choice as a speculator of running a line to either Walgett or Collarendabri, with a view to catching traffic to make that line pay, which place would you sooner have as a terminus? Have I to take into consideration a line from Coonamble.
2176. No? Outside of the Queensland trade, I should take it to Walgett.
2177. Do you think there is a greater probability of catching the Queensland trade at Collarendabri than at Walgett? I think so.
2178. Can you say what is the present direction of the Angledool traffic;—does it go through Walgett or Collarendabri? Through Collarendabri, I should say.
2179. We were informed at Collarendabri that there is a harder road from Angledool towards Collarendabri than there is towards Walgett? That is quite right. That 60-mile track is a harder road than the track more southerly towards Walgett. The southerly traffic goes through richer black country, but it is not so good for road purposes.
2180. If distances and charges are equal, people will be more likely to use the hard track in that country? Yes.
2181. So that it would appear that Collarendabri would be a better point for reaching the Angledool traffic than Walgett? You might say that all the Bundabareena traffic would go to Collarendabri, and all the Dungalear traffic would go to Walgett.
2182. Does the Dungalear wool now go to Walgett? Yes; and it makes from there to Narrabri along the Pine Creek Road.
2183. The Railway Commissioners suggest that, if both places are tapped, they would prefer to reach Walgett from Coonamble. In their opinion the result would be a better opening up of the country;—what is your opinion of that? My opinion in regard to reaching Walgett from Coonamble rests on the freight to Newcastle or Sydney.
2184. How far do you think the country, which might reasonably be placed under agriculture, would extend off from Coonamble? About half way to Walgett.
2185. That will leave a little over 30 miles of purely pastoral country towards Walgett? Yes.
2186. *Mr. Levien.*] The distance between the two lines should not debar the construction of both, so far as the country to the west and north-west is concerned? No.

- W. Webster. 2187. Do you think a line to either Collarendabri or Walgett would serve the whole of the traffic to the west? If you had a line to Collarendabri and none to Walgett, a lot of traffic would probably go to Brewarrina.
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2188. Supposing the proposed lines are constructed, the producers will have a port at Newcastle as well as at Sydney? Yes.
2189. For both wool and sheep? That is so.
2190. Is there not a big trade done in wool, from Walgett downwards, at Newcastle? I should say that there is.
2191. Supposing the stock had to be shipped, which should be the better port at which to ship it—Newcastle or Sydney? I could not say.
2192. Would it be an important consideration to have two ports—Sydney and Newcastle? I should say so.
2193. You state that the country is mostly used for sheep-farming? Yes; there are very few cattle.
2194. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Having in view the character of the country to be passed through, and also having some consideration for the town of Wee Waa—which one line would touch, and the other would not—which do you think would be the more desirable connection—from Narrabri East, or West? I think, taking everything into consideration, the line should go through Wee Waa or Narrabri West.
2195. *Chairman.*] You will notice on the map the branch from the Walgett-road to Collarendabri? Yes.
2196. Would the greater amount of traffic come from the country on each side of the route from the Walgett line to Collarendabri, or from the country lying beyond Collarendabri? From beyond Collarendabri, I think. Of course, there would be a considerable traffic all the way along.
2197. But would there be more from the country beyond Collarendabri than there would be along the branch? I think there would be more from the country beyond Collarendabri.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- J. Harper. 2198. *Mr. Watson.*] Since you last gave evidence in regard to this proposal, the Committee have been on a visit of inspection to the district, and it was thought advisable to obtain from you separate estimates of revenue and expenditure in regard to each of the two proposed lines—a line to Walgett, and a branch to Collarendabri? I think you have it. It is only a matter of deducting one from the other.
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2199. The cost of a line from Narrabri West to Walgett direct is £316,386;—the cost of a line from Narrabri West to Collarendabri I should ascertain by taking the first two sections of the main line which run to the junction, and the branch line to Collarendabri,—that amounts to £335,797;—I understand, you would credit a line to Collarendabri, if there were no extension to Walgett, with £7,681 per annum? Yes.
2200. Supposing we did not construct a branch to Collarendabri, but constructed a line to Walgett, what revenue would you anticipate from it? I have not worked that out; that would require a revision of the whole position. Assuming a line were built to Walgett, the question would arise as to whether a lot of traffic, which is credited to Collarendabri, would come into Walgett. I do not think it would. A lot of the northern Queensland traffic certainly would not.
2201. The question also arises as to whether it would go to Moree, or come in at Collarendabri, and catch the Walgett line at Burren? I think it would go to Moree; some of it might go to Burren.
2202. Then there is the traffic from Angledool and in that direction;—we were informed locally that that at present goes towards Collarendabri? Yes, it passes over the Collarendabri bridge.
2203. Can you offer an opinion whether a line at Walgett would attract that traffic, or whether it would continue to go to Collarendabri, to Moree, or a junction at Burren? I think it would be more likely to go into Burren.
2204. So that it would only travel over one-half the line to Walgett? Yes.
2205. It was stated at Collarendabri that the road from Angledool to Collarendabri, in addition to being shorter than that to Walgett, is a better road because of the country being higher? That is what I have always understood.
2206. Suppose it were decided for the present only to build one line—which do you think would be the more likely to attract traffic from all round—that is including southern Queensland and the surrounding country? A line to Collarendabri. I explained before that the construction of a line to Brewarrina will tap the district to the south of Walgett. The construction of a line to Coonamble will tap the south-eastern portion of that district, whereas Collarendabri is practically a virgin district.
2207. From a traffic point of view, if you had your choice as to which of the two lines should be constructed, you would prefer the Collarendabri route? Yes. I regard it as best serving the interests of that part of the country.
2208. Assuming that the suggestions of the Railway Commissioners were adopted, and a line taken from Narrabri to Collarendabri, and another from Coonamble to Walgett were constructed, do you think the class of country which would be generally served by those two lines would be sufficient to keep both within a reasonable distance of paying point? Viewing lines as we do now, not with any immediate prospect of their paying, I think they would both be good lines. There is one matter I wish to make absolutely clear: We have heard a great deal about the interests of Newcastle in connection with this district. I have had some figures taken out which indicate where the business really is done, as far as the general merchandise is concerned. During the year, ending March, 1899, 36,775 tons of general merchandise went to the northern districts from Sydney. During the same period Newcastle supplied the same districts with 2,400 tons. So much has been said about the interests of Newcastle that I am having worked out for the Committee the wool and the stock traffic, and you will find the same or a greater disparity exists in that connection.
2209. It would seem, then, that although the people in the northern district get their supplies through Newcastle, the original point of departure is from Sydney? Yes. During the period I have mentioned, 32,449 tons of general goods—groceries, drapers' goods, &c.—were carried from Sydney by rail, and 4,336 tons were carried by sea from Sydney to Morpeth. From Newcastle, during the same period, there were 2,427 tons carried.
2210. *Chairman.*] Do you credit to Sydney all the goods landed at Morpeth for transmission to the north? Yes.
2211. Although they go by steamer? Of course they go from Sydney by steamer.

- *2212. *Mr. Watson.*] Is it on some classes of goods only that there is a saving by sending them *via* Morpeth? There is a slight margin on the general class of goods, but during the last few years people have become more disposed to send direct by rail from Sydney. We have altered our rates during the last twelve months, and that has made it more favourable for people to send goods direct from Sydney, instead of from Morpeth. For instance, in 1898 the quantity of general goods sent from Sydney was 19,238 tons, and that has been increased to 32,000 tons. J. Harper.
27 June, 1900.
- *2213. Was there a corresponding decrease in the amount sent by sea? During that period Morpeth sent 2,113 tons. This does not represent all the goods, but it represents the bulk of the goods carried in full truck-loads. The rest would not add 5 per cent. to the tonnage I have quoted.
2214. In view of the big reduction made in the freight of truck-loads, of course the disposition is to put everything in truck-loads? Yes; of course, that applies equally to Newcastle as to Sydney.
2215. Have the reductions which have been recently made for through traffic—as between Newcastle and Sydney—been distinct and out of proportion to reductions made in similar long-distance traffic on other lines? No; they have been made general. We have altered the method of charging by enabling people to amalgamate truck-loads of all classes of goods. At one time we had a truck-rate which practically represented the highest class. Now, it is competent to get a truck-load of mixed consignments.
2216. *Chairman.*] Do you, in the figures you have quoted, include items such as rock-salt? No.
- *2217. In one year alone, 5,000 tons of rock-salt were sent into that district? That is so. My return represents general articles of consumption.
2218. Could you include in your return all the articles sent on the line? I could.
- *2219. Do the figures you have quoted include cement? No.
- *2220. Do they include fencing wire? Yes.
2221. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has there been any increase in the quantity of rock-salt sent to the country since the saltbush has been almost exterminated? I could not say. It is one of the lowest classes of goods we have in our list. It does not produce much revenue.
2222. *Chairman.*] Does your return include agricultural implements? Yes.
2223. Will the return you propose to hand in be a general return of the whole of the traffic, and will it include all the items I have mentioned? Yes.
2224. Will it include beer and spirits? Yes; those articles are included in the figures I have quoted.
2225. *Mr. Watson.*] A number of the people in the district around Collarendabri seem to think that if they are given access to the northern lines, their chances of trade will be increased, from the fact that if they like they can ship at Newcastle, or take goods from Newcastle direct, whilst they will have, in addition, the alternative of going on to Sydney? So they would, under any circumstances. Of course, the Collarendabri extension would come into Newcastle. The Walgett extension, being further south and closer to the Western line, the advantage in reaching Sydney would be 15 miles in favour of a line *via* Coonamble.
2226. Could you say whether the trend of business each year is to concentrate a greater quantity of wool at a depôt like Sydney, for sale? Undoubtedly. Our records show it. I will produce evidence to show that the quantity which has been exported from Newcastle has been a constantly decreasing quantity every year.
2227. Is the same effect noticeable in regard to the principal ports of other colonies? Yes. For instance, more wool is being offered at Melbourne than formerly. Geelong has practically disappeared as a wool-selling centre. In South Australia, of course, there is only the one market—Adelaide.
2228. Is not a greater quantity of wool being sold locally each year? That is so in each Colony. We are beginning to feel it now with some of the Riverina wools, which we used to get this way, because they were shipped. It was immaterial whether they were shipped here or at Melbourne. It was only a matter of rates; but now, although our rate may be a more favourable one than the Victorian rate, the agents of the producers are in Melbourne, and the wool is now being shipped there.
2229. One aspect of the matter, in connection with the proposed line, is as to the respective advantages of the Sydney and the Brisbane markets. The people about Collarendabri seem to think, with Federation, there would be a chance of a railway to Collarendabri getting a very large proportion of the South Queensland wool traffic;—looking at the general aspect of the question, do you think the attraction of the Sydney market would be greater, other things being equal, than that of the Brisbane market? I think so. Our position now, as far as the wool from southern Queensland is concerned, is very much better than it was. We have made an arrangement with Queensland whereby they have withdrawn the £2 10s. a ton duty on wool; and we remain with unfettered hands, provided we do not quote below a certain rate, which will be about the rate we have at Bourke.
2230. If a line were constructed to Collarendabri, to what point, across the Queensland border, do you think its influence would extend, as far as the wool traffic is concerned? It is hard to say. I should imagine it would extend, perhaps, 50 or 60 miles.
2231. Assuming the Federal authorities established a mileage rate pure and simple, and did not allow any preferential rate for the purpose of attracting the traffic, do you think there would be a likelihood of the south Queensland wool within that distance coming towards Sydney? Our position is this: we have no preferential rate. The interior of the country would never be developed if an equal mileage rate were insisted upon. No country in the world has an equal mileage rate—it always tapers. To-day, practically, the boot is on the other leg, as far as Queensland is concerned. They are charging the same rate for 100 miles further than we are. I think Queensland would suffer rather than we, in the event of an interstate commission. Cunnamurra is 100 miles further than Bourke, and they are charging the same rate as we are charging from Bourke.
2232. You think that whatever new conditions might arise you are likely to hold that south Queensland traffic? Yes.
2233. In making up your general estimate of the traffic likely to be derived from the suggested lines, do you allow for any increase on the present wool production, or do you assume that it would be about the same? The most favourable year they have had in that district was taken as a basis—the year 1894–5—before the drought set in. That was what may be regarded as a normal year. Since then, of course, the whole of the seasons have been bad.
2234. It was stated in evidence in the district that there had been, because of the closer pastoral settlement,—the extension, for instance, of the settlement-lease provisions of the Land Act, an increase in the quantity

* See answer to Question 2912 (Mr. Harper's further examination).

- J. Harper.
27 June, 1900.
- quantity of sheep carried, as compared with any previous time when similar conditions existed;—it was stated that, with the same drought conditions previously, under the system of large holdings, there were not so many sheep carried as there are now on the smaller holdings? When the return was taken in 1894-5, there was a large number of small holdings in that district, and even if they had increased, they have not carried anything like the same quantity of stock, because the quantity of wool has been a diminishing one every year since then.
2235. It was stated that if they had had the same large holdings in the late drought that they had in the previous heavy drought, they would have lost more sheep? Yes; because all the small holdings report improvements in the shape of water, and so on.
2236. There seems to be a good deal of land available for settlement in the district generally;—do you anticipate that, with the throwing open of those areas to closer pastoral settlement, that there will be any increase in your wool production? There would be, some years hence; but I think it will be a long time before that country will recover to such an extent as to carry the stock that it carried in 1894-5.
2237. Your estimate, you think, goes as far as you are likely to realise for some time? That is my opinion.
2238. Supposing the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners is carried out, and a line is taken from Coonamble to Walgett, as well as from Narrabri to Collareendabri, the loss which you show would be slightly increased? I do not think the net loss would. My estimate of the traffic on a line between Coonamble and Walgett, assuming that the goods were carried to Sydney, is £4,190.
2239. Is that in competition with a line to Collareendabri? No; that is assuming a line were built from Coonamble to Walgett, and another to Collareendabri.
2240. That is not so great a loss as you credit to the two lines to Walgett and Collareendabri? No; but there are only 69 miles of working between Coonamble and Walgett, as against 104 between Narrabri and Walgett. Assuming that a line were not built from Narrabri to Walgett, we must deduct £648 from the estimate for the mails over the 54 miles between Burren and Walgett. Then we have to add to that the additional £1,000 on wool alone, which to-day is lost. The estimate on that line is through to Sydney, but we do not get it. As a matter of fact, it is carried by the boat from Morpeth. That wool finds its way to Sydney, but it does so by steamer. If that were carried direct to Sydney from Walgett, *via* Coonamble, there would be £1,000 additional to be added to the estimate.
2241. Would there not be a likelihood of that wool, assuming that a line to Collareendabri were constructed, going to that line at Burren rather than coming *via* Coonamble to Sydney? The estimate does not include any wool which would come on the Collareendabri line. It only deals with wool which would come into Walgett, or between Coonamble and Walgett.
2242. Could you say what they save by shipping at Morpeth now, rather than bringing it right through to Sydney? They keep as close to us as they possibly can. The Commissioners are in this position: Some years ago they made a promise to the Newcastle people that they would maintain a certain difference in the rate as between Sydney and Newcastle. That was done in the interests of the port of Newcastle for export purposes. The Commissioners have religiously adhered to that. It is a rate which is very much higher than the normal rate, but I am sorry to say that the return which I will furnish to the Committee will indicate that the Commissioners, whilst making this promise for the purpose of encouraging export from Newcastle, have practically placed the steamboat proprietors in a position to compete with them at Morpeth; so that, instead of Newcastle profiting by this consideration, it has practically gone into the pockets of the shareholders of the steamboat company. I may say that it was never intended that the steamboats between Morpeth and Sydney should get it, but it was intended to develop the export business of Newcastle. As the Committee will see, when I place the figures before them, it has failed in having that effect.

FRIDAY, 29 JUNE, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collareendabri.

Henry Chamberlaine Russell, C.M.G., Government Astronomer, sworn, and examined:—

- H. C. Russell,
C.M.G.
29 June, 1900.
2243. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Can you give us particulars of the rainfall of the country between Narrabri, Walgett and Collareendabri? The rainfall at Narrabri itself is 26.64 inches.
2244. For how many years does your average extend back? Twenty-eight years. The Pilliga rainfall is 24.57 inches; Edgeroi, 24.77; Avondale, 25.50; Millie, 26.28; Boolcarrol, 21.34; Drilldool, 25.12; Deenderrah, 25.26; Mercadool, 22.18; Goangra, 19.42; Collareendabri, 19.28; Gerongra, 18.14; Walgett, 19.57; Colma, 16.64; Brewan, 17.60; Bung Hill Tank, 21.04; Dungaleer, 19.03.
2245. Is the country through which the proposed railway will pass subject to drought? Yes; but less so than stations to the west of it. That is, it is not so severe in the Darling country. I look upon all the tributaries of the Darling as if they belonged to the river. That country is less subject to the severity of drought than the country west of Walgett.
2246. It was stated in evidence, when the Committee were in Walgett, that that district had just passed through a drought extending over four or five years? That is true; but it is common to all parts of the Colony, west of the mountains.
2247. During a period of drought such as that, what would be the minimum rainfall? In some cases it would be 50 per cent. less than the average.
2248. Are there seasons also which have an over supply of rain? Yes; in the years 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, and 1893, they had a great many floods, affecting the Macintyre, and some of the country lower down, between Walgett and the Queensland border.
249. Is there a large area subject to floods? I believe there is.

2250.

2250. Does drought affect this plain country more severely than coastal country? I think not. We, in Sydney, with an average rainfall of 49·50 inches, have everything ruined if we get a rainfall of 25 inches. Vegetation is destroyed; but that is not so in the districts to which I have referred. A fall of 50 per cent. below the average is not so disastrous to them as it is to people on the coast. It is a curious fact that 25 inches on the coast, which would be an abundance of rain on the Macintyre, and in this district, is ruinous. In other words, it is an abundance of rain on the Barwon, and it is ruinously small on the coast. I think the chief reason for it is that the wind in the country is so much less. It is the wind which carries away the moisture and dries up the rain. Where a country is not subject to very strong winds, it does not seem to suffer to the same extent as windy places suffer.
2251. The greater area of the land of which we are speaking has been stated to be sufficiently rich for the production of wheat;—do you think the rainfall they get would be sufficient for growing that cereal? Yes; it is more than enough, according to experience.
2252. Compared with other districts, how does it stand with regard to rainfall? This district is very much better than Bourke, Brewarrina, or Cobar. For instance, in 1898 the rainfall of Cobar was under 10 inches.
2253. Was that an exceptional year? Yes; it was a very dry year. Of course, it is far too low for wheat-growing. In the neighbourhood of Pilliga they had from 15 to 18 inches. It was worse about Moree, where they had as low as 14 or 15 inches. Their average rainfall is at least double that.
2254. How do you think the locality would suit the production of other crops? It is very hot climate; it is not quite so hot as Bourke; but there is very little difference between Walgett and Bourke. Going east from Walgett, however, the land rises, and the temperature falls as the land rises, so that it is cooler on the mountains than it is at Walgett.
2255. Is the country subject to frost in the winter time? Very little.

Charles Edward Rennie, Chief Draftsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

2256. *Chairman.*] You produce a map showing the area of influence of the proposed railway to a distance of 20 miles on each side? Yes. Within those limits the areas of land are as follows:—

Areas in connection with Line, Narrabri to Walgett—altered position.

Alienated Land	1,165,000 acres.	
Reserves	463,700 "	
Settlement and Homestead Leases ...	491,000 "	{ Includes 192,300 acres, Homestead Leases, Western Division.
Crown Lands	774,800 "	
Tenure of Crown Lands.		
Leasehold Areas { Western Division, expiring 1918	... 79,000 acres	} 179,600 acres.
{ Central do " July, 1900	... 81,600 "	
{ Do do " Dec., 1902	... 19,000 "	
Held under Occupation License	353,900 "	
Untenanted	241,300 "	

Areas in connection with Branch Line to Collarendabri—altered position—outside limits of Line, Narrabri to Walgett.

Alienated Land	412,700 acres.	
Reserves	103,500 "	
Settlement and Homestead Leases ...	270,200 "	{ Includes 167,160 acres, Homestead Leases, Western Division.
Crown Lands	203,000 "	
Tenure of Crown Lands.		
Leasehold Areas { Western Division, expiring 1918	... 128,000 acres	} 150,000 acres.
{ Central do " July, 1900	... 22,000 "	
Held under Occupation License	53,000 "	
Untenanted	Nil.	

Areas in connection with land common to lines from Narrabri to Walgett, and Narrabri to Collarendabri—altered position.

Alienated Land	769,500 acres.	
Reserves	299,500 "	
Settlement and Homestead Leases ...	209,000 "	{ Includes 13,200 acres, Homestead Leases, Western Division.
Crown Lands	501,100 "	
Tenure of Crown Lands.		
Leasehold Areas { Western Division, expiring 1918	... 12,300 acres	} 92,400 acres.
{ Central do " July, 1900	... 80,100 "	
Held under Occupation License	181,500 "	
Untenanted	227,200 "	

Areas quoted as under Lease and Occupation License do not include Reserves within the Holdings.

Narrabri to Collarendabri (through).

Alienated Land	1,182,200 acres.	
Reserves	403,100 "	
Settlement and Homestead Leases ...	479,200 "	{ Includes 180,360 acres, Homestead Leases, Western Division.
Crown Lands	704,100 "	
Tenure of Crown Lands.		
Leasehold Areas { Western Division, expiring 1918	... 140,300 acres	} 242,400 acres.
{ Central do " July, 1900	... 102,100 "	
Held under Occupation License	234,500 "	
Untenanted	227,200 "	

2256.

- C. E. Rennie,
29 June, 1900.
2257. Have you any details as to the nature of the reserves? There is one large forest reserve south of Narrabri, and on the border of the area influenced, comprising 98,000 acres. There are travelling stock reserves, water reserves, and commonage reserves adjoining the township.
2258. Are there any large areas not occupied at all? The following parishes near Narrabri are unoccupied:—Quin, Robertson, Papp, Anson, Dampier, and Bohena.
2259. Can you state the proportion of alienated to the unalienated land within the whole area comprised by the two lines? It is almost the same—half and half.
2260. What is the total area that would be available for settlement if the two lines were constructed? Taking the two lines together, the area falling in between the present date and 1918 will be 329,600 acres.

MONDAY, 2 JULY, 1900.

The Committee met at the Court-house, Newcastle, at 10.30 a.m.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESEY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Honorable George Frederick Earp, M.L.C., President of the Chamber of Commerce, Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

- The Hon. G. F. Earp, M.L.C.
2 July, 1900.
2261. *Chairman.*] How long have you carried on business in Newcastle? Since 1863.
2262. Have you any statement to make on the proposal before the Committee? As you are aware, an agitation has been going on for a good many years with the object of connecting the isolated district of Walgett with the North-western line. A great many deputations have waited upon the various Secretaries for Public Works to ask for such connection to be made. I am not aware that there ever was any question as to the advisability of connecting the district with the seaboard by any other route than the Northern one. That is an important factor to bear in mind, because the people of the district naturally know what connection would suit them best. They know the way their trade has gone from the beginning. I produce a map, upon which I have sketched what I presume would be the area served by the proposed line. That area would extend on the south to half-way between Walgett and Coonamble; on the west, to half-way between Walgett and Brewarrina; on the north, to about 60 miles beyond the Queensland border; and on the east, to within 20 miles of the Northern line. You will observe, from the map, that from the Western line there have been several extensions in the direction of that trade. In the first place, there was the line from Wallerawang to Mudjee; then the line from Nevertire to Warren; and now a line from Dubbo to Coonamble has been recommended, and, I think, passed by Parliament. If we study the map, we can only come to one conclusion with regard to the system with which that district should be connected—that is, the North-western system. I will state my reasons why that district should be connected with the North-western and not with the Western. In the first place we must compare the routes, and see what the mileage is. The mileage from Sydney to Walgett is 476 miles. The mileage *via* Coonamble and Dubbo, is 439 miles. That makes a difference in favour of the port of Newcastle of 37 miles. There is not only the question of the additional length and cost of line to be considered, but there is the question of haulage for all time. If the producers of the Walgett district are compelled to send their stuff to Sydney *via* Dubbo and Coonamble, they will have to pay unnecessary charges. If that is not the case, in order to put those people in a fair position—in the position in which they would be by the construction of the Narrabri-Walgett line, and by the port of Newcastle being placed at their disposal—the Commissioners must charge less than ordinary tariffs. I have with me some of the rates worked out on the figures which I quoted on a former occasion. Of course, they are slightly modified, not because the route to be taken by the proposed line makes the difference slightly less in favour of Newcastle. Taking the whole of the proposal, however, the ordinary rate on cattle from Walgett to Sydney would be £8 19s. 3d. per truck. The rate to Newcastle, *via* Narrabri, would be £7 5s. 5d. per truck. The difference in favour of Newcastle, therefore, would be £1 13s. 10d. per truck. That would be slightly modified by the alteration in the difference in distance under the newly proposed route. When you remember that Newcastle is the chief cattle shipping port for all Australasia, you will see the importance of that fact to the people in the Walgett district. Newcastle ships as many cattle in a month as Sydney does in a year. I will mention one or two other lines. Of course, goods come under different rates: A. B. first-class, second-class, and third-class rates. A rate: From Newcastle to Walgett the rate would be £1 7s. 8d. That would be for flour and stuff of that kind. Sydney to Walgett £1 13s. 10d., making a difference in favour of Newcastle of 6s. 2d. Under the B rate the difference in favour of Newcastle would be 11s. 4d. Under the first-class rate the difference in favour of Newcastle would be £1 9s. 8d. Under the third-class rate the difference in favour of Newcastle would be £2 1s. 6d. For all time, so far as the residents are concerned, the trade of this district has come to Newcastle and Maitland, towns on the Northern line. Trade, of course, is like a stream—it follows the line of least resistance. In other words, it follows in the most natural channel. That trade has never found its way to Sydney. It has found its way to Newcastle and Maitland—the only places to which it should find its way. Although I am aware that the Railway Commissioners have prepared reports showing that somewhere between one-half and two-thirds of the trade from that district ultimately gets to Sydney, and that between one-half and one-third of it only remains at Newcastle, still the fact remains that it finds its way through Newcastle. The portion of the trade done with Sydney comes through Newcastle, and there is a large portion, even on the Railway Commissioners' own showing, which remains in Newcastle and Maitland.
2263. Are you referring to the figures lately put before the Committee by Mr. Harper? No; I am referring to the figures put before you by myself in connection with the former inquiry.
2264. Mr. Harper has ascertained that he made a serious error in the figures which he put before us last week? Of course, I do not agree with his figures. I believe the proportion is more in favour of Newcastle than he made it out to be. It would be a very serious thing to construct a railway by which places like

like Newcastle, Maitland, and Morpeth were deprived of trade which they have held for the last half century, especially when you consider that, by constructing such a line, no good is done to the producers or the district, or to the country; and also when you consider that, if you make the line which will retain to Newcastle the trade which belongs to it, you will enable those who wish to trade with Sydney still to do so, because the line will connect them, not only with Newcastle, but with Sydney. Another point in favour of the construction of the line with the North-western system is this: In time of drought a connection with Coonamble would be absolutely useless for people in the Walgett district. If connected with the North-western system they could transfer their cattle to the table-lands of New England, and save a large portion of them. I am given to understand that, had the proposed line been constructed some years ago, the number of sheep which might have been saved by removal would have more than paid the cost of its construction. Again, in times of drought supplies are more easily obtainable from the Hunter valley than from Coonamble. The Hunter valley is more reliable in drougthy seasons than are Coonamble, or Dubbo, and the western area. It is a most important matter that the people of the district should have the chance, in time of drought, of removing their stock to places where they can be saved. That would be effected by connecting the North-western system. The great point in connection with the proposed railway is this: that, in connection with the North-western system, you put the people of the district affected in communication, not only with Sydney, or Newcastle, or Maitland, but with all three. Maitland is the second cattle district in the Colony, Newcastle is the first cattle shipping port, and Morpeth has become a large wool-shipping port. Last year 80,000 bales of wool were shipped from Morpeth. I wish to impress upon the Committee the fact that Newcastle is the first shipping port of all Australasia. At the present time we have at Newcastle 264 vessels, with a tonnage of 91,900 tons. The tonnage at Sydney of 43 vessels is 68,217. In addition to the latter figures there are the mail steamers, with a tonnage of 26,871 tons. Newcastle has now recovered from the effects produced by labour disturbances, and is at the present day the first shipping port of the southern hemisphere. Deep-sea vessels, drawing over 23 feet of water, can come up. We have lines of vessels trading from Newcastle to London, the Cape, and other South African ports, also to India and New Caledonia. As a shipping port, Newcastle is not excelled even by Sydney. With regard to Collarendabri, it was shown in a recent inquiry that by constructing the two lines—Narrabri to Walgett and Woolabra to Collarendabri—a saving of distance of 45 miles would be effected, and of something like £100,000 in cost. I take it that it is admitted by all that a line to Collarendabri must be built for strategic reasons. When we see Queensland advancing in the direction of Cunnamulla and St. George, it is evident that unless Collarendabri is brought into connection with our railway system we must lose our border trade. Under the proposal which is before us the two lines to which I have referred will, for 60 miles, be served by the one line. I understand that the proposal is to make a deviation at what is called the 350-mile peg from Newcastle to Collarendabri, and thus the two lines would be served for 60 miles of their journey by the one line. I do not know whether any later reports as to the cost of the line have been submitted; but when the last Committee inquired into the matter the engineers presented a statement showing that the line would cost, for 56 miles, about £2,297 per mile.

2265. The total cost of the proposed line varies from £2,729 to £5,375 per mile? I merely wished to refer to that because it shows that practically there are no engineering difficulties in the way.

2266. *Mr. Watson.*] Neither of the proposed lines can be carried out at the price you mention. The line you refer to was abandoned, and the proposed line will cost a little more? Still it is sufficient to show that there are no engineering difficulties in the way of construction. Timber is known to exist close at hand south of the Namoi, and the engineering difficulties are such that they can be easily got over.

2267. They have to get over flood-water? The engineer reports that that can be done by means of earth-works. The cost of a little over £3,000 per mile is a very moderate one indeed. I am aware that reports have been made to the effect that the working of the line would result in a loss; but when we regard such reports in their proper light we must come to the conclusion that they ought to have very little weight indeed in deciding upon such an important matter as the opening up of the country. The extension from Werris Creek to Gunnedah, and from north Werris Creek to Narrabri, were also reported against. It was evidently believed that those lines would result in a loss, and yet we find that in 1896 the profit on the Werris Creek to Narrabri line was £10,498. The country around Walgett is second to none as a pastoral country; it carries a sheep to an acre and a half, whereas the country around Dubbo and Coonamble carries about one sheep to 3 acres. The country is very similar to that around Narrabri and Moree, and if there were any justification at all in extending the line to Narrabri, there is a justification in extending it to Walgett; not only is it a pastoral country, but we have the evidence of Mr. Russell to show that there is a sufficient rainfall in the district for the cultivation of cereals. We have the evidence of a large number of inhabitants to show that not only is the soil good enough for cereals, but they have grown cereals, and the only reason they have not grown them in sufficient quantities to send to market is that there has been no means of getting them to market. Although more than 30 bushels to the acre can be grown, it does not pay to grow it, and that is the only reason no serious attempt has been made to cultivate cereals in the district. Another point—and it is a point which shows the uselessness of figures of actual traffic being taken to decide whether a line should be considered, rather than taking the capabilities of the district into consideration—is this: Lambs could be produced in the district to be sent to Maitland and other places, and they would increase the railway freight to a very large extent. The reason fat stock cannot at present be produced and sent to market is that you cannot travel lambs for hundreds of miles over bad roads. Therefore, the cultivation of cereals and the production of fat stock are precluded to people in the district, because they have not the means of getting to market. The population of the district is about 5,000, but it is increasing yearly as lands are thrown open for closer settlement. In speaking of the two routes, I omitted to refer to the fact—and it is a very important fact—that on the western route there are mountains to be got over, and the haulage cost is simply double what it is on the Northern line. There is only one point on the Northern line, near Murrurundi, where it is necessary to use two engines for a load. Coming over the mountains it is necessary to have two engines for a very long distance.

2268. Will you specify the points where they have the two engines on the Western line, apart from the Zigzag? I refer to the Blue Mountains.

2269. Apart from that point, there have been several reductions of grade? I am aware of that, otherwise it would have been impossible to have dealt with this traffic at all. The fact remains that on the

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Blue Mountains, for a great distance, it is necessary to use two engines. If the Commissioners are not going to charge for that, in making the freights, it is unfair to the country generally. If they do charge, it will put a great handicap on the people sending produce to market, or importing their supplies.

2270. *Chairman.*] Could you give any information as to the frozen meat trade? There are lines of vessels carrying frozen meat from Newcastle to the markets of the world. At Aberdeen there is one of the largest frozen-meat-works in the Colony. These works rely very largely on the northern and north-western districts for their stock.

2271. The whole of the district to be served by the proposed railway is noted as a fattening district? It is.

2272. Do you think the construction of the line will practically add to the carrying capacity of the land by giving the producers a market for their fat stock, which they could use as soon as the stock were in condition? I think it would do so to a considerable extent. At any rate, a large number of the residents of the district have stated, on oath, that they could send large quantities of fat stock to market if they had the means of getting them there.

2273. There are regular lines of steamers coming to Newcastle for that class of trade? Yes; the Gulf line, the White Star line, and others; in fact, the loading of frozen meat at Newcastle is almost a regular business.

2274. With a port like Newcastle at hand, the smaller producer would, with railway communication, be able to do better on a small area than he does now? Yes; that is an important point. I have particulars showing the trade of Newcastle for the last six months. Those returns show that in 1899 we exported, during the half-year, ending 30th June, 1899, 2,152 cattle. During the same period in 1900 we exported 4,487 cattle; of sheep, in six months of 1899 we exported 4,654; during the same period of 1900 the export was 23,617. During six months of April, 1899, we exported 17 horses; during the same period of 1900 we have exported 2,415.

2275. *Mr. Shepherd.*] That must be on account of the South African war? Yes; the trade, we believe, is only just beginning.

2276. *Mr. Levien.*] There are more smaller holders north and north-west than there are on the west? There are, and they are likely to increase. Crown lands are falling in, and as these become available for closer settlement, the produce of the district must double. I think, so far as the justice of the case is concerned, there cannot be two questions about the construction of the proposed railway. Why should the traffic of this great district be centred at Sydney? At Sydney you are already about to build a new railway station because you cannot deal with the present traffic. Why should traffic, under those circumstances, be dragged away from Newcastle, which has had £1,000,000 spent upon it to make it the port it is, in order to still further increase the congestion of traffic in Sydney. Why should that be done, especially when it has to be hauled over the Blue Mountains, a distance of 86 miles further.

2277. *Chairman.*] Can you give us any information as to the extent of the direct importations into Newcastle, and as to the character of the distributing trade? We have lines of vessels from every port in the world. We have lines bringing lumber from Puget Sound and Humboldt Bay, and lines bringing American goods—kerosene, and other articles. We have lines from London, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Hamburg. The merchants of Newcastle are in as good a position to supply goods from those places, and to distribute them to the people of the district, as are the merchants of Sydney. I am aware that reports have been made to the effect that more than one-half of the supplies go from Sydney; but even if one-half the supplies go from Sydney, the other half can be obtained from Newcastle as cheaply, and with 86 miles less of traction to pay for. That is a very important consideration with the settlers of the district. Their power to compete in the markets of the world is decided by the cheapness with which they can produce, and the cheaper they can get supplies the cheaper they can produce. At the end of 1899 there were in the Walgett district 1,000,000 sheep, but in normal seasons the number of sheep is nearer 2,000,000. So many have been lost by drought that the number has been reduced to about 1,000,000. When we remember that fact it is evident that such a place as Walgett should have had a railway to it years ago.

2278. *Mr. Watson.*] You stated, just now, that the merchants of Newcastle are as able to supply goods which may be required for this district as cheaply as those of Sydney;—can you state why that is not done now? They do supply a large number of lines. I believe about one-half the goods go from Sydney. You must bear in mind that a large centre like Sydney shares in the Queensland trade. You might just as well ask why Brisbane does not do the trade of Maryborough. They do a share of it. We are all competing, and you cannot prevent any port doing a share of the trade. We do not begrudge Sydney her share of the trade, and we are not jealous of Sydney doing one-half of it. Nevertheless, we say that the people of Walgett should be in a position, when this railway is carried out, to pay for 86 miles less of traction than they would have to pay if a line were constructed *via* Coonamble and Dubbo.

2279. The evidence of the storekeepers of Walgett was to the effect that all they got from Newcastle—that is, originally from Newcastle—was butter and biscuits, and that all the other goods came through Newcastle from Sydney? There is the evidence of Mr. N. Cohen.

2280. I am referring to the evidence of Messrs. Haigh, Vaughn, and Scott—the latter a pastoralist near Walgett? There are seven storekeepers in Walgett.

2281. The two referred to spoke for the others, and they stated that the whole of the goods, with the exception of butter and biscuits, came from Sydney? As against that I should like to say that the people of Walgett have had their minds upset lately; they have been given to understand that they had better say very little about this matter. They used to go baldheaded for the line on the north.

2282. It is of no use suggesting motives, because these people were all in favour of the connection with Narrabri? There is the evidence of Mr. Clarke, who represents the Walgett Railway League, and of Mr. Levy, and of Cohen & Co. There is also the evidence of the Railway Commissioners themselves. The Railway Commissioners, in their report, stated that a very large quantity of the supplies came from Newcastle.

2283. *Chairman.*] Are there not a number of lines sent out west from Newcastle—rock-salt, cement, and so on? Lines like that go principally from Newcastle. Of course, in taking evidence of that kind, one wants to know what the articles are, because £100,000 worth of drapery goods might not mean so much freight to the Railway Commissioners as £10,000 worth of rock-salt.

2284. *Mr. Watson.*] It is the other way about;—the rock-salt is carried more cheaply, with the object of assisting pastoralists? Yes; but there would be very little tonnage in drapery and silk goods.

2285.

2285. Mr. Haigh, storekeeper, was asked as to where they got supplies from, and he said that nearly everything was obtained from Sydney;—he stated that they only got butter and biscuits from Newcastle, and sometimes flour from Tamworth;—Mr. Vaughn also gave similar evidence? Even if that were the case, stuff can be sent from Sydney to that district cheaper *via* the north than *via* the west. If this line is built to the north-west, stuff will be sent more cheaply to Newcastle, and it will be shipped by the local steamers to Sydney, and the other way about, much more cheaply than it could be sent by way of Coonamble and Dubbo. Even the Sydney stuff comes *via* Newcastle, because that is the natural way for it to come. Mr. Cohen was asked:—

Your main contention is, that the trade from the north-western district has for many years come to Newcastle and the towns on the Northern line, and that any attempt to interfere with that traffic would seriously prejudice those towns, while the district would not be better served by an alternative route? Exactly.

2286. *Mr. Watson.*] With regard to the cattle which are shipped here, do you know where they are sent to? To New Caledonia and to the Cape. Horses are sent to India and West Australia.

2287. The greater part of the fat cattle disposed of in New South Wales would, of course, find Sydney their market? Maitland is a large market—the second in the Colony. Regular sales are held there, and large quantities are sold. Of course, this railway would give people the option of sending to either market—Maitland or Sydney. Mr. Cohen says:—

My firm, and several other firms in the Newcastle, West Maitland, and Singleton districts, are a good deal interested in this extension, because the trade from the district which would be affected by it has hitherto always come to Newcastle, and we think that if it were diverted to some other place it would do a great injury to the large towns in the northern district. Irrespective of any personal interest which I may have, I consider that any railway to Walgett should be taken from Narrabri, so that the trade would not be diverted from Newcastle. The trade of Newcastle is at present very large, and it is a growing trade; but if an extension were made to Walgett from Mudgee a good deal of this trade would be taken from Newcastle and brought to Sydney.

2288. With regard to the question of the line to Walgett, and a branch to Collarendabri, paying, I think you stated that it was usual to find production doubling with railway construction;—do you think that remark would apply to a purely pastoral district? I do. This district hitherto has been held in large holdings of 40,000 or 50,000 acres, and as it falls in it will be taken up for close settlement, in lots of 2,000 and 3,000 acres. By that means the production will be nearly doubled.

2289. It is generally assumed that you are safe in good country, fit for agriculture, in constructing lines within 40 miles of each other, so that one will not unnecessarily drag traffic from another; in this case, with pastoral country, it is proposed to have two lines running at an acute angle until, at the widest part, they are over 50 miles apart;—do you think it is likely, under those circumstances, that both lines will pay? The Collarendabri line is as much a strategic line, as anything, to get the traffic of the Queensland border. The line to Walgett is to serve the immense Walgett district. Of course, the Collarendabri line could not serve that district.

2290. The furthest points are only some 50 miles apart, and in pastoral country? I take it that the Collarendabri line would be ultimately carried on to the Queensland border. Although they are only 50 miles apart they serve two different trades—the one will take the trade far away to the north, and the other will take it south and all round.

2291. *Chairman.*] I suppose you regard both Walgett and Collarendabri as centres which will attract trade from some distance west and north? Yes; I consider the large area west and north as being the area which will gain the traffic to make these lines pay.

2292. *Mr. Watson.*] The Railway Commissioners anticipate a loss of £13,000 per annum on the duplicate proposal, and suggest that the country would be better cut up if one line were taken from Narrabri to Collarendabri, and Walgett were reached from Coonamble;—how do you view that proposal? I differ from the Railway Commissioners for all the reasons I have given.

2293. *Mr. McFarlane.*] In view of statements made by several storekeepers in Walgett as to the small quantities of goods obtained direct from Newcastle, could you give an idea of the class of goods sent from Newcastle to Walgett? All storekeepers' requirements. David Cohen & Co. supply drapery, ironmongery, and groceries. Mr. Cohen says, in his evidence, that he sends large quantities of stuff to this district, and the Railway Commissioners have shown, by their returns, that a large quantity of trade is done with Newcastle.

2294. Would that be merchandise imported to Newcastle—not from Sydney? No.

2295. I understand a considerable quantity of goods comes by steamer from Sydney? That is always reckoned in the Newcastle portion.

2296. Could you name anything approaching the quantity which is sent annually from Newcastle? I am afraid there are no returns to enable me to obtain that information, because the stuff which goes north goes to twenty or thirty places.

2297. I mean goods sent through Narrabri to the north-west? I am afraid there are no returns published. Of course, Newcastle sends a quantity of stuff, which is put in the Sydney return. Sugar, for instance, is all sent from Sydney, and the Newcastle merchant would simply pass his order on to the Colonial Sugar Company, and it would be shipped to Newcastle or Morpeth, and then sent by rail on account of the Newcastle merchants.

2298. *Mr. Leven.*] The trade is direct with Newcastle, after all, although the stuff is sent from Sydney? Yes; as I pointed out, the portion of the trade which now belongs to Sydney, will still belong to Sydney, because the line will be as much to Sydney as to Newcastle. No injustice can possibly be done to Sydney, but a great injustice would be done to Newcastle by having the line the other way, because it would kill the trade of the Newcastle people. When you have railway communication all the way to Walgett, no stuff will come by team to Narrabri.

2299. *Mr. Watson.*] What saving is effected by consignees in sending stuff to Morpeth by steamer, rather than sending it the whole way by train, assuming it to be going to Narrabri? It depends on the class of goods. When truck-loads can be made up, there is a saving on various classes of goods, but on every line of goods there would be a difference, because there are so many different rates.

2300. Is it a material difference? I think the steamers carry the stuff from Sydney to Morpeth at a much less rate than the corresponding rate would be from Sydney, the same distance, by rail. I have particulars of the stock which passed through the Maitland sale-yards during the year, ending 31st December, 1899:—Horned cattle and calves, 39,172; sheep, 130,692; pigs, 16,497; horses, 1,492; total, 187,853. By taking the railway the other way, the people would be taken right away from this market.

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2301. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You have referred to cattle being shipped from Newcastle to other ports;—can you state where the fat stock came from? From the Narrabri district and places north.
2302. Is it within your knowledge that large quantities of stock come from the North-western district, through Narrabri, to the Maitland sale-yards, or Newcastle markets? I know the cattle come from the north, but I do not know from what district. I think they come from the north-west and the north, because the pastures are there. In giving the figures *re* the export for the half year, I omitted frozen beef and mutton, as follows:—Of frozen beef in the six months, ending 30th June, 1899, we exported 9,892 cwt. as against 32,466 cwt. during the corresponding period of this year. Of frozen mutton during the six months, ending 30th June, 1899, we exported 37,976 cwt., as against 39,807 cwt. during the corresponding period of this year. That is in spite of the four or five years' drought through which these districts have passed. Had we had a normal time, I think these figures would have been doubled.
2303. Can you give any particulars of the quantity of wool coming from the north-west? The quantity shipped from Newcastle to Morpeth for the year, ending 31st December, 1899, was 121,487 bales.
2304. Was that for shipment to India, or some other market? Some of it would be shipped direct to Great Britain and the Continent by the steamers which regularly load here, and a portion of it would be taken by local steamers to Sydney to be shipped into vessels loading there.
2305. Can you give any idea of the quantity shipped to Sydney and also of the quantity shipped to the London market? I am afraid not. The Commissioners in their report put down from one-half to two-thirds as being Sydney destined, and one-third to one-half as being Newcastle destined.
2306. Can you say whether the direct shipment from Newcastle is increasing? Not during the last year or two, owing principally to the drought.
2307. Taking the proportion of the total quantity of wool coming to Newcastle, would the proportion be increased—that is, making allowance for the smaller return on account of the drought? If it had not been for the drought I think there would have been a progressive increase.
2308. Do you think there would be a tendency to increase in the event of the railway being constructed? I think so; because they would save 86 miles of haulage by shipping at Newcastle, as compared with Sydney.
2309. *Chairman.*] The Sydney sales have shown the same decrease as have those of Newcastle? Yes; the export from Sydney has shown a proportionate decrease during the same period. The Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce has given me the exact particulars of shipments from Newcastle for the last ten to fifteen years, and the average is between 50,000 and 60,000 bales. This amount went direct to London.
2310. The Railway Commissioners have stated that there has been an increase in the local sales? That is quite correct.
2311. Do you think that would be likely to influence the quantity of wool coming from the north-west, through Narrabri, to Newcastle? I think the tendency is to test both markets. For instance, when the wool market is particularly good in Sydney, no doubt more wool will go there for sale. When the market is better at home more wool will be shipped direct. It depends on the markets whether the sale diminishes or increases in Sydney.
2312. Has the merchandise traffic towards the north-west, through Narrabri, increased year by year;—how does last year compare with five years previously? I have not the returns to show that, but my experience is that trade is increasing in that direction.
2313. One of your main reasons for supporting the Narrabri to Walgett connection is that it would give the people in the north-west the advantage of two markets? Three markets—Maitland, Newcastle, and Sydney. Maitland for fat stock, horses, cattle, sheep, and so on; Newcastle as a port of shipment, and as a port for obtaining supplies; and Sydney as well.
2314. In times of drought is there much produce going into the district? Very large quantities, but unfortunately for the people of Walgett they cannot afford to pay the team-rate from Narrabri to Walgett: It goes up to £20 and £30 a ton. They can then neither get their stock away, nor can they get produce to their district.
2315. Is the produce imported? A large quantity is grown in the Hunter valley. The tendency is to grow it locally. I remember a time when two-thirds of the general produce was imported from New Zealand; but the tendency now is to grow it locally in the Hunter valley. Large quantities of lucerne, oaten hay, and maize, are grown there. Even Dubbo and Coonamble would have to get their stuff from places like the Hunter valley, in times of drought; those people will be close to a market for their supplies if the line is connected with the North-west.
2316. What classes of produce would they be likely to get? Hay, maize, and oats.
2317. You refer, of course, to times of extreme drought? And those times are very frequent, unfortunately. On and off, I think there is as much drought as there is fair weather. During the last ten years they have had as many bad as good seasons; they are dependent on the Hunter valley for their produce, but unfortunately there is no railway from Narrabri to get it.
2318. Could they get it at a cheaper rate by a connection with Narrabri than with any other place? Yes; because they are right in the direction of the market, whereas Sydney has to get portion of its produce from the Hunter valley.
2319. *Mr. Watson.*] Whilst we were conducting the inquiry at Wellington and Dubbo, we found that the people had been sending produce right round to Sydney, Newcastle, and up to the Moree line? That might arise at a particular time owing to accidental circumstances, but it would never be a regular trade. For instance, we have been sending three trains a day from here to Riverina. In times like that, accidental trade arises, but it does not last.
2320. I think the explanation was that you were sending lucerne hay away, and they were sending wheaten chaff? Yes.

Samuel Clift, pastoralist, East Maitland, sworn, and examined:—

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2321. *Mr. Watson.*] Are you interested in property on the North-western line? Yes; I am the manager of the Bishop of Newcastle's stations at Goodooga, beyond Walgett.
2322. Do you know the country through which the proposed line would pass? I know the country to Walgett, but not to Collarenebri.

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2323. The line to Walgett would leave the Namoi, for a great part of its route, about 20 miles to the south;—do you know that country? Not exactly where the line runs; but I know it nearer the Namoi.
2324. What is your general impression of the country? It is very good grazing land, and it would be suitable for the cultivation of crops which would grow before the summer came upon them. It would be suitable for hay. Early wheat would grow well there.
2325. Do you know the country from Walgett to Goodooga? Yes.
2326. Do you think the Goodooga trade would come to Walgett if the proposed line were constructed? Yes. At present I am sending my stuff from Sydney to Bourke, and from Bourke back to Goodooga, because it is the most convenient. If there were a railway to Walgett I should send it from Newcastle to Walgett, and then 93 miles out to Goodooga. At present we have to send it 501 miles from Sydney to Bourke, and 140 miles back to the station. If it went the other way it would only traverse about 300 miles to Walgett, and 90 miles to the station.
2327. Would there be a better chance of getting the Goodooga trade with a railway at Walgett than with one at Brewarrina? Yes. It would be nearer to come to Walgett than Brewarrina.
2328. Is the track as good one way as the other? There is a cattle track from Walgett to Goodooga.
2329. Is it liable to flood? It is fairly high. It would take an excessive flood to make it impassable.
2330. How do you regard the country between Walgett and Goodooga;—is it as good as that on the northern side of the Namoi, between Narrabri and Walgett? It is similar country. It is hardly so thickly grassed; but it is quite as rich for fattening qualities. It is mostly plain country.
2331. Taking the land through which the proposed line would pass, and that beyond the Barwon within its influence, should you say that its construction would result in largely increased settlement or production? It must do so. When the Werris Creek to Narrabri line was made, there was not any agriculture in the district. The whole of the agricultural district which we now have about Currabubula and around the Tamworth district has all come about since the railway was constructed.
2332. Do you think the country further west is as suitable for agriculture as is that between Werris Creek and Narrabri? Yes; there is a good deal of similar country, and it would grow crops just as well. I have not the slightest doubt that it would grow excellent wheat crops for hay, and probably good crops for grain.
2333. What is your opinion of the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners to connect Collarendabri with Narrabri, and Walgett with Coonamble, and thence to Dubbo? Personally, that would drive me to Sydney.
2334. How should it affect you if we had two termini, as suggested—one at Collarendabri and the other at Walgett? It would not suit me at all, because Goodooga would be 90 miles from Walgett and 130 to 140 miles from Collarendabri, and I would be about 140 miles from Bourke.
2335. It would not suit you to go to Walgett if Walgett were connected with Sydney by rail? No. That would take me a long way round the Blue Mountains, and I ship from Newcastle.
2336. Does the wool from your stations go direct to England? It has been going to England until last year, when I sold in Sydney.
2337. Is there an increasing tendency to try the local market before sending to England? It has been gaining ground for several years. We can send our wool much more cheaply to Walgett, and thence to Sydney, than we can send it by rail to Sydney direct.
2338. Even if the western route were a little shorter to Sydney, it would be cheaper to send it by the Northern line and then to Morpeth? Yes. As Chairman of the Hunter River Steamship Company I may say that we send 100,000 bales of wool per annum from Morpeth, and an enormous quantity of hay.
2339. The main trouble about this war of routes seems to be the difficulty of having enough country to serve two lines, if you start both from the same point at Narrabri; the Railway Commissioners have suggested that there would be a better chance of getting enough revenue to keep both lines going if one were constructed from Coonamble and the other from Narrabri;—I take it that, in your opinion, the disadvantages would be greater than the advantages? The same remarks would apply to the Werris Creek-Tamworth line. Gunnedah is only 30 miles from Tamworth; the line widens out as it goes further, and I presume that in the event of either of the proposed lines being continued to the Queensland border they also would widen out.
2340. Where would a market be found for the fat stock which might come over the proposed line? Great numbers would be sold in Maitland. Any that would be shipped would come to Newcastle; the balance would go to Sydney.
2341. Is there a large market at Maitland compared with the Sydney market? The Sydney market is about twice as large as the Maitland market. If you take the Sydney Meat Preserving Company's stuff into consideration, we are within 50 per cent. of the Sydney market.
2342. You think the Maitland market is sufficiently large to be an item in the matter of the construction of the railway? Yes; it is the second market in the Colony.
2343. Where do you fatten stock? At Breeza.
2344. Where do you send it? Maitland is our principal market; but we also send to Mr. Richards, of Riverstone. I sold 59,600 fat wethers in 1898. 47,500 of these went by rail from Breeza to Riverstone.
2345. Is there any other evidence you wish to offer? I should like to point out that I do not think the railway estimates are worth a farthing. It was stated that the Werris Creek-Narrabri line would not pay for the grease used for the wheels. That, however, is a good paying line at the present moment.
2346. *Chairman.*] You think the country to be served by the proposed line is as good as the Narrabri-Moree country? It is quite as good fattening country.
2347. In the case of the Narrabri-Moree line, the estimate of receipts was greatly exceeded? The receipts during less than one-third of the year were greater than the Railway Commissioners estimate for the whole year.
2348. Do you think we might anticipate a similar experience in this instance? Not quite so much perhaps, but we are likely to have a big increase.
2349. *Mr. Watson.*] If you look at the map you will see that Moree would, with a railway terminus, be the depot for an extremely large area of back country, more so than would be the case with one or other of the proposed lines? Yes; Moree is in a good position.
2350. From your knowledge of the north-west country, could you say whether any suggestion could be made

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made by which one line alone, with a consequent saving in expenditure, could be made to serve the requirements of the district? I see no better plan than to run from Narrabri to Walgett, and then, if you wished to reach the border, to go straight out to Goodooga. It is good country about there, on both sides of the route.

2351. Do you think if you had a line at Walgett, and perhaps on towards Goodooga, that that line, in conjunction with the Moree line, would have a fair chance of catching all the south Queensland traffic likely to come in? Yes, it would catch a large part of the Queensland traffic, and if the Moree line went to Mungindi we should get a great deal of traffic there.

2352. Would you prefer to approach Mungindi from Moree than from the suggested line to Collarendabri? I think so. It is only about 65 miles from Moree to Mungindi.

2353. Is there any other point to which you wish to draw attention? There has been a large falling off in the production of wool, through loss of sheep, which will be recovered when the seasons change. On the stations with which I am connected, we had, seven or eight years ago, 112,000 sheep; to-day we have only 25,000. All that would be recovered.

2354. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you not think that the smaller landholders would come with their produce to the nearest point? Yes. The proposed railway would be a great advantage in carrying starving stock to New England, where feed is better.

2355. *Chairman.*] With reference to your suggestion to connect Moree with Mungindi, it has been stated that the track in that direction would have to cross a great many river courses and flooded country; whereas from Collarendabri to Mungindi it would avoid them? What is to prevent us going from Mungindi to Benava, and over to Moree. The country on the Moonee, or western side of the river, is almost valueless, and it is all good country from Walgett to Goodooga.

2356. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Which, in your opinion, would suit the major of the Walgett people the better—a connection with Narrabri, or with Coonamble? With Narrabri.

2357. Can you give any particular reason for that? I think the business will very soon tend from the Coonamble line to the other. Take myself, for instance, I should shift my business immediately a line to Walgett were built.

2358. Can you purchase supplies as cheaply in Newcastle as in Sydney? I think so.

2359. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you remember when there were larger holdings, and when all the trade of the north and north-west was done directly with Maitland? I can remember it for the last fifty years; it was always done with Maitland until a few years ago.

2360. The graziers then dealt directly with the Maitland banks, and never thought of coming to Sydney? That was so, in those days.

2361. Of course, it would be an advantage to the smaller holders to be able to convey their wool to a market not far distant? Yes; naturally they would go to the nearest port by the cheapest route.

2362. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You have stated that, with railway communication, Walgett will become an agricultural district? It could become a district for crops which will grow before the extreme heat arrives. You cannot grow anything in our country when the heat of summer comes.

2363. Are you aware whether they grow enough in Walgett now for their own consumption? I am not aware; but they could grow wheat or hay if they chose. The soil is good enough.

2364. Do you think the rainfall is sufficient for it? Yes; for the winter crop. The land will grow anything which can be grown in the cooler weather. Of course, it is not worth while growing grain in Walgett, at present, because they cannot get it away. Everything dealt with on the land requires rain. Six or eight months ago you might have seen three train-loads a day leaving West Maitland, East Maitland, and Morpeth, for Riverina, which is a fine agricultural district.

Henry John Adams, pastoralist, West Maitland, sworn, and examined:—

H. J. Adams. 2365. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you resided in the district? I have carried on pastoral pursuits since 1859.

2366. Do you wish to make a statement concerning the knowledge you possess of the north-west country, as the proposed railway will affect it? I have travelled over the whole of the roads between Narrabri and Goodooga, from here to the Queensland border, in times of drought and flood.

2367. Have you a knowledge of the pastoral pursuits in the Walgett and Collarendabri portion of the Colony? Yes; I have owned about 1,000 square miles in that district at different times. I know every road in the district.

2368. Do you think the railway from Narrabri to Collarendabri will be a paying one? Yes; in lieu of one to Walgett.

2369. Would there be a large extent of country to the west and north-west of Collarendabri, which the railway would benefit? The area of country that the railway would serve is circumscribed as the country between the Barwon and Moonee Rivers is scrubby, the same as on the east side above Mungindi. People east of Mungindi would send their produce to Moree, or when the railway is extended towards Goondiwindi (which I feel certain will follow), to some place on the line.

2370. Which connection would be the more beneficial for the Walgett people, one with Narrabri, or one with Coonamble? One with Narrabri. Sheep would have a better chance of getting to good grazing country in times of drought by making towards New England by way of Narrabri, than by going to Dubbo via Coonamble.

2371. As a pastoralist, did you, in time of drought, send stock to the New England district? Yes.

2372. Would a railway, connecting Walgett with Narrabri, enable pastoralists to send starving stock to New England? Yes.

2373. Would that mean considerable traffic in times of drought? Yes, and it would save large numbers of sheep.

2374. Would New England be the best place to which to send starving stock? Yes.

2375. Where did you send your wool when you were following pastoral pursuits in these districts? To Morpeth.

2376. Was it sent for shipment direct to the English market? It first went to Sydney and then to England.

2377. Was there a line of railway to Narrabri at that time? No. There was none beyond Murrurundi.

2378. Do you think if the proposed line were constructed from Narrabri to Walgett a considerable quantity of wool would come through Newcastle for direct shipment? I think so; although the tendency seems to be to increase the number of sales in Sydney. H. J. Adams.
2 July, 1900.

2379. Has a considerable quantity been coming to Newcastle, for some time past, for direct shipment? Yes.

2380. Do you think the people would be likely to send fat stock, to any great extent, to the Maitland sale-yards? Yes. When we get back again to the ordinary condition of things in regard to stock we shall find that Aberdeen will consume a very large quantity for the export trade. As our runs are divided, and smaller holdings are brought into existence, stock will be sent to Aberdeen.

2381. Is that one of the reasons why you are in favour of the Narrabri-Walgett line? Yes; it will enable the smaller holders to get to a certain market.

2382. Could they not get to the Meat-preserving Company on the other line, supposing they were connected with the Western line? It would be more expensive for them to do so. Apart from that, the meat-works in Sydney do not do as well as the meat-works at Aberdeen. It would pay a small holder with 2,000 sheep far better to send to Aberdeen than to the meat-works in Sydney.

2383. Is the cost of conveying them to Aberdeen less? Yes; it would be very much less than going *via* Coonamble to Sydney, and having them frozen there.

2384. How do the prices at Aberdeen compare with those at the meat-works near Sydney? I think the Aberdeen prices are equal to those of Sydney. I consider that when we have a few good seasons the price of fat stock will be based on their export value, and holders will get a better net return from Aberdeen than from Sydney.

2385. Is one of your reasons for favouring the Narrabri-Walgett connection the fact that it will give the people two markets instead of one? Yes; and it will enable them in bad times to send their sheep to New England.

2386. Do you consider that a strong argument in favour of the line? A very strong one. Within the last four months I have paid £590 in sending sheep from Beaconsfield to one of my stations.

2387. Where did you get your station supplies from? Maitland.

2388. Did you purchase direct from there? Yes. Mr. Christopher Newton, years ago, said that they ought to sell cheaper in Maitland than in Sydney, because the rents are lower.

2389. Have you ever purchased supplies in Newcastle? No.

2390. Can you give any indication of the places from where the fat stock sold at Maitland come? From all parts.

2391. Do they come to any large extent from the north-western parts of the Colony? Yes.

2392. From parts which will be affected by the proposed railway? Yes; from Angledool, Narran, and other places.

2393. You are aware that the proposed railway passes through plain country, and that in good seasons there is an abundance of grass? Yes.

2394. Would those people who have fat stock in the Walgett and Collarendabri districts use the railway when there was an abundance of grass on the plains, or would they travel them? The tendency now is to put them on the trucks at once, even though there may be plenty of grass, because of the saving of time and condition.

2395. Have you a good knowledge of the country to the west and north-west of Collarendabri? Yes.

2396. In the event of a line being constructed from Narrabri to Collarendabri, what extent of country to the north-west would be served by it? Taking a radius from Collarendabri west and north-west, I should say about 30 miles.

2397. Then, besides the country in and around Collarendabri, together with the intervening country between Walgett and Collarendabri, there would be served a large area to the north and north-west, including a considerable portion of Queensland? Yes. If there were only one railway line it would pay better to construct it from Narrabri to Walgett than from Narrabri to Collarendabri, because when you get north from Collarendabri you get into a country which is not adapted for carrying stock.

2398. Do you think such a line would serve the Collarendabri people? Of course, not so well as one going to them direct.

2399. Is the country on the western side of the Barwon flooded? Yes.

2400. How would it serve Collarendabri to extend the line from Moree to Mungindi? It would do no good to Collarendabri at all. They would have to come the nearest way to the Moree line, or to Walgett. I think if you get within 50 or 60 miles of a railway you serve stock fairly well.

2401. Do you think the proposed connection of Narrabri with Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri, would pay? I do not think it would, at once. There is fine country between Walgett and Collarendabri. The soil is adapted for growing grain.

2402. Do you think it would be used for the growth of grain if the line were constructed? I think it would, in time to come.

2403. Have you anything further to state? Only that I think stock is the main consideration in making a line of this character pay.

2404. The Railway Commissioners would have to depend on revenue from the stock and wool carriage? Yes; bones, horns, and hides, which are not saved now, would be sent away, and they would create a traffic.

2405. *Chairman.*] Do I understand you to say that you prefer an extension of the Moree line in the direction of Mungindi as against the branch from Walgett to Collarendabri? If you only want the least amount of railway to develop the largest amount of country, the best plan would be to run a line from Narrabri to Walgett and one from Moree to Mungindi, leaving Collarendabri out.

2406. Would not a branch to Collarendabri attract the whole of the Mungindi trade? Yes; it would, certainly.

2407. Mr. Stuart, railway engineer, was sent to report on a proposed extension from Moree to Collarendabri, and he winds up his report as follows:—

Owing to the flooded nature of the country necessitating higher embankments, as well as the number of bridges which would have to be constructed, I do not consider any line in this direction advisable at the present time, nor do I think it would bring in as much traffic to the railways as a line further south.

? That is quite right.

2408.

- H. J. Adams. 2408. Is not that an objection against going from Moree at all? If you go from Moree to Mungindi you do not go in that way, but in a different direction altogether.
 2 July, 1900. 2409. The flooded country begins 17 miles from Moree? Yes.
 2410. Would you not strike that flooded country whether you went from Moree to Mungindi, or from Moree to Collareendabri? Going from Mungindi you would miss it. What we call the Big River is from 15 to 20 miles wide. It is about 400 yards wide at the back of Moree, and it is 20 miles wide when you get 50 miles away.
 2411. Do you think the proposal now under consideration is a cheaper way of reaching both centres than the one you have suggested? Yes; the only thing I wanted to point out was that the best way of getting to Mungindi was from Moree. You would, however, get better traffic by going to Walgett, and then to Collareendabri, and afterwards as far as Moonee.
 2412. *Mr. Watson.*] With a line to Collareendabri, would you have as good a chance of getting the south Queensland traffic as you would with a line to Mungindi? I think so.
 2413. You would have 50 to 60 miles of road-carriage in New South Wales, with a line to Collareendabri;—when you cross Collareendabri, you have high dry country? All the area of land 25 miles below Mungindi, and on the western side, is of no good until you come to the south bank of the Moonee.
 2414. If you had a railway to Collareendabri, and wanted to extend it northwards, would you continue it towards Angledool to catch the traffic? I would prefer to go to Angledool than to make to Mungindi.

E. P. Capper.

Edward Peter Capper, merchant, West Maitland, sworn, and examined:—

- 2 July, 1900. 2415. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been in West Maitland? About fifty years.
 2416. Are you in favour of the construction of a line from Narrabri to Walgett, with a branch to Collareendabri? Yes; such a line would be of great advantage to Newcastle and Maitland; and with Federation coming there is every probability of large manufactories being established in Newcastle and Maitland, and the people of the north and north-west can be brought in touch with these by the Narrabri-Walgett extension.
 2417. What are the principal places in the Narrabri and Walgett districts, which you supply with goods? We supply Pilliga, Wee Waa, and other places as far as Collareendabri.
 2418. Do you send many goods to Walgett? We send a good deal of ironmongery. We also supply many of the stations. I think the construction of the proposed line would be an advantage, not only to merchants, but to squatters, who would be able to get their cattle away in dry weather.
 2419. Are you aware whether the people of the district would prefer a junction with Narrabri or with Coonamble? I think they would sooner have a connection from Narrabri.
 2420. Do they now chiefly do business with Maitland and Newcastle, in preference to Sydney? I think they would do it.
 2421. Do you sell much fencing-wire and netting in the districts to which you have referred? Yes; we supply a lot to the smaller holders. We also supply them with a great many agricultural implements.
 2422. Have you noticed, of late, an increased demand in those districts for agricultural implements? Yes. I may state that, with the construction of the proposed railway, the small holders would go in for a small amount of cultivation, where none exists now, on the larger holdings. That should bring about an increased demand for agricultural implements.

S W.
Chadwick.

Sheldon Western Chadwick, journalist, Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

- 2 July, 1900. 2423. *Chairman.*] Have you had an opportunity of personally inspecting the country to be traversed by the proposed railway? Yes, twelve months ago.
 2424. Have you any statement to make concerning it? Yes. Representing the *Newcastle Morning Herald* and the Newcastle Chamber of Commerce, I went to Werris Creek, and thence to Walgett, and returned the other way. The principal thing I had to deal with was the Narrabri extension to Walgett. From the information I gathered, and from what I could see, I came to the conclusion that the railway, if built from Narrabri to Walgett, would undoubtedly be of very great assistance to that district. It appears to me to have been the only extension which is practicable in order to give the best possible results. There are three things which might be urged in favour of the line. In the first place, it would promote closer settlement. In the second place, it may be regarded in every sense as a salvage line, because of the great amount of saving which will be effected by it in time of drought and flood. In the third place, it would give a connection with the seaboard by a shorter route, and at the same time would enable producers in the district to test one excellent market, whilst, if necessary, proceeding to a second market, thus offering a choice of markets. Speaking of it as a salvage line, I found that at the time of my visit—July of last year—the country was suffering very seriously from the effects of a long drought. At that time a careful estimate had been made by several people—one in particular by Mr. Gordon, a prominent pastoralist in the north-west district, who is managing two to three large estates, and is regarded as a representative man, as a member of the Stock Board—that during that drought 1,000,000 sheep were lost in the Walgett district. Putting these down at the low estimate of 5s. per head, that would give a direct loss of £250,000. In addition to that, there was an almost entire absence of lambing that season, and that is estimated at £100,000. Therefore, the total loss in that year alone is set down at £350,000. Of course, there are other losses which might be counted in. There was the cost to pastoralists of engaging scrub-cutters, buying feed, getting it up to the north-western districts at high freight rates, and the dislocation of business. Here, however, is a direct loss of £350,000, which would have more than covered the cost of the railway. I think we may reasonably say that there is no possibility of ensuring ourselves against a repetition of that disaster. In the north and north-western districts a drought may be encountered at any time, so that the successive losses by drought and flood are not only losses to those districts, but for the whole of the Colony. By building the proposed line from Narrabri to Walgett, the people would be enabled to effect very large savings in drought or flood time by getting their stock away to the New England table-land. If, however, a railway is built from Coonamble to Walgett, we shall have no outlet, inasmuch as when we are in trouble through drought or flood, a similar set of conditions will prevail in the western districts. It is urged by some people that we shall have a choice of markets. In the case of sheep, whilst there is a considerable saving by reaching the seaboard at a shorter distance, the cost of shipping wool here is about

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on a par with Sydney. There is less handling, and freight rates and brokerage charges amount to about the same. At the same time there is a saving in distance, as against taking it round the other way. One thing I was interested in was the possibility of closer settlement, and that seems to me to be the great question. Owing to the operations of the new Land Act, a large number of holdings were taken up, and are still being taken up, and the evidence goes to show that a greater degree of security will follow, in the course of time, those men who are now taking up the smaller holdings. The people are all hopeful. Some have already succeeded in making a financial success of their holdings. In the course of time a greater degree of security will arise out of those conditions. The general opinion was that, if the railway were built from Narrabri to Walgett, they would be able to enjoy the advantages I have already noted in regard to drought and floods. At the same time they will send their fat stock into markets more easily and readily. The explanation given to me was this: "We have small holdings, and consequently a small proportion of fat stock ready for market at any given time. We may have a couple of loads. That is not sufficient for us to employ a drover to send them away, and even if we did employ one in dry seasons, the roads are so bare that it is impossible to travel them to the railway, whereas with a line passing close it is possible to ship a truck or two at short intervals, thus providing us with ready money with which we can fight our way to make a success of things." The same thing, in a larger degree, applies to the men with larger holdings. I took notice of the possibilities of successful grain-growing, and all the evidence goes to show that grain can be grown successfully. In and around Wee Waa, and connecting to the northward, there seems to be a good deal of agriculture, or country which it is possible to use for agricultural purposes, and at the same time to secure timber useful to the construction of a railway. That timber will be found in the scrub lying round to the south-east of the proposed line.

2425. How would a railway affect the saving of sheep in times of flood? A few years back there were disastrous floods in that district, and in many instances station-holders lost all their stock. In one or two instances a saving was effected by the foresight and really extraordinary experience of those engaged. The suggestion is that with the warnings which are given of the rising of the rivers, and the possibilities of low-lying country being inundated, it is possible for pastoralists to get their sheep away before the water rises to such an extent that they are drowned. The country is flat, and the water rises rapidly.

2426. *Mr. Shepherd.*] With a railway they could only get a small proportion away? Even that proportion is a saving; but the saving in time of drought would be undeniable.

2427. *Chairman.*] Had you an opportunity of inspecting the country about Collarendabri? No.

2428. Did you inspect the country on each side of the proposed route, as far as Wee Waa? Yes, crossing backwards and forwards over the river. My opinion, so far as I was able to judge of the country, is that the railway should go to Wee Waa, and whatever deviation is made it should be made after passing that town.

2429. Can you offer any opinion as to which is the better land—to the south or to the north side of the river? The north side seems to be a purely pastoral country.

2430. Did you see any indications that the south side would be likely to prove profitable from an agricultural point of view? Undoubtedly. There is a very large area of country to the south which some people speak of as being useless. When you press them for an opinion you find that their idea of useless country is in many instances that it is useless for pastoral purposes. It is a question of whether a man is a pastoralist or an agriculturist. If he is a pastoralist he regards agricultural country as useless. If an agriculturist, the reverse.

2431. Did you make any estimate of the extent of the circle which Walgett, as a centre, would drain—for instance, how far north-west would Walgett drain? It would take in the townships up to the Queensland border.

2432. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do floods frequently occur in the Walgett district? Not very frequently. Still, the effect is bad when once they do occur.

2433. Could you give any indication of the area of land which is flooded? A considerable area is flooded; but I could not give you any idea of the extent.

2434. Would the whole of the plain country be covered? No; but a large portion of it would.

2435. Do you think that when the country is severely flooded the line of railway, if constructed, will be used for the purpose of conveying stock to the high lands of New England? Yes. In these days of weather forecasting we can get a good idea of what we are likely to experience; but I should hardly think the line of route would be submerged.

2436. Would there not be abundance of grass on the land which was not flooded? That depends on when the flood came? You might get a flood following the drought, when there was no grass available.

2437. The country might be flooded when there was no local rainfall? To a certain extent. At the close of a long drought, when everything is bare, it is possible for a sudden heavy and continued rainfall to produce a flood.

William Bethel Sharp, shipping agent, Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

2438. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you resided in Newcastle? Twenty years.

2439. How will the construction of the proposed line affect the interests of Newcastle? It will give a large area of wool-growing country which will ship its wool from Newcastle. That area will represent from 25,000 to 30,000 bales of wool a year. It would also give the return carriage of all the produce going to the stations and towns within that area. Another point of advantage to the Walgett district would be the fact that the haulage of wool from that district to Newcastle—the natural port of shipment—would be less by 80 or 90 miles than the haulage to Sydney. Consequently, the additional traction would be saved to the wool-grower. There would also be an additional traction saved in getting stores from this port, which could supply them on equal terms with Sydney. It has always been advocated in Newcastle that the Walgett district should be attached to Newcastle—the nearest port of shipment for the foreign markets. The rates of freight from Newcastle to London and the Continent are as cheap as they are from Sydney. Since the inauguration of the wool shipments at Newcastle, in 1881, there has been an average of from 50,000 to 60,000 bales of wool shipped yearly from Newcastle direct. In my opinion, if the railway were extended to Walgett, we could get 25,000 or 30,000 more bales of wool for handling at Newcastle.

2440. Where does that go now? A great deal of it goes down the river to Bourke, and from there by train to Sydney. Of course, this would be not only a direct advantage to the town, by the employ-

- W. B. Sharp. ment of labour on the wharfs, by dumping and pressing the wool, but it would be an advantage to the railway, as far as haulage is concerned, and a direct advantage to the growers by giving them additional markets.
- 2 July, 1900. 2441. How would it be an advantage to the railway if they now get their wool carried from Bourke, which is 500 miles, to have it carried only from Walgett to Newcastle, which is 352 miles? They make a heavy discount on Bourke wool, and by carrying it the shorter distance it would be an advantage to the Railway Department.
2442. Is much wool going through Newcastle to Sydney by rail? The great proportion of it is trucked at Morpeth and then transhipped. That is a serious competition with Newcastle direct shipments, and probably the Railway Commissioners will some day see the advisableness of charging an extra rate from Morpeth, and a lesser freight to Newcastle to counteract it.
2443. It seems that there is some understanding at the present time, by which some difference is preserved in favour of Newcastle, to allow goods to be shipped at Morpeth? I believe there was a sort of arrangement between the late Commissioner, Mr. Eddy, and the steamship companies. Mr. Oliver has tried to alter it once or twice still further in favour of Sydney as against Newcastle, but he has not carried it out yet. He is naturally anxious that the wool should be carried by the railway. They could, however, do it without curtailing the direct shipments from Newcastle. There is a way of overcoming the difficulty.
2444. Do you think direct shipments are likely to increase, proportionately, or decrease, as compared with selling in the local markets and reshipping afterwards to foreign ports? That is a difficult question to answer. The present idea amongst a large number of wool-growers is to try the Sydney market, and if they do not get their prices to ship from here.
2445. That, even, would involve their taking it to Sydney in the first instance? Yes; but it is quite on the cards that before long wool sales will be established at Newcastle, which will give the same advantage to Newcastle that is given to Sydney at the present time. As far back as twelve years ago I started wool sales in Newcastle. Our first catalogue represented 2,800 bales, and the second catalogue over 3,000 bales. Competition was brisk, but, owing to a combination of the wool-buyers in Sydney and the wool-sellers, they boycotted Newcastle with a penalty of £500 against any buyer who came to Newcastle to buy wool. Thus, our life here was a short one. Such a thing could not take place now, because the trade would not allow it. It is quite possible that before long—in fact, a scheme is on hand now—to arrange for wool sales in Newcastle. If that takes place, the shipments will considerably increase at Newcastle, compared with what they have been during the last year or two, owing to the high price ruling in the Colony for wool.
2446. Would that involve duplication in the representation of firms buying for the foreign wool supply? No. When we started the wool sales in Newcastle we only had steam communication, and a man had to give up the whole of his day, and sometimes two days, to attend them. Now, when we have railway communication, we can get from Sydney in three hours and back in the same time.
2447. Should you require to dovetail your sales in with Sydney, so as to avoid the necessity of having a duplication of agents? Yes.
2448. Can buyers sample and attend an auction on the same day? I have done it on several occasions, myself. You get there at 6 o'clock in the morning, sample every bale in the catalogue, attach your prices to the catalogue, and compete accordingly at the auction.
2449. If local sales were successful, would it mean a considerable difference in the destination and method of export? Yes; a large quantity would go to the Continent direct from here, instead of being principally confined to direct shipments to London.
2450. Do the exporters usually rely upon steam communication for sending their wool home? The growing tendency now is to ship nearly the whole of the wool by steamers.
2451. In that case, would the vessels which come here for coal, and then go on to London—the regular liners usually go back to Sydney before proceeding to England? They generally come here and take their bunkers in, and cargo of frozen meat, or wool, copper, or pig-lead. Then they go to Sydney and take in so much more. Then they go to Melbourne, and finish up at Adelaide. There is no difference from here to London as compared with Sydney; in fact the charges are cheaper here than they are in Sydney. We have more pig-lead here than we can ship; we have to scud some of it to Brisbane and Sydney.
2452. Do you think it will make much difference in the steamer communication when the Port Kembla harbour is completed? I do not think it will make the slightest difference, except that it may rob us of some coal which ought to be shipped from Newcastle.
2453. It seems to me possible that, with the provision of greater facilities on the South Coast, and their coal being held to be more suitable for steam purposes, the steamers might make for there for bunker coal? The delay in going to Kembla and taking in the bunker coal will be greater than the additional expense of loading in Sydney. When they bunker in Sydney with southern or northern coal the bunkering is going on when they are loading and discharging the steamer, and there is no delay. Mount Kembla, as far as the export of wool is concerned, will not interfere with Newcastle. You can get coal here almost as cheaply as you can get it at Mount Kembla, and of much better quality.
2454. Have you attempted to find out, in regard to the larger lines of goods, what the saving is in bringing goods from Sydney to Morpeth, and then on to the Great Northern Railway line, as compared with bringing them right through by rail? I know it is much cheaper to bring the goods by steamer to Morpeth and to Newcastle than to send them right through, except the goods are in truck-loads, for which a concession is made.

Henry Deane Walsh, M.I.C.E., District Engineer, Harbours and Rivers Branch, Department of Public Works, Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

- H. D. Walsh, M.I.C.E. 2455. *Chairman.*] Will you make a general statement as to the improvements which are being carried out in the harbour at Newcastle for the purpose of rendering it more fit to accommodate large vessels? At present we are carrying out a large new northern breakwater, an extension of the southern breakwater, a guide wall, and extensive reclamations in the north harbour. The breakwaters are being constructed with the view of deepening the present channel out to sea, and the reclamation works with a view of improving the accommodation in the north harbour.
- 2 July, 1900. 2456. What maximum depth is the harbour now capable of accommodating in the way of vessels? It is hard to say from day to day, on account of the deposit from the floods; but, as a rule, ships can go out loaded to 24 feet 3 inches, and on the completion of the works now in progress it is anticipated that we shall have 26 feet, at low water, on the bar.

2457. That is sufficiently deep to accommodate the larger class of vessels likely to trade with the Colonies? Yes; we have had vessels like the "Medic" and "Afric" in, already. We berth them on the wool-berth wharf without difficulty.

H. D. Walsh,
M.I.C.E.
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2458. Is the tendency, in connection with modern ships, to build with greater draft or greater beam? The tendency is chiefly towards greater beam—towards making them flatter in the floor.

2459. What was the available depth at Newcastle twenty years ago? Our plans show that where we are berthing vessels now fully loaded—near the Horse-shoe—some few years ago they used to pull up boats to clean their bottoms, at half-tide. Now we have 15 and 18 feet of water at that place. Certain new appliances have been ordered for the port. At present we are getting out six of the newest class of hydraulic cranes, and we are putting in 1,300 feet of special wharfs to carry them. We have two dredges cleaning out the inner basin, which will give, when finished, an accommodation of 90 acres of deep water for mooring vessels. The cranes are in addition to those at present up, and their design is to load a vessel of the class of the "Langton Grange" at high water. That is about the largest vessel which would ever be required to load. At present we are making provision for deepening all along the dyke-walk. Under the old system we had 18 feet of water there, and we are now making 24 feet.

2460. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is there any noticeable silting up with the ordinary flow of the river? The ordinary flow does not silt up, but a fresh does.

2461. To what extent does it silt up in the event of a heavy flood? During the heavy flood of 1893 we had a considerable silting in the north channel. We removed 1,750,000 tons of silt after that flood from this channel.

2462. Does it require dredging after every flood? Yes. Any harbour at the entrance to a river going through alluvial flats will require constant dredging.

2463. The broadening of the bows of a vessel would, I suppose, really make it draw less water? Yes. The tendency now is to make them flat on the bottom. They draw as much water on the bilge-chocks as they do on the keel.

2464. So that vessels of a larger tonnage can come here than came here formerly? Yes. The larger tonnage does not mean deeper draft.

Michael March, wool manager, Dalgety & Co., Ltd., Newcastle, sworn, and examined:—

2465. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been manager of the wool department for Dalgety & Co.? Seven or eight years.

M. March.

2466. What quantity of wool has passed through your hands during the last twelve months? About 20,000 bales.

2 July, 1900.

2467. Has there been a general increase? There has been a falling off, principally on account of the drought. We have had a drought now for five years. The greatest falling off has been in the Walgett district.

2468. What distance do you receive wool from? From the whole of that district, including Pilliga, Collarendabri, and Angledool.

2469. Do you get any from over the border? Yes; several clips. The Australian Pastoral Company do not send it through us, but to other agents; and they have several stations. They have about 5,000 bales from Queensland. We get wool from the Angledool district and as far north-west as Goodooga, and several clips from the southern portion of Queensland.

2470. What effect do you think the construction of the proposed line would have upon those districts? It would considerably increase settlement.

2471. Do you find the country is more productive when there is closer settlement? Undoubtedly.

2472. What do you suppose the increase of production on an area of 500,000 acres would be if it were divided into runs of from 5,000 acres to 10,000 acres? Probably one-third. Of course, you cannot get 100,000 acres of good land in one piece, but there would be a very large increase.

2473. How would small holders, as opposed to larger holders, obtain an advantage by the construction of the railway? It is always an advantage to have a railway as near as possible.

2474. As a rule, small holders cannot get a sufficient number of stock to send away? No; if a man had to travel them 100 miles to get to Narrabri, it would not pay him; but with a railway handy he could send a truckload at a time.

2475. There would, I suppose, in sending them on a journey of that distance, be a falling off in the sheep? Yes; between Wee Waa and Narrabri there is not a blade of grass to be got, and I have been told on several occasions that the sheep lost in value 3d. per head on that journey.

2476. Would there be any advantage in shifting starving stock in a bad season? Yes; if they could have got to the New England district last season, thousands would have been saved. The tendency was to hang on as long as possible, thinking that the rain would come, because when it does come, the herbage springs up quickly.

2477. What is your opinion of the country which will be served by the proposed railway? I have always thought that the Namoi was one of the richest districts in the Colony; it is one of the best grazing districts we have.

2478. At what do you estimate its carrying capacity? A sheep to the acre. Many selectors have carried that for years.

2479. Have you seen any attempt at cultivation? Yes; and it has succeeded fairly well. They have lately started a flour-mill at Narrabri, and the black soil has turned out well for growing wheat.

2480. Have you heard of any failures there in producing wheat? No.

2481. Have you any further information to give? I have noticed that the settlers of the district are well-to-do, and that is a good indication of the nature of the country. Whenever any land is thrown open, there is a great rush for it, people coming from all parts of New South Wales, and even Victoria.

2482. The holdings there now are of considerable extent? Yes; I may state that the whole of the wool comes to Narrabri West from the Walgett district, and it seems to me that is strong evidence in favour of the railway going there rather than from Coonamble.

2483. Are you aware whether there is any wool going from Walgett to Dubbo? No. I think it all comes to Narrabri. During the last twelve months the railway received at Narrabri 22,310 bales of wool from Walgett and north western districts. That is however not a fair criterion of what the district can carry, because that is the result of five years of drought, last year being the worst of all. Several stations lost as much as 70 per cent., some 50 per cent., and many of them 30 per cent. and 40 per cent. The Moree line

- M. March.
2 July, 1900.
- line is of no use to those people. They do not send to Moree now. Some of the wool may go to Millie, but very little.
2484. In the event of a further extension towards Queensland, do you think that the line ought to go from Moree, or from Walgett? I think it should go towards Collareendabri.
2485. Do you send your wool to Sydney, or ship it direct? Direct; we have every facility here which they possess in Sydney, and the steamers come all the year round. With regard to the river-loading we find that the people about Walgett do not care for it, because it is too uncertain.
2486. *Mr. McFurlane.*] It has been stated that there is a strong tendency now on the part of the wool-growers to sell locally? It all depends on the prices. If the prices in Sydney are going to be good they will probably sell in Sydney as they did last year. The prices about October, November, and December were extraordinarily high—1s. 6d. a lb. During this last season shipping at Newcastle has been worse than we have experienced, for that reason.
2487. During the past five years has the quantity of wool passing through the hands of your firm shown a tendency to increase? About the same. Some years it has been up and sometimes down.
2488. Is there any probability of an increase in direct shipments? I think there is this year. The market is pretty low, and some of the buyers have got into difficulties.
2489. It has also been stated that there is some likelihood of establishing wool sales in Newcastle? I think they would be successful. It is quite on the cards that they will be established.
2490. Do you think the wool-buyers in Sydney would attend the Newcastle sales regularly? They go to Brisbane now, and I do not see why they should not come here.
2491. Would the catalogues at Newcastle be sufficiently large to induce them to come? I think they would. The squatters have often asked why we do not have them here. Mr. Sharp has explained the reason, namely, that it is on account of the jealousy of some of the Sydney brokers.
2492. In the event of these sales being established, and proving successful, what effect would they have on the wool trade;—would they induce more direct shipment to London, from Newcastle, and less to Sydney? They would, because all the wool bought here would have to be shipped direct to England or continental ports.
2493. Are the freights the same between Newcastle and London, and Sydney and London? Exactly the same. Freights to continental ports also are the same as from Sydney.
2494. How about loading the ships? There are better facilities for loading here, and there is the same expedition for getting them away.
- 2494½. Have you anything else to add? I would like to point out that if the railway be taken from Narrabri to Walgett it will give the Walgett people a choice of markets—Maitland for stock, Newcastle for shipping (and sale of wool when sales established), both considerably nearer than Sydney by any other route; and even if they desire to send to Sydney they can do so, the distance being about the same as *via* Coonamble and Dubbo. On the other hand, if the railway be taken *via* Coonamble, the Walgett people will be in a measure penalized by being forced to send their produce by the longer route to the seaboard, and an injustice be done to Newcastle and the Hunter District—the natural outlet for the north-west.

TUESDAY, 3 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GALRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collareendabri.

James William Boulton, Superintendent of Public Watering Places and Artesian Boring, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

- J. W. Boulton.
3 July, 1900.
2495. *Mr. Watson.*] Are you acquainted with the country generally from Narrabri towards Walgett and Collareendabri? Yes.
2496. How much, if any, of the area that would be affected by either of these lines would you consider to be in the artesian area? The whole of it.
2497. Can you say what you have done in the way of boring, so far, in that locality, generally? On the Woolabra-Collareendabri survey we have the Woolabra bore and the Bulyeroi bore. Besides those, there are contracts advertised now for several bores, under the Artesian Wells Act.
2498. These, I understand, are where the local owners, or holders, guarantee the expense? Yes. There are two between Collareendabri and Bulyeroi—they are, Orel bore No. 1, and No. 2.
2499. What is the flow of the two bores you have? Woolabra, about 700,000 gallons, and Bulyeroi, 1,700,000 gallons. Woolabra is not a very deep bore—about 1,700 feet; Bulyeroi is 2,424.
2500. From Narrabri towards Walgett, have you any bores north of the river? Not directly on the road, but one has been asked for at Wee Waa—we have not settled about that; and there is one being put down by the Public Works Department for a town supply at Narrabri; and there is one at a place called Come-by-Chance, which is south of the Namoi. That is being done under the Artesian Wells Act; and then the Walgett bore will be done; the interest is being guaranteed. You may take a line from Warialda to the eastward of Bingara and of Barraba down to Gunnedah, and then across to the north of Coonabarabran, down to Terrable, and all that country is within the artesian belt.
2501. Do you find large flows at Come-by-Chance and Walgett? The contract tenders are only just invited for those; but as you go that way to the westward you get deeper ground and better flows; and on the road from Walgett to Coonamble, at Tuloorra, we have the biggest flow in the Colony—over 2,000,000 gallons a day.
2502. At or near the Tuloorra bore some experiments are being made, I understand, with cultivation? They are being done in a very slipshod, perfunctory way—nothing systematic. It is only the caretaker doing what he can.

2503.

J. W. Boulton.

3 July, 1900.

2503. I mean by an adjoining owner, Mr. Bell? Yes, the flow is being utilised by a selector named Bell, to a certain extent.

2504. Mr. Bell, when speaking to the Committee on the subject, seemed to have the opinion that he would be able to utilise that water, if he were given an opportunity to supplement the rainfall, with regard to a large area of land, for the purpose of putting it under crop? Yes, there is no doubt he would. The trouble is that he does not care to pay sufficient for it.

2505. Speaking of that district generally, do you think that there would be any possibility of getting a supply from artesian bores to enable large areas to be irrigated? There is no doubt that is a development that will come within the next twenty years; but it is a good way ahead of us at the present time.

We are just in the same position as they were in America twenty-seven years ago. When they started their settlements at Fresno, Riverside, and Lake View, they had the same disabilities as we have—want of knowledge on the part of the people as regards the suitability of the water, and distance from market, and perhaps disabilities which we have not as to the alkalinity of the soil, and the difference of climate. They had to contend against all those things, and yet they have made a most wonderful development there.

2506. At the Pera bore, I understand, there has been a falling off in the amount of water got from the original bore? Yes.

2507. Has that experience been repeated in regard to the bores in this district? No. There has been no experience of that description, so far as I have heard of, in connection with any of the bores that have been put down in the trias formation, which underlies the cretaceous.

2508. Does it underlie the strata you have at Pera? I cannot say it does, continuously; but at one bore right out towards Milparinka we get the same coal measures as we get in the trias here, and which they get in the Lea Creek coal-beds in South Australia. It may be that there has been an intrusion of the basalt rocks through the trias which has caused a disturbance in that particular part between Bourke and Wanaaring. That is very probable.

2509. Have you formed any idea as to the area that it would be possible to irrigate with one of these bores;—it would, of course, depend on the rainfall for a portion of the year? Yes, and it depends on the nature of the crop you are going to irrigate, and also on the nature of the soil you are experimenting with. In every country there is a different duty assigned to water. We have taken an average one as a basis to go upon; that is, a cubic foot per second as sufficient to irrigate 250 acres of land. That is the American standard. When I was giving evidence at an inquiry some time ago, I gave a table showing what the duty of water was in different countries. That inquiry was in connection with the locking of the Darling, and the information I then gave was as follows:—

	Duty of 1 c.f. per second.
<i>India.</i>	
Eastern Jumna Canal	306 acres.
Western Jumna Canal	240 "
Ganges Canal	232 "
Swat River Canal	216 "
Bari Doab Canal	227 "
<i>Spain.</i>	
Henares Canal	157 "
Valencia Canal	242 "

2510. As to the sources of supply, do you think they are sufficient to permit of a large area of country, or of any proportion of the area within the artesian basin, being irrigated? I think so. For instance, in America, at the Riverside settlement, they have twenty-seven wells grouped on an area of 700 acres. The water from those twenty-seven wells is all gathered together, and carried in a flume down to the land to be irrigated.

2511. That would seem to imply that the yield from one of the wells was not very great? They got about 11,000,000 gallons a day out of the twenty-seven wells, and from experiments they made as to the interference of one well with another, they found that with one well shut down, and the rest all open, that one well was affected only to the extent of about 30,000 gallons a day. According to that, the interference was not very much. How far that experiment would apply to our own country we have no possible means of telling until we put the bores down.

2512. But, as far as investigation has gone, does it seem that we have as large an intake area, proportionately, in Australia as they have in America? Well, it is entirely different. In America they have a series of self-contained basins. Here we seem to have one huge undersheet. For instance, in America the basin at the St. Louis valley covers an area of about 9,000 square miles, and within that they have 3,700 flowing wells. Then there is the Denver basin, also a self-contained basin, and Kern Valley, and a large extent of Southern California, too. But here we have an area of 62,000 square miles, and have just 200 wells on it.

2513. Then we are not near the limit yet? No: I do not think we are.

2514. The estimate of 1 cubic foot per second for 250 acres would mean that the flow would be—what? 548,000 gallons in twenty-four hours. That is not taking into consideration the natural rainfall at all.

2515. You are presuming that they are relying absolutely on the artesian waters? Yes.

2516. But that does not mean that the flow is over the whole of the 250 acres on one day, but that you do sections of the area in rotation? Yes. That would give you about equal to something like 35 inches of rain in the year, roughly speaking.

2517. You irrigate the total area of 250 acres, but you do it in sections, day or week about, as the case may be? That, of course, depends absolutely on what you are doing.

2518. You do not spread it over the whole area at one time? No, you could not do it.

2519. A flow of 500,000 gallons, roughly, per day, is sufficient to irrigate 250 acres all the year round without any rainfall? Yes.

2520. So presuming the supply is there, it is only a question of having that area to each bore? Yes.

2521. Leaving out of count the Tuloor bore, have there been any experiments elsewhere to your knowledge, in this district, in regard to irrigation? We have done a little at Woolabra—the bore on the Railway line—and, on the other side of Collarendabri, we have done a good deal at Moongulla.

2522. At Moongulla the country is somewhat different from what it would be between Woolabra and Collarendabri? Yes.

J. W.
Boulthoe.
3 July, 1900.

2523. Do you think it is more suitable for irrigation? I would not say that. A good many people prefer the red soil; but I must confess that I have a weakness for the black soil for irrigation. Some patches of the black soil are exceedingly stiff, and want a large amount of cultivation; but there is no comparison between the two soils, as to richness. Red soil is more easily worked than black soil.
2524. On some of the black soil between Walgett and Coonamble the people seem to run just a couple of harrows over it without using any ploughs at all? Yes.
2525. Having in view your previous experience on the land in the western country before you joined the Department, and your knowledge of the artesian probabilities, would you say that there is a fair prospect of extensive agriculture through irrigation in these districts, within a reasonable time? I think so.
2526. *Dr. Garran.*] Have we any successful agricultural irrigation in the Colony at the present time? So far as actual production has been concerned, yes; but I cannot say so from a financial point of view—at least so far as the Government or co-operative undertaking is concerned. I think you can see it on private places.
2527. So far as Pera bore is concerned, the latest evidence is that the number of cultivators has diminished? Yes.
2528. And they would like to get away if the Government would buy them out? I doubt if they would—all of them.
2529. That was the statement recently? One of the men who was so anxious to sell out made an offer to the Minister to lease the Government farm subsequently to the time when he made the offer to sell out.
2530. Well, that is a very small settlement to have a superintendent there to look after them? I do not think so, and I will tell you why. Here we have an experiment that may or may not have a very important bearing on a very large class of country in our artesian belt, and to carry out an experiment of that sort we have to take the class of men that is available. We are limited by the conditions under which that land was leased, and we are obliged to take whoever chooses to offer himself as a tenant for the land. The suitability of the man, or his experience, is not taken into consideration at all. The success or otherwise of the experiment, to my mind, absolutely depends on the class of men you get. If you get men who have been used to a pastoral life, or men who have been used to office life—bank clerks or lawyers' clerks—and put them suddenly on the land there, to develop an irrigation settlement, then, as far as I can see, you are very heavily handicapped. It was more with the idea of educating and trying to inculcate into these people the right methods that we had the experimental farm there; and if that thing is once shown to be a success, and if the class of settler that we have there can make a success of it, and make a living out of the 20 acres, in my opinion it will have a great bearing on a lot of that western country.
2531. Then you look upon it rather as a school, at present, rather than anything else? Certainly; it is purely an experiment.
2532. Has either the Wentworth or the Hay establishment been successful? That I cannot say. I never was there, nor have I seen them. I do not think they are carried on under the Agricultural Department, either.
2533. Then your idea is that before we can make a success of irrigation we have to train the men? We have either to train the men, or get a population that are used to that particular class of life, and the growing of those particular products.
2534. But we have not the men in the Colony? No, I think not.
2535. We have either to import them or train them? Yes. I think that when once a few of them show what can be done, and that a living can be made in that way, a lot of people will go into it. To refer again to America, I may say that when the Fresno settlement was started, I think 500 people joined together and formed a colony there. They got 5,000 acres of land, and they had just the same difficulties, just the same trouble. They were of different temperaments, and were different classes of workers, and it was only after years of struggling that they managed to bring the thing properly to the front. We shall just have the same here.

WEDNESDAY, 4 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
	JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarenebri.

John Kenneth Mackay, grazier, Gunnedah, sworn, and examined:—

J. K.
Mackay.
4 July, 1900.

2536. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good general knowledge of the district between Narrabri and Walgett and Collarenebri? I have lived in the district, served by the proposed routes, for the past twenty years, until three years ago, when I went to reside at Gunnedah.
2537. What, in your opinion, is the best route for connecting the western parts with either Narrabri West or Narrabri East? I think the connection should be from Narrabri West.
2538. Would a line from that point pass through country equally as good, if it started from Narrabri East? Not from a pastoral point of view. The north side of the Namoi is the best pastoral land.
2539. What is the character of the land on the south side of the Namoi? It is more arable. It is country more capable of improvement than the northern part. There is a lot of good pastoral land on the south side; but I think the proposed route would go through the scrub land, which, with improvements, will carry a good population.
2540. For pastoral or agricultural purposes? Both, I should think.
2541. Is the land heavily timbered? Yes; the land is not so sweet as is to be found on the other side, for stock, and, I think, it never will be.

2542. For the purposes of settlement, which side of the river would carry the larger population, with improvements? I think the north side would carry the bigger population, there is such a large scope of good country. It is a wool-growing more than an agricultural country.
2543. You say that the south side would be suitable for agriculture? More so than the north.
2544. Will not an agricultural area carry a larger population than a pastoral area? That is a question which I could not very well answer. I remember well when the land about Narrabri West was scrubbed and fit for nothing. Now you see herbage and wheat crops equal to any in the country.
2545. Is that land of a similar character to the land on the south side of the Namoi, between Narrabri and Wee Waa? A great portion of it is, judging from what I remember of Narrabri West before the railway was taken there.
2546. Would you class that as fairly good agricultural country? Very good—nothing better for certain crops.
2547. What would it be capable of producing? It would grow wheat; but I do not think it would grow lucerne. You want more alluvial soil for lucerne; but it would grow wheat, oats, and barley. I have seen crops of maize in that timbered country; but, as a rule, there is not the amount of moisture which is required.
2548. If the line were constructed on the south side of the river, do you think that land would be taken up for agricultural purposes? I think so. Even now, without railways, there is a lot of settlement going on amongst the scrub.
2549. Is that free selection? Yes; on the cleared line to Pilliga. I see improvements every time I travel there.
2550. Is there much land there under cultivation now? No. I do not say that there is much of it under cultivation; but I have seen crops growing there, and there are no means of making use of them.
2551. Is that due to the want of sufficient facilities for conveying the produce to market? I should say so.
2552. Do you know the town of Wee Waa? Yes.
2553. Where the two different routes junction near Burren, the line from Narrabri East on the north side of the river would not touch Wee Waa, whilst to the south of Narrabri West it would go through Wee Waa;—do you think the town of Wee Waa is of sufficient importance to justify its being connected by rail? It is just a matter whether vested interests are to be considered. Wee Waa is a flourishing town, with a lot of arable land about it. I think myself that the railway should run the nearest possible way from the outlying districts to the coast.
2554. Would not some consideration have to be given to the nature of the country, or to the towns it passes through? Of course. I do not say anything about the town. I think the people out west should be considered more than the local towns. I should say that what the back country wants is the most direct route to the seaboard. At present the stock is shunted and kept in the trucks longer than is necessary.
2555. Would it make much difference—I mean, with regard to length of time—in conveying stock from Walgett by the route through Wee Waa, as compared with the route on the northern side of the river? I think it would make a difference.
2556. Any material difference? I go upon the principle that any difference should be avoided, if it is possible to avoid it.
2557. What is your opinion of the character of the country from Wee Waa towards Walgett and Collarendabri? It is a wool-producing country, pure and simple. Of course, it will grow wheat. I have grown wheat out there myself.
2558. What has your experience been? Not good. I have sown for three years in succession, and have had no return, and then I would get a good crop.
2559. Are the failures due to lack of richness in the soil, or to drought? More to the drought. A certain amount may be due to want of proper cultivation.
2560. Do you think it would have any material bearing in carrying out agriculture by the extension of artesian bores, which have been found to be successful in several parts of the district? I have not much faith in irrigation by means of artesian bores—I mean for agriculture.
2561. Why is that so? It is too expensive.
2562. Can you give any information as to what the country is best suited for, or whether there is much available land to be taken up for settlement, and whether such available land would be taken up for settlement, if railway facilities were afforded? Undoubtedly it would be taken up; I do not say for cultivation. The only cultivation we should do out there would be for our own protection—feed during dry times.
2563. Do you think the land is of sufficiently good quality to produce hay, wheat, and other fodder for stock? It will produce hay and wheat in certain seasons.
2564. It has been stated by those engaged in pastoral pursuits that very great loss has been sustained during periods of droughts by their not being able to convey stock to districts where there is feed? We have a property 40 miles below Walgett, and another 30 miles on this side of Walgett, from which we have had to shift every sheep we could travel last year. We have 40,000 sheep away from the station below Walgett at the present time.
2565. In what direction have you sent them? I have 16,000 at New England, and the balance are on the Namoi.
2566. Have you and others, who have suffered during drought, experienced much difficulty in conveying starving stock to New England? Yes; the roads, of course, as the drought increases, get bare, and you can do nothing but cut scrub. Last year, whilst shifting the balance of my sheep, I had to cut scrub and lay hay at Burren and other places. I had some (20 tons) tons of it.
2567. Does that mean a large expense? Yes; but it is the only means of shifting the stock.
2568. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it be used to a large extent during times of drought, such as those we have experienced during the last few years, for sending stock to New England and other districts? I should say so.
2569. Do you think it would be a great saving to stockowners if they had such a railway in times of drought? Yes; and it would be a saving to the country generally. The loss of stock is a national loss.
2570. Do you think the line would also be used for obtaining produce for feeding stock? To a certain extent.

- J. K. Mackay. 2571. Different phases of the question as to whether it would pay the stockowners to get produce from other districts with which to feed starving stock have been placed before us;—what is your experience? It would only pay up to a certain limit. It would depend on how long the drought lasted. Some holders last year carried as much as 1,500 tons of feed to their stock in the Moree district.
- 4 July, 1900. 2572. Carriage at the present time is, I understand, so costly that it means a considerable outlay to obtain produce to bring to Walgett? Yes; it could not be done for any large amount of stock.
2573. In the event of the railway being constructed, do you think much stock will be driven away by road? There always will be droving whilst the routes are practicable.
2574. But there would be no necessity for removing stock if there were grass? No. But when the routes are impassable the only thing to do is to truck them.
2575. Do you think that would be a considerable item in railway revenue if the proposed line were constructed? Yes.
2576. Is the Walgett district a good fattening country for sheep? There is nothing better.
2577. Where are the fat sheep usually sent to? Since the freezing works have been in operation they have been sent to Aberdeen. They are also sent to the Sydney market and Maitland. Aberdeen, however, has been our salvation during the past few years.
2578. Where do you principally send your fat sheep? To Aberdeen and Sydney and Maitland.
2579. Where does the larger portion go to? To Sydney. There are some stations which would sell almost wholly to Aberdeen; for instance, Collymungle station nearly always sells to Aberdeen. Other owners freeze on their own account, and ship at Newcastle, but people who make their sheep absolutely prime would rather sell in the Sydney market.
2580. Would the wool be sent to the Sydney or to the Newcastle market? To the Newcastle market, for shipment to London.
2581. What proportion would that amount bear to the quantity of wool produced in the district? I could not say definitely, but I should think more than one-half. It depends on the local market here. If the Sydney market rules high, people sell there.
2582. Is not the Sydney market to a large extent ruled by the prices realised in the London market? To a certain extent, but there are times when the Sydney market has a boom.
2583. If the proposed railway were constructed, would the stockowners put their stock upon it at the nearest railway stations, or would they drive them through the country to Narrabri, as they do at present? When the railway first came to Narrabri stockowners travelled their stock on the routes, but as time has gone on, we have found that it pays us better to truck them and pay the rate. I am referring to fat stock, and not to store stock. It undoubtedly pays to truck them.
2584. Is it your opinion that fat stock would be put on the railway at the nearest railway station rather than that they would be driven even through good country? Yes, it pays. People may not do it until they find it out by experience. Where I live I can travel stock well towards the markets for 60 or 100 miles, but I find it pays me best to truck them.
2585. Is that because the stock lose in quality whilst droving? They lose in quality slightly; but you would order your trucks to meet a market, and, of course, you would like to get into that market. If I start stock on the road, I do not know what market they will hit.
2586. There has been a little diversity of opinion as to whether the proposed line will be the best, or whether it will be better to connect Walgett with Coonamble, with a view to joining the Western line at Dubbo? I think, in the best interests of the district of Walgett, and of the country generally, a connection with Narrabri would be preferable to a connection with Coonamble.
2587. Does that mean that it would be cheaper to send stock in that direction, or does it mean that they will have better accommodation and better markets? No. I think the fact of their being connected with New England would be an insurance to all the stock-owners in the district.
2588. Is that your principal reason for suggesting that Walgett should be connected with Narrabri rather than with Coonamble, viz., that it will afford facilities in times of drought for sending stock to the New England district for feed? Yes. It would also give them a shorter rail-carriage to the sea-board.
2589. When you speak of the sea-board, do you mean Sydney or Newcastle? I understand that with a Narrabri to Walgett connection there would be less haulage than by any other route to the sea-board, unless we except the Mudgee route.
2590. Would an extension from Mudgee prove of any material advantage in the event of Walgett and Coonamble being connected? It would probably be the most direct route. My own idea is that there should be a railway, on the south side of the Namoi, to Walgett, with a junction from Coonamble to Pilliga, or Come-by-Chance, or Baradine Creek.
2591. Do you think a branch to Collarendabri would be the means of affording additional facilities to those residing in that part of the country, and to the north-west? Yes.
2592. Do you think there would be a probability of that branch paying? It will drain a very large area of country. I know of no larger area of country that will be drained.
2593. What area of country will it drain? From Mogil Mogil to Goodooga.
2594. Do you think it would draw any traffic from the Queensland border? I should say so.
2595. What distance west from Walgett do you think the country would be served by an extension from Narrabri? I think 35 miles south-west and west.
2596. Which extension would serve the greater extent of country—one between Narrabri and Walgett, or one between Coonamble and Walgett? One between Narrabri and Walgett. Between Coonamble and Walgett there is a lot of flooded country.
2597. Is there much flooded country in the other district? Of course, there are floods and floods.
2598. Is the plain country between Burren and Walgett flooded to any extent? There is a certain amount of flood from Pian Creek. During the flood of 1890, Brianbri, towards the Barwon, was all under water, with the exception of Eurie Eurie plain.
2599. Was that flooded to any depth? Yes; in places a horse could swim through it.
2600. Does it remain in that condition for any length of time? During the 1890 flood it remained there for about eight days. In 1864, however I understand that the water remained there for almost six weeks.
2601. Where do the graziers who would be affected by the proposed extension obtain their supplies from? Principally, from Newcastle. Of course there are people who have old friends in Sydney with whom they deal. When, however, they come down to commercial lines, they must deal with Newcastle. Personally, I deal with Newcastle, wholly.
- 2602.

2602. It has been stated by a number of stockowners that considerable loss is involved through their not having railway facilities for sending small lots of fat stock to market. They state that it does not pay to grow them;—have you any experience in that direction? There certainly is a loss to them. Dealers go round, and buy up little lots, put them together, and make up a mob, which they can drive and then truck. Perhaps they make a profit out of them. J. K. Mackay.
4 July, 1900
2603. Does it pay to travel small lots? No.
2604. Do you think the country is of such a character that, with railway communication, closer settlement, followed by increased traffic, will prevail? I think so.
2605. Do you think that the country would maintain a large population? I do not say it would maintain a large population. All that wool growing country is practically stocked for a certain number of years. It may carry a few more people on small holdings; but the wool and stock produce will not be increased. Of course, small paddocks do give a bigger return. We can carry more stock when the country is cut into smaller paddocks; but the open country is now practically being used up to its fullest extent.
2606. I suppose the plain country is not capable of much improvement? No; it is naturally good country.
2607. From which have you obtained the better results—the wool shipped direct, or the wool sold in the local market? That is a question which I could not answer. We have not settled it ourselves. London, however, is the market of the world, and, over a series of years, it is undoubtedly the ruling market.
2608. It has been stated that there are prospects of holding wool sales at Newcastle;—how do you think they would suit the graziers in the district to which you have been referring? They would suit the graziers very well if we could induce the wool-buyers to attend them.
2609. Do you think they would attend the sales if sufficiently large catalogues were offered? I think so. They were starting once before, but owing, perhaps, to want of organisation and proper management, they were given up. However, we hope to have wool sales there.
2610. Do you think the graziers and the north-west and western districts would appreciate a market if it were established at Newcastle? I think so.
2611. Do you think sufficiently large catalogues of wool would be offered to induce purchasers to go there? I think so; the purchasers go to large centres now. Of course, if they say they will not buy, except in Sydney, we shall have to send to Sydney, as we used to send to London. They have had to go to Sydney to buy, and the probability is that, in the near future, they will have to go to Newcastle.
2612. Would the result be a saving to wool-growers in the north and north-west if the sales were held at Newcastle instead of at Sydney? I think it would.
2613. Do you think they would prefer to send to the Newcastle market, provided the results of the sales were equal? I think so.
2614. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you had considerable experience in shifting stock in dry weather? Yes.
2615. What proportion of your stock have you sent away? Out of 60,000 sheep on one holding at Brewan—below Walgett—we sent away 40,000.
2616. Supposing you had wished to send the whole away, do you think you could have found grass for them? Yes; in New England at that time.
2617. Could the stockowners in the whole of the district have found grass? I think not.
2618. There is a difference of opinion amongst witnesses as to whether the New England district could find room for all the starving stock of the west, even if we built railways out there? I do not think the New England district could find room for the whole of the starving stock. The west is a very big country. New England last year took a great number of sheep; I could not say how many, but it was our salvation.
2619. Could you give a rough guess as to the number of stock sent to New England last year? I could not.
2620. Do you think it took 1,000,000? I do not suppose it did.
2621. Could it have taken 2,000,000? I do not think so.
2622. Supposing a railway had been constructed, not only to Collarendabri, but right on to Angledool, and it had been in a position to pour into New England double the number of stock which were sent there, could the grass have been found for them? No. I had a difficulty in finding grass for the last lot of sheep I sent there. New England at that time was on its last legs, so far as the supply of grass was concerned.
2623. You do not think it could have carried many more? No.
2624. Can you tell us how it is that the New England runs are not sufficiently stocked by their owners as to have all this grass to spare? New England is a poor country, and the people have to keep their paddocks under-stocked, so that the stock may get the choicest grasses, or the choicest parts of the grasses.
2625. They live on inferior grass? Yes.
2626. Is that what the sheep from the west get? Yes.
2627. I suppose they are obliged to take that or nothing? They are glad to get it. It is the only thing which has saved, not only myself, but most of the other holders.
2628. Then the western sheep are thankful for the grass which the New England sheep will not eat? Yes. I may mention that, on the Cryon run, out of 14,000 sheep, less than 1,000 were left. We could not get them away, and I had to feed them on hay and scrub the whole of the way to Narrabri. I did that without very much loss. On the adjoining run—Gorian—out of 56,000 sheep only 15,000 remained at the end of the drought; the rest were lost.
2629. If there had been grass to which to send them, would it have paid to send them if they could have been got away? Undoubtedly.
2630. How much does it cost for sheep to send them to New England and get them back, including the hay and all transit expenses? Last year I had 11,800 sheep, which travelled for over twelve months. I shorn them, and when they returned to the station the accounts were made up, and I found they had cost 2s. 3d. per head.
2631. The shearing expenses would have had to be incurred under any circumstances? Yes; the shearing expenses amounted to about 5d. per head.
2632. Is the amount you have mentioned a net amount, after allowing for the wool they had grown in the twelve months? No. They cost me 2s. 3d. per head, but I was considerably in pocket from the wool which I cut. Then I had my sheep to the good.
2633. Had you a better clip than you would have had had you kept them at home? Yes; it was a good investment.

- J. K. Mackay. 2634. You saved your sheep at a cost of 2s. 3d. per head? Yes; allowing for all losses.
- 4 July, 1900. 2635. Supposing we had railways out to the west which were connected with fodder-growing districts, would it be cheaper to send the sheep to the fodder, or the fodder to the sheep? I think it would be cheaper to send the sheep to the fodder.
2636. That is, to the live fodder? Yes.
2637. I suppose you would save all the expense of reaping, harvesting, chaff-cutting, and so on? Yes. It is expensive to feed the stock when you get the fodder out.
2638. Should you have to bring your sheep to the hay on the run? We should have to cart it about, and to scatter it about is expensive.
2639. Do you think it would cost too much to do that? Yes.
2640. A great deal has been done in that way during the last few years;—can you say how much per annum it has taken to keep a sheep alive by the process of taking the fodder to the sheep? No; I have not gone into the matter.
2641. Have you heard your neighbours say anything about it? No. I have heard people say that it requires 3 lb. of hay per day to keep one sheep.
2642. I suppose that the squatters at Collarendabri are much better off than the squatters on the Darling? Yes.
2643. Do you think that squatters on the Darling could send their sheep to New England? No. The country south of the Marra Creek is practically closed to stock getting off. I could scarcely get them away from our station at the junction of the Marra Creek.
2644. You are, I presume, always hoping for rain, and you wait too long, and cannot get them away? Yes.
2645. If they could be got away in time by rail, would it pay to send them to the east? Yes.
2646. Then, if they cannot be got away, will it pay to send the fodder to them? I think so.
2647. If you had a run west of Bourke you would, I presume, make an effort to get the fodder to the sheep rather than see them die? Yes. Those who have done that this year have been well paid for their trouble. Many people did not do it, and they lost their sheep. Those who saved their sheep have them now, and can sell them at high prices.
2648. The question is, has it cost more than the sheep are worth? Not in our case. We are very well satisfied.
2649. You will remember that in that district they have now had five very dry years? We have had five dry years about Walgett as well.
2650. I suppose you have seen green grass during that time? Yes; but we have had no lambs.
2651. Not for five years? We have had none for the last two years, and of the lambs which were dropped three years ago, only a small percentage pulled through. We have had three bad years.
2652. Would it pay to feed the sheep for three bad years running? I have practically been feeding them. I have had 40,000 sheep away for two years. I have moved them about to places where I could rent feed.
2653. Your policy is to keep your sheep alive if possible? Yes.
2654. And if you could do it in no other way, you would go to the expense of almost the value of the sheep by bringing feed to them to keep them alive? Certainly; in fact, it is the only salvation we have.
2655. *Chairman.*] Can you give any idea of the value of the railway to that district from the point of view of the frozen meat trade;—would the presence of a railway in that district, and in connection with that trade, have the effect of adding to the carrying capacity of your run? Do you mean by your question, would it help us if we had a frozen depôt at Walgett?
2656. You can look at the matter in that light if you wish? Undoubtedly it would help us. The carriage on the dead carcasses would be cheaper, and there would be a better return all round.
2657. Would it give you a chance of carrying more stock in a good year than you would care to risk carrying now? Yes, it would do that. That is why the Aberdeen works have been so beneficial to us on the plains. We know that they can deal with so many sheep, and they are not put on the Sydney market. It is really a sort of insurance to us.
2658. Would the construction of a railway to Walgett enable you, taking one year with another, to carry more sheep than you do at present? Yes. If there were a frozen depôt at Walgett, we could get the sheep away to it. Now, by the time we get sheep to railway communication, they lose so much in condition that they are not fit for freezing.
2659. Have you any further statement to make? I should like to see the railway on the south side of the Namoi for more reasons than one. The Stock Boards, through the Government, are spending £9,000 on a rabbit-proof fence. I have always considered that if a railway went through that scrub, we should, to a large extent, get rid of the marsupials, and deal with the prickly pear pest effectually. That scrub, with its dogs and rabbits, is a menace to us. The £9,000 would be thrown away if only an ordinary fence is put up. If a railway line were constructed, the caretakers on the railway could look after the rabbit-proof fence, and the result would be beneficial to the whole of the northern side of the Namoi River. The dogs which come in there kill enough sheep to almost pay, in the course of a few years, for the construction of a railway.
2660. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you used the scrub, to any large extent, for feeding sheep? Yes; we have been felling scrub now for two years.
2661. What description of scrub have you generally used? Belar, myall, buncee, and urah. There are several different kinds; some are better than others; but it is not a very satisfactory way of feeding. It is better to shift your sheep if there is any possible means of getting them away.
2662. Do you find the myall very good? Yes; if you can get it with plenty of water.
2663. What plan have you adopted in cutting the scrub? We have lopped it. It is necessary to leave a branch or two so as to leave the vitality in the tree. If a myall tree gets past a certain age and is lopped, it is almost sure to die.
2664. After lopping a myall tree, have you found that the branches shoot out again in the following season? Yes; if you leave a green branch or two. You can lop all the branches off some kinds of trees, and they will shoot out again, but the myall is a tree the whole of the branches of which you must not cut.
2665. Are not many of the trees cut down to within 2 feet 6 inches of the ground? Yes. In that case they can never get ahead again. It should be prevented. The only way in which the stock were got along the stock routes last year was by lopping the timber. If the people cut the trees down, they are done for. If we do not get a railway constructed in that district, and another drought is experienced, all the sheep must die, because they cannot be got away. We have just about cut out everything.
2666. I suppose the whole of the scrub on many of the runs has been destroyed? Yes.

2667. And the myall is dying out rapidly? Yes. The myall is a tree which only lives for about forty years. On every station there should be tracts of myall fenced in, to enable the young trees to grow. They could be used as horse-paddocks for the time. J. K. Mackay.
4 July, 1900.
2668. Do you think some plan could be adopted for the purpose of nursing the myall? I am personally adopting a plan of nursing it.
2669. Would it not be a good plan, on different runs, to surround 8 or 10 acres of myall by means of a good wire-netting? Yes; I have been doing it even on the Breeza Plain. I have several plantations there fenced in with barbed wire.
2670. And healthy young myall trees will stand lopping? Yes; and they will give an annual crop.
2671. I have noticed on some of the runs that lopping has been carried out; but the squatters, as a rule, say it is too expensive? It is not, if they will only look further ahead. I should have lost a lot of valuable sheep this year if I had not lopped the myall in years gone by.
2672. Is it usual for the squatters to meet and discuss these matters? They do meet privately at times, but of late they have not been able to keep any ground idle—the ground has to be worked up to the hilt. It is a pity we have no legislation dealing with the saving of fodder plants.
2673. Are you aware whether any attempt has been made to plant the kurrajong? It does not suit in our part of the country. The kurrajong requires gravelly ridges.
2674. I suppose that in places where the myall scrub is pretty plentiful the sheep can be kept in good condition during a bad season? Yes.
2675. *Mr. Watson.*] When you made an estimate of the amount it would take to feed sheep, had you in mind what the cost of the hay would be at the place you were thinking of? When I was feeding my sheep I was paying £7 per ton for hay delivered from Narrabri.

John Bissett Brodie, station manager, Boolcarrol, sworn, and further examined:—

2676. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand you desire to supplement your previous evidence, more particularly in connection with the removal of stock? Yes; I am living on Boolcarrol station, about 30 miles from Narrabri. When the 1898 drought commenced we shifted sheep in November. We trained about 32,000 or 35,000 of them to New England. After we had got the larger portion of them away we sent a number along the Moree Road to Glen Innes, where rain had fallen. We had about 60,000 sheep away altogether during that drought. The sheep left in November of 1898, and the last of them arrived back in September of 1899. We have also trucked about 30,000 sheep to New England this year. We started sending them in February, and about 8,000 were roaded to Glen Innes. Most of these sheep are there now. We have started during the last three weeks to bring them back. J. B. Brodie.
4 July, 1900.
2677. I suppose that since the late rains set in you have got some herbage? Yes; sufficient to enable us to start the sheep home. Of course, we were feeding some of the stud sheep at home.
2678. Do you think you saved money by trucking those which you sent away? Yes. We had 60,000 sheep on the run, and if we had not got them away we should not have had 10,000 left. Some of the runs west of ours had a similar number. They did not, however, send them away, and they lost from 80 to 90 per cent. of them.
2679. Did you experience any difficulty in getting them to the railway from Boolcarrol? We used to send a waggon of hay with every lot. Of course, a number of the weaker animals died on the road. We gave them about a pound of hay each in the trucking yards before they were trucked. We did not lose many in the trucks.
2680. Where did you detain them? We detained most of them last year at Walcha-road. This year we put them out at Walcha-road, Llangothlan, and Ben Lomond—wherever we could get paddocks.
2681. Did you experience any difficulty in getting grass? We had to knock about a good deal to get it. Of course, we had to stock very heavily—about two sheep to the acre. The feed was rough, but it kept the sheep alive.
2682. It has been suggested that the amount of grass available, even in New England, for sheep from the western district is a limited quality, and that even if railways were constructed into the western country people would not be able to obtain grass in New England? Of course, the grass in New England is limited, but a number of stock could be got away to the Manning, the Macleay, and the coast country generally, as well. The grass there would be sufficient to keep sheep alive. During the 1897 drought we had to send a lot of bullocks to Casino, and I believe that sheep would do well there when the west was in a drought-stricken state.
2683. A long dry period out west is usually accompanied by a dry period at New England? There is no doubt that when we are catching a drought there is usually one at New England. At the same time, the period during which we are suffering is the best period in New England.
2684. Assuming that the people west trained their sheep to Glen Innes, do you think they could then travel by road towards the coastal districts, which might be held as a further reserve for sheep during a dry period? Yes. Of course, if there were tremendous lots of stock on the road the grass would give out; but there is a great growth of rough grass—not very good—which would enable them to get down. The Queensland people are now training their sheep as fast as they can to their coast country. Their coast country is not so good as ours, because they have a frightful grass-seed—the spear grass—which we do not find in New South Wales.
2685. I understand that your firm has another station some distance beyond Collarendabri? Yes; 30 miles beyond.
2686. What is your experience there? We lost one-half of our sheep there. We were cutting scrub for a long time, but still the losses were great. There were no lambs, and we lost 50 per cent. of the sheep.
2687. Were they too far out to attempt to bring them to New England? Yes; we could not have got them in.
2688. How near would a railway, in the western country, require to be to pastoralists to enable them to get stock away? I would not be afraid of travelling even pretty weak sheep a distance of 100 miles, so long as I could get feed for them. If we had fodder stacked on the route, so that every 10 or 12 miles we could give them a pound or two, we could easily travel them 100 miles.
2689. The ordinary traffic in produce of that far western country is comparatively limited;—you would require a large area to give traffic to a line; therefore, we cannot construct railways very close together;—I should like to know what you consider a fair distance from which a line might attract traffic or assist people, under those circumstances? If people are within a distance of 40 or 50 miles from a railway there is not much to complain of. 2690.

- J. B. Brodie. 2690. If we had railways in that country 100 miles apart it would be a fair thing? I think so.
- 4 July, 1900. 2691. Have you any further information to offer? I only wish to state that the produce of the stations in the district to which I have been referring goes from Newcastle to England. Newcastle is the most convenient port, and we have always looked upon London as the best market.
2692. Have you noticed any inclination recently on the part of pastoralists to take advantage of Sydney as a market? I think they are all sorry they did not sell here last year. I think railways out west will develop a tremendous lot of trade. People know more about the relief country in the present day than they knew formerly.
2693. Do you think the disposition to take advantage of the relief country will be greater each year? I do not think pastoralists will hesitate about it at all. We travelled portion of our sheep in 1898 and 1899, and also during the drought of this year, to Narrabri, and then trucked them from there. The railway authorities allowed a discount of 50 per cent. on the starving stock sent away, and of 75 per cent. when brought home. It would have cost us £30,000 to have replaced our sheep if we had not taken them away.
2694. Can you give us an estimate as to what they did cost you? Of course, everything depends on the time they are away. The railway charges come to about 7d. or 8d. per head—that is, for trucking them from Narrabri to Walcha-road and back. You can keep them on New England for about 3d. per month per sheep, including the looking after of them, or about £10 per month for every 1,000. People are lucky when they can get grass country during times of drought. If the sheep are away for a whole year, I should imagine that they will cost from 3s. to 4s. each.
2695. As against that you have the wool which they grow? Yes, and the lambs. We feed a lot of sheep at home; but there is not much in feeding sheep on hay. A ton of hay will keep about seven sheep alive for a year. They require about 1 lb. of hay per day. It hardly pays to feed flock sheep on hay if there is likely to be a long drought. During the big drought our hay, which we bought early, cost us about £4 per ton delivered at Boolcarrol. If Walgett were connected with New England, you would find that there are plenty of sheep in the western country which, in drought time, would absorb all the spare grass of that district.
2696. *Dr. Garran.*] If there were a line of railway from Narrabri to Collarendabri, the fat sheep would, I suppose, be put in the trucks at Collarendabri? Yes.
2697. For how many months in a year would that trade last? In a good season it would last all through the year. That country would be in the same position as Warrah and Breeza, where they keep their stock almost to the end of the winter.
2698. Do you think the trade would be a pretty continuous one? I think so. There is nothing to prevent the trade being as good as that on the Moree line. The country is similar.
2699. If a line were constructed to Collarendabri, would there be any immediate urgency for its extension beyond that point? I think the people would expect it to go further—to Angledool.
2700. I suppose it would be a great help to all the squatters in the north-west if such an extension were carried out? Yes. It would be a great help to get it to the Barwon. All beyond that point they have to sell their stock as stores.
2701. In good seasons they could send fat stock away all the year round? Yes, with a railway.
2702. *Mr. Shepherd.*] If the travelling stock routes were properly managed, would the result not be of advantage to squatters in moving their stock? In times of drought the stock routes get like the runs. At the present time the stock are returning home, and there is any quantity of feed for them; but in times of drought the routes get bare.
2703. Are not the stock routes, as a rule, unfairly treated by squatters? Some are. As long as the stock routes are not fenced off separately much damage cannot be done. It must be remembered that the sheep have to travel 6 miles a day. I question whether you can improve on the present system.
2704. Is it not a fact that, in some instances, the squatters rent the stock routes from the Government? They are all rented.
2705. Do you not think that they ought to be entirely used for travelling stock? The main stock routes of the Colony start from the Queensland border, and go down the frontages of the large rivers to the southern border, and I do not see how the Government could resume them.
2706. There is no doubt the original intention was that the travelling stock routes were to afford feed for travelling stock? There is not much trouble in removing stock in good seasons. As soon, however, as drought sets in people put their sheep on reserves or anywhere else, in order to save them.

THURSDAY, 5 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

ROBERT HENRY LEVICK, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Robert Edward Jones, M.I.C.E., District Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

R. E. Jones, M.I.C.E. 2707. *Chairman.*] Have you had an opportunity of exploring the country between Narrabri and Walgett? Yes.

5 July, 1900. 2708. Does the report which you published in 1891 include a description of the proposed railway? Virtually so. I made the following reports:—

Narrabri West, via north side of Namoi, to near Walgett; length, 112 miles; estimated cost, £422,700.

The main difference in this scheme from that last dealt with is that this runs on the opposite or northern side of the Namoi. Crossing the river at Gurleigh Point, 16 miles from Narrabri, it is proposed to make use of the firm sandy ridges which exist much of the way to the Barwon. The terminus suggested is at Euric Euric, 10 miles north of Walgett.

This line passes over ground less liable to inundation than on the south side of river. It also serves a larger area of good grazing country, and would be within easy access from Pilliga and Wec Waa, the latter more especially. It also passes through the centre of extensive settlement on Pian Creek and Jews' Lagoon. A

A line to Moree, if made *via* the travelling stock reserve, would utilise the river bridge and 20 miles of construction of this scheme. A considerable amount of competition would, however, exist between both lines.

Having fully discussed the direct project to Walgett, the question arises: Will this line, which is further north, obtain such increased traffic as to warrant the exclusion of the Coonamble and Baradine districts from railway communication? No more Queensland wool is obtained by this scheme than any of the others to Walgett, and there is a probability of an injurious competition with a line to Moree if made.

One advantage, however, by this project, is, that it terminates at a better crossing off the Barwon than Walgett should an extension to Queensland be ever desired, but I think any connection with the sister Colony will be made rather at Goondiwindi or Mungindi.

No survey has been made of the Enrie Eurie scheme.

Narrabri West, *via* Collarendabri, to Angledool: length, 176 miles; estimated cost, £677,500.

No survey has been made of this scheme, which appears to be put forward to attract traffic from Queensland rather than New South Wales.

It leaves the proposed Moree line at Boggy Creek, 34 miles from Narrabri, proceeds, *via* Bunna Bunna and Orel holdings, to Collarendabri, on the Barwon, at 108 miles; then by way of Gambalale, and the abandoned Government bore, to the great Warrambool, which might be crossed at about 29 miles from Angledool, the point of terminus, distant 176 miles from Narrabri. The great difficulty upon this line is the amount of country passed through liable to inundation. At the time of my visit I had ample evidence of the 1890 flood to warrant me in asserting that this line will be enormously costly to construct, especially near Collarendabri, where, from the position of the crossing of the Thalaba Creek, Grawin, an ana-branch of the Barwon, and the last-named river, one continuous bridge will be needed, some miles in length. In this case there can be no following the surface. The above-mentioned channels must be bridged at a safe height, with easy graded approaches, necessitating a great length of flood openings.

Between Collarendabri and Angledool the great Warrambool, which carries a tremendous body of water in flood-time, must be crossed. And when it is found that a length of quite 40 miles of what is known as the 60-mile track was flooded last year, it will give some idea of the country to be passed through. I believe about 250,000 sheep, with a considerable number of horses and cattle, were lost between the Queensland Border and Walgett during the 1890 flood.

Overlooking for the moment the question of costly construction, how will this line serve the districts of this Colony asking for railway communication?

It needs only a glance at the map to show that this scheme is the least useful of all those put forward to give access to the north-west. Coonamble and Coonabarabran would be entirely shut out; Walgett would make very little use of such a line, as it is scarcely likely traffic would be hauled north by road to go south by rail.

No doubt a few stations west of Goodooga—not within the trafficable sphere of a line to Walgett—would use the Angledool railway, but their wool is already obtained either at Byrook or Bourke, and therefore little extra revenue would be received by the State. Possibly Queensland might furnish some additional traffic in the shape of stock and wool—very much of the good country extending from Angledool to St. George and Mungindi is, however, in the hands of the Australian Pastoral Co., whose wool, is not sent to Brisbane, will be obtained in New South Wales stations, the increased freight for extra mileage to Angledool being no great sum. Should it be determined to construct a line to Moree it would branch off from this railway at Boggy Creek. Both lines, however, would be in competition for a large amount of traffic from the watercourse country—Mungindi, &c.

I have not thought it necessary to give any statistics—as such a line so little fulfils the purpose of opening up the north-western district in the best manner. It also passes over purely grazing country, where permanent water is obtained at little expense. One bore on the Dumunbral run I may mention is 2,400 feet deep. Several others have been attempted with great success. In this case to get to the Queensland Border appears to be of paramount importance, although so far as I can discover little extra traffic will be obtained thereby, and it is quite certain if the northern colony considers the country in this neighbourhood of St. George, Goodooga, and Angledool of sufficient importance to warrant railway communications such will be furnished.

Respecting any through line to Queensland, I do not think Angledool—where there is a network of watercourses—is the most suitable junction point.

2709. Can you tell us whether a direct line from Moree to Mungindi would have to cross much flooded country? Yes, it would cross the watercourse country.

2710. What would be the best way to reach Mungindi from the north-western country so as to avoid the watercourse country? It is rather difficult to tell. You would have to cross a lot of flooded country from which ever point you started. Of course, a shorter distance would be from Moree; and although there is a lot of flood country, there are not many streams to cross, with defined channels.

2711. I understand you favour the Moree-Mungindi connection to a line going out *via* Collarendabri? Yes.

2712. Do you think that that country would be well served by a line from Narrabri to Walgett and another from Moree to Mungindi;—would they each be sufficiently apart to draw traffic? I do not think so. I do not think both lines would be warranted. The one now before the Committee would serve a greater scope of country, because the Queensland Border is so close on the northern side of the line from Moree to Mungindi that it would have little traffic on that side to gain.

2713. The survey which you made on the northern side of the river crosses the Namoi closer to Narrabri than the present one? Yes.

2714. Do you think the importance of Wee Waa is such as to justify the crossing of the river further on? I do. I was there in February last, and it has gone ahead very much.

2715. *Mr. Watson.*] The present proposal involves, not only a railway to Walgett, but a branch to Collarendabri, which has the effect of leaving a rather small piece of country between the two prongs of the fork, if I may so term it;—do you think that that country is such, even allowing for the area from which the termini would draw traffic, that it would justify two lines of railway being constructed? I hardly think so, especially with the existence of a line to Coonamble south of Walgett.

2716. That will take a certain amount of traffic away from the Walgett end? Yes.

2717. If you had the opportunity of constructing one only of the two suggested lines, which would you prefer to construct? A line near to Collarendabri—not into Collarendabri. There is increasing settlement in that part of the country, and Collarendabri itself is a growing place. It would get traffic from Gundabluie, Mogil, and Angledool, which is 60 miles from Collarendabri, whereas it is 76 miles from Walgett.

2718. With regard to any of the South Queensland traffic which might come to Collarendabri, do you think it would also go to Walgett if only one line were constructed? Yes; of course, it would have a greater road haulage. I may add that two bores have been successfully put down, since I made my report, on the 60-mile tract towards Collarendabri, one at Moongulla, and one at Dungle Ridge.

2719. Supposing a line were taken to Collarendabri, and none to Walgett, would that not leave a rather large tract of country without access to it, or a way of getting from it? Yes; but we must not ignore the existence of the Brewarrina railway on the one side. It is all pastoral country.

2720. What, in your opinion, is the distance within which it would be safe to construct railways in pastoral country;—how nearly parallel might they go? In the case of such large holdings as there are in the Western Division, I should say 40 miles.

2721. That would mean 80 miles between two lines? Yes; I may mention that the holdings are very large. Even the homestead leases there are over 10,000 acres. It is not close settlement. 2722.

2722. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think there is any other point along the proposed line from which it would be desirable to reach Collarendabri? No; a line from Woolabra would be shorter; but it would not serve a lot of settlement on Pian Creek, and would leave out Wee Waa.
2723. Would the country be equally suitable for making a railway? I think so.
2724. From Woolabra the line would be considerably shortened? Yes; but it would encroach somewhat on the sphere of traffic on the Moree line, and therefore would not bring much additional revenue to the country.

FRIDAY, 6 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Robert Darvall Barton, grazier, Burren, sworn, and further examined:—

R. D. Barton.
6 July, 1900.

2725. *Chairman.*] Can you give us an idea of the character of the country bounded on the south by a line between Brewarrina and Walgett, and stretching north of that line to the Queensland Border;—can you also state the way traffic from it would be diverted by the construction of a railway from Walgett, if there were a railway to Brewarrina? The country you are referring to is from Brewarrina to Collarendabri on the north side. Only one watercourse—the Narren—is marked on the map; but if you look at other maps, you will see that there are others. There is the Condamine, which starts in Queensland. Its first mouth is the Culgoa, then the Birie, then the Bokhara, and then the Barwon. The Narren runs into the lake, and the country is a swamp from that lake into Brewarrina. The Bokhara runs in somewhere about Brewarrina—it joins Cato Creek—and the Culgoa goes further down Wilcannia way. The country west of Collarendabri is very good for grazing purposes; but the present road which is used is one from the direction of Angledool towards Collarendabri. The head of the Narren is shown on the map. It comes down first, in flood-time, at the Condamine. The Condamine, when it passes the St. George, is called the Culgoa. It is called the Culgoa right down to the most northern branch of the four mouths to St. George. The Narren breaks out first, then the Bokhara, then the Birie, and then the Culgoa. The whole of the country north of Brewarrina—north of the Culgoa towards St. George, and round by Mungindi—is first-class grazing country for stock. In olden times it was considered only fit for cattle, but now we have sheep all over it. The road at present used from Collarendabri to Angledool has no watercourses or anything to make it impassable. It is a very good road. After that you get upon the real black soil, and the country, no matter where you go, is more or less difficult to travel over in wet times. My contention is that the traffic from the country north and west of the Narren will be more likely to go to Collarendabri than to Brewarrina, for the simple reason that, from that country to Brewarrina, the rivers and the low-lying country between the Narren, the Bokhara, the Birie, and the Culgoa are all more or less subject to flood.

2726. *Dr. Garran.*] Will not that "three-river" country make a barrier between Collarendabri and Barrington? Yes.

2727. Then everything east of those rivers might go to Collarendabri? Yes.

2728. And everything west might find an easier road to Bourke? Yes.

2729. So that the three rivers practically make a boundary for the drainage of the railway? Yes. What I contend is that the traffic from all these rivers, right up to the the Condamine in Queensland, will go to Collarendabri. All the wool from Mungindi, and Mr. Fisher's large stations south of St. George, and north of Collarendabri, come in now, *via* Collarendabri, to the Narrabri railway station.

2730. *Mr. Watson.*] Does the Mungindi traffic come that way in preference to going to Moree? Of course, it was only last year that we got the traffic to Moree. I have no doubt that the Mungindi portion would come to Moree; but there is a good deal of difficult country between Mungindi and Moree to traverse. There is a good deal of good country, for railway purposes, between Moree and Collarendabri, and Moree and Mungindi. The natural course for the traffic would be from the Queensland Border into Collarendabri.

2731. *Dr. Garran.*] Angledool is the natural terminus of the line to Collarendabri? Yes.

2732. And that would sweep a fair share of the South Queensland traffic? Yes, under federation.

2733. Supposing a railway were made to Collarendabri, would the Angledool traffic go to it? Yes; it would be impossible to go from Angledool to Brewarrina. It is 60 miles from Angledool to Collarendabri, and about double that to Brewarrina.

2734. *Mr. Watson.*] Supposing a terminus were at Walgett, and another at Collarendabri, would the Angledool traffic be more likely to make for Collarendabri than for Walgett? I should think so.

2735. Would a line at Walgett, and none at Collarendabri, fairly serve the Angledool people? It would give them a little longer distance, but it is not as good a road as the Collarendabri road, which is drier, and a good deal of which is hard.

2736. Could you feed sheep upon it as you went along? Yes. The country is nearly all occupied, and there are stock upon it.

2737. *Chairman.*] From your knowledge of the country crossed by the three or four rivers you have named, would the traffic which now comes from Bredah go to Walgett or to Brewarrina, in case both railways were constructed? It would be more likely to go to Walgett. I have no doubt it would be further; but I think it would be better travelling to Walgett.

2738. *Dr. Garran.*] Are there any high ridges between the three rivers? No, it is all low country.

2739. *Chairman.*] Can we regard the Narren River, which flows into the Narren Lake, as being the boundary between the spheres of influence of the Brewarrina railway on the one hand, and the Collarendabri railway on the other? I should think so. Any one who was on the west of the Narren would take the Brewarrina railway.

2740. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there a road between the Narren and the Bokhara? In flood-time it is 30 miles wide.

2741. Where is the Goodooga trade likely to go to? By way of Angledool to Collarendabri. 2742.

2742. To go from Goodooga to Brewarrina you would have to cross many watercourses and much flooded country? You would have to cross the Narren.
2743. Could you get from Goodooga to Brewarrina between the Bokhara and the Narren? Yes.
2744. But you think the trade is likely to go, on account of the better road, from Goodooga to Collarendabri or Walgett? Yes. If a railway were at Collarendabri, and another at Brewarrina, the traffic would go to Collarendabri.
2745. Supposing a railway were at Brewarrina and not at Collarendabri? Then it would probably go into Walgett.
2746. *Chairman.*] What is your opinion of a northern or north-western extension from Moree? I think that would be a very expensive line to construct. Moree is on the Meehi itself, and the Big River branches a little to the east of Moree, and comes round on the north. Then it breaks out into what is called the Big River watercourse. It splits into several watercourses; in fact, it is a big swamp, with ridges all through it.
2747. Taking the sphere of influence of the railway station at Brewarrina, and another at Collarendabri, which would include the better quality of pastoral land? The larger area, including Queensland, would be around Collarendabri. I take it that the traffic near Barringun would be more likely to go to Collarendabri than to Brewarrina.
2748. Is the country traversed by those three rivers often impassable? During the last six or seven years it has been very dry. Of course, in wet weather it would be almost impassable.
2749. Is that country now covered with sheep or with cattle? With sheep. There is always sufficient dry ground upon which to keep sheep during the wet weather.
2750. Then they do not get foot-rot? No; there is a lot of lime in the water. Sometimes they feed with water half-way up their backs. Even if the country is perfectly bare when the flood comes down, the grass grows quickly.
2751. Is it a kind of rush, or real grass? It is a kind of rush.
2752. *Chairman.*] We should have much safer and easier country for the construction of a railway by going north-west from Collarendabri than by going north from Brewarrina? Much easier.
2753. Supposing we went north-east from Brewarrina, would the country be easier? No; that is bad country as well. The Narran Lake is very shallow, and when it overflows it covers a great deal of country.
2754. *Dr. Garran.*] So far as you see, there are only two extensions to the Queensland border possible—one from Collarendabri to Angledool, and one from Bourke to Barringun? Yes. I do not know anything about the country to Barringun as I have not been there.
2755. Would there be enough traffic at Angledool to pay for an extension from Collarendabri? I think so. The line would be a cheap one. There would be no cutting and no bridges. When you get to Angledool, on the Narran, you are in the centre of the best country.
2756. Supposing we only made the line from Narrabri to the junction of the Burren;—do you think it would be sufficiently long to pay;—would it fetch the trade from Collarendabri? Yes. Of course the present traffic from Collarendabri does not come along the route through which the proposed railway would run; it comes more to the east.
2757. Do you think the traffic would leave the road to come to Burren? I am sure it would.
2758. Looking at the importance of keeping down all unnecessary outlay, would it answer all practical purposes for Collarendabri and the country beyond it, to stop 10 miles short at the point marked A. on the map? If I were one of a syndicate running the railway I would stop there.
2759. Such a railway would practically answer all purposes for the Collarendabri and Angledool people? Yes.
2760. Do you know the country between Woolabra and Collarendabri? Yes.
2761. Is not that drier country than that between Narrabri and Collarendabri? No; the route from Narrabri to Collarendabri is drier than the route from Woolabra to Collarendabri.
2762. Is there not some bad country between Wee Waa and Burren? Very little. At Wee Waa, of course, we have the river, and there is a little flooded country on either side of it, but from there to beyond Burren the country is good.
2763. Then you would not call it a bad line for any part? No.
2764. Do you favour the Northern line from Narrabri, missing Wee Waa, or the Southern line going through it? The shorter line would be to Wee Waa, and if there were no engineering difficulties, I think it would be best to go *via* Wee Waa. I have heard that it would cost as much to take the line along the north side as to cross at Wee Waa.
2765. Supposing, instead of making the fork line, which is marked on the map, we only go to Collarendabri, and do not take a branch to Walgett, would the Walgett trade then go into Burren? It would go to Collarendabri. It is only 40 miles from Collarendabri to Walgett, and 60 miles to Burren. It is a better road from Walgett to Collarendabri than from Walgett to Burren.
2766. Supposing we connect Narrabri with Collarendabri, and Coonamble with Walgett, would not such connection give the district every opportunity of being connected, if it required it, with the western country? It would. I lived twelve years near to Coonamble, and I know the country between Walgett and Coonamble. It is all good country on both sides of the river. Within 10 or 16 miles of Walgett the country is flooded.
2767. And if the railway went to within that 16 miles it would be quite sufficient for Walgett? Yes.
2768. I suppose there is no need to connect with the river? No.
2769. *Mr. Watson.*] From whichever side you approach Walgett you will have flooded country? Yes.
2770. Supposing a line is taken from Narrabri to Walgett, as proposed, how far would you go before you got into the centre of the flooded country, as compared with approaching Walgett from the south? It would be about the same distance.
2771. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you know anything of the country between Woolabra and Bingara? Yes.
2772. Would a line from Woolabra towards Inverell have been practicable? It would have to go through very rough country.
2773. When the line was made from Moree to Inverell it was partly with the idea that the Inverell farmers would have an outlet for produce to the west;—if we take a line from Collarendabri to Narrabri they will have to go all the way to Moree, then down to Narrabri again, and then on to Collarendabri, making a considerable detour;—do you think that will stand in the way of the produce traffic to the west? No; it will always follow the railway. Of course, there would be a good deal of haulage.

- R. D. Barton. 2774. Would the producers be able to compete with those lower down—about Werris Creek? I do not think they could compete with farmers anywhere on the Lower Hunter.
- 6 July, 1900. 2775. If we had had a railway to Collarendabri for the last four years, would the squatters there have largely imported produce for their stock? Yes. Numbers of teams loaded with fodder have gone out there during the last few weeks. They are loaded principally with chaff. It is, of course, more difficult to carry hay than chaff. That is the reason we always get chaff. We can load 6 or 7 tons of chaff in bags, whereas 6 or 7 tons of hay is very cumbersome to carry.
2776. Would a railway in dry seasons be of great service to the squatters? Yes, it would save thousands of sheep.
2777. Do you know anything about sending away starving stock to the east? Yes.
2778. Has it paid you? Yes.
2779. Do you think the eastern country was fully stocked with starving stock this year? I should say not.
2780. Some of the witnesses have said that a larger number could have been taken;—others have said that it has taken nearly all it will hold? I sent 12,000 sheep to one particular place.
2781. Would the place have carried another 12,000? No. The 12,000 I took away lived, and of 14,000 which I left on the station I lost 7,000.
2782. If you had only left 7,000 behind, you could have kept them in good condition? I could have kept them alive.
2783. Without imported fodder? Yes; I cut down brush.
2784. Have you spoilt the brush for the future? Yes, it is all gone. My experience of the brush is that it is not nourishing food. I may say that I have brought a great deal of forage from Narrabri to Burren, a distance of 65 miles.
2785. What would it cost to carry it by road from Narrabri to your run? Over £2 a ton. If we had had a railway the cost would have been under 10s. a ton. I bought the forage at Tamworth, Maitland, and other places. It cost me about £2 a ton, delivered in Narrabri, and about £5 a ton delivered at Burren.
2786. Then it is cheaper to take the sheep to the east, and get the grass, if you can do it? Yes. If I could have taken my sheep straight to Muswellbrook or anywhere on the Hunter, and had even hired a yard for them, and had bought hay for them at £1 10s. a ton, I could have kept them alive for far less money.
2787. If you cannot feed them on live fodder, it is cheaper to take them to the Hunter and feed them on dead fodder than it is to bring the fodder to them? Yes.
2788. Have you ever tried making hay on your run? Yes.
2789. How does it answer? Very well.
2790. What sort of grass did you cut? The herbage grass—natural trefoil. It makes a good hay. We keep it in stacks. This year I intend to have stacks all over the run, and to collect fodder for hay.
2791. For how many years will a stack of hay keep good? I cannot say, as I have not tried it. I made it last year, and two years previously, and on both occasions it turned out very well indeed.
2792. Did it keep sweet for two years? Yes; of course the outside of the stacks get dusty.
2793. How long would you have to keep your land closed off from stock, to enable the hay to grow? You would not require to keep them off at all.
2794. Would the hay grow whilst the sheep were running? Yes; it grows as thick as possible. If you put 10,000 sheep into a 20,000-acre paddock, they will not go over a quarter of it.
2795. How long would the hay be growing? It would start about July, and you must have it all cut before the end of October, or it will be dead.
2796. On the whole, you think a line from Narrabri to Collarendabri would pay in a few years' time? I think so; I have heard it said that the Commissioners expect a loss of £13,000 per annum on the two lines. Personally, however, I would not mind having a share in the loss, if there were one line.
2797. *Mr. Watson.*] Supposing you were a private speculator, which of the two lines would you prefer to make first? The line to Collarendabri, because there would be a greater area of country to drain to that place than there would be to Walgett.
2798. *Dr. Garran.*] Is it bad country from Moree to Boggabilla? It is good country as far as the soil is concerned, but it is flooded.
2799. *Mr. Watson.*] It was stated in evidence at Newcastle that a route could be got from Moree to Mungindi, which would not have a good deal of flooded country along it, by keeping to the north of the watercourse shown on the map;—do you think that could be done? Yes; but I think there would be a good deal of difficulty in getting out of Moree itself.
2800. *Chairman.*] Where do you usually send your wool? To Sydney.
2801. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose there is very little timber in that direction? Very little indeed.
2802. *Mr. McFarlane.*] If your property were in the Walgett district, which do you think would be the most suitable railway connection for you? I do not think it would matter much to the residents, so long as they got a railway near. I should always go for the shortest haulage.
2803. Is there much in the contention that the Narrabri connection will give the producers two markets—Sydney and Newcastle? The connection with the Northern line would be much better for getting fodder, because the Hunter River supplies such a large quantity. At the same time the fodder can be supplied from the Western line probably as cheaply as it can from the Hunter.
2804. Is there much direct shipment of wool from the north-west, *via* Newcastle? I am not sure. I do not think anything near one-half of the wool which comes down is shipped.
2805. To which market is the fat stock principally sent? To Homebush.
2806. Witnesses have stated that the Maitland sales absorb a good portion of stock from the north and north-west? They do take a portion, but I cannot say what business is done.
2807. Would it be an additional argument in favour of the Narrabri connection that it would give access to the Maitland market? I suppose it would.
2808. In the event of wool sales being re-established at Newcastle, do you think they would prove of material convenience to the wool growers of the north and north-west? I suppose they would if their financial agents have branch stores there.
2809. I suppose a good deal would depend on whether the prices obtained at Newcastle equalled those obtained at Sydney? Yes. If the buyers came there no doubt the sales would be carried on.

2810. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think it would be possible to cultivate black plain soil if there were an abundance of water? If you have abundance of water you can do anything. R. D. Barton.

2811. I understand that the Euroka bore gives as much water as any in the country. If other bores were sunk in the neighbourhood, do you think it would be possible for the producers to grow enough fodder for themselves without relying on Newcastle? Yes. I think if they store the natural grasses they will be able to do without the Hunter Valley. 6 July, 1900.

2812. I suppose natural grasses, with irrigation, could be kept all through the summer? Yes. I may mention that there is an irrigation farm between Eurio Eurie and Walgett which I think does very well.

Charles Binnie, grazier, Spring Ridge, near Quirindi, sworn, and examined:—

2813. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I understand you have a knowledge of the Walgett district? Yes; I own property there.

2814. Would you like to make a statement as to your knowledge of the district in connection with the proposed lines? My experience of the Walgett district extends over a period of eight years, being about 12 miles up the river towards Collarendabri from Walgett. The capacity of the country with which I am acquainted, with the frontage to the river, I take to be between 12,000 and 14,000 sheep to 30,000 acres—that is, about 2½ acres to the sheep. That is on the Barwon; at Wurrawadin, on the western bank of the river. A deal of the country is subject to floods. The whole of the property on the river is highly fattening, and is capable of great improvement by the axe being used upon the timber. One of the drawbacks to a small holder, like myself, and smaller holders who hold only one homestead—a block of 10,000 acres—is that, although small numbers of our stock will become fat, we are too far away at present to send 200 or 500 sheep to the Sydney market. The cost of droving 130 miles to Narrabri, and a longer distance to Mudgee, to which place I have sent fat stock, is too much for the small holders. As I have stated, it is highly fattening country, and at times I have turned off mobs of 2,000 sheep, which have realised top values at Flemington. C. Binnie. 6 July, 1900.

2815. The small holders suffer more from the want of a railway than do the larger holders? Yes; they are at a disadvantage.

2816. Are there many small holders in the district? There are a number.

2817. How would the rest of the country compare with the property you have described? The country to the east of the Barwon River would be of a higher carrying capacity than mine, which is on the west of the river. It improves as you go towards the east.

2818. It is the same class of country? My country has more timber upon it than would be found to the east of the river. As regards Walgett, I myself would prefer the connection *via* Narrabri, because, upon mileage rates, stock and produce of any kind would be no worse off as regards the cost of getting it to Sydney. I understand that the distance from Walgett, *via* Coonamble to Sydney, and the distance from Walgett, *via* Newcastle to Sydney, is about the same; whereas, for heavy produce, such as wool, it would save 100 miles of rail carriage by shipping at Newcastle. For this reason I would favour a connection with Narrabri, and that connection I would prefer *via* Pilliga.

2819. Not the proposed route *via* Wee Waa? No.

2820. Do you know the route as proposed from Narrabri to Walgett through Wee Waa? Yes; I know both routes—north and south.

2821. Would a line through Pilliga possess any advantages as compared with the other? I think it would be safer country in time of flood.

2822. Is not the land on the south side of the Namoi from Narrabri West, high country? I should say so—certainly between Wee Waa and Narrabri, and, I believe, also between Pilliga and Wee Waa.

2823. Would not the Walgett to Pilliga route be a longer one? Slightly.

2824. Where do you ship your wool? Sometimes I have shipped it to London from Newcastle, and sometimes I have sold it in Sydney.

2825. Where would your fat sheep be sent to? They would have the alternative market of Maitland, which is a very good one, without being at more serious expense. They would also have the Sydney market, which, I understand, would be 13 miles longer than going *via* Newcastle. They would have two markets by the junction at Narrabri.

2826. Is much fat stock from the north and north-west sent to the Maitland market? Fair quantities.

2827. Would the proposed line enable station holders to send their sheep to more favoured county? I am confident it would. There are large areas in the higher table-lands, which, under ordinary circumstances, would not be suitable to turn sheep upon; but in times of drought they would carry the stock well. To my knowledge, country which was looked upon as thoroughly unhealthy, has, during the last two years, been turning off fat sheep and cattle.

2828. Is it mostly to the New England district to which stock are sent in times of drought? New England would take the bulk of them. It is a very extensive district, and overlapping New England would be the eastern fall, which, in dry seasons, would take a large number of sheep. During the last five years the eastern fall has practically been unexploited. They did not exhaust the higher country on the table-land, and in the vicinity of Kentucky, Walcha, Glen Innes, and other places.

2829. Have you had experience in removing starving stock in time of drought from the Walgett district? Yes. I have had to do it during the last two years.

2830. Did you remove to New England? No; to properties I have near Boggabri, Quirindi, and Spring Ridge.

2831. Has there been any difficulty in getting country for starving stock? I should say that the New England country has not been availed of to its fullest extent.

2832. With the probability, in the event of the proposed railways being constructed, of a largely increased number of sheep in the district of which we are speaking, do you think there would be sufficient country to carry, in times of drought, the extra starving stock which would be removed? New England would carry such a proportion that the balance left would have a much better chance. Although it might not pay the stock-owners to shift their stock about, still, if they had the accommodation offered them in the shape of a railway line, they would do it in the hope that they would be able to get their stock back again before long. Although they might be losers by the transaction, it would be a gain to the country, because the productiveness of the sheep would still belong to the Colony, although lost to the individual. From a State point of view, I should say it would be a great inducement to construct these lines, to save the country's main asset.

- C. Binnie.
6 July, 1900.
2833. Do you know the country on the eastern slopes of New England? Yes; a quantity of it. I have had stock there in times of drought.
2834. Do you think that country would be suitable for carrying sheep removed from the drought-stricken district? In exceptionally dry times it would.
2835. So that, in the event of the New England district being over-taxed, additional areas would be available there? Yes.
2836. It has been stated that if the routes were good people would travel fat stock a considerable distance rather than take the train at Walgett? As a sheep-breeder, and one who has highly fattening properties, I would not travel my sheep a yard further than the nearest railway, for one reason alone—the burrs upon the reserves would so deteriorate the fleeces that the extra gain would very soon be lost.
2237. It has been stated in evidence that a large area of good country to the west would largely contribute to the proposed railway? That is good country. In that basin of country surrounding Walgett we have one of the heaviest wool-growing countries that I know of. My stock upon Walgett, even when there is very little feed in sight, get into wonderful condition, and give heavier fleeces than the stock on the Liverpool Plains, which are up to their bellies in feed.
2838. Do you think the traffic which would be opened up, in the event of the two lines being constructed, together with the existing traffic, and the probability of considerable contributions coming from the north-west and north, would enable both lines to pay? I am rather of opinion that one line would rob the other.
2839. In view of that, which would you suggest should be constructed? I should say—taking the country as a basin—that the line to Walgett would serve the bigger portion of the basin, and would serve country more populated.
2840. Do you think that the Crown lands available and within easy reach of the proposed line would be taken up if thrown open for settlement? Every acre.
2841. Are the Crown lands in the locality of similar character to the country you have described? For many miles surrounding Walgett they are. At Pilliga and Wee Waa you get into a heavy forest country, which at the present time is, for stock purposes, unavailable; but there is country which would be suitable for agriculture.
2842. Where? The country between Pilliga and Wee Waa, towards Baradine.
2843. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the country between Narrabri and Walgett as fattening as the country beyond Pilliga? Yes; to the north of the river. It is similar soil and similar herbage.
2844. Is it more flooded or subject to flood? All that country is very similar in that respect.
2845. After the country has been flooded, is the grass all the richer for it, or is it poorer? Richer, as a rule. That would follow if the floods came without the frosts. A flood would do no good in the early winter time if it were followed by heavy frosts. A flood in the spring-time or during the summer benefits us greatly. The growth is then very rapid.
2846. Do you know whether the grass which grows slowly is more nutritious than that which grows quickly? From my experience, I should say that it is the reverse.
2847. Quick-growing grass is the most succulent herbage? When the sun sweetens it.
2848. Is the country to the north of the red line—Narrabri to Walgett—as good as the country to the south of it? Better; there is a space south of the suggested line which would be of the same character, with little variation.
2849. The line from Narrabri to Walgett would go through the centre of a rich belt of pastoral country? Yes.
2850. Why do you prefer the Pilliga line going through a forest country? I think it would be the safer in wet seasons.
2851. But we want a railway to produce? Yes; but there is a large area south of the line which is at present unproductive. The country to the north of the Namoi would, for the most part, be productive of wool and fat stock only; but the other country is excellent agricultural country. The country to the south of the Namoi, between Pilliga and Narrabri, is at present heavy forest country, and carries little stock; but there are very large areas of that which would be excellent for wheat-growing if it were cleared.
2852. It often happens that the timber country, when cleared, makes good wheat country? As a rule the best—particularly pine country.
2853. A line from Narrabri to Collarendabri would also go through the heart of good country? All good country from a pastoral point of view.
2854. Do you think, if that railway were constructed, and the properties were subdivided, they would produce more fat stock than are produced on large runs? I do not think it would alter the numbers of the stock. There are, however, a number of small holders along the suggested route, and in the vicinity of it, as well as west and east of the Barwon, whom it would help; and there would be a larger number of fat stock coming to the Sydney market if a line were available for them.
2855. Will subdividing result in more fat stock being raised? I should think so. Subdivision alone will increase the carrying capacity.
2856. Has it not often happened that when a considerable portion of a run has been taken away the squatter has kept as many sheep upon it as he did before? Yes, by improving his holding.
2857. What is the limit of subdivision for pastoral purposes in that district? 1,500 acres.
2858. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is that without agriculture? Yes.
2859. *Dr. Garran.*] I understand that most of the flooded country was, years ago, cattle country? Yes.
2860. It would still fatten cattle, I suppose, but it is more profitable to fatten sheep? Yes; the number of cattle at present are very few.
2861. If a line be made, and the country be well subdivided, will there be a larger population than there is now? Yes.
2862. And naturally there would be more railway traffic? Yes.
2863. And you think the actual productiveness of the country will be increased? Yes.
2864. Do you think there is a reasonable probability of a line to Walgett or Collarendabri paying within the next five or ten years? I cannot express an opinion, because I know nothing about the railway freights; but the railway would undoubtedly increase the productiveness of the district.
2865. At any rate, a railway would facilitate the keeping alive of sheep in dry weather? Yes.
2866. And it would facilitate the sending of fat stock away in good weather? Yes.
2867. And it would be an immense gain to the squatters beyond Collarendabri, and make it safer for them to occupy their runs? Yes.
- 2868.

2868. *Chairman.*] Do you think there is sufficient country to the north-west to give lines both to Collarendabri and Walgett a fair amount of traffic? I do not think there is sufficient settlement at the present time out there to justify both places having a railway line.
2869. *Mr. Levien.*] Which route do you favour—from Narrabri West or from Narrabri East? The route along the south side of the river.
2870. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think that a line to Collarendabri would be more likely to draw the Queensland traffic than a line to Walgett? I think not.
2871. Collarendabri would be nearer to the Border? Yes, nearer by 50 miles to the direct Border; but the traffic Walgett would lose, and which would come to Collarendabri, would either go to Moree, on the one hand, or Brewarrina, on the other.

C. Binnie.
6 July, 1900.

TUESDAY, 10 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor, "Statistical Year Books," Government Statistician's Department, sworn, and examined:—

2872. *Chairman.*] Have you prepared the usual statistical returns in regard to the proposed line from Narrabri to Walgett? Yes.
2873. Will you kindly indicate the limits within which you have taken these statistics? I have taken them at a distance of 20 miles on each side of the proposed line, but extending out to Angledool, and southerly including Wee Waa and Pilliga.
2874. Do you include any part of Narrabri? No.
2875. Will you give the estimates of population? The estimate of population on the proposed railway from Narrabri to Walgett is 6,240.
2876. What is the estimated population on the proposed branch from Burren to Collarendabri? There would be 2,060 persons affected; but part of these would be included in the estimate for the railway from Narrabri to Walgett. Angledool, Collarendabri, and Mogil Mogil would be included, and the only one not affected would be Mungindi. It seemed to me that Mungindi would be outside the influence of the line, and would be more directly connected with Moree.
2877. The country between Mungindi and Moree is not easily passable? There is a lot of water-course country between the two places.
2878. What other population return have you brought? I was asked to prepare a statement in regard to a probable line from Coonamble to Walgett. The population on that route would be 3,030.
2879. Does that estimate include Coonamble? No.
2880. Perhaps you will be good enough to read the details of the estimates of population? The returns I have prepared read as follows:—

W. H. Hall.
10 July, 1900.

ESTIMATES OF POPULATION.

Proposed Railway from Narrabri to Walgett.

Locality.	Estimated Population.
Angledool	330
Burren	460
Collarendabri	900
Come-by-Chance	210
Goodooga	490
Mogil Mogil	210
Pilliga	930
Walgett	1,950
Wee Waa	710
Total	6,240

PROPOSED Railway from Burren to Collarendabri.

Locality.	Estimated Population.
Angledool	330
Collarendabri	900
Mogil Mogil	210
Mungindi	620
Total	2,060

PROPOSED Railway from Coonamble to Walgett.

Locality.	Estimated Population.
Corinda	380
Come-by-Chance	210
Goodooga	490
Walgett	1,950
Total	3,030

2881.

2883. Will you read the agricultural and pastoral statistics you have prepared in regard to the proposed railway from Coonamble to Walgett? The return reads as follows:—

W. H. Hall.
10 July, 1900.

AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL STATISTICS.
Proposed Railway from Coonamble to Walgett.

District.	Year.	Maize.		Other Grains—Area.	Hay.		Green	Area under—						Horses.	Cattle.			Sheep (including Lambs).	Swine.
		Total Area cultivated.	Area.		Yield.	Area cut.		Food.	Potatoes.	Grape Vines.	Oranges.	Other Fruit Orcharis.	All other Crops.		Milk Cows.	Ordinary (including calves).			
						Wheat, Oats and Barley.	Lucerne.	Area cut.											
Carinda	1896	16			16									1,222	243	4,582	234,157	13	
	1897	58			58									981	315	2,743	221,250	23	
	1898	20			20									1,269	414	1,816	130,293	3	
	1899	20			20									770	201	916	161,409	5	
	1900	20			20									585	119	463	163,687	14	
	1896																		
Come-by-Chance	1897																		
	1898																		
	1899	190			186								4	425	189	387	41,972	56	
	1900	125			121				1				3	414	98	300	87,169	67	
Goodooga	1896	52	1	30	36								15	1,077	249	3,913	241,964	180	
	1897	70			51								19	1,063	180	2,917	216,832	169	
	1898	89			67	1	3	9		1	1		6	927	255	1,943	208,017	196	
	1899	72			50								21	747	151	1,603	214,525	183	
	1900	74			62								11	651	91	489	120,258	71	
	1896	118			54	23	6	2		2	2	4	25	1,368	657	6,017	548,806	203	
Walgett	1897	127	4	Failure.	75	7	11			1			29	2,342	441	4,804	526,489	183	
	1898	134			103	10							21	1,053	30	4,032	553,950	163	
	1899	244			220								14	1,145	46	1,822	380,247	456	
	1900	236			232								14	1,215	71	1,410	293,212	164	

WEDNESDAY, 11 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The HON. PATRICK LINDESEY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with a branch to Collarendabri.

George Charles Yeo, Draftsman, Stock Branch, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined.—

2884. *Chairman.*] Have you any particulars to furnish respecting the stock in the district that would be affected by the proposed railway from Narrabri to Walgett? Yes, and I have a map here showing what area, I think, will be included in this Narrabri to Walgett part.

G. C. Yeo.
11 July, 1900.

2885. That is the area which the proposed line would be supposed to influence? Yes, so far as stock are concerned. The brown tint on the map shows the Narrabri-Walgett part, and the blue tint shows the Narrabri-Collarendabri part.

2886. Will you give the statistics in regard to cattle and sheep? The return I prepared reads as follows:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY, NARRABRI TO WALGETT.

Number of cattle and sheep within the area shown approximately by brown edging on Map "A."

Year.	Cattle.	Sheep.
December, 1896	23,200	1,978,086
" 1897	21,230	1,901,000
" 1898	17,133	1,538,000

I did not make out the return for 1899, because the fall in sheep was so great that I thought it would not be a fair year to take.

2887. Do you think that it would be lower than in the previous year? Yes. The number of sheep in the Colony in 1898 was 41,000,000, and in 1899, the number fell to 36,000,000.

2888. Was the fall due to the drought? Yes.

2889. Will you give the statistics as to wool? The number of bales of wool affected in the same area was 29,670 in 1896; 28,513 in 1897; and 23,070 in 1898. There is also a big stock traffic coming in towards Walgett which I have taken out for the same years. In 1896, 32,200 cattle came in through Walgett from Queensland, and from the country between Walgett, Goodooga and Angledool, on their way to the southern and eastern markets.

2890. Can you give the figures in regard to both cattle and sheep? Yes; the return reads as follows:—

Stock traffic through Walgett.

Year.	Cattle.	Sheep.
1896 ...	32,200	560,000
1897 ...	20,000	530,000
1898 ...	35,000	480,000

Of course most of these cattle would come from Queensland. That is all the information I have in connection with the railway from Narrabri to Walgett.

2891. Would the return you are about to read re the proposed branch railway from Burren to Collarendabri include any of the district from which you have just given the statistics? Yes; the northern part of it.

- G. C. Yeo. 2892. Could you give a separate return also, say, if both lines were constructed? I did not work it out that way. I took them individually. By the map you will see how much they overlap.
 11 July, 1900. 2893. Will you now read the statistics relating to the proposed railway from Narrabri, *via* Burren, to Collarendabri? The return I have prepared reads as follows:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY, NARRABRI, *via* BURREN, TO COLLARENDABRI.

Number of cattle and sheep within the area shown approximately by blue edging on Map "A."

Year.	Cattle.	Sheep.
December, 1896	19,388	1,212,896
" 1897	17,000	1,106,000
" 1898	14,000	980,000

Number of Bales of Wool.

Year.	Bales.
1896	18,180
1897	16,599
1898	14,700

Stock traffic through Collarendabri.

Year.	Cattle.	Sheep.
1896	31,200	254,000
1897	14,500	250,000
1898	6,500	240,000

2894. Has the decrease in sheep in both districts—in Walgett and Collarendabri—been equal to the decrease in other parts of the Colony or greater in proportion during the last three years? I did not work it out; but as the drought fell pretty well all over the Colony I should say it would be.

2895. Have you any personal knowledge of the district? None whatever.

2896. You could not give any information respecting the districts? No; nothing further than supplying the statistics which we take from the returns that we get every year from our inspectors in the districts.

2897. Could you give any information as to the destination of the cattle and sheep passing through Walgett and Collarendabri? They are all working over for the Hunter River market or for Homebush. They may be coming in on to fattening country with a view to ultimately arriving at those markets. They may be coming in as stores from Queensland.

2898. Are there many stores which come in from Queensland? They would be practically all stores, for there would not be any fats coming in from out there.

2899. What is the destination of the stores? To all the fattening country on New England or the Hunter.

2900. Would the bulk of the store stock be going in that direction? Yes.

2901. You could not give any approximate idea as to the number of fat stock coming to the Newcastle and Maitland markets as compared with the number going to Homebush? No.

2902. *Dr. Garran.*] Do stock entrain at Narrabri at present? I could not say. I did not make any inquiry in that respect, but I can ascertain if the information is desired.

2903. You see a good deal of stock comes down from Queensland country passing through Walgett and Collarendabri;—are they making for Narrabri? Mostly. Being stores, they would be making for the fattening country throughout New England and the Upper Hunter.

2904. We are told that this district between Narrabri and Collarendabri and Walgett is a remarkably good fattening district—one of the finest in the Colony? It is.

2905. If that is so, would fat stock be entrained if this railway were made? They are more likely to be trucked than stores are, on account of the freight.

2906. We find very few stores taking the railway at all? The freights are too high.

2907. There would have to be a good reduction in rates before we could get any traffic in stores? Exactly.

2908. Would that pay the railway? That would be a question for the Commissioners to consider.

2909. You do not know much about that? No.

THURSDAY, 19 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HAN.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEU, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- J. Harper. 2910. *Chairman.*] You have some new figures to put before the Committee? I have to supplement the explanation which I gave you in writing on the 27th June, and in which an error was made in taking out the figures. I now tender the correct figures to the Committee.

2911.

2911. Will you read the return? It is as follows :—

J. Harper.
19 July, 1900.

RETURN of Goods Traffic for year ended 31st May, 1900.

Station from	Total weight.	Narrabri East and West	Remarks.
	tons.		
Morpeth.....	16,900	2,004	About two-thirds of the traffic came from Sydney, and about one-third from Newcastle.
Darling Harbour.....	12,490	891	
Redfern.....	4,246	524	
Total.....	33,636	3,419	
Newcastle.....	19,749	1,762	
Grand Total.....	53,385	5,181	

2912. You desire to amend the answers which you gave to several questions? Yes; I desire to amend the answer to Question No. 2212 by leaving out these words, "for instance, in 1898 the quantity of general goods sent from Sydney was 19,238 tons, and that has been increased to 32,000 tons." I also want to excise the answers given to Questions No. 2213, 2217, 2219, and 2220, because they are all really contingent on the answer given to Question No. 2212.

2913. Do the corrected figures which you have put before the Committee include all articles sent up? Yes.

2914. I suppose you have not a detailed compilation with you? No.

2915. We wanted to get, if possible, a few items, such as kerosene, beer, and spirits? It would have been a very big work to have taken them out separately for the twelve months.

2916. You promised to prepare an estimate of the traffic on a line from Narrabri West to Walgett alone? Yes; it reads as follows :—

ESTIMATE of Traffic for proposed Railway—Narrabri West to Walgett—and assuming Collarendabri Traffic will truck at Burren.

	Trucks.	Tons.	Revenue.
Goods traffic.....		3,922	£2,500
Wool		9,008	3,467
Stock	2,600		2,135
Total.....	2,600	12,930	8,102
Coaching and mails.....			3,093
			£11,195
Less diversion from Moree line.....	450	1,132	941
Grand Total.....	2,150	11,798	£10,254

This includes traffic from Collarendabri, Angledool, and Queensland districts, which amounts to £3,064, and which would come in on the Collarendabri line.

2917. Mr. Watson.] But in the event of there being no line to Collarendabri and a line to Walgett, do you think it would come in by the Walgett line? A portion of it would not.

2918. What is the use of putting in this estimate then? As I explained to the Committee before, I cannot tell where that wool would come in.

2919. If you put in this estimate, and say it is not your estimate, what does it mean? I put it in, saying, "This includes traffic from Collarendabri, Angledool, and Queensland districts, which amounts to £3,064."

2920. The question is whether it will come in at Burren or at Moree;—is it your opinion that it will? I think probably a portion of it will come into Burren. On the other hand, I think a good deal of it will come into Moree.

2921. Taking the Australian Pastoral Company as an illustration, is it not a fact that the road from Collarendabri towards Moree is an extremely difficult one, owing to flooding? Yes; but that traffic would not come that way.

2922. Which way would it come? Further north, for their property is further north.

2923. I always understood that the present drift of traffic from Angledool was through Collarendabri and Burren to Narrabri;—if people now send their wool from Angledool to Narrabri, and not to Moree, is it not likely that they will keep to that track when they can get a railway 50 or 60 miles nearer? As a matter of fact, this wool I speak of has gone into Moree; it has not come by Collarendabri.

2924. The evidence we had at Collarendabri was that practically all the Angledool traffic came on that track? But that is not Angledool traffic; it is traffic in Queensland which is further north-east.

2925. Is there nothing you can go upon in forming an estimate as to which would be the more attractive to that company—Burren or Moree? No; it would be difficult to state. The fact remains that I have given the estimate in full. I have just passed that remark, from which I must leave the Committee to draw their own deduction.

2926. Chairman.] In answer to Question No. 2226, you state, "I will produce evidence to show that the quantity which has been exported from Newcastle has been a constantly decreasing quantity every year"? Yes. I was going to produce the evidence. In 1895 there were 55,890 bales shipped at Newcastle; in 1896, 53,409 bales; in 1897, 56,316 bales; and in 1898, 46,126 bales.

2927. That does not agree with the information in the Statistical Register, which says that in 1894-5 there were 58,436 bales shipped from Newcastle? The figures I have given are for the years 1895-6, 1896-7, 1897-8, and 1898-9. We take our seasons differently.

2928. Taking that same period, do you know what the figures are for Sydney? I have the number of bales offered, and the number of bales actually received.

2929. Mr. Watson.] Does that include the wool that came by Morpeth to Sydney? Yes.

2930. Chairman.] For the 1894-5 season I have 58,436 bales? I have not got that quantity. The total number of bales received at Newcastle in 1895 was 68,142, and of that quantity some was shipped to Melbourne, no doubt. That explains the discrepancy in the total. In this return I first of all give the direct shipments, and then I give the totals in each case.

2931.

J. Harper. 2931. The point I am leading up to is that in the same period the total reduction in the number of bales shipped from Sydney was 100,000, the figures being in 1894-5, 697,333 bales: and in 1898-9, 598,000 bales; while, from Newcastle, 58,436 bales were shipped in 1894-5, and 47,529 bales in 1898-9;—I wished to draw your attention to these figures when I put Question No. 2226? The following are the percentages of Northern wool coming to Sydney:—In 1895, 59 per cent.; 1896, 62 per cent.; in 1897, 64 per cent.; and in 1898, 64 per cent., showing that whilst it had been increasing or stationary during the season in Sydney, it was not the case in Newcastle. The total falling off during the 1898 season in the number of bales of wool which came through to Sydney was about 2,400—that is, on a total 170,000 bales—and you must naturally look for an equal percentage of falling off in what went to Newcastle, because that indicates really the falling off in that particular district.

2932. Will you read the return from which you have been quoting? It is as follows:—

WOOL Traffic from Northern Line.

Season, January to December.	Total Number of bales received at Newcastle.	Shipped direct.	Total Number of bales received at Darling Harbour and Morpeth.	Total from Northern Line.	Percentage received at Sydney by rail and boat combined.
1895	68,142	55,890	98,772	166,914	59
1896	64,164	53,409	106,007	170,171	62
1897	62,646	56,316	110,402	173,048	64
1898	62,099	46,126	108,485	170,587	64
Four years	257,051	211,741	423,669	680,720	62

2933. You promised to produce further information in connection with live stock? I promised to produce a return of the live stock which came through to Flemington and Riverstone in the one case, and to Farley and Aberdeen in the other. The return gives the comparison and the disposition of the stock.

2934. Will you be good enough to read the return? I find that it is not amongst my papers. I will produce it to-morrow.

2935. Mr. McFarlane.] Respecting the tonnage which has been given in this return at 33,633 tons;—is that from Sydney direct to Narrabri? No; that is generally on the Northern line.

2936. Could you not give us the figures respecting the total tonnage from Sydney direct to Narrabri? To Narrabri East and West from Darling Harbour, 891 tons; from Redfern, 524 tons; and from Morneth, 2,004 tons. That makes a total of 3,419 tons, as against 1,762 tons sent from Newcastle to Narrabri West.

2937. Have you also similar figures relating to the traffic from Narrabri direct to Sydney, and from Narrabri direct to Newcastle? I have not, so far as the stock is concerned, but I will furnish the information to the Committee to-morrow.

FRIDAY, 20 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarenebri.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

J. Harper. 2938. Chairman.] Have you brought a return of the live stock which come to Flemington and Riverstone in the one case, and to Farley and Aberdeen in the other? Yes. It reads as follows:—

NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAYS.

RETURN of Live Stock received at Flemington, Riverstone, Farley, and Aberdeen, from Narrabri, Moree, Collarenebri, and Walgett District, during the year ended 30th June, 1897:—

	Cattle.	Sheep.
Flemington	7,935	248,542
Riverstone	4,008	68,885
Total	11,943	317,427
Farley	704	26,136
Aberdeen .....	.....	85,451
Total	704	111,587
Grand Total	12,647	429,014

2939. Have you also prepared a return of the wool traffic from that district? Yes. It reads as follows:—

J. Harper.
20 July, 1900.

RETURN showing Number of Bales and Weight of Wool forwarded from Narrabri West during the Seasons 1897-98 and 1898-99:—

Stations to.	1897-98.		1898-99.	
	Number of bales.	Weight—Tons.	Number of bales.	Weight—Tons.
Darling Harbour, Liverpool, and Morpeth	24,071	3,800	21,801	3,399
Newcastle and West Maitland	15,124	2,612	16,520	2,732
Total	39,195	6,412	38,321	6,131

2940. Have you brought any other returns? Yes. In my first examination I was asked, by Dr. Garran I think, a question as to the disposition to offer wool in the Sydney market as against shipping it direct. For the information of the Committee I have prepared the following return:—

STATEMENT showing Number of Bales of Wool offered for sale in Sydney compared with the arrivals.

Season.	Number of Bales offered.	Number of Bales actually received.	Percentage offered for Sale.
			Per cent.
1895-6	441,437	623,000	71
1896-7	437,284	610,000	72
1897-8	445,000	564,000	79
1898-9	447,517	552,000	81
1899-1900	419,000	501,000	84

NOTE.—Brisbane sales are subsidised by the Government.

TUESDAY, 24 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Narrabri to Walgett, with branch to Collarendabri.

Charles McDonnell Stuart, Supervising Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

2941. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the proposed line from Woolabra to Collarendabri the driest of all possible routes? There is not very much difference between it and the line from Narrabri, on the north side of the Namoi.

C. McD.
Stuart.

2942. I am leaving out the eleven miles at the end of the line; I am supposing that we stop at point A on the map;—is the other part of the line drier between that and Woolabra? It is slightly drier; but only slightly drier.

2943. Taking the line from Narrabri to Wee Waa, do we get much flooded country there going south of the river? No.

2944. When we get to Wee Waa, have we to cross the water? Yes; that is troublesome. It is very flooded from there until you join the survey on the north side of the Namoi.

2945. What distance is that? About 7 miles of flooded country.

2946. Would most of that be on piles? No; bridges just here and there at the deepest points, with shallow banks. It is not a very deep or strong flood.

2947. Is there any danger of the bridge, or banks being washed away? No.

2948. Would this alternate bank and bridge work extend over 6 or 7 miles? Yes; that is the worst part.

2949. Would you be pretty well on sound ground until you get to point A? No; only until you get to Burren; thence you have 3 miles of flooded country before you get to point A.

2950. As between Woolabra to point A and Narrabri West to point A, the difference in favour of the northern route for dryness is not very great? No; but on the whole I should say the Woolabra line is the drier.

2951. For commercial and general traffic purposes, which line do you think is the better one? I think the line from Narrabri.

2952. That is a better connection for the railway? Yes.

2953. Even if it is a little more flooded, that is more than compensated for by its going through better country? Yes.

2954. Is there very much flooded country between Burren and Walgett? After you cross Pian Creek into Walgett, where we propose stopping a mile and a half from the town, there are some miles of flooded country, and it is very deep.

2955. How many miles? I think it is 7 or 8 miles from Eurie Eurie.

2956. How close can you approach Walgett, coming from the south, without getting into wet country? You cannot get very near Walgett. It is not the last piece of flooded land that causes the trouble; there are three or four pieces of flooded ground.

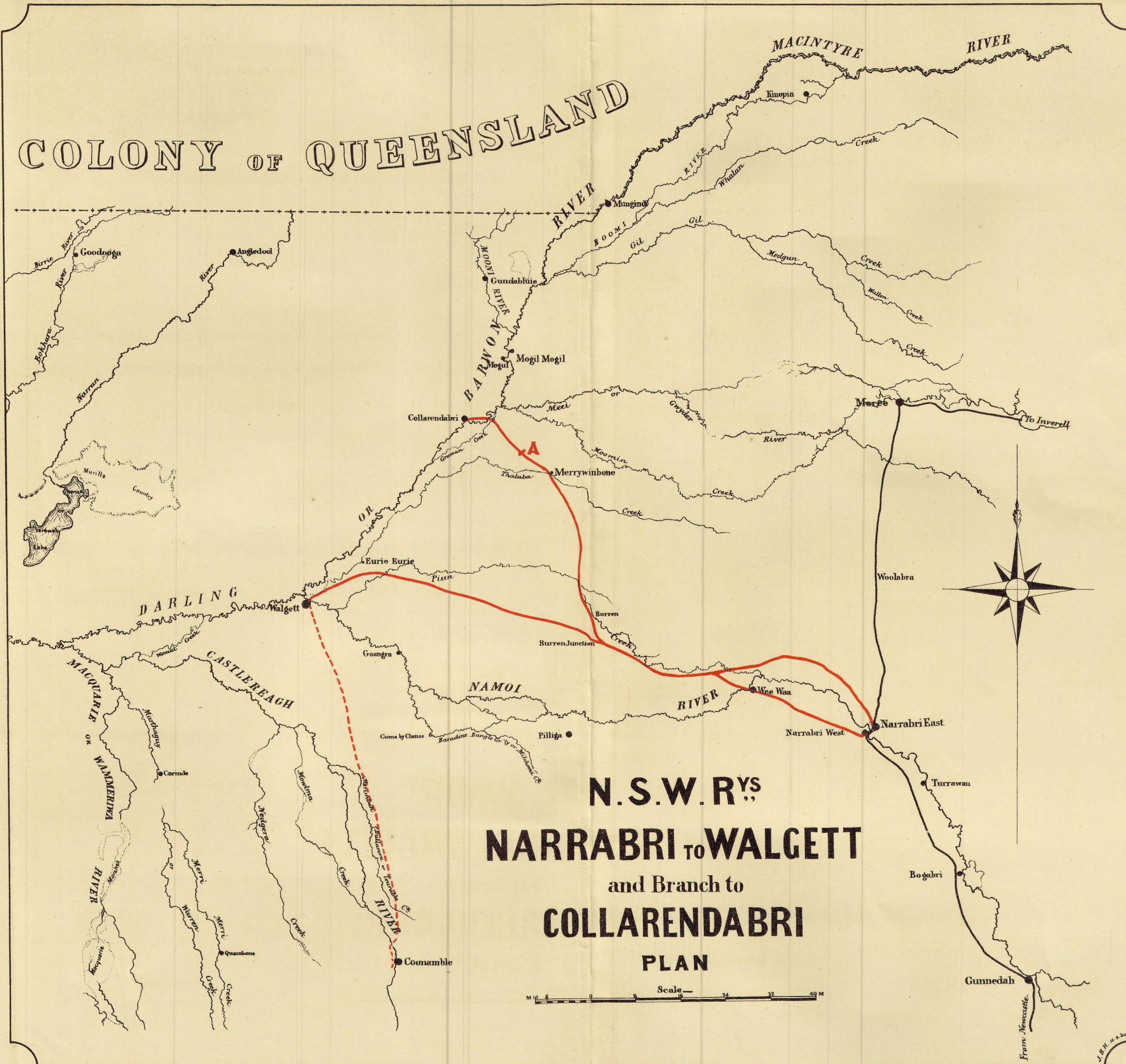
2957. I mean that to avoid all difficulties in approaching Walgett from the south, how far south would you stop? I would go right into Walgett.

C. McD.
Stuart.
24 July, 1900.

2958. I want to know how far you would have to stop to get clear of the difficult country? I do not know exactly. It is a troublesome bit of country, but it is not flooded to anything like the same depth as the country between Eurie Eurie and Walgett.
2959. Is Walgett subject to flood? Yes; in a very high flood the main street is under water.
2960. Could you put your railway station anywhere above flood-level? No.
2961. If you take a line of railway into Walgett, it must be submerged? We would keep it out of the flood by raising it 4 feet.
2962. But would not all the approaches be under water? Yes; in a high flood.
2963. So that practically traffic would be at a standstill? Yes.
2964. Will Collarendabri be so bad as that? No; Collarendabri is practically dry ground. It is in getting from point A to Collarendabri that you have the greatest difficulty.
2965. Suppose we stop at point A, with a view of ultimately going on to Angledool, would it be better to leave that difficulty and face it afterwards, or would it be better to face it at once? That is more a political question than an engineering question.
2966. If you stop at point A, what will be the result? You will have a new town established there.
2967. And if you go on to Angledool, will the centre of population be shifted to Angledool? Not necessarily.
2968. You would not increase the expense by stopping at point A, rather than by going on to Collarendabri? No.
2969. And at point A you will get all the traffic which you would get by going to Collarendabri? Yes; and you would save that expensive 11 miles.
2970. As between Moree and Collarendabri;—is it hopeless to think of a railway line there? Yes; I think it is quite hopeless.
2971. So that the idea of extending the Inverell-Moree railway due west is out of the question? Yes.
2972. The idea was that Inverell would find its market in the west; now it will have to come down south, and then go north-west to Collarendabri;—would not that be a great handicap? Yes.
2973. So that the idea once entertained is, you think, now out of the question? Yes, unless the Inverell people can compete with produce from the Tamworth district.
2974. If we make a railway from Narrabri to Collarendabri, as marked on the plan, and one to Walgett, do you think we shall serve all requirements of that part of the country? Yes.
2975. And the space between the two is not far from either line? It is not.
2976. If we make a line from Narrabri to Collarendabri, and a line from Coonamble to Walgett, we will do justice to the district? I think so.
2977. Would that be a good division? Yes, a very good division.
2978. Would all the parts between the two railways be fairly well served? Yes.
2979. Would any part be more than 40 miles from a station? No.
2980. And it would open up the best of the district? Yes.
2981. Do you think that the line which is being made to Brewarrina will take a good deal of the traffic that might have come to Walgett? It will certainly take some of it.
2982. Do you think that the line to Brewarrina diminishes the necessity, from the Railway Commissioners' point of view, of going to Walgett? I would scarcely say so, because the distance from Brewarrina to Walgett is so great that I think both parties are fairly entitled to railway communication.
2983. Do you think there is room for both? Yes.
2984. From Coonamble to Walgett, to the point where you meet with the difficulties, is an easy line? Yes; it is only on the last 10 miles that there is a difficulty.
2985. At the end of the line you will be under water unless you build up? Yes.

[One plan.]

COLONY OF QUEENSLAND



N.S.W. RYS NARRABRI TO WALGETT and Branch to COLLARENDABRI PLAN

Scale — 0 10 20 30 40 49 M

1900.

—
 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
 NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
 PUBLIC WORKS.

SECOND REPORT

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

GRENFELL TO WYALONG.

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

Printed under No. 8 Report from Printing Committee, 9 August, 1900.

SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPELGATE GULLICK GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

* 216—A

1900.

[9d.]

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

- *The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
 *The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 *The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

- *WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

- The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, Chairman.
 The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

[*On 14th June, 1900, The Honorable WILLIAM JOSEPH TRICKETT, having accepted the office of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, retired from the position of Chairman, and a Member of the Committee. Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Vice-Chairman, was elected Chairman in the place of Mr. TRICKETT, and The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN was chosen as Vice-Chairman. On 4th July, The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM was elected to the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. TRICKETT.]

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM GRENFELL TO WYALONG.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom the consideration of the proposed Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong was referred back for further consideration and report, have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed railway should be carried out, as in their opinion a line from Temora is preferable; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

PREVIOUS INQUIRIES.

1. Including the present inquiry, the question of railway extension to Wyalong has been four times before the Public Works Committee. In 1894 it was under consideration as a proposal for the construction of a line from Temora, and the Committee reported, that, owing to the uncertainty of the permanence of the Wyalong goldfield, the decision upon the proposed railway should, in their opinion, be deferred for six months. The following year the proposal to connect with Temora was again dealt with by a fresh Committee, and on that occasion the decision was against the proposed line, the Committee being of opinion that at that time there was no justification for its construction, and that the prospects of Wyalong's future were not such as to lead them to conclude that the railway should be built in anticipation of what might be the condition of the goldfield and the district some years hence. Last year the present Committee inquired into a proposal for the construction of a railway from Grenfell to Wyalong, the line connecting with that now being constructed from Koorawatha, and a report was adopted recommending the Grenfell route, the resolution on the subject being passed on a division of four votes to three.

THE REFERENCE BACK TO THE COMMITTEE.

2. On 19th December, 1899, the proposed Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong was referred back to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, the resolution of the Assembly being—

“That the consideration of the Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong be referred back to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for further consideration and report, because the matter has not received sufficient consideration.”

The reason stated in the resolution for sending back the proposal the Committee did not consider to be justified, and they, therefore, through their chairman, in reply to the letter of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, informing them of the passing of the resolution, addressed to the Honorable the Speaker, a letter stating that, while recognising the authority of the Assembly to refer the matter

matter back, and agreeing to reconsider the matter, they respectfully took exception to the reason assigned for such reference, and drew attention to their report and the evidence and plans attached thereto, which afforded ample proof that the proposed railway received very full consideration in all its bearings.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

3. In the further consideration given to the matter by the Committee, it was thought to be unnecessary to take further evidence, unless on some points not already put forward, but advisable that those members of the Committee who had not been over the route of the proposed line, and that from Temora to Wyalong, should have the opportunity to do so. It was considered that the evidence taken in the last inquiry was very complete, that the further examination of witnesses would prolong the investigation without resulting in anything useful, and that the only procedure likely to assist the Committee was the further inspection of the route by those of the Committee not personally acquainted with it. The whole of the evidence given in the inquiry of 1899, it was agreed, should be regarded as evidence in the present inquiry, and Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Levien, and Mr. McFarlane were appointed a Sectional Committee to make a further inspection with reference to the proposed railway. The inspection by the Sectional Committee was delayed by the state of the roads consequent upon the wet weather, and, as at this time a vacancy occurred in the representation of the Legislative Council on the Committee, it was thought advisable to postpone the inspection until the vacancy was filled, so that the newly elected member might be added to the Sectional Committee.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE'S VISIT.

4. On 20th July the Sectional Committee, to which Mr. Hyam had been added, left Sydney for Temora, it having been decided that their further inspection should commence, at that town, by proceeding along the alternative route from Temora to Wyalong, and from there travelling over the proposed route from Grenfell to Wyalong; and their report is published with this one. They were able, not only to inspect both the routes, but to see much of the country through which they run, and, though they did not examine any witnesses, they gave the residents of the districts interested in the railway full opportunity to put before them any information likely to assist them in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the results that would follow the construction of the proposed railway, whether from Grenfell or from Temora. As the resolution under which they were appointed did not direct them to do more than further inspect the proposed and the alternative route for the railway, they did not, in their report, make any recommendation. They were of opinion that they should inform the full Committee of the nature of their proceedings from the time of their leaving Sydney to that of their return, and postpone an expression of their views as to the better of the two routes until the matter should come before the full Committee for consideration.

EXPLANATION OF THE VOTING.

5. The report of the Sectional Committee was submitted on the 27th ultimo, and on the 1st instant the Committee came to a decision in regard to the proposed work, by passing a resolution that it is not expedient the line to Wyalong should be constructed from Grenfell, as, in their opinion, a line from Temora is preferable. As in the preceding inquiry, the division is four to three, but the position is reversed, the majority now being in favour of the extension from Temora. Five of the members of the Committee voting in the division took part in the inquiry of last year, and voted in the present further inquiry as they did previously, two favouring the Grenfell route and three that from Temora; but of the two new members appointed since the date of the last inquiry, one voted for the Grenfell connection while the other supported that from Temora. This increased the number of votes in favour of the Temora route, as shown in the division of last year, from three to four, and decreased that in favour of the route from Grenfell from four to three.

REASONS

REASONS FOR SUPPORTING THE ROUTE FROM TEMORA TO WYALONG.

6. The four members of the Committee who supported the Temora connection urged in favour of their view the following reasons :—

- (1) It is considerably shorter than the route from Grenfell to Wyalong.
- (2) It will cost £45,000 less.
- (3) It will serve a larger population.
- (4) It will open up a larger area of land suitable for close agricultural settlement.
- (5) It will serve the mineral area around Reefton and Barmedman.
- (6) It will preserve existing trade relations.
- (7) It will allow the residents of the districts affected an opportunity of trading indifferently with either Sydney or Melbourne.
- (8) It will facilitate the transfer of stock in times of drought from the west to the high country about Gundagai and Tumut.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

7. The following extract from the Committee's Minutes of Proceedings shows the resolution passed, and gives the details of the voting :—

" Mr. Shepherd moved,—'That in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong, as referred back to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, for further consideration and report, be carried out.'

" Mr. McFarlane seconded the motion.

" Mr. Levien moved,—'That the motion be amended by inserting the word 'not' before the word 'expedient.'

" The amendment was passed on the following division, upon the question 'that the word proposed to be inserted be so inserted' :—

Ayes, 4.	|	Noes, 3.
Mr. Dick,		Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Hyam,		Dr. Garran,
Mr. Watson,		Mr. McFarlane.
Mr. Levien.		

" Mr. Levien moved,—'That the motion be further amended by the addition of the following words :—' as, in the opinion of the Committee, a line from Temora to Wyalong is preferable.'

" The amendment was passed on the following division, upon the question 'That the words proposed to be added be so added' :—

Ayes, 4.	|	Noes, 3.
Mr. Dick,		Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Hyam,		Dr. Garran,
Mr. Watson,		Mr. McFarlane.
Mr. Levien.		

" The motion, as amended, was passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 6.	|	Noes, 1.
Mr. Dick,		Dr. Garran."
Mr. Shepherd,		
Mr. Hyam,		
Mr. Watson,		
Mr. Levien,		
Mr. McFarlane.		

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 7 August, 1900.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM GRENFELL TO WYALONG.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee appointed to make a further inspection with reference to the proposed Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong, left Sydney by mail train at 9.20 p.m. on Friday, 20th July, for Temora, it having been decided that the inspection should commence at that town, by proceeding along the alternative route from Temora to Wyalong, and from there travelling over the proposed route from Grenfell to Wyalong.

On the motion of Mr. Levien, seconded by Mr. McFarlane, the Hon. P. L. C. Shepherd, M.L.C., was appointed Chairman.

Temora was reached at 9.15 a.m. on Saturday, and, in the interests of the Temora-Wyalong route, the Sectional Committee were met by the Mayor, the Secretary, and a number of the members of the Temora Railway League, and others of the townspeople.

At 10.30 a.m., accompanied by the Secretary and some of the members of the Railway League, the Sectional Committee left Temora for Wyalong, *via* Reefton and Barmedman. Travelling by way of the Duck Creek and Trungley-road, as far as the Trungley Hall, they saw a fair proportion of the land under cultivation up to that point; and then branching off to Reefton, they arrived at that mining township at 12.30 p.m., and were met by a number of the townspeople and members of the local Railway League. Barmedman was reached at a quarter-past 2 p.m., and after a stay of an hour, during which the mining resources and progress of the town and district were explained, the journey was continued to Wyalong, where the Sectional Committee arrived at 7.25 p.m.

Their inspection of the Temora route for a railway to Wyalong showed them that for about 4 miles from Temora the country was scrubby. Thence to Reefton, 8 miles further on, the land was found to be fairly good, and this continued, with occasional patches of inferior country, to Barmedman, 9 miles from Reefton. Thence to the Half-way House Hotel, 10 miles from Barmedman, the land varied considerably from fair to sandy loam with scrub, and between the hotel and the vicinity of Wyalong, 8 or 9 miles further, almost all the country passed along the main road was inferior, gilgai holes of considerable size being for some distance very numerous, and thence sandy scrub and gravel ridges were noticeable until about a mile from Wyalong when the land became very good. On leaving Barmedman, two of the Committee followed the main road, while the other two travelled from 3 to 5 miles south of the road, where the country was of much better quality.

At East Wyalong, the Government township, the residents were practically unanimous in supporting the Grenfell route. They do so to a certain extent because that by adopting that route less delay in giving them railway communication will take place than may be the case if another inquiry respecting the Temora route should have to be made, but also because they are satisfied with the facilities which the line to Grenfell will afford the town and surrounding

district. They point out that the objections to this route come almost wholly from Temora. That town has business associations with West Wyalong which strongly influence the residents of that part of Wyalong in favour of the Temora route. It does not appear that the trade and traffic with Temora is of any special benefit to that town—most of both simply passes through; but in any case Temora wishes to retain its present relations with Wyalong, either by means of a railway connection or by leaving things as they are. Another factor in the matter is that the people of Temora are afraid that, if the Wyalong trade and traffic are diverted to Grenfell, the railway train service between Cootamundra and Temora, instead of being continued as now—daily—will be altered to one by which the trains will run only twice or three times a week.

At 8:30 p.m. the Sectional Committee met a deputation representing the Wyalong Railway League, and including the Mayor of Wyalong, in the jury-room of the court-house.

The importance of Wyalong as a permanent and flourishing gold-field, and the serious hindrance to the progress of the town and district caused by the want of railway communication, were strongly represented. All of the speakers, including the Mayor, with one exception, favoured the Grenfell route, but were willing to leave the choice of routes to the Public Works Committee, provided the construction of the line was not thereby delayed. On Monday, 23rd instant, a deputation, representing the West Wyalong Railway League, waited upon the Sectional Committee, in the interests of the Temora route for the proposed railway, and advocated that route as the nearest and most direct to Wyalong, and as the national route. It would, they said, afford the farmers of the district a means for getting their produce away to the nearest market, and mine-owners for obtaining machinery for their mines; and it would develop a large timber trade between Wyalong and the district beyond it and Temora. One of the deputation stated that, if the Grenfell route should be the one adopted, goods would still be obtained by Wyalong business people from Temora by team, in competition with the railway.

At 10:30 a.m., the Sectional Committee left Wyalong to inspect the Grenfell-Wyalong route, and reached Back Creek at 12 o'clock noon. For about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Wyalong good agricultural country, and very suitable for fruit-growing, was passed through; and for 4 miles further the land was of excellent quality—a good sandy loam. Thence for $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, to Back Creek station, the land was fairly good, with box, myall, oak, and belar growing upon it. At Back Creek station a deputation of settlers pressed upon the attention of the Sectional Committee the disabilities they laboured under through not having railway communication, and expressed themselves favourable to any route, so long as they got a railway.

From Back Creek station to the Bland Creek, a distance of 5 miles, the Sectional Committee continued along the surveyed railway route, and inspected that portion which is most liable to flood. The land consists of red, and what is known in the district as black, soil, all since the recent rains, more or less covered with grass and herbage excellent for grazing purposes, and portions of the land suitable for agriculture. Several parts of it have been flooded within the last fortnight; most of the water had run off, but it still remained in the gilgais. The portion of the route most subject to flood extends back from the Bland Creek towards Wyalong for a considerable distance, and this, during the recent heavy rainfall, which, it is said, produced one of the heaviest floods experienced since 1890, was found to have been covered to a height of about 12 inches; and now, a fortnight afterwards, the water has disappeared, except that it has left the ground boggy. At the Bland Creek, where the railway route crosses it, a selector who has been ten years there, on a selection comprising 960 acres, met the Sectional Committee and informed them that he had successfully cultivated the black soil.

From the Bland Creek the Sectional Committee travelled 11 miles to Marsden, where the residents of the township brought under their notice the advantage that would accrue to the township, and to Bena, a largely-settled district to the north-west of it, if the Grenfell route could be altered so as to bring the railway through Marsden. The country from the Bland Creek to Marsden was well grassed and of good quality.

Leaving

Leaving Marsden, the Sectional Committee travelled to Lake Cowal station, $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles further, over exceedingly well-grassed land, which must be grazing country of the first quality, with a large proportion well suited for agriculture.

Lake Cowal was left at 10:30 the next morning, and the Sectional Committee travelled to Grenfell, *via* Marsden and Carragabal. The grass and herbage on the plain country in the vicinity of Lake Cowal and around Marsden showed remarkable growth, as the result of the recent rainfall, for it was from 6 to 8 inches to considerably over 1 foot high, suggesting unusual possibilities in the fattening of stock. For some distance from Marsden towards Carragabal splendidly grassed land was passed through; and, though nearer Carragabal station, the grass and herbage were not so thick or plentiful, the land, some of which consisted of bare plains, but most of it lightly timbered, was generally of good quality. All of the country in this locality might be fairly described as very good pasture land, with much of it fit for cultivation. Debris on the wire fence along one of the banks of Carragabal Creek showed that in some places, when the creek was recently in flood, the water must have covered portions of the adjoining land; but, as except in a few rather boggy places no water was remaining, it must have disappeared from the land very quickly. Myall, box, pine, and oak were the chief timbers seen.

At Carragabal station the Sectional Committee were met by a deputation of settlers from Piney Range and its vicinity, who urged the construction of the railway by the Grenfell route in the interests of further settlement and production. The land in the district, they stated, was taken up by settlers to a large extent, and they were cultivating a considerable proportion of it; but the want of easy communication with a railway prevented them putting as much under crop as they would like to do.

From Carragabal the Sectional Committee travelled towards Piney Range, crossing the surveyed railway route several times, and passing a considerable quantity of land under wheat. Approaching Grenfell the country changed from flat to undulating, timbered, chiefly, with oak and box, nearly all suitable for cultivation, and the balance fit for pastoral purposes. Some miles of poor-box country with some hills and undulations which might be described as second-class grazing land for sheep were also met with.

Grenfell was reached at 6:30 p.m., and at 8:30 a deputation, consisting of the Mayor of Grenfell and members of the Grenfell Railway League, waited upon the Sectional Committee, and advocated the construction of the railway from Grenfell to Wyalong. They urged that there could be no question of the superiority of the land along this route, as compared with that along the route from Temora, and stated that more land would be taken up along the route, or within convenient reach of it, and cultivated, if it were certain that a railway would be provided to afford means for sending the produce away. It was impossible, they said, to make farming pay under present conditions, the farmers having to cart their produce such a distance. The Grenfell-Wyalong line, they wished to press upon the attention of the Committee, was one that would afford the people of the Grenfell district a western market as well as one at Sydney, thus giving them some chance of competing with producers in a better position in regard to railway communication. The railway should, moreover, they considered, be regarded as a portion of a trunk line extending to the Hillston district, the trade of which district would thereby be attracted to Sydney, the direction in which it ought to come. The route from Temora, they pointed out, would divert the Hillston trade to Melbourne.

The following morning the Committee left Grenfell for Sydney, by way of Landra and Young, that route affording them an opportunity for seeing some of the rich agricultural lands that will be served by the railway to Grenfell from Koorawatha.

The foregoing statement of proceedings will show that the Sectional Committee inspected both routes and much of the country through which they run, and that though they did not examine any witnesses they gave the residents of the districts interested in the railway full opportunity to put before them any information likely to assist them in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the results that would follow the construction of the proposed railway, whether from Grenfell or from Temora.

Last

Last year, when the Full Committee traversed the Grenfell route, the Bland Plains and most of the country generally were almost bare of grass or herbage; now both grass and herbage may be said to be in profusion everywhere. The country has, therefore, been seen in both a bad and a good season, and its capabilities can thereby be better understood.

As the resolution under which the Sectional Committee were appointed did not direct them to do more than to further inspect the proposed and the alternative route for the railway, they do not consider that they are called upon in this Report to make any recommendation. They are of opinion that they should inform the Full Committee of the nature of their proceedings from the time of their leaving Sydney to that of their return, and postpone an expression of their views as to the better of the two routes until the matter comes before the Full Committee for consideration.

27th July, 1900.

P. L. C. SHEPHERD,
Chairman.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLAN

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.

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

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SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPLIGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

MEMBERS OF THE SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire, Chairman.
 The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

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Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed railway should be carried out, conditionally on the required land being given free or equitably exchanged for Crown lands, and that the lands served contribute a sum sufficient, together with revenue received, to make up an amount equal to the working expenses and 2 per cent. on the cost of construction,—and not otherwise; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

1. The proposed railway, 16 miles 38 chains in length, would leave the Main Southern line about 30 chains south of the Culcairn station, and, taking a generally easterly direction, pass Morven township about 1 mile to the south, and thence, following the general direction of the main road, continue to Germanton, where it would end at Albury-street in that town, beyond the cricket ground, which it would adjoin on the south side. The general construction of the line is described as light, but includes provision for the triplication of rails at the Culcairn station; the junction and terminus arrangements necessarily raise the mileage cost in such a short line. Five fair-sized creeks have to be bridged; the grades and curves are easy.

THE GERMANTON DISTRICT.

2. The proposal for a railway to Germanton has been before the public, the Committee are informed, for many years, the first survey having been made in 1883, from which date to the present time the matter has frequently been brought under the notice of the Department of Public Works by deputations from residents of the districts concerned, and by other means. In 1896–1899 a very considerable development took place in the Germanton district, in the direction of wheat-growing, a large area of land being devoted to that industry on the half-shares principle, with the result, that during the grain season of 1898–1899, out of 115,000 bags of wheat received at the Culcairn railway station, 90,000 came from the Germanton district. As the whole of the present season's wheat has not yet been marketed it is difficult to forecast the actual yield. Up to the middle of March, which is less than four months of the wheat season, 50,000 bags were received at Culcairn, of which quantity 37,000 bags were the produce of the district to be served by the proposed line. The continued development of the district is regarded as highly probable, inasmuch as it is favoured as a rule with a rainfall sufficient to ensure the success of all agricultural operations.

AN

AN ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL.

3. At the request of the Progress Committee of Cookardinia, an exploration was made in 1897 of a line from Henty to Germanton, as an alternative to that from Culcairn. It was found that a railway from Henty presented no engineering difficulties, and was not likely to cost more per mile than the other; but it would be expensive in the aggregate, on account of its extra length—some 10 miles—and it did not present any special advantages over the original proposal, as the population to be served by it was no larger than that along the route from Culcairn. The Railway Commissioners went over the route, and, as a result of their inspection, were not prepared to recommend it in preference to the line from Culcairn, which has the great advantage, from a traffic point of view, of leaving the main line at a point which is already a junction station.

ESTIMATED COST.

4. The estimated total cost of the line is £53,957, or £3,275 per mile. This estimate is based on the price of rails being £7 10s. per ton; but the Engineer-in-Chief, according to his evidence, anticipates a higher price than this by the time the line is under construction. There may, he says, be a drop; but, on the other hand, the price may rise to the extent of another 10s. per ton, which would amount to about £50 or £60 more per mile.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

5. The report by the Railway Commissioners estimates the annual cost, comprising interest at 3 per cent. and working expenses based on a tri-weekly service, at £3,469, and the revenue from traffic at £2,175, which exceeds the working expenses by £325, but is £1,294 less than the total annual cost. In referring to the circumstance that the estimated revenue which can be calculated upon to-day will more than pay working expenses, they say it is fair to assume that the traffic will be considerably increased, and, as a large proportion of it would pass over the main line, it is reasonable to look to that line to bear any deficiency that might arise on account of interest on the capital cost of the branch line. The locality is one of a highly competitive character as regards Victoria; but, while it is impossible to look for more than the carriage from Albury to Germanton of general goods, the grain and kindred traffic would, under existing rates, come in the direction of Sydney. In view of the possibilities of the district, and its probable development, if aided by railway communication, they feel justified in recommending the construction of the line, subject, however, to the imperative condition that all the land required should be conveyed to the Government free of cost.

INSPECTION BY A SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

6. The Committee having examined the necessary official witnesses in Sydney, a Sectional Committee visited the Culcairn-Germanton district, where they inspected the route of the line and a considerable portion of the country to be served by the railway, and took local evidence. They found the country through which the line would pass to be generally level, with small broken hills on the northern side, whilst on the southern side the flat lands extend for a considerable distance, bounded by a range of hills some miles away. From the township of Morven, 5 miles distant from Culcairn, the expanse of level land widens out considerably, forming extensive areas of verdant flats. The greater portion of the land along the route on the lower levels is suitable for agriculture, whilst the slopes in the hilly parts are excellent for grazing purposes.

It was noticeable that but little attempt at agriculture had been made within 8 or 9 miles of Culcairn, the land for that distance being occupied almost exclusively with stock. A considerable amount of cultivation, however, was apparent on approaching Germanton, and though agriculture has only been carried on there to any large extent during the last three or four years, there is every promise,—the Sectional Committee say,—of a considerable development of this industry

industry in the near future; in fact, larger areas are being put under crop every year. In addition to the paddocks which have already been brought under the plough, further areas are being prepared for sowing, whilst ringbarking and other improvements are being rapidly carried out on most of the holdings.

The evidence given before the Sectional Committee, generally, went to show that the country through which the railway would pass, as well as considerable areas beyond the terminus which will be served by it, is of a superior description, suitable for growing wheat and other agricultural products. Its suitability for sheep, the rearing of cattle, and the production of wool is generally conceded, whilst it is anticipated, according to the evidence of several landowners, that in some of the country beyond Germanton, an extensive dairying business will be developed within a very short period, more particularly if the means of transit, which the proposed railway would afford, is obtained. The higher lands in the direction referred to are, though for the most part consisting of good soil, deemed more suitable for grazing than for agriculture, on account of their broken character.

It was ascertained that the country through which the railway would pass is held in large areas by private owners. These, the Sectional Committee found, are not inclined to give, free of cost, the land that would be required for the line, but express themselves generally as willing to accept Government land in exchange for that which may be taken by the Railway Department.

During their visit the Sectional Committee drove in the direction of Yarra Yarra, a distance of about 13 miles east of Germanton, and from there northward to Little Billabong, a further distance of 15 miles. From Little Billabong they proceeded to Kinross, a distance of about 15 miles, and thence back to Germanton, another 5 miles. The land towards Yarra Yarra consists of undulating country, interspersed with rather precipitous hills. It is all first-class grazing land, about three-fourths of it being suitable for cultivation. Some of the land is exceptionally good. It is mainly forest land—box and red-gum country. From Yarra Yarra to Little Billabong the country is more level than in the part already referred to, and the whole of it may be classed as land suitable for cultivation. Already considerable areas of it are under wheat, and the crops so far look very promising. The land from Little Billabong to Kinross is of an excellent character, and is tolerably level and well watered. A considerable portion of that land also is being used for growing wheat, and the farmers met with expressed their intention of largely increasing the area under cultivation if the proposed railway were constructed.

On the route of the line, and for a considerable distance beyond Germanton, there are large areas of land suitable for cultivation, that between Little Billabong and Germanton being noticeable for its superior quality.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

7. The traffic expected on the proposed line will consist chiefly of the carriage of wheat. The district is a pastoral as well as an agricultural one; but the bulk of the stock and wool, according to a report read to the Committee by the Chief Railway Traffic Manager, is forwarded by road to Albury, 38 miles from Germanton, and thence by rail to Melbourne. Fully 75 per cent. of return supplies, he also says, are obtained from Melbourne, *via* Albury or Culcairn, the Melbourne rates, arising from shorter carriage, operating distinctly in favour of that source of supply, and an analysis of the rates, apart altogether from the business relations of the district being chiefly centered in Melbourne, does not hold out any hope of a diversion of this trade to Sydney. The Sectional Committee were informed by some of the storekeepers that, under the existing condition of things, they find it cheaper to have supplies purchased in Sydney sent round to Melbourne by sea, and carried by way of the Victorian Railways to Germanton.

The wheat traffic, however, is assured. The traffic area of the line is considered by the Chief Railway Traffic Manager to be the country within about 20 miles due east from the terminus at Germanton, and 12 miles north and south of that town, and within this area there are under cultivation 26,000 acres, of which from 12,000 to 14,000 acres are east of Germanton. Throughout the 20 miles he states, if not for

for a further distance, all the land is very suitable for agriculture, from which fact it may be seen that, although the people of Germanton may be said to be near enough to railway communication, the line will bring within the influence of the railway other areas which under present circumstances are not served. Evidence given before the Sectional Committee represents the area of land in the district suitable for growing wheat to be 150,000 acres, of which 27,000 acres are already under cultivation and producing 115,000 bags a year, the yield per acre being from 12 to 20 bushels; and the Committee say in their report that the halves system of wheat-growing appears to be tolerably satisfactory to both the owners of the land and the lessees, and that applications are reported to be both numerous and incessant from persons in various parts of the Colony desirous of obtaining land for cultivation under this class of tenure.

At present the wheat produced in the district is carted to Culcairn, and carried by rail to various milling centres in New South Wales. With the railway, and the existing rates for the conveyance of grain, the inducement to keep this traffic in the Colony will be all the greater. The wheat traffic, together with the carriage of a certain proportion of fat stock and wool, would, in the opinion of the Chief Traffic Manager, represent the great bulk of the traffic carried over the line in the direction of Sydney. The line might, however, he states, be utilised for the carriage of goods from Albury to Germanton, and from Germanton to Albury, and he has allowed for this in his traffic estimate, which is as follows:—

		<i>Summary of Traffic.</i>				
		Tons.				Revenue.
Goods traffic	...	...	...	...	1,353	£241
Wool	"	...	...	...	1,000	214
Wheat	"	...	...	...	10,576	1,088
Stock	"	...	...	...	300 trucks	70
Total		...	...	...	12,929 tons	£1,613
		300 trucks				
Passengers—2,000, at 2/10 each		...	...	...	...	£283
H.C.D. and parcels		...	...	...	...	75
Mails—17 miles, at £12		...	...	...	...	204
Total, coaching		...	...	...	...	£562
Grand total traffic		...	...	...	...	£2,175

With regard to wool, the Sectional Committee mention 8,000 bales as the locally estimated quantity which would be carried from the district by the railway, 5,000 bales being the produce of the area which the line would traverse. Some of the witnesses, however, estimated that another 3,000 bales, including some that now goes towards Wagga, would be intercepted by the railway from places beyond Germanton, such as Tarcutta, Tumberumba, and Adelong. The bulk of the wool from the Wagga district at present finds its way to Melbourne *via* Albury; but the opinion was expressed by some witnesses that after the accomplishment of Federation, the wool must inevitably come to Sydney, if the proposed railway be constructed, and some of the traffic which now goes to Melbourne, though continuing to go in that direction, would probably be carried by way of the proposed line to Albury.

To judge from the evidence of several landowners in the district, examined by the Sectional Committee, traffic is also possible from dairying, which it is anticipated will be carried on extensively in some of the country beyond Germanton. Timber, also, might furnish some traffic to the line, as there are said to be valuable timbers in the district, which cannot be turned to profitable use though very much in demand, owing to the want of railway communication.

STOCK IN THE DISTRICT.

8. Evidence given by the Chief Inspector of Stock shows that in the area that would be influenced by the railway, there were, in 1899, 298,785 sheep, and 3,850 cattle. The average carrying capacity of the country, he states, is from a sheep and a half to a sheep per acre. The drift of stock has hitherto been to Melbourne, the market there being better than that in Sydney, and stockowners

in

in the district being largely interested in the southern capital; but bad seasons in New South Wales improve the Sydney market. Considerable stock movements take place between Culcairn and Germanton, and also between Little Billabong and Germanton.

LAND STATISTICS.

9. According to the Chief Draftsman of the Department of Lands, there are, within an area of 12 miles north and south of the proposed line, and extending 20 miles to the eastward, 361,000 acres of alienated land, 34,400 acres of reserves, and 56,000 acres of Crown lands. Of the Crown lands, 24,000 acres are held under occupation license, and 320 are untenanted, unless it be by annual lease.

THE COMMITTEE'S DECISION.

10. The Committee consider that it is expedient the proposed railway should be constructed, but, in view of the very exceptional circumstances surrounding the proposal, their approval is subject to the conditions that the required land should be given free or equitably exchanged for Crown lands, and that the land to be served should contribute a sum sufficient, together with the revenue earned by the line, to make up an amount equal to the working expenses and 2 per cent. on the cost of construction,—and not otherwise.

Two facts that stand out very prominently in this inquiry, are that the land to be served by the line is practically all privately owned, and that very little of it is at the present time beyond a reasonable distance from the Great Southern Railway. The length of the line— $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles—is less than the distance ordinarily considered as reasonable for farmers to travel with their wheat to a railway, and, while there is at present strong indications that the growth of wheat in the district will increase, the method by which a considerable portion of it is cultivated—the halves system—has not been as successful in some other parts of the Colony as was expected.

The first condition attached to the Committee's approval of the line being constructed—that the land should be given free or equitably exchanged for Crown lands—is a modification of what the Railway Commissioners regard as an imperative necessity in connection with the railway. The second is justified by the fact that the lands that would be benefited by the line are almost all private lands, and by the advisableness of ensuring the permanency of the wheat industry in the district. The payment of a tax, regulated in amount by the distance from the line of the lands benefited, may have the result of inducing the landholders to continue their land under cultivation instead of letting it go back to a condition which will provide little or no traffic to the railway.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

11. The following is the Resolution passed by the Committee, as shown in their Minutes of Proceedings:—

Mr. Watson moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Culcairn to Germanton, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, conditionally on the required land being given free, and that the lands served contribute a sum sufficient, together with revenue received, to make up an amount equal to the working expenses and 2 per cent. on the cost of construction.”

Mr. McFarlane seconded the motion *pro forma*.

Dr. Garran moved,—“That the motion be amended by the omission of the words ‘conditionally on the required land being given free, and’”

The amendment was negatived on the following division upon the question “that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the motion.”

Ayes, 5.

Mr. Dick,
Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Watson,
Mr. McFarlane.

Noes, 2.

Dr. Garran,
Mr. Levien.

Mr.

Mr. McFarlane moved,—“That the motion be amended by the insertion after the word ‘free’ of the words ‘or equitably exchanged for Crown lands.’”

The amendment was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 6.	Noes, 1.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Shepherd.
Dr. Garran,	
Mr. Hyam,	
Mr. Watson,	
Mr. Levien,	
Mr. McFarlane.	

Mr. Hyam moved,—“That the motion be further amended by the omission of all the words after the word ‘and’ to the end of the motion.”

The amendment was negatived on the following division upon the question “that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the motion”:—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Shepherd,	Mr. Levien.
Dr. Garran,	
Mr. Watson,	
Mr. McFarlane.	

Dr. Garran moved,—“That the motion be further amended by the addition of the words ‘and not otherwise.’”

The amendment was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Shepherd,	Mr. Levien.
Dr. Garran,	
Mr. Watson,	
Mr. McFarlane.	

The motion as amended was passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 4.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Shepherd,
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Hyam,
Mr. Watson,	Mr. Levien
Mr. McFarlane.	

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 29 September, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.

TUESDAY, 24 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Have you a statement with reference to the Culcairn to Germanton railway? Yes; I propose to read a statement prepared for the Under-Secretary. It is as follows:—

H. Deane.
24 July, 1900.

CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON RAILWAY.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration on 22nd November, 1899, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Culcairn to Germanton."

This is a proposal which has been before the public for many years.

The first survey for such a line of railway was made in 1883, and from that day up to the present time the proposal has been frequently brought under the notice of the Department by deputations from the residents of the districts concerned, and by other means.

In 1891, at the instance of Mr. Secretary Bruce Smith, the proposal was subjected to a thorough investigation by Mr. Stanley Alexander, one of the Examiners of Public Works proposals. Mr. Alexander reported that, in his opinion, the construction of the line would not, within a long time, produce an appreciable effect upon the pastoral or farming industries of the districts served by it, and that the traffic to be obtained from the carriage of stores and general goods would be extremely limited.

Representations continued to be made, however, to the Department urging the construction of the line, and in 1898 a further examination of the route was made by Mr. C. McD. Stuart, of the Construction Branch, as forming the first section of a proposed line from Culcairn to the Upper Murray. Mr. Stuart's report favoured the construction of a railway from Culcairn to Germanton; but was against any extension of the line beyond the last-named town. A revised survey of the line from Culcairn to Germanton was carried out by Mr. Surveyor Wilkins and completed early in this year.

In the meantime, but more particularly during the years 1896-1899, a very considerable development had taken place in the Germanton district. Although the country which the proposed line traverses is almost wholly alienated and consists of purely pastoral properties, a large area has of late been devoted to wheat-growing on the half-shares principle. The result has been that, out of the 115,000 bags of wheat received at Culcairn Railway Station during the grain season of 1898-1899, 90,000 of them came from the Germanton district. The grain traffic for the current season has not been so large, only some 50,000 bags having been received at Culcairn up to the middle of March, 1900; but of that quantity 37,000 bags were the produce of the district to be served by the proposed line.

The continued development of the district may be regarded as highly probable, inasmuch as it is favoured with the great advantage of receiving, as a rule, sufficient rainfall to ensure the success of all agricultural operations. Nevertheless; it has to be pointed out that the cultivation of land on the half-shares principle may not be the method most conducive to permanent settlement.

At the request of the Cookardinia Progress Committee, an exploration was made by Mr. Stuart in 1897 of a line from Henty to Germanton as an alternative route to that from Culcairn. The survey report showed that this alternative proposal, while it presented no engineering difficulties and was not likely to cost more per mile than the line from Culcairn, would be much more expensive in the aggregate, on account of its extra length—some 10 miles; that it did not present any special advantages over the original proposal; and that the population to be served by it was no larger than that along the route from Culcairn.

These conclusions in favour of Culcairn as the junctioning point have been generally endorsed by the Railway Commissioners, who reported last November that they had personally inspected and considered the merits of the two routes in question, but they were not prepared to recommend that *via* Henty in preference to the line from Culcairn.

Culcairn to Germanton is practically a straight line and has the decided advantages, from a traffic point of view, of leaving the main line at Culcairn, which is already a junction station.

The following is the report of the Railway Commissioners on the proposed line:—

"Proposed Line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton—16 miles 38 chains.

"In accordance with section 13 of the Public Works Act of 1888, we beg to report as under:—

Cost of Construction—

The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction of a light line of railway (exclusive of land and compensation) at £53,957

Annual Cost—

Interest on capital expenditure at 3 per cent. £1,619

Working expenses, allowing for a tri-weekly service 1,850

Total annual cost £3,469

Traffic Estimate—

Merchandise and live stock £1,613

Passengers and parcels 358

Mails 204

Total estimated revenue £2,175

H. Deane.
24 July, 1900.

"The country that would be served by this line is practically all privately owned. It is of good quality and well suited for agriculture, but chiefly devoted to pastoral pursuits. At the present time there are about 26,000 acres under crop, and it is stated that this area would be at least doubled if the district had the benefit of railway communication with Culcairn."

"It will be observed from the estimated revenue that the traffic which can be calculated upon to-day will more than pay working expenses, and it is fair to assume that this traffic will be considerably increased, a large proportion of which would pass over the main line; and, therefore, it would be reasonable to look to the main line to bear any deficiency that might arise on account of interest on capital cost of the branch line."

"The locality is one of a highly competitive character, so far as Victoria is concerned; but, while it is impossible to look for more than the carriage from Albury to Germanton of general goods, the grain and kindred traffic would, under existing rates, come in the direction of Sydney."

"In view of the possibilities of the district and probable development, if aided by railway communication, the Commissioners feel justified in recommending the construction of the line, subject, however, to the imperative condition that all the land required should be conveyed free of cost to the Government."

With reference to the stringent condition governing the Railway Commissioners' recommendation of the proposed line, namely, that all the land required should be conveyed free of cost to the Crown, it may be stated that when a deputation waited on Mr. Secretary Lee, then Minister for Public Works, on 7th July, 1899, to advocate the construction of the line, Mr. John Ross, of Germanton, who was chief spokesman on the occasion, said, *inter alia* :—

"With regard to the matter of the land, he did not think there would be any difficulty in that respect; Mr. Roach, who owned a tract of some 8 miles through which the line would pass, would not stand in the way of its being made. There would doubtless be some land near Culcairn which would require to be purchased, but so soon as the line got beyond that the land would be no trouble. He (Mr. Ross) would give any land of his it might pass through."

In view of such authoritative representations as the foregoing, it may reasonably be expected that the conditions imposed by the Railway Commissioners as to the free gift of the lands required will be satisfactorily complied with by all the parties concerned.

The official description of the line is as follows :—

"Culcairn to Germanton Railway."

"(Length, 16 miles 38 chains. Estimated cost, £53,957 7s. 9d., or £3,275 2s. 2d. per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.)"

"This line begins by a junction with the Great Southern Railway at 356 miles 18 chains 65 links from Sydney, about 32 chains south of Culcairn Station, and takes a generally easterly direction, passing about 1 mile south of Morven township at 361 miles; thence following the general direction of the main road to Germanton, it ends beyond the Cricket Ground, which it adjoins on its south side, at Albury-street, at 372 miles 56 chains 65 links."

"The forming is light, but includes provision for the triplication of rails into Culcairn Station. Five fair-sized creeks have to be bridged, and the junction and terminus arrangements necessarily raise the mileage cost in such a short line."

"The grades and curves are easy."

"The land traversed is chiefly alienated, but that at the terminus is unsold."

2. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the cost of this proposed line higher than the cost of other cheap lines, such as that at Berrigan and elsewhere? Yes.

3. Do you explain that on the ground of the shortness of the line and terminal accommodation being required? Yes.

4. Will the cost of construction itself be higher than on the other cheap lines? No. The first six items of the estimate amount to £1,897 per mile. That is fairly comparable with some of the later lines. Part of the extra cost is due to the increased price of rails.

5. Will you read the details of that estimate to the Committee? Yes; they are as follows :—

CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.

Amended Trial Survey.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway 16 miles 38 chains in length with 60-lb. rails; ruling grade 1 in 100; sharpest curve, 24 chains radius—New fastenings; $\frac{1}{2}$ ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile; new 4 feet 6 inch T.O.s.

Description.	Estimated cost.		Average per mile.
	£	s. d.	£
Earthworks	3,335	4 2	202
Timber bridges	3,368	0 0	204
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	1,781	10 0	108
Permanent way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	10,259	14 0	623
Freight	2,782	8 0	169
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £1,691 8s. 8d.	9,737	19 2	591
$\frac{1}{2}$ ballasting at 4s. = £1,450			
Sleepers at 3s. 3d. = £6,596 10s. 6d.	6,637	14 8	403
Station works, including junction and sidings	4,479	0 0	272
Station buildings.—Passenger station, £287; waiting sheds, £115; platforms, £276; loading banks, £300; goods shed and platform, £345; cottage, £282; 20-ton weighbridge, £242; 5-ton crane, £207; engine shed, £805; carriage shed, £230; coal stage, £195; trucking-yards, £620; turntable, £575			
Gradient and mileage posts .....				271	16 9	17
Telegraph	271	16 9	17
Miscellaneous	500	0 0	30
Cost of works	£43,425	3 6	395
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	6,513	16 6	
	£49,939	0 0	3,031
Add for extra cost of rails at £7 10s. per ton	4,018	7 9	
Total cost	£53,957	7 9	3,275

I am afraid the cost of rails has been going still higher since that estimate was prepared. By the time the line is under construction there may be a drop in the price; but to keep it up to date this estimate would have to be altered from week to week while prices are rising, as they have been.

6. Still, would it make very much difference per mile in cost; it is now £3,275 per mile; is it likely to go above £3,400 per mile? No. You cannot tell, unless fresh tenders are called for; but I think it is very likely we should have to pay 10s. a ton more now for rails, and that would mean about £50 or £60 extra.

7. I see that 15 per cent. is put down in the estimate for engineering and contingencies;—is that the usual charge? Yes.
8. Allowing for all things, is this estimate fairly on a level with the cost of other cheap lines? Yes.
9. Is it considerably cheaper than the line from Culcairn to Corowa? Yes.
10. In what respect is there a difference between the Culcairn—Corowa line, and the one now proposed;—is the Culcairn to Corowa a stronger or better line? It is a ballasted line.
11. Is it fenced? Yes. That would make a difference of a few hundred pounds per mile.
12. All your cheap lines are unfenced;—have you found any great danger or difficulty arising out of that fact? No; I have not heard of any great difficulty.
13. Have you heard of the Government having to pay any damages on that account? No.
14. So that we have not had to pay for that saving? Certainly not, in any proportion. There may be a little damage occasionally through running over an animal; but, taking it altogether, it has been so slight that the Railway Commissioners have not found it necessary to offer the slightest objection to making lines of this character.
15. You are aware that when we first proposed to do without fencing, a good deal of alarm was expressed;—has experience justified that alarm? No.
16. Is it quite safe to go on in the same way? Yes.
17. Have you been over the route of this proposed railway? Yes.
18. Do you approve of the survey as laid out? Yes.
19. Has the bulk of the wheat grown in the district come from that portion between Culcairn and Germanton, or from beyond that point? I think it has mostly been grown between Culcairn and Germanton. When I went out to that district I intended to go further than Germanton, so as to form an idea of the character of the country; but the weather broke up the evening before I arrived there, and I found 5 or 6 inches of water lying over the roads in places, so that it was practically impossible to do any exploration.
20. Did you see any reason to believe that your railway formation would be under water? No; it would be quite safe.
21. If the bulk of the wheat-growing is between Culcairn and Germanton, would we get the whole of it for the full length of the proposed railway? No.
22. Do you know anything of the country beyond Germanton? I have brought with me a report, made by Mr. Stuart in September, 1898, on a proposed extension of this railway to the Upper Murray. I will read extracts from that report, which will give all the information which the Committee may desire:—

Memo. to the Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction.

Sydney, 27 September, 1898.

Culcairn to the Upper Murray, via Germanton.

I HAVE the honor to report that I have examined the country between Culcairn and Welaregang, on the Upper Murray, with a view of a railway extension to the latter place, and I have laid down a route shown by red line on the accompanying tracing. Leaving the Main Southern line at Culcairn, at 356 miles from Sydney, and adopting the route from Culcairn to Germanton, with the proposed alterations suggested by Mr. Burge, the line would thence bear in a north-easterly direction, taking advantage of the easy country to the east of the main Sydney-Germanton Road, until a low spur of the Cascook Range is crossed at 377 miles; thence bearing more northerly, the same road would be crossed about a mile further on, after which the line, bearing round to the east, would be carried approximately parallel to this road on its northern side, until the surveyed township of Garryowen is reached. . . . The easy country continues close up to Jingellic, where a saddle will have to be crossed before reaching the main road up to Murray River; thence the line, after crossing this road, bears in an easterly direction, approximately following up its right-hand side, and keeping between it and the river. A few nasty sidings have to be negotiated, where the road will require deviating. The intermediate country up the river being more or less broken and undulating will require a considerable amount of work. A slightly easier line might be got by keeping as close as possible to the flood-level of the river, but the curvature in places would be very sharp, particularly where the steep sidings junction with the easier country—in a few cases so sharp as to necessitate crossing low ground, or running with considerable cutting. The latter line would also be longer, but there would be an improvement in the grades. When the surveyed town of Welaregang is reached, the line might terminate at 426 miles from Sydney, or 70 from Culcairn, and close to where the main road to Tumberumba branches off. The grade from Culcairn to the foot of the main range at Yarra Yarra will be very easy, and a surface line can be obtained up to this point. In crossing the range at Yarra Gap there is a very quick rise on its eastern side—700 feet in about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles; and to get a grade of 1 in 40 with the load would entail a long tunnel with heavy approaches. After getting through on the eastern descent down Lankey's and Coppabella Creeks, a grade of 1 in 60 against the load will be the best obtainable, but with a considerable amount of work up to where the line crosses the latter creek; thence to the end, a limiting grade of 1 in 100 can be got, but the works will, in places, be fairly heavy, commencing with the cutting through the spur at Jingellic. There would be a good deal of curvature from the foot of the range on the Yarra Yarra side to the end. In view of the difficulties met with in ascending the river, I examined the Victorian side from beyond Tintaldra down to the bridge across the river at Jingellic, and would certainly give that side the preference, as, in nearly every case, where the mountains abut on the river, the sidings are easier, giving more width to work in, with the view of easy curvature, and a more uniform gradient. Again, the main road on this side is only a bush track, and could be very easily deviated at any point where it may be found necessary. There is already a railway survey located on this side by the Victorian Government. The question arises, if the connection with the Upper Murray should be made *via* Germanton, would the advantages gained by carrying the line on the Victorian side compensate for the extra cost entailed by having to put a bridge across the river at Jingellic, close to the present road bridge? This can only be determined by an actual survey of both routes. . . . Description of country: From Culcairn to Yarra Yarra the country on the flats and low ridges is of a good friable nature, suitable for either grazing or agricultural purposes. A very large portion of it is now cultivated, and there would, no doubt, be a further development in this direction if better facilities for transit were afforded. . . . After crossing the range down Lankey's, Coppabella, and Jingellic Creeks, and up the Murray as far as the country is inhabited, the area of land suitable for either pastoral or agricultural pursuits, taking both sides of the river into consideration, probably does not exceed 150 square miles, one-half of which might be suitable for agriculture, the rest being river flats liable to flood, but splendid fattening country for stock, and ridges too steep to be economically worked. The population is principally on the Victorian side, where there are the only townships worthy of the name. . . . All the cattle and sheep fattened in this district go to the Melbourne market, and the wool to Wodonga to avoid trans-shipment. Taking everything into consideration with reference to the Upper Murray, although the quality of the available country is very good, and the scenery, from a tourist's point of view, exceptional, still the area of good country is limited, the population on the New South Wales side small, the difficulty in reaching the district by the proposed route entailing considerable cost, and the fact is that the traffic to and from the district is almost exclusively with Victoria, Melbourne in geographical situation and distance being its natural outlet. A favourable consideration might be given to the question of running a branch line from Culcairn to Germanton, or on to Garryowen or Yarra Yarra (there is no township at Garryowen, but it is at the junction of Billabong and Yarra Creeks), provided all wheat, wool, and stock raised in the district be trucked at the nearest station, which, if Melbourne is the market, could scarcely be expected, owing to the cost of trans-shipment at Wodonga. A line to one of these points might, possibly, tap some of the traffic from Tumberumba and the Upper Murray, the former place being about 45 miles from Garryowen, as against 73 from Wagga, and the latter, taking Welaregang as the centre, about the same distance from Garryowen, as against 70 miles from Wodonga. It is a pity so much of the country in the neighbourhood of Germanton is alienated, and in the hands of large holders, a good deal of the land now under cultivation being worked on the halves principle, which is not conducive to permanent settlement.

H. Deane.

24 July, 1900.

- H. Deane.
24 July, 1900.
23. *Mr. Watson.*] Does Mr. Stuart suggest that there will be any possibility of getting to Tumberumba from Garryowen? No; I do not take it that he suggests that. I fancy that would not be possible, as the country is high in between.
24. Do you know whether there is any present intention of putting forward a proposed railway from Wagga Wagga to Tumberumba? No, I believe not.
25. Is the report very encouraging? No.
26. Supposing that a line were constructed from Wagga Wagga to Tumberumba, do you think that a line from Germanton would be a competitive one? No; I think it is far enough away, and the lines are sufficiently divided by high ground to render them incapable of competing. I have been over the line from Wagga Wagga to Tumberumba. I should think that some day a line from Wagga Wagga to Tumberumba will come forward, but not at present.
27. Is it very easy country from Wagga Wagga to Tumberumba? No; the country is hilly, and consequently the line is very crooked in parts.
28. How far is Yarra Yarra Creek from Germanton, *via* Garryowen? It is 25 miles from Culcairn, that would be 9 miles from Germanton.
29. Would that be well within the influence of a terminus at Germanton? Yes.
30. Does there seem to be any country beyond Yarra Yarra Creek which is of value—that is, any large area? No. I gather from Mr. Stuart's report that the country which would come under the influence of the Germanton line would be the lower part of the valleys of the collecting streams in the neighbourhood of Germanton and Garryowen.
31. I gather that, in Mr. Stuart's opinion, the cost of making the line beyond Germanton would be materially increased per mile? Yes; there is a tunnel there, and some stiff grades.
32. To what land does Mr. Stuart refer when he states that at the terminus it is not alienated;—does he refer to village lots, or large areas of land at the terminus? There are allotments in the town of Germanton, and a recreation reserve at the end. I put in the plans and section of the line and the book of reference.
33. *Dr. Garran.*] What grades and curves are there on the proposed line? The steepest grade is 1 in 100, and the sharpest curve 24 chains.

WEDNESDAY, 25 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

- H.
McLachlan.
25 July, 1900.
34. *Chairman.*] Do you regard the district to be served by the proposed railway, from Culcairn to Germanton, as likely to become a permanent agricultural district? The Railway Commissioners think it will. At present it is largely devoted to agricultural and pastoral pursuits. The land is of good quality, there is a very good rainfall, and there seems to be every prospect of considerable development in connection with agriculture.
35. It is stated in the Commissioners' report that agriculture in the district is carried on only on the halves system;—have you any knowledge as to the recent development of that system in the Grenfell district? No.
36. Some time ago, strong hopes were held out there to farmers that the institution would be permanent, but on one very large holding, at least, the system has fallen with a crash? I have no personal knowledge on the subject.
37. Do you anticipate that that system is likely to settle a permanent agricultural population in the district to be served by this railway? Personally, I would sooner see the land owned by the farmers themselves; but if it pays the squatter and the person working with him, it will certainly provide traffic for the railway. No doubt permanent settlement would be better developed if the persons themselves went in for selection, and cultivated their own land.
38. Is the greater number of the holdings to be served by this railway composed of fairly large areas? Yes; there are four stations between Culcairn and Germanton.
39. Is the land nearly all alienated? Yes.
40. From what part of the district is the main portion of the agricultural produce now drawn? Of course, the estimate is that we get a larger crop from Germanton itself. It is estimated that 2,000 tons of wheat would be carried from Morven station, 2,000 tons from Carabobala, an intermediate station, and nearly 7,000 tons from Germanton. It is estimated the greater quantity would come in from Germanton.
41. Do you regard Germanton as the centre of a fairly large area, from which the traffic will be drawn? Yes; not only from Germanton itself, but from a considerable distance to the east of it.
42. Are these figures based on existing tillage, or does it take into account probable increased tillage? They are largely based on the existing tillage. There are 26,000 acres under cultivation in the district, and a fairly large increase is shown during the last few years. There has been an increase of 5,500 acres during the last year, which is an increase of about 25 per cent.
43. Do you think that that increase is likely to be maintained in the coming year? The Commissioners think so. They were given to understand by the local people that, if the railway were taken to Germanton, they would considerably increase the area under cultivation.
44. In the areas between Culcairn and Germanton, which extend from nothing up to 16 miles, or a general average of 8 miles, do the Commissioners anticipate getting the whole of the agricultural traffic from there? Yes, practically. We carry wheat at such a low rate that we are bound to get the traffic.
45. Suppose a man is 7 miles to the north of the line, half-way along its distance, would it pay him to go direct to the line for a distance of 7 miles, or would it pay him better to go 9 or 10 miles to Culcairn? It would pay him, because Culcairn would not be the objective point. The wheat would be put into trucks principally to go to Sydney.

H.
McLachlan.
25 July, 1900.

46. How far east of Germanton do you expect to attract such traffic? Our officers estimate that they will get traffic for a distance of 20 miles east.
47. And down to the Murray on the south? I do not know that we would get much traffic from the Murray. The Tumberumba coach traffic now goes to Wagga.
48. Would not the area south of the line have a competing means of conveyance? I think it would. A great deal of the business will, no doubt, be done at Albury, and they would have a more direct route to Albury than by railway, and anything near the river towards Albury would have a more direct route.
49. A portion of the agricultural produce will be destined for export;—when Federation comes about, where do you think that will find its outlet—at Melbourne or Sydney? You have to recollect that Melbourne is very much the nearer port. A good deal would depend upon the rates charged. But, as far as the earnings of this line are concerned, it would not affect them, because the proposal is to charge a local rate, and we would get main-line carriage whichever way the traffic would go. If it went to Sydney, we would get a long carriage rate; if it went to Melbourne we would get a higher proportionate rate to Albury. We are bound to get the business to a smaller or larger extent for the main line. There would be a local rate from Culcairn to Albury as well.
50. *Dr. Garran.*] How do you make that out? It is a local rate.
51. Is it not a main line rate from Culcairn to Albury? As a matter of fact, our cheap rates are always imposed in the direction of the up journey; the other is a down rate.
52. But between Culcairn and Albury you would charge your usual main line rates? Yes; but it is practically a local rate.
53. *Chairman.*] Do you regard this as a pioneer line? Yes; it is a cheap line. It is somewhat dearer than other lines, because the terminal expenses would be charged over a short length, and there are a number of waterways to cross.
54. We have evidence that the tendency recently has been rather to increase the accommodation on these so-called pioneer lines beyond what was anticipated when they were first mooted;—does that pay in the long run? I should think so. The Commissioners consider every case very carefully, and, consistently with the requirements to be met, they cut down the terminal or station accommodation as low as possible, but necessarily the terminal accommodation on a short line is greater proportionately than on a long one.
55. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you find in your experience of these local rates that they tend to discourage the farmers from using the railway? We have had very little experience of that. Our experience is hardly wide enough to enable me to give a definite reply. We have few local rates. The Berrigen-Finley line would be of a somewhat similar character to this line, but very soon after the local rate was introduced we altered it so as to make it a through rate. On the Culcairn-Corowa line, which is the complement of this line, we have no local rate.
56. If we make a railway on the strength of local rates, and two years afterwards they are changed to through rates, we are making that railway on false pretences; take the case of Germanton;—if the weather is dry, and there are good natural roads, if you put on a local rate, might not a farmer say, "I have a dray and horses idle, I can take my produce as cheaply by the road as by the railway"? I do not think that would pay with regard to wheat. The local rate from Germanton to Culcairn would be from 2s. to 2s. 6d. per ton. We know they cannot possibly compete with that. Of course, in the other cases I have referred to, we had competing lines at the opposite terminal, therefore we were almost forced to adopt our ordinary scale.
57. Do not drays on the main trunk line between Sydney and Orange sometimes compete with your through rates on the railway? Not with special class goods.
58. What sort of goods are sent in that way? General goods, down journey—grocery, drapery, machinery; they are all high-class rates.
59. Are these the only rates which can be competed against? Yes.
60. Are you quite sure that they could not compete for produce? Personally, I cannot see how they can compete.
61. Does produce ever come down the main road? No.
62. Do the drays come down empty? They bring hides or wool.
63. Is not that pastoral produce? I am speaking of agricultural produce.
64. The charge for pastoral produce is higher than for agricultural produce? Yes.
65. People can compete with you for pastoral produce as back loading? Yes. I do not think that in this case we would get the whole of the wool. The wool from that district has hitherto gone to Melbourne, and is likely to do so. They have a direct road from many of the stations to Albury, and no doubt most of the wool will still go that way. The estimate does not include a large quantity of wool.
66. Do you expect that Germanton will be the centre of a radius of 10 miles from which the line will obtain agricultural produce? Yes; and even beyond that. Our traffic officer estimates that produce will be sent for a distance of 20 miles from that point.
67. Is not the country about there hilly? Yes; but there are patches of good soil.
68. It is not a flat country all about, like it is at Berrigan? No; that is not the case when you get a considerable distance east of Germanton.
69. The Commissioners, looking at the question altogether, although they do not think it will be a brilliantly-paying line, are willing to take a favourable view of it? Yes; they think there is likely to be a development of the district which warrants them in recommending the line for favourable consideration.
70. They think that at no distant time the line may pay expenses? From the estimate it appears that the expenses are nearly covered now. The line must also increase the earnings of the main line to some extent.
71. Would you be able to dovetail the workings of this line with the Corowa line? Yes, for, say, six months in the year. When we find that the grain traffic is heavy we may have to work them independently.
72. Is the Culcairn-Corowa railway an encouraging or a discouraging line? It has improved considerably during the last year.
73. How long has it been open? About eight years.
74. What has been the result during the first seven years? There has been a loss on it each year; but last year the prospects were brighter. We have a competing railway at the terminus, which is so much nearer to Melbourne.

H.
McLachlan.
25 July, 1900.

75. Was not that all taken into account when the line was made? I do not know that the Commissioners reported on that line; they might have done so in 1889.
76. Is it paying yet? No.
77. What is the loss on it now? For the year ending December, 1899, £5,700; it is a more expensively constructed line than the one now proposed.
78. Have we any other branch line as short as this one which would be a guide to us? No. We have, of course, the Blacktown to Richmond line, and the Nevartire to Warren line; but they are hardly similar lines.
79. This would be an experimental line to some extent? Yes.
80. Not only as to its length as a cockspur line, but as being almost purely an agricultural line? There is some pastoral production in the district.
81. Still you do not think you will get the pastoral business? No, the larger part will be agricultural.
82. Then it will be an experimental line? Yes, to that extent.
83. Looking at the fact that the length is not very great, and the loss not unendurable, the Commissioners think we may chance it? That is the Commissioner's feeling.
84. Is there any idea of continuing this line in the future? The Commissioners see no immediate prospect of extending it.
85. If there is any idea of extending it, would it not be better to do so at once? Germanton is a gathering centre at present.
86. Would it be expensive to go further? Yes, and there is nothing particularly to be gained by it. The traffic now drains into Germanton. The Commissioners would stop there at present, whatever might be decided upon in years to come.
87. Mr. Deane tells us that his maximum cheapness in making these lines is a thing of the past—that he has to make the lines with better equipments, so that we can hardly take £2,000 or £2,200 per mile as the standard cost of a new line? The cost of this line seems to be a little bit high; but no doubt extra bridges account for that, and also the terminal accommodation on a short length.
88. Are you charging through or special rates on the Corowa line? Through rates.
89. You could not get special rates? Not very well.
90. Where does most of the traffic on the Culcairn-Corowa line come from? From a number of stopping-places. Settlement is fairly good right through. The land is practically all taken up, and is largely held in farms.
91. Except one large run, is it all settled? Yes.
92. Does the trade go to Culcairn or Corowa? The grain business practically comes right through to Sydney.
93. What is the reason for that? The duty in Victoria, and also the cheap rates we charge.
94. But cannot they take the wheat in bond from Corowa right through to Melbourne? It can be sent there in bond.
95. Then the duty ought not to deter it? There has always been a good local market.
96. Do you think that grain grown so near the border comes to Sydney? Yes, by preference.
97. You cannot tell what will happen when the duty is abolished? No; but if the grain were diverted the other way it would not affect the earnings as given by the Commissioners for this line.
98. Does the wheat come on to Sydney or stop *en route*? It may stop at intermediate places; but finally most of it comes to Sydney as flour or wheat.
99. Is it an increasing trade? I have not seen the returns for some time.
100. What has made the Culcairn to Corowa line better this year? I think there was some better stock traffic, and also more grain.
101. The returns from the Culcairn-Corowa line are nearly £2,000 a year better this year? £1,300.
102. Can you say at present whether that is a permanent improvement? No.
103. From what you know, do you think that Mr. Harper has over-estimated this traffic? No; the Commissioners went into the matter with him, and, basing it on local rates, they think he has made a fair estimate.
104. Do they think the experiment is worth making? The Commissioners are prepared to recommend it.
105. Mr. Watson.] Can you say whether this railway is likely to draw traffic from any great distance beyond Germanton? Yes; the traffic officers estimate it will drain the country for a distance of 15 or 16 miles east of Germanton, and to the north-east.
106. Is the country to the eastward similar in character to that through which the line goes? It is not quite so good; but it is fairly good, and so is the rainfall, which is about 27 inches a year. That is equal, if not better than, the rainfall at Grenfell.
107. I suppose it will be admitted that, as far as Germanton is concerned, it is well within the influence of the existing railway? It is within 18 miles of it; but that is a fairly long way to haul grain.
108. Do you consider that it will be necessary to construct a railway to every place 18 or 20 miles away from the existing railway? I should not like to say that. At the same time, where you have a good district, and there is some prospect of the railway paying, it is worth considering whether you ought not to make a railway to it.
109. Is there any short railway without traffic beyond the terminus being directed to it that is paying? No; as a rule, a local line by itself would not pay. It is the country which it drains that enables it to pay.
110. In this case, do you think there is sufficient area of land beyond the proposed terminus to help the local traffic? The Commissioners think there will be. From their own observation, and from what they were told locally, they are favourable to the proposal. There is a considerable increase in the grain cultivated in the district. People are generally very sanguine when asking for a railway; but a number of people in the district assured the Commissioners that in a few years the area under cultivation within the district would be doubled.
111. I understand that some of the owners are prepared to give the land through which the railway will go free of charge? The Commissioners think that ought to be imperative. The land is practically all privately owned, although I think the terminus will be on a reserve. The Commissioners think that it ought to be an imperative condition that all the land required, except, perhaps, in the case of a very small holding, should be given free.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

112. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the route of the proposed line from Culcairn to Germanton? Yes.
 113. Do you produce a map showing the trafficable area and the manner in which the land is held? Yes.
 114. Will you favour the Committee with your opinions on the proposal? Perhaps I had better read my report to the Railway Commissioners, which is as follows:—

J. Harper.
 25 July, 1900.

PROPOSED RAILWAY, CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON—17 MILES.

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had very thorough inquiry made as to the probable traffic on the proposed line from Culcairn to Germanton. Its total length is 17 miles, the ruling grade being 1 in 100. Up to the present no estimate has been received of the cost of construction.

The district is a pastoral and agricultural one. The bulk of the stock and wool traffic is forwarded by road to Albury, the distance from Germanton being 38 miles, and thence by rail to Melbourne; the wheat traffic is carted to Culcairn, and carried by rail to various milling centres in New South Wales. Fully 75 per cent. of the return supplies are obtained from Melbourne, *via* Albury or Culcairn, the Melbourne rates, arising from shorter carriage, operating distinctly in favour of that source of supply; and an analysis of the rates—apart altogether from the business relations of the district being chiefly centred in Melbourne—does not hold out any hope of the diversion of this trade to Sydney.

At the present time there are some 26,000 acres of wheat under cultivation within the sphere of influence of the line, and so long as the rates for this commodity remain as they are, the traffic will come to New South Wales. This, together with a certain proportion of fat stock, would represent the great bulk of the traffic which we might anticipate would be carried over the line in the direction of Sydney. There is, of course, another phase of the question, and that is, that the line might be utilised for the carriage of goods from Albury to Germanton, and *vice versa*, as far as the district is concerned, and this view has been taken into consideration in forming the estimate of the probable traffic. For this purpose ordinary mileage rates have been taken between Culcairn and Albury, added to the arbitrary rates which it is proposed shall be charged on the section between Culcairn and Germanton.

The following return indicates the current road rates, and what the rate from Germanton to Albury would be were the method I have suggested adopted:—

Rates of Road Carriage.

From—	To—	Miles.	Description.	Average rate.		Lowest rate.	
				Per ton.	Per ton per mile.	Per ton.	Per ton per mile.
Culcairn	Germanton	18	Goods	12/6	8/33d.	10/0	6/66d.
Albury	"	38	"	20/0	6/32d.	15/0	4/74d.
Germanton	Culcairn	18	Wool	10/0	6/66d.	10/0	6/66d.
"	Albury	38	"	17/6	5/53d.	15/0	4/74d.
"	Culcairn	18	Wheat	7/6	5/00d.	6/9	4/50d.

I also attach a return showing the estimated total traffic to be £2,175 per annum, and a further return showing the rates which would prevail, assuming mileage rates were charged from Culcairn in the direction of Albury to Sydney and Melbourne respectively on the probable commodities of the district, *viz.*, wool, wheat, stock, and general supplies.

It will be observed that the estimated revenue is small, and can only be obtained by the imposition of arbitrary rates, and that the only justification which appears to exist, from a commercial point of view, to the construction of the line, is that it would induce larger cultivation of cereals in the district, and probably will have the effect of fostering such cultivation as already exists, and thereby provide traffic for the line.

PROPOSED RAILWAY, CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON—17 MILES.

Summary of traffic.

	Tons.	Revenue
Goods traffic	1,353	£241
Wool	1,000	214
Wheat	10,576	1,088
Stock	300 trucks	70
Total	12,929 tons 300 trucks	£1,613
Passengers—2,000, at 2/10 each		£283
H. C. D. and parcels		75
Mails—17 miles, at £12		204
Total, coaching		£562
Grand total traffic		£2,175

Goods and Live Stock Rates—Germanton—Culcairn extension.

Distance.	Wool.		Wheat.		Live stock.	Merchandise.		
	Scoured. Per ton.	Greasy. Per ton.	Per ton.	Per truck.	Per truck.	1st. Per ton.	2nd. Per ton.	3rd. Per ton.
Germanton and Culcairn ..	17 miles.	5/-	5/-	2/6	5/-	5/-	5/-	5/-
Culcairn and Darling Harbour	357 "	78/9	62/3	13/1	144/7	99/-	123/2	145/-
	374 "	83/8	67/3	15/7	149/7	104/-	128/2	150/-
Germanton to Culcairn ...	17 "	5/-	5/-	2/6	5/-	5/-	5/-	5/-
Culcairn to Albury	30 "	15/-	10/6	4/9	20/-	11/9	14/2	18/8
	47 "	20/-	15/6	7/3	25/-	16/9	19/2	23/8
Albury to Melbourne	Junction..	3/6	3/6	3/6	3/-	2/6	2/6	2/6
	190½ miles	40/-	31/6	15/8	106/-	66/10	66/10	66/10
Total	237½ "	63/6	50/6	23/5	134/-	85/1	88/6	...

115. From the map which you produce it appears that nearly the whole of the land within the influence of this proposed line is alienated? Yes.

- J. Harper.
25 July, 1900.
116. Can you state, roughly, what you consider to be the traffic area on the line? About 20 miles due east from the terminus at Germanton, and 12 miles north and south of Germanton. I may point out that a very large percentage of the land which is under cultivation is due east of Germanton.
117. It is not between Culcairn and Germanton? Out of 26,000 acres I should think 12,000 to 14,000 acres are east of Germanton.
118. Under those circumstances, you would get freight over the whole line? Yes.
119. Is there much land beyond Germanton fit for cultivation and not now cultivated? Throughout the whole 20 miles, if not further, it is all fit for cultivation; it is all very good agricultural land, and not too hilly. On Yarra Yarra run they had 7,000 acres under cultivation—that is due east of Germanton.
120. Although the people of Germanton may be said to be near enough to railway communication, yet this line will bring other areas within the influence of the railway which at present are not served? Yes. Of course, if there was only intermediate traffic between Culcairn and Germanton which could be obtained, the Commissioners would not have viewed the line with favour. I would not.
121. As you have seen the country to the east and south-east of Germanton, can you offer an opinion as to the wisdom, at a later date, of taking the line beyond Germanton? I do not think there would be any difficulty about taking it 20 miles further; thence the country is hilly and rough. Due east of that you get into the Tumberumba country.
122. Do you think it would be worth while taking it further, or will the line to Germanton sufficiently serve the country worth opening up? It will serve for the present; that is to say, the people east of Germanton will be no worse off than the Germanton people are to-day, as far as railway communication is concerned.
123. Would a point 20 miles east of Germanton be the limit of the agricultural land? It was represented to me that there is very good land some distance beyond that; but I did not go further than Yarra Yarra.
124. It has been asserted that there is a considerable area of good basaltic country on the Upper Murray;—would that be best reached from our railway system, or would it be better to allow the Victorians to carry a railway there? Naturally, I think the traffic must gravitate to Victoria.
125. It is hardly worth our striving for it? No; the bulk of the traffic will continue to find its way to Victoria, except with regard to wheat.
126. How will the cost of railway carriage from Germanton to Culcairn, and thence to Albury, with the local rates suggested, compare with the present road carriage from Germanton to Albury? It will be in favour of the route from Germanton to Albury.
127. It will pay to take the railway, although it will be running on two sides of a triangle, rather than to take the road? Yes; it is only a difference of 38 miles and 48 miles.
128. Is the difference in cost pronounced? It is sufficiently pronounced to bring the traffic to the line. For wool, it is 15s. against 20s.; the wheat under no circumstances would go there, because the through charge to Melbourne is only 7s. 3d. by railway—it would be nearly £1 by road. Merchandise would be about 16s. 9d., as against 23s. 8d. per ton from Albury to Germanton.
129. In comparing merchandise, would it be necessary to allow for the cost of transshipment at Albury from Melbourne? No; we do not charge anything for transshipment, it is a through rate, including a junction charge for the mileage between Albury and Wodonga.
130. So that goods coming from Melbourne towards Germanton would be conveyed by the proposed line rather than by team from Wodonga to Culcairn by road? Yes.
131. There is no doubt that in any case the branch line would get the full amount of traffic which you estimate? There is no doubt it will. Whether the traffic goes to Melbourne or comes to Sydney, the estimate will be realised. The wheat will continue to come in this direction for some time at all events.
132. As soon as the border duties are abolished under Federation, it is not probable that Melbourne will take a great deal of that wheat for shipment? There is not a very great margin between their rate and ours. There is very little difference between our rate at Corowa and the Victorian rate at Wahgunyah.
133. Is it not possible that the Inter-state Commission may insist upon an absolute mileage rate? I do not see how they can. This is practically a tapering mileage rate; it applies not only to this line in a competitive district, but to all lines in the Colony. It is in no sense a competitive rate, it is a normal rate.
134. Then you taper proportionately to distance quite as much coming from the Queensland border as coming from the Victorian border and from Bourke? Yes; it applies all over the Colony. It is a general rate, and not a special rate, for that district as far as wheat is concerned.
135. Have you a special rate for wool and merchandise? Yes.
136. Then there is little probability of the wheat traffic going away? No. There is no doubt that where our lines are close to the Victorian border, as at Corowa, we shall lose all that traffic. Under any circumstances, wheat going to Victoria would have to pay either road carriage to Wodonga or our rates to Albury, and those rates, added to Victorian rates, would be in excess of our rates.
137. Assuming that the Victorian railways are as well managed as ours, they should be able to draw wheat for the shorter distance cheaper than you can bring it to Sydney? Yes; but they are in a peculiar position in Victoria. They look very largely to the wheat traffic for their revenue. As a matter of fact, because some reductions have been recently made in the rates for the carriage of wheat, the railways are being subsidised by the Government. What the railways are losing is being refunded to them by Parliament. I take it that the Inter-state Commission would rule that that is irregular. The state of things is rather peculiar under their Act. It is competent for the Minister of the day to ask the Commissioner to reduce the rates, but that is contingent upon the Minister refunding half the amount of the loss out of the Consolidated Revenue.
138. Do you know whether that system has been long enough in existence to show what the results will be? I do not think so. Naturally enough, the railway people do not approve of it very much. One can see at once the incidence of it. A Minister representing a country constituency only wants to be moved strongly enough to use the powers given to him under the Act, and it is absolutely in the hands of the Minister to do it.
139. Do you know whether there has been any loss to make good under that system? There has been in connection with coal. Of course, the carriage of coal is subsidised; but it is only during the last season that it has been brought into operation in connection with wheat.
140. What is the explanation of their not being able to easily compete with you;—is it because you have

a larger area of pastoral country on your trunk lines which yields a class of traffic which pays better than agricultural produce? Yes; and it has been the desire of the administration to develop the lands of the interior. It was only possible to do it by charging low freights. In Victoria they have been depending for the bulk of their revenue on wheat. J. Harper.
25 July, 1900.

141. Seeing that you make the railways come within a reasonable distance of paying, you must have something else which makes good what you lose on agricultural produce? Decidedly; wool pays.

142. What is it that you have which the Victorians have not? We have general merchandise hauled over long distances; we have the wool, which they have not. We carry four times as much wool, and it stands a higher freight.

143. That enables you to give greater concessions on some products? Yes; mining and agriculture.

144. On the whole, do you think that this proposed line will retain sufficient local traffic to justify its construction? Yes; I think so, looking at it in the light of the development of the territory. I would not like to say that the line would pay. In connection with that, of course it is for this Committee to determine whether it would be judicious or otherwise to recommend that the people in the neighbourhood of the line should be called upon to contribute in any way. Of course, that is not a matter for us to consider.

145. If you have any largely increased cultivation resulting from the construction of the line, would it mean some contribution to the profits of the main line which would not be credited to the branch? Yes; it would have an influence on the main line earnings. As far as the land is concerned, practically the whole of it is fitted for agriculture.

146. As to the probability of the land being kept under cultivation, it is, I understand, mostly held in large areas by private owners? Yes.

147. Do you think that the halves system is likely to be permanent? I am inclined to think that it will be in that district, because it is to the interest of the large owners to have a considerable amount of agriculture. They have something to fall back upon for their stock in the event of drought.

148. You know that on open forest land, when it is cleared and cultivated for a year or two, it will carry more sheep than it did before? Yes; that is my reason for saying that I think the large owners will encourage cultivation on the halves principle.

149. Is there not a possibility that, after the land has been cleared and cropped for three or four years, some of the owners will be disposed to use it again for sheep? That will depend largely upon the value of wool.

150. Are you aware that, on one large estate in the Gronfell district, the men working on the halves system have been cleared out, with the exception of two or three, and they were only retained to break up new land? No doubt that will be the method adopted. New land will be given to men prepared to take it up to clear and cultivate it.

151. But that does not make for permanence? It is more than likely that the district about Germanton will develop into a large dairying district. It is within comparatively easy distance of Melbourne.

152. Would dairying be a greater traffic producer than wool-growing? It would mean more population and the consumption of more goods. I think that that country is carrying one sheep to the acre at present; under cultivation I fancy that it would carry a cow to a couple of acres. There is infinitely more traffic to be obtained if you have a cow to 2 acres than if you have a sheep for 1 acre. It is only 230 miles from Melbourne by the railway. To-day we are bringing butter a greater distance than that.

153. That is mostly for export? Yes.

154. You bring that at a very low rate? Yes; but it is the population which would increase the traffic. For instance, there is one station on this line where they have 93,000 acres of freehold land. I fancy that, except at shearing time, that would be worked by about eight or ten men.

155. *Dr. Garran.*] Did not this method of working on halves originate at a time when the wool was very cheap? I imagine it did. My first experience of it was in the Berrigan district; but it might have been in operation in Victoria prior to that.

156. If the rise in the value of wool should be permanent, would not that have a tendency to induce people to go back to the pastoral use of the land? I think what we may look forward to in future is a system of mixed farming. I do not think anyone is now prepared to have all his eggs in one basket, the disposition will be to grow both wheat and wool.

157. What I am looking to is this: Is this system of farming on the halves principle so certain that we can feel we have a guarantee that wheat production will continue? My own impression is that it will continue. If it does not continue on the halves system, those who are farming will acquire land, and go in for mixed farming. That is happening in the Berrigan district.

158. In the absence of cheap manures, is there not a tendency for the wheat-grower to work out his land? Yes; but when you carry sheep on the same land where you grow wheat, not only does it keep the land clean, but it manures it.

159. Under the halves system does the squatter run his sheep on the farming land? Yes; that is a condition of the agreement.

160. Then you do not think it is a mere temporary phenomenon? No.

161. As a traffic man, do you think it is safe to rely on the wheat grown in this district? Yes; with mixed farming. If you asked me the same question with regard to purely timber land, I would hesitate. Once the timber is gone the traffic is gone unless you replant the forests, which we do not.

162. Ten years is long enough to trust to timber traffic? Yes; that would be a very good term.

163. Are the roads good to the east of Germanton? Yes.

164. So that you might expect that 20 miles is not too far to bring traffic in to the railway? The roads are fairly good; they are not so good as between Germanton and Culcairn, but it is reasonably sound country. As a matter of fact, they now come into Culcairn.

165. Do you think there is any likelihood of much of this land now rented on the halves system becoming freehold owned by the agriculturists? If the halves men get good seasons, they all show a desire to acquire a freehold in the Berrigan district.

166. But then you have to get the consent of the present holders? I think any of them will sell if they get enough for their land.

167. If the price of wheat falls very low, do you think we should still be able to grow wheat here and ship it. As a matter of fact, I do not see what else they are to do. Every day the cost of cropping wheat is becoming less. This is a district where the crops are generally very heavy in a good season.

- J. Harper.
25 July, 1900.
168. Shall we be able to open agricultural land if it does not pay? No; but those who are able to combine sheep-farming with wheat-growing have a better opportunity of making it pay.
169. The evidence in other inquiries goes to show that the cheapest part in the world in which to grow wheat is Argentina, where they have many miles of river frontage? It is not very long since we heard that Argentina was going to spoil our market for wool, meat, and horses; but that has not happened.
170. If it does not pay to grow wheat here, shall we not have to fall back on wool? Yes; but wool can be far more successfully grown with wheat.
171. In that event will not population fall off and also the traffic? Our own population is increasing. Western Australia and Queensland are not producing wheat to any extent, and I daresay markets will be found for wheat. People who keep sheep and grow wheat do not know what failure is, even in drought time. Young sheep will fatten very quickly on wheat-stubble.
172. Did the farmers do pretty well this year with wheat? Those who sold in the first instance did fairly well; those who are holding are in rather a bad position.
173. Has the wheat traffic at Berrigan justified the expectations which were held out? We do not regret making that railway.
174. You do not think you will regret to adding this line to the other railways? No. I cannot see any prospect of this line paying in the immediate future, or probably for some time; but for the development of this country it is not unreasonable to add it to our railway system.
175. That is looking to the fact that we have to settle people on the land? Yes. The view I take is this: The country is capable of production. Any country of that nature which is likely to yield a legitimate percentage and working expenses is entitled to consideration.
176. Still, on general traffic principles, a short cocks spur line, looking principally to agricultural traffic, is placed at perhaps the maximum disadvantage? The line is peculiar in this respect. It has a common junction with the line from Corowa to Culcairn, so that we will be practically able to do a great deal of the work on this line with the staff and appliances which we have on the other line.
177. Has that Culcairn to Corowa line been very profitable? No, for this reason we have always carried the wheat from intermediate points, and we have carried only a certain amount of wheat from Corowa itself; but the position will be different on the proposed line. Only a mile separates the two railway stations at Wahgunyah and Corowa. Germanton and the adjacent district is not near any railway. As a matter of fact, as far as Corowa is concerned, there is far more justification to make a line to Germanton than to Corowa, because the wants of Corowa are already served. If the line from Culcairn had been made to Germanton instead of to Corowa it would be much more likely to be a paying line, it would have been away from existing communication.
178. I have asked Mr. McLachlan if we must look upon this as a purely experimental line, risking a little risk to test the system, because we have no parallel to it? The private line from Moama to Deniliquin is very successful; but they deal more largely with wool. They also carry a great deal of wheat.
179. Besides, that is an extension of the Victorian line? This is an extension of ours. We have also the Temora line, which is a line very much on all fours with this, and it is doing very well.
180. But that is not a paying line? No; but it is improving. The loss on the Temora line in 1897 was £3,519; in 1898, it was £3,856; in 1899, I think the loss was still smaller.
181. Have we indirectly made gains on the Temora line? I think the country has indirectly gained. It has certainly opened up a great deal of country.
182. You do not think the apparent loss is all real loss? No, because it has provided traffic for the main line.
183. From a national point of view it has been a gain? Yes, a distinct gain.
184. Do you think that there is any likelihood of the proposed line being extended at any future time? It would be possible to extend it if considered desirable to the point I have already indicated, and probably, a little further east.
185. Would there be any engineering difficulty? No; not as far as I went east in the direction of Yarra Yarra.
186. *Chairman.*] Does the Tumberumba trade now go mainly to Wagga Wagga? Yes.
187. Is there a chance that some of that trade will be diverted? Some of the trade of the western portion of the Tumberumba district may probably come in to this line.
188. When we were on the Gundagai-Tumut line, we heard a good deal of evidence to the effect that the Tumberumba ranges and foothills were covered with fairly valuable timber, and that the long carriage to Wagga Wagga prevented a good deal of it from being developed? I should expect that some of the timber on the western slope would find its way to Germanton, although I have not included that in the estimate of traffic.
189. We were told that people in the direction of Wagga Wagga, and right down to Albury, were anxious to get that timber, and two contractors told us that they had orders as far as Albury, but they could not fulfil them. We were told that if they had some means of getting to the main line, they would be able to develop some timber areas? I do not know what the roads into Germanton would be like, but I think there would be a fair amount of traffic from the western ranges.
- 190-1. There seems to be only one spur to cross? That is not important. There is one shown at Germanton, but it is a very small affair.
192. Is all the country from Germanton to Tumberumba good agricultural land? Yes; as far as I went. It is about 15 or 16 miles to the east.
193. Do you think that the fact that the land in this district is mainly held in large holdings would prevent the development of the dairying industry? No. The Ross family own 93,000 acres of the best land, and they announced their intention, if the line is built, of going in largely for clearing and cultivation. I think dairying would probably come after that. There is a fairly heavy duty on butter entering Victoria; but after Federation there would be more inducement to go in for dairying in that district.

THURSDAY, 26 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

Alexander Bruce, Chief Inspector of Stock, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

194. *Chairman.*] Have you a return showing the stock statistics for the trafficable area of the proposed Culcairn-Germanton line? Yes.

A. Bruce.

26 July, 1900.

195. Will you first state the limits of that area? I produce a map showing the boundaries of the area. It takes in the river Murray from Dora Dora to Jingellie. From there it passes in a north-easterly line between Yarara and Tumberumba, thence to Kyamba, and from there to a point on the Billabong Creek, 10 or 12 miles east of Culcairn, and from Culcairn south-east to Dora Dora, where it commenced.

196. Can you give us the returns of stock in that area? In 1898, in that area there were 326,822 sheep and 4,162 cattle; in 1899, there were 298,785 sheep, and 3,850 cattle.

197. Have these numbers been seriously diminished by the drought of the last five years? Not in that district. They have had comparatively good seasons.

198. What is about the average carrying capacity of that country? It would range from a sheep and a half to a sheep to the acre; it is very good country. Of course, there might be something to reduce that average in small portions of the district.

199. Is that a fair general average? Yes.

200. Will it carry that many sheep all the year round? Yes. It is some of the heaviest carrying country in the Colony.

201. *Dr. Garran.*] Has it a cold winter? Not very cold.

202. Does the grass die down in winter? It is a country in which horses and cattle, and particularly horses, do not lose any condition to speak of in the winter time.

203. *Chairman.*] Have you any other figures? I have the drift of stock on several of the roads. I may point out that there would be a large portion of that drift for Melbourne. The market for the owners in that district is largely Melbourne, and the portion which would come to Sydney would be comparatively small in ordinary seasons.

204. *Dr. Garran.*] Is it equally good country for cattle and sheep? It is too good for cattle, as sheep pay better than cattle. That is how the owners find it. It is very good for wheat.

205. Did the stock tax diminish the drift of sheep to the Melbourne market? To some small extent it did; but the Melbourne market, as a rule, in by-gone years, was better than the Sydney market. The last year or so our bad seasons have equalised matters. We have had about as good prices as Melbourne.

206. Have some of the sheep from this district come to Sydney this year? Yes; and even further away. Sheep have come to Sydney from lower down the Murray.

207. I want to know whether, in a dry season, we draw some of these sheep to our market? Yes.

208. And, in an ordinary season, do the sheep go to Melbourne in spite of the stock tax? Yes; to a considerable extent.

209. Is the country which is being taken up for agriculture good sheep country as well as agricultural country? Yes; and it is sound country, except in some of the upland spots.

210. What about the river flats? There are not many sheep on those flats. Cattle are mostly there.

211. Do the sheep take the high lands and the cattle the low lands? The sheep take the falls to the Billabong Creek, and not towards the Murray River.

212. Has this district under occupation shown any sign of falling off in the quality of its herbage owing to its being over-stocked? Very little in that way.

213. Is it as good as ever it was? Yes.

214. Beyond Germanton, out to the east, beyond where the railway is proposed to go, is that good productive country? Yes; it is good right up and down to Billabong Creek.

215. Have you been over that part of the country? Yes.

216. Is it going into agriculture? Yes; into wheat-growing.

217. Are there many conditional purchasers, or are the agriculturists all halves men? There are still some conditional purchasers left. A good many have sold out, and their selections have been added to other selections. I believe that about the largest selectors in the Colony are in that district. There are also some men working on the halves system.

218. Do you mean the graziers? They are letting the land out again for wheat-growing.

219. What pays best in that district at present—growing wheat or grazing? I expect it will pay best with stock now; but that was not the case two or three years ago.

220. When wheat was at its best, wheat-growing paid better? I made that remark principally because stock are such a high price at present.

221. At present prices, which do you think pays better—growing wheat or fattening stock? Stock, I should say. Wool was very high, and fat stock is high.

222. If that is the case, there is not a strong tendency at present for the land to be used for agriculture? It would largely depend upon the price of wheat. If wheat were at 3s. a bushel, it would still pay better to grow wheat.

223. Is there a certain amount of grain grown in that district now? Yes.

224. Do you think that wheat-growing will decrease? No; I think it will increase.

225. That is if the price keeps up to 3s. a bushel? Yes; a system is now becoming common of growing wheat for a few years and then laying out the land in lucerne. The two combined make wheat-growing more profitable.

226. Have you seen any of this land under crop for two or three years, and then brought back to pasturage? No.

227. Have you only heard about it? Yes.

228.

- A. Bruce. 228. And have you heard that the land was improved by this process? It was generally understood that lucerne would only grow profitably on alluvial land; but in some portions of Riverina, further down the Billabong, and on the Murray, they have been growing lucerne on what they call the box country. They can fatten from three to four sheep to the acre by that means. They do not get the same crop of lucerne that can be obtained on alluvial ground, but it pays very well.
229. Lucerne will grow on land after tillage on which it would not grow before tillage? Yes.
230. Do you think there will be any falling off in the amount of tillage in the district? No; I think it will increase.
231. Do you think that all those squatters who lease their land on the halves system will ultimately restore that land to pasturage? Yes, for a time; I have heard that it is made a condition that the land shall be left in lucerne. That system gives rotation. They will leave the land for three or four years in lucerne, and then they will break it up again. In that way they will keep the heart in the land and not run it out.
232. So that agriculture would not go out altogether? No; instead of turnip-growing, as in New Zealand, this system enables a rotation—the great want in the farming of the Colony—to be kept up, so that the fertility of the land is preserved.
233. The idea is to have three or four years of tillage, and then to keep the land under lucerne for three or four years? That is to begin with; but after that it would be only one crop of grain and then, say, four in lucerne.
234. How deep does the ploughing go when you have this tillage? A 6-inch furrow would be a good furrow.
235. So that the surface soil is not loosened more than 6 inches? The question as to the growth of lucerne depends largely on the sub-soil, so that it can get its roots down deep. It could not get through stiff clay, but gritty clay or sandy soil would suit lucerne.
236. So far as lucerne has been tried, does it answer? Yes; it has been much more largely tried on the Murray, and on the country a little north of the Murray, from Corowa down to Deniliquin, than in the country we are speaking of now.
237. Have the graziers generally in that district tried this alternating system of tillage? Not very many on this area, but a few have done so.
238. If their example brings out good results, do you think that others will follow their lead? Yes; especially the small men.
239. *Chairman.*] Do you think that agriculture will be an intermittent thing in that district, or will they always have some of their land under crop while the remainder is resting under lucerne or lying fallow? It is a necessity that it should be intermittent, if they are not to run the fertility out of the land. We have not, as at Home, the means of growing green crops and cleaning the land with turnips and some other crops, but we can do it to a certain extent in the way I have described. In the old land they take crop after crop of a different description for four years. Here we have only discovered one thing yet which would enable us to carry out a rotation.
240. Will the land, say, for three years, be all devoted to one sort of cultivation, or will part of it be resting while the other part is under wheat? It will be partly resting.
241. So that every year we may expect some railway revenue from agriculture? Yes; and a good deal ought to be used for fattening the stock. They might grow rape, or some other green crop, so as to be able to fatten the sheep. The climate and soil in that district are very suitable for that sort of thing.
242. Do you think that this railway is likely to draw traffic from Dora Dora up to Horse Creek? It would be traffic to Melbourne, to a large extent.
243. Is there not a range of mountains a little north of the Murray, which practically shuts off that part of the country from this proposed railway? Dora Dora is only 8 or 10 miles from the top of the Range to the Murray. It would be only a small strip of land on the Murray which would be affected in that way.
244. How far east of Germanton does the good country extend? Right up to the top of Billabong Creek.
245. How far is that? About 30 miles from Germanton, on the east side. On the north it is all good country.
246. Is it country which could be profitably devoted to dairying for the Melbourne market? It might, but the carriage would be over a long distance—about 250 miles.
247. Mr. Harper has assured us that the carriage would not be a serious handicap if the land was good? It would do for dairying, but I think it would be better for cross-bred sheep, and that could only be profitably carried out by tillage. The country is well suited for mixed farming.
248. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been on the route of the proposed line? Yes; I was Inspector of Stock in that district, and I know it very well.
249. Is it a thoroughly well-watered district? Yes; it is fairly well watered. The Billabong Creek sometimes gets into water-holes, but for a good many seasons it is running. Then there are other creeks—the Little Billabong, Yarra Yarra, Forest, Back, and Mountain Creeks, besides the frontage to the Murray.
250. Is there always sufficient water to carry stock safely? There have been no losses from want of water during the late drought.
251. What sort of country is it? It is principally box country, mixed here and there with what is called the yellow-jacket, which indicates better country than where the timber is all box; and there are a good many patches and strips of gum country.
252. Is it loamy soil? Not much of it; it is principally a yellow soil, such as you get in good box country.
253. Is the timber really good? Not much of it. Where there is red-gum it is fairly good. There is some timber on the tops of the ridges—stringy-bark—but there is not much of it. There is messmate in the extreme eastern portion.
254. Do you think there will be sufficient timber there to provide railway sleepers and fencing in connection with the railway? I do not know if the red-gum is large enough to provide sleepers. It is not like the red-gum on the Lower Murray flats; it is not nearly so large, but it is sufficiently large for posts for fencing purposes.
255. Where do the settlers generally find a market for their stock now? It used to be all for Melbourne, but of late years, especially on account of the tax, they do not send it there. Our market in bygone years has always been cheaper than Melbourne.
256. Do you say that this is good agricultural land? Yes.
257. What outlet do they get for their wheat? Sydney; on account of the tax.
258. They do not think of sending their wheat to Melbourne? No.
259. Have they grown any other crops there besides wheat? No. I left the district a long time ago, but I know a good deal of what is going on there. I do not know of any other crop being grown except lucerne.

260. Has your attention been chiefly occupied in connection with stock? Yes.

261. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you remember that in one of the very dry seasons, about three years ago, a great deal of the wheat in Riverina was purchased for Melbourne? Yes.

A. Bruce.
26 July, 1900.

262. Do you think, now that there is a possibility of the border duties being removed, that a great deal of wheat from that district will be diverted to Melbourne for shipment or consumption? That would not affect the question of the Culcairn-Germanton railway, because the wheat would be put on at Germanton to go to Melbourne if it were sold for Melbourne. I have with me a return showing the drift of stock in that district. In 1897, the stock traffic by road from Culcairn to Germanton was 51,732 sheep; from Germanton to Culcairn, 66,974 sheep. These numbers depend largely on the sheep going to the mountains on account of drought. A very large proportion of sheep which go to the mountains in starvation times pass through the Germanton district.

263. *Mr. Levien.*] It is merely travelling stock? Yes; but I hope before long there will be a railway, which will be a continuation of the Germanton-Culcairn line, down the Billabong to Jerilderie. The land on both sides is high-class land, and would then get the starving stock upon that line, and they would be taken to the mountains more safely and more economically, and they would not perish by the way for want of grass. These sheep now pass through the Germanton district. In 1898, from Culcairn to Germanton there was a traffic of 107,962 sheep, and from Germanton to Culcairn 45,771 sheep. The number of sheep passing each way usually balances, but in this case the season was so bad that the sheep were left in the mountains; they did not come back in that year, which accounts for the difference in the numbers. In 1899, from Culcairn to Germanton, there were 138,397 sheep, and from Germanton to Culcairn there were 153,238 sheep. In that year more went back than went the other way. Some of these had been left for the whole year in the mountains. Then, in 1897, there was a traffic from Little Billabong to Germanton of 66,406 sheep, and from Germanton to Little Billabong 62,886 sheep. In 1898, from Little Billabong to Germanton, there were 44,612 sheep, and from Germanton to Little Billabong 94,468 sheep. In 1899, from Little Billabong to Germanton, 226,719 sheep, and from Germanton to Little Billabong 146,633 sheep.

264. *Chairman.*] What places does this district chiefly relieve in drought time? From below Deniliquin in the last drought. They are taken to the top of the Murray, and between that and Monaro.

265. You said you would like to see this railway extended;—how far, and in what direction, would you like to see it extended? Right down the Billabong to Deniliquin, or to the railway from Hay to Deniliquin, if that be made; that would be passing through Jerilderie.

266. What we understood you to say was that the Germanton line should be extended at the Germanton end further east? I propose that it should not stop at Culcairn, but that it should be taken west right down the Billabong. It is all good country, and there is no mountain or hill all the way.

267. How far is it that the land in this district can be used in drought time for starving stock purposes;—is it not the custom to stock up to the full capacity? The land in this area is fully stocked, and is not used by starving stock. My suggestion had reference to the railway from Culcairn to Germanton carrying starving stock towards the mountainous country, which is only occupied in drought time, because it is not sound country. Rather than see the sheep perish the owners run the risk of their getting fluke and footrot amongst the mountains. I have figures showing the wool produced in the district to be served by the railway. In 1898 there were 4,905 bales; in 1899, 4,485 bales.

Charles Edward Rennie, Chief Draftsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

268. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a map showing the trafficable area of the proposed line? Yes; it shows the area within 12 miles north and south of the proposed line from Culcairn to Germanton, and extending 20 miles to the eastward. Those were the limits about which the Railway Commissioners asked us to provide them with information. The holdings within that area are as follows:—Alienated land, 361,000 acres; reserves, 34,400 acres; Crown lands, 56,000 acres. The alienated land is shown on the map by a blue tint, the reserves by a green tint, and the Crown lands by a brown tint.

C. E. Rennie.
26 July, 1900.

269. By far the largest portion of the area is wholly alienated? Yes; almost the whole of it. There is one small area under an improvement lease. Of the Crown lands, 24,000 acres are held under occupation license, and 32,000* acres are untenanted, unless it may be by annual lease.*

270. Is the unoccupied land in the high country? I do not know the nature of the land, but a range of hills is shown right through the untenanted area.

MONDAY, 27 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

Charles McDonnell Stuart, Supervising Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

271. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the proposed route of railway from Culcairn to Germanton, and of the proposed site of the Germanton station? Yes; but I have not been over the ground in detail.

C. McD.
Stuart.

272. Do you think it a sufficiently convenient site for Germanton? I think so; it lies parallel to the main street, and also parallel with the Government reserve. 27 Aug., 1900.

273. Is it on the Government reserve? On part of it.

274. How far would it be from the town to the station? Not more than a quarter of a mile.

275. Some of the residents, in giving evidence, suggested another site for the station, to the south of the proposed site, on a reserve; they thought it would be more convenient to the town, and, further, they say there is a good water supply adjacent;—do you know? I do not know the position exactly to which you refer; I suppose it would be on the Ten-mile Creek, about half a mile from the proposed station.

276.

* Note (on revision):—It has been since ascertained that 27,250 acres of this area is held under annual lease.

- C. McD. Stuart.
27 Aug., 1900.
276. Would that be more convenient to the centre of the town? Yes; but it would not be so well suited to the railway if it were to be extended.
277. If the railway were to be extended, you would have to make a curve? You would have to put in an S curve to cut the street at right angles, and it might take up more valuable property.
278. Do you think that was in contemplation when the proposed site was selected? Yes; with a view of further extension, if found necessary.
279. Do you think a sufficient water supply could be obtained in close proximity to the proposed station? I think it more than probable; there is no permanency in regard to these creeks.
280. Do you think it desirable to alter the proposed site to the one required by several local residents? I could not say without further examination of the ground.
281. Do you think there is a reasonable prospect of further extension? That I could not say.
282. Do you know the country between Germanton and Culcairn? Pretty well.
283. Do you know the Carabobala Station? Yes; it is quite close to the main road.
284. Does the Ten-mile Creek run through it? I think it does. It runs very close by, at any rate; if it does not, the main creek does.
285. That is the Billabong? Yes; the Ten-mile Creek goes into the Billabong.
286. Do you understand that the proposed railway would run through the Carabobala Estate? Yes.
287. Do you think there is anything in the contention that to construct a railway, as proposed, through the Carabobala Station, would seriously damage it? I do not think it would.
288. Are you aware that there is a road passing almost parallel with the proposed railway line through Carabobala Station? Yes; a surveyed road.
289. If that road were opened, would it not have the same effect as a railway, in cutting off the remainder of the station from the water supply spoken of? I do not think so.
290. Could you say whether the proposed line follows the main road, or does it go approximately close to it? Approximately to it.
291. Is the country fairly level? Yes.
292. Would it be possible to vary the deviation of the line, so as to follow the road now in existence? No.
293. Then there would not be much in the contention of the owners of Carabobala Station in regard to compensation? Of course, their argument is that they are cut off from Billabong Creek.
294. The road keeps pretty well to the one side of Billabong Creek? Yes, until it gets within a few miles of Germanton, then it crosses it. We keep the railway to the opposite side of the creek to that on which the road runs, until the road crosses the creek.
295. Mr. Hyam.] The road of which Mr. McFarlane spoke just now is an unformed road? I presume so.
296. You do not know whether there is a made road there? I do not know of my own knowledge.
297. Or whether one has been reserved? I do not know.
298. And you do not know whether the railway will follow that line of road? It does not follow it exactly, but takes the high ground on the southern side of the Billabong.
299. The road I refer to is an unused road? Yes.
300. But there is a surveyed road there? Yes.
301. Dr. Garran.] Do you know the Corowa line? I do not.
302. You do not know whether this is an easier line? This is, if anything, an easier line.
303. Then we can make it a cheap line? Yes, fairly so.
304. It need not cost more than £3,000 per mile? You have the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate.
305. But, so far as you know? It is the stations that run away with so much money.
306. But to put in such stations as the Department proposes? Yes.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor, Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Department, sworn, and examined:—

- W. H. Hall.
27 Aug., 1900.
307. Chairman.] Have you any statistics with regard to the population and production of the area which it is proposed to serve by a railway from Culcairn to Germanton? Yes, I have.
308. Will you state from what area you have obtained those particulars? The country embraced in the return covers about 20 miles from the terminus of the railway. It bisects about one-half the country on the north and the south between the proposed railway line and the main Southern line. It also goes out as far as the Carabost Range on the north-east, and as far as Jingellic on the south-east. The estimated population of that part of the Culcairn district which would be affected by the railway is 200; the population of Germanton is 1,660; the total population of the two places being 1,860. The agricultural, pastoral, and dairying statistics for 1897-1900 are shown in the following returns:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.
Agricultural, Pastoral, and Dairying Statistics, 1897-1900.

District.	Cultivation.														Live stock.				Dairy produce.			
	Wheat.		Maize.		Barley.	Oats.	Other grains.	Hay.		Green food—area cut.	Area under—			Horses.	Cattle.		Sheep, including lambs.	Swine.	Butter made	Ham and bacon cured.		
	Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.				Wheat, oats, and barley.	Lucerne.		Potatoes.	Fruit orchards.	All other crops.		Milch cows.	Ordinary, including calves.						
Culcairn, 1900 ..	acres.	bushels.	acres.	bushels.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	acres.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	lb.	lb.		
	10,880	9,916	143,084	..	..	100	..	873	..	..	..	..	..	545	155	632	71,008	13	2,600	1,71
Germanton.	1897	3,414	2,511	26,175	2	162	687	..	2	14	29	7	1,279	648	5,012	272,837	271	9,078	190	
	1898	8,023	6,580	52,931	3	90	..	128	1,263	..	1	10	29	5	1,230	589	4,020	277,289	217	7,170	8,910	
	1899	13,411	11,481	198,131	1	82	2	1,732	..	11	6	33	13	1,260	393	4,721	241,237	254	13,006	100
	1900	18,328	15,556	217,701	1	..	3	144	2	2,536	10	31	7	1,132	422	2,836	285,611	252	11,820	7,420

309. Taking a general view of the statistics you have just read, would you say the district is a progressive one? Unquestionably; it shows that the area under cultivation has increased considerably during the last four years. W. H. Hall.
27 Aug., 1900.
310. And from what you know of the district, you think there is room for still greater expansion? Unquestionably; the best proof of that is that so many of the holdings there were originally taken up in small areas, extending out from the north of Germanton. Out Back Creek way, to the Billabong and Cookardina, they were all taken up in small areas of from 40 to 160 acres.
311. Whereabouts would that be? To the north and north-east.
312. *Mr. Levien.*] I suppose you would recommend a railway there? I would.
313. You think there would be an absolute good return from the country to be served by this railway? There would.

Henry Chamberlaine Russell, C.M.G., Government Astronomer, sworn, and examined:—

314. *Chairman.*] Could you give us the details of the rainfall over the district proposed to be served by the line of railway from Culcairn to Germanton? Yes; I can give you the average rainfall at the stations where records are kept. At Culcairn the rainfall averages 20·13 inches; at Pulletop it is 27·40 inches; at Howlong, on the other side, it is 23·29 inches; at Thurguna it is 31·16 inches; at Germanton, 21·91 inches; at Strathdownie, to the east of Germanton, it is 26·46 inches; at Aunadale, north-east of Germanton, it is 21·66 inches. That takes the stations all round the line. It is only a short area. H. C. Russell,
C.M.G.
27 Aug., 1900.
315. Can you say whether the rain falls in such a way as to be eminently suitable for wheat growing? Yes; that is the character of the distribution of the rain about the river Murray, comparing it with places further north—that the distribution of the rain is more even during the year, and more abundant between the winter and the early summer.
316. Is the yearly rainfall subject to any very great variation? Yes, a very considerable variation, but not at all to the same extent as in the Northern parts of the Colony.
317. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you consider the climate suitable for products other than wheat? I cannot answer that question.
318. But with regard to the rainfall? The rainfall is good and favourably distributed. The greater part of it falls between, say, July and November, and so far as wheat is concerned that is a very favourable condition, indeed.
319. Can you say whether, during the past five years, the district has suffered as severely from drought as compared with the west and extreme north-west? There is no comparison at all between the extreme north-west of the Colony and this part of the Colony, which will be served by the proposed railway. In the extreme north-west they go frequently for months without rain; but that is not the case about the Murray. Albury, Germanton, and other places have always a considerable amount of rain.
320. Taking Germanton, what is the minimum rainfall for the past five years? 21·19 inches.
321. Would that be the average for five years? No; it is less than the average. That is the lowest reading of the rainfall for the particular year.
322. This part of the country does not suffer from floods or excessive rainfall? Not very severely, speaking of the district generally. There are no great records there. It is on the Murrumbidgee that the floods are so mischievous, coming down from the high lands.
323. The fact that the rainfall is fairly distributed every year makes the country very suitable for growing wheat? Certainly.
324. Wheat does not want a very wet climate? No; the chief feature in its favour is the abundance of rain at a particular season of the year. It is very seldom, indeed, that the wheat-growing period without rain.
325. *Dr. Garran.*] There is no failure of crops by drought in that district? I do not think so.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.

RAILWAY FROM CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.

REPORT.

THE Sectional Committee, consisting of Mr. J. C. Watson, the Hon. S. H. Hyam, and Mr. John McFarlane, appointed to inspect the route of, and to take evidence and report upon the proposed Railway from Culcairn to Germanton, left Sydney on the evening of Thursday, the 2nd instant, by the southern express, arriving at Culcairn at 6 o'clock on the following morning.

The Sectional Committee held its first meeting at the "Culcairn Hotel" at 10 a.m. on the 3rd, when Mr. J. C. Watson was elected Chairman. The evidence of a number of witnesses was taken in regard to the character of the country between Culcairn and Germanton. All the local residents appeared to be favourable to the proposed extension, so far as could be gleaned from the evidence adduced.

At about 1 o'clock the Sectional Committee left for Germanton, proceeding along the route of the proposed railway, and reaching the terminus a little before 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The country through which the line would pass was found to be generally level, with small broken hills on the northern side, whilst on the southern side the flat lands extend for a considerable distance, bounded by a range of hills some miles away. From the township of Morven, 5 miles distant from Culcairn, the expanse of level land widens out considerably, forming extensive areas of verdant flats, which presented a luxuriant appearance, no doubt owing to the copious rains which have recently fallen in the district. The greater portion of the land along the route on the lower levels is suitable for agriculture, whilst the slopes in the hilly parts are excellent for grazing purposes.

It was noticeable that but little attempt at agriculture had been made within 8 or 9 miles of Culcairn, the land for that distance being occupied almost exclusively with stock. A considerable amount of cultivation, however, was apparent on approaching Germanton, and though agriculture has only been carried on there to any large extent during the last three or four years, there is every promise of a considerable development of this industry in the near future. In fact, larger areas are being put under crop every year. In addition to the paddocks which have already been brought under the plough, further areas are being prepared for sowing, whilst ringbarking and other improvements are being rapidly carried out on most of the holdings.

The Sectional Committee held a meeting in the Court-house, Germanton, at half-past 4 o'clock, on the afternoon of the 3rd instant, when a number of land-owners and other local residents gave evidence. A further sitting was held on the following day, which was attended by residents of all parts of the district likely to be affected by the proposed line, all of whom, with one exception, were favourable to its construction. Though the evidence, generally, was favourable to the route which the railway is to take, dissatisfaction was expressed by some residents of Germanton with the proposed site of the terminal station, on the ground of its being at an inconvenient distance from the centre of the township and in a locality where there might be some difficulty in obtaining a supply of water. It was suggested that the station should be located on a Government

reserve near the cricket ground, which is in closer proximity to the main street and to the Government buildings. The Sectional Committee, however, after a careful inspection of the two sites, came to the conclusion that the objections raised to the one already selected had but little force, while it would be the most convenient for future extension.

The evidence, generally, went to show that the country through which the railway is to pass, as well as considerable areas beyond the terminus which will be served by it, is of a superior description, suitable for growing wheat and other agricultural products. Its suitability for sheep, the rearing of cattle, and the production of wool is generally conceded, whilst it is anticipated, according to the evidence of several landowners, that in some of the country beyond Germanton, an extensive dairying business will be developed within a very short period, more particularly if the means of transit, which the proposed railway would afford, is obtained. The higher lands in the direction referred to are, though for the most part consisting of good soil, deemed more suitable for dairy farming than for agriculture, on account of their broken character.

The wheat-growing industry, which is carried on on what is known as the "halves" system, appears to be tolerably satisfactory to both the owners of the land and the lessees, and the Committee were informed that applications are both numerous and incessant from persons in various parts of the Colony who are desirous of obtaining land for cultivation under this class of tenure.

It was stated in evidence that there are 150,000 acres of land in the district suitable for growing wheat, of which area 27,000 acres are already under cultivation, producing 115,000 bags a year, the yield per acre being from 12 to 20 bushels.

The production of oats has been only recently entered upon by one or two land-holders who, however, have been remarkably successful. The yield for 1898 was 1,000 bags, the average production being from 20 to 40 bushels per acre. It is probable, therefore, that the production of this kind of cereal will be entered upon much more extensively in the immediate future.

It is computed that the quantity of wool to be carried by the railway from this district is 8,000 bales, of which 5,000 bales would be the produce of the area which the line will traverse. Some of the witnesses estimate, however, that another 3,000 bales would be intercepted by the railway on its way from districts beyond Germanton. This produce comes from Tarcutta, Tumberumba, and Adelong, and includes some wool which now goes towards Wagga Wagga. The bulk of the wool from that district at present finds its way to Melbourne, *via* Albury; but the opinion was expressed by some witnesses that after the accomplishment of federation it must inevitably come to Sydney, if the proposed railway be constructed. It may be pointed out that some of the traffic which goes to Melbourne, though continuing to go in that direction, would probably be carried *via* this line to Albury.

A point which was much emphasised by the local residents is the fact that the Germanton district is practically free from droughts, the losses from that cause according to the evidence, not at any time exceeding 2 per cent.

Attention was also drawn to the valuable timbers in the district which, it is stated, cannot at present be turned to profitable use, owing to the want of railway communication, though they are much in demand. Orders which have been received from various parts of the Colony not being supplied, because of the impossibility of getting the timber away.

It was ascertained that the country through which the railway would pass is held in large areas by private owners. These, the Committee find, are not inclined to give, free of cost, the land that would be required for the line, but express themselves generally as willing to accept Government land in exchange for that which may be taken by the Railway Department.

The Government Inspector of Stock for the district mentioned that the stock, in the area of which Germanton is the centre, had increased considerably during the last three years. The carrying capacity of the land is 1½ sheep to the acre.

It was stated by some of the storekeepers that, under the existing condition of things, they find it cheapest for them whilst buying supplies in Sydney to have them sent round to Melbourne and carried over the Victorian railways to Germanton.

On the 5th instant, the Sectional Committee drove in the direction of Yarra Yarra, a distance of about 13 miles east of Germanton, and from there northward to Little Billabong, a further distance of 15 miles. From Little Billabong they proceeded to Kinross, a distance of about 15 miles, and thence back to Germanton, another 5 miles. The land towards Yarra Yarra consists of undulating country, interspersed with rather precipitous hills. It is all first class grazing land, about three-fourths of it being suitable for cultivation. Some of the land is exceptionally good. It is mainly forest land—box and red gum country. From Yarra Yarra to Little Billabong the country is more level than in the part already referred to, and the whole of it may be classed as land suitable for cultivation. Already considerable areas of it are under wheat, and the crops so far look very promising. The land from Little Billabong to Kinross is of an excellent character, and is tolerably level and well watered. A considerable portion of that land also is being used for growing wheat, and the farmers met with by the Committee expressed their intention of largely increasing the area under cultivation if the proposed railway were constructed.

On the route of the line, and for a considerable distance beyond Germanton, there are large areas of land suitable for cultivation, that between Little Billabong and Germanton being noticeable for its superior quality.

As there is still a considerable amount of evidence to be taken on the proposed line of railway, the Sectional Committee think it desirable not to make any recommendation.

The Sectional Committee left Germanton at 10 o'clock on Monday morning for Culcairn, catching the 3.42 p.m. train for Sydney.

8 August, 1900.

J. CHRIS. WATSON,
Chairman.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

[SECTIONAL COMMITTEE.]

RAILWAY FROM CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON.

FRIDAY, 3 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the "Culcairn Hotel," Culcairn, at 9 a.m.]

Present:—

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

Richard John Matchett, manager of the Morven Estate, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Does the proposed line go anywhere near the Morven Estate? It goes through it.
2. What do you think will be the effect of the railway if it be carried out? I think it will be beneficial to our district.
3. Is the Morven Estate a large one? It comprises 7,200 acres of secured land, and about 600 acres of annual leases, besides which we rent about 1,100 acres from private owners.
4. Do you go in for cultivation there? Not much; we have 93 acres under cultivation this year. Formerly we had no cultivation, except for the production of hay for our own use.
5. Has that area to which you have referred been put under crop with the view of producing wheat, or merely for hay? Some of it for hay, and probably 70 acres under wheat.
6. Is the land round Morven suitable for agricultural purposes? It is.
7. Why is it that there is only such a small area cultivated out there? We thought wool-growing more profitable.
8. Do you think it likely that there will be a greater proportion of land put under agriculture in that locality in the future than there has been in the past? Yes, if the price of wheat does not get too low.
9. On the other holdings surrounding Morven has there been much cultivation going on? Yes; a great deal.
10. Can you give us an approximate idea of the area under cultivation there? There is a property adjoining ours belonging to Mr. McLennan, 1,100 acres, most of which is under cultivation. At Benambra there is a great deal under cultivation. On the Carabolla estate, which adjoins our property, they are putting 700 acres under crop this year for the first time.
11. Does the traffic from that direction come towards Culcairn? Yes, chiefly. I think that some of the Benambra wheat went to Gerogery this year for the first time, but all the rest round there has come to Culcairn.
12. What was the reason that induced them to go to Gerogery;—was it that the wheat was likely to find a market towards Melbourne? No; I think the distance was a little shorter than to Culcairn, or the road is better, I am not quite sure.
13. Do you know whether the trade in wheat usually makes for Sydney or for Melbourne from here? I think mostly for Sydney.
14. Where does your wool go to? To Melbourne.
15. How do you send it? By rail from Culcairn.
16. Then by rail from Wodonga to Melbourne? We send it by rail right through.
17. If this railway were constructed would you put your wool that is intended for Melbourne on to the railway if there is a siding at Morven, or would you carry your produce to Culcairn? We should put it on at Morven if possible.
18. Where do you get your supplies from? We get them from Culcairn. They come from Albury to Culcairn by rail.
19. Do you know anything of the land beyond Morven? Yes; I know it pretty well.
20. How does it compare with that between Culcairn and Morven;—is it better or worse? It is very similar country, for some miles anyhow.
21. Towards Germanton is agriculture gone in for extensively? Yes; a great deal of land is cultivated in that neighbourhood.
22. Is that mostly on the halves system, or are the owners cropping their own land? I think it is chiefly on the halves system.
23. Do you know whether the people have found it profitable? I believe they have. I think the yields have been very good during the last few years.
24. Have you estimated the yield of hay and wheat that you get? I think the average would be about 1 to 1½ tons of hay to the acre. We have grown no wheat for grain.
25. What is the carrying capacity of the land at Morven as regards sheep? About one sheep to the acre.

R. J.
Matchett.

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- R. J. Matchett.
3 Aug., 1900.
26. Is it forest land or plain? It is forest land.
27. I suppose you have killed the timber? Yes, the land is well improved.
28. Do you think a railway would be of any advantage to your property out there? In one respect it would be an advantage; but going through the property it might injure it to some extent.
29. By cutting it up? Yes; I think it goes across for a distance of about 2 miles.
30. Does it cut through at an awkward angle? It will cut one paddock off at a rather awkward angle. It will go through our cultivation paddock.
31. You were going to say that the railway would be of some advantage? It would be an advantage to have a railway station and less freight to pay.
32. Do you engage carters or use your own teams for carrying your produce? We engage carters.
33. What does it cost per ton? Five shillings and sixpence.
34. Do you know whether your people would be prepared to give free the land which the railway would take from the estate? I could not say that the land would be given without compensation.
35. I suppose the railway would take about 32 acres in 2 miles? Yes.
36. Would the construction of the railway be worth 32 acres to the estate? I do not think so.
37. Are there many settlers along your way towards Germanton, or is the land mainly held in large blocks? They are fairly large holdings; there are a very few small holdings as far as I know.
38. Do you send any fat stock away? Yes; we sent a good number last year.
39. Where do you make for with fat stock? For Homebush.
40. Do you drive them to Culcairn, and have them trucked there? Yes.
41. Of course, it does no great injury to stock driving them that distance? No.
42. Supposing there were a station near at hand, would you truck them at the nearest point? Yes, we should.
43. Is the stock traffic likely to be a large item? I think so.
44. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You say that you know the country between here and Germanton? Yes, pretty well.
45. Is most of the land alienated along the proposed line? It is.
46. Do you think that the proposed line, if constructed, would have the effect of increasing settlement:— would those who have large holdings subdivide their properties and turn them into farms? I do not know whether they would do that, or whether they would go more into share-farming.
47. Do you think the railway would cause a large increase in agriculture in the district? I think it would.
48. What is the feeling of the people, as far as your knowledge goes? I think the feeling is very generally in favour of the line, except on the part of those through whose property it will go.
49. Do you think there will be a considerable traffic between Germanton and Culcairn, in the event of the line being constructed? Yes, I think there will be a lot of traffic.
50. Is Germanton an important settlement? Yes; I should consider it important.
51. Do you know the country around Germanton? I have a fair knowledge of it.
52. Within a radius of 10 or 15 miles beyond the terminus of the proposed railway, would that country be likely to contribute much traffic to the line? I think it would.
53. Has wheat-growing been carried on with the market as it is now in your district? Yes; I think it has been very profitable.
54. Could you give any idea as to the average result per acre, taking ordinary seasons? I am not quite certain, but the results have been very good; I think the average is three or four bags to the acre.
55. Twelve to 16 bushels? Yes; but I am not quite certain.
56. Would you consider that a fair average crop? Yes; I think about four bags to the acre is the average.
57. Is the country heavily timbered? It has been.
58. I suppose most of the land has been improved? It is highly improved.
59. *Mr. Hyam*] How long have you resided in the district? About thirty years.
60. I suppose the rainfall is pretty regular in the district? Yes; I think that about 26 inches is the average.
61. Are the seasons fairly regular? They are.
62. They do not vary very much? No.
63. It is pretty certain that you will get a crop? Yes; the crops very seldom fail in the district.
64. Have the failures that have occurred been partial or absolute? There have been partial failures, but no absolute failures.
65. If this railway were made, do you think there would be a great increase in agricultural products, live stock, and wool in the district? Yes; and especially in wheat.
66. Do you know the country through to Jingellic? Not very well; I have not been there. I think Jingellic is a rather lilly country.
67. Can you tap the Upper Murray from here by going through Garry Owen? I cannot give any information about the Upper Murray.
68. Do you think that if a line of railway were constructed to Germanton it would take the traffic from the places which I have mentioned? I think it would.
69. That traffic would be almost certain to come on to the line? Yes.
70. Is there a very large population at Germanton? Not in the town.
71. I suppose the town has not progressed owing to the want of railway facilities? That has been the drawback.
72. You think it would not only improve the agricultural area, but the town also, if a railway were made to Germanton? I think it would.
73. There is no doubt, then, that the whole of the trade of the district would be diverted to this line, and possibly a great deal of the wheat grown in the district might be diverted to Melbourne? I do not think that wheat has been sent to Melbourne to any extent.
74. Two or three years ago, when the price of wheat was very high in Victoria, I think a great deal of wheat was sent from this district to the Melbourne market? I never heard of it.
75. With freetrade between the colonies, is it likely that a considerable portion of this trade would be diverted from Melbourne? I cannot say.

76. Do you not think that the people would avail themselves of the nearest port? I daresay that if prices in Melbourne are as good as they could get anywhere else they would.

R. J.
Matchett.

77. Of course, you are alive to the fact that they would like to have two markets instead of one? It would certainly be an advantage. I might mention, with regard to giving the land for the railways, that we should be prepared to grant the land required provided that we got other land in exchange in the shape of unnecessary reserves on the property. I understand that the Department are willing to grant that.

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78. *Chairman.*] The Engineer informs me that in running a railway through purchased property they take 12 acres to the mile;—that would be 24 acres in this instance? Yes.

John O'Donoghue, hotel-keeper and postmaster, Morven, sworn, and examined:—

79. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided long at Morven? Three years and a half.

80. Have you a general knowledge of the country through which the proposed railway is to pass? I have, from Morven into Germanton and around this district.

J.
O'Donoghue.

81. Is there much traffic between Morven and Culcairn? Yes; a good deal. All the Benambla wheat comes through Morven.

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82. Where is Benambla station? About 7 miles from the "Morven Hotel," to the south-east.

83. What is the nature of the traffic between Morven and Culcairn? Wheat, wool, and stores.

84. The stores come from Culcairn? Yes.

85. Do you think, if the railway passed through Morven, as proposed, it would be universally used by the people for carrying produce and supplies? Yes.

86. Of course, road carriage has to be used at present? Yes.

87. Does much traffic from Germanton pass through Morven? Yes; nearly the whole of it.

88. Would you consider the present traffic a large traffic? There is a traffic from Albury. A great deal of traffic comes from Albury by road, but if there was a railway from Germanton that traffic would go by the railway.

89. How far is Albury from Germanton by the road? About 36 miles.

90. About double the distance between here and Germanton? Yes. The brewers have to cart their beer from Albury, but they would not do that if there was a railway.

91. What is the occupation of the settlers? They are farmers.

92. Are they agricultural farmers? Yes. They cultivate the soil and rear sheep.

93. Is there much mixed farming? Yes, a good deal.

94. Is the district progressing? Yes. There has been a great deal of clearing done. Thousands of acres have been cleared within the last few years.

95. Has there been much increase in settlement? Yes, a great deal. Some of the settlers at Benambla have purchased farms.

96. I suppose there is a very small extent of Crown land available? Very little.

97. How do the settlers get land now? They purchase it from private owners.

98. If this line were constructed, do you think it would have a great effect in increasing settlement? I do.

99. Do you think those who are living such a short distance from Culcairn as Morven is would not drive their stock to Culcairn? No; I do not think they would if there was a station at Morven.

100. Do you think there would be much passenger traffic? Yes; the railway would catch all the people from Benambla, Mountain Creek, and Roachdate.

101. Are the landowners favourable to agricultural farming being extended in the event of the line being constructed? They are; and they are already preparing to let out the land largely on the halves system next year.

102. Do you think that a satisfactory system of farming with regard to wheat-growing? It is.

103. Is it satisfactory to the persons who take the land from the owners? Yes; they are making homes. Some of them are leasing the land for five years.

104. Do you think the land is suitable for wheat-growing? Yes; it is as good as any in New South Wales.

105. Have you been in any other district of the Colony? I have; and I have been in New Zealand, where I grew wheat myself.

106. Do you think there would be a satisfactory average yield of wheat in the district? I do.

107. Do you know the Germanton district? Yes; but I have not been further than there. The land as far as Germanton is all level.

108. Is it similar country to that between here and Morven? No; it is more level here.

109. Is there much waste land between here and Germanton? There is very little waste land, except some hills.

110. Is Germanton growing in importance and population? I do not know that it has grown much. It is nearly at a standstill, but slightly improving.

111. Is it the centre of a considerable district? Yes, it is. There are some very big stations in that district, and I believe that a railway would improve the place vastly.

112. Do you think there would be a large amount of traffic opened up if the line were constructed? I do. It might not pay just at first; but there is a great district beyond Germanton, the traffic of which must come to the railway.

James Hugh Balfour, manager of the Round Hill Estate, sworn, and examined:—

113. *Mr. Hyam.*] How long have you been in the district? About twenty years.

114. Where do you reside? On the Round Hill Estate.

115. Will the proposed railway go through your estate? Yes; for about 4 miles.

116. Of course you heard the question raised as to giving up the land necessary for the construction of the railway;—would you be willing to give the land free to the Government for this purpose? We certainly could not give it free.

117. What conditions would you impose if you gave the land? We should be willing to make an exchange of land, if we could get some that would be suitable.

J. H. Balfour.

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- J. H. Balfour. 118. Is there any land near your place that you could take in exchange for that which would be required for the railway? Yes; I think there is. Of course, we should not expect to take unimproved land for our improved land.
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119. You would take land of the same value as that which you give up? Yes; except for two blocks, for which we would expect compensation, being completely cut off from our water. One block would be isolated from the property altogether.
120. Can you tell me the area of your holding—on this side of the line? The whole of our property is on the eastern side of the Main Southern line.
121. How much freehold have you? Between 30,000 and 40,000 acres.
122. All freehold? Yes.
123. Does that land lie between here and Morven? A portion of it.
124. Does it extend a great distance along the Southern line? About 7 miles.
125. Does it abut on the line? Yes.
126. Is your land suitable for agriculture? Yes.
127. The whole of it? Almost the whole of it, except the tops of some of the rises.
128. I suppose the whole of the hills are fit for grazing? Yes, they are.
129. Do you pay much attention to agriculture? Yes; we have about 6,000 acres under cultivation.
130. Do you cultivate it yourselves? No; it is nearly all let on the halves system.
131. If this line were constructed, would you increase the area under cultivation? No, not necessarily. The line would not affect us in that way.
132. Your property being so near to Culcairn, you would come to Culcairn under any circumstances? Yes.
133. Then the line would be of no benefit to you? Of no benefit at all.
134. Do you carry many sheep on your land? Yes; about one and a half sheep to the acre.
135. Your land is highly improved? Yes; it is one of the oldest stations in the district.
136. Can you give us any idea of the average yield per acre of wheat, taking one season with another? From 15 to 20 bushels would be a fair average.
137. What is the yield of hay? About $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons to the acre.
138. Can you grow potatoes? Not well.
139. Do you grow maize? No.
140. Do you grow lucerne? Yes; good grazing lucerne. It is not such lucerne as that of the Hunter River district.
141. Do you find that by cultivating lucerne you increase the carrying capacity of your land to a considerable extent? Yes.
142. How is the country watered between here and Germanton, and especially on your own place? The main Billabong Creek runs right through our property.
143. And it never fails? It is never absolutely dry. During the late drought it stopped running, but there were holes holding considerable quantities of water, and we could get water anywhere on the creek by sinking.
144. Then you think that the chief traffic on this line would be wool and wheat? Yes.
145. Do you know the country beyond Germanton? Not for any distance beyond Yarra Yarra.
146. How far is that from here? It is about 32 miles.
147. What is the nature of the country between Yarra Yarra and Germanton? It is more hilly than the country on this side of Germanton.
148. Is it good agricultural country? Some parts of it.
149. What proportion of it? I hardly know.
150. Would one-third of it be fit for agriculture? I should think so.
151. And I suppose the rest is good grazing land? Most of it is.
152. Will it carry one sheep to the acre? I should not say that it would.
153. What would it carry? It is difficult to say, so much of it is rough country.
154. Is that country very rough? Yes.
155. Still it would carry sheep? Yes, when improved; a lot of it is not improved.
156. You think that the trade of that outlying country would increase the revenue from the railway between Culcairn and Germanton? Yes; the traffic from that part would come to the railway.
157. Taking the country running at right angles to the railway between here and Germanton, is that good country, say for 5 or 10 miles back on each side? Yes; on the whole it is good country on both sides of the line for a distance back of about 5 miles.
158. Do you think that the traffic would be diverted on to this railway? I think the trade would undoubtedly come to the line beyond a certain distance from Culcairn. All the traffic within that distance would come to Culcairn.
159. Would the traffic of the district between Morven and Germanton come to the railway? I should think so.
160. Do you know anything of the road traffic between Albury and Germanton? Yes; all the wool from the Germanton district goes that way. The large stations send their wool direct to Albury, along the Old Sydney Road.
161. As a rule, do they get their supplies from Albury? Yes.
162. Is Albury the centre at which they deal? It is.
163. Do they send their wheat from that district to Albury? No; the wheat comes to Culcairn.
164. And does the wool go to Albury? Yes.
165. Do you think that if this railway were made it would get that traffic? It is hard to say. I suppose the main thing would be the freight. It may be that a man may be able to send his wool cheaper by the road than round by the branch line and the main line.
166. Is it a good road to Albury? Yes; it is a good macadamised road.
167. Then it will be good in all seasons, wet or dry? Yes.
168. You cannot say whether the traffic would be diverted to this railway instead of going to Albury? No; I think that the wheat traffic will naturally come to Culcairn.
169. Where is the wheat from here generally sent to? To Sydney.
- 169½. And the wool? The wool goes to Melbourne. One reason for that is that the freight of wheat to Sydney

Sydney is less than to Melbourne, and the freight on wool to Sydney is a good deal more than the freight to Melbourne. J. H. Balfour.

170. Assuming that the wool will continue to go to Melbourne, do you think it will be sent to the Border by road or by rail? I think a good deal will depend upon the freight. 3 Aug., 1900.

171. Assuming that there will be very little difference between the two? Then I think that it would be sent by rail.

172. *Chairman.*] Mr. Harper, the Chief Traffic Manager, in giving evidence, said that the wool freight from Germanton to Albury at the present was about 20s. per ton by road;—do you know whether that is so or not? I think it is between 15s. and 20s. per ton. I believe it has been reduced below 20s.

173. He said that the freight on wool from Germanton to Albury, at existing rates, by rail, would be 15s.;—do you think that at that rate the railway would have a chance of competing with the road traffic? I think it would in the case of some stations; but in other cases I do not think it would, because when they get it put on their waggons they can have it carried for £1 into Wodonga. They would have to pay another freightage from their stations to Germanton Railway Station, and for the short distance to Culcairn the charge would not be less than 5s., and when you put the wool on the trucks here they would have to pay the truckage rate from Albury to Wodonga, which they would escape by taking their wool direct to Wodonga.

174. It would appear from that that those pastoralists whose land is a little distance from the line on the Albury side of Germanton would find it pay them better to go direct to Wodonga? I think they would, at the present rates of freight. Those near Germanton would naturally be inclined to send their produce by the railway.

175. You are not interested in the line;—as a taxpayer, what is your opinion of this proposal—do you think it would be a fair thing to construct this railway in view of the country that it would open up beyond Germanton, and the traffic that it would get generally? I think that the main thing on this line would be the wheat traffic. I certainly do not think the railway would pay with only the present production of wheat; but, as a rule, a railway causes an increase in agriculture. In my opinion the main point is, whether in view of the wet seasons wheat-growing would be continued to a great extent in the outlying Germanton districts. Wheat is known to grow very well in dryer times. The question is, whether, if wet seasons come, it would be profitable enough to continue growing wheat to any great extent.

176. What is the difficulty in wet seasons? Too much moisture. Germanton is nearer the hills than this part, and gets more rain than we get here. Our average rainfall here since 1879 has been 20 inches per annum. At Germanton I should say that the average is something over 30 inches.

177. Do they not grow wheat with a much heavier rainfall than that in New Zealand? Yes.

178. Have they been growing wheat at Germanton during wet seasons? I suppose they have grown wheat there, but not in any great quantity until the last four or five years. They have grown wheat for hay, and they may have had small crops for grain too.

179. Assuming that wheat can be grown in average seasons as well as in the past few years, do you think that the encouragement of agriculture would be sufficient to justify the construction of the line? I think it would.

180. The Railway Commissioners anticipate a loss on the working of the line? I suppose there are few which will not show a loss at the commencement.

181. Do you think, looking at it generally, that the construction of the line will be justified? Yes, in the future. I might mention one of our great difficulties about the line: Our property is enclosed in wire-netting, and this railway would cut both the east and west fences, and so open it to the rabbit pest. That would have to be provided for before the line was started, otherwise the rabbits could get in when the line is being made. Great damage would be done.

182. Lately these light lines have been left unfenced; how would that state of things affect you? It would not suit us.

183. Would it not be possible to make some pits, or cattle stops, which would have the effect of blocking the rabbits? That is done in some cases, and is a great help, but it is not an absolute protection. The difficulty would be in the making of the line. Whilst the line is being made you cannot keep the fences closed.

184. I should think that the Department would be willing to meet you in reference to that? It would be ruination for us, having gone to the expense of 50 or 60 miles of fencing to have it broken open. If it is thrown open for only three months the rabbits, which are all along the outside, would get in. If it was left open for a couple of nights we might get twenty or thirty of them in each night.

185. Have you got the rabbits down on your property? Yes; we have never had many of them.

186. Are they bad outside your boundaries? Yes, they have increased greatly since we put the netting up.

187. I suppose the hills harbour them? Yes.

Sydney Hinde, railway station-master, Culcairn, sworn, and examined:—

188. *Chairman.*] Can you give the Committee any information as to the class and volume of the traffic that usually comes from Germanton towards Culcairn? Yes; wheat and wool, a little tallow, sheep-skins, and hides. S. Hinde. 3 Aug., 1900.

189. Is there any fat stock? Yes; principally sheep, occasionally a few trucks of cattle.

190. In which direction does the wool from that district usually go—towards Melbourne or Sydney? It all goes to Melbourne.

191. And where does the fat stock go to? About one third to Sydney and the remainder to Albury.

192. Where does the wheat go to? To Goulburn and Sydney. During the last few years we have had a little chaff going towards Sydney.

193. Can you give the Committee any idea of the volume that either of these items would amount to from the direction of Germanton? Last year there were between 50,000 and 60,000 bags of wheat from Morven and beyond, and the year before that the quantity was a little heavier, from 70,000 to 80,000 bags.

194. Is there any large passenger traffic to and from Germanton and that direction? Most of our passenger traffic comes from the Germanton direction, from Morven, and beyond there. I believe a great many

- S. Hinde. many travel down the back road, from Germanton to Albury, by coach. If the railway were constructed I should think they would come by rail.
- 3 Aug., 1900. 195. Have you been long at Culcairn? I have been here thirteen years next September.
196. Have you noticed, during that period, any great increase in the traffic at the Culcairn station, irrespective of the branch to Corowa? There has been a large development in the wheat traffic. When I came here there were only a few farmers in the district.
197. Has there been any corresponding falling off in the production of wool,—or has it kept up its average? The quantity of wool going by rail has increased. When I first came here we used to get about 1,000 bales. I think the highest number of bales we ever had in one year was 6,000. It is down now to between 3,000 and 4,000 bales.
198. So the increase in agriculture does not necessarily result in a falling off in the production of wool? No.
199. Does any great quantity of goods go out towards Germanton from here by rail? Yes, a fair quantity; but owing to the difference in the rates I believe that most of the goods go up the main Sydney Road from Albury. They can be brought from Sydney to Albury at about the same price as they can be landed at Culcairn, and they can get teams to cart them up almost as cheaply there as here. I am told that goods are sent round by boat from Sydney to Melbourne, then brought to Wodonga, then carried by road from Wodonga to Germanton, because they can get from there to Germanton almost as cheaply as from here.
200. What is the cost of carriage by road? Flour, sugar, potatoes, and so on, about 18s. a ton. For groceries and drapery, about £1 a ton.
201. What is the cost from here to Germanton for similar goods? From 10s. to 15s. per ton, according to the class of goods. It is 18 miles from here to Germanton, and 37 from Germanton to Albury. The freight from Albury to Culcairn is from 3s. 11d. up to £1 5s. 7d. a ton, according to the class of the goods.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Germanton, at 4 p.m.]

Present:—

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM. | JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

Gordon Ronald McLaurin, grazier, Stonebroke, sworn, and examined:—

- G. R. McLaurin. 202. *Chairman.*] What are you? A grazier, residing at Stonebroke.
- 3 Aug., 1900. 203. How far from here? About 12 miles.
204. What is the extent of your holding? It is held conjointly (five in family). We have from 75,000 to 80,000 acres.
205. Is it fit for agriculture? A great deal of it is. Roughly speaking, about 30,000 acres of it.
206. Do you class the remainder as good pastoral land? It is, and in time, when it has been properly improved, it will be available for cultivation. In some places, though the land is good enough, you could not work the ploughs on it, because it is too steep.
207. Is a great deal of what you class as agricultural land improved? The greater part of it is.
208. To what purpose do you mainly put the land now? We use it for grazing, and we have a number of acres under crop.
209. How many acres have you under crop? I suppose about 6,000 or 7,000 acres.
210. What is the carrying capacity of the holding? The cultivation of the land has not made a great deal of difference to the carrying capacity of the place, because whilst the crops are growing we can make use of the wheat, and it relieves the paddocks and does a great deal of good. We have between 800 and 1,000 bales of wool.*
211. How is your land being farmed? On the "halves" system.
212. How do the farmers seem to be doing? They seem very happy.
213. What yields do they usually get? The last returns were between three and four bags of wheat to the acre.
214. Was that an average year? That was in 1898. There were 11,618 bags from 2,700 acres. In the following year there were 19,884 bags from 7,000 acres. At present there are 8,000 acres under cultivation.
215. Is last year to be regarded as an average season? It was not such a good year as the previous one. We have only been a very few years at cultivation. I think that the average yield here is between three and four bags an acre.
216. Where do you send your wool to now? To Melbourne.
217. By which route? We send it *via* Albury.
218. Where do you send your wheat to? To Sydney.
219. Do you send fat stock away during the year? As a rule, we sell them on the place or at Albury.
220. Do they find their way to Melbourne or to Sydney? I could not tell you. We sell them to dealers.
221. Where do you get your supplies from? We deal with Mate & Co., at Albury.
222. What do you think would be the effect of the construction of the proposed railway? It would open up a vast amount of country which has never been touched, I think.
223. Immediately round Germanton, or away from the town? It would tend to open up country here as far as cultivation is concerned, and it would bring in trade from the Upper Murray.
224. How far do you think the line would influence trade beyond Germanton? Taking into consideration the geographical position of the place, it ought to influence it for 70 or 80 miles up the Murray.
225. In that part of the Upper Murray 70 or 80 miles from here do they not make for the other side of the river? They have a long way to go to get to Tallangatta.
226. Do you think that if a line were constructed to Germanton it would influence trade to that distance? I think so. We are only 20 miles from the Murray.
- 227.

* NOTE (on revision):—This quantity includes 300 bales of scoured wool, which, if sent away in the grease, would increase the total number of bales by 300,—calculating that two bales of greasy are equal to one of scoured wool.

227. What class of trade do you think would come from there towards the line? In the first place there would be a good passenger traffic, because when they can get a train within 16 miles they would not ride 40 or 50 miles.

228. Would you expect that goods traffic would come from that part of the Upper Murray towards this line? Yes.

229. What class of goods traffic? General goods. People would, perhaps, deal with Sydney instead of getting through goods from Albury, as they do now. They would get them *via* Germanton if it were the terminus of a railway.

230. Are the roads good between Germanton and Welaregang? They are average roads.

231. There is a road shown on the map as going from Welaregang down the river towards Albury;—is it not a more direct road than that from Welaregang to Germanton? The distance is shorter from Walleragang to Germanton than from Welaregang to Albury, by 30 or 40 miles.

232. Do you think the people would be more likely to come from Walleragang to Germanton with goods than to go down the Murray towards Albury? I am certain of it.

233. Is there any road from Germanton in a direct line towards Tumberumba? Yes.

234. Which is the most direct road to Tumberumba? The road by Coppabella.

235. Do you think there is any likelihood of traffic coming from the direction of Tumberumba towards the railway at Germanton? I think there would be.

236. At present the traffic goes to Wagga Wagga, does it not? A good deal of it does, although there is a considerable trade between Albury and Tumberumba.

237. How far out from Germanton, in the direction of Carabost or Jingellic, is the land suitable for cultivation? In a straight line from here, in the Carabost direction, there is land fit for cultivation for a great many miles.

238. How far is it to the Yarrara Gap? Eighteen miles and a half.

239. How far in that direction do you say the land would be suitable for agriculture? Sixteen miles.

240. Then towards Jingellic, is the land as good for a similar distance? There is a belt of good country there; but not so good as the other—it is more broken.

241. Is it fair pastoral land? It is good for that. It is really good soil—in fact, better than we get lower down.

242. Do you think that if the line were constructed the people would be induced to go in for cultivation in the direction I have named? I do; I think it will forward the industry.

243. What do you pay now for the carriage of your wool to Albury? That is rather an inquisitorial question. We pay about 30s. a ton.

244. What do you estimate it would cost you to bring that wool into Germanton if the railway were here? The distance is about 12 miles. I do not think it would cost 10s. a ton.

245. Do you think it would pay you to put the wool on the trucks at Germanton instead of sending it to Albury? Certainly; if they did not charge an exorbitant rate.

246. It is estimated that the charge from here to Albury will be 15s. a ton by the railway? That will pay us.

247. It will pay you to use the railway after carting the wool from your station to Germanton? Certainly it will.

248. There is no doubt that you will use the railway for the carriage of wheat? Not the slightest doubt about that.

249. With regard to the fat stock, I think you said you sold to dealers? As a rule, we do; but the time may come when we shall not.

250. You cannot say what you will do with fat stock? No; if the price is good in Sydney we shall send them there.

251. If you were sending fat stock to Melbourne you would not truck them here, in view of the fact that they would have to be transhipped at Albury on account of the break of gauge? We go in more for fat sheep than anything, and we generally sell them in Albury.

252. Do you think you will continue to send them that way, even if this line be constructed? No; I do not say that.

253. But you will have the break of gauge at Albury? That will only be for a time.

254. What do you pay per ton for stores that you get from Albury? That carting is generally let by contract for the whole year.

255. For wool one way and for supplies the other? Yes; and, of course, letting it that way it is a private agreement.

256. Could you say whether it would pay you to get your supplies, supposing you got them from Albury, by rail to Culcairn, and from there to Germanton instead of having them sent as they are sent now from Albury by road? If it would pay us better to get our supplies from Sydney *via* Culcairn, we should get them that way.

257. What I wish to get at is whether it would pay you, knowing what the railway rates usually are for that distance, supposing you continue to get your goods from Albury, to have them brought *via* Culcairn and Germanton? In all probability we shall get them that way.

258. Would you use the line instead of the road? That is what we intend to do.

259. Is there anything else you would care to mention? We have had to refuse dozens of orders for timber, because we cannot get the timber away from the district.

260. Have you a saw-mill? Yes.

261. Where is the timber got for supplying the saw-mill? In the ordinary bush.

262. What class of timber do you get? Red-gum and stringy-bark.

263. Where do you find a market for the timber? We have had orders from Coolaman, Narrandera, and Rutherglen; but we cannot supply the timber, because we cannot get teams to take it to Culcairn.

264. Which class of timber do they require? I do not know anything about it.

265. But you know there have been orders sent? I know that those orders have been refused.

266. Do you think the carriage of timber would form a considerable item if the line were constructed? I am certain of it.

267. Is the forest that could be tapped extensive? The supply is very good, and seems likely to last for some years. I suppose we get now about 100,000 feet a quarter for local requirements alone.

G. R.
McLaurin:
3 Aug., 1900.

- G. R. McLaurin.
3 Aug., 1900.
268. Is there any difficulty in getting timber at other points on the railway line which would put a premium on timber here? Not that I am aware of.
269. How many farmers have you on the share system on your estate? I think, about twenty-six.
270. *Mr. Hyam.*] How much of your land is freehold or conditional purchase, or Crown land? Most of it.
271. All the 80,000 acres is secured land? Yes.
272. Have you any leasehold area? Yes; in addition to the 80,000 acres.
273. Is any of that leasehold land fit for settlement? No; it is only grazing land.
274. How many sheep do you carry on the 80,000 acres? From 75,000 up to 95,000.
275. And you get 1,000 bales of wool? Yes; between 800 and 1,000 bales.
276. Is not that a low average;—does not a sheep cut 6 or 7 lb. of wool? Not in this district.
277. They are light sheep? Yes.
278. Have you any horned cattle? I suppose we have 400 or 500.
279. Is it good cattle country? Some of it is; but you can class it mostly as sheep country. Some of it is wet country, and that is suitable for cattle.
280. Is it swampy? No, not big swamp.
281. What is the nature of the soil that you are cultivating? Some is black and some is chocolate.
282. Have you any volcanic country? Yes.
283. Which do you find best for wheat-growing? We have only been two years wheat-growing. I have given the returns.
284. *Chairman.*] Have you anything more to say? I wish to say, with regard to the carriage from our place to Culcairn, that if it had not been for the bad seasons which have prevailed throughout the country, we could not have got teams to cart the wheat away for the last two years.
285. *Mr. Hyam.*] Why? The effect of the bad seasons in the far west was to drive the teams up here. If it had not been for that, the teams would not have come, and our wheat would have been left in the paddocks.
286. *Chairman.*] It would have cost more for carriage than you could afford to pay? It would. If we cannot get teams to cart our wheat away, we cannot grow it, and if they have good seasons in other parts there is no certainty that we shall be able to get teams here. We had, I think, forty-seven teams going for about six weeks. That was for our own share.

Charles Edward Burrowes, farmer, Yarrara, sworn, and examined:—

- C. E. Burrowes.
3 Aug., 1900.
287. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you reside? At Yarrara, 22½ miles from Germanton.
288. In which direction is that? To the east of Germanton.
289. How many acres do you occupy? About 400 acres.
290. Have you been long residing in the district? About twenty years.
291. Do you carry on agricultural farming? I combine sheep-grazing with agriculture.
292. How long have you carried on agriculture? Ever since I started. I carried it on mostly to produce stuff for my own use.
293. You have not sent any wheat to market? No.
294. Can you tell us what result you have had from wheat-growing? I live in that particular stretch of country between where the arable land finishes and starts again. So my block does not represent the quality of the land generally in the district.
295. Is your land inferior to the general run of the country? It is very good land, but rather too broken for agriculture.
296. Have you got a knowledge of the country within a radius of 15 miles of Germanton? Yes.
297. How do you class that country,—is it good for wheat-growing? The bulk of it is.
298. How would the balance of it be classed for sheep farming? The balance of it could be classed as second-class grazing land as a rule.
299. How many sheep to the acre is the country capable of carrying? In its improved condition it will carry about a sheep to the acre.
300. Is that the general average? Yes.
301. During the time you have resided in this district has it made much progress with regard to settlement and increase in population, and increase in agriculture and sheep farming? Not until the last two years. There has lately been a rush for land on the share system for wheat-growing. That stimulated it wonderfully.
302. Is there likely to be any further increase? Yes; a very great deal of increase in that respect.
303. Is there much room for additional settlement? On the system they are adopting now there is. Unfortunately, most of the land is in the hands of large holders.
304. There is not much available Crown land? No, not fit for agriculture.
305. Is Germanton your market where you send your produce for sale? Yes.
306. In what direction would the produce go from there? Mostly to Albury. That is the predominating market in this district.
307. You have heard *Mr. McLaurin's* evidence about the rates of carriage,—do you agree with his statement? Exactly.
308. Is Germanton a recognised centre for all the sheep and agricultural farmers in the surrounding district? Yes; it is the recognised centre for a very large district.
309. Is there much communication between the outlying districts and Germanton? Yes, a good deal.
310. Is it looked upon by the people of those districts as their place of business? Yes, as their natural trade centre.
311. If the proposed railway were constructed to Germanton, do you think it would have the effect of increasing settlement? Yes; it would increase settlement very much.
312. In what direction would the increased settlement be? I am speaking from an agricultural standpoint.
313. You think that if railway facilities were given there would be a great inducement to the farmers to grow wheat? I am certain there would be a very large increase in settlement, as this is a very safe district from droughts. During the last couple of years the crops here have been exceedingly good, though in other districts they were a failure.

314. Do you think it would pay to grow wheat at the present price, carry it to the railway station, and send it to either the Albury or the Sydney market? It certainly would.
315. Is the country thickly timbered and difficult to clear? No; it is not difficult to clear. The land which they use for agriculture is cleared at very little expense.
316. Is there a large area suited to wheat-growing in your locality? Not in my locality.
317. Is there any other product which could be successfully grown in the district? Yes; potatoes, onions, and other vegetables.
318. Would it pay to grow them? Yes; I would go into it very largely myself if we had railway facilities here.
319. Do you think the settlers would use the railway instead of doing as they do now in many instances—paying carriage to Albury? I am certain that they would.
320. Even if Albury is the point to be reached? Yes; I am certain they would use the train in preference to ordinary road carriage.
321. Is there anything else that you would like to say? I should like to add that, as regards the condition of the Upper Murray, it was not quite clear from Mr. McLaurin's evidence that this is the natural depôt for the trade of the district. There is a natural avenue between the hills here till we come to the valley of the Upper Murray, and the trade will come here from that part if the proposed railway is made, and it will be a very large trade. Nearly all that Upper Murray trade which is now going to Albury will come here. In view of the consummation of Federation, the trade from the Victorian side which is in the occupation of smaller holders will come this way, this being their nearest market.
322. *Chairman.*] Will it cross the river at Jingellic? Yes; there is a bridge there.
323. Would there be a passenger traffic? Yes; a very large one.
324. In which direction will it go after taking the train at Germanton? If a person at Jingellic wished to go to Melbourne it would be better to come this way than to go down the Murray.
325. Would it not be more costly? No, it would be less costly; but the distance would be almost exactly the same. People from Jingellic would come down here to go either to Albury or Sydney.
326. How far would it be to Albury from Welaregang? It is 72 miles going within a few miles of Germanton; consequently if a person at Jingellic wished to go to Albury, and we had the railway to Germanton, he would use the railway.
327. How far is it from Jingellic to Germanton? Thirty-five miles.
328. It would be a considerable distance further by train, would it not? Yes; and it is a very rough road down the Murray to go to the train.
329. *Chairman.*] If a man were at Jingellic, and he wanted to go to Melbourne market with either fat stock or goods, would he make for here or for Wodonga? With goods, I think he would make for here; but as regards stock, transhipping would make a difference. The people up my way are handicapped. This extra distance to Culcairn makes it easier to go to Albury or Tullangatta.
330. You think there is no doubt that they would use the railway? I am certain they would, to a very large extent.

C. E.
Burrowes.
3 Aug., 1900.

Edward Byrne, farmer and grazier, Cookardina, sworn, and examined:—

331. *Mr. Hyam.*] Where do you reside? I reside 5 miles east of Cookardina—15 miles from here.
332. What is the extent of your holding? I am part owner of three different places. I live at one of them, another is 6 miles from Germanton, and the other is 22 miles east of Germanton, on the road to Jingellic.
333. How many acres have you altogether? About 12,000 acres.
334. Is it secured land? Yes.
335. Is there much of it under cultivation? Yes; between 2,000 and 3,000 acres.
336. How are you farming them? Most of it is let to farmers at so much per acre, and we ourselves farm sometimes 300 acres, sometimes 400 acres.
337. Do you find that the farmers who are renting the land are fairly prosperous? Yes; they are doing very well.
338. Would you mind telling the Committee how much a year you get for the land per acre? It is not let altogether on money considerations, but partly for improvements. We are, perhaps, the only people who do it. We let the land partly on improvement leases.
339. For how many years on improvement leases? For five years.
340. Is there any money consideration? Yes.
341. Would you mind telling us how much the money consideration is? The money consideration is 4s. per acre, and they have to make certain improvements.
342. Was that ringbarked country, or was it in a state of nature when the tenants went on it? It was partly improved, and some very much. It was all fairly improved grazing land, but not all what you would call fairly improved for cultivation. It was ordinary grazing country.
343. How many tenants have you under that system? Nine or ten.
344. I suppose that if you had a railway from Germanton, and better facilities for getting produce to market, you would be likely to increase the number of your tenants? Not very much in our case; our holding is limited in area.
345. How many acres of your land are fit for agriculture? Altogether I suppose that between 3,000 and 4,000 acres would be fit for agriculture, in excess of what is already occupied for agriculture.
346. Half of your holding is fit for agriculture? More than that.
347. Can you grow anything but wheat? We can grow anything that would grow in a humid climate.
348. Can you grow maize? Yes.
349. Can you grow potatoes? Yes.
350. And oats? We have had some remarkably heavy crops of oats.
351. What is the carrying capacity of your pastoral lands? One sheep to the acre.
352. Do you call that first-class or second-class pastoral land? I consider that land which would carry a sheep to the acre is first-class pastoral land.
353. What is the character of the sheep? They are average sheep.
354. Not so large as the sheep you get in the Riverina? No.

E. Byrne.
3 Aug., 1900.

- E. Byrne.** 355. Was the late drought felt very much here? It was felt, but not nearly so severely as it was in some places.
- 3 Aug., 1900. 356. Were there any serious losses of stock? No; there were losses, but not such disasters as occurred in other places.
357. Then the country, for agricultural and pastoral purposes, will stand the drought fairly well? It is a splendid district for standing a drought.
358. I suppose you have a good knowledge of the country within a radius of 15 miles east of Germanton? Yes.
359. And further out, I presume? Yes, up to 40 miles.
360. Do you think the traffic from Jingellic would be brought to Germanton? Yes; this is its natural run. It must come here.
361. How far is Jingellic from the nearest railway on the Victorian side? There is a sort of driver's track to Tallangatta, and the distance I should take to be about 36 miles.
362. Then, if the Victorian Government were to extend that line to the Murray—and I think it could easily be done—would it not attract the trade of Jingellic and the Upper Murray into Victoria? No; it would not interfere with Jingellic at all. The Victorian Government could not tap the Murray so low down as Jingellic; they would have to tap it much higher up—about Toolong.
363. It is only about 32 miles from Tallangatta to Jingellic? It is 32 or 36 miles, but there is no road.
364. You think there would be no possibility of this Victorian railway attracting traffic from our railway here? No; none whatever.
365. Do you think there would be any chance of our losing the trade of Welaregang? No; I think a line to Germanton would suit the people better. There is already a line to Tallangatta, but still they come down here, and they go to Albury.
366. There are fiscal barriers at present, but it will not be so much longer;—there is a stock tax and a grain tax? Yes, I know; but they come down to Albury with stock, knowing that they must pay the tax.
367. Do you think that any agricultural industry will grow up in the Jingellic and the Welaregang districts? They will grow oats and potatoes; but it will be principally a dairying district. That is a model dairying country to the east of Germanton, in the direction of Tumberumba and the Upper Murray. They can grow tobacco and hops in that country, and it is all very well suited for dairying.
368. Do you think that the traffic from that particular industry will be attracted to Germanton? Yes.
369. Is there any dairying going on in that district now? Only for local requirements.
370. I suppose that if a railway were constructed to Germanton, you would use it? Yes.
371. Do you think that if a railway were constructed to Germanton, it would promote further settlement on lands already alienated in the district? Yes; there would be vastly more production on that land.
372. Is there much unalienated land around Germanton? No; I do not think there is much.
373. What, in your opinion, is the greatest distance that a man can cart wheat to a railway station and make it pay at the present price? That depends on the quality of the land he is farming. If a man is farming good land, he can cart wheat in average seasons and at average prices from 20 to 25 miles, and make it pay; but it has to be good land. You can cart wheat from good land, where you would not attempt to cart wheat from bad land.
374. Take the average of the land about here—within a distance of 25 miles from Germanton;—is the bulk of it fit for wheat-growing? Yes; it is suited for wheat-growing.
375. Is there any other statement that you would like to make? In a place that I am interested in now, and in other places, we have a good deal of timber. We left it unskilled, thinking that it would be of value, but it is too far to cart it to Culcairn. If there is a railway to Germanton, it would relieve us of 18 miles of road carriage, and we should be able to dispose of that timber.
376. How far is that timber from here? Twenty-three or 24 miles.
377. What is the nature of the timber? It is mostly blue-gum and stringy-bark.
378. Is that stringy-bark country good grazing land? Yes.
379. As a rule it is not good? That is not the case in this district. There are thousands of acres of it here which is good land.
380. Is it true stringy-bark? Yes.
381. You think that a good timber trade would spring up between Culcairn and other districts, if you had a railway to Germanton? Yes; timber is very scarce, and there is an unlimited demand for it. I can speak from my own experience. In the place that I am interested in myself, you could put down a mill, pump water out of a creek, and work that mill for twelve months, without having to drag a log a single mile—there is so much timber. The land will never be developed until that timber is killed. With regard to dairying, the people say that it is too far to carry their produce 40 or 50 miles, but they say it is their intention to start dairying if they can get the road carriage to Culcairn reduced by 18 or 20 miles by means of this railway.
382. If they were within 20 miles of a railway or a port, they could do well? Dairying will stand 20 miles of carriage. The country to the east of Germanton is better suited for dairying than the land in many districts where they are carrying on dairying successfully.

SATURDAY, 4 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Sectional Committee met at the Court-house, Germanton, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq., CHAIRMAN.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Sectional Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Culcairn to Germanton.

John Holmes (Holmes, Wickham, & Co.), Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

383. *Chairman.*] Can you give the Committee any information as to the traffic which at present comes to Germanton, and the direction of that traffic? I can tell you what comes to our place; then there would be about twice as much as that comes into the township. Looking over the way-bills last night, I found that the quantity of traffic that comes for our firm from the Victorian and New South Wales railways, including what comes from Albury by team, is about 290 tons. J. Holmes.
4 Aug., 1900.
384. For what period? That is for twelve months, from June last year to June this year. That does not include anything that comes in from this district. It does not include produce that we buy here; it is simply merchandise. We get flour from Albury, and that comes by teams. The amount of stuff that we get, independent of the flour, is about 270 tons. I am well within the limits when I say that it is nearly 300 tons of traffic altogether. Two-thirds of that comes over the Victorian lines, and one-third, since the new rates were imposed, comes over the New South Wales lines.
385. Before the new rates were imposed where did you get your goods from? Prior to the imposition of the new rates we got the bulk of it *via* Melbourne. If we bought stuff in Sydney we took it to Melbourne, and had it carried over the Victorian lines. Since they have reduced the truck rates in New South Wales we have been getting three times as much over the New South Wales railways as we did previously. We have only been three years in the district, and we have built up the trade since we came here, and it is still increasing.
386. Then you think that the town, generally, will probably get as much again as you get? There is another store in the town that gets more bulk stuff than we do. We do, perhaps, more shop trade, but they do more of the heavy trade. They get more tonnage than we do.
387. What would you take the total inward tonnage of the town to be? Do you mean of the town alone, independent of what the stations would get?
388. Taking what the town imports, without what the stations would import directly for themselves? I should say that there comes into this township at least 800 tons of merchandise.
389. Without the flour? It would include the flour; but the outside public buy a good deal of flour from the mills.
390. What do you pay the teamsters for bringing merchandise from Albury? Just now we are paying 15s. a ton for heavy and 17s. 6d. for case goods. We keep a man constantly on the road, and we have been paying 15s. all round. Recently they have been charging 17s. 6d. from Albury; but the average would come to 15s. all round. The carriage from Culcairn is 10s. a ton. I may mention that the returns from Albury station last year would not give the exact amount of tonnage that was coming over the Victorian railways, because Wright, Heaton, & Co. were carrying stuff from Wodonga station into Albury for a little less than what the railways were charging. There is 2s. 6d. a ton charged from Wodonga into Albury. Last year they put teams on, and carried the stuff over at a lump sum, and we got most of the stuff consigned to Wodonga.
391. Mr. Harper, the Chief Traffic Manager, in his evidence, said that the merchandise rates (on third-class goods, I presume) would be 16s. 9d. per ton from Albury to Germanton? I suppose that is on the railway right into Germanton.
392. Do you think it would pay you to use the railway for merchandise if you continued to get goods *via* Albury and Wodonga? Now we are paying 15s. a ton from Albury, and the railway proposes to charge 16s. 9d. The road makes no differential rate as regards parcels of goods.
393. For some classes of goods—for instance, flour, sugar, salt, and the heavier classes of goods—the railway might charge much less? We pay the same all round for carriage by team—the same for flour, salt, wire-netting, &c.
394. But, considering that wire, sugar, salt, flour, and other heavy goods would be carried at a lower rate than 16s. 9d., would it pay you to pay 16s. 9d. for drapery, and things like that? It would not if we could get the stuff carried for 15s.
395. Do you think the carriers would continue in competition with the railway if the railway was charging such a low rate for heavy goods that it would get the bulk of them, so that they would be confined to the carriage of drapery? No; it is the heavy goods that keep them on the road. If we took the carriage of the heavy stuff from them there would not be enough to keep them going.
396. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long does it take the teams to travel between here and Albury? Four or five days.
397. *Chairman.*] To what extent does your trade go from here in each direction? We send stuff all round the district for a distance of 15 to 18 miles.
398. Can you indicate the places? We send stuff to Yarra Yarra.
399. Do you send to Jingellic? No, we do not go there; we do not go further out than 15 miles in that direction. If good roads were made up that way the whole of that trade would come to Germanton.
400. Why would it come here instead of going to Tallangatta? Most of it has to go to Albury now; this is the direct road. They have to send in here for all their light goods.
401. Is that because of the greater number of coaches coming this way from Albury? Yes. If people want anything in a hurry they ride in here for it. This is the natural channel. That district is not opened up properly. The Tumberumba stuff has to come through Germanton, and it would be quite natural to suppose that if the railway brought goods for a little less to Germanton they would cart from here, as they would get the stuff quicker that way.
402. Does not most of the Tumberumba trade go to Wagga Wagga? I should think not. There are about

- J. Holmes. about three teams on the road here, and one of the carriers told me that they are making arrangements for further teams to Tumberumba from Albury. All their heavy stuff must come over the Victorian railway. The New South Wales lines are not able to compete with the present tariff. We get a rebate of 10 per cent. on all third-class goods carried over the Victorian railway. Kerosene, sugar, salt, wire, and other lines we must even now buy in Victoria. We should buy more stuff in New South Wales, and have it carried over the railway to Culcairn, but for the fact that they charge 40 or 50 per cent. more than the Victorian railways. We could cart flour cheaper by sending it to Culcairn than by the present road. We could get it for 3s. 1d. from Albury to Culcairn, and 10s. from Culcairn to Germanton by road, making 13s. 1d. as against 15s. from Albury. Of course, at other times of the year, when wool is being carried, we should get that class of goods much cheaper by back loading from Culcairn, but as we have carriers on the road we have to keep them going, and to put on our stuff irrespective of that.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 403. What class of goods do you get from Sydney now? Second and third class goods. We buy all our drapery in Sydney, and all our fancy goods. We buy all our shelf ironmongery in Sydney. In fact, we can afford to buy in Sydney all small lines, ship them to Melbourne, and ship them over the Victorian lines better than buying them in Melbourne. The houses in Sydney, for the sake of the trade with Riverina, will land our stuff at Melbourne wharf free of charge when we buy a parcel. That is to compete with the Victorian houses.
404. Is there anything else you can tell us? You will get evidence in regard to the stuff coming in from the station-owners. They bring in a lot of very heavy stuff, such as cornsacks, woolpacks, and salt. They buy in large quantities.
405. Their heavy supplies they get direct? Yes.
406. And probably the carriers get back loading when their wool goes down? I do not know how that is. There is another matter which I should mention. I think it might be pointed out to you that a saving of £100 a year could be made by the railway authorities if the station were put in the proper place in the town. Where the proposed station is now there is no water. I do not think they will be able to get water there. The people about there cannot get a permanent supply.
407. The terminus is to be on a Government reserve? Yes.
408. Is there any other Crown land that would be more convenient to the terminus? There is a block of ground, which I think is dedicated for a hospital, on the Culcairn-road. It is Crown land, and it is alongside a never-failing supply of water—the Ten-mile Creek. With an artesian bore they would have an unlimited supply of water. You can sink to a depth of 5 or 6 feet and get a permanent supply.
409. How far is that from the proposed terminus? It is not very far away. It would save the making of half or three-quarters of a mile of railway, and it would save an expense of £100 a year; it would be more central, and it would be on the main road. It would be about half a mile from the town. Where they propose to put the terminus is right back in a reserve nearly a mile from this place. The public offices being at this end, the people would all have to come up here. I do not say that it would affect our business; but looking at it from a general standpoint, I think they might as well save that £100 a year, have a good water supply, and save the making of about a half to three-quarters of a mile of railway.
410. What is the extent of the site you speak of? About 12 acres.
411. Would that site lend itself as well to a future extension as the one now proposed? That I cannot say; it is a matter for the engineers. I should think it would make very little difference. It would be more central, and it would be more convenient.
412. You consider that the nearer the station is to the town the better? Yes; especially when you can make it central, and have it near to the public offices, the post office, and the banks.

James Gifford, farmer, Lankey's Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Gifford. 413. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you reside? At Lankey's Creek, beyond Yarrara.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 414. In what direction is that? It is eastward from here, on the main Germanton and Jingellic Road.
415. How far is it from Germanton? Twenty-five miles.
416. Have you been long residing there? I have been in that district for the last thirty years.
417. Are you a freeholder? Yes; I am a freeholder, and I farm on the share system on the Yarra Yarra Estate.
418. How many acres do you occupy? Sixty acres of freehold, and 400 acres of leased land.
419. Do you cultivate land? Yes; I cultivate the 400 on the share system.
420. Could you give us the result of your experience as a farmer, with regard to production;—what do you grow? I grow wheat on the Yarra Yarra lands. At the other place, at Lankey's Creek, I do a little dairying, and grow potatoes, and other crops.
421. How far is your residence from the land which you rent? Twenty miles.
422. Is that land good for wheat-growing? Yes, very good.
423. Could you give the average yield per acre in fair seasons? I can give you the average of what I have had since I went there. I have only been there for two seasons. The first year we got four and a half bags to the acre; last year the average would be about three bags per acre.
424. Is there much wheat grown in that locality? Yes; on the Yarra Yarra station I suppose there must be between 7,000 and 8,000 acres under cultivation this year.
425. Would the results on the holdings be similar to what you have had? Just about the same; but some of the land is better than mine.
426. What do you do with the grain? Send it to Sydney.
427. By which route? We send to Culcairn, and from there by train.
428. How far are you from Culcairn station? Twenty-eight miles—10 miles from Germanton.
429. Could you give the cost of carriage? It is 1s. 2d. per bag. That was during the last two seasons; but if we have a general rainfall, and there is a good crop in the other wheat-growing districts, we shall not get our wheat carried for that.
430. Would not that amount represent the average crop? One shilling and 2d. per bag would not represent the cost when they have good crops in other parts of the country, because then we should not be able to get the teams. There have been scarcely any crops during the last two years in the lower part of the country, and that has caused the teams to be brought here. I had teams from Bourke carting for me. If they have a good season this year in other wheat-growing districts, we shall not be able to get our wheat carried at 1s. 2d. per bag.
- 431.

431. What is your experience with regard to the share system;—is it satisfactory? It is to me, most decidedly. J. Gifford.
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432. Do you grow any other products for the market besides wheat? Yes, potatoes; but I grow them on my other land. I only grow wheat on the leasehold land.
433. Have you an agreement that you are only to produce wheat? No.
434. Is there a large area of land in the district which the proposed railway would be likely to affect, suitable for growing wheat? Yes.
435. A very large area? Yes; there is a good deal of land that would be suitable, if only the owners will lease it out on the share system, as they have been doing. I think it has paid them very well to let the land on the share system.
436. Do you think it pays better than grazing sheep? Yes, I am sure of it; but the number of sheep has not been reduced as a result of the cultivation.
437. Taking the distance of about 15 miles further in than Germanton, is there any considerable area that would be likely to be put under wheat if the proposed railway were made from Culcairn to Germanton? There is; but, as I say, it depends upon the owners whether it shall be put under cultivation.
438. You think that people would take up the land, provided they had an opportunity of doing so, and cultivate it for wheat-growing? Yes; for wheat-growing and dairying.
439. Has there been any dairying carried on there? There has not; but the land is suitable for it—as suitable as it is on the South Coast.
440. Do you know the South Coast district? Only by reading about it. The stations about Jingellico have some of the most beautiful land to be found in Australia.
441. *Mr. Hyam.*] But only in patches? It is; but you cannot beat it for dairying purposes.
442. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Are there many small land-holders in the district? There are a great number.
443. What would be the extent of their holdings? Some hold 300 and some 400 acres; some 2,000 acres; some, perhaps, 3,000 acres. It is not easy to get land in the district; you cannot get a foot of Crown land. On the Victorian side of the river, when I first came up the river thirty years ago, there was not a settler on the land; there was not a bit of land taken up by selectors. Now, Walwa is thickly populated, and there the land is of the same kind as that on the Kibacabin station, the Bringanbrong, the Welaregang, the Gregg Gregg, and the Ournie stations.
444. How far is there a railway from Walwa? I suppose Walwa is between 30 and 40 miles from the railway. It is a matter of impossibility to bring the railway from Tallangatta to Walwa; the country is too rough.
445. Over the area which you have just described, in the event of the railway being extended to Germanton, do you think the farmers generally would use it to carry their wheat to market? Most decidedly. I could get my wheat brought in from the farm out there for 4d. per bag, and I should use the railway in preference to paying 1s. 2d., even if I had to pay a little for the use of the railway.
446. How far from Germanton would the railway be likely to be used by the wheat-growers—how far would it pay them to carry the wheat? I should think 25 miles.
447. Do you think the whole of the farmers within 25 miles would bring their produce to the railway at Germanton? I could not say that, because it would be more than half the distance towards Albury, and the people in that direction would take their produce to Albury.
448. How many acres of wheat-growing country do you consider it would take to maintain a family? It depends upon what, and how, you cultivate.
449. I am referring to wheat-growing country which gives a fair average yield? I maintain a family on 200 acres. There is not a fortune to be made out of it, but it is better than letting the boys go to manual labour.
450. *Mr. Hyam.*] I suppose you could make a good living off 150 acres if it were your own? Yes.
451. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you think 400 acres a sufficient area? 640 acres is about what a good-sized family would require in this district. Then they could have a few sheep, and keep the land in good heart and keep it clean. A farmer always wants a few sheep.
452. You believe in mixed farming? I do. It is a bad thing to have all your eggs in one basket.
453. With regard to the land which is not suited for wheat-growing, is it good country? It is good dairying land. A lot of the country about here, in my opinion, has the wrong kind of stuff upon it; it should have dairy cattle on it instead of sheep.
454. You think the dairy cattle would be more profitable? I am sure that the land is better adapted for dairying than anything else. The land is hardly good enough for cultivation, being rather too rough for that, but it is suitable for dairy purposes.
455. Have there been any good results from dairying? Yes; at Walwa there is a cheese factory—that is on the Victorian side; any quantity of cheese is made there.
456. Is Germanton the business centre for the farmers and settlers living in your district? Yes; nearly all the inhabitants between here and Jingellic get their goods from Germanton. It is only 35 miles from here to Jingellic.
457. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is there a good deal of settlement at Walwa? Yes; that district is thickly settled.
458. What do they produce there? The principal thing is dairying and raising stock.
459. Where do they take their produce to? Some of it goes to Albury. The settlers supply the cheese factory with milk.
460. Is the produce that goes to Albury sent on to Melbourne? More of it comes into New South Wales than goes to Melbourne.
461. Does it go by Albury or Germanton? A quantity of it comes into Germanton; they sell it here.
462. They would not be able to sell much cheese here, would they? An old man goes selling cheese all round the country.
463. That would not be a large quantity? He supplies some of the stores with cheese too, and some goes to Albury. They could not make enough cheese last year to meet the demand.
464. Does any of the trade from Walwa go to Tallangatta? It cannot.
465. It must come to either Albury or Germanton? It must go right up the river and round by a good road. It must go to Wodonga instead of Tallangatta.
466. Is there a good road from Wodonga to Walwa? No. The roads are not so good, generally speaking, as they are on the New South Wales side.

- J. Gifford. 467. *Chairman.* Would you state on what terms you rent the land? On the halves system.
 468. Does the owner supply the seed? Yes: he supplies the seed and the bags.
 4 Aug., 1900. 469. Does he clear the land? Yes.
 470. And he takes half the produce? Yes; and we do the labour.
 471. You find the plant, machinery, and labour? Yes.
 472. For how many years have you the use of the land? Some have it for three and some for five years.
 473. How long do you think you would require to have the use of the land to justify a man in buying a plant;—how long would it take to pay the plant off? It would take a man two years, but he would have to be very saving to do it in that time.
 474. So a man wants the land for three or four years to make it pay? A man ought to pay off the plant in three years, and then be ready to take a place for himself if he sees an opportunity.
 475. Is there anything else that you would care to mention? I was going to mention that the land at Lankey's Creek is not so good as some of the other land in the district for cultivation; it is not fit for dairying. There are small patches like gullies on which you could grow anything. I have grown potatoes up to 4 lb. in weight.

Samuel Hall Phillips, postmaster, Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

- S. H. Phillips. 476. *Mr. Hyam.*] Would you like to make a statement in connection with the proposed railway? Yes, with reference to the rainfall in this district. I have been keeping the rainfall returns for the last eight years.
 4 Aug., 1900. The average rainfall is 27 inches. I may say that in connection with the Postal Department a petition is going in asking for a coach service three times a week between Germanton and Jingellic. The revenue that we derive between Germanton and Lankey's Creek, from postage stamps, is £164 a year. The adult population between Germanton and Lankey's Creek numbers 201. Lankey's Creek is about 12 miles this side of Jingellic.
 477. How far is it from Germanton to Lankey's Creek? About 25 miles.
 478. How far is it from Lankey's Creek to Jingellic? Twelve miles, making 37 miles in all.
 479. Your coach does not go further than Lankey's Creek at present? No.
 480. Do you know what is the population about Coppabella and Yarra Yarra? At Coppabella there are thirty adults, and at Yarra Yarra ninety-six adults.
 481. Do you know the country? I have been as far as Yarrara.
 482. I suppose the inhabitants are chiefly farmers? Yes; Yarrara was once a mining place, now it is a grazing district.
 483. I suppose you have been some time in the district? Eight years.
 484. Have you formed a good idea as to the quality of the land about Coppabella? Yes.
 485. Is it fairly good land? It is.
 486. Is there any extensive area that could be brought under cultivation? I have noticed that considerable areas have been put under wheat lately in that locality.
 487. Have you been to Jingellic? No.
 488. Is it good country for agricultural purposes between Germanton and Lankey's Creek? Yes; it is fairly good country for wheat-growing.
 489. Do you think that one-third of it could be brought under cultivation? Yes, more than that.
 490. Is the rest good pasture land? It is. The population has been steadily increasing since I have been here.
 491. Has it doubled in eight years? It has trebled in that time.
 492. Do you think that with a railway from Germanton to Culcairn, that increase would be continued? Yes, I am sure it would; it would cause increased population and more settlement.
 493. Do you know anything about the trade coming from Jingellic to Germanton? No. I know that people from Jingellic make Germanton their depôt for supplies.
 494. Is there anything else you would like to state? Within 3 miles of this town there is a tin-mine, and the only difficulty in developing the tin is the want of water.
 495. Is it lode or stream tin? It is stream tin. One man is working there and making very good wages; he works in the wet weather.
 496. Is there any other mining in the district? There is some mining out east, at Four-mile Creek, and they have a six-head battery working continually.
 497. Is it a quartz reef? Yes; it averages about $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. to the ton. It is poor stone. I have seen a crushing for three months which yielded 26 oz.
 498. Is it good mineral country generally? There is a good deal of it, but it is poor. The shafts have not been put down to any great depth. With regard to the site for the railway station, referred to by Mr. Holmes, that is a matter that deserves the consideration of the Committee. In the creek where the station could be put there is a permanent water supply, and it is in the centre of the town.
 499. The Chairman asked a previous witness whether, if the railway were put on the site you suggest, it would interfere with any future extension of the line;—do you think it would? Not in the slightest.
 500. There would be no serious deviation to get out of the town again? Not the slightest.
 501. Would it have to go through private property? No; there is a travelling stock route in a direct line from the site proposed by Mr. Holmes; there would be no difficulty in getting out of the town.

Arthur Hulme, farmer and grazier, Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Hulme. 502. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 6 miles from Germanton, to the north-west.
 4 Aug., 1900. 503. What is the nature of your holding? It is partly freehold, the remainder conditional purchases.
 504. What is the area? 3,800 acres.
 505. Is any considerable area of that fit for agriculture? It is all agricultural land.
 506. How much do you cultivate at the present time? During the last three years we have been cultivating between 1,100 and 1,200 acres.
 507. With what results? Very good results. The last four seasons have been dry, but we have had an average of a little over four bags; that is including some new land. We crop new land every year.
 508. Does your land carry sheep as well? Yes; we combine grazing with cultivation.
 509. What number of sheep do you usually carry? We have shorn from 4,000 to 5,000; one year we had over 5,000.

510. Were those sheep which you had on the property all the year, or had some of them been bought just before the shearing? They were on the land all through the winter.
511. Has the land carried those sheep whilst you have been cultivating? Yes.
512. Have you any leasehold land? No.
513. I understand that your land has been carrying from 4,000 to 5,000 sheep, in addition to your cultivating 1,100 or 1,200 acres out of the 3,800 acres? Yes. Last year we had no leased land, but we shored over 4,000 sheep, and we had over 1,100 acres under cultivation.
514. Do you find that the cultivation of the land is a help to you with the sheep? Yes; we consider that the land all wants cultivating because the sheep do not thrive if it is not cultivated. We have had nothing wrong with the sheep since we started cultivation.
515. Is yours low-lying land—liable to be wet in winter? No; the water does not lie on it. Of course we feed our sheep sometimes, but we grow the stuff on the farm. We have never bought food for our sheep.
516. Have you some portions specially suitable for lucerne? Yes; most of our land will grow lucerne.
517. Will it grow sufficiently well to enable you to cut hay off it? Yes; but we have never done that. We could have done it, but we thought it better to use it for feeding. We fed the sheep during two bad seasons with chaff.
518. Which you got from your own land? Yes.
519. Do you use the binder? Yes, and also the stripper.
520. Where have you been in the habit of sending your produce to? It all goes to Sydney, except the oats; the oats generally go Narrandera way.
521. Are you cultivating oats for grain? Yes.
522. What yield of oats have you had? From 5 to 9 bags per acre. That was on old land. We generally put it on land that we have been growing wheat on.
523. Is it a good sample? Yes, a very good sample. Last year we had 7 bags to the acre; we have had 9 bags to the acre.
524. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How many acres of oats have you in? We generally put in between 100 and 150 acres a year.
525. *Chairman.*] Does the wool go to Sydney? No; we never send our wool to Sydney. We deliver the wool at Culcairn, and it goes on to Melbourne. Sometimes we have taken it to Albury, when we wanted back loading.
526. Do you think the railway would be of any material assistance to yourselves? No doubt it would. That is what we want. The road is not a good one. It is 18 miles from here to Culcairn, and at this time of the year we could not attempt to cart our stuff.
527. What do you think would be the effect of the railway generally in the district? I should think that the result would be increased cultivation, because cultivation has increased without a railway, and with the advantage of railway communication it would increase still more. We have only been here about nine years, but when we came here there was very little cultivation at all.
528. You have heard most of the evidence that was given this morning;—is there anything that you could say in addition to that? Comparing this with other parts where we have lived—and we came from one of the best districts in Victoria, the Ovens district—I think this district is as good as any. It is very prosperous now. The combining of cultivation with grazing is a great success.
529. With regard to dairying,—do you think there would be any chance of this district competing with the coast districts in the export trade? Yes; I think so. They are doing it on the Upper Murray.
530. Are they competing for the outside trade, or only supplying the people locally? They send the produce right away.
531. Where to? They send butter to England. An uncle of mine living up there is one of the principal suppliers, and he tells us that his butter brings as good a price as any that is sold. He gets the top price.
532. Can they utilise the rougher lands for dairying? The rougher land gives the richest cream. When they started dairying in Victoria the people living on the rich country—the flats—were dissatisfied, because they thought they were not getting as high a percentage as the people were getting on the higher lands; and when they came to test it, they found that the people on the higher lands had the far better quality of cream. Country which was considered useless is now being taken up there—even the tops of the hills.
533. *Mr. Hyam.*] You say you go in largely for the cultivation of oats? Not very largely.
534. I suppose there are large areas that would produce crops similar to those which you produce? Yes.
535. What price do your oats bring on the average? 2s. 6d. is the highest we have obtained.
536. That is locally? Yes.
537. You would not expect to get that in Sydney? No; we sent some to Sydney, and we got about 1s. 10d.
538. That is better than wheat? Yes.
539. Which particular variety of oats do you grow? Mostly the Algerian and White Tartarian. We have grown peas, and they do well here. We tried mangolds and sugar-beet, and they grow without irrigation.

William Brodribb, farmer and grazier, Little Billabong, sworn and examined:—

540. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you reside? At Little Billabong.
541. How far is that from Germanton? Thirteen miles north-east; right along the main Sydney road.
542. Are you an old resident of the district? Yes; I have been here for over thirty years.
543. Do you farm to any considerable extent? I cultivate 680 acres.
544. What is the area of your holding altogether? 3,180 acres.
545. Have you any leasehold area in addition? No; only conditional lease.
546. Have you been cultivating for a number of years? Ever since I have been on the place, but not to any great extent until recently.
547. What products do you cultivate? Wheat and oats.
548. Have you met with much success? Yes, very considerable.
549. What yield of wheat do you get per acre? The last three seasons, from 5 to 6 bags to the acre. Last season I had some new land under crop, but we were rather late in getting the crop in, and it only gave about 4½ bags.

W. Brodribb.
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- W. Brodribb. 550. What quantity of oats did you get? About 7 bags to the acre. The year before last I got 11 bags of oats to the acre.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 551. Do you think the cultivation of oats will be extended? I do not know whether it will or not. It all depends on what will pay the best.
552. In view of the much higher yield per acre, do you not think it would pay better to grow oats? There is more expense attached to growing oats.
553. How would you class the land in your locality? Half of my land is suitable for wheat-growing.
554. Is the land in your district, that you have got a knowledge of, land that you would class as good for wheat-growing? Yes.
555. And how would you class the land which is not suited for cultivation? It is first-class grazing land.
556. Where is the market for the wheat? Culcairn is the place where we generally take it to. It goes to Sydney, Goulburn, Cootamundra, and Wagga Wagga.
557. Do you send to Culcairn all the wheat that has to go away by rail? Yes.
558. How far would that be from your place? About 30 miles.
559. In going to Culcairn, would you pass Germanton on the road from your place? Yes.
560. How far away? We come through Germanton. It is the only road that we have from our place.
561. So that in the event of the railway being constructed, it would be 18 miles shorter carriage for you? Yes.
562. Do you think that if the railway were constructed it would have the effect of causing a large additional area of agricultural land to be placed under wheat, or some other crop? I think so.
563. Is it a handicap having to carry produce that long distance? Yes. I have paid as much as 3s. 6d. a bag for the carting of wheat from my place to Wagga Wagga years ago.
564. How much do you pay now? 1s. 3d. a bag to Culcairn.
565. Would you place more land under cultivation if you had a railway to Germanton? I have about 1,200 acres cleared now.
566. Is that in addition to what you have under cultivation? No; I have 1,200 acres altogether.
567. What class of holdings are there in your district;—are there many small holders? Not many small ones.
568. Do you think the land that is suitable for agriculture would be cultivated if you had railway communication? It would be very hard to say.
569. Do you not think that having the land under cultivation would be more profitable than grazing? I think so.
570. What has your experience been? I could make the most money out of cultivation myself.
571. Do you not think that the large holders would come to that way of thinking? Yes, I think so.
572. You have heard the evidence given to-day; is there anything else that you would like to say in addition? I could not give any more evidence than you have already heard. I keep sheep as well as cultivating.
573. How many sheep have you on the property? 3,500, or thereabouts.
574. Do you keep them all on your own land? Yes.
575. It must be land of good carrying capacity? Yes. We get the benefit of the cultivation land for half the year.
576. Do you send the wool and other produce the same way as the wheat? We send the wool to Melbourne, *via* Albury. It would not pay to cart to Culcairn and truck it there.
577. If the railway came to Germanton, would you still cart your wool to Albury? I do not think so.
578. What distance is your place to Albury? Forty-nine miles from Albury, and 13 miles from Germanton.
579. Would it not pay you better to cart your wool to Germanton and have it carried by rail from there to Albury, instead of sending it nearly 50 miles by road to Albury? Yes, it would pay better.
580. But you must calculate that the additional railway carriage between here and Albury? Yes; it would take but a short time to bring the wool to Germanton from my place.
581. What does it cost to cart your wool from your place to Albury? £1 5s. per ton. The teamsters have been carting it lately at an unusually low rate.*

Lucien Grimwood, storekeeper, Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

- L. Grimwood. 582. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you been here long? I have been here three and a half years.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 583. How many storekeepers are there in Germanton besides yourself? There are two others, and there are small shops as well.
584. Where do you get your store goods from? About three-parts from Melbourne.
585. Where does the balance come from? From Sydney. Some of the goods come from Sydney, *via* Melbourne.
586. Do you get any goods direct from Sydney? Yes; about half of the goods are brought from Sydney and half *via* Melbourne. Some of the goods from Sydney come *via* Melbourne because freight is cheaper that way.
587. Can you give any idea of the amount of freight which you pay annually on goods? I suppose between £300 and £400.
588. That includes everything? That is the freight from the station to here.
589. I suppose you will still continue to get your goods in the same way that you have been doing, from Melbourne and Sydney, and from Sydney *via* Melbourne? I shall buy wherever I can get them the cheapest.
590. Perhaps you will see no reason to make any alteration as to where you are getting your goods from? Unless Federation should make some difference. I see no other reason.
591. Suppose you have a railway to Germanton—will you have your goods sent by railway from Albury to Germanton, or will you get them by road from Albury? Not unless they alter the freight from Sydney to Culcairn.
592. Will you continue to get them from Albury by road? That will depend on the railway charges.
593. What will you do if the charges are equal? I will get the goods by rail. 594.

* NOTE (on revision):—In the event of the railway coming to Germanton, I could send fat stock and also chaff to market.

L. Grimwood.

4 Aug., 1900.

594. What is the freight by road from Albury to Germanton? It is different in different seasons.
 595. What is the average? The average would be about 17s. 6d. a ton.
 596. What is the lowest rate you have paid? It has been as low as 10s. a ton, and as high as 22s. 6d.
 597. Do you cart goods from Culcairn to Germanton? Yes.
 598. What is the freight from Culcairn? 10s. for flour, 12s. 6d. for case goods.
 599. There is no alteration in that? That is the standard charge.
 600. It is not like what it is on the Albury-road? No; there are more teams on the Albury-road, and the charges do not fluctuate so much there.
 601. Have you been out any distance from Germanton? I have been out about 20 miles each way.
 602. Were you ever engaged in farming pursuits? No.
 603. I suppose you have some knowledge of farming? Yes.
 604. Do you call this a fairly prosperous district? It is the soundest district which I have been in in my life.
 605. Do you expect any increase in trade here? A great deal depends on the squatters. It all rests with them. There is room for any number of people here if the squatters are willing to throw open their lands.
 606. Do you think there would be larger settlement if more land become available? Decidedly; very much more.
 607. Where were you in business before you came here? I was sixteen years in Granville, and eleven years on the Turon. I have been all over the country.
 608. I asked you that to see if you could make any comparison between this and other agricultural districts? I was at Bathurst.
 609. Do you think this district will bear comparison with Bathurst? It is a better district.
 610. What is about the limit of your distributing area? We send out about 2½ miles from here.
 611. In what direction would that be? Generally east, south-east, and north-east.

Heber Herbert Walsh, farmer, Old Carabobala, sworn, and examined:—

612. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Old Carabobala.
 613. That is on the proposed line between Culcairn and Germanton, is it not? Yes.
 614. Is it good land between Culcairn and Germanton? I should say that it is good.
 615. Does that good land extend a considerable distance on each side of the line? I should say that it does, speaking from places that I know.
 616. You are managing Carabobala station? Yes.
 617. What is the area of that holding? Over 5,000 acres. I manage two different estates—Carrabobala proper and Old Carabobala.
 618. What is the area? The area of the two combined is between 9,000 and 10,000 acres.
 619. How far is Carabobala from Culcairn? Nine miles.
 620. So, of course, all your wool and other produce goes in there now? Sometimes it goes towards Wodonga. We can get it taken cheaper by teams than by the railway to Wodonga.
 621. What have you lately paid for carriage by team to Wodonga? 17s. 6d. a ton.
 622. Would it cost more than that *via* Culcairn? Yes; it would be £1.
 623. How much of that £1 would be for team carriage to Culcairn? 7s. 6d.
 624. If a railway came through your holdings, and there was a platform there, do you think it would pay you to truck there for Wodonga, or to continue to send your produce by the road? It all depends.
 625. Mr. Harper stated that from Germanton to Albury the charge would be 15s. per ton, and the presumption is that it would be a little less than that from your place;—in that case would it pay you better to use the railway? Certainly, for 15s. There are disadvantages connected with it. We have our shed on one side of the creek, whilst the railway is to be on the other side, and we could not possibly cross the creek with wool. It would pay us much better to send to Culcairn than to cross the creek.
 626. Is any of the land on the property under your management suitable for agriculture? Yes.
 627. What proportion do you think would be suitable for agriculture? The whole of it.
 628. Have you engaged in agriculture so far? Only to a very small extent.
 629. Assuming that you went in for wheat-growing, the railway would then be of material advantage to you, would it not? No; I do not think so.
 630. Assuming that you wish to send wheat to Sydney, and that the rate from Culcairn to Sydney and from your place to Sydney would be exactly the same, would you rather cart the wheat to Culcairn, to truck it, than truck it from your own place? I do not know anything about wheat.
 631. Do you think it pays to go in for growing wheat? I do not know; it might. I have never tried it.
 632. You prefer sheep-grazing? Yes; and always will.
 633. For how many miles does the railway go through your land? I have never followed it.
 634. Can you say approximately? It goes 4 or 5 miles through each property. It will spoil our runs completely.
 635. How many miles would it go through Old Carabobala? For a distance of about 5 miles.
 636. That would be about 60 acres that the railway would require of that holding;—can you say whether you and those associated with you are willing that that area should be given to the Government? Decidedly not. It cuts us off from our main water frontage.
 637. Could you not have a means of getting to the water? No. My principal decidedly objects to the way the railway is going. It cuts us off from the whole of our summer water.
 638. Could any deviation be made which would obviate that? Certainly. You can bring the line up the main road.
 639. Would not that be more expensive? Very little. It would do away with the expensive bridges that you must put up on the proposed route. You would have two very expensive bridges to build as the line is proposed at present. That would not be necessary if the line went along the main road.
 640. Would there not be some heavy cuttings where the spurs of the hills run down to the creek? Only two.

H. H. Walsh.

4 Aug., 1900.

- H. H. Walsh. 641. Would you still have to bridge the Billabong? Yes. You will have a bridge over one creek that would be a far more serious matter than the Billabong—the Mountain Creek. The line as at present proposed cuts us off from the water on both holdings.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 642. Could any other arrangement than giving the land free be arrived at;—could you take other Government land in exchange? Speaking of Old Carabobala, I would not take any Government land in exchange for the land along the line as it is surveyed at present, unless I was compelled. It cuts us off from the summer water, which we always want. It runs within a few chains of the main road, and might just as well be on the main road.
643. Do you think that your land would get any advantage from having the railway brought so close to it, having all things in view? Not the slightest. I think that one of our executors on the lower property did make a proposal to Mr. Ross about the matter; but I would not say anything about it till I see whether he is coming to give evidence.
644. You do not think the railway would benefit your property at all? No. My principals are entirely antagonistic to the railway as proposed, because it spoils three of our best paddocks.
645. Most people on land suitable for agriculture are very glad to welcome a railway, because it gives them a big advantage in getting their wheat away; but your position is different from that which most people take up under similar circumstances? It spoils our properties for pastoral purposes, and we regard that as most important.
646. Mr. Hyam.] What is the carrying capacity of your land? About two sheep to the acre.
647. What is the average? I have had one and three-quarter sheep to the acre on it for the past two years.
648. Is the land highly improved? It is fairly well improved. It is a property with permanent water on it. It is rung and fenced.
649. The permanent water is the creek that you spoke of? Yes.
650. Is that the only permanent water? Yes. We have not a drop of water except on the frontage. That is what we depend on.
651. If they had a level crossing, and sheep and cattle stops, it would not prevent your sheep and cattle from going to and from the creek, would it? The line would cut through our paddocks in a dozen different places, and we have different classes of sheep in different paddocks. How are we to keep them separate with a railway line going through the paddocks? Must we keep a man to look after the gates when the train comes.
652. What do you consider the value of your land per acre? I should not like to put a price on it. It is for my principal to do that.
653. Would you mind telling the Committee what return per acre you get from your land? I could not give you an average; when I took the place we had two very bad years, and we have had one very good year.
654. Did you lose any stock during the last drought? We lost, comparatively speaking, nothing.
655. What would the percentage of loss be? About 2 per cent.
656. You could not form any opinion as to the return from your land per acre? I should not like to.
657. How many sheep have you altogether on the two holdings? 12,000 or 13,000, including lambs.
658. That would not be one and three-quarter sheep to the acre? No; we have sold some.
659. Do you consider the runs are fully stocked now? No.
660. Chairman.] Is there anything else that you would like to mention? Only that both my principals were up here a short time ago, and they decidedly objected to the line going as it is proposed. They said it would simply spoil the holdings altogether.
661. If the line were fenced, and had only a train a day passing over it, would that be a great disadvantage to you? Certainly it would be a great disadvantage.
662. Which would be preferable to you—a fenced or an unfenced line? If the line must go through there, a fenced line most decidedly, because I do not see how we are to manage about the stock; the sheep would be always running over the line, the paddocks being narrow.

John Ross, farmer and grazier, Kinross, near Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Ross. 663. Chairman.] How long have you been residing in the district? Thirty-two years.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 664. You are Secretary of the local Railway League? Yes.
665. Have you any statement to make concerning this district for the information of the Committee? I may state that the agitation for a railway to Germanton has been going on for some time, the desire being to get better access to the markets for the produce of the district. There are in this district 150,000 acres of land fit for cultivation, which would be served by the proposed railway. Of that area, about 27,000 acres is at present under cultivation. The yield from that 27,000 acres in 1898 was 115,000 bags of wheat and 1,000 bags of oats. The number of bales of wool that it is computed would be carried on the railway is about 8,000. About 5,000 bales of wool would be produced within the area traversed by the proposed railway. But we estimate that we shall be able to arrest about 3,000 bales which come from a distance beyond 20 miles from Germanton, and which go through Germanton, from Tarcutta, Tumberumba, and Adelong, and even wool that comes from near Wagga Wagga. The bulk of the wool at present goes to Melbourne, but after Federation has been accomplished I do not think it will go to Melbourne, because the cutting rates that are adopted on the Victorian railways will have to cease. The present rate for wool is the same from both Albury and Wodonga to Melbourne. I should like to draw special notice to this fact that the Railway Department in Victoria charge the same price for wool from Albury as from Wodonga, namely, 28s. a ton. That is what we have paid for the last two years. Previous to that, on one occasion, we had it carried for 25s. a ton from Wodonga; then they ceased taking it from Wodonga to Melbourne, unless at the same rate as from Albury. I understand that the general rate for Victorian-grown wool is about £2 10s. from Wodonga, so I think we are quite justified in calculating on the whole of the wool being taken by this railway if the proposed line is constructed. As regards the area under cultivation for wheat in this district, I do not think it will increase much beyond what it is at present, unless the railway is made. The firm of which I am a member—consisting of five of us—owns about 25,000 acres of land that is fit for cultivation, of which about 1,000 acres is under cultivation now. If the railway is constructed we shall feel justified in putting the greater part of that land

land under cultivation. Our difficulty at present is to get the wheat taken away. During the last two years there have been over 100 different teams employed in the district carting wheat, and more than three-fourths of them have come long distances from drought-stricken districts. They were forced to come here for want of employment in their own districts, and want of feed for their bullocks and horses. Besides filling up the gap which existed here, and having this produce to cart, these men were competing with each other, so that the rates for carriage were below what they would have been had there not been so many teams available. If the yield next harvest is as good as it has been the last two seasons I think it will be some months before we shall be able to get the wheat away. They are having a splendid season down the Murrumbidgee where the teams come from, and they will not come here at all if they have plenty of grass there.

J. Rosa
4 Aug., 1900.

666. *Mr. McParlane.*] Do the farmers cart any of the wheat? The share-farmers generally cart their own wheat—the greater number of them, but not all. I might mention that one of the chief reasons why we rely upon inducing the Government to construct the railway is that, from Culcairn junction, three trains a week run to Corowa, and the same rolling stock and the same men that are employed on that branch line could be employed in working the line to Germanton. This district is practically exempt from drought. During the last two or three years there have been the worst droughts that have occurred for thirty years on the Murrumbidgee and in the Riverina generally, but they have been the best seasons that we have ever had here for grain crops, and for wool, too.

667. Have you had experience of wheat-growing during the wet seasons? I have had experience in wheat-growing for the last thirty-two years.

668. How did wheat thrive during the wet seasons? The average yield about here has always been about four bags to the acre. Some of our share-farmers have had over five bags to the acre. I came to this country to grow wheat, having been brought up to it in South Australia. The district is admirably suited for what they call "closer settlement." Fruit can be grown in the district to any extent.

669. What would bring about closer settlement? This share-farming. The farmers would rather go into share-farming than rent the land, because it requires less capital to commence operations.

670. Do you think the large landowners would let the land out under the share system? That appears to be the system that is gaining favour.

671. Have you any practical knowledge of the share system? Yes; we have about 1,000 acres of land let in that way. There are four or five farmers on it.

672. Are the results satisfactory to you and to the farmers? Financially, the result is satisfactory; but I always look with dread at the carting away of the grain.

673. Would that system pay you better under existing circumstances than grazing sheep? Yes; because you do not lose the ground altogether for the whole year, and the reduction in the number of sheep that you can keep is not very great.

674. You have heard stated in evidence the conditions on which the farms are let out;—is your land let on the same conditions? Just about the same.

675. Is that system generally practised? That is the system that is generally favoured by the farmers. Some of the farmers clear the ground, but, generally, they prefer to have the ground cleared.

676. You have stated that there are 150,000 acres of land suited to the cultivation of wheat? Yes.

677. That is, including the area under cultivation at present? Yes.

678. In the event of the railway being extended to Germanton, and the landholders being willing to let their land for cultivation on the share system, do you think there will be a sufficient number of farmers who will be willing to take up the land? The demand for land on the share system is very great.

679. Is it great at present? It is very great at present.

680. And the making of a railway would, no doubt, increase that demand? Yes; I have applications every week from farmers, asking if I have any land to let on the share system.

681. What is about the average quantity of land that a farmer working on the share system would require? It depends on whether he is a man with a family or not. One man by himself can put in 250 acres—some of them more.

682. What area of wheat-growing land would be required to maintain a family on the share system? I should say from 200 acres upwards.

683. Do you think 200 acres would be sufficient? It would be all the better if a man had more. I know several farmers who have not so much as that, and they seem to get along.

684. Are there many members of the Railway League which you represent? Yes; about twenty.

685. Are they residents of Germanton or of the surrounding district? Most of the members reside away from Germanton. There are only two or three who are residents of Germanton.

686. As far as you know, are the residents of Germanton unanimous in their desire to have the railway extended to Germanton? They are practically unanimous. A few object on some personal grounds.

687. Is there any prospect of the railway being extended in future years further than Germanton? Yes. It would be an advantage if it were to go as far as Garry Owen now.

688. How far is that? About 7 miles further. The country opens out. There is a large range of hills to the east which ceases there. There is a large basin on the Yarra Yarra estate; then, continuing on the Sydney-road, there is the valley of the Little Billabong.

689. Is Germanton the recognised business place for those districts? Yes.

690. Would that be the most suitable place to have the railway extended to? Yes. I may state that in 1898 I paid £568 17s. 9d. for trainage, sheep-trucking, and for the year 1899, £400 12s. 8d. This was at Culcairn. I have a monthly account there. In December, 1898, I paid £221 for that month.

691. Was that in the wool season? There was not much wool in it; it was for sheep-trucking.

692. Which port do you do the most business with—Melbourne or Sydney? Sydney. We do little business with Melbourne. The only item of goods that we get from Melbourne is lake salt. We use about 80 tons a year. I do not know how the storekeepers get on, but I find that I can get goods from Sydney by rail far more conveniently than from Melbourne. I can get them in half the time, too, that it takes to get goods from Melbourne. I could send a letter away on a Monday morning, and have the goods from Sydney on Wednesday night at Culcairn—a truck load if I wanted them. It would take about ten days to get the goods from Melbourne to Culcairn.

693. If the railway were extended to Germanton, would Sydney be the point to which you would send your goods? We should send to Sydney for supplies, except, perhaps, for salt.

- J. Ross. 694. If the railway were extended to Germanton, would you use that railway, or would you continue to send by road to Culcairn? I should certainly use the Germanton station.
- 4 Aug., 1900. 695. Do you consider the statements which have been made here in evidence fairly represent the state of agricultural and pastoral pursuits in this district? Yes.
696. They have been borne out by your own experience? Yes; I believe that if the line were constructed, the area under crop would be doubled the first year.
697. And the products from that area;—would they go by the proposed railway? I feel quite sure that all the produce would go by the railway.
698. There has been some evidence given as to the likelihood of a portion of the produce raised in this district still going to Albury, if the railway is made;—could you give an opinion as to that? That is wool. I think that that will cease when the cutting rates have to be determined. The differential rates will have to cease, then there will not be the same inducement to send the wool to Melbourne.
699. There were some questions asked of Mr. Holmes as to getting certain classes of merchandise from Albury; it was stated the third-class goods could be got as cheaply from Albury by team, as they could by train to Germanton;—do you think there would be any desire on the part of business men to still get their goods carried by team if they had this railway? I do not think so.
700. If the cost were about the same? All things being equal, people would prefer the railway, because the articles would be promptly delivered.
701. Something has been said about the possibility of this becoming a dairying district;—could you give an opinion on that? Yes; I believe the district is suitable for dairying. Dairying was carried on here thirty-five years ago, before the selectors came.
702. There has been a great change made in the butter-making business since then? When I first came here for the first few years, we made cheese and butter, and sent cheese to Wagga Wagga.
703. Have you any personal knowledge of any of the dairying districts in the Colony? No.
704. So you could not compare these districts with those well known dairying districts? No.
705. How many acres are required for a beast in this district? When the land is improved, it will generally carry about one head of stock to 5 acres. Perhaps 4 acres might be sufficient.
706. Most of the land is held by large owners in this district, is it not? Yes; there are a few large owners and a considerable number of medium-sized holders. They are only two or three very large holdings, and they are held by firms consisting of four or five persons. When you divide the holdings amongst the several members of the firm, they are small-sized holdings.
707. Are the small holders successful? Yes; they are all moderately successful. This is considered a financially sound district.
708. Has it made any marked progress during the last few years? During the last few years the seasons have been very favourable, although there have been droughts in other places. Many landowners have profited from being able to take stock to graze on their land.
709. That is from the drought-stricken districts? Yes.
710. So you did not participate in the damage which was done by droughts elsewhere? No.
711. During your long term of residence in the district, has there been any drought that has done serious damage to the district? Since the country has been improved by ringbarking there has been no drought that has done any injury to the settlers, provided that they have only their own stock to maintain.
712. Have you had much experience of wheat-growing for a lengthy period? I have been brought up to it ever since I was able to work.
713. It has been stated here that the country here would be rather too wet for wheat production? There are some parts of this district that have been brought into cultivation during the last few years which I thought too wet for wheat-growing.
714. You mean that it would hold the water? Yes.
715. The witnesses to whom I refer meant that the rain would affect the wheat, and in what would be looked upon as a favourable season for stock the rainfall would be too heavy for wheat-growing? Generally it has not proved so, although a medium rainfall is better than a heavy rainfall. I think a rainfall of 22 inches in the year is better than 30 inches for wheat-growing.
716. *Chairman.*] As secretary to the Railway League, you have been endeavouring to ascertain how far the owners through whose land the line would go are willing to give land for the line? Yes.
717. What has been the result of your inquiries? Some of the owners have met us very fairly, and are willing to give the land if they can get their roads closed, or get in return some reserves which are worth the same amount acre for acre.
718. Is that at the Culcairn end or this end? At the Culcairn end. Mr. Balfour stated his willingness to meet the Railway Department, and to offer no objection to the line, provided that he gets some other land for that which he is to give up. He is not extravagant in his demand, and met us very fairly. Mr. Matchett, the next owner, stated that he will give the land required for the line provided that he gets lands in exchange from the Government acre for acre. Those two owners are so near to Culcairn that the proposed line would be of very little advantage to them. In connection with the estate of the late Mr. Herriott, I have had one or two interviews with one of the executors, and he says that he is willing to give the land required for some other Government land, in reserves—rather more than acre for acre.
719. Is that the Carabobala estate? Yes, Carabobala proper. I have had several interviews with the manager of old Carabobala, and he stated, on one occasion, that there were some reserves there, and if he could obtain the reserves he would consent to the line. He did not point out very definitely the area, but he required more than acre for acre. I am not sure whether it was not 2 acres, or even more than that. Coming further this way, the next owner is Mr. Kendall, who is willing to give the land if he gets acre for acre in return. The next owner is Mr. Roach. He has about 1½ mile in two different places. He has a piece of estate between old Carabobala and Carabobala proper—about 50 chains, and he has about ¼ of a mile near this side of Mr. Kendall's property. He was at the first meeting of the Railway League, and he stated that if the line were made, as shown on the map, there would be no trouble about the land for the line. He has not mentioned it to me since. But I have heard, indirectly, that he will withdraw that offer.
720. How far is his place from Culcairn? About 14 miles.
721. Between his place and Germanton are there any other owners? Yes; one or two small owners. There

There is an owner close to Germanton who recently bought his estate. I mentioned it to him, and he said, "If you can find me a piece of Government land that will suit me we shall have no bother about it." 722. The Railway Commissioners, in their recommendation, consider it imperative that the lands should be given free, and seeing that there is likely to be a considerable loss on the line for some time, it looks as if some of the people through whose land it will go might be fairly expected to give the lands free;—will it not make a considerable difference in the value of land which is 15 or 18 miles away from the existing railway? No doubt.

J. Ross.
4 Aug., 1900.

723. Assuming that there was considerable trouble with regard to one or two owners, and it were necessary to resume their land and send them to arbitration, would the other people interested at Germanton and beyond, through whose land the line does not go, be willing to do what has been done on other lines—give a guarantee that they will reimburse the Government for the expense they are put to? The matter has never been mooted. Personally, I should be willing to do it.

724. If any resumption is made by the Government of a piece of land for railway purposes, and the matter goes to arbitration, the arbitrators have to take into consideration the increased value given to the rest of the owner's land, because of the construction of the railway, and that would be deducted from the value of the resumed land;—what do you reckon the land on the Carabobala estate would be worth? I suppose they could obtain £3 an acre for it.

725. In that case, about 100 acres would be required for railway purposes;—assuming that to be worth £4 an acre, instead of £3, it does not follow that the owner would get £400, because the increased value given to the rest of that property will be taken into consideration, and it might wipe out the whole cost of the resumption? Then we are to understand that if a line goes through a landowner's property and the land taken is valued at £100, and it was computed that the balance had been increased in value by £300, he would only receive £100?

726. Yes, that is so? Then, if the land were increased in value by £400, he would get nothing.

727. Mr. Hyam.] Mr. McLachlan, the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, in giving evidence, was asked this question:

I understand that some of the owners of property will give the land through which the railway will run free of charge?

His answer was:

The Commissioners think that ought to be imperative. The land is practically all privately owned, although I think the terminus will be on a reserve. The Commissioners think it ought to be an imperative condition that all the land required, except, perhaps, in the case of a very small holding, should be given free.

? There is a danger in carrying that out, of one or two persons being able to prevent a line being made.

728. Chairman.] Is there any other point which you wish to speak upon? Yes; I may say that the Tumberumba trade would come through Germanton. I might mention that an immense quantity of hay and chaff would be grown in the district if we had a railway, and would be sent to Sydney.

John Thomas Hely, Senior-constable of Police, Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

729. Chairman.] Where are you stationed? I am in charge of the Germanton Police Station. I was recently transferred from Tumberumba.

J. T. Hely.
4 Aug., 1900.

730. Can you give the Committee any information as to the direction which the trade of Tumberumba usually goes? It goes to Albury via Germanton. I do not think that during the six years that I spent in Tumberumba ten loads of store goods were sent from Wagga Wagga. The road is not suitable.

731. How do the distances compare? From Tumberumba to Wagga it is about 67 miles, and from Tumberumba to Albury is 90 miles.

732. Tumberumba would be nearer the railway at Germanton than at Wagga Wagga? Yes.

733. Would the Tumberumba trade be likely to make for Melbourne or for Sydney? I think that most of the Tumberumba trade is done with Melbourne via Albury, but with a railway station at Germanton the goods could be sent this way. The Wagga Wagga Road is not suitable for haulage on account of the big hills. They branch off at Emerson's, about 27 miles from here, to avoid two big hills. But coming back they have to haul up big hills.

734. Irrespective of distance, there are other disadvantages? Yes. I have been over all the Upper Murray country, from Mount Kosciusko to Toolong.

735. Have you a fair knowledge of what the land is like? Yes.

736. How do you regard the land north-east, east, and south-east from here—beyond Jingellic and Yarra Yarra? I consider it first-class agricultural land between here and Yarra Yarra Gap.

737. What is it like beyond? Between Yarra Yarra Gap and Jingellic it is good second-class grazing land, and there is some good agricultural land, and land that is well suited for dairying.

738. Do you think there would be any considerable traffic from that more broken country? I think the whole of the traffic from Jingellic would come down this way if we had a railway here. You could carry a far heavier load coming this way from Jingellic than you could in going from Jingellic to Albury, provided the road was properly maintained.

William Alexander Mackie, Inspector of Stock, Germanton, sworn, and examined:—

739. Chairman.] Have you some information bearing on the movements of stock from and to this district? Yes; the stock passing through Germanton during the last three years have averaged 365,231 sheep per annum; the cattle, those that have come under my notice—some pass that I never hear of—7,125 per annum; horses, 370 per annum.

W. A.
Mackie.
4 Aug., 1900.

740. Could you say what proportion of the sheep would be fats, and what proportion would be stores? No; they are principally stores.

741. From whence would they be coming, and where were they going to? The bulk of them were travelling from the plains to the mountain country for grazing.

742. Was that the regular traffic, or was it consequent on the extremely dry seasons we have had? It is not so heavy in good seasons.

743. Were those stock taken to the railway at any point? Out of that there was slightly over 52,000 store stock from the beginning of this year which were trucked either from Culcairn, Wagga Wagga, or intermediate

W. A.
Mackie.
4 Aug., 1900.

intermediate stations, to be sent to Jerilderie, Hay, Narrandera, and intermediate stations along the South-western line.

744. Do you think it is likely that those store stock would have been trucked at Germanton had there been a railway here? I think there is little doubt that they would have been trucked here.

745. Have you any means of ascertaining the number of fat stock that have been sent out of the district? 15,438 fat sheep were sent from this district, from 1st January to 31st July, 1900, principally to Albury and Victorian markets.

746. Might others have gone from this neighbourhood towards the railway for the Sydney market without your having had any record of them? Yes; small lots. What I have given is not the total by any means. Of course, most of the stock go towards Victoria.

747. And they would be trucked at Wodonga? Yes; there or at Tallangatta.

748. Assuming that the railway were constructed, and the owners of fat stock wished to send their stock to Melbourne after the accomplishment of Federation, do you think they would truck at Germanton and send them to Albury to be transhipped, or that they would send them from here by road to Wodonga? They would send them from here by road to Wodonga, but if there was no break of gauge they would truck here and send them right through.

749. Is there any other information you can give the Committee? Of course, this railway would be the means of getting stock up here in dry times. The stock I have referred to would have trucked at Culcairn this year, but there was no grass between here and Culcairn; the road was bare, and they had to go off on to other roads.

750. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Has there been any increase in the stock in the Hume district during the past three years? Yes.

751. Could you give the approximate increase for the time you have been here? I should say it was not less than 20,000 per annum. There are 60,000 more sheep in the district now than there were three years ago.

752. *Mr. Hyam.*] Not counting the stock that come here, there is an increase? Yes; in addition to that there has been an increase.

753. Has this district during the time which you have been here suffered from the drought that has been experienced in the north and north-western districts of the Colony? No.

754. Have there been any serious losses? Not in local stock, but in sheep travelling.

755. Not in the stock properly belonging to the district? No.

756. How has the feed been during the dry season? It has been fairly good. The dry seasons are really beneficial to us.

757. How is the district situated with regard to water supply for stock purposes? It is very well off.

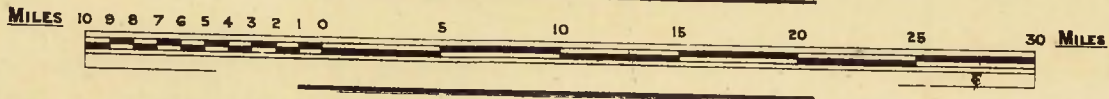
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RAILWAY

from

CULCAIRN TO GERMANTON

Scale



1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, APPENDIX, AND PLAN,

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

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[Plan.]

Bogan Gate to Bulbodney Railway.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed railway be carried out, conditionally upon the landholders in the district benefited by the line contributing annually towards the deficiency between the revenue and the annual charge for interest and working expenses an amount not exceeding $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land within 5 miles of the line, 1d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land beyond 5 miles and within 10 miles of the line, and $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land beyond 10 miles and within 20 miles of the line, such tax to be a charge upon the land until the line becomes self-supporting;" and, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

PROCEEDINGS LEADING TO THE PROPOSAL.

1. The proposed railway is described, in the official statement put before the Committee at the opening of their inquiry, as an agricultural line, the route traversing good wheat country, on which there is, at the present time, a fair amount of settlement. The farmers, the Committee are informed, have come, mainly within the last ten or twelve years, from the Southern Riverina and Victorian districts, and are of a class who have had the experience necessary to develop the latent capabilities of the land. They claim that, as compared with the Goulburn Valley and Southern Riverina districts, the country is better suited for agriculture, and yields greater results in an average season.

The question of providing Bulbodney with a railway arose in 1898, when the Bulbodney settlers represented, by petition, that they were prepared to make up any deficiency between working expenses and revenue, in connection with the line, to the amount of £1,275 per annum, for a period of five years from the date of the opening of the railway from Bullock Creek to the Bulbodney settlement, a distance of 34 miles. A line from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek was advocated earlier; the movement commencing with an agitation to connect Bogan Gate with Trundle, an agricultural centre 25 miles from Bullock Creek.

Railway connection with Trundle was first definitely brought under review in the year 1895, when the then Public Works Committee was conducting an inquiry into the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Parkes to Condobolin. In
the

the course of that inquiry the residents of Trundle strongly urged that the Parkes to Condobolin line should deviate from the route via Bogan Gate, and be made to pass through their settlement. But as this deviation would have added about 7 miles to the length of the line, prevented its consideration as a surface railway, and largely increased its cost, the Committee, after hearing exhaustive evidence, decided that the deviation could not be recommended.

The claims of Trundle to a railway were not, however, ignored by the Committee, and as a Sectional Committee reported that a branch line from the locality of Bogan Gate towards Trundle might be worthy of consideration, the residents pressed the matter upon the attention of the Minister for Works, who, after inquiry, came to the conclusion that Trundle itself was already fairly well served by the railway at Bogan Gate. The settlers of Bullock Creek then joined with those of Trundle, and urged the construction of a line from Bogan Gate through Trundle to Bullock Creek, a distance of 40 or 41 miles. Respecting that proposal the Railway Commissioners reported unfavourably, but on the Bulbodney settlers joining the movement, and a willingness being expressed to enter into a guarantee to make up any deficiency between the revenue and the working expenses of the line, a survey between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney was made, and a decision arrived at to submit the line to Parliament.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RAILWAY.

2. The proposed railway, 75 miles 5 chains in length, would commence at the east end of Bogan Gate railway station, and proceed in a generally north-westerly direction, more or less identical with the travelling stock reserve 6,645, to the village of Trundle. Ten miles further on it would go in a more northerly direction until crossing Bullock Creek, 41 miles from Bogan Gate; and thence it would proceed north-westerly, crossing the road from Dandaloo to Melrose at 59 miles, and ending near Bulbodney Creek, in the vicinity of Lansdale. The works would be generally light, but a good many moderate sized creeks would have to be bridged. The ruling grade would be 1 in 100 against the load, and 1 in 80 with it. Except for about 10 miles south of Bullock Creek the land required for the railway is unalienated, but most of the country north of that is held under lease, which runs to 1928.

ESTIMATED COST.

3. The estimated total cost of the railway is £229,370, or £3,055 14s. 5d. per mile. The first 40 miles 40 chains of the line is less expensive than the remainder. For that distance the estimated cost per mile is £2,955; for the remaining distance, 34 miles 45 chains, it is £3,175.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

4. The Railway Commissioners report favourably on the proposed railway. They estimate the annual cost, based upon a tri-weekly train service, at £12,946, made up of interest on capital cost at 3 per cent., £6,881, and maintenance of line and traffic and locomotive expenses, £6,065; and the annual revenue, calculated upon the charging of local rates and fares, at £4,400, which comprises merchandise and live stock, £2,600, and passengers, parcels, mails, &c., £1,800.

The country that would be served by the line, they say, is specially suitable for wheat-growing. At the present time there are something like 23,000 acres under cultivation, exclusive of the country within 7 miles of Bogan Gate, the present terminus; and there can be but little doubt that this acreage would be very largely increased if the district had the benefit of railway communication.

Although the estimated annual revenue, based upon existing traffic, falls short of the working expenses, apart from the interest upon the capital cost, the character of the country, and the evidence of industry on the part of the settlers—as shown by the extent of wheat-growing that has been carried on, despite the long distance from the railway, and the consequent high and uncertain means of team-carriage—induce them to believe that, with certain means of conveyance and moderate rates, traffic would develop, and they think the line is one well worthy of favourable consideration.

They

They are, however, of opinion that all land required for the line should be conveyed free of cost to the Government, and they suggest that the estimate of cost of construction be reconsidered, as, having regard to the character of the country through which the line would pass, and in comparison with other lines of a similar character, it appears to them to be excessive.

REDUCING THE COST OF THE RAILWAY.

5. With regard to the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners in their report, that the cost of constructing the railway should be reconsidered, the Engineer-in-Chief explains that the higher estimate is, to a certain extent, due to the increased cost of permanent-way material, and to the higher wages now paid; but it is due also, he states, to requests from the Railway Commissioners for station accommodation beyond what was considered by the late Chief Commissioner for Railways to be necessary in connection with pioneer railways. Goods platforms and goods sheds are wider than originally proposed; the width of station verandahs is increased to make them more comfortable; low platforms, which the late Mr. Eddy called landings, have been abolished, and the usual high platforms substituted; in connection with the smaller stations, instead of dead-ends the Commissioners now ask for loops, and at the larger stations it has been decided, as a proper provision, to construct what is called a back road for special loading. Station yards, generally, are now made longer to allow of more freedom of action and greater facilities in shunting, and to give more room for standing trucks, a comparison of some of the first stations designed for pioneer lines with those more recently approved of by the Commissioners showing that the present stations are, on an average, 5 chains longer than those previously deemed sufficient. All this adds to the cost of constructing a railway to an amount estimated at from £200 to £300 per mile, and, as the Engineer-in-Chief points out, unless the Railway Commissioners can lessen their requirements in regard to station accommodation, lines that should be constructed on the pioneer principle must necessarily be more expensive than they otherwise would be. In the opinion of the Committee, the accommodation provided in connection with these railways should be, at first, no more than is absolutely necessary for the traffic expected, additions being made as the increase in traffic justifies them. If this course were adopted in the present instance, the cost of constructing the line would be reduced by about £20,000.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

6. The Committee's inquiry with reference to the proposed railway was carried out in both Sydney and the country. Having examined the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, the Chief Railway Traffic Manager, and some other official witnesses, the Committee left Sydney, and travelling through the district to be served by the railway, visited, and took evidence at Bogan Gate, Trundle, Bullock Creek, Jumble Plains, Bulbodney, Dandaloo, and Wallanbillan. From Wallanbillan, the Committee returned to Sydney by way of Tomingley, Peak Hill, and Parkes, in order to make inquiry respecting a suggested alternative line to Bulbodney, by way of Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, from Parkes.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

7. The details of the Railway Commissioners' traffic estimate are given in the evidence of the Chief Traffic Manager, as follows:—

Goods, 800 tons	£304
Wool, 2,067 tons...	679
Stock, 475 trucks	285
Agricultural produce, 9,700 tons	1,650
	<hr/>
	£2,918
From this, however, it will be necessary to deduct the loss due by diversion of traffic from the existing main line, viz.	£318
	<hr/>
Total, goods, wool, and stock traffic	£2,600
Coaching traffic, including parcels, H.C.D., &c.	900
Mails, 75 miles, at £12 per mile	900
	<hr/>
Total traffic	£4,400

The

The traffic of the district, it is stated, would come to the railway at the following points :—

Trundle	15 miles from Bogan Gate.
Bullock Creek	40 " "
Bulbodney	75 " "

The Chief Traffic Manager is of opinion that under anything like favourable circumstances considerable development in the district may be expected in the near future, and he looks for a steady reduction in the estimated annual loss upon the line. Mineral development in the west, he says, is possible at any time, and would in that event add to the traffic of the railway. The trade of the district is at present dealt with to a large extent at Condobolin, Narramine, and Trangie, and to a small extent at Nevertire, Nyngan, and Parkes, which means that by the construction of the railway there would be a certain amount of traffic diverted from the main line ; but allowance for this has been made in the estimate.

The area of the majority of the holdings is 2,560 acres, and the settlers graze sheep as well as grow wheat ; carting the latter to market, in some instances, a distance of 60 or 70 miles. They labour under great difficulty in getting their produce away, and in periods of drought they are further hampered by the impossibility of removing their sheep to other districts, or, in consequence of the cost of carriage, of purchasing fodder for them.

According to evidence given at Trundle, the area under cultivation in the district has been increased since 1895 to the extent of 18,596 acres, and, in addition to the new land prepared this year for agriculture, there are thirty-three new settlers whose holdings are not yet producing, owing to the prolonged drought. Next year a further increase to the area cultivated of from 5,000 to 7,000 acres is expected. The larger holders, as well as the smaller, it is believed would cultivate more than now if the railway were constructed. Some of the land is farmed on the share system, which is said, so far, to have proved satisfactory.

A considerable area of land in the district is held under scrub lease, and this contains a provision by which the whole or any portion of the area may, in the event of a railway being constructed within 10 miles of the land, be resumed by the Government, and thrown open for settlement.

The following local statistics give some further indication of the traffic prospects :—

LOCAL STATISTICS.

Supplied at Trundle, and representing an area within 20 miles east and west of the line, and extending north to 8 or 9 miles beyond Bullock Creek.

Number of producers—115.
 Area under wheat—23,096 acres.
 New land put in for 1900—5,456 acres.
 Value of farming equipment—£20,281.

Supplied at Bulbodney (Lansdale), and representing an area within a radius of about 20 miles from Lansdale :—

Population—405.
 Occupied area affected by the railway—647,507 acres.
 Carrying capacity in sheep—400,800 (which would produce about 5,968 bales of wool).
 Fat stock that would be sent by railway—308 trucks.
 Tallow and skins—20 tons.
 Acres under cultivation—6,069. (Average yield, in fair seasons, about 16 bushels to the acre, or a total of 80,944 bushels.)
 Increase in cultivation, if railway constructed—14,000 acres.
 Value of farming plant—£10,464.
 Value of machinery—£5,709.
 Value of draught stock—£4,755.

NATURE OF THE COUNTRY TO BE SERVED.

8. According to information supplied by the Department of Lands, there are within 20 miles, on either side of the route of the proposed railway, 813,700 acres of alienated land (which includes land conditionally purchased and conditionally leased) ; 112,000 acres of reserves ; 84,580 acres settlement leases ; 177,800 acres improvement

improvement leases ; 410,320 acres scrub leases ; and 369,900 acres of Crown lands—3,100 acres of which are described as inferior. The tenure of the Crown lands is as follows :—Under leasehold, which expired on the 4th August, 1900, 143,170 acres ; under leasehold, expiring in August, 1901, 1,100 acres ; area of leasehold, expiring in 1903, 2,130 acres ; area which, when this evidence was given, on 26th July, the Committee were informed would be held under occupation license in a few days, 113,000 acres ; untenanted, 107,400 acres.

Within the traffic area of the proposed line there were, in 1897, 2,700 cattle, and 359,850 sheep ; and, in 1898, 2,670 cattle, and 366,091 sheep.

The land generally is of good quality, timbered chiefly with box and pine ; the soil a red loam, well suited for agriculture ; and the rainfall—as the Government Astronomer informed the Committee—though not quite so favourable as that in the eastern part of the Colony, is suitable for wheat-growing. Those parts of the country which have been taken up by settlers, almost wholly Victorians, are in the hands of what are described as a very thorough and practical set of farmers, who have given evidence of a determined intention to make the most of the land, notwithstanding the drawbacks to which they have been compelled to submit, owing to the distance of their holdings from railway communication. The Committee were much impressed, during their visit to the district, with both the nature of the land and the character of the people. With the exception of a few stony ridges, which form the divide between watersheds, and upon which the timber is chiefly ironbark and some mallee, the country passed through, for the whole length of the route, appeared to be exceptionally well suited for agricultural purposes ; and where wheat was seen, the crops were in excellent condition, and promised a satisfactory yield. One witness informed the Committee that he had been continuously cropping a paddock for nineteen years, with a spell of two years under lucerne, and that the crop of wheat there now was just as good as those grown on land which has been in use for only two or three years.

In its unimproved state the land in the district is covered with scrub, which harbours noxious animals in large numbers. Railway facilities, it is urged, would, by promoting increased settlement, lead to the clearing away of this scrub, and make the land more productive. Unless scrubbed and ringbarked, the country is of little use, even for pastoral purposes, and cultivation is regarded as the surest method of getting the land into good condition.

ALTERNATIVE LINE FROM PARKES TO BULBODNEY.

9. In the course of their inquiry, it became apparent to the Committee that a line of railway to Bulbodney from Parkes, *via* Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, might be more generally advantageous than a railway from Bogan Gate, and after traversing that part of the route which such a line would take between Parkes and Peak Hill, and examining witnesses respecting a railway in that direction, they had, through the Department of Public Works, an exploration of the country between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek made by an officer of the Railway Construction Branch, and obtained a report from the Railway Commissioners on the subject.

At first sight, a railway from Parkes to Bulbodney, by the route mentioned, would appear preferable to one from Bogan Gate, as besides serving an extensive area of good agricultural land, including that which would be within the sphere of influence of the Bogan Gate line, around Bullock Creek and on to Bulbodney, it would run through a well-populated district, where mining, as well as agriculture, is a permanent industry. The country between Parkes and Peak Hill is very well suited for agriculture, and is extensively cultivated. Harvey's Range limits the area of good land to the east of the road from Parkes to Peak Hill, to a valley only a few miles wide, but on the west the area is practically unlimited. At Alectown, Peak Hill, McPhail, and Tomingley, mining is carried on, and in the opinion of the Chief Inspector of Mines, the field is a permanent one, and likely to be further developed. The population of Alectown and district is given in evidence as 600 ; that of Peak Hill and district as 2,250 ; that of McPhail as 500 ; and that of Tomingley and district as 400.

The

The result of the exploration from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek, and the report of the Railway Commissioners, however, do not, in the opinion of the Committee, place the line from Parkes to Bulbodney in a light which would justify it being carried out in preference to the railway from Bogan Gate.

By the route explored, this line would leave the northern end of the proposed Peak Hill station about 306 miles from Sydney, *via* Parkes, and taking an almost due westerly direction, which is maintained throughout, it would cross the Bogan River, at 309 miles, Back or Genaren Creek at 322 miles; the Gap, a low point in a small range of hills, at 327 miles; and Sandy Creek at 331 miles; and thence join the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney survey, close to where that survey crosses Bullock Creek, at a point 338 miles from Sydney, by this proposal, and 332½ miles by Bogan Gate.

The line would be a comparatively easy one to construct, and there should, in the engineer's opinion, be no difficulty in maintaining the same grades and curves as on the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line, the only cutting of any importance being at the Gap, and this would probably not be more than 10 or 15 feet deep. The most expensive part of the line would be the crossing of the Bogan River, where a bridge, possibly 200 yards long, would be required, but ordinary timber openings with one 60-foot span would be sufficient. The country passed through is reported by the engineer to be good, varying from light sandy loam to rich myall flats. All the available land in the immediate vicinity of the route has been taken up, but it is sparsely populated, and the areas under crop have not increased in the same proportion as in the few years prior to 1898.

Except with regard to what is said of the lack of increase in areas under crops, there is nothing in this report of the railway engineer unfavourable to a railway by this route; but in respect of length and cost, the line does not compare well with that from Bogan Gate, as the following figures, supplied by the Engineer-in-Chief, show:—

COMPARISON between Bogan Gate, Bullock Creek, and Bulbodney; and Parkes, Peak Hill, Bullock Creek, and Bulbodney.

Description.	Length.	Estimated cost.	Average per mile.
	Mls. chs.	£	£
Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek.....	40 40	119,658	2,955
Bullock Creek to Bulbodney	34 45	109,712	3,175
Distance, Bulbodney from Sydney, 367 miles.	75 5	229,370	3,056
Parkes to Peak Hill.....	31 52	112,808	3,564
Peak Hill to Bullock Creek.....	36 00*	122,400*	3,400*
Bullock Creek to Bulbodney.....	34 45	109,712	3,175
Distance, Bulbodney from Sydney, 371 miles.	102 17*	344,920*	3,375*

* These figures are only approximate.

The Railway Commissioners' report estimates the annual expenditure at £18,748, and the annual revenue at £8,035, the difference being £10,713. They are not favourable to the proposal, and suggest that, if instead of a line from Bogan Gate, one from Parkes should be determined upon, it should take a route more north-westerly, diverging towards Bulbodney at a point some distance to the west of Peak Hill.

LOCAL GUARANTEE AGAINST LOSS.

10. The report of the Chief Railway Traffic Manager states that the local residents are willing, should it be practicable and deemed necessary, to contribute at the rate of 2d. per acre within 5 miles of the railway, 1d. over 5 and under 10 miles, and ½d. over 10 and under 15 miles, in order to meet any loss which may be incurred through the construction and working of the line.

Questioning

Questioning the witnesses regarding this, the Committee found that there was a willingness on the part of the residents generally to contribute towards what may be necessary to meet the estimated loss in connection with the line; and most of those through whose land the railway would go are understood to be willing to give the land required for the line free of cost. A few of the farmers regard the special tax on their land as a hardship, but the majority are agreeable to pay as high as the rates mentioned by the Chief Traffic Manager rather than not have the railway. When it is considered that for the full distance between Bulbodney and Bogan Gate, in transit to Sydney, wheat would be carried on the railway at a cost to the farmer of only $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a bushel—the cost by team now being 3d. to $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel for a distance of from 20 to 40 miles to Bogan Gate; 4d. and $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel for 30 miles to Narramine; and 6d. per bushel for 55 miles to Nyngan and 62 miles to Trangie—it is clear that the saving to the settler from the railway would far more than cover the land tax he would pay.

CONCLUSION ARRIVED AT.

11. From the evidence before them and their inspection of the country through which the proposed railway would go, the Committee are of opinion that, while there is no immediate prospect of the line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney paying, there are sufficient reasons to justify its construction, provided the residents of the district contribute in a special manner towards the reduction of the annual loss. This, they have expressed themselves willing to do, and the Committee recommend the construction of the line, conditionally upon the landholders of the district benefited contributing annually, until the line becomes self-supporting, a tax upon the unimproved value of their land. According to the report of the Railway Commissioners, there will be an annual loss upon the railway of £8,546, that being the difference between the estimated expenditure and the estimated revenue. The revenue estimate is within £1,665 of the working expenses, and there is a practical certainty of the traffic on the line increasing; but it will probably be some considerable time before the earnings meet the expenditure, and in view of the benefit to the district which the railway will be, and the fact that the land tax proposed is considerably less than the farmers are now paying for the carriage of their produce by team, the Committee consider that the residents should be required to contribute in the manner stated.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

12. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from their Minutes of Proceedings:—

Mr. Hyam moved,—"That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, conditionally upon the landholders in the district benefited by the line contributing annually towards the deficiency between the revenue and the annual charge for interest and working expenses an amount not exceeding $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land within 5 miles of the line, 1d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land beyond 5 miles and within 10 miles of the line, and $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the unimproved value of land beyond 10 miles and within 20 miles of the line, such tax to be a charge upon the land until the line becomes self-supporting."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Watson, and passed.

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 31 October, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.

TUESDAY, 24 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Are you prepared with a statement of the proposal for constructing a railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? Yes; I have a statement prepared for the Under-Secretary, which is as follows:—

H. Deane.

24 July, 1900.

RAILWAY FROM BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly on 13 December, 1899, for the Committee's consideration, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney."

This is a proposal to construct a branch "pioneer" line of railway from Bogan Gate, on the Parkes-Condobolin line, via Trundle to Bullock Creek, and thence to the Bulbodney settlement.

The question of providing Trundle with a railway was first definitely brought under review in the year 1895, when the then Public Works Committee was conducting an inquiry into the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Parkes to Condobolin.

In the course of the inquiry the residents of Trundle strongly urged that the line should deviate from the proposed route via Bogan Gate, and be made to pass through their settlement. But as this deviation would have added about 7 miles to the length of the line, prevented its consideration as a surface railway, and largely increased its cost, the Committee, after hearing exhaustive evidence, decided that the deviation could not be recommended.

The claims of Trundle to railway accommodation were not, however, ignored by the Committee, as will be seen from the following extract from the Committee's report of 21 May, 1895:—

"Trundle is a well-settled district, where numbers of settlers are producing large quantities of cereals, fruit, &c., as well as to some extent, following the occupation of pastoralists; and many of the landholders along the route which would be of service to Trundle stated their willingness to give the land required for railway purposes free of cost, as well as pay special rates of carriage for the conveyance of their produce over the line. The Sectional Committee, much impressed with the importance of this part of the district, remark in their Report that it may be worthy of consideration whether a branch line could not with advantage be made from the locality of Bogan Gate towards Trundle."

Encouraged, no doubt, by this commendatory reference of the Public Works Committee, the residents of Trundle approached Mr. Secretary Young, through their Parliamentary representative, Mr. Thomas Brown, with the request that a branch line should be constructed from Bogan Gate to their township. A survey of the route was made in July, 1896, its length being 15½ miles, and the opinion of the Railway Commissioners asked upon the proposal. Their opinion was unfavourable to the construction of the line, and the Minister therefore decided that the proposal could not be entertained, on the grounds, chiefly, that Trundle was connected by an excellent road with the railway at Bogan Gate, that the distance between the two places was only 13½ miles, and therefore, so far as Trundle itself was concerned, it was considered to be already fairly well served.

Shortly afterwards, that is in October, 1896, a petition, bearing the signatures of 205 residents of the Trundle and Bullock Creek districts, was presented to the Minister, again asking for the construction of the line to Trundle, with its extension to Bullock Creek settlement, being a distance of some 30 miles further on, in a north-westerly direction. The petitioners represented that such a line would open up a large area of Crown lands suitable for agriculture; that the major portion of the present settlers were mainly engaged in farming pursuits, there being 5,000 acres under wheat; that the district was quite equal to the southern districts for wheat production, and superior as regarded fruit and cereals; and that the area under cultivation would, in the event of railway facilities being provided, be at once increased by 19,900 acres.

The Minister stated, in reply to the deputation who presented the petition, that he would have further inquiries made as to the advisability of carrying the line beyond Trundle to Bullock Creek; and, if it could be shown that there was any reasonable justification for doing so, and that the line would pay in the course of a year or two, he would have much pleasure in pushing the matter forward.

The Minister accordingly instructed that a survey should be made of the proposed extension to Bullock Creek, and, on receiving the surveyor's report, submitted it to the Railway Commissioners for their opinion upon the proposal. The Commissioners gave their opinion, under date 10 August, 1897, as follows:—

"The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, having asked for the opinion of the Railway Commissioners on the proposal to construct a branch line of railway from Bogan Gate, on the Parkes-Condobolin railway to Bullock Creek, a distance of about 40 miles, we beg to state that the proposed railway is an extension of a line from Bogan Gate to Trundle, upon which we reported on the 15th September last.

H. Deane.
24 July, 1900.

"The country is sparsely populated by a recent settlement, and is of an agricultural character. There is no doubt the settlers suffer much inconvenience, and are subjected to considerable expense, in consequence of the distance from the existing railways, and it is also reasonable to conclude that near railway communication would induce further settlement and greater production; but while taking this favourable view, there is small prospect of the line returning even working expenses.

"The only way in which railway communication could be provided for this district without involving an undue burden on the railway capital would appear to be to adopt a special arrangement in regard to it, and make the cost a charge upon the land served and improved by it.

"As, however, there are large tracts of agricultural country available and suitable for settlement within reasonable distance of existing railway communication, it is a question for consideration whether any exceptional course should be pursued in this instance to meet the requirements of a limited settlement."

In the interval between the date of the survey report on the extension to Bullock Creek and of the foregoing opinion of the Railway Commissioners, a petition had been presented from sixty-seven (67) residents of the Bulbodney settlement, which lies some 40 miles further to the north, praying that in the event of the railway being carried to Bullock Creek, it might be further extended on to Bulbodney. The petitioners stated that the then population of the settlement was 376; the area of holdings, 450,271 acres; the area under cultivation, 2,437 acres; and the additional area promised by holders to be immediately put under cultivation in the event of railway facilities being provided, was 14,140 acres.

On 11 November, 1897, a second deputation, representing the Bullock Creek districts, waited upon Mr. Secretary Young, to urge that the proposed line should be at once submitted to the Public Works Committee. The deputation were emphatic in their assertion that the area to be served thereby was the greatest wheat-growing belt of country in the Western district, and quite equal, if not superior, to any other agricultural district in the Colony; the only drawback to its development was the absence of railway communication.

At the conclusion of the representations of the deputation, Mr. Howard, who had come down on behalf of the North and South Bullock Creek Progress Committees, said he was instructed by the people of the district to state that they were prepared to guarantee any shortage on the interest in the event of the railway being constructed.

Mr. Young, in reply, informed the deputation that he would have a thorough survey and estimate of cost made, and the proposal sent on to the Public Works Committee as soon as possible. With respect to their offer to make good any deficiency in the interest, Mr. Young considered that there should be an absolute guarantee, with some security at the back of it.

A third deputation, which included representatives from the Trundle, Bullock Creek North and South, and Bulbodney Selectors' Associations, waited upon the Minister at Bogan Gate on 16th March, 1898, with the object of laying before him some additional information regarding the development of the districts from an agricultural standpoint, and also for the purpose of giving him some idea of the guarantee being prepared in connection with meeting any deficiency that might occur so far as the working expenses, &c., of the line were concerned. The proposed guarantee was to be an individual guarantee up to the amount of each guarantor's present cost of carriage, so that in the event of his being called upon to make it up to the full, he would not be any worse off.

These representations were supplemented by a petition received on 5th May, 1898, from a Committee appointed by the Bulbodney settlers, which set forth that they were prepared to make up any deficiency between working expenses and revenue, to the amount of £1,275 per annum, for a period of five years from date of opening of the line from the proposed Bullock Creek terminal point to Bulbodney settlement, being a length of about 34 miles.

The corresponding amount to be guaranteed by the Bullock Creek settlers has not yet been stated, but they have expressed their readiness to complete the guarantee whenever required so to do.

The survey and report thereon of the total length of the proposed railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney was finally completed in 1899.

The proposed railway is what may be termed an "Agricultural line." The route traverses splendid wheat country, on which there is at present a fair amount of settlement. The settlers have been drawn mainly within the last ten or twelve years from the Southern Riverina and Victorian districts, and are of the class, and have the experience, best calculated to develop the latent capabilities of the country. They claim that, as compared with the Goulburn Valley and Southern Riverina districts, the country in question is better suited for agriculture, and yields greater returns in an average season. It is also claimed that only by resort to agriculture can the country be profitably cleared of its superabundance of scrub growth, and freed from its rabbit and noxious animals pest. The settlers are confident that the proposed line will return a large revenue, and speedily become self-supporting.

The official description of the line is as follows:—

Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

(Length, 75 miles 5 chains; estimated cost, £229,370, or £3,056 per mile.)

This branch line begins by a junction with the Parkes to Condobolin railway, recently opened at the east end of Bogan Gate station at 291 miles 43·83 chains from Sydney, and proceeds in a generally north-westerly direction, more or less identical with the T.S.R. 6,645, to the village of Trundle at 308 miles. Ten miles further on direction traverses more northerly, until Bullock Creek is crossed at 332 miles. The north-westerly direction is then resumed, the road from Dandaloo to Melrose being crossed at 350 miles, and the line ends near Bulbodney Creek, at 366 miles 53·83 chains.

The works are generally light, but a good many moderate-sized creeks have to be bridged.

The ruling grade is 1 in 100 against the load and 1 in 80 with it.

Except for about 10 miles south of Bullock Creek the land required is unalienated, but the most of the country north of that is held under lease, which runs to 1928.

The following is the Statutory Report of the Railway Commissioners upon this proposal:—

Sydney, 9th Dec., 1899

"Proposed Extension of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, 75 miles 5 chains.

"In accordance with Section 13 of the Public Works Act of 1888, we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of Construction—

Engineer-in-Chief's estimate of construction, exclusive of land and compensation.....£229,370 0 0

Estimated Annual Cost—

Interest on capital cost, at 3 per cent.£6,881

Maintenance of line and traffic and locomotive expenses 6,065

Total annual cost 12,946 0 0

Estimated Traffic Revenue—

Merchandise and live stock£2,600

Passengers, parcels, mails, &c. 1,800

Total estimated revenue 4,400 0 0

"The annual cost is based upon a tri-weekly train service, and the revenue upon the charging of local rates and fares.

"The country that would be served by this line is specially suitable for wheat-growing. At the present time there are something like 23,000 acres under cultivation, exclusive of the country within 7 miles of Bogan Gate, the present terminus; and there can be but little doubt that this acreage would be very largely increased if the district had the benefit of railway communication.

"Although the estimated annual revenue, based upon existing traffic, falls short of the working expenses, apart from the interest upon the capital cost, the character of the country, and the evidence of industry of the settlers,—as shown by the extent of wheat-growing that has been carried on, despite the long distance from the railway, and the consequent high and uncertain means of team-carriage,—induce us to believe that, with certain means of conveyance and moderate rates, traffic would develop, and we think the line is one well worthy of favourable consideration.

"As in other cases, however, we are of opinion that all land should be conveyed free of cost to the Government, and we would also respectfully suggest that the cost of construction be re-considered. £229,370, is at the rate of £3,056 per mile, which, having regard to the character of the country through which the line will pass, and in comparison with other lines of a similar character, appears to be excessive." With

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.

With regard to the Commissioners' remarks respecting the apparently excessive cost of this line, Mr. Deane, will, no doubt, be able to furnish satisfactory explanations on this point. But I may perhaps mention that one chief cause of its higher cost, as compared with other pioneer lines of the same class already constructed, is the sharp rise that has recently taken place in the price of steel-rails, which have advanced from £5 5s. up to £7 10s. per ton, the price now quoted, being an increase of 43 per cent. H. Deane.
24 July, 1900

The following is a detailed statement of the cost:—

BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.—Part 1.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 40 miles 40 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade 1 in 80 with, and 1 in 100 against the load. Sharpest curve 12 chains radius.—New fastenings: new 4 feet 6 inch T.Os.; $\frac{1}{2}$ ballast; Sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	£
Earthworks.....	9,961	13	4	246
Timber bridges.....	7,586	5	0	187
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions.....	2,139	0	0	53
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	25,225	5	6	623
Freight.....	5,701	6	8	141
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £4,158.....	23,938	4	0	591
$\frac{1}{2}$ ballasting, at 4s. = £3,564.....				
Sleepers, at 3s. 3d. = £16,216 4s. 0d.....	9,869	6	0	244
Station works, including junction and sidings.....				
Station buildings, waiting sheds, £840; platforms, £708; loading banks, £828; goods-sheds and platforms, £720; 20-ton weighbridges, £504; 5-ton crane, £216; cottages, £588; trucking-yards, £1,296.....	5,700	0	0	141
Water supplies.....	3,000	0	0	74
Gradient and mileage posts.....	668	5	0	17
Telegraph.....	668	5	0	17
Miscellaneous.....	1,000	0	0	25
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly).....	95,457	10	6	354
	14,318	9	6	
Add for extra cost of rails at £7 10s. per ton.....	109,776	0	0	2,711
	9,882	0	0	
Total Cost	£119,658	0	0	2,955

BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.—Part 2.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 34 miles 45 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grades, 1 in 80 with, and 1 in 100 against the load. Sharpest curve, 12 chains radius.—New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inch T.Os.; $\frac{1}{2}$ ballast. Sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	£
Earthworks.....	8,944	11	8	259
Timber bridges.....	8,509	5	0	246
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions.....	1,394	0	0	40
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	21,523	17	6	623
Freight.....	5,472	15	0	158
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £3,548 3s. 8d.....	20,427	4	8	591
$\frac{1}{2}$ ballasting at 4s. = £3,041 4s. 0d.....				
Sleepers at 3s. 3d. = £13,837 17s. 0d.....	8,156	12	0	236
Station works, including sidings.....				
Station buildings, passenger station, £1,032; waiting sheds, £360; platforms, £444; station-master's cottages, £930; goods sheds and platforms, £900; loading banks, £492; 20-ton weighbridges, £504; 10-ton crane, £420; carriage shed, £240; engine-shed and pit, £840; coal stage, £204; turntable, £600; trucking yards, £1,536.....	8,502	0	0	246
Water supplies.....	3,000	0	0	87
Gradient and mileage posts.....	570	4	10	17
Telegraph.....	570	4	10	17
Miscellaneous.....	1,000	0	0	29
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly).....	£88,070	15	6	.....
	13,210	4	6	382
Add for extra cost of rails at £7 10s. per ton.....	£101,281	0	0	2,931
	8,431	0	0	.....
Total cost	£109,712	0	0	3,175

BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.—Revised Estimates. Summary.

Rails at £7 10s. per ton.

Part.	Description.	Length.	Estimated cost.	Average per mile
1	Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek.....	m. c. 40 40	£ s. d. 119,658 0 0	£ s. d. 2,954 10 4
2	Bullock Creek to Bulbodney.....	34 45	109,712 0 0	3,174 10 9
	Total	75 5	229,370 0 0	3,055 14 5

H. Deane.
24 July, 1900.

2. Do you regard the class of country through which the line goes as easy country? Yes; it is fairly easy, but it is not quite so easy as the country between Parkes and Condobolin. You cannot get quite on to the surface in the same way as on the Parkes to Condobolin line, and we have to traverse the water-courses, to a great extent, at right angles. Then, if we compare the cost with the cost of the Parkes-Condobolin line, it will be found that the Parkes-Condobolin railway was constructed very cheaply. There were several reasons for that. The item for contingencies was not drawn upon at all. The timber bridges which were erected cost very much less than the total originally estimated, the reason being that it was impossible to locate some of the waterways, and determine their size. I have reckoned that a certain amount of money should be reserved, so that, when really heavy rain comes on, it can be used to make good any damage. I believe that water will go over the Condobolin line in some places, and that additional waterways will have to be provided there eventually. But it is difficult in flat country to say how the water will come. One great reason for an increase in the cost of the Bulbodney line, as compared with the Parkes-Condobolin line, will be the increased cost of permanent way material.

3. How do the earthworks compare? Taking the earthworks and culverts together, they come to about the same amount. On the Parkes-Condobolin line, £420 is allowed for those two items. In this line we have £433 for the first part, and about £505 for the second. That would be £465 as compared with £420, so that they are a little more expensive on this line.

4. Do you think that that country can be as easily traversed by a railway as the country between Narrabri and Pilliga, or between Narrabri and Walgett? It will prove better than that, because we shall not have the same amount of water to contend with. The creeks are easily crossed. With regard to the cost of permanent way materials, it will be seen that, taking rails at £5 5s. per ton landed in Sydney, and freight to Bogan Gate, the cost will amount to £764 per mile; that is, in the first part from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek. On the Parkes to Condobolin line the permanent way material was put down at £630 per mile; that is including freight. The reason for the difference is that rails were exceptionally cheap at that time. If I remember aright, we got rails delivered then in Sydney at about £4 per ton. The price of rails is now nearly double that.

5. *Mr. Watson.*] Then there is a difference in the cost of permanent way at that rate of about £400 per mile on present prices? Yes. Then look at the station works and sidings. The station works and sidings on the Parkes-Condobolin line were put down at £213 per mile. On this particular line, taking the first part from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek, that amount is £385 per mile. The Parkes-Condobolin line is essentially a pastoral line. This railway will be an agricultural line, and there will be more stations required. Independently of that, there are some additional expenses connected with stations which should be noted. In consequence of the slightly rougher country we have to go through, the earthworks will be heavier. Then the station buildings, although cheap, will be somewhat more expensive than we put on the Parkes-Condobolin line. I have been asked by the Railway Commissioners to add one thing and another. I have added to the width of the goods-platforms and goods-sheds. I have increased the width of verandahs, and so on, to make them more comfortable, and perhaps more suitable. But that is going back, to a certain extent, upon Mr. Eddy's idea of the pioneer principle. Not that it is not quite right; but still it adds to the expense. Then, again, the low platforms, which Mr. Eddy called landings, and not platforms, have been abolished, so that there we have the extra cost of building the usual high platforms. Then, again, in the small stations, instead of having dead-ends, I have been asked by the Railway Commissioners in every case to place loops, thus connecting each end of the main line. That also means extra expense. Then, again, in the larger stations, it has been decided as a proper provision that we should construct what is called a back-road for special loading. We always put these in now. Again, Moree station, which was one of the first of the terminal stations made in connection with pioneer railways, was made a certain length, and there was a certain compactness given to it. It was scarcely opened, however, when it was found that it was too constricted. Station-yards, generally, are now made longer, so as to allow more freedom of action and greater facilities in shunting, and so on, and giving more room for standing trucks. I find, in comparing some of the first stations, that we designed for the pioneer lines, with those stations which have been more recently approved of by the Commissioners, that on an average our present stations are 5 chains longer. The length of an important station was originally 25 chains; it is now 30 chains. I am quite certain that the Railway Commissioners would not ask for a provision which is not necessary; but, at the same time, it must be borne in mind that they are asking a great deal more than they asked in the case of the Parkes-Condobolin and the Moree line. That accounts for much of the difference in cost.

6. *Dr. Garran.*] When they make such provision, do they charge it to working expenses, or to the capital account? When they make it on a new line, they come to me for the money.

7. *Chairman.*] How does this more expensive station accommodation compare with the accommodation on similar lines in other countries? I have no doubt that the work is of such a class that it would compare with the best work in other countries.

8. For the same class of lines? Yes. Possibly the Commissioners are anxious to look a little further ahead than they did in the first place with the pioneer lines. Then there is another point I should like to mention to the Committee—and I have mentioned it with regard to one or two other lines—that is the rate of wages. The minimum rate of wages, as the Committee are probably aware, has been fixed at 7s. per day, where previously it was only 6s. per day. That, of course, means that the rates for all classes of labour have gone up, and we have to pay more.

9. Can you give us any idea in figures as to what the difference in wages means per mile? It is very difficult to do so. The estimate depends very much upon the cost of material, and that is indirectly connected with the question of wages.

10. *Dr. Garran.*] Would it make a difference of £50 per mile? Yes, fully.

11. Would it make a difference of £100 per mile? I daresay it would.

12. Would it make any difference in your contracts for sleepers? It is not very apparent in the cost of sleepers. I think the consideration given to labour in the rate of wages has had its effect on the price of sleepers, and we certainly are paying very much more than we otherwise would have to pay.

13. *Mr. Watson.*] But there is no day labour in connection with sleepers? No; it affects us indirectly, but I think the effect is very marked.

14. *Chairman.*] How far is Bulbodney in a direct line from the Western railway? I think it is about 40 miles.

15. Would not the last 20 miles of the proposed railway be practically little more than 40 miles from the Western line? Yes. H. Deane.
16. Do you regard that as being country which can stand two lines of railway so close to one another? Yes, for agricultural purposes, but not for pastoral purposes. 24 July, 1900.
17. Do you look upon that part of the country as purely agricultural? Yes; this line is brought forward as an agricultural line.
18. *Dr. Garran.*] I gather from your remarks that in the very cheap lines we have made hitherto we have been rather more fortunate than we are going to be in the future? I think so as regards cost.
19. You do not see your way to keep the lines of the same quality quite down to the same price? No. More freight has to be added as the lines are made further out. Then we are getting a diminution in the iron-bark and timber reserves, we are paying more for wages, and unless the Railway Commissioners can forego the advantages of increased accommodation at stations these lines must, necessarily, be more expensive.
20. Three or four causes are operating to raise the cost of the lines, yet their quality and capacity for traffic are not increased? Yes. Of course, with regard to the stations, if they are made more expensive now, they will not want enlarging in the near future.
21. If you spend the money in the first instance you will not want to spend it afterwards, and it is only putting off the evil day a little further, when you are very economical at first? Yes.
22. Then we will have to put on £200 or £300 per mile to the price of the cheapest line you have made hitherto? Yes.
23. We must make the minimum a little higher than we have before? Yes. After all the cost of the running-road still remains pretty low. Take the first six items of the first part of this Bogan Gate line, and you will find that they only amount to £1,841 per mile.
24. *Chairman.*] Is not the allowance of 15 per cent. for engineering and contingencies, somewhat larger than usual? I think that is the amount I have been allowing lately. I think it was in some cases to be 12½ per cent., but I found that that was not enough.
25. Do you find that, as a rule, the expenditure on that account comes up to the maximum of 15 per cent.? Yes, we very often do. Fifteen per cent. for engineering and contingencies is very moderate, indeed. I know that, in other countries, engineers not infrequently put down 10 per cent. for contingencies alone, and engineering and supervision comes to 5 or 8 per cent., according to the nature of the work.
26. Would you have any difficulty in getting sleepers for this line? I think that will be all right. I now put in the usual plans and book of reference in connection with this line.

WEDNESDAY, 25 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined.—

27. *Dr. Garran.*] Is this a district in which the selectors have taken the initiative, and are showing where the good land is? Yes. H. McLachlan.
28. Many of them are practical men from Victoria, who know what they are about, who have settled there, and who are already cultivating to advantage? Yes; I may say that the Commissioners in going through the district were very much impressed by the character of the men who had taken up land along this line. 25 July, 1900.
29. We are asked now simply to follow them and give them the means of transit? Yes.
30. Is it a strip of good land, or is there a large area of good country for miles on either side? The Commissioners think there is a large area of good land, which is easily cleared. In many ways it is far better to have it under cultivation, because it develops into scrub country, and becomes almost a nuisance.
31. Is much of the country liable to be covered with scrub? Yes.
32. Has a good deal of it been scrub which has been cleared by these farmers? Yes; I do not know whether that scrub is so obnoxious as it is in other places; but good land soon grows scrub.
33. Of course, this land is parallel to the main Western line, and is not at a very great distance from it? It is almost too great a distance for profitable cultivation. From Narramine, where a large quantity of grain comes in, it is 36 miles.
34. We are told that, for pastoral purposes, if two parallel lines are 80 miles apart, and a squatter is only at a maximum distance of 40 miles from a railway, that is a reasonable distance? Yes.
35. But in the case of agricultural land, a maximum distance of 20 miles is reasonable? Yes.
36. How far would this line be from a main line? Nearly 40 miles. Some of the farms would lie between the two lines.
37. Looking to the future, you are aware that one of the lines which have been much advocated is that from Narramine to Forbes, so as to make a connection with the Werris Creek line if it be made? Yes.
38. Suppose we open the Narramine line, we shall then have an intermediate line between the present Western line and this new line;—would there be room for three? I should hardly think so under present conditions.
39. That raises the question: Which would be the more important line—one from Narramine to Forbes or this line, because we are told that the Narramine-Forbes line will go through first-class agricultural country? To a large extent that line would bisect the country which this line would serve.
40. What I mean is, if we make this line, shall we rather check the making of a line from Narramine to Forbes? Personally, I should think this line would serve the country better, because I do not see that you

H.
McLachlan.
25 July, 1900.

you want a cross-country line from Narramine to Forbes, unless it be to develop country. The point is, which is the best line to develop the country? The Commissioners have never reported on a line from Narramine to Forbes to my knowledge, but, personally, I think this line would better develop the country than the other.

41. That line has been advocated as a cross-country through line, whereas this is a local line? I do not see what fresh business you are going to get on the Narramine-Forbes line.

42. Do you think we need not distress ourselves at all about a line from Narramine to Forbes? I think it is a question for the distant future.

43. Can we consider this on its own merits? Yes.

44. If we make this line, will it fairly serve the whole district between the Great Western line and this line? Yes.

45. Would the farmers between the two lines have fairly good access to some station or another? Yes. It seems to me to fairly bisect that tract of country, and, from the Commissioners' observation, the country is good and the people there deserve encouragement.

46. Is this a cockspur line for almost purely agricultural business? For agricultural and pastoral produce.

47. Will not most of the pastoral produce go direct to the main Western line? The pastoralists who are close to this line will take advantage of it.

48. It will be a cockspur line, depending mainly on agricultural business and the miscellaneous business which that gives rise to? Yes. The estimate of the traffic officers is that 2,000 tons of wool will come over the line. That is a fair quantity.

49. Except as to the rest of it, the wool is well accommodated? It is no hardship to travel 40 miles with wool in that country.

50. Is there any idea in the Commissioners' minds of a further extension of this line? Not at present.

51. Does the good land cease at Bulbodney? The Commissioners did not go beyond that.

52. Do you think it is better to start from there than to go further west and work north; or will there be room hereafter for another line from Condobolin? The Commissioners did not consider that question.

53. If this line is a good one, and answers expectations, do you hope to make another cheap line northwards from Condobolin? Yes.

54. We need not look about for a better site to start from? No, and it runs through the better country. The further west you get the poorer the country is.

55. We know the land is good, and that the men are there to stay? Yes.

56. As we have no agricultural cockspur line in the Colony, will this line be experimental? Yes.

57. But the loss is one which the Commissioners think we may fairly face? That is their recommendation. As a rule they do not recommend a line unless there is a prospect of its paying working expenses. In this case they make an exceptional recommendation, saying it is worthy of consideration. That is after they had gone through the district, and had seen the character of the country and the people.

58. They will be content to work at a loss for six or ten years if they see that it will eventually pay? Yes.

59. There are all the elements of permanence? Yes.

60. This line is getting into the dry country? Yes; but we know that, in the parallel country, production is increasing.

61. A few dry years must be expected occasionally? Yes.

62. But that does not deter the Commissioners for recommending the line? No.

63. You will have no competition in this district? Yes. That is one feature about this proposal which makes it different from the Culcairn-Germanton railway. We open up our own country.

64. Will not this line require a service all to itself;—you cannot work it with the trucks on the main line? There may be a separate engine, but the trucks loaded there will go right through to Sydney. It will be a tri-weekly service.

65. Have you some tri-weekly lines at present? Yes.

66. Do they answer well? The people would like a daily service. The Temora and Cobar lines were tri-weekly at one time.

67. Do you find any difficulty in working such lines;—are they alternately starved and over-loaded? No. In such a case the Commissioners would start a daily service.

68. Do you have to leave goods behind? No; if we found that happening frequently we would run a daily service.

69. *Chairman.*] Do you expect to draw much traffic from Tomingley and Peak Hill? Nothing is provided for the Peak Hill business in connection with this line.

70. Do you know whether the mineral belt north and south of Parkes extends over this line? No; as far as we know there is not much mineral development about Bulbodney, and the traffic officers allow nothing in their estimate for mineral traffic. Nearer Bogan Gate the mineral prospects are better.

71. Is the branch line, Parkes to Forbes, worked as a separate branch line? We have a through carriage from Sydney, and we would have through trucks. We have what you might call a local service to some extent, with regard to local men and engines from Orange, but it might be considered to be a through business, because the same trucks and carriages can run through.

72. You could not run in the locomotives with this line? No; we would probably have a locomotive to run this line, but all the produce would come through. There would be no junction transfer.

73. *Mr. Watson.*] How do the Commissioners deal with rolling stock on new lines;—is the equipment of new lines with rolling stock part of the vote for the construction of the line? Not as a rule. We throw the rolling stock in, unless it is a very long line, such as Nyngan to Cobar, where you would have to keep a lot of rolling stock, or at Casino, where it would require to be separate; but we do not add anything to these short lines for rolling stock as a rule.

74. Has any attempt been made to see whether a line could be as advantageously located from Parkes as from Bogan Gate? Not to the knowledge of the Commissioners. They make it a rule to report on the line referred to them.

75. Would it not be more advantageous from the Commissioners' point of view, if you had a branch north and south from Parkes, rather than a branch at Parkes, and another at Bogan Gate? There might be a slight advantage.

76. At Bogan Gate you will have to erect duplicates of the junction arrangements, which you have now at Parkes? Still the arrangements of a small junction do not cost much. On the Nevertre-Warren line we have not spent much. That is only a detail.

77. Would it not be easier to work, if you had the junction there, so as to dovetail the trains and arrangements generally? Naturally it would be a little easier to have the junction at Parkes, but it is really not a point that would weigh in determining the route of the railway.

H.
McLachlan.

25 July, 1900.

78. Would it be worth while considering, if all other things were equal? Yes.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined—

79. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a map showing the trafficable area between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? Yes; it is defined by the green mark, commencing at a point 7 miles from Bogan Gate, and embracing an area of about 20 miles on the other side of the line, about 25 miles to the north, about 15 miles to the south, and about 15 miles to the west, and about 15 miles to the east. The following is an estimate of the traffic:—

J. Harper.

25 July, 1900.

PROPOSED RAILWAY, BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY; DISTANCE, 75 MILES.

Estimated cost of construction, £229,370, exclusive of land and compensation.

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had very careful inquiries made as to the prospective traffic on this proposed line. The soil is of an excellent character, and at the present time about 23,000 acres are being farmed in the district which would be served by the proposed line. The trade of the district is now dealt with to a large extent at Condobolin, Narramine, and Trangie, and to a small extent at Nevertire, Nyngan, and Parkes. As a consequence, therefore, the construction of this line would mean a certain amount of diversion of traffic from the main line, and I have dealt with this phase of the question in submitting the estimate of the traffic.

As already stated, the land is of an excellent character, and has been taken up by a very thorough and practical set of farmers, who have given evidence of a thorough intention to make the most of the land, notwithstanding the drawbacks to which they have been compelled to submit, owing to the distance of their holdings from railway communication. I may also incidentally remark that the local residents have undertaken, should it be practicable and deemed necessary, to contribute at the rate of 2d. per acre within 5 miles of the railway, 1d. over 5 and under 10 miles, and ½d. over 10 and under 15 miles, in order to meet any loss which may be incurred.

Up to the present time produce has been carted a distance of from 20 to 40 miles to Bogan Gate at 3d. and 4½d. per bushel, 30 miles to Narramine at 4d. and 4½d. per bushel, and 55 miles to Nyngan and 62 miles to Trangie at 6d. per bushel.

The roads to any station on the Main Western line are generally very bad in wet weather, the formation being black soil. The country is chiefly box and pine, and a very large area has been improved by ringbarking and scrubbing. There are large areas of Crown land in the neighbourhood, most of which consist of very excellent agricultural soil.

In the area to be served by the proposed extension there are about 130 selectors. The bulk of these are located between Trundle and Bullock Creek, and the remainder between Bullock Creek and Bulbodney.

My opinion is that, under anything like favourable circumstances, we may look forward to considerable development in this district in the near future; and I am further of opinion that it possesses fairly good claims for consideration in the direction of the construction of a railway; but would suggest that, if possible, some provision should be made whereby the Crown lands should in some direction be required to bear the burden involved in the inevitable loss which will for some time occur in the construction and working of the line.

The traffic of the district would fall in at the following points—

Trundle.....	15 miles from Bogan Gate.
Bullock Creek	40 " "
Bulbodney	75 " "

The following is the estimate of the traffic:—

Goods, 800 tons.....	£304
Wool, 2,067 tons.....	679
Stock, 475 trucks.....	285
Agricultural produce, 9,700 tons.....	1,650
	£2,918
From this, however, it will be necessary to deduct the loss due by diversion of traffic from the existing main line, viz.....	£318
Total, goods, wool, and stock traffic.....	£2,600
Coaching traffic, including parcels, H.C.D., &c.....	900
Mails, 75 miles, at £12 per mile.....	900
Total traffic.....	£4,400

80. The total revenue is practically a little over one-third of the total annual expenditure? Yes.

81. Various suggestions have been made in connection with lines of this character, which are practically developmental lines for bridging the gap between revenue and expenditure;—in this particular case, can you suggest the best means of doing so? In view of the fact that there is such a large area of Crown lands which will be affected by the line, I think, if practicable, the revenue to be derived from the Crown lands should be called upon to meet the deficiency. The line will very largely increase the value of a large quantity of Crown lands in that district. When the Crown lands are dealt with, the fact of a railway being in existence will be taken into consideration either in the assessment or in the valuation.

82. Presuming that most of the people there have taken up land on the old terms of £1 or 25s. per acre, on twenty-eight years' purchase, do you think that another £1 per acre added to the capital value would discourage the taking up of land in view of the construction of a railway? I would not like to say that the land is worth £2 per acre.

83. What is the general character of the holdings there? There are 31,000 acres taken up in settlement leases, 100,000 acres in improvement leases, and 3,000 acres of scrub land; inferior Crown lands, 6,500 acres.

84. Have you details of the conditionally-purchased land? No.

85. These are practically very cheap forms of taking up land? Yes.

86. Would not any attempt to materially increase the capital cost discourage the taking up of that class of land? Yes; but still we have the fact that the people there are willing to contribute to the cost of the railway.

87. I notice that the people have promised to guarantee a considerable portion of the loss? Yes; they are prepared to guarantee up to 2d. per acre for land adjoining the line. If they are prepared to guarantee that much it would not be unreasonable to ask the Crown to set apart either the same amount or a little more. It is country which, unless it is closely settled, will certainly never be of much value to the State or to any one else. It requires cultivation to rid it of scrub. It is very rich, but much infested with scrub.

- J. Harper. 88. Do you anticipate much traffic from the mineral belt to the east of this line? No; that would go into the main line. The mineral developments at Melrose would be affected by it—that is, to the west of the line. There is another question which I did not look into very much, but I think it is worth considering. This line represents about the shortest route which you can get to Nymagee. I do not know what engineering difficulties might be in the way, but it seems to be 30 or 40 miles shorter than any other route. It would bring Nymagee 40 miles closer to Sydney and Eskbank than it would be by any other line. If Nymagee develops like Cobar there will be some justification for extending this line to that point.

THURSDAY, 26 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

- J. Harper. 89. *Dr. Garran.*] Does all the pastoral traffic to the west of the Western railway come to some station or another on that line at present? Yes.
90. Would this new line intercept some of that traffic? Yes; I have allowed for that in my estimate.
91. How far to the east would the effect of the new line be felt in drawing pastoral traffic? About 20 miles.
92. And everything to the west? Yes—of course, within a radius of about 22 miles.
93. Would the Bulbodney station draw the Nymagee traffic? I hardly think so. It is only 38 miles from Hermidale, on the Cobar line, with a good road, and plenty of water. That is where they go at present.
94. Is there a small mine at Overflow? Yes; there are several small mines there.
95. Will you get all the traffic from there? Yes.
96. Will there be a little terminal trade? Yes.
97. And it may grow? Yes.
98. Is the mining development at present only in its infancy? Yes.
99. It may prove to be something or nothing? Yes; the probability is that their distance from a railway at present keeps them back.
100. How far does agricultural development go on the line at present? The whole distance.
101. Is it equally good land all the way to Bulbodney? It varies; but the great bulk of it is very good land.
102. Is any of the land which is not taken up tied up in leaseholds for a term of years? I think some of it is; but I do not know the nature of the tenure.
103. Has the selection been on the resumed area mostly? Yes.
104. From the figures you read yesterday it would appear that a large quantity of land there has been taken up under settlement leases, improvement leases, and scrub leases? Yes.
105. In all these cases does the title remain in the Crown? Yes.
106. So that at the end of a term of years the improved land will come back to the Crown? Yes.
107. The quantity of conditionally purchased land does not seem to be large? No.
108. Are the areas comprised in improvement and scrub leases rather larger areas as compared with conditionally-purchased land? Yes.
109. So that the population would not be so large as if the land had been taken up on conditional purchase? No.
110. Have you formed any estimate as to what the population is likely to be when the line is made? No; it is impossible to form such an estimate.
111. Is the industry at present mixed agricultural and pastoral occupation? Some of the selectors there are keeping sheep as well as growing wheat; but a great many are only growing wheat at present. Of course, they have had adverse seasons ever since they have been there.
112. Is there a great deal of scrub to clear away? Yes; the ordinary Bogan scrub, growing on good soil.
113. Is it much the same kind as is to be seen at Nyngan? Yes; the same as you see between Nyngan, Cobar, and the Bogan.
114. Where the Government has been clearing the scrub? Yes.
115. Where the land is cleared is its quality very good? Yes.
116. Do the settlers seem to be going ahead? Yes; two brothers have 2,300 acres under wheat on one farm. That gives an indication of the class of farmers who have settled there. They are a very good class of farmer—Victorians almost to a man. They have had very bad seasons during the last three or four years.
117. After the line is made, during the first three years the area under grain will not be anything like what it will be afterwards? No.
118. So that the amount of traffic during the first few years, will not be a fair test as to what may be expected later on? No; the country will constantly go on improving when there is railway communication.
119. Is your estimate based on the traffic which you expect to get at first? Yes.
120. So that the annual loss ought to diminish after the first few years? Yes.
121. We have one junction already at Parkes to go to Forbes, and now it is proposed to have another at Bogan Gate;—would there be any advantage in making this branch start from Parkes? No. In the first place, by that means you would not serve so large an area; because, in leaving Parkes, the line would run at an acute angle, and it would not go through such good country as the line now proposed.
122. Could not we go at right-angles due north? You would then miss some of the best settlement in the district. The best settlement is on the main road to Trundle and Bulbodney. 123.

123. But at every junction do you not want extra appliances? Not at a junction of this kind. It would require one additional man, probably. It would probably be worked from Parkes in conjunction with the Forbes service.

J. Harper.
26 July, 1900.

124. If so, would it not be more convenient to have only one junction? The same train-staff would be employed as we have for Forbes.

125. You do not think that there would be any more people employed under this proposal than if we junctioned at Parkes? No.

126. How far are the Peak Hill people from their nearest station? From Parkes it is 33 miles; it is 32 miles from Narramine.

127. I suppose Parkes is their station? Yes.

128. Is there considerable traffic there? There has been a good deal of machinery going there at one time and another, but I cannot say for certain what traffic is going there just now; but, of course, if you keep in that direction you will miss a great deal of the country to the west.

129. Has this line the advantage of being in no way a competitive line? Certainly; but it will divert some of the traffic from the main line.

130. But we are only in competition with ourselves? Yes.

131. We are improving the very heart of our own country? Yes.

132. Is it too far west for agriculture? No; the rainfall is about 21 inches.

133. And the gradients on the line are easy? Yes; they are 1 in 100.

134. Is there any danger of being flooded at any part of the line? No.

135. Although the initial loss may be £8,000 a year, do you reasonably look for a steady reduction of that loss? Yes.

136. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you been over this line to Bulbodney? Yes.

137. I have been twice over the whole length of this line, and from what I was told by the residents, I was under the impression that they had offered to guarantee any loss on the working of the line? Yes; they are prepared to pay 2d. per acre for land within 5 miles of the railway, 1d. per acre on land from that point up to 10 miles distant, and so on.

138. Is it your impression that it would be a very easy line to work? Yes.

139. Would it be similar to the line from Bogan Gate to Condobolin? Yes; it would be practically the same. It is a cheap line. There is only one range to get over, and it is a very low one.

140. Do you think that, besides wheat and wool, there would be any other traffic on the railway? The country to the west is full of minerals, and I do not know what mineral development may take place there.

141. Did the people there inform you that there would be a large trade in poultry and eggs during the winter months? That is a very small item.

142. They seemed to think that the quantity would be enormous; the laying season is in winter, and in the wheat fields they could keep an enormous number of poultry, and, if they had a market, they would send them by the railway;—is that a paying trade? No; there is nothing in it in the net or gross value. The same thing as far as poultry raising is concerned applies wherever they grow wheat. There is a lot of very good pine timber in that district, but they have been ringbarking so extensively that a good deal of it has been destroyed.

143. You stated that a good deal of this country was under settlement lease, improvement lease, and scrub lease;—are the areas there very large? No.

144. Are the areas too large to prevent close settlement? No.

145. Hence there would be a fairly numerous population? Yes. There is nothing to prevent the farmers from carrying a good number of sheep, and at the same time there might be a comparatively dense population.

146. Is there a great deal of wheat-growing carried out in the district? Yes; there are 23,000 acres under wheat.

147. Have some of the farmers large areas under wheat? Yes; as I have mentioned already, two brothers have 2,300 acres under wheat, and there are other farmers who have large areas under cultivation.

148. Did they inform you that they would grow considerably more wheat if they had railway communication? Yes.

149. Do you think that a line running to Bulbodney would serve a considerable amount of side country? Yes; I have indicated that on the map by means of a green strip.

150. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you seen the country to the west of the proposed line? No.

151. It seems probable that, some day or another, a line will be taken from Parkes to Narramine, in which case it would be advisable to have this proposed line of railway further west than is now projected? That is a matter for inquiry. I do not know much about the land in the west. As you go west you get closer into the range which is marked on the map. I think it is called the Black Range.

152. That range does not seem to be very extensive, judging from the feature map? I am not personally acquainted with the country in that neighbourhood.

153. Can you say anything as to the country between Bulbodney and Nymagee? It is good red-soil country practically the whole way.

154. Do you think that the rainfall to the west of Bulbodney is sufficient to justify cultivation? It diminishes there.

155. Towards Nymagee, would it be outside the wheat-growing zone? I scarcely think so. As far as Nyngan they grow wheat, and also along the Bogan. I have seen some very good crops in the neighbourhood of Nyngan.

156. *Chairman.*] Do you think that the line would practically serve all the good country in that neighbourhood? Yes; it is a very good location, judging by the settlement which has already taken place there.

157. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The report states that the ruling grade is 1 in 100 against the load, and 1 in 80 with it;—what is the meaning of that passage? That means that the loading is never equal—that is to say, that in hauling traffic in the direction of Bulbodney the loads would never be so heavy as they are coming towards Sydney. The grade coming towards Sydney would only be 1 in 100, while in going towards Bulbodney it would be 1 in 80.

Charles Edward Rennie, Chief Draftsman, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

- C. E. Rennie. 158. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a map showing the character of the holdings in the district to be served by this railway? Yes.
- 26 July, 1900. 159. Will you describe the limits of it? The areas are taken out within 20 miles of the proposed line—Bogan Gate—Bulbodney Creek. Allowance is made for the influence of the line, Parkes to Condobolin, on the south. The areas within these limits are as follows:—Alienated land, 813,700 acres; reserves, 112,000 acres; settlement leases, 84,580 acres; improvement leases, 177,800 acres; scrub leases, 410,320 acres; inferior Crown lands, 3,100 acres; Crown lands, 366,800 acres. The tenure of the Crown lands is as follows:—Under leasehold, expiring on the 4th August, 1900, 143,170 acres; under leasehold, expiring in August, 1901, 1,100 acres; area of leasehold, expiring in 1903, 2,130 acres. The area which will be held under occupation license in a few days will be 113,000 acres; untenanted, 107,400 acres. These areas are shown on the map as follows:—Alienated land, blue tint; land held under various kinds of leases, blue hatching; Crown lands, brown tint; reserves, green tint.
160. Does the brown tint represent unoccupied lands? No; it represents all the Crown lands outside reserves.
161. *Mr. Hyam.*] Where is the unoccupied land? It is scattered in different pieces throughout the whole area.
162. *Chairman.*] Can you give us the details with regard to the settlement, improvement, and scrub leases? I have not got that, but the usual tenure of settlement leases is twenty-eight years; improvement leases, vary up to twenty-eight years; and scrub leases up to twenty-eight years; inferior Crown land leases, twenty years.
163. Taking a general view of the map, does the leased land follow pretty closely the course of the proposed line? Yes; the greater part of it abuts on to the proposed line.
164. So that the construction of the line would practically improve the Crown estate all the way? Yes, for a great part of the way.

THURSDAY, 2 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

George Charles Yeo, draftsman, Stock Branch, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

- G. C. Yeo. 165. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you any statistics showing the number of stock in the district which will be served by the proposed Bogan Gate to Bulbodney railway? Yes; the number of stock which was depastured in that area was as follows:—In 1897, 2,700 cattle, and 359,850 sheep; in 1898, 2,670 cattle, and 366,091 sheep. The wool clip was as follows:—In 1897, 5,400 bales; in 1898, 5,490 bales. In the area which will be affected by the railway, there are nineteen large owners of sheep, and eighty-seven small ones. The stock traffic has been as follows:—In 1897, from Trundle and north to Bogan Gate, 4,200 sheep; in 1898, between the same places, 7,430 sheep. In 1897, the stock traffic from Bogan Gate to Trundle and north was 3,000 sheep; and in 1898, between the same places, it was 11,861 sheep.
166. What are the boundaries of the district which you have taken as being likely to be served by the proposed railway? I have taken the boundaries shown in green on the map produced by Mr. Harper, the Chief Traffic Manager of the Railway Department, with the exception of the Burdonda holding; I have included the whole of that in my returns. The boundaries run in a north-easterly direction to the Bogan River at Wallanbillau. From there they follow the Bogan River downwards to Burdonda; thence westerly to about the centre of the Melrose holding, and generally south through Melrose across to the starting point.
167. Does the district which you have described extend roughly on the eastern side about 20 miles from the proposed line, and then does it go about 15 miles north of Bulbodney, and on the western side about 22 miles? Yes.
168. Do you know where the stock from that district makes for now;—does it go towards Parkes or the Western line chiefly? The stock mostly make up the Bogan. That is the biggest drift of stock at the present time.
169. From the Bogan does fat stock come towards Sydney? I have not taken particular notice as to which way it works after that.
170. Has there been any great variation in the number of stock in the district which you have described;—have many sheep been lost owing to the drought? Yes; during last year it made a difference of about 100,000 sheep. In 1896, which was a good year, there would be about 100,000 more sheep in the district than the numbers I have given for the two succeeding years.
171. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you know the particular stations on which those sheep were lost? No; I am giving only the general loss throughout.
172. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you anything in your returns which would show whether the loss was larger on the large holdings, as compared with the small holdings? I could ascertain that, because we have the returns of each individual holder. By comparing the figures for one year with the previous year, I could show what decrease has taken place.
173. It is contended by some people that there is a better chance of saving stock on small holdings, on account of the improvements which are generally made. I would like to know how your returns bear on that? The returns will show the actual losses of each individual, whether the losses occurred on large or small holdings. I will prepare such a statement for the years 1897, 1898, and 1899. [*Vide Appendix.*]
174. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you say that the loss of stock within the green boundaries marked on this map numbered 100,000? Yes; close to that.
- 175.

175. What is the area of country within the green boundaries? 3,696 square miles. My returns only show the owners of sheep. G. C. Yeo.
2 Aug., 1900.
176. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Taking into consideration the area of country which is likely to be affected by the proposed railway, how will that compare with other pastoral districts as to the number of stock which is kept? It compares very favourably with any other pastoral district.
177. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway will increase the number of stock in the district? I do not think so, unless it tends to promote the cutting up of the large holdings. There are, however, only nineteen large holdings.
178. Is it not generally the result that when large holdings are cut up into small ones, it tends to increase the number of stock kept in that area? I have never worked out the figures, in order to ascertain the exact results in that way.
179. In your returns you furnish two years' statistics of stock;—can you say what was the number of stock running in those boundaries previous to 1897? Yes. I have already stated that, in 1896, there was practically an increase of 100,000 above what I have stated for the two following years.
180. What was the reason for that large decrease? The drought.
181. How did the year 1899 compare with the year 1896? It showed a decrease of nearly 200,000 on the returns for 1896, which was a good year.
182. Have you worked out the figures for 1896 and 1899 in such a way as to show how they compare with the figures in other pastoral districts? No.
183. Have you reason to think that the number of sheep and cattle in that district suffered a greater decrease than in other districts of the Colony? No.
184. Has the number of holdings increased? There was a slight increase in 1898 as compared with 1897, but it was only very slight. My figures, however, only refer to the owners of sheep. There might have been an increase of agriculturists, but that would not be shown in our statistics.
185. I see from the figures that the stock traffic has increased;—what is the reason for that? It is impossible to tell why a slight increase of traffic has taken place. The traffic to the Bogan varied a few thousands backwards and forwards.
186. What I was thinking about was that if there had been a decrease in the actual number of stock in the district, what reason could there be for an increase in the actual traffic? It would be hard to say where the increase came from; it might come northwards from that district; it might consist of stock coming down from Nymagee and Cobar. The figures do not prove that the increase arose from local stock.
187. Have you any return as to fat stock sent to Sydney? We get the cast of fats in the returns for one annual report. I can give the annual cast of fats, but I shall first have to look up the figures.

FRIDAY, 10 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Bogan Gate Hotel," Bogan Gate, at 3:45 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

William Todd, forwarding agent, Bogan Gate, sworn and examined:—

188. *Chairman.*] Do you represent the firm of Hollibone and Todd? Yes. W. Todd.
10 Aug., 1900.
189. Are you also a landholder in the district? Yes, I have been here fourteen years.
190. Have you some knowledge of the development which has been brought about in this district by the construction of the Parkes-Condobolin railway? Yes.
191. What has followed in the way of settlement, increased production, &c., through the opening of that line? Settlement has increased greatly along the route from Parkes to Condobolin. There has been a great demand for land, and when land has been thrown open we have had to go to a ballot, and there has been from eight to fourteen applicants for each block.
192. Coming along in the train to-day, we noticed a great deal of land adjacent to the railway which is not under cultivation, and there does not seem to be much improvement;—what is the reason for that? I think most of the land which you saw along the railway is held by Nelungaloo station. Apart from that there is a reserve along that line, and there is settlement on both sides of the line, which you could not very well see from the train. The land on the station is secured land.
193. What is the area of that land? About 18,000 acres.
194. Is there much land still in the district adjacent to the Parkes-Condobolin railway which is fit for agricultural settlement; but which has not yet been taken up? Yes; there are large areas of land, which I expect will soon fall in, and which is good wheat-growing land. It is now held under lease.
195. Do you think that the construction of the Parkes-Condobolin line has had a distinctly beneficial effect upon the district? I am quite certain that it has. When I came here, fourteen years ago, this country was all scrub.
196. Taking the district proposed to be served by a line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, how would you compare the character of that country 20 miles on each side with the country along the Parkes-Condobolin line? It is similar country for wheat-growing purposes all the way along that route.
197. What area along the route of the proposed line would be sufficient to enable a farmer to make a decent living for his family? 2,560 acres.
198. Would it be necessary to carry out a system of mixed farming? Yes.
199. What is the general tenure of the land;—is it mostly held in large sheep runs at present? Yes.
200. When will the leases fall in? I understand some of them will fall in within three years.

201.

- W. Todd.
10 Aug., 1900.
201. Do you think the falling in of the leases and the construction of the line will offer attractions to farmers who have had experience in wheat growing? Yes. I know several Victorians have come here, and have gone 40 miles away from here in search of land for wheat-growing purposes. They consider that it is equal to the country they have come from.
202. Is there any wheat cultivation to a large extent in the direction of Bulbodney? Yes; out at Bullock Creek there are large areas under wheat cultivation.
203. Do you think the district towards Bulbodney is at present kept back, as far as its agricultural capabilities are concerned, for want of railway communication? Yes.
204. The official estimate of the total annual cost of this railway is £12,916 per annum, and the anticipated revenue is only £4,400;—do you think that we may reasonably expect within a few years the great gap between revenue and expenditure will be bridged over? I think a certain amount of it would, because the people would go in more for cultivation if they had a railway.
205. It has been proposed that a special financial arrangement should be made, and I find that the people of Bulbodney are prepared to guarantee an annual amount of £1,257, and it is anticipated that the people at Bullock Creek will be prepared to guarantee a proportionate amount;—do you think it would be a paying concern to the settlers who would take up land in the district to give such a guarantee? I certainly think so. If I were 50 or 60 miles out from here, I would be willing to guarantee a certain amount, because the railway would enhance the value of the land.
206. What difficulties are the people subjected to with regard to road facilities? It is impossible to get in wheat. We have wheat 40 miles from here, and we have been trying for three months to get teams to bring in that wheat.
207. Is that the normal condition of things? It is according to the rainfall. The roads are easily made difficult by a very small rainfall.
208. It is generally urged as one reason in support of lines to districts suitable for mixed farming that a largely-increased fat stock traffic might be reasonably anticipated;—are the stockowners in this district handicapped at present with regard to fat stock? Yes; owing to the great distance they have to travel before they begin the long train journey.
209. Can we reasonably expect that each small owner on the proposed railway would be able to send in small consignments of fat stock where they are now absolutely prevented from doing so? Yes. It costs a great deal at present to drive fat stock 30, 40, or 50 miles. By the time the sheep get to Sydney they look much worse than they would if they could be put on the railway at once without long driving.
210. Could we expect much traffic in that way from each holder? That all depends upon the season, with regard to the fattening. A lot of stock have gone from here this season, owing to its being good.
211. Can you get three fattening seasons out of five? We are subject to droughts, and we cannot foretell. The rule is to have a few bad seasons, and a few good ones.
212. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Has any attempt been made to cultivate the land along the proposed railway? Yes; there are large areas under cultivation now.
213. For how long? The last three years.
214. Can you give any of the results and the average per acre? The average in this district during the last three years has been about 8 bushels to the acre. Further out the yield is much better.
215. Would the three years you refer to be considered unfavourable seasons? Yes.
216. Would that represent a fair average, taking the good years with the bad years? No; that is the average of three bad seasons. I think you could put the average, taking good and bad seasons, at 16 bushels an acre. The last three years have been exceptionally bad.
217. Which are the principal centres of population? Trundle, Bullock Creek, and Bulbodney.
218. Do they do business with Bogan Gate? Yes; the traffic comes here principally.
219. Do the farmers draw wheat to the railway station here? Yes.
220. What is the greatest distance from which they draw wheat here? Seventy-five miles—that is from Woodlands.
221. Would that pay? No; but they grow the wheat and they must get rid of it.
222. Have you done much in the way of forwarding goods along the proposed route? Yes.
223. Do you think the construction of the railway would increase the goods traffic? Yes; there would be an increase in settlement, and an increase in goods traffic must follow.
224. What class of country is it, speaking from a pastoral standpoint? It is good sound sheep country.
225. What is its carrying capacity per acre? If the land is well improved it will carry one sheep to the acre, taking one season with another. I am speaking of country which is fenced, subdivided, scrubbed, and ringbarked.
226. Is the country fairly well watered? There is not much permanent water; it has to be conserved.
227. In times of drought have there been severe losses? Yes.
228. Do they travel stock during times of drought to other districts which are more favoured? With railway facilities they would do so. Sheep have been sent away from here.
229. In what direction would they be likely to go? East; towards the mountains.
230. Do you think sheep-farmers would avail themselves of the railway in times of drought? Certainly; I would do so myself.
231. Is this good fattening country? Yes; after it is improved.
232. Do any fat stock go through here to the market? Not during the last three or four years, owing to the unfavourable seasons. Several lots have gone through this year.
233. In good seasons do you think that a large business would be done? Yes; they go to the Sydney market principally, and also to Orange and Goulburn.
234. Is there much traffic in store stock? Yes; at present a lot of sheep are changing hands.
235. Is the country heavily timbered? Yes; parts are heavily timbered with box, pine, and oak.
236. Is it expensive to clear? Not after it is dead.
237. What is the average cost of ringbarking? About 8d. an acre.
238. Is there much of it scrub country? Yes; a portion of it. It consists of pine scrub.
239. If a railway were constructed, do you think that people would go in for cultivation? I am certain that they would.
240. Is there much available Crown land within easy reach of the line? Yes; all along it.
241. Are there many large holdings privately held? Yes, they are fairly large—from 2,560 acres up to 7,000 or 10,000 acres.

242. Do you think that the holders of 10,000 acres, who have land suitable for cultivation, would be likely, in the event of the railway being constructed, to lease the land for agriculture, or cultivate the land themselves, in preference to sheep-farming? There is quite sufficient land to be thrown open on the proposed route for people to settle on without leasing from the large holders. W. Todd.
10 Aug., 1900.
243. Has there been any leasing in the district? There is a little of the halves system worked in the district.
244. Has that been satisfactory to the tenants and the owners of land? Not during the last three years.
245. In favourable seasons, do you think the system is fairly satisfactory? I think it is more satisfactory to the landholder.
246. Are there agricultural areas suitable for growing other products than wheat? Wheat is the principal product. A little barley growing has been tried successfully.
247. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You say that 2,560 acres would be a fair area for a man to make a living by mixed farming? Yes.
248. How would you divide the industries? My idea would be to farm 640 acres—320 one year, and the balance the second year. In that way you would get better results than if you farmed the whole 640 acres at once. I would use the balance of the land for running sheep.
249. What is the average yield of wool per sheep? About 5 lb., lambs included.
250. Do you think that any less area would be insufficient to keep a family? Certainly a smaller area would keep a family well if they had good seasons for wheat production, but not otherwise.
251. What is the rainfall in the district? About 20 inches.
252. At what time of the year does it usually fall? We have heavy rains in summer, and, as a rule, we have fairly good winter rains.
253. Does the rain fall about the right time for crops? We want early rains to put in the crops, and late rains to fill them. The trouble last year was that there were no late rains.
254. Which would be your market? Sydney, principally.
255. Would it pay to send hay to Sydney? There has not been much hay cut in this district; it has principally been wheat.
256. Have you suffered much loss in stock from the drought? We have had our share, like other places, especially during the last two years.
257. Would there be any land available here to receive starving stock in a dry time? No.
258. We are generally told that a railway will induce wheat-growing, but we saw thousands and thousands of acres along the railway to-day apparently fit for wheat-growing, but which did not appear to be touched—that was on both sides of the Parkes-Condobolin line; how do you account for that? On the right-hand side of the line most of the land has been taken up in small areas during the last two or three years. There is very little Crown land on the right-hand side of the line which is not occupied. On the opposite side you come through a large station on which a considerable area is held as freehold.
259. What would be the average size of the holdings? About 1,000 acres. The land there has been thrown open under homestead selection.
260. Is not that rather less than you say would be sufficient for a good living? Yes.
261. Is much of the land out here secured, or is it generally held under lease? A large portion of Burrawang station is secured. There are about 100,000 acres of freehold.
262. Do you know the country between here and Bulbodney? Yes.
263. Do you say that it is quite equal to the country about here? Yes; it is quite equal to the country between here and Parkes. It might be a little more expensive with regard to timber.
264. What does it cost to clear land here? With the timber on it, it costs about 10s. an acre to clear the land for the stump-jump plough.
265. How long is it ringbarked before it is fit to clear? Four or five years. It costs 8d. or 9d. an acre to ring it, and the scrubbing depends upon the thickness of the scrub.
266. Would there be sufficient timber on the proposed railway to furnish sleepers? Yes; taking a distance of about 16 miles on each side of the line, you would get sufficient ringbarked timber for sleepers for the line.
267. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long has the country been ringbarked between here and Parkes? A lot of it for fourteen or fifteen years. Some of it has only been ringbarked lately. A lot of that country which you came through might be said to be green; that was owned by the Honorable John Lackey, and no improvements were made, except where there was selection. The line has been opened about three years.
268. What class of soil is there between here and Bulbodney? Rich loamy chocolate soil; further out it is inclined to be a little clayey.
269. Which is the most suitable for agriculture in this district? Red chocolate soil.
270. How far on each side of the line would the railway serve? About 20 miles.
271. *Chairman.*] Is a good deal of the country very scrubby? Yes, in places.
272. Is it a fact that, in its present condition, without a railway, it is hardly profitable to remove the scrub if you devote the land to sheep farming entirely? That all depends upon the leases. I am certain that if they had a long tenure on some of these stations, they would be quite willing to remove the scrub.
273. In the official report it is stated that only by resorting to agriculture can the country be profitably cleared of its superabundance of scrub growth, and freed from rabbits and other animal pests;—you agree with that statement generally, with a modification as to the length of the leases? I know very well that if they had long enough leases they would clear away the scrub.
274. Which would be the most profitable to the country as a whole—an extension of the leases or opening the land for agricultural settlement? Throwing open the land.
275. Is there anything else you would like to add? I have made out a statement of the agricultural machinery which we have brought into the district. We represent the machinery firms, Massey-Harris Machinery Company and T. Robinson and Company, of Melbourne. Since 1898 we have unloaded here 130 machines, consisting of ploughs, 17; strippers, 18; winnowers, 9; threshing machine, 1; harrows, 7; tread powers, 8; binders, 26; cultivators, 30; thatching machines, 6; chaff-cutters, 8. We have ordered ten machines for the coming season. Most of that machinery was sold in 1898 and 1899. There were several other orders given besides these; but they were cancelled. There are other machinery agents in the district; but no records have been kept.

John Christie, farmer, Bogan Gate, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Christie. 276. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where do you live? I live about 3 miles from Bogan Gate.
 277. What is the area of your farm? At present it is 1,137 acres.
 10 Aug., 1900. 278. How much of it is under cultivation? About 100 acres this year. I have only had the land, on which I am now living for three years. I leased the remainder of my land for grass.
 279. What number of sheep are running on the balance of your land? There have been 2,000 or 3,000 at a time; but not permanently all the year round.
 280. About what do you suppose it would average per year? It would carry about one sheep to the acre all the year round.
 281. Has it been ringbarked? Yes; by the station. The dead timber is standing on a great portion of it.
 282. Is it on the proposed new line? No.
 283. What effect do you think the construction of the line would have on the district? I think it would very considerably develop the district for agriculture chiefly. It would also improve it for stock carrying, because the country would be more improved.
 284. What has been your average return of wheat to the acre? During the last two years it has been very bad. The rabbits were very bad, and the seasons also bad. In good seasons the average would be about 16 to 20 bushels per acre, and more in good seasons.
 285. Has fruit-growing been tried to any extent? No, except at Burrawang station, and on the other side of Trundle and Mr. Foy's place. Grapes have been very successfully grown there.
 286. Is there any timber in the district which it would pay to cut for sale? Yes, there is a considerable amount of pine, which would be very saleable.
 287. Are you acquainted with the country along the proposed line? Yes, I lived close to Trundle for seven years, and I have been in this district for fifteen years.
 288. What is the principal timber that would be available? Pine and ironbark.
 289. I have noticed that most of the pine scrub timber is very small; has the timber which you have referred to been much used? There are forests of pine which are too far away to be used up to the present; they could be utilised if the railway were constructed. There is also ironbark.
 290. Do you find that the country upon which ironbark grows is good for agriculture? No; it is generally found on the ranges in this part of the country.
 291. What area of land is required to fairly support a family by mixed farming? 1,280 acres is sufficient of good agricultural land.
 292. What proportion do you consider should be taken for farming and for grazing? I believe in cultivating as much of the land as possible. You can carry very nearly as many sheep if you farm a great quantity of it. You are able to feed your stock on stubble and straw after you get your crop off.
 293. Have you kept stock? Yes.
 294. Which pays best, growing crops or running stock? Without a railway, of course, cultivation is a loss; with a railway I would favour cultivation.
 295. Have you cultivated land sufficiently long in the district to know what time the land would stand cropping without manure? A great deal depends upon the mode in which the land is worked. If it is well cultivated it will last twenty years—that is, by giving it a spell occasionally, say once in three years. I have known land in this district which has been cultivated for fifteen years in succession.
 296. Is that the red land? I am speaking of the black soil.
 297. Do you think the black soil would be more durable? Yes.
 298. Does it throw equally good crops? Yes, where not liable to be under water in winter; a great deal of the black-soil country on the Bogan and Lachlan Rivers is under water in fair seasons.
 299. Have you tried anything except wheat? No.
 300. How does it answer for vegetables? I have grown splendid vegetables during the last few years. I have also grown very good melons and cabbages, and also splendid Swede turnips.
 301. Have you grown all these crops without manure? Yes; I have given suitable manure to the cabbages.
 302. Is there any other information which you can give to the Committee? I know the Trundle district very well. The people there are of a very good class, and with a railway they will develop the country thoroughly. Without a railway, they can only develop the country at a loss to themselves. They cannot possibly grow wheat and send it a great distance at the price now given.
 303. What do you consider is a fair distance from a railway to enable a man to successfully carry out farming? Not more than about 15 miles.
 304. To some extent would not that depend upon the roads? Taking good roads into consideration, I would not like to go further than 15 miles from a railway.
 305. *Chairman.*] Are you acquainted with the country right out to Bulbodney? Yes; right out to Dandaloo.
 306. Is it all fairly good for agriculture 20 miles on each side of the line? Yes; the scrubbiest part of the land often turns out to be the best for agriculture when cleared.
 307. Does it cost much to keep down the scrub where the land is devoted to pastoral purposes? Yes; it is very bad country to seed, and it is only by cultivation that it can be brought into good condition.
 308. Has the district, in spite of rabbits and bad seasons during the last four or five years, been progressing steadily? Yes.
 309. Could we anticipate any immediate increase of settlement with a railway? Yes.
 310. Have you had experience in any other part of the Colony? Yes, in Riverina.
 311. How would this district, from a wheat-producing point of view, compare with Riverina? It is superior. There is a greater quantity of good land here than in Riverina suitable for farming.
 312. Is the yield and quality of wheat as good as in Riverina? Yes.
 313. What position does the wheat grown here take in the milling world? It takes a very good position. A railway will enable mixed farming to be carried out with great success. Large quantities of poultry, pigs, and fruit will also be raised in the district.

Alexander John Evans, commission agent, Bogan Gate, sworn, and examined:—

314. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you resided here? About three years; but I have been fourteen years in the district. A. J. Evans.
10 Aug., 1900.
315. Have you a good knowledge of the country through which the proposed line will pass? Yes.
316. What is your opinion concerning it? I think it is a very favourable country for a railway; it would also be very beneficial for agriculture and pasture—principally agriculture.
317. How would you class this country from an agricultural point of view? The best portion of it I should call good agricultural country.
318. Taking about 15 miles on each side of the proposed line, what proportion of agricultural country do you think there would be? With the exception of about 12 or 15 miles of it, nearly the whole of it is agricultural country.
319. Would the country, which is not suitable for agriculture, be suitable for pastoral purposes? Yes; and it is rather good for mining.
320. Where is that country? At Burra Burra, about 45 or 50 miles from here.
321. Since you have been in the district, has it become more settled, and has there been a marked increase in population? Yes; we had no population three years ago at Bogan Gate.
322. In your business have you done much in the direction of the proposed railway? I have been dealing with wheat a good deal. 7,000 bags of wheat went through my hands, and about 5,000 bags came from that direction.
323. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it induce the cultivation of wheat? I think it must do so.
324. Would people utilise the land for that purpose rather than for pasturage? They would use the best portion of it.
325. How would the line affect Bogan Gate? It would affect the carting of wheat, but we have a great extent of country. We have 30,000 acres suitable for cultivation.
326. Is this a business centre for the people on the proposed line? The business passes through here.
327. Do you think that wheat growing at the present low prices is payable? It would pay if there were anything like crops.
328. Even at the present low price, with fair seasons and railway facilities, would it pay? Yes.
329. Are there many inquiries here for settlement? Yes.
330. Do you think the available Crown lands would be taken up? Yes; we have a great number of applications for nearly every block thrown open.
331. Do you think that that would particularly be the case if there were railway communication? Yes.
332. How would the cultivation land in this district compare with other districts? It is equally as good as the land at Riverina, and it is equal to the land in the Corowa district.
333. How far would it pay a farmer to carry his wheat to the nearest railway station? We are carting it in here for a distance of 68 or 70 miles.
334. Would that pay? No.
335. What would be a reasonable distance? Fifteen or 20 miles.
336. *Chairman.*] Do you know the country to the west of the proposed line? Yes.
337. How far west does the good agricultural land extend from here? You have good agricultural land all the way west; it is on the east that there is a bit of inferior land.
338. You stated that there are indications of minerals on the inferior land; can you give any evidence on that point? We had an Inspector of Mines here lately, and he gave a very good report. There is gold in quartz and tin ore at one place.
339. Do you know the country towards the Western line? Yes.
340. It has been proposed to make the line from Parkes through Peak Hill to Narramine as an alternative to this route. It is supported mainly because it will serve a larger population, and open up a rich mineral field;—would the Bogan Gate line, or the Parkes extension, be the most justifiable in the public interest? The Bogan Gate line would be.
341. Do you think there are greater probabilities of prosperous settlement along the Bogan Gate line? Yes, I am sure of it.
342. Do you know any holders of land close to the Condobolin-Parkes line who have not yet made any attempt to put the agricultural land which they hold to the most profitable use? No; every one of them is going in for agriculture, and doing all he can in that direction.
343. Is it plain that the construction of the Condobolin line has stimulated agriculture? Yes; I was there when there was not a sod turned over. I have been here since the 5th August, three years ago, and the increase in agriculture is from 600 acres to 4,400 acres, within a radius of 8 miles from Bogan Gate. That is in spite of bad seasons. We had only a population of men, women, and children of 86 two years ago, now we have a population of about 280. They come to school from a distance of 2 miles.
344. What is the average capacity of the wheat-growing land? I am sure we can get 16 bushels to the acre in any season. People are asking us to sell our homestead selections already, and they are offering good prices.
345. What is a fair average value of land in an unimproved state? Anywhere near the railway you could get 10s. to 12s. per acre for land in its unimproved state.
346. Has there been a steady and consistent demand for land in this district since the construction of the railway from Parkes? Yes; I have inquiries for 2,560 acres conditional purchase and conditional lease anywhere from here to Bulbodney.
347. Do you think the settlers, in the district to be served by the railway, are prepared to pay special rates, or special taxes, on land in order to liquidate the deficiency between the revenue and expenditure? I think they would be willing to do almost anything to have railway communication. It is quite impossible to get teams to carry anything at present.
348. Do you know the rates charged for carriage on the road? About 1s. 4d. a bag for a distance of 32 or 34 miles.
349. What is the reason for the present dearth of carriers? I cannot say; they seem to have gone away; some of them have selected land. I cannot get any carriers at present.
350. How many teams are on the road between here and Bulbodney? We do not get the Bulbodney carriage—it goes to Dandaloo and the west. We get wool from Woodlands, which is about 74 miles away.
- 351.

A. J. Evans. 351. How many teams are on that stretch of road, on an average? It would be very difficult to say. I have seen as many as eleven teams unloading in the railway yard; on other days there may be none at all, or only one or two. We have seven teams in to-day with wheat, and they are taking back loading.

10 Aug., 1900.

William Thomas Jones, Officer-in-charge, railway station, Bogan Gate, sworn, and examined:—

W. T. Jones. 352. *Chairman.*] Have you a statement prepared giving details of the goods received at your station from the district proposed to be served by the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney railway? Yes.

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353. Will the whole of that traffic, in any case, come to the proposed line? I cannot say; but what I am about to give comes from the Trundle district.

354. Where is it usually trucked? At Bogan Gate. The figures I am about to give are the actual truckings at Bogan Gate from those places.

355. Have you a return of the stock trucked here? We truck very little stock here.

356. What are the returns which you have prepared? They are as follows:—Thirty-nine settlers have trucked 10,429 bags of wheat, weighing 1,158 tons 10 cwt. Some of the agents have bought wheat, and the weighings have been done in their name. What I have given are simply the weighings by those thirty-nine settlers.

357. How long have you been on this station? About five months.

358. Have you had an opportunity of looking at the books in order to see whether the weight is an increasing amount year by year? These figures show an increase on previous years.

359. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you know anything about the district? I prepared a return a few months ago, and my inquiries went to prove that there is a considerably greater area under cultivation this year than in the previous season.

360. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Is there much passenger traffic between Bogan Gate and any other part of the railway system? We average between £40 and £50 a month.

361. Do many of these passengers come from settlements along the proposed line? I should say about one-half. The inwards tonnage at Bogan Gate station for twelve months ending 31st July, 1900, was 1,514 tons 12 cwt., and the freight amounted to £2,452 6s. 4d. The wool trucked at Bogan Gate from Trundle and district around and beyond, from 1st July, 1899, to 30th June, 1900, amounted to 1,599 bales, and the weight 245 tons 12 cwt.

Charles Tait, manager, Wright, Heaton, & Co., Bogan Gate, sworn, and examined:—

C. Tait.
10 Aug., 1900.

362. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you give the Committee any information as to the traffic from the direction of Trundle, Bullock Creek, and Lansdale? I have only been a short time here. A great lot of wheat and wool comes from that direction. I was here during last wool season, and a great quantity came in. We do not go in for wheat much.

363. What does your business consist in chiefly? Forwarding supplies outwards, and forage and merchandise. There are only three people out there who do a decent business that I know of, and I have taken down these figures for May, June, and July:—Mr. Maloney, Trundle, 25 tons; Mr. Metcalfe, store-keeper, Fifield, for the same three months got up 5 tons.

364. Is that merchandise alone? Yes. Mr. Metcalfe, 7 miles this side of Fifield, got a little over 14 tons for the same three months. At present there are shearing supplies going up.

365. Do they amount to a considerable quantity? The average man gets about 2 tons. I sent some out to-day to Mr. Hawley, of Troff's station. I do not think he has a great number of sheep.

366. Does most of the wool go through your firm? We do our share of it, and Messrs. Hollibone and Todd do a fair share.

367. Is there anything else in the district except wheat and wool? I do not think there is anything else.

William Todd, forwarding agent, Bogan Gate, sworn, and further examined:—

W. Todd.
10 Aug., 1900.

368. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Are you prepared to give further evidence with regard to timber? Yes; the principal timbers are pine and a certain amount of ironbark on the proposed line. There is not a great quantity of ironbark.

369. Where are the principal forests? All along the proposed railway, on both sides. They are large forests.

370. Has there been much timber cut in that direction? No, only locally. We have supplied it from here principally. I have been in the timber trade myself.

371. Is there a large timber trade done at Bogan Gate? Yes; there have been two saw-mills here, which have cut large quantities. They have cut from 8,000 to 10,000 feet a week on an average, purely for building purposes. The plant is capable of cutting 25,000 feet a week; but the demand has not been large lately.

372. Has there been a local demand? Yes; for Orange and Cowra.

373. How far are the forests from Bogan Gate? You are in pine country when you leave Bogan Gate right out to Burra Burra and Woodlands.

374. What is the class of pine? It is a good class. The logs are up to 2 feet 6 inches in diameter. They have been getting small in diameter here, because the supply is getting smaller.

375. If a railway were made, do you think it would be extensively used for timber? There is no doubt of that, because the pine timber here is pretty well cut out.

376. Are there places along the existing railway line which would take pine timber? Yes.

377. Is it because the timber is nearly cut out that the mills are not now fully employed? No; there are two mills in Parkes, and two in Forbes, which are being supplied with logs from here.

378. Are there many orders coming from stations along the line for timber from here? Yes; and a large order has gone to Burrawang.

379. What does it cost to carry pine from the forest to Bogan Gate? Three shillings for 100 superficial feet for a distance of about 8 to 10 miles.

380. If a railway were constructed, would timber be supplied by the railway? Yes. At present they are carting timber 7 or 8 miles to the line at Yarrabundi, sending it to Forbes.

381. Is there much ironbark in the district? There are ironbark ridges within 15 or 20 miles of the railway.

W. Todd.

10 Aug., 1900.

382. What is the class of ironbark? It is nothing like the coast ironbark.

383. Is it faulty timber? Some of it is sound.

384. Is it pipey? Some is sound, and some is pipey, like all other timber.

385. Would it be sufficiently good for railway sleepers and girders? Yes.

386. Has it been used for that purpose? It has been used all about here, from 10 to 15 miles, on the line.

387. Are these forests close to the proposed railway? Yes.

388. If there were railway communication, do you think large quantities would be trucked to be sent to other parts? There is not a large quantity to send away. When the railway went through it would pretty well exhaust the supply of ironbark.

389. Do you send supplies to the different townships along the proposed railway? Yes.

390. Can you give an idea of the quantity sent yearly? On an average, about 100 tons—that is, machinery, produce, and everything else. Last year, during the dry season, we sent a lot of chaff and produce as far as Woodlands.

391. Have you noticed any increase during the past few years in the quantity of goods sent? Yes; it is increasing daily, and so is settlement.

392. *Mr. Watson.*] Have the mills been kept going hard at their full capacity? No.

393. What has that been due to? Lack of demand.

394. If the mills are not now kept going, where do you expect to get a market for the extra pine that will come along the proposed line, seeing that the carriage will be greater the further you go away? That is not the case, because you would then be much nearer to the pine. The difficulty arises through having to cart the timber from the forest to the mill, which is 7 or 8 miles away.

395. Then, the mills are not working at their full capacity because there is no demand for the pine at a reasonable price, but the road carriage makes it impossible for them to compete? Yes.

396. Where do the principal supplies of pine for the easterly towns come from now? Narromine, Trangie, and other places. There is not much sent from here at present, but a great deal of timber has gone from here.

397. What is the price given for pine at Orange now? Ten shillings a hundred for sawn timber—that is, rough undressed timber, delivered in Orange. They cannot do it now.

398. Would that be cheaper than Oregon pine delivered at the same place? Yes.

399. What is the freight from here to there? About 1s. 6d. per 100 feet; that is on a 6-ton truck.

400. You have no doubt that, if a railway goes in this direction and opens up large quantities of pine, there will be a market for it? Yes; there will be more demand. The pine forests are getting worked out right back from the railway.

401. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is ironbark country good for agriculture? Yes; where it grows on the flats with other timber the land is good.

402. Is it good grazing country? Yes.

403. Would you call it first-class grazing country? No; it is better for wheat-growing than for grazing.

404. You do not get much ironbark off the ridges? Yes; it grows at the foot of the hills and extends out on the flats.

405. What is the size of the pine you get here? It averages 15 inches.

406. What length? Up to 35 feet.

407. Is it the chief timber of the district? It is the only timber in the district for building purposes.

408. Does it stand the weather for outside purposes? Yes; if it is painted and well cared for.

409. If the timber were sent down to Bathurst and other places, could it be sold in competition with American lumber? Yes; they use it down there in preference to American lumber, especially for flooring on account of its not being attacked by the white ant, and it is very durable.

410. Is it good for mining purposes? No; it is too brittle.

411. Is it good for fencing? Yes; for wire-fencing.

412. How long does it last in the ground? I knew a case in Riverina where it was in the ground for thirty years, and it was quite sound.

413. I have known some pine timber to go very quickly—do you know the reason? It may have been sap-wood. If you use the hard wood it will last a long time—a good deal depends upon the size of the tree.

414. Have you noticed whether there is any considerable addition to the area of land under wheat this season as compared with last year? I do not think there is a great increase in the area in this district.

415. Is there any increase in sheep? There is a decrease.

416. Have the losses been heavy in the smaller holdings? They have all lost a certain percentage, I think.

417. Has the lambing been good? It is turning out very satisfactory. Up to 90 per cent. have been marked amongst the small holders.

418. What is the average? About 75.

419. That will give a considerable increase? Yes; the season has been very favourable for lambing.

420. Will the land here grow anything else besides wheat? It is too dry for maize. Potatoes might grow in seasons like this one, but I do not think it is a success.

421. Would the district be good for dairying? I do not see what there is to prevent it.

422. Do you think it could be made a success? It would all depend upon the seasons.

423. Do you think the district is progressing? Yes.

424. With any great rapidity? No, owing to the seasons; but the settlement is increasing every year.

425. Have you been here fourteen years? Yes; in the district. I have a place here.

426. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you give an estimate of the area under wheat within a radius of 10 miles of Bogan Gate? About 4,000 acres.

427. *Mr. Hyam.*] Who are the principal wheat-producers within a radius of 10 miles? McEwan Brothers, Herbert Brothers, Jeffrey, Christie, Dwyer, Francis Brothers, McCawley, and myself.

428. Would not those holdings make considerably more than 4,000 acres under wheat? No.

429. Have not Francis Brothers over 1,000 acres under wheat? Yes; but theirs is the largest.

430. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is the timber almost exclusively cut on Crown lands? Yes.

- W. Todd.
10 Aug., 1900.
431. Do they put the Act into operation with regard to the size of the timber? Yes.
432. You say that it is about 15 inches in diameter;—is that the small or the butt end? The butt end.
433. What is the Government restriction? Eight inches, 3 feet from the ground.
434. Do you say that it costs 3s. per 100 feet to cart 8 miles? Yes.
435. So that in the event of this line being constructed, you think that the timber business would be confined to about 8 miles on each side of the line? The mills will probably be established in the forest, and sawn timber will be carted in to the line. You can get the sawn timber carted for about half the cost of round timber.
436. Do you think it is likely that saw-mills would be started along the line? Yes, the saw-mills will have to work out there; the timber is getting exhausted here.
437. You say that they pay 3s. per 100 feet? Three shillings per 100 in the log is different from 3s. in sawn timber. You only get about two-thirds of the measurement drawing it to the mill.
438. So that really it would amount to more than 3s. per 100 feet on ordinary timber? Yes; you lose about one-third.
439. In the event of their carting the timber 15 or 16 miles, do you think that they would expect to get double the price that they charge for carting 8 miles? No; they would do it for less in proportion to the distance.
440. Are they bringing any sleepers from a distance? No; this line would exhaust the timber supply within 10 miles, so that there is not much left on any section of this line. Further away from this there are ironbark ridges.
441. *Mr. McFarlane.*] With regard to the timber you spoke of as being delivered at Orange at 10s. per 100 feet, would that be 12 x 1 boards? Yes; that is superficial measurement. In weather-boards it is five-eighths of an inch. Only six of them go to a foot, the same as 6 x 1, and three battens, and 9 inches to the foot.

SATURDAY, 11 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the School of Arts, Trundle, at 2:30 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN.)

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Thomas Looney, Honorary Secretary, Railway League, Bullock Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Looney.
11 Aug., 1900.
442. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in the district? Twelve years.
443. Have you a statistical statement prepared with respect to the railway? Yes.
444. For what limits have you drawn up your statistics? Approximately not more than 20 miles east, west, and north of the line.
445. How far out do your statistics go? About 8 or 9 miles from Bullock Creek, along the line towards Bulbodney.
446. What distance will that make from Bogan Gate to the boundary of the district from which you have drawn the statistics? About 59 miles.
447. Will you give us the totals of the statement? Number of sheep, 308,533; cattle and horses, 3,016; pigs, 227; acres under wheat, 23,096; new land put in for 1900, 5,456 acres; value of farming equipment, cost price landed on the ground, £20,281 18s.
448. How many producers does that return refer to? One hundred and fifteen.
449. Can you state from your own personal observation whether the agricultural development of this district has continuously progressed during the last few years? Yes. When the inquiry was held regarding the detour of the line, *via* Trundle, instead of Bogan Gate, in 1895, we had 4,500 acres under cultivation. In 1896 I had an interview with the Secretary for Public Works, and I promised that if he made the railway we would be prepared to put in about 20,000 acres. The area has grown from 4,500 acres to a total of 23,096 acres without a railway. We have broken up new land this year amounting to 5,456 acres. We have also thirty-three new settlers in the district who have not yet got under weigh, the drought has put them back. We expect another increase next year of 5,000 or 7,000 acres.
450. Would the construction of a railway cause a rapid increase in the area of land under cultivation? Yes; there is a lot of timber ringbarked, and the land is ready for cultivation.
451. Can you give any details as to the yield last year from the 20,000 acres under cultivation? I did not take the average yields, but about Bullock Creek it was slightly over 3 bags to the acre. Further north I believe it was more. I do not regard last year as a good one. There was a late frost, and it tipped a lot of wheat, and the rains did not strike us properly.
452. Under what disadvantages do producers in this district now labour? They labour under a great many difficulties. One great difficulty is in getting the stuff away, and in droughty years, of course, it would be a great assistance to be able to get fodder into the district or to get stock away.
453. Have you a list of the landholders in the district to be served by the railway who are prepared to give the land required free of cost? Yes; but it is not quite completed.
454. How many are there? Ten have signed the list, and two have refused. One is near Bogan Gate, and the other is near Trundle.
455. Is it country land? Yes.
456. What is the size of the holdings of those who refused to give the land? One has 1,200 acres, and the other has 80 acres of purchased land—the latter is near Trundle.
457. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Did they give any reason for refusing? They simply say they will not give the land; but the owner of the land at Bogan Gate said he is prepared to let the Government settle what the land is worth.
458. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is he far from Bogan Gate? About 3½ miles.

459. *Chairman.*] Some time ago representations were made to the Secretary for Public Works by a committee of Bulbodney settlers, which set forth that they were prepared to make up any deficiency between working expenses and revenue on that portion of the line, to the amount of £1,275 per annum. Do you know whether any similar agreement has been obtained for the portion of the line for which you provide statistics, and whether the people along that portion of the line would be prepared, in the event of the line not paying, to contribute a proportionate amount to the revenue? Yes. First of all, we sent papers to the Minister offering to give him an individual guarantee. We had it drawn up by a solicitor, and sent it down for his inspection, and we asked if it would suit before we got the signatures; but it was never decided. Then the Public Works Committee passed a resolution in connection with the Byrock to Brewarrina railway, proposing a tax on the land on a sliding scale. We offered to meet the deficiency in that way. In a later interview with Mr. O'Sullivan, he told us that he thought it could be met by a special railway rate. When the Railway Commissioners were here they asked me if I could give them an idea as to what amount could be collected from those willing to pay.
460. It was stated by Mr. Harper, the traffic expert of the Railway Department, that the inhabitants, if deemed necessary, are prepared to pay 2d. per acre on land within 5 miles of the railway; 1d. per acre on land within 5 to 10 miles of the railway, and a proportionate amount further out;—do you think there is a general agreement among the landowners that they are prepared to pay that sum if they get the advantage of a railway? There were some who would not agree to it; but the majority did agree.
461. Do you think that that would be a fair charge while the line is not paying? We would give that rather than not have a line.
462. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think that £2,600 is a fair estimate of the revenue which will be derived from the railway? I think it is pretty nearly a fair estimate. I notice that Mr. Yeo, in giving his evidence, said he expected that there would be 4,500 bales of wool along the line. In an average season we would send a little over 10,000 bales.
463. From how far along the line would the 10,000 bales come? Between 6,000 and 7,000 bales would come from Trundle and Bullock Creek, and the balance from the Bulbodney end.
464. The 10,000 bales would go over half the line on an average? Yes.
465. The amount of revenue which would be derived from wheat carriage over a branch line of this description would be comparatively small. For the full distance between Bulbodney and Bogan Gate the Commissioners would only get ½d. a bushel on wheat—that is, if it were sent to Sydney. That is the extra amount which they would get. Taking the amount you are likely to have this year off 28,000 acres, yielding about 300,000 bushels, an average of 12 bushels to the acre, the amount they would get from that would pay only £300;—do you think the majority are willing to give a guarantee to make up any loss on the working of the line? Yes; it is certain that the majority would assist in that way.
466. Do you think that the gain would be sufficient to make it worth your while—that is, getting wheat carried at ½d. a bushel instead of what is now paid? Yes; we consider that we would then be better off.
467. What area of land would be put under cultivation if the line were constructed? It is impossible to say exactly, but, judging by results up to the present, it is likely that a great quantity would be put in.
468. Is there land available for those who are likely to be attracted to the district owing to the railway? It can be made available. It is under scrub lease, with the right to throw land open when the line runs through.
469. With regard to those who have the larger holdings along the railway, is it likely that they will go in for cultivation, or allow others to do so? Yes; a great number would let their land on the halves system.

T. Looney.
11 Aug., 1900.

Thomas Quade, farmer, and Honorary Secretary, Farmers' and Selectors' Association, Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

470. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the size of your holding? 1,265 acres. I live 8 miles from Trundle, in a north-westerly direction.
471. Is that on the proposed line of railway? About 4 miles away from it.
472. How long have you been residing there? Two years. I have 170 acres under cultivation.
473. What would you consider a fair average farm for the support of a family in this district at present? 2,000 acres, for mixed farming.
474. How do you think that would be best divided for working? 500 acres for agriculture, the rest for sheep and other stock.
475. What is the carrying capacity of the country for sheep? About a sheep to the acre, with mixed farming.
476. Have any of the settlers about here tried artificial grasses? I have tried lucerne, but we find, in good seasons, the natural grasses are all right. Sorghum grows splendidly.
477. Do natural grasses produce as much fodder as lucerne? No.
478. Are you subject to loss of stock from drought? Yes.
479. What would be the average loss? Some people did not lose anything, because they were able to feed their stock. I am trustee for the Stock Board, and during the last seven years 300 native dogs have been killed, and some have been paid for at the rate of £4 or £5 a head. Last season 15 were killed.
480. Is large stock run to any extent? No, they are nearly all sheep.
481. Do you find the distance from the railway station a great drawback to you? Yes.
482. What are you paying for the carriage of wheat? I had to pay 1s. a bag last year—that is, 3d. a bushel. If that 1s. was in our pocket we could cultivate more.
483. Do you think it is any drawback to the sheep-farmers to be so far away? Yes.
484. Particularly to small holders? Yes.
485. Would they be able to send away twenty or fifty sheep at a time? Yes; or they could club together and send a truck away.
486. Is there much difficulty in driving sheep here? It has been almost impossible lately.
487. Is the district fairly well watered? Yes, chiefly by dams.
488. What is your opinion as to the advantages the district would reap from the construction of this railway? I consider it would clear the country of scrub. We would not then have trouble from rabbits, wallabies, and wild dogs. We would be able to send pigs and fat bullocks to market. We cannot compete with other places at present, because we have to pay too much to the carriers.

T. Quade.
11 Aug., 1900.

- T. Quade. 489. Do you think the railway would be likely to be self-supporting within a reasonable time? Yes.
 490. Do you think the agreement to guarantee the Government against loss in the working of the railway would be generally participated in? Speaking for myself, I would do it willingly.
 491. Do you think that would be fair and reasonable? Yes; I am willing to pay 2d. per acre.

Francis William Gibson, farmer, Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

- F. W. Gibson. 492. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you reside in the district? Yes; about 8 miles from Trundle. I have been here about twelve years.
 493. What is the size of your holding? 4,500 acres; that includes the settlement lease.
 494. On the conditional purchase and conditional lease land have you much land cleared? 900 acres fit for cultivation.
 495. Is the rest ringbarked and improved? Yes.
 496. Have you much under cultivation for wheat this year? 700 acres.
 497. How many sheep have you? 3,750.
 498. Have you much improvement on the settlement lease? Yes; it has been scrubbed during the last nine months.
 499. Do you expect to get much from that at present? No.
 500. How long has your land been under cultivation? Eight years.
 501. Has it fallen off in its producing qualities? It is hardly noticeable.
 502. What has been your average for the last five years? About 14 bushels to the acre.
 503. Taking five years of fairly good seasons, what do you think the land would produce? About 16 bushels.
 504. What does it cost you to carry wheat to Bogan Gate? We have been paying 1s. a bag—that is the highest; but I think if we had a good season, with an increase in cultivation, we would not get it done at that price.
 505. Is some of your land under grass? It is all under cultivation at present, barring 100 acres.
 506. Have you any experience as to the carrying capacity of the land after it has been under cultivation? I think it improves the land.
 507. Is nearly the whole of your grass natural grass? Yes.
 508. Do you find that it is fattening, strengthening grass? Yes; during the last few years it has improved very much. We have fat stock now fit for Sydney. Fat stock from this district has topped the market this year.
 509. Is the natural grass here specially good? Yes.
 510. Have you a variety of grasses? Yes.
 511. You have heard that some farmers in the district are willing to make up a portion of the deficiency in the working of the railway? Yes.
 512. Have you joined with the others? Yes.
 513. Did you come from Victoria? No, from Riverina.
 514. Will the land here bear comparison with Riverina? Yes; I came from the Berrigan district, and the land here is quite as good.
 515. What is the rainfall here as compared with Riverina? It is better by about 4 or 5 inches. The average at my place is 20 or 21 inches.
 516. If this line were constructed, would you increase your wheat area? Yes.
 517. Would you cultivate much more land? Yes, up to 1,000 acres.
 518. Do you carry other stock besides sheep? Only a few head of cattle for our own use. The district is very suitable for cattle, they become fat.
 519. Have you fat sheep now? Yes.
 520. Have you found a difficulty in getting to market? Yes. I have to drive them to Bogan Gate.
 521. If you could truck them a few miles from your place, would you avail yourself of the opportunity? Yes.
 522. Is your place well watered? Yes, by tanks; there is no natural water.
 523. Is your place fully supplied? Yes, we never run short.

Charles James Metcalfe, storekeeper, Fifield, sworn, and examined:—

- C. J. Metcalfe. 524. *Mr. Watson.*] How far is your place from here? Twenty miles by road, it is 8 miles from the proposed line.
 525. How long have you been in the district? About fifteen years.
 526. Have you had any experience of agriculture? Yes, about eight years. I have been more or less connected with it during the whole time.
 527. Do you know the country through which the line would pass from Bogan Gate out to Bulbodney? Yes; as far as Bullock Creek, and up to Jumble Plains. From Trundle that would be about 45 miles.
 528. Do you know the country east and west of the line? Yes.
 529. How would you describe the country through which the line passes? Good agricultural country as far as it would cross Bullock Creek. Between that and Jumble Plains it would be about half agricultural country, and the other half rather rough, being more fitted for running stock.
 530. Taking the country that you know to the west of the line, how far west would the good country extend? Personally, I can only speak of about 20 miles.
 531. Do you think that for that 20 miles it is as good as the land through which the line goes? On an average it is about the same; where I live it is better. There is no rough country at all for 5 or 6 miles.
 532. Do you think that any great development would follow the construction of the line by the present route? As far as I know the settlers in that part of the country, they would all go in for a great deal more wheat growing. That would apply to my district, and 10 miles further on.
 533. Eighteen miles west of Fifield it would lead to extra cultivation? Yes. There are about twenty selectors who have taken up land north of Fifield during the last twelve months—that is, about 5 miles from the line.

534. Is there any cultivation going on at present in the vicinity of Fifield? There are only two or three, except the new hands. Some of them have small areas under cultivation. For C. J. Metcalfe.
11 Aug., 1900.
535. Do they grow for hay at present? Yes; one or two have grown a certain amount of wheat this year. At one place between here and there we have 1,000 acres under cultivation for wheat. That is sent to Bogan Gate, about 28 miles away. My district has been more of a mining district than an agricultural one, until the last twelve months.
536. What has been the class of mining? Principally alluvial.
537. Has that been worked out? The main lead is almost worked out, but there is a considerable area of surface work. It is very poor, but with the quantity of water available, they can put a lot of dirt through, and it pays them. There are about 1,000 or 1,500 acres, and the whole of the surface carries gold. With water, that will give employment to a number of men for years.
538. Is there any indication of reef outcrops in the district? Yes; about 5 to 7 miles out to the north-east there are several copper shows being prospected. Twelve to 15 miles to the north there are a number of reefs being prospected in what they call Lightning Paddock. It has several quartz reefs carrying gold. They have got some large reefs.
539. Has anything been done with regard to tin-mining in the district? Nothing payable. To the north-west there is the Burra Burra tin-field—that is, stream tin. It was worked six or seven years ago, but it was deserted. At present there are eight men on the ground. They are making a living, and getting about 15s. a week. With machinery they could make good wages, and there seems to be no limit to the deposit. The flat is 3 miles long, with several gulleys. The assay shows that it is of the best quality, yielding 74 and 75 per cent.
540. Is anything being done with the copper shows of which you have spoken? No; only prospecting. Some stone was sent a little time ago to Dapto, but I have not heard of the result.
541. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is it granite country where they got the tin? There is granite about the head of it, 4 miles away. There is a main dividing range between the Bogan and the Lachlan, and there is granite there.
542. Is not the granite poor country? There is not a great deal of it; Gobondry Range is only 5 or 7 miles long. Only the hills are poor, and that grows good crops.

Walter Berry, farmer and grazier, Woodview, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

543. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where is Woodview? Six miles south-west of Trundle. W. Berry.
11 Aug., 1900.
544. How many acres do you hold? 7,680 acres.
545. Do you use it for agriculture? Yes.
546. To what extent? I have 1,700 acres cleared—1,200 in wheat, 150 in rape, and 350 are being cleared now. I have 1,750 acres under cultivation altogether.
547. Have you been cultivating for a number of years? Since 1887; but only a small piece until the railway was made.
548. What were the results of farming during that period? We had very good crops; we never had a total failure, but we have had five dry years lately.
549. Did you commence in a small way? I started with 10 acres, and I increased it to 200 acres when the railway came to Parkes.
550. What is the yield in an average season? Fifteen to 20 bushels per acre.
551. Is there much agriculture in your immediate locality? Yes; wheat and hay.
552. Has that been successful? Fairly, I think.
553. Where do you send your wheat? To Sydney. My wheat has all gone through Trundle to Bogan Gate.
554. What distance is that? About 22 miles.
555. Do you find it costly? I am nearer the railway than that; but for the convenience of a better road the carriers prefer to come that way.
556. What is the cost of sending it that way? About 1s. per bag. During some parts of the year you cannot carry it at any price.
557. Do you know the country further on than Trundle along the proposed railway? For some distance, but not right through. I know it for about 10 or 15 miles.
558. What is the class of country? Very good. It is, perhaps, better than my country.
559. Is it similar to the country on both sides of the line between here and Bogan Gate? I fancy it is better; but it is very similar country.
560. Has there been any marked increase in the area put under wheat during past years? Yes; since the railway came to Bogan Gate, and it is increasing. If this railway were made it would increase ten times.
561. Do you also carry on sheep-farming? Yes; I think they work better together.
562. Which do you think is the most profitable—using the land for agriculture or for sheep? I think that farming is more profitable when you carry as much stock as you can. In dry times one helps the other. The haystacks help to keep the sheep alive in the dry times, and there is a good market for hay in the dry times.
563. Do you think that if railway facilities were given those who have large holdings, but who have not yet commenced agriculture, would put a large portion under wheat? Perhaps some of them would not bother about it themselves; but they might lease it on halves or rent it.
564. Has the halves system been adopted in any part of this district? Yes.
565. Does it work satisfactorily to the tenant as well as to the owner? No; I would prefer farming myself. There is a lot of slummed work under the halves system.
566. Out of the area of land which you hold, how much would be suitable for wheat-growing? All of it, except 200 acres.
567. Has there been much inquiry for land for agriculture? Yes.
568. Have you a knowledge of the Crown lands in the district which would be influenced by the proposed railway? No; but the small areas are taken up in homestead selections. I think there ought to be combined agriculture and grazing.
569. The only chance, then, for new settlers would be to lease land or purchase it from the large land-owners? There may be Crown lands in the district which I do not know of. I believe there is one Troff's station. 570.

- W. Berry. 570. If the proposed line were carried out, would you increase your area under wheat? I propose to clear up to 2,000 acres, and then, if it pays well, I will increase the area; but I have just about as much land as I care to farm single-handed.
- 11 Aug., 1900. 571. Is the land difficult to clear? When the timber is dead it is very easy; but if not, it is very difficult. The land when cleared at first, cost me £3 or £4 an acre; now it costs 7s. an acre.
572. Do the landholders speedily clear the holdings which are taken up in the district? As soon as they can, as rule; but not always for cultivation. They kill the timber, and make it suitable. It depends a good deal upon the finances.
573. *Mr. Hyam.*] Were you the first in the district to make a new departure with forage crops? Yes.
574. How do you find the rape to succeed? Very well. I have kept ten sheep to the acre for the last month on rape, also a lot of pigs and some cattle.
575. How much did you put in? 150 acres.
576. How long did it last? I commenced with a few cattle; then I turned in ten sheep to the acre, and kept them in for a month. I spelled it for a month or six weeks.
577. Will it last three months altogether? Yes.
578. You find that that improves the land? Yes; it cleans the land and enriches it.
579. Have you some lucerne planted? Yes.
580. How does it do? Very well.
581. Do you think that rape is a very profitable crop? Yes, it will pay in two or three ways. I think that the bacon has paid for putting it in, and the feed for sheep is all profit.

John O'Brien, pastoralist, Yarrabundi station, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

- J. O'Brien. 582. *Chairman.*] How far is your property from Trundle? Ten miles, in a south-westerly direction, from here.
- 11 Aug., 1900. 583. Have you had opportunities of personally investigating the capacity of land in Victoria and Riverina? I have had experience of Riverina and the Jerilderie and Berrigan district.
584. Would you establish a comparison between the character of the land around Berrigan and Jerilderie and the land in this district? I think the land in this district is equally good, if not better, than the land in Riverina. We find we can grow a greater variety here than in Berrigan, and the wheat yield is greater.
585. Is it a district fit for close agricultural settlement? Yes.
586. Has it been handicapped up to the present by the absence of a railway? Yes; it has been very much handicapped, considering that this was ten years ago a virgin forest for 50 or 100 miles, with no land ring-barked. During those ten years we have overcome the difficulty of ringing the timber. It takes a number of years before you can burn it off. Now that the timber is dead we can put in 100 acres easier than we could put in 10 acres before.
587. Is it a district that absolutely requires railway communication in order to lead to its full development? Yes.
588. Do you regard wheat as a crop that cannot stand long or expensive road carriage? Yes; it is impossible to make it pay over 10 miles.
589. It has been stated that this proposed line is somewhat too near to the Western line, and that a line running parallel to it, but further west, would more equally split up the good country than the one now referred to the Committee;—have you some knowledge of the country to the west of the proposed line? Yes.
590. What is your opinion of that statement? It would be foolish for the Government to build such a railway. The rainfall decreases as you go west. There are 7 or 8 inches per annum less in 50 miles—that is, between Bulbodney and Melrose. It varies very much between Trundle and our place—to the extent of 2 inches during the last seven years.
591. Is there any other consideration in the character of the country? The character of the country further on is infinitely rougher. Fifteen miles from the Condobolin railway the ground is stony and ridgy, and covered with mallee. It is principally held by large stations. The settlement is very sparse and rendered very difficult on account of dingoes, wallabies, and scrub. Wheat-growing at that distance will not pay, and they could not keep their sheep alive.
592. Do you think that this proposed line is the best that could be adopted for serving the good agricultural land north of the Parkes-Condobolin line? Yes; there is good land all through, and it is thickly settled. I do not think it goes through a single leasehold area, and there is available Crown land adjacent.
593. What is the area of your holding? 22,000 acres. We cultivated 1,200 acres last year. We have 800 acres under wheat this year, and 200 acres under fodder crop.
594. Would you be induced to cultivate more by the construction of a railway? Yes; we would go in for the halves system. We have had a slight experience of it, and it works very well.
595. Do you think the halves system lends itself to permanent settlement? I am sure of it in this district. It is only recently that it has had a trial, but so far it is very satisfactory. Mr. Kerr has 3,000 acres under the halves system in our direction, and we have 400 acres. We had not the slightest trouble with the men; they came and put in their crop, then they went away, and they will come back to take it off.
596. What is a fair average yield for the district? Fifteen bushels, year in and year out.
597. Is there anything else you would like to state to the Committee? We have an unlimited supply of pine logs in our district, which would find a ready market to the railway. It is the finest timber to be obtained anywhere. At present it is useless, owing to the distance from a railway line, and a demand does not seem to exist.
598. Is there much suitable timber close to the line of the proposed railway? Yes; in Bulbodney district there is a good deal of ironbark. A great deal of the timber about here has been taken away. As to the general carrying capacity of the country, it carries sheep well. We can fatten stock here. Lucerne and rape grow well. We have had lucerne for eight years. Unfortunately we struck dry years. At first it flourished splendidly. There is still a good deal of it left, and it was the means of saving a lot of stock during the drought. We have 100 acres of rape, which was put in rather late; it is giving good results. We are fattening sheep, and intend to put more land under the same crop.

599. What percentage of your holding would be fit for cultivation? There are about 21,000 acres of splendid agricultural land. J. O'Brien.
11 Aug., 1900.
600. Is your holding characteristic of the district? Yes; the character of the country seems to be similar in every direction about here, with the exception of slight ridges and hills; but the land is good right to the foot of them.
601. *Mr. Hyam.*] Does your holding adjoin Mr. Berry's property? Yes; we take in a little of the mountain—about 50 acres—but the richest land we have runs right up to the foot of the mountains.
602. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been cultivating lucerne? About six years.
603. Has the result been satisfactory? Yes; considering we have had five years' drought. It has not yet given out. We never took hay off it, except in small quantities. We fed the stud stock, horses, and cattle in the middle of the drought with but a slight shower, and the lucerne lasted very well. It was the means of saving stock which otherwise would have died.
604. How long have you cultivated rape? Since April this year. It was put in a little too late. Mr. Berry's rape was planted a week before, and got a shower of rain, so that it is ahead of ours. All the old cultivation paddocks are under rape. We have no means of irrigating, as the water supply is not strong enough. We have had no trouble with the halves system. It is likely that next year we will clear more land, and let it on the halves system.
605. What are the terms? Merely the halves system. We find land cleared, and the seed. The men put in the crop and take it off. We take all the responsibility of stacking. If we take our share in wheat, they strip it, and let it remain in the paddock, and we cart the bags away—that is, for one season. The men who do the work are small holders in the district. We do not care about the system under which the men come and live on the land.
606. *Mr. Hyam.*] How many sheep are on your country? 18,000 sheep for the last ten years, but the drought reduced them to 13,000. At present we have 13,000 grown sheep, and 7,000 lambs. We lost about 1,500 last year. We would have lost many more, but for the hay and wheat grown on the place.

George Frederick Giles, station manager, Troffs, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

607. *Chairman.*] Are you the manager of the station? I am supervising the management of the station for the Australasian Mortgage and Agency Company, Limited. G. F. Giles.
11 Aug., 1900.
608. Where is the station? Seven miles from here, on the proposed railway.
609. Does the surveyed route practically go through the station? Yes.
610. What is the tenure of the holding? It is under different tenures. There is a scrub lease, divided into three blocks, having a ten years, fourteen years, and a twenty-one years' term.
611. Will the construction of the railway be an advantage to the owners of the station? No; it will not, owing to a condition in the scrub lease by which it is provided that—
- In the event of its being decided to construct a railway within 10 miles of any part of the subject land, the right is reserved to the Governor to resume the whole or a portion of the scrub lease by giving not less than four months' notice to that effect in the *Government Gazette*; and no compensation will be paid for the exercise of the right of resumption. Provided that upon the resumption of any land as aforesaid a reduction of the annual rent will be made proportionate to the area taken.
612. Are you of opinion that it is more than likely, if the railway were constructed, that a portion of the lease would be withdrawn, and the land thrown open to settlement? I am of opinion that that would be the case.
613. Do you regard the land in Troffs station, or in any portion of it, as suitable for closer settlement? A portion of it could probably be improved.
614. What is the total area in the three leases? 31,000 acres.
615. How much is suitable for agriculture? Probably one-fourth or one-fifth. It is not really good land—it is fairly good.
616. Would it be a serious matter to the owners of the station if that one-fourth or one-fifth were withdrawn? If the whole of the lease, or a large portion of it, is resumed, it will mean the ruination of the station. There is only a small portion of the land secured beyond this area.
617. When were these leases first taken up? In July, 1898.
618. Was it not then accepted that it was more than likely the railway would go through that property? I cannot say, because at that time I had nothing to do with the station.
619. How long have you been on the station? About eight or nine months.
620. I find, by a reference to the official statement concerning this line, that as early as 1896 a proposal to send a railway up to Bulbodney was before the public;—do you think those who took up the station under the present lease took it up knowing that it was likely that clause 9 would be brought into operation? When I took the supervision of the property, I saw this clause in the lease, and I drew the Company's attention to it. They did not seem to clearly understand it up to that time. I cannot speak with reference to the previous owners.
621. Did the Company only take over the property in 1898? It was held by other persons, subject to mortgage, up to that date.
622. Prior to that, did the people to whom your Company advanced money on mortgage, hold the property under ordinary pastoral lease? Yes.
623. Which expired? Yes, I think so. It was then made into a scrub lease.
624. What is the rental now paid under the present scrub lease? £96 19s. 8d. annual rent—that is, for 31,034 acres.
625. Can you give the Committee any idea what the annual financial responsibility of your Company is, according to the terms of the scrub lease? It means a considerable outlay. The annual expenditure will amount to at least £400 per annum for the full term.
626. As manager of the station, have you any further statement which you would like to make with respect to the proposed railway? I simply appear to-day to give evidence, pointing out this clause in the scrub-lease conditions. With that exception, I would not be against the proposed line. The Company has made an application to have a modification of that condition, by way of a guaranteed term of the lease. Unless that is done the run is practically at the mercy of this condition as to the land being resumed. If it is resumed, it simply means the ruination of the run.
627. *Mr. Hyam.*] On this station was there a resumed area? Yes. 628.

- G. F. Giles. 628. Was not the whole of that land taken up? Yes; on homestead selections.
 11 Aug., 1900. 629. Is it not a fact that the land taken up is not superior to the land you hold at present under scrub lease? I think it was much of the same quality. The scrub lease is not fully improved.
 630. If the Government claim forfeiture under these circumstances, do you not think that the 31,000 acres would be readily taken up on the same conditions? I do not think it is equal to the resumed area.
 631. Would it not be taken up by people looking for land? I think that is possible.
 632. Do you not think that your estimate of the land fit for agriculture is very low? No; I mean fair agricultural land.
 633. Is there not a considerable quantity of good agricultural land on it? That is my estimate—about one-fourth or one fifth; the rest is only fair grazing land.
 634. What would it carry if highly improved? It would require 2 acres to a sheep all the year round—that is, in a fair season.
 635. That is what you call second-class agricultural land? I call it fair.
 636. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you been in this district for some time? In the Parkes district.
 637. Do you remember when the 1884 Act was passed? Yes.
 638. Have you been connected with pastoral pursuits during all that time? Yes.
 639. Did not pastoralists have an opportunity to choose which half of the run they liked? Yes.
 640. Do you think that in this instance the lessee chose the worse half, when he had the opportunity of taking the best? It appears to me to be the worse half.
 641. Of the resumed area, declared in 1884, how much has since been secured by the owners of the station? I am not aware that any of it has been secured. Altogether, there are only 960 acres of secured land on the property. That is what makes this clause have such a bad effect.
 642. *Chairman.*] Do you fear that the result of your operations would be lost to you if the land were resumed for settlement? Yes.
 643. Which are the improvements that you are forced to place on the land that are most important, financially? The tanks, fencing, and ringbarking.
 644. Look at clause 13, and see if the tanks and fencing are included in it? What I complain of is the loss of the land before the expiration of the term.
 645. You have only the land on lease at a very low rental; the question is, whether it would be very unjust to take the land and throw it open for selection, when clause 13 gives you tenant rights in the fencing and the tanks? Ringing and scrubbing means a great outlay from which we may get no benefit. When the bulk of the work is done the land may be resumed.
 646. Would your Company be prepared to hand over, without any trouble, the amount of land necessary for the construction of the railway through the run? I cannot say. If only the minimum amount was taken, I do not think there would be any objection—that is, 2 chains in width.

John Stewart, saw-miller, Parkes, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Stewart. 647. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the district through which the railway is proposed to run? Yes.
 11 Aug., 1900. 648. Where do you get your principal supplies of timber? At present I have a saw-mill at Bogan Gate. I had another mill here, fifteen months ago, at Bullock Creek. I supplied a lot of settlers there.
 649. From what part did you get your timber? At Mr. Looby's, about 30 miles from Trundle, in a westerly direction.
 650. How far from the proposed line? Eight or 10 miles.
 651. What class of timber is there? As good a sample as I have seen in the Colony; it is the Cyprus pine—all good timber. I got over 250,000 feet in eight or nine months. Out of the whole lot I only throw away three or four logs.
 652. Where was your market? Among the neighbouring settlers.
 653. Had you orders from other places along the railway line? I had letters on the subject; but I could not compete with other mills on the Western line, owing to the long carting distance. If there were a railway I could compete with other mills.
 654. How far from the forest were you at Bullock Creek? I was right in the forest.
 655. What cost per 100 feet would be incurred in sending the timber from the mill to the railway station? One shilling per 100 feet, or less, in dry weather.
 656. Are the forests extensive? Yes; very extensive. At the last place I got 100,000 feet, and I got that inside of 300 acres. You would not have noticed that the timber had come out of the paddocks.
 657. As a rule, the pine timber grows small;—is that the case in the forest you refer to? No; I had no difficulty in getting timber large enough.
 658. What is the girth of the trees? About 5 to 6 feet, 3 feet from the ground.
 659. We have it in evidence that timber is delivered at Orange at 10s. per 100 feet, 12 inch by 1 inch sawn stuff;—would it pay to supply timber at that low rate? Yes.
 660. That is, if you had not too much haulage? Yes; if the railway were made, it could be done.
 661. Will it cause much increase in timber-getting if there are railway facilities near the forest? Yes.
 662. So as to enable the proprietor to execute orders at a considerable distance along the line? Yes. I often had letters inquiring what I could put timber on the trucks for. I had a business in Parkes.
 663. What is the price of Oregon pine—that is, Sydney price, freight added for boards? I think it would cost from 18s. to £1 per 100 feet in bulk, with the carriage added. From Bogan Gate to Parkes it would add about 9d. per 100 feet.
 664. Would local pine be preferred to Oregon pine at the same price? Yes; even on Government jobs it is preferred, because it is free from white ant, and it is durable wood.
 665. Are there any other classes of timber? Yes; but not in the same quantities as pine. There is ironbark, I have been told, a little further out. It would do for railway sleepers.
 666. It has been said that the ironbark here is not of such good quality as the ironbark in the coast districts? I have had a large experience. I was engaged on the railway from Molong to Forbes, and the ironbark used there was very good timber. I am sure the ironbark in this district is the same as in the Bunbury and Parkes districts.
 667. Would it be suitable for railway purposes? Yes; it would be sufficient for the local requirements of the railway.

668. If the railway were constructed, do you think, from your experience, that the timber industry would be entered upon largely? Yes; in pine timber. J. Stewart.
669. Would the railway be used largely for that purpose? Yes; I am using the existing railway at present, and at a disadvantage, because I have to cart logs 8 miles. 11 Aug., 1900.
670. Supposing mills exist at Bogan Gate at present, would the mills be shifted to the forest if the railway were made? Yes; and the timber would be sent by train. There would be a large trade with Orange, Cowra, and Blayney.
671. What is the extent of forest fit for milling purposes? Almost every settler has a large quantity of pine on his land. In one paddock alone, which I saw, it would go into millions of feet.
672. Would that be sent upon the proposed railway? Yes.
673. Would the haulage be far to any railway station? No.
674. Have you any further information with respect to the timber industry? If the railway were made there would be a large market for timber. I have had a large amount of correspondence on the subject. I am sure there would be a large trade in this district.
675. Have you had experience in other districts where Cypress pine is available? Yes; in the Dubbo district.
676. How does that compare with the forests here? The forest at Bullock Creek is the best I have seen.
677. Is it largely timbered? Yes; there is a great quantity, and it is of good quality.

John Carey, farmer and grazier, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

678. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where do you reside? Fifteen miles north from here. J. Carey.
679. What is the area of your holding? In partnership with my brother, I hold 7,000 acres. 11 Aug., 1900.
680. Can you add anything to what we have already heard? With regard to the timber trade on which Mr. Stewart gave evidence, I can bear out what he stated as to the quantity of timber he cut at our place. I can bear out all the other evidence given in connection with wheat-growing and grazing, and also the quality of the land. On our place we have about 6,200 acres available for grazing. On that we have run from 5,000 to 6,000 sheep. In 1898 we had 6,000 sheep on the place, and the same number in 1899. Those were two very bad seasons. In 1899, by feeding them, we got through with very little loss, only from 1 to 1½ per cent. With regard to lucerne-growing, last year we put in a small patch of 5 acres, and so far it has done very well. Last March we put in 35 acres additional. So far we are perfectly satisfied, and I believe it will be a success.
681. Have you attempted fruit-growing? Yes; in a small orchard less than a quarter of an acre. It has done very well so far. I may point out that the early settlers have had great difficulties to contend with, and we had the same difficulties until within the last year or two. We had to contend with dingoes and wallabies as well as the scrub. There was an association formed in 1893 to put down the wild dog pest. I believe that since then there have been from 250 to 300 dogs paid for. The rate was £4 to £5 a head, and 30s. a head for pups. Now they are almost exterminated.
682. Have the dogs destroyed many sheep? In past years we used to lose, on an average, about 10 per cent. We lost more through the sheep being knocked about. Latterly our losses have been trifling. The wallaby pest has been even a greater drawback. In the first six months of 1897 we killed 4,000. They eat out the best grasses.
683. Have you a good knowledge of the country along the proposed line? I have from Bogan Gate to 15 or 20 miles on the other side of Bullock Creek.
684. Is that all fairly good country? Yes. From here to Bogan Gate is a fair average of it. If anything, land on the northern end may be better; it does not require so much rain as the land on the southern side; fully 90 per cent. of it would be fit for cultivation. There are some rough hills; but 10 per cent. would more than cover that.
685. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think closer settlement would do away with noxious animals? Yes. The scrub is a harbour for them.
686. Where the country is ringbarked, improved, and scrubbed, have you few wallabies? Very few.
687. Have you the rabbit? Yes; but up to the present they have not done much damage; they are easily kept in check by ordinary precautions.

Henry Hollibone, commission agent and station manager, Mordialloc, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

688. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you carry on business? My firm carries on business at Bogan Gate, and I am also managing a property in this neighbourhood for Mr. Foy. H. Hollibone.
689. What is the area of the run? 10,000 acres, and it is 5 miles north of Trundle. 11 Aug., 1900.
690. Have you a good knowledge of the country through which the proposed line passes? Yes; I have been all over the country from here to Bulbodney.
691. How would you class the country generally? It is all good agricultural country.
692. Does that apply for a considerable distance on each side of the line? Yes, right through.
693. Do you know the country well between here and Bogan Gate on both sides of the line? Yes.
694. How would the land further on compare with that? The land further on is much better country. Trundle hardly touches the best part of the agricultural country.
695. Can you give any particulars of your station? We go in for wheat-growing and sheep. We have about 2,000 acres under wheat this year.
696. What are the results? Our average is about 15 bushels to the acre. We have had as high a yield as 40 bushels of wheat and 60 bushels of oats to the acre; that was in 1894, which was a very good season.
697. Do you carry the wheat by road to the railway station? Yes; it is a distance of about 20 miles from the cultivation to Bogan Gate.
698. Have you any particulars to give with regard to the operations of the station? We run from 7,000 to 10,000 sheep. We have 10,000 sheep this year. We leased a little country for a few months to keep them in case of drought. I bought 10,000 wethers off the shears to put on the land. We intend to carry them on 10,000 acres.

- H. Hollibone. 699. What advantage would the railway be to you? It would be a great advantage in agricultural pursuits. We would go in for wheat-growing on the halves system. We have 10 acres of vines—they do very well. We would also have pigs—we have only a few at present; 200 is the most we have had; the dry year was against them; in good seasons they do very well.
- 11 Aug., 1900. 700. Do you think that the construction of a line would greatly increase settlement? I am certain of that.
701. You have heard all the evidence given to-day? Yes.
702. From your personal knowledge of it, do you endorse it? Yes; it is all correct.
703. *Mr. Hyam.*] Did you hear Mr. Giles give his evidence? Yes.
704. Do you know the country which he was talking about, and do you think his evidence respecting the amount of land available for agriculture is correct? No; I think his land is equally as good as the selectors' land. The only difference is that it is unimproved; the country is all good.
705. Would a large proportion of that land be fit for cultivation? Yes.
706. How much? All of it, except a few stony ridges. Ten per cent. ought to cut out all the hills; 90 per cent. of the land would be fit for agriculture.

William Herbert Cannon, grazier, Bullock Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- W.H. Cannon. 707. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you lived in the Bullock Creek district? Twelve years.
- 11 Aug., 1900. 708. Do you wish to make a statement with regard to the proposed railway? Yes; I am thoroughly acquainted with the resources of this district. The construction of the railway would open up one of the finest wheat centres in the Colony. My experience during the last twenty-five years enables me to say that the yields obtained in this district are greater than those obtained in the Goulburn Valley, Victoria, and in Riverina. In 1897 I had a yield of 26 bushels of wheat to the acre. The highest yield I obtained when living in the Goulburn Valley was 16 bushels to the acre. The rainfall there is 16 inches; here the rainfall is 20 and 21 inches. The lasting capabilities of this land are much better than in the other districts I have mentioned. The reason is that it has richer soil, stronger land, and a better rainfall, therefore the yields must be greater. Another great industry which would be promoted by the construction of a railway is the growth of Chevalier and Battledore barley. The colonies are about to federate, and that will mean the imposition of a duty on imported malt. We shall probably have malting houses erected, and grow our own barley. Where we get a yield of 18 or 20 bushels of wheat to the acre, we would be able to get 48 to 50 bushels of barley per acre. The land is very well adapted to the growth of that crop. Another large line of traffic would be secured to the railway, owing to the fact that we possess an unlimited quantity of pine timber suitable for building. All the good pine has been cut out for a considerable distance along existing lines of railway. Men with large sawmill plants are only waiting for this line to be built, in order to move those plants into this district. That means a large traffic for a long time. There is no better agricultural land in this Colony or in Victoria than is to be found in this district, which we ask the Government to open up by means of a railway. It does not mean opening up 35,000 acres of good country; it amounts to 1,400,000 or 1,500,000 acres. It is beyond doubt that this railway will be a good paying line, because the land is here in quality and quantity to supply it with traffic. If the railway be built, there is a great future in store for the settlers; if it be not built, it will be a great pity to leave such a magnificent agricultural district undeveloped. Another great advantage of this line is that it equally divides the country between the Condobolin and the Bourke railway lines. I think that the estimated cost for the construction of the line is too high, as compared with the cost of the Condobolin line, and other light railways—that is, with the exception of the extra price for steel rails.
709. That amounts to £250 per mile alone? Yes; but that does not account for the extra high estimate.
710. The engineers say that the reason for the increased cost, irrespective of the extra cost for rails, is more particularly the number of bridges to be constructed, and the slightly heavier earthworks necessary, and we can fairly leave the estimate of cost to them? Yes.
711. Do you think we are likely to get as good results from this line as from the Condobolin line? Better, in my opinion; it runs through a better district with a better rainfall.

David Jones, selector, Bullock Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- 2.D. Jones. 712. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you reside near the proposed station at Bullock Creek? Yes; the railway will run half a mile from my land.
- 11 Aug., 1900. 713. What area do you hold? 5,760 acres.
714. How much under crop? 430 acres under wheat.
715. How many sheep have you? 3,000.
716. Are you fully stocked? No.
717. Do you experience any difficulty in getting wheat to market? Yes; I have nearly 800 bags on hand now. I am offering 2s. a bag for cartage, but I cannot get any teams.
718. What is the reason? The roads are bad, and the teams seem to be scarce. It does not pay a farmer to cart his own wheat.
719. If you had a railway would you be able to send your wheat to market at once? Yes.
720. Supposing the proposed railway were constructed to Bullock Creek, would you increase the area under wheat? Yes; I would double it.
721. Do you know the nature of the country further on towards Bulbodney? Yes.
722. Is it equal to the country you occupy? Yes.
723. Do you consider that your country is equal to the land in the Trundle district? Yes, fully equal to it, if not better.
724. Is the country out towards Bulbodney equally as good as yours? Yes.
725. What is the proportion of inferior land? Not more than 100 acres in every 1,000.
726. If this line were constructed, do you think a very large area of land would be put under crop at once? Yes; in the course of a year or two.
727. Do you think that the railway would induce a great deal of settlement? Yes; and the share system would be largely adopted.
728. Would your land grow lucerne? Yes.
- 729.

729. Did you hear Mr. Berry give his evidence as to rape? Yes; Mr. Watts put in some last year, and it grew very well. It was a dry season, but the result was very satisfactory.
730. What rate of carriage were you in the habit of paying until the roads got into their present bad state? Generally 1s. 6d., and never less than that.

D. Jones.
11 Aug., 1900.

Frederick Charles Herzog, farmer, Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

731. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What area do you hold? 640 acres; and I have over 300 acres under cultivation.
732. Do you grow wheat? Yes; but if I got a railway I would go in for pig-breeding.
733. Have you tried fruit-growing? Yes; I am an experienced fruit-grower from the Albury district.
734. Have you tried fruit-growing here? Yes; peaches, pears, apples, plums, and grapes. In good seasons I can grow them better than in the Albury district.
735. Would it be too far to cart fruit to Bogan Gate? It would not pay me.
736. Would you be likely to go in for fruit cultivation largely if the railway were made? I would go in for wine-making and fruit.
737. What has been your success with farming generally? There has been no success at all for five years; the weather has been too dry.
738. Do you agree generally with the evidence you have heard? Yes.

F. C. Herzog.
11 Aug., 1900.

George Charles Little, farmer and grazier, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

739. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? Ten miles from Trundle, on the proposed line. I was present when the Troff's scrub lease was recommended by the Land Board. This line of railway was previously advocated, and the applicants were asked if they were willing to accept the lease with the present conditions, which the Committee have read. These conditions were recommended by the inspector. It was with their eyes open that they agreed to take the lease. With reference to the statement as to one-fourth or one-fifth only of the holdings being fit for agriculture, I am certain that there is not more than 5,000 acres out of the 31,000 acres unfit for cultivation. I know all the country well, and also all the country on the proposed line to Bulbodney. I can form a very fair estimate as to what land is unfit for cultivation on each selection. I confirm what has already been stated in evidence, and I am of opinion that we have the largest area of wheat-growing land which it is possible to open up by railway in New South Wales. It will all be required to supply Sydney after Federation, because we know that then all the wheat grown in the southern portion of the Colony will go southwards. It takes from seven to ten years to get the country fit for burning; but after that time it goes ahead by leaps and bounds, because the land is then very easily cleared.
740. From your conversation with various landholders and settlers on the route of the proposed railway, are you prepared to state that the majority are willing to pay either special rates or some special tax to make up the anticipated deficiency on the working of the line, so long as there is a deficiency? Yes; they are quite satisfied in their own minds, judging by the development which has taken place during the few years we have been here, notwithstanding the droughts, that the line will pay its way almost from its inception. The greatest part of the cultivation has been put in with the expectation that the line will be made. At Bullock Creek and other places they are only preparing their holdings for this line. When the line is made what has been done will be no guide as to what will be done in the future. That is one reason why the people in this district are fully prepared to guarantee any loss.
741. *Mr. Hyam.*] How many acres have you? Little Brothers have 4,000 acres.
742. Is the whole of your land improved? Yes; the whole of it is ringbarked.
743. How much have you under crop? 450 acres.
744. Could some of the ringbarked land now be cleared at a very small cost? Yes; from 5s. to 7s. per acre.
745. Is 5s. per acre about the cost of clearing improved land? No one would care to give over 7s. an acre.
746. Should this railway be constructed to Bullock Creek, will you increase the area considerably? Yes; it will be increased as much as possible, with a view of laying down lucerne. It improves the country very much. The barley, grass, and trefoil which follow will increase the carrying capacity three times. We have now the eighth crop which has been grown successively on one paddock. The yields have been as follows:—In 1893, 3 bags; in 1894, 6 bags; in 1895, 3 bags; in 1896, 4 bags; in 1897, 6 bags; in 1898, 4 bags; in 1899, 2 bags; and the eighth crop is now the best. That does not represent the average yield on the holding. Large areas had been sown late, and we got nothing. This particular paddock we clear first.
747. Have you planted some fruit-trees? Yes.
748. How are they doing? They bear splendidly.
749. Can you carry one sheep to the acre? Yes; fully. Our country was spoiled in the past owing to the great plague of wallabies. One scalp receiver alone received 32,000 for one quarter.
750. Is the district absolutely free from rust or any other disease in wheat? It is not absolutely free from rust, but I never knew it to affect the grain but once, and that was a small area last year. It grew very quickly and very rank, and the grain shrivelled; it then went three or four bags to the acre.
751. Was your yield last year affected by the frosts? Yes.

G. C. Little.
11 Aug., 1900.

MONDAY, 13 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Trundle Hotel," Trundle, at 9 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	|	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

John McFadden, post and telegraph master, Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

- J. McFadden. 752. *Chairman.*] How long have you occupied your present position? Eight years.
 13 Aug., 1900. 753. Has the revenue increased since you have been here? Yes, very considerably. That is also the case since I gave evidence last before the Committee in 1895. There has been a very large increase in mail work.
 754. Have you any statistics? Yes. About 1,500 letters pass through the post per week; about 70 mail bags per week are made up here. That is a considerable increase. About 330 telegrams pass monthly. There have been three telephones connected with the office since I gave my last evidence. The commission on money orders and postal notes has increased by about 100 per cent.

[The Committee met at "Lara," at 2 p.m.]

George Charles Little, farmer and grazier, near Trundle, sworn, and further examined:—

- G. C. Little. 755. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to give further evidence? Yes; I wish to correct an item in my evidence, which I gave on Saturday, by stating that there are 7,000 acres of land on the Troff's Station unfit for agriculture. I think I stated that there were 5,000 acres unfit for agriculture. I also wish to say that I have had some experience in poultry raising, and we get a full supply of eggs all through the winter. We sent a large quantity to Sydney in a preserved state, but with better communication we would be able to send a regular supply of fresh eggs. At present we lose 3d. per dozen, or more. We have also grown amber cane in the district. The first year it attained a height of 7 feet; the second year it shot from the roots, and attained a measured height of 12 feet 6 inches. I am of opinion that this is a first-class dairying country, when we have this means at our hand for supplying fodder during the few dry months.
 13 Aug., 1900. 756. There is a suggested proposal to connect Parkes with Peak Hill and Tomingley;—if that line were built, would it accommodate the traffic between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney—say, 15 miles out from Bogan Gate? No.
 757. Why not? We are over 20 miles from Trundle now. It would not accommodate even this place too well, as the line would traverse several creeks, which are ana branches of the Bogan; it is heavy black-clay country.
 758. Are there any stony ridges to get over? There would be one piece of rough country near Gennaren. From Parkes to Tomingley it is undulating country, bounded by the Harvey's Range, close in on the right side, which is a tract of the most worthless country I have seen. The Harvey's Range extends the full length, and they come right to Tomingley. Then such a line would have good country only on one side.
 759. Is it a reasonable conclusion that the line now before us would almost equally split the good land? Yes; this line splits fairly the real agricultural country. Ten miles from here you get on to the clay-pans of the Bogan.
 760. What direction is that from this Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line? Ten to 12 miles north-east.
 761. What would be the general average of good country on the west side of the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line for a distance of 20 miles alongside the line? The agricultural country would extend about 20 miles, but it is all good country. The clay country, to which I have referred in another answer, is good fattening country.

Thomas Carey, farmer and grazier, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Carey. 762. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you own land in this district? Yes.
 13 Aug., 1900. 763. What area? My brother and myself own 7,000 acres.
 764. What class of land is it? It is all fit for agriculture, except 200 acres.
 765. How many acres do you cultivate? Altogether there is cleared 550 or 560 acres. A few hundred acres are let on shares.
 766. On what terms do you let the land? We clear the land, and the share-farmer finds the plant. We find the seed for the first year.
 767. Do you let the land on a term of years? Yes; for three years in this case. We get a bag to the acre for the use of the land out of his crop.
 768. Then it is not on the halves system? No; on shares.
 769. Has that system been generally adopted in this district? It has not been so liberal as our terms. There are farmers working on the shares system. Although our terms are liberal, they pay us—that is to say, it would be the case if we were nearer railway communication.
 770. Has the halves system been satisfactory in this district? We have found it very satisfactory, so far.
 771. Do the tenants appear satisfied? So far as I know, they are satisfied, and they seem inclined to go on with it.
 772. Is the land good for wheat-growing? Yes.
 773. What is the average yield per acre? Last year it averaged 14 bushels to the acre of first-class wheat.
 774. Was that a good average season? No; it was one of our driest seasons.
 775. Taking five years of ordinary seasons, what would be the average? From three to six bags per acre, with an average of 18 bushels—that is, wheat put in early at the proper time.

776. Where do you send your wheat to market? To Bogan Gate, for Sydney. We sent some of it home to England through the Farmers and Settlers' Association. That wheat was graded by the Board of Exports, and our wheat was marked A quality—that is, the first quality. I believe that some wheat from this district was marked B quality. That proves that we have grown first-class wheat in dry seasons. T. Carey.
13 Aug., 1900.
777. Did sending it to London prove remunerative? We have not yet got the returns, but I think they will leave a fair profit.
778. Will the business of sending wheat to London increase? I think so. The Farmers and Settlers' Association will handle the wheat only once, and we will ship direct through them. No doubt, a lot of wheat will be sent direct from the farm to the ship, in that way cutting down expenses. We find the cartage from here to Bogan Gate almost as expensive as it is from Bogan Gate to Sydney. Bogan Gate is 30 miles from here.
779. What does cartage cost? In summer, 1s. 3d. per bag. We had great difficulty, a few months ago, in getting teams to take the wheat away at 1s. 6d. per bag. We held some over in case of a drought, as we might want to use it for sheep feed. We fed our sheep on wheat, and pulled them through the drought. We hold some wheat every season in case of drought.
780. How far is your property from the proposed railway? About 10 miles.
781. Would it pay you to grow wheat in larger quantities if you had only 10 miles cartage instead of 30? Yes, on the shares system. There is not only the cost of haulage at present, but also the uncertainty of getting teams. As the country becomes fenced, the carriers' horses will have to be fed, and the work will be more expensive. At present the carriers only make a living.
782. If the proposed railway were made, would you be inclined to extend your agricultural operations? Yes; we could go in for a couple of thousand acres.
783. Would that be the case with others? Yes, even with the low prices now paid. We find that it pays even at one bag to the acre. It left us a return, after all expenses, of close on 7s. 6d. an acre.
784. Have you long been engaged in farming? Yes, all my life. I was in the northern districts of Victoria since 1873.
785. Which would pay best—to put the agricultural land under wheat, or to have it under sheep? Agriculture would pay best at a distance of 15 miles from a railway station.
786. How would you class the country likely to be influenced by the proposed railway? First-class wheat land.
787. What proportion of it is suitable for wheat? Only 10 per cent. would not be fit for wheat growing; perhaps not even so much.
788. Would the land, which is not suitable for wheat-growing, be suitable for pastoral purposes? Yes; a few stony ridges would not be suitable.
789. *Mr. Hyam.*] When you let your land on the shares system, at what time of the year did the men come on to it to get ready for the crop? In March.
790. When would they go off? They camp there the most of the year.
791. Do you run your stock on it? Yes; we have the run of the stubble for four months.
792. You do not alienate the land for three years? No; we have the use of it as far as grazing on the stubble is concerned. That is a very great consideration in dry times.
793. Do you get 7s. 6d. rental and the use of the land for four months in the year? Yes; and when that is all done it is highly improved for grazing. Another thing is, you would get the scrub killed. We intend to lay down some of this country with lucerne.
794. *Chairman.*] Have you tried a small area with lucerne? Yes.
795. With what results? Quite satisfactory, and we intend to go on with it. We sowed last year in October; this season we sowed some in March. I think the spring sowing is the best.
796. Do you think it is very likely that you will be able to permanently establish lucerne here as a fodder crop? Yes; it would more than double the carrying capacity of the land.
797. If lucerne growing becomes a success, would it lead to a discontinuance of agricultural operations, and a heavier stocking of the runs? Possibly; but I do not think so.
798. Does lucerne growing enable you to carry on mixed farming? Yes, far better. There would not be a less acreage under wheat; there would be a decided increase for many years. If the land was put under lucerne for a few years, it would be giving it a rest. Lucerne growing is likely to double the carrying capacity of the land.

Robert McArthur, share-farmer, near Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

799. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you reside in this district? Yes; I have been here for seven years. R. McArthur.
13 Aug., 1900.
800. Have you been working on the share system all the time? No; for one year.
801. How many acres do you cultivate? 200.
802. How many bags to the acre do you get? A little over three and a half; it averages 15 bushels.
803. What terms do you get? I gave the landowner 250 bags. I have thirty-eight bags sown for seed, and I sold 408; then I have so much for horse-feed.
804. How much do you give to the landlord? One bag to the acre.
805. Where do you market your wheat? Sydney.
806. When you gave the landlord a bag to the acre, did he have to deliver the wheat himself? Yes; I only carted my own.
807. Where did you take your wheat to? To Bogan Gate, about 31 miles away. I engaged teams at 1s. 3d. per bag. That was the highest price. I sent it in the summer, and I had great trouble in getting the teams.
808. Do you consider that a low rate? Yes. I shall have to pay more this year. The crops are looking favourable, and no teams are about. Carriers have been going in for farming, and taking off their teams.
809. Have you been farming long? I have lived on farms all my life.
810. Do you think this is a good district for wheat and lucerne growing? Yes; and for amber cane.
811. Is the system under which you are working a profitable one to you? Yes; it would pay me if I had no difficulty in getting the wheat away.
812. At what distance could you make a decent living? Within 12 or 15 miles of a railway.
813. Would you be afraid to go in for share farming at a distance of 15 miles from a railway? No; if I got the same terms, 814,

- R. McArthur. 814. Are there many others working on the same conditions? No; there are some on different terms.
 13 Aug., 1900. 815. You look upon your terms as exceptionally favourable? They were the best I could get. To show the quality of the wheat we grow, I may say that the share I gave to the landowner was graded A by the Board of Exports.

Annie Tomkins, Lara, sworn, and examined:—

- Annie Tomkins.
 13 Aug., 1900. 816. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided here? Seven years.
 817. What is your opinion of this district, from a poultry-raising and dairying point of view? It is a splendid country for poultry. Very few go in for dairying, because we have no means of getting away the produce; but from our experience in supplying ourselves it is a very good country for dairying. We have only two or three cows milking, and they keep, not only a large household, but we are able to sell to the men on the place. We would go in for dairying if we could get the produce away.
 818. Have you had experience of dairying in any other part of the country? Yes; my relatives kept cream separators. We did a little of it ourselves in Riverina, but we were near a market there.
 819. Do you think that, with a railway, large consignments of poultry would be sent from here? Yes; I know two or three who have made up their minds to keep poultry. I intend to do so myself. We can only get 1s. 6d. or 2s. for a turkey at Parkes. We rear 100 to 150 for our own use. I would double that number if I could sell them.
 820. Would eggs be a fairly large article of production? Yes; Messrs. Gibson sent 75 dozen to Parkes and Orange.
 821. Do you think that both poultry and egg-raising is stopped by want of communication? Yes. If we had the railway, we could get to Parkes in one day. Two of my daughters intend to engage in the industry.
 822. Can you give us any information as to fruit-growing in the district? Yes, it grows splendidly. We grow plums, peaches, apricots, apples, figs, and grapes. We do not know what to do with our fruit. We have made our own raisins.
 823. Can you dry the raisins by ordinary exposure to the air? Yes; I have made cases of them. We can dry plums and peaches. We preserve the peaches ourselves. A great many would go in for bacon and ham curing if we could get it away, because there is a lot of cracked wheat to feed pigs.
 824. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do the fowls in this district lay nearly all the year round? Yes; we are very seldom without eggs. They lay in winter, and we are getting 3 or 4 dozen a day now, and also turkeys' eggs.
 825. Could you take advantage of the high prices in Sydney during the winter months? Yes, certainly.
 826. Could you send large quantities of poultry? If we had the means of sending them away we would improve our poultry. It does not pay at present. When eggs are 1s. 6d. a dozen in Sydney they are 9d. in Parkes.
 827. Are turkeys very easily raised here? Yes.
 828. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you lived in the Doniliquin district? Yes.
 829. Have you some knowledge of dairying? Yes.
 830. How does this district compare with the Riverina district? It is better, because it is a cooler climate, and there is a better way of making it.
 831. Do you use a separator here? No; we churn it ourselves.
 832. *Mr. Hyam.*] Would you use a separator if you had a great number of cows? Yes. Our vegetables go to waste for want of a market; they grow splendidly.

[The Committee met at "Tullamore," Bullock Creek, at 5.45 p.m.]

Thomas Loobey, farmer and grazier, Bullock Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Loobey.
 13 Aug., 1900. 833. *Chairman.*] Can you tell us how far along the course of the proposed line from Bogan Gate your property is situated? Over 40 miles.
 834. How far in a direct line are you from the surveyed route? Seven or 8 miles.
 835. What is the size of your holding? 2,560 acres.
 836. How much have you cultivated? 300 acres under crop this year.
 837. How do you describe the country immediately around your holding? It is a rich red loam, the same as the country between Trundle and here.
 838. What proportion of the country within 20 miles of the railway line and about your property would be suitable for agriculture? Forty miles from my place to Narramine, which is our railway market, the land is all good.
 839. How far to the east and west of the proposed line does the good country extend? About 42 or 43 miles from my place, right up to Peak Hill, is fairly good land.
 840. In an ordinary season, what would you say was an average yield in your vicinity? Five to six bags per acre—that is, 20 to 24 bushels.
 841. What is your market at present? Narramine.
 842. Are your agricultural operations considerably handicapped by reason of your distance from Narramine? Yes.
 843. What is the usual rate of carriage from your place to Narramine? £2 per ton. I pay £2 10s. per ton in weather like this.
 844. How much do you pay for wheat when you send it in? I have not sent any away. I have 300 bags now, and I cannot send them away. I will probably have to pay 2s. a bag for it.
 845. Do you think that the construction of the railway would greatly stimulate agricultural pursuits? Yes.
 846. What particular benefit would the railway be in a time of severe drought? It would be a great benefit. For instance, last year I had to get a 6-ton truck of corn to feed my sheep. The rain came in the meantime, and I could not get it out, and I lost 1,000 sheep that could have been fed if I had the railway.
 847. Would the railway lead to the consumption of a good deal of fodder in times of drought, or would the farms in the district be able to keep enough of their own produce to feed their stock? Yes.
 848. Then we could not anticipate much traffic of that sort if the railway were built? No; we could grow enough to keep the sheep alive ourselves. 849.

849. What is the character and value of the timber? The value is very good. I have preserved a lot of pine myself, which I think is very valuable.
850. Are there extensive areas of pine forest? Yes; there is a good deal further out.
851. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you engaged in any other industry besides wheat-growing? Only grazing. I would clear it all if we had the railway, because I consider it would return me more.
852. How many sheep can you carry? I have had over 4,000 sheep; but, unfortunately, the drought killed many of them. My son-in-law and I had 5,000 acres, and we had 300 acres under cultivation this year.
853. Are you quite satisfied as to the result? Yes.
854. How do you find the country for large stock? Very good.
855. Do you think that the dairying industry would be advanced by the construction of a railway? Yes; we could grow lucerne.
856. *Chairman.*] Would a railway from Parkes to Peak Hill serve your district beneficially? No.
857. For what reason? Because it is too far away. It is over 42 miles from my place to Peak Hill.
858. Would the road carriage be difficult? Yes; it would have to go through creeks and broken country.

T. Loobey.
13 Aug., 1900.

Charles McLaughlin, farmer, Bullock Creek, sworn, and examined:—

859. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you reside? Thirteen miles from here, and I have resided in the district twelve years.
860. How much land do you hold? About 900 acres, and I cultivate 130 acres. I have only got it under wheat this year.
861. Do you think the land here is favourable for wheat-growing? It is first-class.
862. What results have you obtained? I had over 12 bushels off some of the land last year, which did not get hurt with the frost.
863. Would that be considered a fair average for the district? No; I think it would go from 25 to 30 bushels on an average.
864. Would last year be considered a bad season? Yes.
865. Have you any knowledge of the country along the proposed railway? Yes; for about 25 or 30 miles.
866. In which direction? That is from Bogan Gate to this place, and a little further on, (say) 12 or 14 miles.
867. How would you class the character of the land which you know? I think it is the best land I have ever seen for cultivation and wheat-growing.
868. Have you been farming in other districts? Yes; in Victoria.
869. How would that land compare with this? I do not think you could make any comparison between the lands. It is much better land here.
870. In what part of Victoria were you? I have been at Kyneton, Goulburn Valley, Shepparton, and up the Northern line, Sandhurst and Echuca.
871. Is wheat-growing carried on extensively there? Yes.
872. How far is your land from the proposed railway? About 12 miles.
873. What distance are you at present from the railway station? Forty-five miles. I cannot get my wheat away.
874. Would it pay you to cart wheat that distance? No, not just now.
875. In your locality, is there much land under wheat? No; they do not like to put the wheat in, because there is no market for it.
876. Would the construction of the line have the effect of enabling these people to place their land under wheat? Yes; they would only be too happy to have the chance.
877. Taking the land 15 or 20 miles on each side of the railway line, what proportion of it, do you think, would be suitable to wheat? Very nearly all, except a little bit of swamp.
878. Would not some of the hilly ground be unsuitable? There are very few hills.
879. Do you keep sheep? Yes.
880. Your land is conditional purchase? Yes.
881. Which would be the most profitable for farmers—wheat-growing or sheep, if railway facilities were given? Wheat-growing.
882. Would they to a large extent abandon sheep farms for wheat-growing? Yes; at least, they say so.
883. *Mr. Hyam.*] Would you go in extensively for wheat-growing if the railway were constructed? Yes.
884. What is the carrying capacity of your land for sheep? One sheep to the acre.
885. Is your place highly improved? Yes; it is ringbarked and cleared. If the railway were made we would saw all the pine.
886. *Chairman.*] Is there a considerable amount of pine, which, on the construction of the railway, would be utilised in this district? Yes.
887. Is there an extensive area of pine in your district? Yes; there is good pine in every paddock.

C.
McLaughlin.
13 Aug., 1900.

TUESDAY, 14 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at "Tullamore," Bullock Creek, at 9.30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	|	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

William Berwick, gold-miner, Bullock Creek, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Berwick. 888. *Chairman.*] Where do you live? Just where the proposed railway crosses Bullock Creek.
- 14 Aug., 1900. 889. Have you been mining for some time? Yes.
890. Where are you carrying on operations? At Lightning Paddock, where the surveyed line spans the creek, 5 miles due west.
891. Are you mining for gold? Yes.
892. Is there a large area of auriferous country there? Yes; it runs for miles, with large flats at intervals.
893. Does this auriferous country extend as far as the old Melrose holding? I cannot say; but gold has been found right through the Little Melrose.
894. Does the belt extend north and north-east for any distance? I believe it goes on to Nymagee; it makes a sweep towards Dandaloo.
895. What is the nature of your operations? Quartz-mining. There is a lease taken up of 25 acres by Messrs. Oxley and Evans and their partners. Then there is a claim owned by Mr. William Rix and Mr. Menzies.
896. What have been the results? They have not sent anything away to be tested; they are dollying. They have got, by Government assay, 17 dwt. to the ton. That is Mr. Rix's claim; I do not know what the others got.
897. Have you had much experience? Yes; from the first days of old Bendigo.
898. Would the construction of a railway lead to great mining development here? Yes. Men come here with rations, and when they run out of supplies they have to go over 20 miles. With a railway there would be stores near at hand.
899. What is the largest number of men who have been working at Lightning Paddock at one time? About five years ago there must have been 100 or 200 when the alluvial was first discovered. I sent 4½ tons away five weeks ago, and it realised 11 dwt. to the ton. I sent it to Tomingley; but owing to the machinery breaking down, the special treatment was not carried out. They then used the ordinary battery process, and the yield was 2 oz. from the 4½ tons, and 10 dwt. was obtained from the tailings. The same stuff was assayed, and it yielded at the rate of 2 oz. 16 dwt. 10 grs. to the ton, and 6 oz. of silver.
900. Do you regard 11 dwt. to the ton as a payable yield? Yes, if we had to pay a lower rate than 30s. a ton for taking it to Tomingley.
901. Have you resided a considerable time at the place where it is proposed to take the railway across the creek? Yes.
902. Can you give us an idea as to the nature of the floods at that point, and if they are likely to prove a source of danger to the railway? I was there when the heaviest flood known occurred—9 inches of rain fell in two days, and it came down very heavily. One-third of a mile from my place there is an embankment on the stream which causes it to back up a little; but a culvert would relieve that. The banks are all dry in very heavy floods.
903. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you a well-defined reef? We have two walls going down; we are down about 40 feet; the reef cut out at one end; we drove and took out the stone. The reef is dipping heavily to the north-east. All reefs here seem to go to the east. We sank another shaft. When we got down 30 feet the reef dipped again; but we still had walls. We sunk another shaft, and got two splendid defined walls, and the inspector told us to continue operations. We carry gold all the way. At 46 feet the reef is coming in, and making 6 inches wide at 51 feet. We had payable stone on the top, and we have it now. The adjoining claim had stone at 50 feet which assayed 3 oz. 16 dwt. to the ton. Our assay was 6 dwt. on the surface, and at about 8 feet it was 17 dwt., and 6 oz. of silver. Eight feet below that the assay was 2 oz. 16 dwt. of gold, and 8 oz. of silver. We then sent 4½ tons to be crushed, and we all expected to get a better result than we did. When we reached 20 feet we applied for aid to the Government. An inspector was sent out, and he thought a good deal of it. He described the reef just as we have since found it. He told us to continue, and that there was no fear of losing the walls. He said we would strike something.
904. What is the width of the reef? In the old shaft it is 18 inches. In the new shaft it pinched out at about 20 feet. It carried gold on the hanging wall, and it is now making again. It is not a reef—it is a lode.
905. Has there been any alluvial obtained here? Yes. I obtained 3 oz. 17 dwt. alluvial in five weeks. I got £3 19s. 7½d. an ounce.
906. Does the country seem settled? No; it is broken.
907. Have you gone deep enough to reach the settled country? No.
908. Are there no funds in hand to put down a vertical shaft? The inspector said there were none, and that the Government could only afford to give 7s. 6d. per foot, which only pays for the powder.
909. What was the width of the reef where you got the 4½ tons for crushing? Eighteen inches to 2 feet. It then cut out.
910. Are there no regularly organised parties at work? No; and a man has to go 20 or 30 miles to Trundle to obtain supplies.
911. Is it all dollying work? No.
912. Have you to cart away any of the stone? Yes; the mining would give employment to a large amount of surplus labour, if we had better facilities for communication.

913. Do you think that the mining here would prove permanent? Yes; I have been down at Jumble Plains, and I found a prospect there that would give a man good wages. W. Berwick.
914. Is the country where these reefs are found Government land? Yes; I believe they are scrub leases. 14 Aug., 1900.

[The Committee met at Jumble Plains, at 2.30 p.m.]

Edwin John Witts, licensed surveyor and settlement lessee, Jumble Plains, sworn, and examined:—

915. *Chairman.*] How far is your property from the proposed railway? About 4 miles. This place is 55 miles along the route of the proposed railway. E. J. Witts.
916. How long have you resided in the district? Nine years. 14 Aug., 1900.
917. Does your professional duty take you practically throughout the whole district traversed by the proposed railway? Yes.
918. What are the limits of your district as a surveyor? It includes the whole area served by the line, and easterly for a distance of 15 miles, and westerly a distance of from 30 to 40 miles.
919. Is the country from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney suitable for close agricultural settlement? Yes; the greater portion is suitable for agriculture, combined with grazing.
920. What is the nature of the country from Bullock Creek to Bulbodney, taking 20 miles on each side of the proposed line? It is slightly undulating country, consisting of box, pine, and yarran forest; it is chiefly scrub; it should be classed as agricultural land right through, except about 10 miles of it along a spur—that is, where Lightning Creek crosses the line. There is a stretch there of a gravelly class of country.
921. Would the country between Bullock Creek and Bulbodney compare favourably with the country from Bullock Creek to Bogan Gate? Yes; it is the same country and quite as good. The rainfall is slightly less, but nothing appreciable.
922. With the construction of this railway, do you think that there would be a reasonable prospect of a considerable area within 20 miles of the proposed line on each side being devoted to agriculture? I am satisfied there would.
923. You, having a settlement lease, it would follow, according to the conditions, that any land required for railway purposes would be resumed by the State without compensation? Yes.
924. Two other routes have been proposed to open up the country north of the Parkes-Condobolin line—one going from Parkes to Peak Hill and from Peak Hill to Bulbodney, the other to start from a point on the Parkes-Condobolin line further west than Bogan Gate and going about parallel to the proposed Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line, with a view of opening up an area further west;—in your opinion, what would be the value of these two connections? Taking the proposed line from Peak Hill to Bulbodney first, you would have several rather bad creeks to cross; you would also be coming through a large area of secured land on the Mungary holding; you must also cross the Bogan River, approximately at right angles.
925. Would that open up a large area of good country? It is scarcely so suitable for agriculture as the proposed line from Bogan Gate.
926. In proportion to its length, would it open up as much country as the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line? Not in proportion to its length; but taking the through length it would open up a great deal.
927. Would it be considerably more expensive than the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line? Yes.
928. Take the other line further west than the proposed Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line, how would you describe the country to be served by that line? You would pass through an area of good country, but you would also have to cross a lot of broken hilly country. It would not be an easy line to construct.
929. Going further west, what would be the rainfall? It is much lighter, although I do not know the exact data. From Piffeld west you would have a considerable area of hilly country to get through.
930. If the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line were constructed, would you devote part of your holding to agriculture? That is my intention.
931. What is the area of your lease? 7,500 acres.
932. What proportion is fit for agriculture? One-half.
933. Have you made any experiment in wheat-growing? I have had crops growing for the last five years. The results ranged from six bags to one and a half.
934. What would be the average in a fair season? About three to four bags to the acre.
935. Would that average be payable? Yes, with railway communication. Last year I stripped three bags.
936. In a previous inquiry in connection with the Parkes-Condobolin line, a number of holders in this district guaranteed to pay a certain amount of any loss which might accrue; they have now stated their willingness to give the same guarantee for the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line;—would you join in any such guarantee, such as 2d. an acre on all land within 5 miles of the railway, 1d. per acre for land between 5 and 10 miles of the railway, and a proportionate amount for land further away, until the line became self-supporting? I think the rate is too high, except for agricultural country. It is rather high for land held on settlement lease; but I would be quite willing to contribute up to 1d. per acre.
937. *Mr. Shepherd.*] With regard to the guarantee, the way to look at it is what you would be likely to save; the guarantee would be reduced year by year as the line becomes self-supporting; the question with you is whether the guarantee would amount to less than what you would actually save by the construction of the railway;—if you have confidence in the railway, would it not be a tax for only one or two years? That is so. I was one of the original persons who offered to give a guarantee. I think the principle is good, and I quite agree that it is a necessary and desirable thing. For a small area of 2,560 acres it would not be so heavy, because a great proportion of that would be devoted to agriculture. In my own area the greater proportion is devoted to grazing, and it is not of a very heavy carrying capacity. Generally you must allow 2 acres to the sheep.
938. What does it cost you to cart your wool? I deliver wool at Bogan Gate or Trangie. I could get it carted for 30s. per ton.
939. Have you sent in any wheat? Only by my own team. That cost me about 1s. 6d. per bag. I could not get it carried for that; it would cost me 2s. per bag.
940. Is there much agriculture carried on at this distance from a railway? Nothing of any consequence.
941. The average for a great deal of the country we have been through is one sheep to the acre? One

- E. J. Witts.
14 Aug., 1900.
- and a half acres to the sheep is the usual estimate; but I conclude, to make it safe, it should be 2 acres to the sheep.
942. Is there any other industry besides wool and wheat-growing which you would be likely to enter upon? There would be a considerable quantity of pine logs sent from here. It is a pine country, with some very fine timber within 10 miles of the line on either side.
943. Is there anything else besides timber which would be likely to be delivered by the railway—for instance, fruit? The district, as far as I know, is favourable to fruit-growing. Vines appear to do well here.
944. Have you any difficulty with regard to water? It can be conserved readily. So far we have not been able to get artesian water.
945. What does it cost to clear land for cultivation? That depends upon whether the timber is well killed. I have done 200 acres at a cost of 7s. an acre. It is grubbed 4 inches deep, and the timber was well killed. Green country would be very expensive.
946. Do you think the railway would be self-supporting within a reasonable time? Yes.
947. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is your opinion of the district for wheat-growing? I think that a general average of three bags to the acre can be got, taking one year with another.
948. You consider that as a fair average? Yes.
949. Have you a good knowledge of the country through which the proposed line will pass in the direction of Bulbodney? Yes.
950. How does that country compare with what we have passed through from Bogan Gate? It compares favourably—there is less broken country.
951. What is your opinion of the country where there is gravel on the surface? The part I referred to is ridgy and very poor country—mallee and ironbark grow on it, which is an indication of poor country.
952. Has not some of the flat country a gravel formation? That is suitable for agriculture.
953. Is there much mallee country? No; a belt of mallee country continues along the ridge. There are no large areas of mallee country until you get west of Bulbodney, and there is not much there.
954. If the railway were constructed, do you think the landowners would go in largely for wheat-growing? Yes.
955. What is a reasonable distance from which to send wheat to a railway? I have always thought that 20 miles was a fair limit.
956. Taking the whole of the country you know which would be served by the railway, what proportion of it would be fit for cultivation? About one-fourth.
957. Would the balance of the country be good for sheep? Yes; chiefly for sheep.
958. Would the ridgy country cover a large area? No; it is a small proportion of the whole.
959. Excepting that small portion, would the rest of the country be suitable for wheat-growing or sheep? Yes.
960. *Chairman.*] Would the construction of a railway be of great benefit to settlers in times of drought? Yes; the great drawback in sending stock away in time of drought is that there is a difficulty in getting them away and in getting grass. It is much better to feed them on the place than to send stock away at present. The railway would be an advantage in enabling settlers to get fodder more cheaply than at present.
961. If a larger amount of the district were devoted to agriculture, could enough fodder be obtained in the district? Yes.
962. Does the devoting of part of the holdings to agriculture practically increase the carrying capacity of the whole? Yes.
963. So that the construction of the railway would lead to increased production over what now takes place in two ways,—first, from the agricultural products, and second, from the increased amount of wool due to the increased carrying capacity? Yes.
964. *Mr. McFarlane.*] On the large holdings there is a great quantity of agricultural land;—would the owners of the large holdings place the whole of the land suitable for agriculture under cultivation, or would they let it out on the share system? I should say they would adopt both principles. They would work a considerable area themselves, and also some on the share system; principally, I think, it would be worked by the holders.
965. Do you think that by adopting both systems the whole of the land suitable for agriculture would be put under cultivation? Yes.
966. *Chairman.*] Of the 147,000 acres of leasehold land which have fallen in this year in this district, is there any considerable amount fit for agricultural settlement? Yes, a good proportion of it.

WEDNESDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at Bulbodney (Lansdale), at 11 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Thomas Ankers House, farmer, and Secretary, Bulbodney Selectors' Association, sworn, and examined:—

- T. A. House.
15 Aug., 1900.
967. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in this district? About eleven years.
968. What area do you hold? With my brother, 5,120 acres.
969. How do you use it? For agriculture and grazing.
970. Have you certain statistical and general information to lay before the Committee? Yes. The acreage within a radius of about 20 miles from Lansdale, which will be affected by the railway, is 647,507½. Its carrying capacity is 400,800 sheep, which would cut about 5,968 bales of wool. The number of fat stock

T. A. House.
15 Aug., 1900.

stock which would be likely to be sent away would amount to 308 trucks. Tallow and skins, 20 tons; acres under cultivation, 6,069; average yield in a fair season, about 16 bushels to the acre; or a total of 80,944 bushels. The population within a radius of 20 miles is about 405. The increase in cultivation, in the event of a railway being constructed, would be about 14,000 acres. That, however, is a very low estimate, and I believe that, with a railway, the increase in cultivation will be practically unlimited. Every acre that we possess would be put under cultivation if we had a railway.

971. Can you give a general idea of the proportion of land within that radius which is suitable for cultivation? I think the whole of it is. There is not an acre which is not fit for agriculture. The farming plant in the district is valued at £10,464 10s. The machinery is valued at £5,709 10s., and draught stock £4,755. At present there are 6,000 acres under agriculture, and that leaves a balance used for pastoral purposes of 640,000 acres.

972. In that 640,000 acres do you exclude Government reserves not occupied? Yes. I have only included occupied land in the statistics.

973. With the development of agriculture, would the general carrying capacity of the country be increased? Yes.

974. So that, with the construction of the railway, there would be two new sources of revenue—that is, one from agriculture, and one from the increased number of sheep which could be depastured? Yes.

975. Two methods, so far, have been suggested for bringing the revenue from the railway nearer to the expenditure—one being a specific monetary guarantee, and the other a general tax imposed upon all land indifferently within a certain distance from the railway, the amount of the tax varying with the distance from the railway;—if either were deemed necessary, which of these two methods do you think would be the better? I should say a land tax in preference to the specific guarantee. I think an increased rate for freight would be the most satisfactory, because then those who used the railway most would pay the most.

976. Would you care to offer an opinion as to the amount of the tax suggested by the railway experts, namely, 2d. per acre on land within 5 miles of the railway, 1d. per acre on land over 5 miles and under 10 miles from the railway, and a proportionate amount for the land further away? I think 2d. per acre is rather excessive, and I would suggest 1d. per acre within 5 miles, and ½d. per acre within 10 miles and over 5 miles.

977. If, after carefully investigating the proposal, it is deemed necessary by those in authority that 2d. per acre should be imposed, do you think the people in the district would be willing to agree to the construction of the railway with such a condition attached to it? I think so. As far as I am concerned, if I were within 5 miles of a railway, I would gladly pay it.

978. Would the imposition of such a rate impose a special hardship on any of the selectors or farmers? It would be a hardship.

979. In what cases? Of course, it would be a handicap as against those who are nearer the other railways. We would be handicapped in having to pay an extra amount besides the long carriage charges to Sydney.

980. I suppose you know that the rates for agricultural produce are very low? Yes; we are very well satisfied with them.

981. Do you think that 2d. per acre on top of that would be a serious handicap? Yes.

982. Is there any special class of settler whom it would prejudicially affect? I do not think so.

983. Do you care to give an opinion as to what would be the development of agriculture in the district? Of course, I have taken it roughly at 20,000 acres; but that is a very low estimate. I have put down 500 acres extra for myself and brother; but we would put in the whole 5,000 acres in our holdings if we had a railway, and others are in the same position.

984. Do you send any wheat to market now? Yes; we send it by way of Nyngan—45 miles. I do not think we could get teams to start now to carry the wheat. When we sent it it was a very bad season, and there were a lot of carriers offering; it was carried at 1s. 7d. per bag.

985. Do you anticipate that you will get it carried cheaper in future? I do not think we could get any quantity carried at any price at present.

986. Two other proposals have been mooted—one to take a line from Parkes to Peak Hill, another from a point on the Condobolin line, west of Bogan Gate, running parallel to the Bogan Gate line;—would either of these proposals serve the good agricultural country as well as the one now before the Committee? I do not think so.

987. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What class of timber grows here? Pine and box; there are patches of myall and belar.

988. What timber grows on the best class of country? It is a matter of opinion. Some people are in favour of pine country for agriculture, and others belar. Every man thinks his own land the best.

989. Which do you think is the best? Pine and belar are very similar.

990. Is much of the country about here ridgy? No.

991. What proportion of the land is suitable for agriculture? Ninety per cent.

992. Have you any gravelly country about here? Not within 20 miles. You might find a gravel ridge here and there.

993. Is any of the level land gravelly? No.

994. Have you had any experience of gravel country from an agricultural point of view? Yes. There is a gravel ridge about 20 miles from here, and it has grown as good a crop as anything in the district.

995. Is it country that would last as long as the other class? It seems to do so up to the present.

996. Is the country fairly well watered? Not naturally. It is artificially watered with tanks.

997. Is there any difficulty in getting the water supply by means of tanks? No; you can get the water by making the tanks large enough.

998. Has much work of that kind been done? Yes.

999. Has stock suffered much from the drought? Yes.

1000. Which season was the worst? The last three seasons were very bad. The last season was the worst, but that might be because it followed the others. Some people lost nearly all their stock.

1001. Did they make any efforts to travel them? They could not, because there was no grass on the stock routes.

1002. Would the railway be used in time of drought? Yes.

1003. Where would you send them to? It would depend upon the state of the other districts. At one time we could get grass at Girilambone, at other times we have had to move them to Tumut.

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1004. Do you think produce would be brought here from other districts to feed stock if there was a railway? Yes, if we had not enough of our own; but if we had a railway there would be enough produced to feed our own stock.
1005. Then there would be no necessity to send them away, or to bring produce here? Yes.
1006. How is agriculture affected by the drought? It was not affected like grazing. If the rainfall comes at the right time, the drought does not affect the wheat crops very much.
1007. Have you been farming during the whole of the eleven years you have been here? Yes; with the exception of the first year. We have been eight years cultivating wheat.
1008. You stated that 16 bushels an acre would be the yield of wheat? Yes; but that is a fair average yield.
1009. During the ten years that you have farming, would your yield average 16 bushels per acre? No, not taking one year with another. The last four years were not very good, and the last two years have been very low, and has brought down the average. For an ordinary season we consider 16 bushels a fair crop. Some people have had as high as five and six bags to the acre in a good season; that is an average of 24 bushels to the acre.
1010. Is there very much variation in what is called agricultural land? I do not think so.
1011. Do you think that in a fairly good season the wheat-growing portion of the land would produce 16 bushels to the acre? Yes.
1012. Is there a large area of Crown land that would be affected by the proposed railway, and which would be made available for selection? Yes.
1013. Is most of the land held privately? Most of it is included in conditional purchase and conditional lease.
1014. What would be the size of an average holding? 2,560 acres.
1015. Are there very many under that size? Very few.
1016. Are there not some large areas held in the district? I do not think there is anything in the district under 2,560 acres; but I do not know how much freehold the squatters hold.
1017. Speaking of the conditional purchase land, what would be the average holding? 2,560 acres—I do not know of any smaller.
1018. If railway facilities were given, and the land were properly improved, do you think that the land suitable for agriculture would be used for agricultural purposes? Yes.
1019. That is, within reach of the railway? Yes; within 15 or 20 miles. I believe that more than that, outside of such a distance, would be used; but I speak positively as to land within 20 miles of the railway.
1020. In view of that, how many acres would it take to maintain a family by agriculture? 640 acres of agricultural land, adjacent to the railway, and in an improved condition, would be sufficient.
1021. Do you think that the holdings would be divided as small as that, or would there be a tendency to go in for mixed farming? They would sooner have mixed farming, because then you have not to cultivate the same land over and over again.
1022. Have you had much experience of sheep-farming? Yes, since I have been in this district.
1023. With a railway, which would pay best—agriculture or sheep-farming? Agriculture, decidedly.
1024. Do you think that those who hold large areas of private land would use it for agriculture if they had a railway? Yes, if they could get anyone to use it on the halves system.
1025. Has there been any of that system adopted here? Yes; there is a little at present.
1026. Is it satisfactory to the tenant and the owner? This is the first year that it has been tried.
1027. Are you aware that the system has been carried on in many parts of the Colony? Yes.
1028. From your knowledge of the system, do you think it would work satisfactorily here? Yes.
1029. If land were thrown open on the halves system, do you think people would be ready to take up the land? Yes.
1030. *Mr. Watson.*] You say that you pay at present 1s. 7d. per bag for carting wheat to Nyngan? That is what we would have to pay. We have carted our own.
1031. With a yield 16 bushels to the acre, that amounts to a tax of 5s. 8d. an acre upon the land-owner; if you had a railway here it would go from Bulbodney, and the charge would be 3d. a ton less than it is at present from Nyngan to Sydney, so that you would save 5s. 8d. if the railway were constructed? Yes.
1032. How, then, can you say that 2d. an acre would be a serious tax upon a land-owner if he could save 5s. 8d. an acre in carriage? Taking it in that way, I agree with you. What I meant to say was that 2d. an acre would be a tax.
1033. Is it a great tax, in view of what I have stated? I can put it in this way: At present we cannot carry on agriculture successfully and pay that charge of 5s. 8d. an acre for carriage. You will understand that the charge is a tax in that way.
1034. Assuming that a man has only a small portion of his land under agriculture, would it not still pay him, on that basis, to give a certain guarantee to the Commissioners until the railway paid its way? Yes; as far as I am concerned I would willingly pay it.
1035. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I understood you to say that the construction of the railway here would largely increase the carrying capacity of the country for sheep? Yes.
1036. How would it do so? You could turn the stock into the stubble country, and you could grow hay as a stand-by, so that you could afford to carry more stock, and be safe from a drought.
1037. That would be where mixed farming is carried on? Yes.
1038. *Chairman.*] Have you consulted the settlers in the district as to whether those through whose land the railway will pass are prepared to hand over the land free? I think the whole distance from Bullock Creek to Bulbodney is Crown land, so that there is no necessity, so far as that part of the line is concerned. I may be allowed to make a short statement to the Committee, putting forward a few reasons for the construction of this line. The policy of this country has been to settle the people on the land. I would ask what benefit is it to the country to settle the people on the land unless you give them the necessary conveniences to make it productive. This railway is what might be termed an agricultural line, running as it does nearly the whole distance through agricultural land, and it would serve about 2,000,000 acres. Of that area, 1,800,000 acres are first-class agricultural land. The settlers are thorough agriculturists, coming, as they do, from Victoria and Riverina. We all have a special knowledge of farming. The value of the farming plant in the district is £10,464; the area under cultivation is 6,069 acres, which would yield, in a fair season, 81,000 bushels, or 2,058 tons. If the line is constructed, I believe that that amount will be increased to an unlimited extent. If our present statistics do not show that we produce sufficient to warrant the construction of the line, it is simply because, under present conditions, the margin of profit

profit is not sufficient to warrant us in producing more, as the cost of carriage to the railway, and the inability to get teams, prevent us from cultivating to any great extent. As to the future development of the district, we are quite satisfied that, with the construction of the line, we can produce sufficient to provide enough traffic to pay interest on construction and working expenses. We know of no country where the growth of wheat and barley can be carried on with better results. As to the lasting qualities of the soil, some men have grown eight crops in succession on the same land, and the present crop has the appearance of being quite as good as any of the previous crops. We consider that the land in this district, as a whole, is superior to the land in the Goulburn Valley, which is considered to be one of the greatest wheat-growing districts in Victoria. If this line were constructed, whereas at present there is only one family on every 2,560 acres, four families could make a living on the same area. The railway would be the means of encouraging closer settlement. Then, there is the noxious animal pest. The wallabies and wild dogs are a continuous menace. Unless we get rid of the growth of under-scrub it is impossible to get rid of those pests. The only effectual way is to cultivate the land. It is impossible, without a railway, to cultivate any more than we do at present. At present it takes us, with a six-horse team, six weeks to deliver 210 bags of wheat at the nearest railway station. If this railway were constructed within 10 miles of our land, we could deliver 1,000 bags in the same period with a four-horse team. It could hardly be expected that this railway would be a paying concern from the start; but we consider that the railway could be used as a means of developing the country, and, if worked in harmony with the Lands Department, it could be made the means of profitably using a very large tract of country which, up to the present, has been a source of great trouble to the Government generally, and the Lands Department—that is what is known as the West Bogan Scrub. This land is as good as anything in the Colony for agriculture. It depends upon the construction of this railway whether we shall make this part of the Colony the granary of New South Wales, or whether it shall be abandoned to scrub and the noxious animals pest.

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Isidore Henry Moss, grazier, Woodlands station, sworn, and examined:—

1039. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What distance is your holding from Bogan Gate along the route of the proposed railway? About 70 miles. I. H. Moss.
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1040. What is the size of your holding? 42,915 acres of Crown land, held under West Bogan scrub improvement lease. Under the terms of the lease, a portion of the area becomes available in a certain time for settlement if the Crown desires it. They have the right to resume one-third in about nine years; another third will be available for resumption in seventeen years; and the balance in twenty-five years from the present time.
1041. What does the remainder of your holding consist of? 10,240 acres of conditional purchase and conditional lease land, and about 1,400 or 1,500 acres of freehold.
1042. What do you consider are the capabilities of this country for pastoral purposes? Partly improved, its carrying capacity would be one and a half acres to a sheep; unimproved, without water, it would carry nothing; by putting tanks down, the country would carry one sheep to 5 or 7 acres.
1043. Does any one attempt to carry on pastoral pursuits without improving the country? It would be impossible to do so.
1044. In the event of a railway being constructed, do you think there would be sufficient timber to supply sleepers? Yes; I believe there would be sufficient ironbark and box, so long as the Department did not confine itself strictly to ironbark to supply sleepers for a double line.
1045. What is your opinion of box timber? A great deal of it is quite sound.
1046. How would you compare it with ironbark for durability? Ironbark must be put first, but we find that box lasts very well.
1047. What is your opinion of the country for agricultural pursuits? I think a great deal of it. I have been continuously cropping one paddock for nineteen years. It has been cropped continuously year after year with a spell of two years under lucerne. The crop of wheat on it now is just as good as crops grown on land which has been in use for only two or three years.
1048. Are you fairly well acquainted with the whole of the country from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? I know the country between Bogan Gate and Trundle by the road, and I have been at Bullock Creek. I know the country better from Bullock Creek to Bulbodney, and I know the country generally.
1049. Taking a fair distance on each side of the proposed line, what would you say is the average proportion of land suitable for agriculture? From what I have seen, I should say about two-thirds.
1050. Would the balance of it be all fit for pastoral purposes? Yes, when improved.
1051. There are some rather stony ridges between Bogan Gate and this place;—do you think that they are fairly good for agriculture, or are they useless? The stony ridges are not good for agriculture, but I have seen a crop growing right up to a large upheaval of granite, to the foot of the ridge, and among the granite hills there are crops growing in basins. The ridges are of very small extent.
1052. Are you acquainted with the mineral resources of this district? I can only speak of what I have heard. The shows are very good.
1053. What minerals are found here? Copper, silver, and gold; at one place they have found tin.
1054. Has anything been sufficiently tested? No; there has been no deep sinking. They have never been able to crush. A man informed me that he obtained a very good prospect at Burra Burra, and the shaft was down 44 feet; the reef was 4 feet wide. He was never able to get a crushing away on account of great distance, but the assay showed a very good yield.
1055. Have you any idea as to what quantity was assayed? No; I think there was only a small quantity. He said the teams were too expensive to send it away to the train, and there were no crushing mills near at hand.
1056. What is the rainfall in your neighbourhood? I have the rainfall record, which has been kept accurately from 1882 to 1899, a period of eighteen years. It shows an average of 19 inches 70 points for that period, and that includes the last four or five years of drought. The record is as follows:—

1882	...	19·27	1888	...	10·47	1894	...	29·57
1883	...	13·73	1889	...	21·17	1895	...	13·63
1884	...	14·74	1890	...	28·24	1896	...	20·41
1885	...	19·23	1891	...	26·29	1897	...	17·22
1886	...	22·77	1892	...	17·54	1898	...	14·55
1887	...	30·59	1893	...	22·01	1899	...	13·18

1057.

- I. H. Moss.
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1057. Do you wish to make a statement to the Committee? Yes; my opinion of this country, from an experience of nineteen years, is that very little can be done with it unless grubbing and clearing are carried on to a very large extent. That is very expensive work. There are certain classes of scrubs which grow here which would be ineradicable unless grubbed out. Once the land is ploughed we get good fattening grasses. It would be impossible for us to grub and clear this land unless we had a railway to take away the wheat. The great drawback is the want of teams. When a farmer has finished taking off his crop at the end of the year or early in January, he wants to start ploughing in January, and he has no time to spend in carting his wheat away. I had only 200 bags to send away this year, but I had to wait until April before I could get a team to carry it away, and the last two teams did not get away until June or July. If I left that in the paddock I would have sustained a great loss; if I built sheds to protect it it would be too expensive. I had to pay 1s. 9d. a bag to get it carried to Bogan Gate, and I thought that was cheap. That did not pay the carrier, and it did not pay me either. I have more land cleared than I am cultivating, because I find it is impossible to do so at a profit. I am only growing for my own requirements. The yield has been very good. I have taken off 8 bags an acre, and I have known 10 bags to be taken off an acre. I consider that the average crop of wheat would be 16 bushels to the acre. With regard to pine logs, we have reserves to the extent of about 40,000 acres in close proximity to the line. These reserves were made by the Crown to preserve the pine timber, and they contain some of the most valuable pine in the colony. That timber would be taken to the different centres of population in a raw state or sawn. Another phase of the question is that there is such a large quantity of unimproved Crown lands which would be taken up if there were railway communication. At present they are very much infested with noxious animals of all sorts.
1058. What is the area of unimproved Crown lands? On one station alone there are 250,000 acres of Crown land within twelve miles of the proposed line. It is now available for settlement of any description the Government like. There is also some land on Orange Plains station. The men who are improving their properties are harassed by these noxious animals. They come on the land and eat out the settlers, who are surrounded by scrub country which is just as good as that which has now been cleared. The only thing to benefit this country is the construction of a railway. It would convert a great deal of abandoned and unimproved Crown lands into highly valuable property. It only needs improvement. It cannot be improved without grubbing, and grubbing will not pay without a railway. I think the extent of agriculture and cultivation in this district would be quite unlimited if a railway were made, because most men would put all their holdings under wheat for the sake of improving them. Another consideration is the present loss of stock by drought. We had a very dry season last year and the year before. For my own part I could have saved a great deal of my stock if there had been a railway. We had favoured districts within a very short distance, and with a railway we could have got our stock away very easily. Even if we could not have sent them away we could have brought forage into the district. Last year I spent £1,000 in feeding stock, and the greatest trouble I had was to get teams to cart the forage. I would have paid anything for cartage but the teams were not available. At certain times there are not a sufficient number of teams to meet the requirements of the district. Men will not go into the carrying business when they know that they will only have wheat to carry during certain portions of the year, and then they will have to be idle for six or seven months.
1059. Is there any description of timber here which it is necessary to grub? Yes; several of the scrubs have to be grubbed out. Box seedlings, silver wattle, and one or two others have to be grubbed out. If you cut them you are only cultivating them.
1060. Have you ever tried the scrub exterminator? Yes; I tried Lowe's Scrub Exterminator in several ways. We thought it was a great success for about a week; but afterwards we found we were cultivating the scrubs; they grew better than ever.
1061. How did you use it? We tried it in several ways. We bored holes in the tree and poured it in; we ringed them and painted them with it, and found it a failure. I have tried other specifics, but they were nearly the same. I have driven copper nails into the trees, which kills the oak at home, but it is not a success here.
1062. At what time in the year do you get a rainfall? In droughty times it comes anyhow and at any time. We used to look forward to heavy February rains, but they failed us during the last four or five years.
1063. Does the rain fall at a favourable time for wheat growing? Yes; during my experience of nineteen years in cropping I have only had one failure in the hay crop, and that was two years ago.
1064. Do you find any difficulty when harvesting in obtaining extra hands? There is a little difficulty; but the machinery now in use gets over that.
1065. Are you always able to get the harvest in before it has gone too far? Yes.
1066. Is it likely that fruit culture will be developed in the district? Yes, we have had very good fruit; the trees have grown well.
1067. Do you think it likely that poultry would be raised largely? Yes; a man having lucerne paddocks could rear a lot of turkeys.
1068. Have you cultivated lucerne? Yes; I have a very good lucerne paddock.
1069. Was it a thorough success? Yes; but during the dry years the wallabies came down and ate it out. We were infested from the outside runs.
1070. Did you cut the lucerne? We cut it for six or seven months, and then we kept the stud sheep on it. I put it in again last year, but as it was such a bad season it failed.
1071. How far from a railway station could a man carry on farming operations successfully? From 10 to 12 miles. That would enable him to take a load to the station and get back the same day, or to take two loads in three days. It would depend upon the state of the roads.
1072. *Chairman.*] Can you give the Committee any details of the wheat crop which you obtained during the nineteen years you have been cultivating? Until the last three or four years our crops have been about two tons of wheat and hay to the acre. One year we had four tons of wheat and hay to the acre.
1073. With regard to the Crown leases, do they carry a condition that any land required for public purposes should be handed over without compensation? Yes.
1074. With respect to the general class of West Bogan scrub leases, do you think that, with the construction of the railway, the lessees would be induced to farm any of that land on the share system? Yes; I believe that would be the case with a great deal of it.

1075. So that it would not be necessary to wait for the falling in of the leases for the railway to induce agricultural operations? No.
1076. *Mr. Watson.*] Have the West Bogan leases been chiefly granted to get rid of the scrub? Yes. I. H. Moss.
15 Aug., 1900.
1077. Have you been successful so far as you have gone? Yes, very successful.
1078. Have you treated the greater part of your leasehold area? Yes; there are only 3,000 or 4,000 acres not finished now. The rest is completed.
1079. Is that out of the total? Yes.
1080. Do you think the scrub is likely to come again unless some greater expenditure is entered upon? We do not anticipate large expenditures; perhaps two or three more.
1081. With regard to your secured lands; you have heard the suggestion that some guarantee or subsidy should be given by the landowners to make good a portion of the anticipated loss upon the railway;—would you be willing to pay on the secured lands which you hold? Yes.

Andrew Lindsay, farmer and grazier, Myra Vale, sworn, and examined:—

1082. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How far do you live from here? Twenty miles, and about 15 miles from the surveyed line of railway. A. Lindsay.
15 Aug., 1900.
1083. Does your holding adjoin Melrose leasehold? Yes.
1084. Is there land on that holding which will be shortly available for settlement? Yes.
1085. What is the area of that land? 250,000 acres.
1086. What is the character of that land? It is similar to what you see here. It is good agricultural land, interspersed with ridges of mallee.
1087. Is that considered to be good country? Not for agriculture, but a great deal of it is fair land.
1088. Is the land in your neighbourhood similar to the land between here and Trundle? I think it is better than the land at Trundle; it is like the country you pass through from Woodlands to this place.
1089. Taking the 250,000 acres of land which will be available for settlement, how much of it would be suitable for agriculture? I think there are at least 200,000 acres; there are not 50,000 acres of mallee in it.
1090. How far from the railway would that land be? Twenty miles.
1091. On which side of the line is Melrose leasehold? On the west side.
1092. Would the whole of that area be served by the railway? Not if you take a radius of 20 miles,—some of it is beyond that distance.
1093. How much would the 20 miles radius include? I think it would go about midway through the leasehold.
1094. Would 25 miles include the whole of it? No.
1095. Which half would contain the best agricultural land? The half close to the railway line.
1096. Can you give us any information as to the rainfall in your district? The average is about 20 inches.
1097. Have you had any experience in farming? Yes, for thirty years.
1098. How many acres do you hold? 2,560, and my three sons each hold an equal area.
1099. How many acres do you cultivate? 175, at present.
1100. Is your land of the same character as the land on the Melrose leasehold? Exactly the same.
1101. What are the results of your experience on your present holding? I have not cultivated a great deal. I started with a little, because it was too far to cart the grain. I consider that the soil is capable of growing good crops. You can depend upon an average crop, in a fair season, of four bags to the acre. I have grown as much as six bags to the acre in a good year.
1102. How long have you been cultivating? About nine years on my present holding.
1103. Have you been in any other part of the Colony? I have been in Goulburn Valley, Victoria; I was engaged in wheat-growing.
1104. How would the land in this district compare with the Goulburn Valley? It is just the same country, growing box, yarran, and pine; but there is not so much undergrowth in Goulburn Valley.
1105. How is your land timbered? Box, pine, yarran—it is heavily timbered.
1106. Do you consider that the distance you are away from a railway is too great to allow you to carry on farming operations? Yes.
1107. How far are you from the nearest railway station? Condobolin is about 56 miles away.
1108. If you had a railway within 20 miles of you, would you be able to farm extensively? Yes, we would go in for it largely.
1109. In your area of 2,560 acres, how much do you consider would be fit for wheat growing? The whole of it?
1110. In the event of a railway being constructed, would you be inclined to put a larger area under wheat? Yes. The land is all ringbarked and scrubbed.
1111. So that you would soon be in a position to place the land under cultivation if you had a railway? Yes, we would do so at once.
1112. Would people having holdings in the same locality do the same as you would? Yes, their land is of a similar character.
1113. Have you any experience in sheep farming? Yes.
1114. Would it pay you better to place your holding under cultivation and to do away with sheep? No, we will never do away with the sheep. I agree with what has been said about mixed farming, and I have fully proved it, here as well as in Victoria. I consider that sheep improves the farm just as much as manuring it.
1115. What proportion would you cultivate, and how much would you utilise for sheep farming? In all probability one-third would be ploughed; the rest would be kept for sheep. The whole of my block, as it is now, could be put under the plough.
1116. What would you do with your own holding? I would put two-thirds of it under crop.
1117. Have you a good knowledge of the district? Yes, a fair knowledge.
1118. Does the country which would be influenced by the railway consist of hilly country to any large extent? No; the hilly country is outside the influence of the railway. There might be a few miles of gravelly land.
1119. When that sort of land is cleared, is it good for pastoral purposes? Yes.

- A. Lindsay.
15 Aug., 1900.
1120. So that even the ridges would not be waste land? No; there is good country between the ridges.
1121. I noticed a considerable quantity of flat country containing gravel on the surface;—have you had any experience of that land? I have never farmed any gravel land, but I have seen it ploughed up.
1122. Is it as good as the other land? I think that it had better be left alone; I would never think of cultivating it.
1123. Has it been cultivated in any places? Yes, but not where they can get better land.
1124. Have you suffered during the last two or three years from drought? Yes, in common with others.
1125. Was there any loss of sheep? Yes, generally.
1126. How is the country watered? By tanks.
1127. Is there any difficulty in obtaining a sufficient water supply? No, it is good country for holding water.

Alexander Menzies, grazier, Walker's Hill, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Menzies.
15 Aug., 1900.
1128. *Mr. Watson.*] Where do you reside? Near Walker's Hill, at Bobadah, about 30 miles from here, in a north-westerly direction.
1129. What is the area of your holding? It is a family holding of a little over 12,000 acres.
1130. Have you carried on agriculture? On a small scale, and mostly for hay.
1131. What success have you had? It averages about 1 ton to the acre. I have also grown wheat, and I got a good average yield of about 20 bushels to the acre.
1132. What area did you have in? About 12 acres. I also got about 60 bushels of oats to the acre.
1133. Were they specially good years? Yes.
1134. Do you reckon that from an agricultural standpoint the land out there is as good as the land about Bulbodney? Yes, it is similar land.
1135. Is there as great a proportion of it suitable for agriculture? Yes. There are some rough hills coming into the district.
1136. What is the rainfall? At Melrose, that is about 20 miles south from me, it is about 19 inches. The rainfall at my place is about the same.
1137. Does the rain usually fall at seasons suitable for hay and wheat? Yes. Sometimes we get thunderstorms during the summer months, which are not suitable for wheat, but on the whole we get good falls during the winter.
1138. Do you know the land generally between here and Nymagee? I am not well acquainted with a wide area of it, but I have been about Nymagee; it is similar to this country, but slightly more ridgy.
1139. What stock have you been carrying on your holding? We never had it fully improved until the last few years, and then the drought threw us back. I think there have been a little over 7,000 sheep on the 12,000 acres.
1140. Which is your nearest railway station? Condobolin; but I am midway between there and Nyngan. I do business sometimes with one, and sometimes with the other.
1141. How far west do you reckon you would be out of the practicable area for wheat-growing, owing to the rainfall? Wheat has been grown 30 or 40 miles further west from me.
1142. Assuming that this line were built to Bulbodney, would you use it in preference to going to Nyngan? Yes; it would save me 30 miles.
1143. Would there be any agricultural development in your direction if this line were constructed, leaving you, say, 30 miles away? It is a little too far to grow wheat at a profit, although there are some people now growing wheat near me and carting it to Condobolin.
1144. What would be the effect of the railway upon your district? I do not know that it would have very much effect. It would suit Bobadah, which is a mining town likely to develop—that is, 35 miles away from here. They would probably get their supplies by the railway, and also coke for smelting.
1145. Are there any large developments there? Not at present. It is quite in its infancy.
1146. Is there any great amount of Crown land in that direction which might be made available for settlement? I think it can all be made available. I do not think it is under lease, and it is nearly all Crown land.
1147. Is there any prospect of increased settlement for pastoral purposes in your direction if the railway were made? There would be a great increase in pastoral pursuits.
1148. What advantage would it be to a man to take up the land not now taken up if the railway were made? It would be more convenient for him to get his supplies and his wool taken away. It is now impossible to take away stock.
1149. Would it be possible for a man with a small capital to take up land within 30 miles of the railway when he cannot take it up within 60 miles of a railway? Yes, and there is a vast amount of pine timber through that country. I do not know of any ironbark forests.

John Lancaster Tindall, miner and prospector, Bobadah, sworn and examined:—

- J. L. Tindall.
15 Aug., 1900.
1150. *Chairman.*] Were you the discoverer of the Lightning Creek and Bobadah mining fields? Yes.
1151. Can you give us a general idea of the mineral characteristics of the country to be served by this railway, and what effects would follow in the mining industry from its construction? At Lightning Creek chiefly gold is found. There will be reefs worked there soon. There is a good deal of reef country in the direction of Jumble Plains, Lightning Creek and Bobadah. There is copper at Jumble Plains. I found a little alluvial there tracing up the reefs. There was no capital to develop the reefs, so I left, and came on towards Bobadah.
1152. Was capital frightened away owing to the long distance from railway communication, or was it owing to the uncertainty of the prospect? That had a great deal to do with the copper. The gold is generally low grade, and it takes a great deal of heavy machinery to work those ores.
1153. What was the value of the gold which you got at Lightning Creek? The alluvial gold was poor, but there was a great quantity of it; it went from 2 dwt. up to 7 dwt. to the load. You can get gold all through that country, more or less—that is, from Fifield to Platina and Lightning Creek.
1154. Do your observations lead you to the conclusion that with railway communication there is a likelihood of mineral development in the neighbourhood of Lightning Creek? Yes.

1155. What is your experience of Bobadah? It is a low grade formation with a good deal of smelting ores—silver, copper, lead, and gold. There is a little gold mixed with them. J. L. Tindall.
15 Aug., 1900.
1156. Is the mineral area there extensive? Yes.
1157. Are Lightning Paddock and Bobadah connected with each other? Yes; there is a continuous belt of country there.
1158. What is your experience of Bobadah? There is a very large low grade gold formation, besides copper and silver.
1159. Are they of such a character that with easy communication they could be profitably worked? Yes; the cheap carriage of coke for smelting would make a lot of difference in the working of the mines.
1160. Have you so thoroughly prospected the Bobadah district as to be able to state definitely that there is a large area of mineral country there which could be profitably developed? Yes; I know of two or three very fine shows there which will eventually be worked.
1161. If a railway were constructed as far as Bulbodney, would that materially help towards the development of the Bobadah field? Yes; it would be within thirty miles of a railway.
1162. In low grade country would machinery and coke be brought to the ore? Yes, it would have to be treated on the spot. The matte would have to be sent down the line for treatment.
1163. Do you find any difficulty in obtaining water for mining purposes? No; excavations will have to be carried out for water, but I would sooner excavate for water than have to contend with it.
1164. So far, in sinking, have you had to contend with any water difficulty? No.
1165. Have you had any experience of mining elsewhere? Yes, in Victoria. I was at Temora at the first of the mining there.
1166. Is the Bobadah country similar to the Cobar country? Yes, the mines are large, and we employ a number of men, but they are handicapped through being such a long distance from a railway.
1167. *Mr. Watson.*] Was there not a large company formed to work at Bobadah some time ago? Yes.
1168. Did they put machinery on the ground? They did not put on much.
1169. What was the cause of their failure? The gross misdirectionship—the managers had to do what they were told.
1170. Did they go so far as to make any bulk test to find out how things were? The smelting ores which they sent to Sydney gave £5 per ton after paying expenses, but they have done nothing. It yields lead, copper and gold.

George Lind, miner, Albert Water Holes, sworn, and examined:—

1171. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been engaged at those mines? I have been there a little over eighteen months. G. Lind.
15 Aug., 1900.
1172. What is your opinion of the field? There is a mineral belt of country running for miles along there—from Fifield on to Bobadah. It is nearly 100 miles in length. I think it is auriferous country. We know that there are minerals of several kinds there; but the only payable mineral we have got so far is copper. We have traces of gold, and gold has been got 15 or 16 miles to the south, towards Fifield and Lightning Paddock. At Lightning Paddock the mines are only in their infancy, and so are ours. I cannot actually say how the country is going to turn out until it is more developed. It takes a good time to develop a field like this. As we have no banks behind us, we are handicapped to a great extent by having to take our ores 40 miles to the nearest railway-station, and with a very bad road. Carriage is very high. If we had better facilities by getting close to a railway-station, people would be able to come on to the fields, and the country would be properly opened out.
1173. Have you a true lode where you are working? Yes; we are about 80 feet down; there is another shaft 125 feet. There are three mines working. Two have been getting ore for twelve months. Two men are working in one, and about three or four in the other.
1174. Have you had any quantity treated anywhere? Yes; we have been sending ore down to be treated.
1175. What quantity? As far as I can find out, about 90 or 100 tons of picked ore have been sent away. There is a lot of second-class ore on the top, which it would not pay to send down.
1176. Has it paid you to send away the ore? Yes.
1177. What has been the return? On an average 22 per cent. right through. The ore has gone as high as 30 per cent. and over, and as low as 15 per cent.
1178. At what depth did you have the best results? We have had ore all the way down to a depth of 125 feet.
1179. Is it running all the same? It is running in patches and blocks all the way down.
1180. Did you have as good a result near the surface as you had at 80 feet? Yes, and in some instances better.
1181. Where did you have the ore treated? We had ours treated at Cockle Creek at first, but at present we have it treated at Lithgow.
1182. What is the size of your lode? It averages from about 1 foot to 2 feet 6 inches, or 3 feet at the most.
1183. Does the lode vary as you go down? Yes.
1184. Is it not rather small for a copper lode? It is too small for a company to tackle it; they would do so, however, even with poorer stuff, if there was a larger quantity.
1185. Have you been along the auriferous belt of country? Yes, for a part of the way.
1186. Is the part where you are the most promising? Yes; 10 or 12 miles further north there is what we call Orange Plains—there are some mines there. I understand they look pretty well at the surface.
1187. Has only one lode been discovered? There are three distinct lodes. We have got three.
1188. Has trenching been carried out to discover new lodes? There has been no one prospecting there, except three or four of ourselves. The country has not been tried.
1189. How far are you away from the railway? The railway will come within 5 or 6 miles of our mine.
1190. Will that railway assist you? Yes; it will help to develop this belt of country, as it will bring more prospectors out here, and the carriage will be cheaper.
1191. Have you water in the 80 feet of shaft? No; we have never got to any water-level.
1192. Could you get sufficient water to carry on operations on a large scale? Yes; we have made preparations to catch surface water. Our party have a good-sized dam now.

- G. Lind.
15 Aug., 1900.
1193. *Chairman.*] Is there any indication of these lodes opening out wider at a depth? Yes.
1194. What are they? The country, in one mine especially, is very much disturbed, but in the other mine, in which I am, the lode carries two splendid walls right down. We have the lode at the bottom level as large as 3 feet 6 inches and 4 feet. We had no size like that on the surface. It runs in blocks, pinching and widening out. The blocks of quartz seem to be widening.

Charles Henry Siemsen, farmer and grazier, Buddabudah, near Lansdale, sworn and examined:—

- C. H. Siemsen.
15 Aug., 1900.
1195. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you reside? Thirteen miles north from here, on Bulbodney Creek.
1196. Have you any statement to make to the Committee? Yes. In the first place, if railway facilities are given to this district, self-interest will induce landholders to go in largely for agriculture, because the majority of the holdings are 2,560 acres in area, which is not sufficient for grazing purposes alone. In the second place, cultivation is the only sure method of economically preventing the dense growth of noxious scrub which continually makes its appearance on this West Bogan country. In the third place, because the rents and instalments are altogether too large in proportion to the net return which can be made off these holdings by grazing. The very great disadvantage under which landowners of 2560 acres are labouring should be borne in mind, owing to the want of railway facilities up to the present time, which has prevented them in the past from taking full advantage of agricultural operations, which otherwise they undoubtedly would have done. Fourthly, because it has been proven beyond doubt that this land is most admirably adapted for the growth of cereals. I would also point out, in addition to these considerations, that a great advantage would be gained from the fact that there is a large quantity of marketable pine timber in this district. The landholders here have not been treated as they ought to have been. The majority of the selectors were given to understand, when they came here under the 1890 Act, that in five years from that date there would be a great deal of land resumed, and in that case we would have had a dense population here, because land would be taken up. Every available acre here has been taken up by selection.
1197. Are you of opinion that the small holders, that is men with 2,560 acres, have suffered more from the want of a railway than the larger holders? Yes; because the small holder has gone in more for cultivation.
1198. Do you think that 2,560 acres are not sufficient for grazing purposes? Yes; in this district.
1199. What is a fair area on which to maintain a family by grazing? A great deal depends upon the amount of improvements put upon the land. If the area is improved, I should say that 5,000 acres would maintain a family, if it were not too large a family.
1200. Where do you live? Near Orange Plains.
1201. How many acres do you hold? 2,560.
1202. Do you use any of that for cultivation? Yes, between 450 and 500 acres. I have been cultivating since 1894.
1203. What distance are you from the railway? I am between 47 and 50 miles from Nyngan station.
1204. Is that too far to make farming pay? Yes, it is impossible to make it pay. It has cost me in the past from 1s. 7d. to 2s. a bag for cartage. The great drawback is the impossibility of getting teams at certain times. The spring may be good, but the summer exceptionally dry, and carriers cannot afford to pay for feed at 2s. a bag.
1205. How much of your land is suitable for cultivation? Every acre.
1206. Is all the land in your locality equally good? Yes.
1207. Do you know Orange Plains very well? Yes.
1208. What class of land is it? Although I differ from most of the people here to-day, I consider that the whole of Orange Plains is well adapted for agriculture. There is a good deal of gravel land on Orange Plains; but it has proven itself in this district able to grow a better average year in and year out than the other land.
1209. Do you know any of this gravel land which has been under cultivation? Yes; and taking the general run of it, I have known gravelly ground to produce just as good crops as the other land.
1210. Are there any Crown lands on Orange Plains? Yes; I believe most of it is Crown land.
1211. Has any of it been recently thrown open? No.
1212. If the land were thrown open, would it be taken up? I am sure you would not have an acre left in two years.
1213. Do you think it would pay you to cultivate if you only had to cart for 13 miles, as against your present distance? Certainly.
1214. If the railway were constructed, would you increase the area you have under cultivation? Yes, to the extent of about one-half of my holding. I believe that example would be generally followed. By cultivating about half the holding, I could carry as much stock as at present. I reckon that I would go in for 1,200 acres of cultivation.
1215. Would there be good marketable pine in this district? Yes.
1216. Has it been cut for milling purposes? Yes; there has been a saw-mill here, and there was a good demand for the timber. They are drawing pine 17 miles to the railway station at Nyngan.
1217. What would be the average yield of wheat per acre? I do not think I am in a position to give an average. The selectors, and people who have gone in for wheat-growing, have done so principally within the last six years. During that time there have been three bad seasons, and that has been the case only during the last eleven years, so that those bad years robbed the average of five good years. From my experience of ten years, an average of 16 bushels to the acre would be within the mark; but for three years past it has been lower than that.
1218. Are there many large landholders in your locality possessing 5,000 acres, 10,000 acres, and upwards? No; they are mostly conditional purchase and conditional lease men.
1219. Is the land well watered? There is no natural water; you have to conserve the water by sinking tanks.
1220. Is it level or hilly country? On the west side of Bulbodney it is very level country for about 16 miles, then it gets a little more ridgy; on the east side the country is hilly. The country is fairly heavily timbered.
1221. What is the average of cultivation land in your locality? The whole area is fit for cultivation with the exception of some narrow ranges.

1222. Is there much mallee country? There is no mallee country within 25 miles of this place.
1223. *Chairman.*] Is there any area on Orange Plains which has been available for settlement lease for some time which has not been taken up? Yes.
1224. Do you think that persons have been prevented from taking up that land on account of its distance from railway communication? Yes; if there had been a railway station on this creek that land would not remain there as it is a fortnight. I think that a good many people are of opinion that that land is not suitable for grazing or agriculture. I say it is suitable, and that has been proved on a selection a few miles from us; they have grown the best average crop there for the last six years.
1225. Do you know any other place where the same conditions prevail? Yes; I believe that is the case on Bulbodney Creek. I believe there are a few blocks there available for selection, and they have not been taken up there for a few years. It is all of good quality.

O. H.
Siemeen.
15 Aug., 1900.

Thomas Lacey, share-farmer, Balgay, sworn and examined:—

1226. *Mr. Watson.*] Where do you reside? Twenty miles from Lansdale, to the west.
1227. Have you a holding of your own? No; we are working on the half-share system.
1228. What area have you? About 570 acres from Mr. Ryrie.
1229. How long have you been there? About ten years in the district; but we only started this year on the half-share system. My father has been farming for ten years.
1230. Where does he send his crop to? To Nyngan, 57 miles away.
1231. What has been your father's experience with cropping? We have got 16 to 20 bushels per acre since we have been there. It costs 1s. 7d. to 2s. a bag to get it to Nyngan.
1232. Would it pay you to work on the halves system? Yes, if we get a railway.
1233. But when you took up this land, you did not know there would be a railway? There was some talk about it.
1234. That induced you to take it up? Yes.
1235. Would it pay you, if you got 10 bushels of your half-share, to cart it 57 miles? No; not at a low price.
1236. What price would you require? Four shillings a bushel.
1237. What are the terms on which you have got the land? Mr. Ryrie finds the land, and we find the labour. He clears it and finds us in seed, and we have to take it off. He has to find his own cartage.
1238. Are there any others besides yourself who have taken up land on that system? No.
1239. Is there other land as suitable as that which you have taken up? Yes, all the land about there.
1240. Is it similar to the land about here? Yes.
1241. Is the rainfall there as good as it is here? Yes.
1242. Do you think that if a railway were constructed, many other people would follow your example? Yes, a great many; it pays both parties.
1243. If this line were ultimately extended towards Nymagee, would it then be far from your land? In a straight line to Nymagee it would go within 2 or 3 miles of our land.
1244. Do you know the character of the land towards Nymagee? I have been to Overflow; it is all good agricultural and grazing land.
1245. Does it become more ridgy? Yes.
1246. What proportion of the land at Overflow would be suitable for agriculture? One half.

T. Lacey.
15 Aug., 1900.

Robert James Hutchinson, selector, Lansdale, sworn and examined:—

1247. *Chairman.*] What area do you hold? 2527 acres.
1248. Had you any experience in the timber trade? Yes, a little.
1249. Can you give the Committee any idea of the amount of timber within easy reach of the proposed railway which could be worked for milling purposes? There is a great quantity of timber within an easy distance; it consists mainly of pine suitable for sawing.
1250. Do you think there is a sufficient area of pine to give a large amount of traffic to the railway for some time? Yes, for a couple of years.
1251. What is the quality of pine timber in this district? What is large enough is mostly good; it is mainly sound timber; it is suitable for building purposes of all kinds.
1252. If the line were constructed, is there a chance of finding a market down the existing railways for some distance? Yes; from what I hear there is a great demand for the timber.
1253. We understand that districts like Orange would be large consumers of this timber. Have you the timber in such quantities here, that after paying for sawing and getting it on to the railway line, and another 1s. 6d. per 100 feet, you would be able to find a market in such districts? There are several people doing so now, and I think they ought to be able to do it here. At Trangie they have to cart the timber 15 and 20 miles to the station.
1254. What is the destination of the timber trucked at Trangie? I think I have seen some of it going to Bourke.
1255. Do you think that the timber is in such quantities here that it will stand that amount of carriage? Yes.
1256. Can you offer the Committee any evidence as to the rates for the carriage of store goods? It costs £10 10s. a ton to deliver goods here from Sydney; the cost of carriage on the railway is very high, and I pay £3 a ton from Trangie.
1257. Does that impose any difficulty on the people living here? Yes; it is a great handicap.
1258. Do you go in for farming? Yes; I have 300 acres under cultivation.
1259. What has been your experience as an agriculturist? I have obtained 14 or 15 bushels to the acre; in some years I have got 7 or 8 bags to the acre.
1260. Would the greater part of the district, say within 20 miles of the railway, around Bulbodney be fit for agriculture? Yes; it could not be better.
1261. What would be the percentage of arable land there? Almost the whole of it.
1262. Would the construction of this railway enable the selectors in this district to frequently send small consignments of fat stock for sale? Yes.

R. J.
Hutchinson.
15 Aug., 1900.

- R. J. Hutcheson.
15 Aug., 1900.
1263. Are they prohibited from doing so now? Yes, on account of the distance they have to travel the sheep.
1264. Would that materially increase the chance of profitably running sheep on their holdings? Yes; the sheep get fat, but we have to leave them here.
1265. By a system of mixed farming, under which the sheep are fed off the stubble during the period in which the grass is seeding, would you, to a large extent, avoid the risk of deteriorating the wool? Yes. I have 100 acres of land cleared beyond what I cultivate.
1266. How much of your holding would you farm if you had a railway? Between 600 and 700 acres.
1267. Do you agree with the statement that, with the construction of the railway and a consequent increase of cultivation, the total carrying capacity of the district with respect to sheep would be considerably increased? Undoubtedly.
1268. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Are there any other classes of marketable timber in this district? Not between here and Burra Burra that I know of. There is a little ironbark in patches, but there is not a great deal of it.
1269. Would there be sufficient ironbark for railway construction? Yes, for the time being.
1270. Is it of fairly good quality? Yes.

THURSDAY, 16 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the "Post Office Hotel," Dandaloo, at 8 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq., (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.,
THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM,		JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

George Edgar Richardson, Secretary, Dandaloo and Trangie Railway League, Dandaloo, sworn and examined:—

- G. E. Richardson.
16 Aug., 1900.
1271. *Chairman.*] What is your occupation? Grazier, residing on Trangie, Dandaloo Road.
1272. The Committee have at present under their consideration a proposal to connect Bogan Gate with Bulbodney;—would you give your opinion as Secretary of the league of the Dandaloo-Trangie connection as to whether the Bogan Gate line would or would not serve this district? It will not serve this district.
1273. How far is Dandaloo from Lansdale? Thirty-two miles.
1274. How far is Dandaloo from Trangie? Twenty-seven miles.
1275. Do you know the stock route from Dandaloo going about south-west through Dandaloo down through Kerriwah holding? Yes.
1276. That stock route is practically in a direct line from Dandaloo to the nearest point on the proposed Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line;—what distance is it from Dandaloo along that stock route to Bulbodney Creek? Twenty-five miles to the creek.
1277. So that practically you would be an equal distance from the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line and the western line? Yes.
1278. From the nearest point of the proposed railway line, Dandaloo would be practically about 20 miles in a direct line. You are now 27 miles distant from Trangie. The mileage to the nearest point on the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line from Sydney is 350 miles, the mileage from Trangie is 321 miles;—taking both these facts into consideration, which of the two lines would serve Dandaloo best? The western line.
1279. Do you state that the extension of the line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney would be of absolutely no benefit to the people of Dandaloo? It would be of no benefit.
1280. In what way could the people of Dandaloo be served? They could be best served by a line from the western railway at Trangie coming to Dandaloo; that would be a distance of 27 miles.
1281. What is the character of the country between Trangie and Dandaloo? It is all flat country.
1282. Are there any watercourses to cross? Only Boggy Cowal. An extension could be made from Trangie to the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line, or on to Nymagee.
1283. Would it not be a distinct advantage to the people of Dandaloo to get on to a main line where there would be main line charges as compared with sending their produce over a branch line? Yes.
1284. *Mr. Watson.*] It has been suggested that the line towards Bulbodney might be taken first to Peak Hill, and from there westerly to Bullock Creek, and thence to Bulbodney;—would that line serve Dandaloo to any greater extent than the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line? It would be just the same.
1285. Was there any idea on the part of your league that a railway to Dandaloo might be extended further? They did not ask for anything else; they sent in a petition for a line to Dandaloo from Trangie.
1286. Are you aware that short cockspur lines are not favoured by the Railway Commissioners, because they do not pay so well proportionately as a longer line;—is there any suggestion as to where the line might be taken from Dandaloo after coming here from Trangie? It might be made to junction with the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line.
1287. *Mr. Hyam.*] What is the nature of the country between here and Trangie? Plains and belts of timber alternately.
1288. Is it agricultural land? Yes; it is black and red soil.
1289. Is it heavy country? Yes, in wet weather.
1290. Would the railway which you propose run at right angles to the rest of the line? Yes.
1291. Then would the line from here to Nymagee be taken at another angle? Looking at the map, I see that it would be at an angle of 65 degrees.
1292. *Chairman.*] Have you anything else to add? Our committee has not instructed me to prepare any evidence, as we thought the Public Works Committee were not taking evidence on the Trangie-Dandaloo Railway. We understand that to be the case now. My evidence is simply to show that the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line would not meet the requirements of Dandaloo.
1293. I may sum up your evidence by saying that you do not think the proposal now before the Committee would benefit Dandaloo, or the country between Dandaloo and Trangie? Yes.

FRIDAY,

FRIDAY, 17 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at Wallanbillan Homestead, at 4.15 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM,JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.,
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Peter Andrew Cannon, grazier and farmer, Wallanbillan, sworn and examined:—

1294. *Mr. Watson.*] Are you part owner of Wallanbillan? Yes.
1295. Are you interested in property towards Bullock Creek? Yes.
1296. How will the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney railway affect your position? It will do so very advantageously.
1297. Will that apply more particularly to your land near Bullock Creek? Yes.
1298. Is your land here 22 miles easterly from Bullock Creek? Yes, but rather north-east.
1299. How many miles are you from Narramine? Thirty-two.
1300. If a line were constructed from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek, would you continue to use Narramine for your produce, or would you come into Bullock Creek? To Bullock Creek, because it is nearer.
1301. How do the roads compare in the two directions? The roads are better to Bullock Creek than to Narramine. In a wet season the roads to Narramine are almost impassable, and we also have to pass the Bogan River without a bridge.
1302. How far east do you think the Bulbodney line would attract traffic at Bullock Creek? When it is possible to cross the Bogan, I should think it would go 4 miles on the north-eastern bank of the Bogan. I have great difficulty in getting my wheat away from here. I have nearly 3,000 bags of last season's crops here, and I am compelled at present to buy teams to carry it. I cannot get ordinary carriers, except at ruinous prices.
1303. What have you been paying in the past for carriage to Narramine? From 1s. to 1s. 4d. per bag.
1304. At the present price of wheat would it stand that cost? No.
1305. If the railway were at Bullock Creek, would you be able to get cartage much cheaper then? Yes; I would get it carted from here for 1s. a bag, as against 1s. 4d. the other way. As the production of wheat increases teams become scarcer, because the competition for teams is greater. The supply does not keep pace with the demand.
1306. Would the majority of the farming population have to employ teams rather than cart themselves? Yes; it does not pay farmers who grow wheat to keep teams, because they would have to keep such a large plant. By the time they have the wheat taken off they want to start ploughing again.
1307. What is the area of your holding at Wallanbillan? 14,900 acres.
1308. What proportion of that is suitable for agriculture? The whole of it with the exception of a few acres under water.
1309. Taking the land between Wallanbillan and Bullock Creek, is it all of the same character? Yes.
1310. Is it all suitable for agriculture? Yes.
1311. It has been suggested that the line towards Bulbodney might, instead of starting from Bogan Gate, be taken from Parkes to Peak Hill and from there to Bullock Creek;—what is the country like between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? There is a great deal of broken country, creeks, and cowals. It would have to cross some high ridges.
1312. Would the country on the whole between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek compare favourably or unfavourably with that between Trundle and Bullock Creek? From Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek it would be much cheaper to run a railway.
1313. Which would be the best from an agricultural stand-point? I do not think there would be any difference. There is a good deal of hilly country on the Peak Hill line which does not appear on the Committee's map, and there are also some deep creeks which would necessitate bridges.
1314. Do you think it is probable that the cost of construction would be a great deal higher if you attempted to reach Bullock Creek from Peak Hill? Yes.
1315. What area do you cultivate at present at Wallanbillan? 2300 acres.
1316. Would the Bulbodney railway be an incentive to you to increase cultivation? Yes; my intention is to increase it more than double.
1317. Do you farm your land yourself, or do you let it on the halves system? I do it all myself.
1318. Would any extension of farming operations be dealt with by you in the same way? Yes.
1319. What is the general capacity for stock of the land around Wallanbillan? One sheep to the acre.
1320. What has been your wheat yield? Our average yield for about seven years has been 17 bushels to the acre.
1321. Does that include the recent drought years? Yes, dry years and good years. We had as low a yield as 9 bushels to the acre one year.
1322. What was your largest crop over the whole area during that period? In one season, 24 bushels over the whole area.
1323. It has been put forward that the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line and the western line will serve the country between the two railways;—do you think that is so, or do you think it will be necessary to make an additional line to effectually serve that area? I do not think the proposed line would serve the whole area. I do not consider that it would serve me on this part of the run. If no line were constructed to Bullock Creek I could not continue growing wheat here; but, in the event of the railway being constructed to Bullock Creek, I intend to grow wheat in that direction. The portion I have under wheat, close to this homestead, will go back to grass.
1324. Do you think 22 miles is too far to cart wheat? Yes, at the present price.
1325. What suggestion is there to serve the country in addition to the proposed railway towards Bulbodney? In order to open up this country it would be necessary to run a cross line from Bullock Creek

P. A. Cannon.

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- P. A. Cannon. Creek to Narramine. It would run the whole way through first-class agricultural and grazing land. From the river to Narramine, in what we call a reasonably wet season, it is impossible to cart even wool.
 17 Aug., 1900. We have to pay very high prices for wool.
1326. Supposing you had fair roads, do you think it would pay a man to grow wheat on good land 22 miles from a railway? Not with the price at 2s. a bushel.
1327. What, in your opinion, is the limit of attraction for an agricultural line? Twenty miles at the outside. I have to pay 2d. a bag extra for an additional 2 miles cartage. I am paying 14d. a bag from here to Narramine, and 16d. a bag for 2 miles further out, and the carriers take the 14d. a bag wheat in preference. That is because the road is very heavy.
1328. Do you think that if the suggested line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, and a line from Narramine to Bullock Creek, forming a loop, were constructed, they would come within a reasonable distance of paying? Yes; I believe that the produce from the district would increase 400 per cent. at the very least, and the carriage of other merchandise accordingly.
1329. Is there a great amount of settlement between Wallanbillan and Bullock Creek, or is the land mainly in the hands of a few holders? There is a good deal of settlement. There has also been some land surveyed recently for selection.
1330. Is that land suitable for agriculture? Yes; it is good agricultural land.
1331. Do you think that landholders generally would be of the same opinion as yourself, as far as extending the agricultural operations are concerned, between Bullock Creek and Wallanbillan if the railway were made? I am sure they would. I have heard a great many of them say so, and I know a great many of them are clearing land in anticipation of that line being constructed.
1332. I presume you have seen the estimate of the Railway Commissioners as to the probable financial results of the railway, which go to show rather a large deficiency;—are you willing, as far as your land within a reasonable distance of the line is concerned, to contribute towards reducing that loss? I am quite prepared, provided the suggestion is reasonable.
1333. Do you think it is reasonable to impose a charge of 2d. per acre within 5 miles of the line, and 1d. per acre between 5 and 10 miles, and so on? Yes.
1334. Do you send your wool at present to Narramine? Yes. I cart my own wool. I would have to pay £1 or £1 5s. per ton.
1335. Would you send your wool *via* the Bullock Creek line? Yes. I believe the proposed railway is necessary to open up this country. It is not producing one-tenth of its capacity.
1336. *Mr. Hyam.*] What time is occupied on the journey between here and Narramine by a waggon with an average load, and with the road in its ordinary state? It takes my waggon six days to go there and back.
1337. What time would it take you from the extreme end of your land to Bullock Creek? Three days. The road is much better; the country is hard and livelier.
1338. Is there any metal on the road between here and Bullock Creek? There is a little stone at one point; I think it could be utilised for road making.
1339. Is the country sounder than on the Narramine-road? Yes.
1340. Is there any possibility of improving the road between here and Narramine? No; there is no material for doing so, until you get within a few miles from Narramine.

George Currie, grazier, Strathallan, sworn, and examined:—

- G. Currie. 1341. *Chairman.*] What is your position with regard to the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line? I live 23 miles north-easterly from Bullock Creek.
 17 Aug., 1900.
1342. Have you had any experience as a farmer? No.
1343. Have you had any opportunity of judging the capacity of the land, from an agricultural point of view? Yes.
1344. What experience have you had? I lived about fifteen years in the Goulburn Valley district. I was brought into contact with farming to a great extent there, although I took no personal part in it.
1345. From what you have seen of the country in your own district, how would you compare it with the Goulburn Valley wheat land? I consider that this country compares very favourably with the best of the Goulburn Valley. I have also lived in a district close to Berrigan. My relatives have properties there now. This district compares very favourably with Berrigan.
1346. What is the size of your holding on the Bogan? Close on 8,000 acres of secured land.
1347. Do you do any farming? No, only growing hay.
1348. What do you consider is the carrying capacity of your country? I have kept about a sheep to the acre during the last five years of drought.
1349. In good seasons, what increase would there be? I would put it down as a sheep to the acre country. In a good year it would carry more.
1350. Would the construction of the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line induce you to go in for agriculture on your land? Yes—probably a good deal.
1351. What proportion of your holding is suitable for agriculture? There are some parts more suitable than others; but, with the exception of a swamp, it is all suitable.
1352. What yield of hay do you usually get? I have only begun to grow it quite recently. I have seen over 2 tons per acre grown on my land.
1353. Do you agree in the main with what Mr. Cannon has stated? Yes; the roads are the principal objection. I was on the point of beginning to farm about two or three years ago, but the road from here to Narramine is impassable in wet weather, and the cartage is too high.
1354. With railway communication, and with the development of agriculture on your holding, would you be able to carry more sheep than you can carry now? Yes, far more—probably double in the course of a very short time.
1355. Do you agree with other witnesses who have told us that, with the construction of a railway, the produce in the district would be increased in a two-fold manner—first by the agricultural produce, and second by the increase in the sheep-carrying capacity of the run? Yes. Of course, my idea would be, if there were a railway within a reasonable distance, to farm portions of my land and then lay it down in lucerne. It has been proved to be lucerne-growing country, and the rainfall is large enough for lucerne.
1356. Are we to gather from that that you would not go in permanently for agriculture? Yes; because I would keep on putting in fresh paddocks year by year.
- 1357.

1357. Would you put in lucerne in the older paddocks? Yes; that would increase the carrying capacity.
1358. What would be the increase in the carrying capacity? Five or six times. The country that would carry one sheep to the acre now, would carry five or six to the acre under lucerne.
1359. Do you think it has been satisfactorily established that this country is suitable for lucerne-growing? Yes; I have seen it live here during the last four years of drought.
1360. *Mr. Hyam.*] How long will lucerne stand after it has been planted? Provided it has been properly farmed, it has stood here for the last five or six years.
1361. Is that the limit? I do not know; it is impossible to say what is the limit.
1362. You know that lucerne does not stand so long after feeding as by cutting? Yes; but it has stood here for five or six years.
1363. Then you would have to replant? I do not know that it would be necessary to replant at the end of that time, because the country has not been tried.
1364. Your evidence might be open to the construction that you would gradually clear your land, and put it under wheat for a certain number of years, then sow it with lucerne until you had the whole of it under that crop, and then discontinue growing wheat? Not necessarily; because it will always be a country suitable for wheat. If I began growing wheat I would continue to do so. We are at a great disadvantage here on account of the difficulty of road carriage to Narramine. The roads during this winter have been practically impassable for teams. I have been paying as high as 3s. 6d. a cwt. on loading from the railway to this place.
1365. *Chairman.*] Is there the same difficulty in getting from here to the railway? Yes.
1366. What do you usually pay for goods from the railway? When the roads are hard, about 1s. per cwt. and upwards.

G. Currie.
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Arthur Seaton Machin, farmer and grazier, near Wallanbillan, sworn, and examined:—

1367. *Mr. Hyam.*] Where do you live? Four miles west from here, running parallel to the railway.
1368. How far would you be from the proposed railway at the nearest point from your boundary? From where I am at present living, I would be 20 miles from Tullamore.
1369. What is the size of your holding? At present, 970 acres. The balance of my block is surveyed, but I have not yet got it.
1370. Is it to be made up when the land is available? Yes.
1371. Will that give you 2,560 acres? Yes; and I have an annual lease of the stock route.
1372. How do you use your land? For sheep at present, except a piece for hay. I am clearing the land.
1373. If the railway is constructed from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney as proposed, will you go in for wheat growing? Yes; I have 70 or 80 acres cleared now.
1374. Is the land in your locality suitable for anything else besides sheep-farming and wheat-growing? It is suitable for dairying and wheat-growing.
1375. Do you think that in dry seasons you could carry on dairying successfully? Not without farming; we would have to grow feed.
1376. With care and attention, and with the growth of crops suitable for dairying, would you be able to carry out that industry successfully? Yes; but I do not think it has been tried.
1377. Would it be an experiment? Yes.
1378. With a railway, would you combine dairying and sheep-farming? Yes; the additional area which I would get will only be 15 miles from the proposed railway.
1379. You have heard Mr. Cannon and Mr. Currie give their evidence;—do you agree with them? Yes; in the main.
1380. Is there anything you would like to add to it? I consider that the proposed railway would not suit the majority of the people in this district; they would not be able to use the railway on account of the river.
1381. Do you think that the people on the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney side of the river would be brought into communication with the proposed railway? Yes.
1382. Would they use it in preference to the railway at Narramine? Yes; on account of the river and the road.
1383. Would the road to the proposed railway be better? Yes; undoubtedly.
1384. You have heard of the proposal to put a tax on land within 5 miles of the railway at the rate of 2d. per acre, and proportionately at a greater distance? Yes.
1385. Would you be willing to contribute with the others on that basis? Yes; of course that would mean a halfpenny per acre on my full holding.
1386. Have you been farming in the New England district? Yes.
1387. Were you engaged in extensive operations? Yes, in that district. There are immense areas of land here eminently suited for agriculture.
1388. How would the land here compare with the land in the New England district? On the whole, the land here is superior. Of course there are patches of land in New England far superior to the land here—that is to say, there are immense areas of basaltic soil there. I was living east of Glen Innes, 13 miles towards the coast.
1389. Do you think that the land in that locality is superior to the land here? Yes; for wheat-growing.
1390. What was your average in that locality? If I remember rightly, I obtained 45 bushels to the acre, but that was an exceptional season. I have taken off the land here 32 bushels, and I have only been here five years, and it could not have been a good year. I got it three years ago. Of course it was only on a small area, and I think it was in the year 1896.
1391. Do you think this country would compare favourably with the New England district? Yes; I consider it is superior, taking into account the immense area. I do not know anything about its lasting qualities.
1392. What is the carrying capacity of the country for sheep? I differ from other gentlemen on that point; I would put it at 1½ acres to the sheep, in order to be safe.
1393. What would it carry, combined with agriculture? Two sheep to the acre.
1394. As you clear your land and improve it, would you be perfectly safe in carrying more sheep than you do at present? Yes.
1395. Have you had experience in feeding sheep in drought times? I have had to feed my sheep here for

A. S. Machin.
17 Aug., 1900.

- A. S. Machin. for four years. Those who have had experience here in feeding sheep on hay find it has been a great success.
- 17 Aug., 1900. 1396. Would the proposed railway be a benefit to the district in times of severe drought by giving facilities to remove stock to better places? Yes.
1397. Have any large quantities of stock been removed from this locality for better pasture? Yes.
1398. Do you think the railway would be made use of by small holders? Yes; it would be easy to get the sheep quickly on to the grass and at a less expense.
1399. Have you a small number of sheep? Yes.
1400. Occasionally you have to feed your sheep? Yes.
1401. If a railway came within a reasonable distance, would you be induced sometimes to send half a truck or a truck load of sheep to Sydney, perhaps joining with your neighbours? Yes; we are debarred from doing that at present.
1402. The reason being, that it would not pay you to drive them to Bogan Gate? Yes.
1403. If you had a railway within a reasonable distance, would you be able to avail yourself of the Sydney market? Yes. I consider that if the proposed railway were constructed, it would be a great benefit to the majority of the people here to extend it to Narramine.
1404. Do you think that this railway would attract the whole of the trade that goes to Narramine at present? Yes, on this side of the river.
1405. Do you know the Narramine Road? Yes, I had a team on it. The roads are very good compared with what they have been during the past winter. I came out of town the other day with six horses carrying 32 cwt., and it took me four days to do the trip. I do not think there is a worse road in New South Wales over level country.

SATURDAY, 18 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at "the Hall," Peak Hill, at 7.30 p.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Jacob Matthews, Mayor, Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Matthews. 1406. *Mr. Watson.*] Where do you reside? Two miles out of Peak Hill.
- 18 Aug., 1900. 1407. Do you know the proposal to take a line of railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? Yes.
1408. You know that there has also been suggested a line from Parkes to Narramine through Peak Hill? Yes.
1409. It has been further suggested that, instead of starting from Bogan Gate to reach Bulbodney, that Parkes should be made the starting-point, and that the line, after going to Peak Hill, should be taken from there to Bulbodney, then forming a portion of the suggested line between Parkes and Narramine;—will you give the Committee your ideas on that subject? I think if it started from Parkes to come to Peak Hill, then turning to the west at right-angles, going to Bulbodney, it would suit Peak Hill equally as well, and I think it would suit the Bulbodney-Bullock Creek people generally as well as a line going from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney. If the line came here, going to Bulbodney, I do not think the distance from Parkes to Bulbodney around this way would be any greater than from Parkes to Bulbodney *via* Bogan Gate. From Parkes to this place there is splendid country. There is a grade of 1 in 100 to be obtained on the present surveyed line. There are no cuttings of any consequence. The railway would serve Mingelo and Bulderudgera; likewise it would serve McPhail and Tomingley, north of Peak Hill. McPhail is 9 miles and Tomingley 11 miles from here. If it went westerly from here it would cross the Bogan, which is a small river at that point; likewise it would cross Back Creek, which is not very large, and the only other creek between there and Bulbodney would be Bullock Creek, which is not a large one. It has to cross that creek anyhow. The only streams which it would have to cross on this line that it would not have to cross on the Bogan Gate line would be the Bogan River and the Back Creek. I know the country fairly well from here to Bulbodney; it is all splendid country. It is composed of myall, pine, and oak flats; also box and belar. Between here and Bullock Creek I do not think there would be one mallee hill to cross; after leaving Bullock Creek there are a few. I think it is 40 miles from here to Bullock Creek. There is a population at Peak Hill of about 1,000 or more. In evidence which I gave before, I stated that the population of McPhail was 400; I find that it is really 600 or 700. Tomingley has a population of about 250. This line would serve about 150 settlers outside the town limits.
1410. Would that number of 150 be on the line to or beyond Tomingley? From Tomingley to within 10 miles of Parkes, and within 10 miles of this place, and 10 miles towards Bullock Creek westerly from Peak Hill.
1411. In that number, you do not count those within 10 miles of Bullock Creek? No; but when you get there, there are a lot more settlers.
1412. You speak of the number that would be served by an extension *via* Peak Hill? Yes; the population of that area would be about 4,000 altogether—that is, including Peak Hill, Tomingley, and McPhail.
1413. I understand you have some figures relating to the tenure of land and the areas on the suggested Peak Hill line;—can you give the figures? I start 10 miles from Parkes, and continue to Tomingley. The total is 530,702 acres; area under cultivation, 22,092 acres; number of sheep, 263,742; number of landholders, 170. These figures refer to the area within 10 miles of Narramine.
1414. What should be deducted from each of these totals for the distance between Tomingley and the point at which you ceased to collect the figures? The number of landholders would be reduced by about twenty; the area of land would be reduced by about 40,000 acres. I do not think the area of cultivation would

would be reduced by more than 3,000 acres, and the sheep, approximately, by 20,000; so that the figures, after making those reductions, would refer to the land which would be served by an extension to Peak Hill. J. Matthews.
18 Aug., 1900.

1415. From here to Bullock Creek, is the land all good? Yes; it is splendid land.

1416. On the feature map of the Lands Department there is a range shown nearly directly west from Peak Hill;—would the line from here to Bullock Creek avoid that by keeping northerly? Yes; that range would be to the left of it—that is, south. They used to be called the Cadungule Mountains. It is timbered with kurrawong, mallee, ironbark, and oak.

1417. By how much would you avoid those hills? Eight or 10 miles to the north.

1418. So that they would not affect the traffic-producing part of the railway? No; the line would be fully 10 miles away.

1419. Taking the land between Parkes and Peak Hill, how far on each side of the line do you get agricultural country, taking the eastern and western sides? You get agricultural country to the Harvey Ranges, which are 8 or 12 miles easterly. On the western side you get it as far as the line from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek.

1420. From Peak Hill towards Narramine, through Tomingley, do the ranges come near the line? No; they are 8 or 10 miles away, except at Mingelo, where they come within 7 miles of the line.

1421. Are the greater number of the town population on this route engaged in mining? Yes; at Peak Hill, McPhail, and Tomingley.

1422. Speaking generally of mining affairs, are they healthy? Yes.

1423. Can you reasonably expect that the present population will either continue or be augmented? It will increase.

1424. The people who are to be served by the suggested Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line have nearly all offered to bear their share of making good any loss which may accrue in the working of the line;—do you think that if it is proposed to bring a line in this direction, the landholders here would be willing to come to a similar understanding? I have no doubt of it. I think if a line were constructed here it would not require anything of that kind. I believe that a line *via* Peak Hill would pay from the start.

1425. Are you prepared to back your opinion by entering into a guarantee for your share? Yes.

1426. Do you know the line the railway would take to Bullock Creek? Yes.

1427. Are there any engineering difficulties that would necessitate heavy construction? There is not a hill between here and Bullock Creek.

1428. Taking the gilgai country, would that require expensive viaducts or bridges? No, only the water-courses would require timber construction. There is not much gilgai country. The line would follow the high country, which is dry forest country.

1429. Taking the land first between Parkes and Peak Hill, what would you say, in view of its average rainfall, as to its capacity for wheat-growing? Last year was exceptionally dry, and the average was about 12 bushels to the acre. A fair average yield would be 16 bushels, and all of it would carry one sheep to 2 acres—that is, when improved.

1430. Take the land between here and Bullock Creek in the same way? It is equally good.

1431. Is there anything else which would be of interest to the Committee? When I was giving evidence at Dubbo, I said that the output of gold was 20,000 oz. I find that I was very much at sea in that respect. I find that since the inception of Peak Hill the output of gold has been 90,000 oz., amounting to £360,000. That is for ten years. One year the output was about 13,000 oz. That does not include McPhail and Tomingley.

1432. Is there any gold being got at the present time, independent of the shutting down of the Peak Hill Proprietary mine? Yes, that mine is working now on tribute; it is not shut down. There are two or three other mines on the Hill which are working in addition to that.

1433. *Mr. Hyam.*] The people living on the route of the proposed Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line have agreed to give the land required for the railway free of cost;—do you think the people on this alternative line would do the same? Yes; I think they would be only too glad to do so.

1434. Are you certain of it? I have never asked about it.

1435. What proportion of good land is there on this route? From Parkes to Peak Hill, and from here to Bullock Creek, 95 per cent. of the land could be ploughed—that is, within 10 miles of each side of the line.

1436. What proportion of the 4,000 population are engaged in mining? About 1,000 at Peak Hill, about 700 at McPhail, and 150 in Tomingley. These are people who are engaged in pursuits other than agriculture.

1437. You said that there would be no engineering difficulties, but is there not a great deal of hilly country about Parkes? The proposed line comes *via* the Condobolin line, and then round the hills. I know the country generally, and there are no big hills. I do not think there would be a cutting of 10 or 12 feet in the lot.

1438. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Can you give the increase of population in this district during the last four or five years? No; but it has been considerable, because a great deal of land has been taken up.

1439. Has it substantially increased? Yes.

1440. Does that apply to Peak Hill also? Yes; the cultivation has increased by nearly 8,000 acres during the last two years. There are large holdings between here and Allectown, which is 15 miles from Parkes. Goobang station had about 3,000 acres cultivated. I do not know what is being cultivated now.

1441. Has the agricultural area increased during the last five years? Yes; an increase of 8,000 acres in about two years.

1442. Between here and Bullock Creek, is there much land under cultivation along the suggested line? Yes; between here and Curra, 20 miles away, there are large farms.

1443. What would be the total length of the line to connect Parkes with Bulbodney, *via* Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? I think it is 67 miles from Parkes to Bullock Creek; that would be nearly 100 miles altogether.

1444. Is there much settlement between here and Bullock Creek? It is all selected.

1445. Where do the settlers between here and Bullock Creek do business? Between here and Curra, 20 miles away, they do most of their business at Peak Hill and Parkes. Further on, they do business with Narramine.

- J. Matthews. 1446. Is there a considerable trade between here and Bullock Creek? No; they go to Parkes with their wheat. They come here to get supplies.
- 18 Aug., 1900. 1447. Have you a knowledge of the country between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek? Yes.
1448. How would that country compare with the country between Parkes and Bullock Creek for agricultural purposes? This is the best country. The country is a little better, and the rainfall is decidedly better. We have a rainfall of about 22½ inches.
1449. Do you think that if a line between Parkes and Bulbodney were constructed, it would greatly increase the area under cultivation? I am sure it would.
1450. More than if a line were constructed between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? Yes.
1451. Would it open up more agricultural country? Yes.
1452. Is there much Crown land along the route between Parkes and Bullock Creek? No; the most of it is in private hands.
1453. Are there any large holdings? It is conditionally purchased and conditionally leased land. It is in the Central Division, and most of them have the full area of 2,560 acres.
1454. Have the large holders secured land other than conditionally purchased? I do not think so.
1455. Are there any within your knowledge who own 40,000 or 50,000 acres? No; there are some Crown lands between Alectown and here. It has been let on improvement lease lately; but it is not alienated.
1456. *Chairman.*] What is the character of the road from Peak Hill to Parkes? The road from Alectown to Parkes is very good. From here to Alectown it is good, except in exceptionally wet seasons.
1457. Do the settlers from Peak Hill or from Tomingley down to Alectown suffer any great inconvenience at present by reason of the indifferent roads? They suffered a lot this winter.
1458. What are the rates of carriage charged from Tomingley to Parkes? Thirty shillings a ton to Tomingley; 25s. to Peak Hill.
1459. What are you charged for the carriage of your wheat? One shilling a bag anywhere between here and Alectown. From Curra they give 1s. 6d. a bag—that is, on the proposed line.
1460. How far is Curra from the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line? I think Curra would be 25 miles from Trundle.
1461. When the Committee took evidence in Sydney, Mr. Harper, the Traffic Expert, was asked:—"We have one junction already at Parkes to go to Forbes, and now it is proposed to have another to go from Bogan Gate,—would there be any advantage in having this line started from Parkes? No; in the first place, that line would not serve so large an area, because at Parkes it would run at an acute angle, and not go through such good country as the line now proposed." Then he was asked:—"Could we not go at right angles due north? You would then lose some of the best settlement between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney";—have you anything to say with reference to that? My opinion is that, with regard to the land between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, there is nothing better in the Central Division. Certainly, from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek the country is not as good as it is between here and Bullock Creek.
1462. *Mr. Watson.*] Would it be as good as the country between Parkes and Peak Hill? Yes; it is splendid land; but it is a different kind of land. It is good for grazing, agriculture, and everything. The country between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek is better than that between here and Parkes, taking grazing and agriculture combined. I do not think it is any better for agriculture between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek than between here and Parkes; but taking both together it is better, and in addition we have mines.
1463. How far from the railway line do you think mixed farming can be profitably carried on? I think if you get within 15 or 20 miles of a railway you are pretty well served.
1464. Taking that into consideration, and also your previous statement that the Harvey's Range comes in on the eastern side of the Peak Hill-Parkes line at a distance of 8 or 12 miles, and leaving out of consideration for the moment the population on the land, would it not be better to go a little to the west, and get an area of 17 miles on each side of the line? There is another thing to be considered. At Mingelo the mountains are very narrow. On the other side of them is a great basin, and a fine agricultural area of land. A railway to Peak Hill would serve that country out to Obley—that is, about 32 to 35 miles from Peak Hill, about 30 miles from Mingelo, then 40 miles to Molong, and 30 odd miles to Wellington.

John Dight Mackay, grazier, Bulgandramine, sworn, and examined:—

- J. D. Mackay. 1465. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where do you reside? Ten and a half miles north-west of Peak Hill.
- 18 Aug., 1900. 1466. What area of land do you hold? I have a large pastoral holding of about 40,000 acres—that is, a pastoral lease which is falling in shortly.
1467. How much secured land have you there? 14,000 acres of conditional purchase and conditional lease.
1468. Do you cultivate any land? Yes; a little wheat and hay chiefly.
1469. Which is your nearest railway station? Narramine, from which my homestead is 33 miles distant.
1470. Have you a knowledge of the land along the suggested line from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek? Yes.
1471. How would you class that land? It is nearly all first-class agricultural land. It is also very good grazing land, especially from Peak Hill westward.
1472. How far would your property be from the suggested line? From 5 to 8 miles.
1473. Is there much land under cultivation between Parkes and Peak Hill? Yes.
1474. Further along towards Bullock Creek, is there any considerable area under cultivation? Not a great deal. On each side of the proposed line the quality of the land is fairly uniform. On the western slope it varies from red-pine forest to myall plain.
1475. Have you been cultivating for any length of time? For twenty years; but only for home consumption.
1476. What is the average production of wheat per acre in a fair season? Narramine is very similar to this country, and there the crops vary from 12 to 30 bushels to the acre.
1477. Have you been residing here long? Twenty-one years.

1478. During the past few years have you noticed any marked improvement in the district with regard to increased population and improvement of the land? There has been an enormous increase since I came here. During the last ten years the chief part of the settlement has taken place—that is, since the passing of the Land Act of 1884. J. D. Mackay.
18 Aug., 1900.
1479. Since the land has been settled upon, has there been any tendency to improve the land? Yes: from a grazing point of view, as well as in agriculture.
1480. How does it class as a pastoral district? On improved land it carries a sheep to $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 acres; in some cases it carries a sheep to 1 acre.
1481. Does the district suffer severely from drought? Sometimes; but we have a good average rainfall. My average for seventeen years is 23 inches.
1482. Has there been a severe drought during the last two or three years? They have been years of comparatively low rainfall.
1483. Has there been any serious loss of stock during those years? Not in this district.
1484. Is the water supply sufficiently good? It is chiefly artificial water, and it may be made good on every holding.
1485. Do you think that, if the suggested line from Parkes through to Bullock Creek and Peak Hill were constructed, it would be the means of opening any large area of land for agriculture? I have little doubt about it.
1486. Taking agricultural land, which you referred to as suitable for wheat-growing, say, 15 miles on each side of the railway, which would be the most profitable to the owners—to use it for wheat-growing or for sheep farms? On small holdings, agriculture; with the holdings as they are now they must be agriculturists. On the run immediately adjoining Peak Hill the areas were, I think, from 400 to 1,200 acres, and on Coradgery Run the areas are 1,000 acres.
1487. Would that be sufficiently large to maintain a family by sheep-farming? No; there must be agriculture.
1488. Would they be sufficiently large for wheat-growing? They are certainly large enough for one man to work. It depends upon a man's capital what area he can work.
1489. Are there many large holdings in the district similar to your own? There is only one, as far as I know, which would be affected by this line. There is only one really large holding in this district, and that is Mungary. I think they have about 50,000 acres of secured land; it is very rich land.
1490. How far is it from this line? Some of it is, perhaps, within 5 miles of the line.
1491. In a case such as that, given a railway, do you think the whole of that large area would be subdivided for agricultural holdings, or would the owner place that large area under cultivation himself? I cannot say. Speaking for myself, I have a large area of land ready for agricultural purposes if a railway comes near me. I have been looking for a railway from Parkes to Narramine. I now have upwards of 1,000 acres ready for the plough if a railway comes near to me.
1492. If the railway comes to Peak Hill, would it be sufficiently near to suit you, and also the other holding to which you have referred? A portion of it would come within a reasonable distance.
1493. Do you think that it would be more profitable with a railway close to large properties to place areas suitable for agriculture under cultivation, either by the owner or by subdividing it or letting it? Yes; provided the price of wheat did not fall below a profitable point.
1494. Has Peak Hill increased in population materially during the last two years? I do not think that is the case with the town, but it is with the district.
1495. Does that hold good with regard to the other townships further on? Yes; every year the land, as it becomes available, is immediately taken up. There is no land available here now which has not been selected.
1496. Is there any likelihood of other Crown lands being thrown open for settlement within easy reach of the suggested line? Yes; there are Crown lands on my own holding. I fancy the line will pass through it, or very close to it. To the west there are Crown lands falling in.
1497. When that land is thrown open, do you think it will be speedily taken up for settlement? I have no doubt of that.
1498. During the inquiry of the Committee into the Bogan Gate and Bulbodney railway, a number of owners of land who would be benefited by the railway expressed their willingness to contribute, by way of a tax on land, to make good any loss incurred in working the railway, the amount named being 2d. an acre within 5 miles on each side of the line, 1d. per acre on land between 5 and 10 miles, and so on;—would you be prepared to agree to such a proposal? Personally, I should be quite satisfied to pay such a tax.
1499. Do you think the landowners along the railway would be willing to do that between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? I should think they would. I would be very glad to do it.
1500. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is your pastoral land likely to be resumed? My lease runs out in 1903; I absolutely lose the whole of that, and it will be available for settlement.
1501. How much land is there on Mungary station in the same position? Rather a larger area. That land falls in next year. I think there are 50,000 acres.
1502. Is there much leasehold on Gerranagie station? About 30,000 acres.
1503. When would that land fall in? In about three years.
1504. What about Coradgery station? It has been all cut up.
1505. Can you only speak for yourself with regard to what you would do in the event of the suggested railway being carried out as to future agricultural operations? Yes.
1506. Do you think other people would follow your example? The Mungary holding is large enough to work as a pastoral holding, and I do not think they will go in for agriculture.
1507. Would not the increased revenue from wheat growing induce them to let their land? I do not think so. Coradgery is a large cultivator already. There they cultivate about 1,000 acres at present.
1508. *Chairman.*] Is there anything you desire to add? Yes. I wish to say something with reference to the question you asked Mr. Matthews with regard to Mr. Harper's evidence. At the time Mr. Harper gave his evidence the settlement had probably not taken place at Coradgery. He probably did not know that Coradgery had then been taken up in small farms. From my knowledge of the Coradgery and Bogan Gate country, I know that the former is infinitely superior to the Bogan Gate country, and that immediately north of Bogan Gate. When you get to Trundle it is a larger settlement, but they are within reach

J. D. Mackay. reach of Bogan Gate already. The country down Bullock Creek has a good deal of kurrawong ridges, which are not good for agriculture. With reference to this extension west to Peak Hill, it seems to me, looking at the map of existing railways, that it would divide the country here, and it is capable of further extension as far as agricultural land is available, and it is more suitable than a line at right angles to the existing line.

18 Aug., 1900.

1509. *Mr. Hyam.*] What is your opinion of the line from Peak Hill to Narramine direct? That is the line which I personally desire most to see.

1510. Would that be a good line? Yes; as it opens a market to the west.

1511. Would it open good country between here and Narramine? There is no better in this district.

1512. Would it serve a great area of country? It is only 23 miles from Tomingley to Narramine. The country is all settled with the exception of one small leasehold area, which will be available for settlement.

Frederick Beasley, farmer and grazier, near Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

F. Beasley.

18 Aug., 1900.

1513. *Mr. Hyam.*] Where do you reside? About 6 miles from Peak Hill in a south-easterly direction.

1514. Have you a large area? I have a big family, and we have five blocks amongst us. We have 2,560 acres each. We have about 1,000 acres under wheat this year.

1515. Do you carry on grazing as well? Yes; we have about 14,000 sheep.

1516. What is the average production of wheat per acre? About four bags to the acre.

1517. You carry over one sheep to the acre? Yes; there is abundance of feed at present.

1518. Have you had many losses? No losses during the drought.

1519. How far are you from Parkes? The homestead is about 25 miles.

1520. Do you take your produce to Parkes? Yes.

1521. What price per bag do you pay for wheat? Generally 1s.; but I have paid 2s. 6d. in the winter.

1522. Did you find any difficulty in obtaining cartage for your wheat this year? No.

1523. Can you give us general information on the subject before the Committee? The prosperity of the Colony at large depends greatly on those who occupy the land. I have been farming for forty years, and the greatest drawback is the want of railway communication to centres of population. In the cases of thousands of people who have left their holdings, that has been the principal cause; they have been too far from a market, and men with small capital have been obliged to dispose of their holdings. If they had been supplied with railway communication, they would still be on their holdings. I came from Riverina, and nearly the whole of that district was settled by small holders. They were agitating for railways for twenty-five years. About that time the principal number sold out, and many came into this part of the country. A great many of my former neighbours are now in this district; they were too far from a market in Riverina; they were on the Victorian border, and had to pay duty if they sent any of their produce into the neighbouring Colony. This district is well adapted for wheat-growing, and if there were railways provided for those producing wheat, the Government would find a difficulty in providing a sufficient number of trucks. In Victoria, when they made a line up the Goulburn Valley, they could not get sufficient trucks to carry away the wheat. This country is equally as good as that. The men here are capable and willing to cultivate the land, and the only drawback is the want of communication.

1524. If a railway were constructed from Parkes to Peak Hill, would it cause you to increase the area under cultivation? Yes; and every man along the line would increase his area of cultivation. From the very start the line would pay. I reckon that if every acre contributed 3d. in the way of freight for 5 miles on each side of the line, it would pay interest at the rate of 4 per cent. on the cost of construction.

1525. On the proposed line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, the people within 5 miles of the railway are willing to allow themselves to be taxed at the rate of 2d. an acre, and within 5 and 10 miles, at the rate of 1d. per acre, and so on;—do you think the people on this line would agree to that condition? I can say distinctly that they would have no objection to pay that amount.

1526. Would most of the people on the proposed line give the land required for the railway free of charge? I think any reasonable man would do so.

1527. Do you think they would do so, from your own personal knowledge, between Parkes and Peak Hill? It is nearly all Government land there; it is a railway reserve.

1528. Do you know the country between here and Bullock Creek? As far as I have seen it, the land is adapted for agriculture.

1529. What is the percentage of land fit for agriculture? I should say 90 per cent.

1530. Have you had considerable experience in fruit-growing? Yes; it is a good district for grapes and apples.

1531. Does it grow raisin grapes? Yes.

1532. Do you think this country would be suitable for evaporating or drying fruit? I have dried them myself in the sun, and I have had an evaporator. It could be done successfully from a commercial point of view.

William Michael Nash, farmer and grazier, Reedy, sworn, and examined:—

W. M. Nash.

18 Aug., 1900.

1533. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? At Reedy, 18 miles south-west from Peak Hill.

1534. Have you heard most of the evidence to-night? Yes.

1535. Do you corroborate generally what you have heard with regard to the desirability of constructing the Parkes-Peak Hill railway as against the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney railway? Yes; I agree with what has been stated. I think the Curra leasehold of 18,000 acres falls in this month. With regard to the probable applicants for it, we have had an instance at Coradgery, where there were 140 applicants for one block of 1,000 acres. There were a number of other blocks opened.

Evan Lewis Jones, farmer and grazier, near Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

E. L. Jones.

18 Aug., 1900.

1536. *Chairman.*] Where do you reside? About 15 miles south of west from Peak Hill.

1537. Have you heard the evidence as to the quality of the land in this district? Yes. I have travelled from here to Bullock Creek many times.

1538. Can you substantiate what has been said as to the good quality of that land? Yes, it is suitable generally for agriculture.

1539.

1539. What area do you hold? Three blocks of 2,560 acres each.
1540. Have you carried out agriculture? Yes. When we started to agitate for a railway here, I put in some cultivation, and I have increased the area every year; I have now 650 acres under cultivation.
1541. Which is your nearest railway station? Parkes, 33 miles away.
1542. Would there be any large development in that district if a railway were made *via* Peak Hill? Yes.
1543. If a line went from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek, would it go near your land? Yes.
1544. Would all the people there go in for cultivation? I think so.
1545. Is there anything you would like to add? The small settlers about Peak Hill, and between here and Parkes hold only about 400 acres each. My experience is that a man wants a fair sized area to live upon. For these small men, the only hope is dairying. As for a man trying to make a living on 1,000 acres with sheep, it is impossible.
1546. *Mr. Hyam.*] Could he not do so with mixed farming? He could make more out of dairying.
1547. *Mr. Watson.*] If a man had a railway within 15 miles of him, do you think he could make a living on 1,000 acres? Yes.
1548. Is this your argument, that because there is so much small settlement there is all the more necessity for a railway? Yes. If a line were made here, there is a great deal of pine timber which could be made use of, at present it is going to waste. A good market could be found for it; before wheat was grown the pine used to be carted 30 miles to Parkes. I pay £16 a year to the Government for 1,920 acres, and have proved it impossible to make that amount off the scrubby land. But after the land is improved it gets better, and can be made to carry a sheep to the acre in good seasons.

E. L. Jones.
18 Aug., 1900.

Thomas Bridle, farmer and grazier, near Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

1549. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What area of land do you occupy? 5,320 acres of conditional purchase and conditional lease, belonging to myself; and my son holds 1,050 acres conditional purchase and conditional lease. It is situated 12 miles due west from Peak Hill.
1550. Do you cultivate any considerable portion of it? Yes; 700 acres this year.
1551. Have you heard the statements made with regard to the character of the country between Peak Hill and Parkes and Peak Hill and Bullock Creek and Bulbodney, and do you confirm in the main the statements of the different witnesses? Yes.
1552. Do you know the country between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? Yes; I have travelled over it once or twice.
1553. How would that land compare with the land on this suggested line? The land on the Peak Hill line is better. There is more broken country on the other line than there is here.
1554. Is there much cultivation in the district near your land? Yes.
1555. Is it principally wheat? Yes.
1556. Where do you find a market? At Parkes for the Sydney market. I send mine to England.
1557. Is that more profitable than selling it locally? Yes.
1558. Do you think it will be profitable in future? Yes.
1559. How far have you to cart your wheat to the nearest railway station? Forty miles.
1560. Is not that too great a distance? Yes; if it was a wet summer I could not get it carried. I have tried to get it carted this summer; but I have not succeeded. It cost 2s. a bag to send the last of it. 1s. 6d. a bag is what I paid this year.
1561. Is there anything you can add to the evidence given this evening as to the desirability of carrying out this proposed line? The chief thing I have to say is that the line from Parkes to Peak Hill and thence to Bulbodney will split up the country better than any other line. It would break up the great distance between existing lines better than any other line.
1562. It has been stated that the average production of wheat in this district is 16 bushels per acre;—do you bear out that statement? Yes.
1563. Is there anything additional you wish to say? I quite agree with all I have heard stated. I have stopped cultivating at present. I have 1,000 acres more land ready for cultivation, but I have refused to go further until I have a railway. The roads are so bad that I could never get the wheat carried away at a proper price.
1564. What proportion of your holding is fit for cultivation? The whole of it. It would grow from 16 to 30 bushels an acre in a good season.
1565. Is that a fair description of all the country? Yes. There is a ridge at Coradgery; but that is the only bit of bad country between here and Bullock Creek.
1566. *Mr. Hyam.*] How far is your homestead from Trundle? Thirty-five or 40 miles.
1567. Would you be so far as that from the proposed railway between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? As far as I know, it would not be of any benefit to me.
1568. How far are you west of the Bogan? About 8 miles. There are several thousand tons of wheat still in the district, which will not stand road carriage. It would be sold at a profit if there were a railway.

T. Bridle.
18 Aug., 1900.

Thomas Daniel Oxley, storekeeper, Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

1569. *Chairman.*] Would a proposal to carry a railway through Peak Hill from Parkes, and thence on to Bulbodney, more equally divide the country at present without railway facilities than the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line? Yes; and the area is so large that it would be isolated from communication by the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line.
1570. Taking that portion of the suggested Peak Hill line to Bulbodney, what distance would it leave first, on the south side from the Condobolin line, and, second, on the north side from the Western line? Forty miles on each side. The Peak Hill section from Parkes to Peak Hill would work in as a connecting link of the other systems of railway—that is, the Parkes-Narramine line—that would be one link already made; while the extension from Peak Hill to Bulbodney would serve the whole of the country west of the Western line and north of the Condobolin line, which is purely agricultural. Then between Parkes and Peak Hill there is the Goobang holding. On that an area of 30,000 acres will fall in next year.

T. D. Oxley
18 Aug., 1900.

1571.

- T. D. Oxley. 1571. How far is that from Parkes? About 4 miles north of Parkes, and it comes this way.
 1572. Is not that all practically within the influence of the Parkes line? Yes; but this line will run alongside of it, and the land all round there is much superior to the land along the Bogan Gate line. I have been all over that land. Both as to climate and quality of soil, the land here is superior. Another thing which has been missed is the natural grade of the land through which the Peak Hill line would run; there are no engineering difficulties at all. The range which has been spoken of, where this line would cross it, is not 10 feet high between here and Bullock Creek; it falls away to nothing.

18 Aug., 1900.

MONDAY, 20 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Parkes, at 10:30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
 The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

John Medlyn, Mayor, Parkes, sworn, and examined:—

J. Medlyn.

20 Aug., 1900.

1573. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided here? Twenty-six years.
 1574. Have you a general knowledge of the country to be served by the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney railway and also by the Parkes-Peak Hill extension? I have not much knowledge of the first proposed line—I know the country between here and Peak Hill.
 1575. Can you give a general idea of the character of the country between Parkes and Peak Hill, and its possibilities? As far as agriculture is concerned, it is reckoned to be all good. There is a great deal of mining on that line, and there is a great deal of carriage by teams from here to Peak Hill. It has always been reckoned that the railway from here to Peak Hill would be part of a national line—that is, what is known as the cross line. Whether it would suit the people at Bulbodney I am not in a position to say. The cross line from here to Peak Hill and in that direction, has been advocated by almost every one as a national line which would go through the best agricultural land in the country. A great deal of wheat comes in here.
 1576. What do you mean by a national line? It has always been called a national line; that is, a cross line from Dubbo or Narramine on to Peak Hill, through here and then on to Forbes, Grenfell, and Young.
 1577. What peculiarity has it that you should call it a national line? It would open up traffic right through the Colony in the agricultural and mining country. At present a lot of coke is taken to Peak Hill for smelting.
 1578. What has been the character of the mining from here to Peak Hill during recent years? It has been steadily progressing. There are reefs between here and Aleetown, there is reefing country right through, and Peak Hill is a large mining centre.
 1579. Has there been much new development in mining lately? No; but there is a plant being put up 4 miles on this side of Aleetown.
 1580. Can you give the Committee a general idea of the trade relations between Parkes and the district towards Peak Hill? Parkes is the business centre for Peak Hill. Wheat comes in from Peak Hill. For some distance further, I think it would go to Dubbo or Narramine. There is a passenger traffic and goods traffic between here and Peak Hill.
 1581. What is the immediate course of the line from Parkes? I believe it goes straight on to Peak Hill; it would all go through agricultural country.
 1582. Where would the suggested line leave the Parkes-Condobolin line? It goes directly north from Parkes.
 1583. How far out from Parkes would it come on to the main road? About 4 miles.
 1584. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you regard the country the whole way to Peak Hill as first-class agricultural country? Yes; there is an enormous amount of wheat grown there now. It is generally an agricultural country.
 1585. How is it timbered? Box, chiefly.
 1586. Would it be sufficiently good to supply sleepers? Ironbark is better, and that might be got in the hills between here and Peak Hill. A large number of sleepers were brought from Aleetown for the Parkes-Condobolin line.
 1587. What is the prospect for mining? It is very fair.
 1588. How many mines are in work now? Between Peak Hill and here there are four small mines working. I believe that they will develop into large mines.
 1589. Have not a good many of them been abandoned? Yes; but the Koh-i-noor and the Phoenix were also abandoned for some time, and now they are among the best in New South Wales.
 1590. What has been the greatest depth obtained? 600 feet at the Koh-i-noor. It is now better than ever, and it is still working.
 1591. What are the average output and the returns? They have been dividend-paying mines during the last twelve months.
 1592. What influence would a railway have on the mining industry? At Parkes it would not have any influence; but it would have an influence in Peak Hill and between here and there. I have heard complaints about the cost of carriage of coke and machinery to Peak Hill.
 1593. The mining industry can hardly be considered to be flourishing in the district just now? Some of the mines have been idle for want of money to go deeper. That was the case with the Phoenix and the Koh-i-noor; but they have since turned out very well. That will be the case with others.
 1594. Do you know if any prospecting is going on? There is a little towards Aleetown.

Sydney

Sydney Ephraim John Close, auctioneer, Parkes, sworn, and examined:—

1595. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a knowledge of the country through which the proposed Bogan Gate-Bulbodney railway will pass? Yes; I know it well. S. E. J. Close.
20 Aug., 1900.
1596. How would you describe the country generally, taking a belt of 15 or 25 miles on either side of the line? It is fairly level country. There are a few ridges; but most of it is fit for agriculture.
1597. What proportion? There is very little of it that is not fit for agriculture. Three-fourths of it are fit for cultivation.
1598. What would the other fourth be fit for? Grazing.
1599. Is it heavily-timbered country? Yes.
1600. Which would be the best part of it? It is good right on to Bullock Creek. As you go over to Bulbodney there is a bit of a range, which is the worst of it. On the other side there is good country as well.
1601. Would the country carry close settlement with railway facilities? Yes; and they could do on much smaller areas than at present.
1602. What would be a sufficient area for a farmer? 1,000 acres, with a railway.
1603. Have you had any experience of the people engaged in agricultural pursuits there? Yes; I have bought wheat from them.
1604. Is it of good quality? Yes.
1605. Do you think that 16 bushels to the acre would be a fair estimate of the yield? Yes; I have known a yield of seven and eight bags to the acre.
1606. Would that be in an exceptionally good season? We have not had a good season for seven years, and the yield I have referred to was during that period.
1607. Have the wheat crops been a failure during the drought? No; there has been a fair crop even during the worst seasons. They have obtained three or four bags to the acre in most places.
1608. If a railway were made, would all the land suitable for agriculture be used for that purpose? I think most of the present holders would utilise two-thirds more than they do at present. It is only the cost of carriage which keeps them back.
1609. For what distance on each side of a railway would it serve agriculturists? Fifteen miles is not too far to come to a railway.
1610. Are there some farmers carting their wheat a greater distance than 15 miles now? Yes, considerably more.
1611. Would it pay to carry wheat at the present ruling rates for the distance which some wheat-growers are now carting it? No; it gives them very little return.
1612. Would wheat-growing be better than sheep-farming with a railway? Yes.
1613. What distance are some farmers now carting their wheat? A man carted some in for me the other day, 36 miles—that was to Bogan Gate.
1614. What is the nature of the country between Parkes, Peak Hill, Bullock Creek, and thence to Bulbodney? I occupied most of the country in that neighbourhood. I owned Curra and Currawinnia. The first section of the proposed line, between Parkes and Peak Hill, consists of good agricultural land. Between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek you get into a different class of country; it is myall land, and it is not thoroughly reliable for agriculture; it does not grow good crops in wet seasons. The remainder of the land on that line would be common to both railways.
1615. How would you compare the land between here and Bullock Creek with the land between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek? The land on the first portion of the line to Peak Hill would be similar to the land on the other line from Bogan Gate. Then from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek you have the myall and gilgai land. Curra is midway. Then you get on to sandy soil; after that, thickly timbered country of a sandy nature. It would be good for agriculture when cleared.
1616. Taking the country between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek, and the country between Parkes and Bullock Creek, which would contain the greater amount of agricultural land? I think the Bogan Gate country.
1617. Which line would open up most land for settlement? I think the Bogan Gate line would.
1618. Which contains the greater area of Crown lands? I think the Bogan Gate line.
1619. Is the rainfall similar in the two districts? Yes; in a drought they would suffer about equally.
1620. What about the water supply on this line? Of course, on the Bogan Gate line they would have to conserve all the water; there are no creeks. Bullock Creek is small, but it could be dammed so as to hold a good supply. The line from Parkes would cross the Bogan River.
1621. As a purchaser, can you say which district produces the most wheat? On the Parkes-Peak Hill line there is a good deal of wheat growing, but that is also the case on the Bogan Gate line. I do not know exactly which would give the best yield for the same area of country. The principal part of the country between Parkes and Peak Hill is under cultivation. Some have 800 or 900 acres under wheat. That is also the case on the other line.
1622. From a pastoral point of view, how would the country on the two lines compare? The country, *via* Peak Hill, would be better fattening country. They would be about the same with regard to carrying capacity.
1623. Were you engaged in pastoral pursuits on the property you have referred to? Yes; for a number of years.
1624. Is it good fattening country? Yes.
1625. Did you experiment in cultivation? Yes; I tried it for several seasons and got no return. I persevered and put in 50 acres to grow hay, and I got as much hay off that as kept me during the rest of the time I was there. The season happened to be suitable; it was not too wet or too dry.
1626. Was the soil unsuitable? It was myall land, and if it got too much wet I had no return; if a dry season came I got nothing. A medium season having occurred I got a wonderful crop.
1627. Is there a large area of that kind of country? About 14 or 15 miles of it; it was flat, alluvial, myall ground; it was black soil.
1628. Is there much black-soil country in that locality? Only 12 or 14 miles where the railway would go through.
1629. Would there be more red-soil country between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek than between Parkes and Bullock Creek? Yes.
1630. Which was the most suitable for agriculture? The red soil. 1631.

- S. E. J. Close. 1631. For pastoral purposes would that also hold good? It is good carrying ground, but not good fattening ground.
- 20 Aug., 1900. 1632. Does it stand drought better than the black soil? Yes; as soon as the black soil dries, the ground cracks.
1633. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the land at Wallanbillan? Yes.
1634. That is some distance north of the suggested line between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek;—would you hold that to be similar land to that through which the line would go further south? No; that is a little more solid; there is not so much gilgai ground.
1635. It seems that this suggestion of running a line from Parkes to Peak Hill, thence to Bullock Creek and Bulbodney, was put forward with the idea of endeavouring to serve the same number of people with one line instead of constructing two lines—that is to say, it has been advocated that there should be a line from Narramine to Parkes; it is thought by some people that if the railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney is constructed, it will be too great a competitor with a line from Narramine to Parkes;—do you think that the country between Parkes and Peak Hill surveyed line and the Bogan Gate and Bulbodney line is sufficiently productive and extensive to provide traffic for both lines—that is, assuming that the line does not go further than from Parkes to Peak Hill, and the other line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? I do not hold with the railway stopping at Peak Hill; I believe it should go further.
1636. Would the area between those two lines justify their construction? I can hardly answer that question. I think the Bogan Gate—Bulbodney railway should pay its way; I do not know about the other.
1637. What is the average distance between the two lines from here to Tullamore? About 35 miles.
1638. Does it start at 20 miles and widen out to 35 miles at Bullock Creek and Peak Hill? Yes.
1639. Would you say, from a national point of view, that that country would be thoroughly divided by the two lines? I think the Peak Hill line should be run as a national line, and that it should not stop at Peak Hill.
1640. It may be many years before the national view is brought into operation; in the meantime we have to consider the question from a paying point of view;—from that point of view, do you think we would be justified in constructing the two railways at present? I hardly know how to answer that question. I think one line should be carried out from a national point of view, and the other line should be carried out for the benefit of those who have settled on the land.
1641. Is it a fact that there will be a good-sized area of Crown lands on Curra to be thrown open for selection at an early date? A portion of it will.
1642. Is a reasonable portion of the leasehold area on Curra likely to be fit for agriculture? A good portion of it would be. There is a good deal of rough country on the holding. There are some ridges which run from the south to the north. None of the ridges would be fit for cultivation.
1643. On the Mungary station we were informed that a large portion on the western side of the Bogan would be made available for settlement next year;—does it consist of gilgai country? A good deal of it is gilgai country. There is a very large swamp on it, three-quarters of a mile across. There is a lot of it which would be suitable for agriculture.
1644. We have been informed that on Genanagie there are 30,000 acres falling in in three years time;—what is the character of the leasehold there? That will be on the east side of the Bogan, close to Peak Hill. That is good agricultural land.
1645. Would any line to Peak Hill serve that country? Yes.
1646. *Mr. Hyam.*] Who is the present owner of Curra station? Mrs. Arthur.
1647. Was some portion of Curra resumed some time ago? Yes.
1648. Was that land selected? Yes.
1649. Did you know any of those selectors? Yes.
1650. Do you know Mr. Williamson? Yes.
1651. Has he bought out a good many of those selectors lately? Not on Curra run.
1652. Well, some of the selectors on other stations? Yes.
1653. For what reason did they sell out? I do not know. My own idea is that they only came here for speculative purposes—that they came to take up the land with the view of selling out at the expiration of their term.
1654. You did not look upon them as *bonâ fide* settlers? Yes. I do not think they sold out because the land was not suitable.
1655. Do the people here go in for mixed farming? Yes.
1656. Do you think that an ordinary block of 2,560 acres is sufficient for a man in this district to carry on? Yes. I think a man could do on that. A man on one of the selections referred to who who sold out came here with £150, and took up 2,560 acres. You can imagine his financial state at the end of five years.
1657. Did those selectors make a profit in selling out? Yes; a fairly good profit.
1658. Was it because they enhanced the value of the land, or was it because Mr. Williamson wished to add to his holding? They enhanced the value of the land; they ringbarked it, put a tank on and improved it about half as much as it should have been.
1659. Is Mr. Williamson a large landholder there? Yes.
1660. Is this land, which has been sold, on the proposed Parkes—Bulbodney railway, or is it anywhere near it? Yes; some of it is.
1661. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you mean that you would recommend the construction of a line from Parkes to Peak Hill, but not on to Bulbodney? I think it could be run to Peak Hill, and right on to Narramine; but I cannot recommend the other proposal.
1662. But you recommend the line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? Yes; I think that would be a paying line.
1663. Is that because you consider the country between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney is better than the country between Peak Hill and Bulbodney? I think the Bogan Gate line would supply a greater number of settlers, and I think the settlers on that line could do with smaller areas.
1664. Are the ridges on the Peak Hill—Bulbodney line extensive? They run right through the block from north to south.
1665. What width are they? About a mile and a half, or a mile and three-quarters.
1666. Would they provide pasture, or would they be useless? There is but little to be got out of them; the soil is very gravelly. It is all small white quartz, where it does not consist of big granite rocks.

Robert Mitchell (Wright, Heaton, & Co.), Parkes, sworn, and examined:—

1667. *Chairman.*] Have you some figures indicating the amount of outward traffic from Parkes to Peak Hill? I have not had time to take them out; I have only been here three months. During June and July there were about 200 tons of goods outwards from Parkes to Peak Hill. R. Mitchell.
20 Aug., 1900.
1668. Were they mainly consigned to Peak Hill? Yes; the largest part of the traffic was coke. Fully half of it was for the Peak Hill Proprietary Mine. That is rather extraordinary traffic; but I understand that they intend to go in more heavily for that traffic.
1669. Do you send goods any further north than Peak Hill? We did for a time send goods to Tomingley and McPhail.
1670. Do you send station supplies to any holdings between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? We send supplies to Genanagie, Curra, Brue Plains, and Coradgery. On the west, our trading area is practically bounded by the Dividing Range, and on the north by the boundary of Curra, and then on towards Bulgandramine. From what I have heard from selectors and others, I think that with a fairly good season, they will have considerable difficulty in getting their wheat to market owing to the want of teams.
1671. When you have teams available, do you experience much difficulty with respect to the roads? Between here and Peak Hill the road is a very fair one.

Henry Harry Cooke, farmer, and member of the Local Land Board, Parkes, sworn, and examined:—

1672. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you resided in Parkes? Since 1862, ten years before Parkes was founded. H. H. Cooke.
20 Aug., 1900.
1673. Have you been chiefly engaged in farming? In farming and mining.
1674. How far from here is your farm? Two miles.
1675. Are you acquainted with the country between here and Bulbodney? I have been over it several times.
1676. How would you describe the country, taking 10 to 15 miles on each side of the proposed railway? It might be fairly described as undulating country, consisting of open box and pine forests, suitable for wheat, wool, and wine growing. This district is the home of the grape vine.
1677. What is the proportion of agricultural land? About 75 per cent. of the people seem to me to be a little in the dark about this matter. This country, in order to be occupied profitably, must be occupied by those who grow both wheat and wool. If a man goes on to 2,560 acres and grows wheat, the grazing capabilities of the land are not lessened; they are very often increased. Three-fourths of the whole area mentioned would be fit for agriculture—that is, between here and Peak Hill.
1678. What proportion would be fit for vine culture? The whole three-quarters. The remainder would consist of ridges, but every place will grow grass when the rubbish is cleared away. Where there are rocks above the surface of soil you will see signs of mineral deposits, either gold or copper.
1679. How would you describe the country between Peak Hill and Bulbodney? It is similar, with the exception that there is some myall country intervening between the Bogan and the red country on the other side of Curra.
1680. Do you consider that land equally good for agriculture? It is heavier for ploughing, but once it is broken it is good land, and in favourable seasons it yields heavy crops.
1681. Are you also acquainted with the country from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? It is similar undulating country, covered with open pine and box forests; there are, occasionally, ridges, with mineralised rocks and thin soil. When the rubbish is cleared away it will grow grass.
1682. What proportion of that country do you consider is suitable for agriculture? About three-fourths.
1683. What has been the average yield of wheat on the country through which the two proposed lines will pass? Since the farmers have taken to growing wheat in that neighbourhood, we have had very inferior seasons. Notwithstanding that, the average yield has been from 15 to 20 bushels. The crops have never absolutely failed. When showers come at the right time there is an abundant harvest. Some have got 30 bushels, and others 15 bushels.
1684. Do you think the average is about the same on the two lines? Yes.
1685. What is the rainfall here? Twenty-four inches at Parkes, but not lately. Further west the rainfall diminishes.
1686. Have you had any experience in growing fruit? Yes.
1687. Has fruit been grown to any extent here? No, but people are beginning to do so. I have 14 acres of vines and 2 acres of mixed fruits.
1688. Are any other crops grown here? Barley grows very well, oats sometimes, and maize on the lower ground. Sorghum will grow well here.
1689. Is there a satisfactory return from those crops? Yes, but there is not much demand for them.
1690. On the line from here to Peak Hill and on to Bulbodney, what do you think would be a fair area on which to support a family by mixed farming? To start with, not less than 2,560 acres. It will take a long time to bring that into a state of production; but the man's family will be increasing, and he will have to subdivide it because all the rest of the land is taken up.
1691. What is the method of clearing the land for agriculture? Grubbing. If you clear the land properly it will cost 30s. an acre after the timber is killed.
1692. Do you think that mixed farming is the best method? Yes; it is the only paying method.
1693. Is there a possibility of mining in this district being permanent? Yes. I came here as a miner in 1862. There were then one or two reefs, and when they got to a depth of 200 or 300 feet, it was said they had run out. Superior enterprise and capital came in, the lodes were followed deeper, and it was found that they were as good as they were on the surface.
1694. What is the deepest of them at present? 600 feet at the Koh-i-noor; 700 feet at the Bushman's; and Dayspring 500 feet.
1695. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have the reefs continued? Yes; they have had good crushings lately.
1696. What is the width of the reef? From 2 to 4 feet.
1697. Do the persons who are engaged in mining seem hopeful? Yes; the alluvial has been worked out in the vicinity of Parkes; but in many cases reefs are found under alluvium.
1698. Are you in favour of a line of railway the whole way from here to Peak Hill and on to Bulbodney? It seems to me incredible that it could be proposed in that way. Suppose you make a line to Peak Hill—
which

H. H. Cooke. which will be made ultimately—that would be part of a line from here to Werris Creek. If you make a line from Peak Hill on to Bulbodney, it seems to me that a more necessary connection will be wanted—that is, between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney.

20 Aug., 1900.

1699. Are you in favour of a line to Bulbodney by way of Peak Hill? No; it is not the best way from what I know of the country.

1700. Is there anything else that you would like to state to the Committee? Something has been said about the state of the roads. All bush roads and tracks are bad when there is heavy traffic. The Government are urged from time to time to spend money on roads, and I daresay if the cost were reckoned up it would be found that to make a good macadamised road, and to keep it in repair, the cost would be quite equal to that of making a light line of railway over the same length of country. If farmers are to exist by wheat-growing and other agricultural pursuits, they must have roads. A light railway is cheaper than a macadamised road; you can travel on the railway in all weathers, and you can get revenue from it. Light traffic does not hurt the bush roads. I saw seven teams going to Peak Hill, and it took thirty-six horses at a time to pull one waggon out of the mud. It is certainly better to provide light railways instead of roads.

1701. Do you think that owners of land along the proposed railway line would be willing to give their land free for railway purposes? I do not know; but I should think so.

1702. *Chairman.*] You stated that you thought the Parkes-Narramine line through Peak Hill should be constructed on national grounds;—what national benefit would follow from the construction of the line? We are now entering upon a Federal system of government. We do not know where the federal city will be, but I fancy it should be near Orange. In view of Federal government in the future, we do not think it is absolutely necessary that all the traffic from the north to the south, from Queensland to South Australia or to Western Australia, should go down the Northern line to Sydney, and by the Southern line to Melbourne. We look upon a railway from Werris Creek to the south as being of importance, not only in opening up the country through which it passes, but also as a line by which traffic can be taken from one Colony to another. Then also it should be considered as a military line. We do not know what may occur in the future. It must be apparent how easy it would be to break the connection between Queensland and Sydney by a chance shot at the Hawkesbury Bridge. For these reasons and others, we are of opinion that a line from here to Werris Creek should be made, and that it should be continued south, perhaps to Grenfell.

1703. *Mr. Watson.*] You said that you could not understand the suggestion to take a railway from Parkes to Peak Hill, and thence to Bullock Creek and Bulbodney, because, if it were constructed, it would leave a large area which would still require railway communication? Yes.

1704. A line from Parkes to Bulbodney by Peak Hill would leave only about 40 miles between that line and the Condobolin line;—do you say that that would be too great an area to leave without railway communication? A line taken from Parkes to Peak Hill and on to Dubbo or somewhere else, must be made. To Bulbodney from here by Peak Hill, seems to me to be like a dog's hind leg, and it would leave the country about Trundle and further on without a railway.

1705. What area of country would be unserved if a line were taken from here to Peak Hill and on to Bullock Creek? All the Trundle country would be unserved. I do not see any sense in the alternative proposal to take a line from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek.

1706. Do you think that the country between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek, and that between the suggested line from Parkes to Peak Hill and Narramine, could stand two railways so close together? You must have roads of some kind, and a macadamised road would cost as much as a railway.

1707. Do you think we can afford to make railways so close all over the country? I do not think so at present. We should make the most urgent ones first.

John George Dane, stock and station agent, Parkes, sworn, and examined:—

J. G. Dane. 1708. *Mr. Watson.*] How long have you been here? About four years.

1709. Have you any information which you can give with regard to the proposed railway from here to Peak Hill, and on to Bullock Creek, and from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? I suggest that a line should be run between the two—from here to Peak Hill, and going on to Bullock Creek.

20 Aug., 1900.

1710. Would you go between Parkes and Peak Hill? Yes, keeping a little to the west.

1711. Would it be necessary to go to Peak Hill, or to keep some distance west of it? That would depend upon the cost of construction and other things.

1712. What reasons are there in favour of that project? Because there are two lines advocated—one direct from here to Peak Hill, forming part of a national line, and the other from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney. There is no doubt that both tracts of land require railway facilities; but I do not think we can make two lines. If one railway could be made between both, it would be better, and it would open up a good tract of country.

1713. Do you know the country between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? I know it well.

1714. Is that pastoral land, or is it fit for agriculture? Two-thirds would be fit for agriculture, and, of course, that would also grow wool.

1715. Would there be any difficulties in railway construction? I do not think so; there seems to be plenty of timber and level country. The line could be constructed cheaply.

1716. It has been suggested that such a line would have to cross the waterways at right angles, and that there would be costly bridges? I do not know where they would come in.

1717. What are the main watercourses? There are four, including the Bogan, between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek.

1718. Does most of the wheat from that area go to Bogan Gate or Parkes? The bulk goes to Bogan Gate. I handle a good deal of the wheat in the district, and have an opportunity of knowing.

1719. Do you know those who are cultivating land between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? Yes; there are a number, and they are increasing every year.

1720. How far are they from Parkes or Bogan Gate? Thirty-eight or 40 miles.

1721. Do they bring their wheat to the railways that distance? Most comes by team to Parkes. Beyond that it goes to Narramine.

1722. What have they to pay for bringing it in? From 1s. 6d. to 2s. a bag, according to the state of the roads.

1723. What is the ordinary price when the roads are in good condition? 1s. 6d. per bag.
1724. Assuming that only one line can be constructed, which do you think would be most payable, and develop the country best? I should say a line from Parkes to Peak Hill, and thence on to Bulbodney.
1725. If a speculator had authority to construct a line to Bullock Creek, and he wished to make as much money as possible, which line would he construct? He would construct the Peak Hill line. I can endorse the evidence of the last witness as to the roads. I also think that lines of railway could be made as cheaply as roads.

J. G. Dans.
20 Aug., 1900.

Henry Alfred Croft, farmer and grazier, Trundle, sworn, and examined:—

1726. *Chairman.*] Have you had long experience in this part of the Colony? Yes, for thirty-eight years.
1727. Do you know practically the whole of the country which will be served by the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line, and also that which will be served by the suggested line from Parkes to Peak Hill? Yes.
1728. Would you establish a comparison between the character of the country opened out by the Bogan Gate line and that opened out by the Parkes-Peak Hill line? The country from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, *via* Bullock Creek and Lansdale, is all undulating country well-fitted for agriculture; it is well drained. The country from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek is more or less wet country. It is gilgai country; there are patches of myall country which are dry, and fit for agriculture, but, as a rule, it is not so well-suited for agriculture as the land on the Bogan Gate line, because it is not so sure. If you have a wet-season the country is all wet; if it is a dry season, the crop will be almost a failure; if you have a moderate season, you will have a heavy crop.
1729. Do you think that, year in and year out, the country on the Bogan Gate railway would give more uniform and profitable returns than the country between Peak Hill and Bulbodney? Yes.
1730. Will you compare their relative grazing capacities? I think the country between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek would fatten better, but it has not any greater carrying capacity. On the western side of the Bogan Gate line it is equally as good fattening country as it is on the Peak Hill line.
1731. It is generally assumed that an agricultural railway will draw traffic from 20 miles on each side;—which of these two proposed lines, Bogan Gate or Peak Hill, would have, on the first part, the largest amount of good land on each side? The Bogan Gate line.
1732. How far from the Parkes-Peak Hill line, on the eastern side, does the agricultural land extend? Not very far, on account of Harvey's Range.
1733. What is the average distance of that range from the line? Not more than 6 or 7 miles.
1734. Is there any country over Harvey's Range which could be served by the Parkes-Peak Hill line? I do not think so.
1735. Do you know the Gingham Gap? I do not know it very well.
1736. Does it lead to any extensive area of agricultural land on the other side? There is a basin there, but it is not very large, and is inferior agricultural land.
1737. Take the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line;—what is the general average yield of wheat along that line, year in and year out? Fifteen to 16 bushels is a fair average, although I have averaged six and a half bags per acre three years ago. I never had less than three and a half bags, even last year, which was the worst we have had.
1738. Is the Trundle country superior, or is the land on that line on the whole the same? I think Trundle is a fair average. It is not at all a picked spot.
1739. What is the grazing capacity of the land right through? One and a half acres to a sheep. When you allow that much land there is never any occasion to be frightened about a bad season. That is what I am carrying, and I have never lost a sheep through drought.
1740. It has been the experience in some parts of the Colony that, although before the construction of a railway great prospects were held out of agricultural development, the construction of the line has not been immediately followed by any large increase in agriculture;—do you think that, in the case of the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line, we can reasonably expect a considerable increase in the area under cultivation? Yes; 50 per cent. on the holdings.
1741. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the country between Bullock Creek and Peak Hill? Yes.
1742. Would the watercourses be any great item in the construction of a railway there? Yes.
1743. Do they all run at right angles to the suggested line? Yes.
1744. How many are of importance? Two besides the Bogan—those are the Back Creek and Sandy Creek. There may be others, but not of any great extent.
1745. Going over the gilgai country, would the construction be expensive? Yes.
1746. Would you get heavier watercourses than on the Bogan Gate line? Yes; the country is liable to flood in wet seasons.
1747. In your opinion, would the construction of the Peak Hill line cost a great deal more than the Bogan Gate line? Yes.
1748. *Chairman.*] One witness to-day pointed out that a number of selectors had taken up agricultural holdings merely for speculative purposes;—has that class of occupation characterised the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney country? No; I do not think you could buy one of them out.
1749. Where were those holdings which were sold? Somewhere near Curra.
1750. Were they sold to consolidate them into larger agricultural holdings? No; they were sold to a very large proprietor of land—Mr. Williamson.
1751. Is he an agriculturist? No.
1752. Do you think that the settlers along the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line have taken up land permanently to develop it? Yes.
1753. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been engaged in pastoral and farming pursuits all your life? Yes.
1754. Do you think it is desirable to construct two lines—one to Parkes, *via* Peak Hill to Bulbodney, or one from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney—and do you think that two lines would be likely to be supported? A line from Parkes to Peak Hill would be well supported, but not if a line were made from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney. I do not think the line from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek would be well supported.
1755. Do you think it is desirable to construct a railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, and one from here to Peak Hill? Yes.
1756. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Which line would pass through the greatest quantity of good country? The Bogan Gate line.

H. A. Croft.
20 Aug., 1900.

H. A. Croft. 1757. What proportion of good agricultural land would there be in the country which would be served by the Bogan Gate line? From 60 to 70 per cent.—that is, agricultural land; the remainder would be first-class pastoral country.

20 Aug., 1900.

1758. How would you class the country from Peak Hill to Bulbodney? It would go through good grazing land; but I cannot say that it is agricultural land at all. I do not believe in it. You only get belts of good land there fit for agriculture.

1759. Would as large a proportion of it be fitted for agriculture as there would be on the Bogan Gate line? No.

1760. *Chairman.*] Is there anything else you would like to add? There are a lot of discrepancies with respect to the distance from Peak Hill to Bullock Creek—some say it is 35 miles, and others say it is 30 miles. If the Peak Hill line is constructed as suggested, it would actually cut off the main settlement in the Trundle district, which is a very large one. At present it is said that a distance of 15 to 20 miles from a railway is sufficient to suit all persons. I cannot agree with that, simply because if a man has 2,000 bags of wheat, it takes him five months to cart that, provided that he carries 5 tons a load. He cannot make more than two trips a week; that would occupy twenty weeks. Even if he takes fifty bags, that would make 5½ tons. Therefore, we have very great difficulty in getting cartage even in a dry season. In the Trundle district we have great difficulty in obtaining cartage. There is a lot of wheat there now, but we cannot get carriers.

1761. *Mr. Watson.*] Does that condition apply to the land about Trundle, or to further west of Trundle—that is, Fifield, and so on? No; it applies to Trundle alone. At Fifield it is still more difficult.

1762. Do you think that Trundle is too far from the railway now? A farmer cannot carry his own wheat.

1763. The question arises, do you think it necessary, in agricultural country, to construct railways within less than 30 miles of each other, in order to serve the country? No; most of the settlement in Trundle is 25 or 30 miles away from a railway.

1764. How far are the Fifield people away from a railway? Thirty miles.

1765. Would the Parkes-Peak Hill-Bullock Creek line benefit them? No; they would be as far away as they are now.

William Metcalfe, miner, Parkes, sworn, and examined —

W. Metcalfe. 1766. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a knowledge of the country through which the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line passes? Yes; I used to live at Bulbodney.

20 Aug., 1900.

1767. Do you know the country between Parkes, Bullock Creek, and Bulbodney? Yes; I have been over the different roads for the last twenty-five years.

1768. How would you describe the country on each line? I consider that the country from Parkes to Peak Hill is better than that from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney for agriculture and for grazing. There is some very good agricultural land between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, and there is a portion of it which is first-class grazing land, it consists of myall plains and that sort of country.

1769. Has your experience been principally in mining? I have been farming, mining, publichouse-keeping, and contracting.

1770. Where were you farming? In New Zealand.

1771. Were you mining in this district? Yes.

1772. What is your opinion of mining in this district and Peak Hill? The mining industry is not very satisfactory at present. For the last twenty years it has fluctuated.

1773. What percentage of land would be fit for agriculture between Parkes, Peak Hill, Bullock Creek, and on to Bulbodney? I consider that there is three-fourths of the land on each of the routes fitted for agriculture. There is a belt of ironbark and hilly country to go through on the Bogan Gate line at Gobondry.

1774. Do you agree generally with the evidence you have heard to-day respecting the country on both lines? Yes; but not the whole of it.

1775. What portion do you disagree with? That stating that a great many favour the Bogan Gate line. I would prefer a line from here to Peak Hill on these grounds, that it would form a branch of the national line to be constructed which has been referred to to-day. It would serve quite as large a population as the other line between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney.

1776. Do you mean that the line should cease at Peak Hill? No; it should be constructed from here to Peak Hill, and then on to Bulbodney; it would serve two purposes.

1777. Would the whole country be served by a line from Parkes by way of Peak Hill? The only drawback is that it would leave the district of Trundle a little to the south-west of the line; it would go within 20 miles of it.

1778. Would it pay farmers to carry their produce 20 miles to a railway? I would not like to have to do it myself; I do not think it would pay.

1779. How would a line from Parkes to Peak Hill form part of a national line? It has been laid down that the Government intend to construct a national line, and this would be a portion of it—that is to say, from Parkes to Peak Hill, thence to Dubbo or Narramine, and thence to Werris Creek—that would be a national line.

1780. Speaking from a local point of view, would you still be in favour of the Parkes-Peak Hill-Bullock Creek-Bulbodney line? Yes; because there is a very large wheat-growing district on the other side of Aleetown, that is the Kadina district.

1781. Do you think there would be a greater area put under wheat if the Parkes-Peak Hill line were constructed instead of the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line? I think it would be about equal. I consider there is better wheat-growing land on the Peak Hill line, there is a better rainfall, because it is closer to Harvey's Range.

1782. But one part of the line is identical, that is beyond Bullock Creek? Yes, that would be the same.

1783. Do you want to say anything additional? There is one point I wish to mention touching Harvey's Range. The line would go within 6 or 7 miles of that range at Peak Hill. Once the line left Peak Hill it would go away from Harvey's Range, and there would be splendid land on both sides.

Harry Bowditch, journalist, Parkes, sworn, and examined :—

1784. *Chairman.*] Are you well informed as to the rates of cartage throughout the district? Yes, with H. Bowditch. regard to produce.
1785. What are the rates charged from the various points for wheat delivered at the railway station? 20 Aug., 1900. When the roads are dry for 25 miles it costs about 1s. a bag. When the roads are boggy it costs more. Then from Alectown or Kadina the rates might increase 100 per cent.
1786. What is the greatest distance over which grain is carried to the railway? I suppose 35 miles. If you have a railway within 3 or 4 miles of your farm it would not be worth more than 3d. a bag to put the wheat on the railway trucks. With a 16-bushel crop that would be equal to 1s. an acre. If your farm is 25 miles away from the railway it would be worth at least 4s. an acre on the same basis.
1787. What is the maximum charge for long distances? I cannot say, except with respect to Kadina. I visited the farms there to get the production, and I ascertained that for a distance of 25 miles it would cost 1s. per bag.
1788. What has been the average yield in this district? Last year it was about 12 bushels to the acre. I collected information on that subject for the *Daily Telegraph*. That was the yield on the country which would be served by the Parkes to Peak Hill railway. Last season the crop was a comparative failure.
1789. Are you thoroughly acquainted with the country between here and Peak Hill? Yes.
1790. What would be the prospect for a railway between those places? It would mean a return of 3s. per acre more profit in an average season—that is, for wheat-growing alone.
1791. Do you consider that the whole of the country between here and Peak Hill is suitable for agriculture? Yes. I have a good knowledge of the Young and Cootamundra districts in which I lived for many years, and the district between here and Peak Hill is superior for wheat-growing. It will grow as good a crop, it is more easily cleared and worked.
1792. What is a fair distance from a railway station in carrying on agriculture? I think railways through wheat-growing centres should not be more than 40 miles apart.
1793. Yet you can get wheat delivered at a distance of 25 miles for a 1s. a bag? That is in a good season. If the roads were bad, the charge would be increased 100 per cent. There is another great advantage in having the railway near a farm; you can get the wheat into the hands of the millers and the wheat dealers quicker than if you have to depend upon teams.
1794. How would you describe the country within a radius of 20 miles from Peak Hill? The country to the west of Peak Hill is excellent wheat-growing country. That is the best wheat-growing land in the district. I refer to a strip of land from Parkes running in a north and north-westerly direction. It is stiffer soil than the soil to the south. The land about Kadina and some newly taken up land on Goobang, on the left of Peak Hill Road, has returned excellent crops even in dry seasons.
1795. Would you describe the country from here to 20 miles beyond Peak Hill as good agricultural land? I think 60 per cent. of it is good.
1796. Would the whole of the balance be suitable for pastoral purposes? Yes, except where Harvey's Range comes in. That is very poor, but the rest of the country is fit to run sheep on.
1797. How far along the railway line does Harvey's Range run? The range comes in at one point within 6 miles of the road; it then goes away from the road, and runs at an average distance of from 12 to 14 miles.
1798. Is there anything else you wish to add? There is one point with reference to a national railway. I feel strongly on that point, having carefully considered the question for years. I think that the Melbourne market should be connected with Queensland by a line to junction at about Young, extending from Forbes. It should junction at Dubbo or Narramine, and go on to Werris Creek. That would run on about the borders of the agricultural land of the Colony. I thoroughly endorse Mr. Cook's evidence with reference to the military aspect of that railway. I believe that it will ultimately be absolutely necessary to construct that railway, and I advocated it before I came to the Parkes district.

MONDAY, 27 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LANDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD, |
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D. |

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIE, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor, Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Department,
sworn, and examined :—

1799. *Chairman.*] You have, I understand, some statistical information to lay before the Committee respecting the proposed railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney;—could you tell the Committee what area of country your statistics will cover? After allowing for the influence of the line from Condobolin, I have taken a distance of 20 miles on each side of the line extending as far as Dandaloo, but not going east of the Bogan. W. H. Hall. 27 Aug., 1900.

1800.

W. H. Hall. 1800. Is that more than 20 miles? Just over 20 miles. I have taken the western side. I have not touched the Dandaloo country on the other side of the Bogan to the proposed railway. I have kept on this side of the Bogan. The estimated population is as follows:—Trundle, 660; Fifield, 480; Dandaloo (part), 750; making a total population of 1,890. The cultivation statistics, &c., are shown in the following table:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.
Agricultural, Pastoral, and Dairying Statistics.

District.	Cultivation.														Live stock.					Dairy produce.	
	Total area cultivated.	Wheat.		Maize.		Barley.	Oats.	Other grains.	Hay.		Green food.	Area under—			Cattle.					Butter made.	Bacon and ham cured.
		Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.				Wheat, oats, and barley.	Lucerne.		Area cut.	Grape-vines.	Other fruit orchards.	All other crops.	Horses.	Milch cows.	Ordinary, including calves.	Sheep, including lambs.			Swine.
Trundle	1897	4,766	2,930	22,892	..	..	..	..	1,276	..	539	14	10	..	765	192	963	166,157	289	..	..
	1898	6,535	4,633	70,211	..	..	..	..	1,183	..	567	12	7	..	668	114	551	114,445	239	..	..
	1899	13,591	11,348	72,369	..	..	..	..	2,243	..	..	..	..	..	803	233	502	142,694	218	7,150	..
	1900	12,519	9,372	80,596	..	..	..	..	3,137	..	..	..	..	..	374	152	374	84,962	174	..	..
Fifield	1897	543	195	400	..	..	..	..	333	..	7	..	8	..	295	97	437	105,504	31	500	..
	1898	650	336	5,210	10	150	..	..	290	..	5	..	6	3	322	65	97	96,469	12	200	1,120
	1899	1,964	1,323	10,775	..	..	..	..	589	..	40	..	5	7	346	100	256	90,923	35	850	1,000
	1900	3,756	2,705	16,934	..	..	..	..	1,051	..	..	..	..	..	336	101	248	72,537	36	403	500
Dandaloo	1897	2,398	1,807	14,138	..	..	..	..	531	3	..	..	..	..	874	268	2,106	144,703	413	..	..
	1898	2,412	1,816	35,983	..	..	..	..	549	..	..	..	..	..	769	255	683	166,708	12	..	..
	1899	5,833	4,102	25,747	..	..	..	..	1,671	..	10	..	..	..	811	247	492	168,519	41	..	..
	1900	6,704	4,650	47,200	..	..	..	..	1,974	..	..	..	..	..	659	162	501	100,286	41	..	..

1801. Those figures show that there would be about 9 bushels to the acre of wheat? Yes; it would be about that.

Henry Chamberlaine Russell, C.M.G., Government Astronomer, sworn, and examined:—

H. C. Russell, C.M.G. 1802. *Chairman.*] The Committee is inquiring as to the expediency of constructing a railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney. Can you furnish the Committee with any particulars as to the rainfall in the district that will be served by the railway? Yes. At Bogan Gate the average rainfall is 17.08 inches. Immediately to the east of that, at Timaldra Station, it is 23.24 inches. I should state that the Bogan Gate rainfall rests upon the records for the last six years, and which, taken as a whole, are very unfavourable. The figures I have given for Timaldra rest upon nine years' records, and are therefore relieved of some of the evil effects of the drought.

1803. Can you say how far Timaldra is from Bogan Gate? It is a station about 17 or 18 miles east-north-east of Bogan Gate. There is another station close to called Brue Plains. The rainfall there averages 22.76 inches. Timaldra is a little south-east of that. The Condobolin rainfall average for the past eighteen years is 18.89 inches. That is considerably more than Bogan Gate appears, but that is because of the longer period over which the records have been made, which has given us good years with the bad ones. Almost immediately north of Condobolin is a station called Mowablaa. It is a tank, the average rainfall there being 18.19 inches. Immediately north of that again is Burra-Burra, where the rainfall averages 22 inches. East-north-east of that, about 20 miles away, is Warge Rock, where the average rainfall is 22.63 inches; immediately north of that is Tabratong, where the average rainfall is 21.70 inches. Then comes Dandaloo, with 23.23 inches. Then we get Bulbodney, with 21.46 inches. Then for 20 miles further there is rather a gap among the observers till we get over towards Eremeran, which is about 20 miles south-west from Bulbodney. The records of the rainfall there are valuable, because they have extended over twenty years, and show the average fall to be 16.56 inches. Then immediately north of that is Moothumbil, with a rainfall of 16.55 inches. The next station immediately north is Babinda, where the rainfall averages 22.39 inches, and about 12 miles to the east of that, and 12 or 13 miles west of Bulbodney, is Panjee, where the rainfall averages 21.50 inches.

1804. Have you the return for Trundle, about 15 miles north of Bogan Gate? I have Trundle Lagoon; the mean annual rainfall there is 21.35 inches.

1805. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you the return for Bullock Creek—the place is better known as Tullamore? No; I have not the return for that.

1806. *Chairman.*] Could you institute a comparison between the places you have named and other places—Parkes, for instance? Parkes has an average rainfall of 24.12 inches.

1807. Have you the returns for Alectown, Peak Hill, and Tomingley? Not of Alectown; the average rainfall of Peak Hill is only 23.48 inches; that for Tomingley is 19.64 inches.

1808. Can you tell us how much greater the rainfall is about Parkes than it is towards Bogan Gate or Bulbodney? It would be from 2 to 3 inches towards Parkes. The country falls very rapidly as you go further west; you not only go further from the sea, but you are going down hill.

1809. To the east of Peak Hillie what are known as Harvey's Range, having an average distance of 6½ miles from the proposed line;—would they have an appreciable effect upon the rainfall? I should think it would not be very appreciable.

1810. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you any rainfall record of places 12 miles from Peak Hill—Yeoval, for instance? No; but if there is an elevation there of 300 feet or so the increase in the rainfall would be about an inch.

1811. Harvey's Range has an elevation of about 600 feet? An elevation of about 300 feet makes the increase in the rainfall about 1 inch.

1812. *Chairman.*] With respect to the rainfall between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney, which you say is about 21 inches, is that sufficient for wheat-growing? Yes.

1813. Do you know whether it falls in a favourable season of the year? Yes; it is not quite so favourable as in the eastern part of the country, but still it is favourably situated for wheat-growing.

1814. More likely to be subject to intermittency in the rainfall? I could not say.

1815. As you go north-west the rainfall becomes more irregular? Yes.

THURSDAY, 30 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).	
The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

William Henry John Slee, Chief Inspector of Mines, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

1816. *Mr. Watson.*] The proposal before us is to construct a line of railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, through Trundle;—do you know of any mineral development along the route of that railway? There are some developments, so far as gold is concerned. I have been through that district. When Fifield and Platina were opened I had charge of the district as Warden, and that caused me to go about the district a good deal on horseback. W. H. J. Slee.
30 Aug., 1900.

1817. Were they alluvial diggings? Yes.

1818. What is the position there to-day? There are not so many people as there were at the time of the rush, but the townships have always kept up ever since. Going from Bogan Gate, I do not think there will be any mining until you get past Trundle; but there is a good agricultural, wheat-growing district there. Going from Trundle, through Carlisle and Fifield, I have no doubt that there will be a population of gold-miners. Of course, near Melrose Plains, there are silver and copper, but the traffic of that part generally goes to the Condobolin line.

1819. How far is Melrose Plains from the Condobolin line? From 35 to 40 miles.

1820. How far would it be from the proposed line, say at Bullock Creek, or anywhere between there and Bulbodney? I do not know, but I think that if a line were constructed from Bogan Gate, it would be handier for them to go from that part to the Bogan Gate railway than to the Condobolin line.

1821. Has anything been done in a large way with the copper shows at Melrose Plains? Near Dandaloo, or on the Lightning Paddocks side of Dandaloo, men are prospecting for copper lodes, aided by the Government.

1822. That is between Dandaloo and the proposed line? Yes; in the same locality.

1823. The Lightning Paddocks is where Lind is working, is it not? Yes.

1824. Is the show there extensive? The real miner has hardly ever been at the Lightning Paddocks. It is very rough country near there, and the country is fit for mining only just at the Lightning Paddocks and past there. It is not fit for agriculture. I have no doubt that, with a proper population, they might find quartz reefs, and they might also find silver, but I do not think that they will ever find copper. There is copper further on, and nearer Condobolin; but I am talking only of the locality of Lightning Paddocks, which belongs to the Burra Burra pastoral lease.

1825. What is the real name of the place where Lind is? I do not think that there is any township name. I know that the Government thought sufficiently well of the place to aid parties in prospecting there out of the Prospecting Vote, but they are not at present getting anything payable or really good, at which they could start on their own account. However, the prospects are very promising.

1826. Are there any claims on gold reefs in that district? Yes; there are a large number of reefs there, but not tested. As I have said, the real mining population has hardly ever got that way. There are more of the men who are usually employed about stations. There is tin at Burra Burra; in fact, there is alluvial tin on the very line of this proposed railway.

1827. You would consider it, then, a promising district, from a mining point of view? I think so.

1828. In connection with this proposal to reach Bulbodney by rail, a suggestion has been made to run a line from Parkes to Peak Hill, and thence to go westerly towards Tullamore and Bulbodney, taking the section to Peak Hill and further on;—can you give the Committee any particulars as to the present condition of the mining industry north and south? The line would go through Alectown if it went from Parkes. Peak Hill and Alectown were opened in 1889. In 1890 and 1891 I was there for sixteen months as a Warden of the Colony, going backwards and forwards to Sydney. As far as Alectown is concerned, there are a large number of quartz reefs and very good agricultural land. I believe that the pastoral leases are either to be thrown open soon, or have just been thrown open. In my opinion, Peak Hill is a permanent gold-field. There is a great deal of refractory ore there.

1829. They are not working the big mine at Peak Hill at the present time, are they? Yes, they are. There is also the Proprietary Mine at Peak Hill, although I believe it has paid little in dividends to the present company, compared with what it paid previously. The ore there is very refractory, but the Government Mineralogist, when he was in our Department at a salary of £1,200, thought sufficient of that ore to resign his position and take it in hand, in order to try and make it pay.

1830. Do you think that sufficient time has elapsed for you to be able to say whether he is likely to be successful in that? About a week ago he came to see me at my office, and he said he was quite confident that he had taken the right step. I had thought that he had taken the wrong step in throwing up his appointment; but he told me the other day that he was quite satisfied that he had taken the right step, and that the gold-field was better than he had anticipated.

1831. Are any other mines being worked at Peak Hill? Yes, there is Mooney and Wise's. There are half-a-dozen fairly large mines, and there are numerous small mines—the latter being worked just by individual miners.

1832. But nearly all on reefs? Mostly reefs. Of course they have had some very rich gold there in alluvial—the richest I have seen during the time I have been in Australia.

1833. You mean they had rich alluvial? Yes. They bottomed a small shaft in 1890 when I was Warden, a shaft about 4 feet x 2 feet, and they had over 10 oz. of gold picked out in pieces. That caused a big rush, and 8,000 or 10,000 people were there in about a fortnight.

1834. That has probably been worked out pretty well by now? Well, it has been tried a good deal, but there is a very large valley. The late Mr. Wilkinson, who was our Government Geologist, and I went

over

- W. H. J. Slee, over it some years ago; and when the rush was on at Peak Hill, I induced the Government to give prospecting aid to test this valley. This valley must extend from Alectown right down to the Bogan—15 or 20 miles in length. A little gold has been got, but no shaft has ever been bottomed on it. They have gone down to a depth of over 300 feet, but were always thrown out by water, through not having the proper appliances. I feel confident that, sooner or later, we shall have one of the deepest leads, if not the best—a payable deep lead—about 4 miles west of Peak Hill township. We had a little gold on a sidling in a shaft 80 feet in depth—from 2 to 3 grains of gold—and it dipped away, as far as we have gone, about 300 feet. There was a little gold on the sidling, but nothing has been done there since then. The late Mr. Wilkinson and I were staunch friends, and we both always took great interest in that field. I have been to Peak Hill three or four times to try to induce people to go in for prospecting it. Of course they would have to have a small steam plant, and I would ask the Government, if possible, to give them a subsidy. I feel confident that, sooner or later, Peak Hill will be a very thriving gold-field and farming district combined.
1835. What is the characteristic of the ore bodies at Peak Hill—are they large deposits? In the Proprietary Mine the deposit is sometimes very large—never less than 3 or 4 feet.
1836. Going further north, between Peak Hill and Tomingley, there is a place called McPhail? Between Peak Hill and Tomingley there is a place now called McPhail, but formerly called Myall. McPhail was the name of the prospector, but Myall was the original name of the place. That was opened about sixteen or eighteen years ago. I was there in the first week. It has been worked by English companies, and there is now a large number of persons employed there. Myall is 8 miles from Peak Hill, and Tomingley 2 miles further, and in between there is no doubt that it is all auriferous country.
1837. Have you inspected the mine at McPhail? Yes: I have been through the whole of it.
1838. They have a large ore body there? Yes. It is now being worked by an English company.
1839. What is the characteristic of the ore? It is quartz reef.
1840. Do you think they have a good permanent mine there? I think so. Myall, or McPhail, is not a new affair; it was started long before either Peak Hill or Alectown was founded. Peak Hill and Alectown were discovered in 1889.
1841. Is there mining also going on at Tomingley? Yes: there is mining at Tomingley, but not further on, going towards Narramine or Dubbo. Tomingley is about 30 or 32 miles from Dubbo, and Narramine something similar.
1842. Can you, from memory, state roughly the mining population in each of those centres along that route? I doubt whether, at the present time, you would find more than about from 500 to 600 miners there; but there is the usual population of business people and farmers as well. At Peak Hill there is a large number of families settled on 20-acre and 4-acre suburban blocks, which were sold by the Government on certain conditions. They have made their homes there, and I believe that if the pastoral leases have not already fallen in they are to be thrown open in a very short time right from Parkes to Alectown. Of course, that is an agricultural country as well. If mining goes down there—and mining always has its ups and downs—then agriculture will fill up the gap.
1843. Can you say whether railway communication would be of much value, from a mining point of view, as far as Peak Hill? In my opinion, the Peak Hill route is far more valuable, from a mining point of view, than is the Bogan Gate route.
1844. What I want to get at is whether, because of the peculiar character of the ore which is met with along that route, there is any great necessity for railway communication—for instance, either for the carrying away of ores, or for the carrying of fuel to the mining centres? The refractory ores of Peak Hill, of course, require to be treated by means of furnaces, and to use furnaces for metalliferous purposes properly you require coke or coal. For that reason, if for no other, refractory ores are more valuable to a railway than would be ore consisting merely of clean quartz.
1845. Of course, in the case of a place where there are only quartz reefs, the railway would only have to carry supplies to the miners and take the gold away; whereas, in the other case, the railway would have to carry stuff for smelting as well? Yes. There are three cyanide plants now working at Peak Hill. Two of them are working on ore now being produced, and one of them is working on tailings produced some years ago. The line proposed to go to Peak Hill is what was always called the "White" line. That was measured in 1878 or 1879. Surveyors were sent from Parkes long before Peak Hill was thought of, and that line was, at that time, supposed to form a portion of a line to Werris Creek, *via* Dubbo, to connect the Northern districts with the Southern, through Young, Grenfell, Forbes and so on.
1846. If a line were constructed to Peak Hill, do you think that the mine-owners there would arrange for the local treatment of their ores, or would they send them away for treatment? I think they would rather arrange for the local treatment of the ores.
1847. Then you think that traffic for the railway would consist, among other things, of the taking of coke to the mines? Yes.
1848. Would they also require fluxes to be taken to them by the railway? They have limestone not far away, and they could get the necessary fluxes without difficulty.
1849. They would not need to have these brought to them by rail? No. Independently of this being one of our best mining districts, it is also a very good agricultural district. You can go to a depth of 8 or 10 feet through rich loam. The country is very good for wheat growing; in fact, anything would grow there.
1850. Has anything in addition to gold been found on the line from Parkes to Tomingley? There is a little copper, but that has not been sufficiently developed. There is a hill close to the main road going from Alectown to Peak Hill, and a little prospecting for copper has been done between Peak Hill and Parkes, but that is all.
1851. Would you class that district generally as an important one in comparison with other mining centres in New South Wales? Yes; I always have done so since I first saw it. My first report on it was not an extraordinarily glowing one. I said it would require capital, economy, &c., to make it a payable field, and that report has been borne out since. At that time, to use a common phrase, they were merely pig-rooting—they were not doing any real mining.
1852. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is your opinion of the mineral resources generally between these two points? My opinion is that they will employ a large number of persons—both wages men and individual miners.
1853. Do you think that any of them have been sufficiently tested yet to justify you in saying that they are likely to be permanent? Yes. They have been working ever since 1889. The Proprietary Mine has never

never stopped a day from working, and then there is the Crown of the Hill, and Moonie and Wise's; ^{W. H. J. Sloc.} they have always been working.

1854. Do you think the prospecting has been carried out intelligently—in a systematic way? Latterly it has, but in the beginning it was not. With practice and science combined, they will no doubt succeed. ^{30 Aug., 1900.}

1855. Nothing of any great consequence has been done yet, I think? No, there has not.

1856. So that you would hardly be justified in expressing an opinion as to the probability of its permanence, I suppose? Yes, as far as I can see, I am of the opinion that the Peak Hill district will be one of the most flourishing districts in New South Wales.

1857. What is the greatest depth attained there yet? A little over 400 feet.

1858. What are the best results obtained? At first, when they started roughly, before the ore went into the refractory state, as much as 6 or 8 oz. to the ton were obtained. The ground was very rich on the top levels.

1859. What is the width of the lode they have got those returns from? What I am speaking about was never less than 3 feet; but when the late Mr. Kelly, who was a Member of Parliament for Dubbo, had charge of it, he had a cutting over 40 feet in width, and he crushed the whole lot.

1860. Did that give anything like a fair return? Yes, it paid him very well; but the ore became very refractory, and the gold fine, going away with the slimes. And there was the slimes difficulty, which is a difficulty even at Lucknow now. They have thousands of tons, but their scientific men cannot recover the gold out of the slimes. However, Mr. Taylor, the late Government Metallurgist, thinks he has now got on the right track. He told me so last week.

1861. Do you think it is likely that the mining development will be such as to materially assist a railway in the event of its being constructed? Yes, combined with farming. Of course if you have only a mining district, and no farming, you must expect it to go down and drop very low, like Hill End, which had a population of 25,000, but now has a population of not so many as 1,500.

1862. *Mr. McParlane.*] You stated that mining has been carried on at Peak Hill since 1859? Yes.

1863. Does that apply also to the other towns where the proposed railway would go? To Alectown, McPhail, and Tomingley. McPhail and Tomingley were called after men of those names, and these two gold-fields were opened long before Peak Hill, which shows that although Peak Hill has been opened, there may be other good places in between. They have not been sufficiently prospected yet.

1864. Do you know Bullock Creek—Lightning Paddocks? Yes; I have been through there.

1865. Is that a recent discovery? There are only a few parties working there. Lightning Paddocks is about 8 miles from the Burra Burra home station, and it is very rough country.

1866. Do you think that mining is in a prosperous condition there, or is likely to be? I think so. Of course in mining there are always ups and downs.

1867. Comparing its present condition with what it was five years ago, what is it now? To-day it is not much better than it was then, past Myall or Tomingley.

1868. Take Peak Hill;—are there as many miners working there now as there were five years ago? Yes; one or two places more. Peak Hill is a municipality. The people think sufficiently well of the mining there to have formed a municipality and to tax themselves.

1869. With regard to the other mining centres which the proposed railway would be likely to influence, are there as many men working there now as there were, say, five years ago? Yes.

1870. Any increase? A little. There was an increase throughout the Colony last year, compared with 1898, of about 3,000.

1871. But I am speaking more particularly of this district? Yes; there is a little increase there.

1872. Is there any increase in the gold production? Yes; the gold production is increasing everywhere.

1873. But I am speaking of Peak Hill? Yes. Peak Hill produced more gold in 1899 than it did in 1898.

1874. So that it did increase? Yes; and no doubt it is still increasing.

1875. Does that apply also to the other mining towns? Yes; there is Alectown in between.

1876. Does the gold-bearing country cover a very large area? Yes. The whole of the country, from Parkes, 32 or 33 miles, to Peak Hill, is auriferous country for 10 miles on either side of the proposed line.

1877. Has it been thoroughly prospected? No.

1878. Do you think that the railway would assist in the development of mining throughout the district generally? I think so. A railway always does. A mining population always uses a railway more than a farming population does. A miner is far freer in spending his earnings than a farmer is.

1879. He gets more, I suppose? Yes; a farmer has to work harder, and gets less for it; whereas the miner has regular hours, and can afford to spend more.

1880. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you consider that the mining industry at Peak Hill is now being kept back by want of railway communication? I will not say that. I will not go that far; but I believe that if a railway were constructed to Peak Hill, the whole district would be assisted; and even if it would not pay at first, it would be likely to pay within a very short time afterwards.

1881. You think that a railway would lead to a much greater development of the mining industry? Yes, no doubt.

1882. You spoke of some rich farming land in the neighbourhood of Peak Hill—does that go all the way from Peak Hill to Parkes? Yes, right from Parkes to Peak Hill; in fact, right to the Bogan—it takes in all the Bogan flats.

1883. Is it as good as the land between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? Every bit as good as that.

1884. Is it as much taken up? No, it is not taken up, because the pastoral leases were in force; but the pastoral leases are either to be thrown open this year, or have already been—I am not sure which. I have not been there this year.

1885. Your opinion is, that when the ground is available for selection in any form, it will be taken up? Yes, selected at once, or taken up under certain conditions—under the most liberal conditions of the law.

1886. Then, you think that, both as an agricultural line, and as a mining line, this railway has some recommendations? Yes.

1887. There is only a very slight indication of mining on the line between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? I feel confident that there will be no mining between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney until after you pass Trundle, and get into the quartz ridges at Carlisle, or Fifield as it is now called, Burra Burra having been the original name.

- W. H. J. Slee. 1888. At present it is more alluvial indication than reef? No, it is mostly reef indication.
 1889. You have had no proved reef with gold in it? Yes, we have. They are working. We have several crushing machines there.
 30 Aug., 1900. 1890. Do you think that the alluvial there is coming out of those reefs? Yes.
 1891. And that there is more gold in the reefs yet? Yes.
 1892. A workable amount? Yes.
 1893. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you know the country between Tomingley and Bullock Creek towards Dandaloo? Yes; that would be an agricultural and pastoral country.
 1894. You would not expect to find any considerable quantity of gold in that country? Yes; but at present there are no big deposits being worked past Tomingley.
 1895. Whatever gold is there would be alluvial? Alluvial and quartz reefs mostly.
 1896. You expect to get quartz reefs in that country? Yes; quartz reefs are to be seen on the hills. I have been through that country on horseback for weeks.
 1897. Do you know Woodlands station, on the road from Dandaloo to Bulbodney? That name is not familiar to me.
 1898. Well, do you know the name Lansdale? Yes. I believe there will be gold got there—right through that country.
 1899. You think that is gold country? Yes.
 1900. And further on than Lansdale, do you expect there will be a continuation of that gold-bearing country. Yes. As far as mining is concerned, I feel confident that a line from Parkes to Peak Hill and through there, would do more good to the country, from a mining point of view, than would a line from Bogan Gate.
 1901. You think it would be a better line for developing new mines and improving those already in existence? Yes. Of course it would not serve the people between Bogan Gate and Trundle.
 1902. You think the whole district, taken generally, is a good one? Yes, I think so.

WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The HON. ANDREW GARRAN, J.L.D.
 The HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

William Duncan, Pastoral Inspector, Union Bank of Australia, sworn, and examined:—

- W. Duncan. 1903. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know the country through which the proposed railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney would pass? Yes, I know the country very well, as far as Tullamore, on each side of the route of the proposed line. I have travelled through that district several times.
 5 Sept., 1900. 1904. How would you describe that country? It is good, strong, red, loamy soil—good wheat-growing land. There are small patches of ironbark ridges, but the area of the poor country is comparatively small.
 1905. To what distance on each side of the route of the proposed line would that description apply? It applies to the country within 12 or 15 miles on each side of the route of the proposed line.
 1906. Do you visit the farms of the clients of the Union Bank in that district? Yes, and I also have an opportunity of seeing the country in travelling about to inspect sheep.
 1907. The people in that district appear to have gone in very largely for agriculture? Yes, very largely, considering their distance from a railway.
 1908. What is the greatest distance over which people in the district draw wheat to the railway? Wheat is drawn to the railway from places about 40 miles beyond Bogan Gate.
 1909. How far west of the route of the proposed line does the good country extend? It is all good country for at least 15 miles west of the route of the proposed line.
 1910. Taking the rainfall into consideration, would you say that the country on the western side of the route is as well suited for agriculture as that on the eastern side? Yes, within a distance of 12 or 15 miles.
 1911. Do you know if there is any appreciable diminution of the rainfall within 15 miles of the route on the western side? I do not; but the diminution would be very slight if any.
 1912. You have not been further north than Tullamore? No.
 1913. It has been suggested that a line might be taken from Parkes through Peak Hill to Tullamore; how would the construction of such a line affect the people living between Tullamore and Bogan Gate? It would be of no advantage to them.
 1914. From how far towards Trundle would such a line draw traffic? The traffic would naturally go to the nearest railway station.
 1915. Do you think the present railway to Bogan Gate would have a greater attraction for the traffic between Bogan Gate and Tullamore than a line going from Parkes through Peak Hill to Tullamore? I fancy that it would, but I cannot speak definitely upon the point. What is the distance from Bullock Creek to Peak Hill.
 1916. It would appear to be about 30 miles. The distance from Tullamore to Parkes by rail would be about the same by either route? I think that some of the land to the east of the suggested line to Peak Hill is poor country.
 1917. The land on Harvey's Range? Yes; a lot of that is rough, useless country.
 1918. It has been suggested in favour of the Peak Hill line that it would serve a greater number of people than the Bogan Gate line, and would not leave the settlers between Tullamore and Bogan Gate at a greater distance than 20 miles from a railway; would that be too great a distance? Twenty miles from a railway is rather too long a distance at which to carry on farming profitably, with the prices which have ruled during the last two years.
 1919.

1919. But you say that at the present time some of the people in the district are carting their wheat 40 miles. Would not a saving of 20 miles be of material assistance to them? Yes, it would be of great assistance to them. W. Duncan.
5 Sept., 1900.

1920. Twenty miles would be the greatest distance which any of the people between Bogan Gate and Tullamore would be from a railway, so that most of them would be less than 20 miles from a railway? No doubt there is a bigger population on the Peak Hill route, taking the township of Peak Hill into consideration, than there is on the proposed Bogan Gate route, but I think that the proposed route runs through better country, and country more suited for settlement, than the Peak Hill route does.

1921. It has been suggested that a line might be taken from Parkes to Narramine, in order to serve a series of townships lying along that route, and a considerable area of agricultural land. If the proposed line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney were constructed could the country afford to construct a line from Parkes to Narramine? I do not know the country lying to the north of Peak Hill, but I think that a lot of it is very rough.

1922. But, seeing that the two lines would be only 20 miles apart at the beginning, and would run nearly parallel, would it pay to construct it, assuming that they both ran through good country? I hardly think so.

1923. If we construct the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line we must abandon all hope of reaching Peak Hill by railway? Yes.

1924. The Peak Hill-Tullamore-Bulbodney route has been suggested with a view to serving the Peak Hill portion of the district as well as the Bulbodney portion, without leaving any part of the district too far away from a railway; is there any other suggestion which occurs to you as likely to meet the position better? I can see no other.

1925. From what you know of the district, do you think that railway construction there is justifiable? Undoubtedly it is. There is a large extent of country there which will shortly be opened for settlement, and it is all good land, and land which it is not difficult to clear. I look upon the district as one of the best I know, though it wants men with a little capital to develop it properly.

1926. It seems to have attracted a very energetic class of settlers? Yes, the settlers there are a splendid class of men.

1927. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you visited the district frequently? I visit it sometimes two or three times a year, and never less than twice a year.

1928. Do you think that the country through which the proposed line would run is capable of closer settlement? Undoubtedly it is.

1929. And suited for mixed farming? Yes.

1930. Is it well watered? It is not watered naturally at all; but there is every facility for conserving water by means of tanks and dams. It is good holding ground.

1931. How is it timbered? Principally with the bright-leaved box, pine, and bull-oak, and there is yellow box and belar in places.

1932. Is there sufficient timber there to provide the necessary railway sleepers? No, there is not very much timber there suitable for railway sleepers.

1933. From what distance would sleepers have to be brought? I could not say. There is very little ironbark in that country, and what there is, is not much good; it is stunted, decayed stuff mostly.

1934. Is the land pretty well all taken up? All that has been available has been taken up.

1935. For a considerable distance on each side of the proposed line? Yes.

1936. Is that land now held under lease? It is chiefly conditionally purchased and conditionally leased land.

1937. Has any considerable area of it been brought under cultivation? Yes, a good portion on each selection.

1938. Chiefly for wheat, I suppose? Almost entirely for wheat.

1939. Are you aware of fruit having been grown there to any extent? Yes; I have seen excellent fruit grown there. Fruit seems to do wonderfully well in any part of that district. I know of a splendid orchard in the district.

1940. Do the people who have grown fruit there seem satisfied with the results? Yes, perfectly.

1941. Do you think that the fruit industry will expand if the proposed railway is constructed? I could not speak about that.

1942. Is it your opinion that if a railway is constructed, it will be a success? Yes, after a time, but not for a year or two. The land is capable of carrying such a large population that I think a line would undoubtedly pay.

1943. Are the holdings there generally of any large extent? Some of them are large. About 12,000 acres is the largest that I know of.

1944. Are there any holdings of a moderate extent? They are all fair-sized holdings, ranging from 3,000 acres to 12,000 acres.

1945. What would be a fair sized holding to support a family by mixed farming? From 1,000 acres to 1,280 acres, if the farm was well managed. Small holdings, when properly worked, are more remunerative than large holdings which lie partly idle.

1946. What is your opinion of the Peak Hill route as compared with the Bogan Gate route? I think that the Bogan Gate route runs through better country than the Peak Hill route; but I am not so well acquainted with the Peak Hill country. I know that not far from Peak Hill there is some very indifferent country, which is not suitable for settlement of any kind.

1947. It is your opinion that the district is sufficiently good to support a railway? I think that it undoubtedly is.

1948. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you known the district? For three years.

1949. Have you known the country between Parkes and Peak Hill for that length of time? Yes.

1950. In comparing the Bogan Gate route with the Peak Hill route, which do you think would open up the larger area of agricultural land? I think the Bogan Gate route.

1951. Do you think that if there were railway facilities the people in the district would show a disposition to go in more largely for agriculture? I think so.

1952. Do you think that the district is prospering? From appearances the people there are prospering, but it is very difficult for a farmer to prosper if he has to cart his wheat 30 or 40 miles to get it to the railway.

- W. Duncan. 1953. Is settlement on the increase in the district? So far as I know all the available land has been taken up.
- 6 Sept., 1900. 1954. Is agriculture increasing there? Yes, undoubtedly.
1955. Do you think there would be a material increase if the proposed railway were made? I am certain that there would be a big increase.
1956. *Dr. Garran.*] We have been told that part of the land is held under conditional purchases and conditional leases, and part under scrub leases and settlement leases;—is that so? I do not know of any settlement leases out there, though there may be some.
1957. Have you noticed any difference between the farming of those who have contingent freeholds and that of those who have not? No; I do not know of any settlement leases in the district.
1958. So far as you know, all the banks' clients have the right to purchase their land? Yes.
1959. The land they hold will ultimately become theirs? Yes, if the payments are completed. In the southern district, where there are settlement leases, I have not noticed any difference.
1960. So far as you know, the people of this district are making steady progress? Yes, and are increasing the area under cultivation.
1961. Notwithstanding the long distances that they have to carry their produce? Yes.
1962. Do you know any other district where people can afford to carry agricultural produce 20, 30, and 40 miles? I know other districts where produce is carried similar distances.
1963. Are the people in this district as prosperous as those in any other agricultural district that has come under your notice? Yes, quite as prosperous as people similarly circumstanced elsewhere. People who have railway communication have a better chance to prosper than people who live away from the railway.
1964. What additional value will the construction of the proposed railway give to the holdings you are speaking of by diminishing the cost of transit to and from them;—would it increase their value by one-tenth? I think so.
1965. By more than that? I think so.
1966. By one-fifth? Possibly not so much as that.
1967. But it would make a very sensible difference? Undoubtedly.
1968. Would it make a very great difference to a farmer to reduce his road carriage from 30 or 40 miles to 20 miles. Yes.
1969. We have been told that a farmer does very well if he is near enough to a railway to be able to take his wheat in and get back again in the one day? Yes, that suits the farmer very well.
1970. If a farmer has to spend the night in town it makes a difference to him? Yes, it causes him to lose two days.
1971. And it makes it necessary for him to incur expense? Yes, for the accommodation of himself and his horses.
1972. Your verdict is that, notwithstanding the past five years, which have been very trying years—more trying perhaps than we may expect to have again for some time—the people in this district are actually forging ahead? Yes.
1973. *Mr. Hyam.*] Does this district compare favourably with any other of our wheat-growing districts? In my opinion it is one of the best wheat-growing districts that I have been in.
1974. Could a man who lived 20 miles from a railway take his produce to the line and get back home in one day? No, not even with good roads.
1975. What is the greatest distance from a railway in which a man could do that? Twelve or 15 miles.
1976. I suppose you have seen a great deal of the district in its unimproved state? I have seen it in all states. A great deal of it is still unimproved.
1977. Is it of any value in its unimproved state? Of very little value.
1978. Do you consider it good sheep country when it has been ringbarked and scrubbed? Yes, capital sheep country; it is sound and good.
1979. What is its capacity? Taking it all through, it will carry nearly a sheep to the acre.
1980. Are the grasses there good and sweet? Yes.
1981. There is no fluke in the district? There is no disease of any kind there. It is absolutely sound country for stock.
1982. Do you think that the cultivation of the land improves it for grass? Yes. The grass is finer and more nutritious where the land has been cultivated.
1983. And the cultivation produces a better growth of grass? Yes.

THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

John James Miller, Manager, Farmers' and Settlers' Co-operative Association, sworn, and examined:—

- J. J. Miller. 1984. *Chairman.*] You are acquainted with the country through which the proposed railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney would pass? Yes.
- 6 Sept., 1900. 1985. Since that railway proposal was referred to the Committee, it has been suggested that a line might be taken from Parkes through Peak Hill to Bullock Creek, and then on to Bulbodney:—can you compare the country on the two routes? I have not been along the alternate route that you speak of; but I know the country from Bogan Gate through Trundle to Bullock Creek.
1986. How would you describe that country? It is all splendid agricultural land.

1987.

1987. What portion of the land within 20 miles on each side of the proposed route is agricultural land? J. J. Miller. I should say three-quarters of it.
1988. Given railway facilities, what area of land in that district would maintain a family in decent comfort under mixed farming? The Australian families are generally pretty large. I suppose about 2,500 acres would maintain a family properly in that district. 6 Sept., 1900.
1989. If a man used 2,500 acres for mixed farming, how much land would he have under cultivation, year in and year out? Some farmers would cultivate more than others; but if a farmer was cultivating 1,500 acres, he would have 600 or 700 acres under crop one year, and about the same area under crop the next. That would maintain the strength of the soil.
1990. Would not a man be able to carry more sheep on 2,500 acres if he farmed a portion of it than if he used the whole of it for pastoral purposes? Yes; the more land a man farms, the more sheep he can carry. The old cultivation paddocks always carry a great many sheep.
1991. To cultivate the land is, to some extent, to provide an insurance against drought? Yes; especially if a store of fodder is kept on hand.
1992. What is the average carrying capacity of the district? It is all a sheep-to-the-acre country.
1993. What would be its average yield of wheat, year in and year out? It is splendid wheat country. It is part of the same belt as the Narramine country, and has the same rainfall. Some of our farmers have been there for 12 years, and have had twelve crops. They have never had less than 10 bushels to the acre, and they have had as many as 25 and 28 bushels to the acre. The average yield would be 15 or 16 bushels to the acre.
1994. Had there been many inquiries for land in the district from *bona-fide* farmers? Yes; there has been a good demand for land there. A good many farms have changed hands lately, and farmers have come from Victoria to look for land in the locality.
1995. Do you think that the settlers between Bullock Creek and Bulbodney are seriously handicapped by the want of railway communication at the present time? At the present time it is impossible to make farming pay there.
1996. Are they an enterprising class of settlers? I think they are the most enterprising class of men in the country. They are men who have come from Victoria and South Australia, and they are steady and thrifty. I do not know any district where there are men of a better class than those between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney.
1997. Do you think that, if the proposed line were made, it would, in a short time, prove a profitable one? I think that it would be a very profitable line. It will in time be self-supporting, and it will be a big feeder to the main line. The district will be one of our biggest wheat-growing districts, because so much of the land there is suitable for wheat.
1998. I suppose the two main items of produce will be wheat and wool? Yes; and a great deal of poultry and a great many pigs, stock, and other produce will also be sent from there.
1999. Are the settlers there handicapped by the want of a railway in the matter of the consignment of small lots of fat stock to market? Yes; a man cannot send a small consignment of fat stock to market unless he is close to the railway, because of the expense of driving them to the line. It costs as much to drive 100 sheep 30 or 40 miles as to drive 1,000 sheep that distance.
2000. Is the district a good fattening district? Yes.
2001. What leads you to the conclusion that a great deal of poultry will be sent from there? A great deal of poultry is sent from there now. Turkeys are sent from there, and a great many eggs are sent from the country round Trundle, and the district generally. I have seen dressed turkeys on the table weighing 19 lbs. That shows that the country is capable of producing good poultry.
2002. *Dr. Garran.*] What is the greatest distance any farmer you know of sends produce to a railway? About 50 or 60 miles.
2003. That is an extreme distance? I think that some of them send even further.
2004. What would you consider a paying distance? A farmer ought to be able to get to a railway station with a load and to return home in the one day.
2005. A man could not do that if he had to travel 50 miles? No; 15 miles would be rather far. When a man has to stay a night in town with his team it becomes rather an expensive matter for him.
2006. The settlers at Tullamore could not go to the railway and back in a day? No.
2007. Yet they are thriving? Most of them went there with a little capital. They are men who have done well in Victoria, and who have gone there to obtain larger areas. They have improved their land in the hope of getting railway communication; but they are carrying on their farming under great difficulties.
2008. A railway through Peak Hill to Tullamore would suit the Tullamore people, and it would also suit the people within 15 miles north or south of Tullamore. The question is would this line be better than a line from Bogan Gate? Whichever route is followed one part of the district must be left out to some extent. I know that there are some prosperous farmers out towards Peak Hill, and they would gain by a railway going through Peak Hill, whereas the Trundle farmers would gain by the proposed railway. A lot of stuff comes from Trundle.
2009. *Mr. Hyam.*] The people in this district have shipped wheat to England through the agency of your Association? Yes. We have shipped wheat to England on behalf of nine farmers living between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek. The first lots shipped have been sold in England at the top price obtained in the market—30s. 3d. a quarter. This wheat was all examined before being sent away, and the secretary's certificate showed it to be above fair average quality. It was graded A and B, and most of it was of A quality. The country is splendidly adapted for the production of good quality wheat. It is a full-grained wheat, of a splendid colour, very flinty, and full of gluten.
2010. Were many bags of it sent away? 6,000 bags were in the first shipment, and one-fourth of that wheat came from Trundle. There have been five shipments, and they have had wheat in every shipment.
2011. Do you look upon these shipments as an experiment? The "Vortigern" took the first shipment of wheat sent from New South Wales and resulted satisfactorily.
2012. It looks as if there would be a big surplus this year? Yes; and we are making arrangements for full shipments. The farmers are growing for export.
2013. Do you think there will be a big export trade? Yes; there is a big trade already.
2014. Is there room for a considerable increase in the wheat production of the Colony? Yes. This district could grow enough wheat to supply the whole of New South Wales. The land in the Bullock Creek valley is as good as any in the country.
- 2015.

- J. J. Miller. 2015. Did you see the wheat growing at Wallanbillan? Yes; and also at Bulbodney. At Bulbodney it was a little early, and the frost had touched it.
- 6 Sept., 1900. 2016. Is all that country suitable for wheat? Yes, except where there is ironbark and gravelly ridges. For miles at a stretch, the whole of the country is suitable for wheat.
2017. You do not wish to express an opinion as to which is the better route for a railway? No; I am not competent to do so.
2018. Do you like the country round about Wallanbillan for wheat-growing? Yes. We shipped wheat from there for Messrs. Cannon Brothers; that wheat went to Narramine. There were 2,000 bags to go in another shipment; but it could not be got into the railway station, because of the bad state of the roads.
2019. If the proposed railway were constructed, Messrs. Cannon Brothers would send their wheat to it? Yes; most of their holding lies in towards the proposed line, whereas it is 25 or 30 miles to Narramine. They have to go nearly 40 miles round to cross the Bogan by the bridge. None of the wheat sent from Trundle was as low as C grade.
2020. Is there a great difference between the A and the B grade? The A grade is superior to the B grade.
2021. Is there as much difference between the A grade and the B grade as between the B grade and the C grade? Yes; but, according to the Board of Exports, even the C grade is a fair average quality milling wheat.
2022. Have you resided in the district of which we are speaking? No; but I have visited it, and I have transacted business for the people there.
2023. Is much fruit grown in the district? No; but I have learned that fruit does very well there.
2024. Do you think that fruit-growing would enter largely into the operations of a person engaged in mixed farming? Yes; fruit-growing, dairying, and poultry and pig-raising would go very well with the growing of wheat, and the rearing of sheep. A farmer can generally keep his house upon these subsidiary aids.
2025. Is the country on each side of the proposed route at a considerable distance from it as good as that immediately upon the route? Yes; as far as I can see there is very little difference. It is much the same sort of country right through, the good country being divided here and there by an ironbark gravelly ridge.
2026. There is very little waste land? Very little. Very large paddocks of wheat could be cultivated, and wheat-growing pays best where you can carry on your farming operations on a large scale.
2027. Is it probable that the mineral resources of the district will be largely developed? I do not know much about the mineral resources of the district, but I believe that it is gold-bearing country, and that tin and other minerals will be found there. The country of which we are speaking is not far from Peak Hill on the one side, or from Cobar on the other.
2028. Do you think that the large estimated loss upon the proposed railway is likely to be made up within a reasonable time? I feel sure of it. The fertility of the soil, and the results of the recent shipments, show that the district is splendidly adapted for wheat-growing. Not only will the holders of land grow wheat there themselves, but they will also let their land out to tenant farmers, who will also grow wheat, and in this way a very large area of land will be brought under the plough—a larger area than the settlers themselves think. The Commissioners have not taken into consideration the great advantage which the traffic of this district will bring to them in earning revenue for the main line, because everything that goes over the branch line will also be taken over the main line. I would like to impress upon the Committee the splendid character of the men in this district. If any men can subdue the country and make it profitable, it is the men already out there; and they are worthy of every assistance from the Government. They must make things succeed. There seems to be plenty of timber and ballast in the district. There is ironbark and box along the route, and there will not be much expense in getting ballast. In addition to the earnings from the mineral, agricultural, and stock traffic, there will be the earnings from the timber traffic, because there will always be a certain quantity of timber traffic on the proposed railway.
2029. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you known the country through which the proposed line will pass? I have not known that immediate locality very long.
2030. Then you cannot speak of its condition a few years ago? Not from personal experience.
2031. Did the people who were settled there go there with a view to using the land for farming, or did they intend to use it for pastoral purposes? For farming; they are all practical farmers.
2032. Have you noticed any material progress in the opening-up of the district since you have known it? Yes; the farms there are in a splendid condition. Very large areas have been cleared, and very well cleared, too. The improvements which have been made are of a substantial character, and some of the farms are more creditable to their holders than many of the farms on the railway line.
2033. When you said that three-fourths of the land is suitable for agriculture, did you mean for wheat-growing? Yes; it is all wheat-growing land.
2034. What is the country like before it is improved;—is it scrubby? It is heavy country; but the timber can easily be burnt off after it has been killed.
2035. Has much land been cleared other than that which is actually under cultivation? I think that whatever land has been cleared has been cultivated, or is about to be cultivated.
2036. Are the holdings sufficiently large to enable those who have them to make a living upon them? Yes. Those who have taken up the land seem to have sufficiently large holdings.
2037. Have the people taken up the land in very large areas? Most of the blocks are of about 2,000 acres.
2038. Are there many large holdings in the district? There are not very many large holdings of freehold or secured land, though there is a lot of leased land about to fall in.
2039. Do you think that the proposed line will go through the middle of the good agricultural land? Yes.
2040. Have you a good knowledge of the country between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? No; I do not know much about that part of the country, but I have been up past Wallanbillan where the country is similar, though perhaps a little more open in places than that between Trundle and Bulbodney.
2041. Do you know of any land under cultivation along the route of the proposed line? Yes. Some of the farmers have as much as 2,000 acres under wheat, and he is a small man who has not 400 or 500 acres under wheat. There is a prospect of a big crop this year.
- 2042.

2042. Are these large areas at a considerable distance from the railway? The large areas are round about Trundle and Wallanbillan. Messrs. Cannon Brothers have about 2,500 acres there.

2043. Is there much cultivation between Trundle and Bullock Creek? Yes; a great deal.

2044. Do you think that the present cost of transit is too great for the farmers to pay? Yes; it is a great handicap to them at the present price of wheat. When they went to the district, wheat was worth 4s. a bushel, and at that price I suppose that they could manage to make it pay. Some of them are able to run 3,000 or 4,000 sheep, so that they can make a living apart from agriculture; but no doubt they took up the land in the hope that the railway would come sooner or later. They are men who came from Victoria. In Victoria, no matter where men selected, the railways followed them; and no doubt they hoped that the same thing would happen here.

2045. Do you think that the bulk of the land which is suitable for wheat-growing will be placed under cultivation? Yes.

2046. Have you had any experience of the halves system? Not personally; but I know a large number of people who are working in that way.

2047. It is held by some that the halves system has been adopted by landholders for the purpose of getting their land cleared and improved? That is so, to a large extent. Agriculture on the halves system is not so permanent a thing as when a man is cultivating his own land. Very often a squatter, upon the expiration of a lease on the halves system, will lay down his land with lucerne and artificial grasses. Land thus treated will carry more stock than other land, and the transaction pays the landholder and pays the farmer too. As a rule, when tenant farmers have saved up a few pounds they go away and select land for themselves.

2048. Do you think that the land which will be placed under cultivation in this district will be only temporarily under cultivation? No; I think it will always pay the men in that district to go in for mixed farming. Wherever a man is cultivating his own land, there is a certain degree of permanency about his operations.

2049. These farmers are not likely to abandon agriculture for pastoral purposes? No; because even light crops, with small prices, will pay them.

2050. Which would pay best—the use of 2,500 acres for agriculture only, for sheep raising only, or for mixed farming? The use of the land for mixed farming. There is nothing like mixed farming, where a man has a family to keep. It is the man who goes in for mixed farming who gets along.

2051. How has the district fared during the last few years of drought? It has done very well as compared with other districts.

2052. Has the rainfall been fairly good? Yes; it is sufficient for wheat-growing.

2053. Is the district one in which dairying operations would be profitable? I do not say that dairying will be carried on there upon as large a scale as along the coast; but in the country districts they always require a certain amount of dairy produce for local wants, and the surplus will be sent to Sydney for export. I know districts in which dairying has paid very well, even at a distance from a railway station.

FRIDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

James Taylor, B.Sc., Wh.S., F.C.S., A.R.S.M., metallurgist, Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

2054. *Chairman.*] You have had some opportunity to become acquainted with the mineral resources of the district between Parkes and Peak Hill;—do you consider Peak Hill likely to prove a permanent mining field? I think it is very likely to be a permanent mining field. Work has been going on at Peak Hill for the last twelve years or more, while at Tomingley the mines were working even before that. The mine with which I am connected has been continuously at work for the last twelve years, and has not had to apply for the suspension of labour conditions on any occasion. Our shaft is down 700 feet, and the main lode goes below that, but we do not know how far.

2055. As you go down, do you find the same body of ore and of the same quality as in the upper part of the mine? In the upper levels the ore is usually such as can be treated by the ordinary battery processes—crushing and amalgamation. When you get down to the water level sulphides come in, and the ore becomes of a nature that cannot be treated successfully by the batteries. That is the common experience in mines generally, and it has been our experience. We have a battery running to treat the ore obtained in the higher levels, and we have introduced a smelting process to treat the ore in the lower levels.

2056. Can you give the Committee any details of your operations with the new process? We put up as small a plant as we could, so that if the process proved a failure the loss would be a minimum loss, and we ran the furnace continuously for over ten weeks. So far as the process is concerned, we might have gone on for ten years without stopping. It was well known that the ore was difficult to treat, and people who were supposed to know about these things said that it would be impossible to treat it by a smelting process; but during those ten weeks we treated over 700 tons of ore, and we sent away 39·7 tons of matte. The value of the matte produced was something over £30 per ton after paying transport and treatment charges. We were sending the matte away regularly. The ore is difficult to treat, but, if we could get suitable ores to mix with it in place of using fluxes which contain neither gold, silver, nor copper, to any extent, our charges would be much less, and the process would be correspondingly more successful. At Orange Plains there is exactly the material we want, and we are trying to get supplies of ore from there; but 60 miles of road carriage is a very serious matter, especially with the weather that we sometimes get there.

2057.

J. J. Miller.

6 Sept., 1900.

J. Taylor,
B.Sc., Wh.S.,
F.C.S.,
A.R.S.M.

7 Sept., 1900.

J. Taylor, 2057. If a railway were made from Parkes *via* Peak Hill to Bullock Creek, would it enable you to take
B.Sc., Wh.S., advantage of the Orange Plains ores? Yes; because that line would pass within 10 miles of the mines
F.C.S., at Orange Plains.
A.R.S.M.

2058. What quantity of ore could you use if the railway were made, and your plant were in full working
7 Sept., 1900. order? There are two groups of mines, and one mining field which is just beginning to be developed,
directly on the route of the proposed railway. There is one group of mines at Orange Plains, another
group at the Albert Water Holes, and another group at Lightning Paddock. All those places are within
a few miles of the route of the line that you speak of. Lightning Paddock is about 40 miles from Peak
Hill, and is near Bullock Creek, and the mines there would be within 3 or 4 miles of that line. Further
on, you come to the Albert Water Holes, and the mines there would be within 6 or 7 miles of the line, while
at Orange Plains the mines would be within 8 or 10 miles of the line. From these mines we could take
from five to fifteen tons daily at present.

2059. If your process of smelting proves a success, will the other mines in the district be able to take
advantage of it? The gold-mines would not. The concentrates they produce would probably come to
us, but the bulk of their ore will be treated by the ordinary battery processes. This week they are
bringing from 5 to 10 tons of gold ore to us from Lightning Paddock as an experimental crushing, and,
if the stuff proves to be worth anything, they will put up a battery on the ground. They have, however,
copper deposits as well, and we expect shortly to get a supply of copper ore. The copper ore in those
mines must come either to us or to some other smelting place. If it comes to us, and the line that you
speak of is made, it must use that line, whereas, if it went elsewhere, it would probably use the line
from Bogan Gate. The erection of smelters to treat ore in the district would mean a considerable
amount of traffic in coal and coke, and a copper-mine provides more traffic for a railway than a gold-
mine does.

2060. What is your opinion of the Albert Water Holes as a copper-mining field? The show there is very
good so far. There are three shafts down on three different claims, and the deepest is down about 90
feet. Mr. Lynn, who gave evidence at Lansdale, is part proprietor of one of the mines, and about three
weeks ago one of the other mines found as good a deposit as anything which has been seen in Mr. Lynn's
shaft. Mr. Lynn has been sending consignments of ore to Cockle Creek and to Dapto. Of course, no
one can tell what will happen in the future, but, so far, things appear satisfactory there, and the ore that
is being raised is good.

2061. What do you think of the gold prospects at Lightning Paddock? I have not been there.

2062. What fuel do you use for your smelters? Coke.

2063. Where do you get it from? The bulk of it comes from Unanderra; but we have got some of it
from Rix's Creek, and some from the Purified Coke Company, Newcastle.

2064. What is the charge for conveying fuel from Parkes to Peak Hill? 17s. 6d. a ton.

2065. Is that a considerable handicap? It is a serious matter. The railway charge for the same distance
would be something like 2s. 6d. a ton.

2066. If there were a railway from Parkes to Peak Hill, what amount of coke would you be likely to
use? Hitherto we have been using 2 tons of coke a day; but we are enlarging our operations, and it is
quite possible that when they begin again we shall use from 3 to 4 tons a day. The directors have had
under consideration the advisability of putting in larger furnaces, and there would be all the more reason
for doing so if we could conveniently get ores from other places. A larger furnace would consume at
least 8 to 10 tons of coke a day.

2067. In what way would the mines at Tomingley and McPhail be benefited by the construction of the
line we are speaking about? They are gold-mines, and would not provide so much traffic for a railway as
if they were copper-mines, because they do not require fuel for the treatment of their ores. At McPhail,
however, there are from 100 to 150 men employed, and, of course, a large quantity of supplies are
required for a population like that, while, in addition, there are the ordinary mining supplies required.

2068. Is the copper-mining likely to be developed in the district by the construction of the suggested
Peak Hill line? I think so. We are getting about 1 per cent. of copper from our ore; but, from time
to time, prospectors bring in samples from the country roundabout, and we may come across something
which is worth working. The country being flat, it is not so easy to make discoveries in it as if it were
undulating.

2069. Is the country similar to that between Nymagee and Cobar? I have not been to Nymagee,
although I have been to Cobar. It is generally supposed that there is a belt of metalliferous country
extending south-east from Cobar. There are small shows of copper all the way down past Peak Hill.
Lightning Paddock, Albert Water Holes, and Orange Plains are all in that belt. There is a considerable
show of copper deposits round about Albert Water Holes, which has not yet been touched. There are
outcrops here and there which give promise of something.

2070. *Dr. Garran.*] Do I understand that there are mineral indications all the way from Parkes to Cobar?
Not quite to Parkes, but pretty nearly as far as that.

2071. Are there any indications of mineral wealth in Harvey's Range? Yes; here and there.
Manganese, carrying a little gold, has been found nearly opposite Peak Hill.

2072. Do you know what the rock is of which those ranges are composed? I think it is silurian rock.
The rock about Peak Hill is silurian. We have silurian shales and schists there.

2073. Then it is quite possible that there may be minerals in that range? Yes.

2074. Have the mines at Peak Hill any connection geologically with the Parkes gold-field? I do not
know as to that. The formation about Peak Hill is very much contorted. There is a good deal of
irregularity in it.

2075. It is not the same rock as at Parkes? I have not examined the country at Parkes.

2076. Are there any indications of minerals between Parkes and Peak Hill? At Alectown a good deal
of gold has been taken from alluvial workings, and a reef is being worked at Monte Carlo, about 9 miles
from Peak Hill. There are some other indications, but I do not know much about them.

2077. So far as you know, Tomingley is the northern end of this field? I think so.

2078. There is nothing between Tomingley and Narramine? I do not know of anything being worked there.

2079. A railway to Peak Hill would practically be enough for Tomingley? Yes; Tomingley is only 11
miles from Peak Hill. McPhail, where there is one of the largest gold-mines in the district, is only 9
miles away.

2080. Then a line to Peak Hill would practically serve the whole of the mineral area of which Peak Hill
is the centre? Yes.

J. Taylor,
B.Sc., Wh.S.,
F.C.S.
A.R.M.S.

7 Sept., 1900.

2081. Are there indications of minerals going west or north-west from Peak Hill towards Bullock Creek? That is flat country, and difficult to prospect.
2082. There is nothing on the surface to show? No.
2083. Have the mines been discovered by surface indications? I think there is a slight rise at Lightning Paddock, and I think that there are some outcrops there, but I have not been on the ground.
2084. Is there any mineral outcrop beyond Bulbodney, on towards Nymagee? I cannot say; I have not been through that district.
2085. There are minerals at Overflow? Yes; both copper and gold, and some work has been done at Honeybugle station; but I have not been in that district.
2086. A line from Peak Hill to Nymagee would run through mineral country? Yes. At Overflow they have put in a furnace, and have attempted to smelt.
2087. What is the quality of the land between Parkes and Peak Hill? Where there are crops growing there they seem to be doing well.
2088. Would a line from Parkes to Peak Hill develop agriculture there? So far as I know it would; but I do not profess to know much about agriculture. My impression is that from Peak Hill out the land is very satisfactory from an agricultural point of view.
2089. Do you know whether there are minerals between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? There are minerals at Fifield, to the left of the proposed line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.
2090. How far to the left? About 20 miles from Trundle.
2091. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is the ore which is obtained above the water-level easily treated? Yes; we treat it by the ordinary battery processes.
2092. Is there much of it in sight? The whole hill can be treated. It varies from rich to poor in places. We have from 15 to 20 head of stampers going on that kind of material.
2093. At McPhail they are using the cyanide process? Yes; they crush first, and then use the cyanide process, except for the slimes, which they are not treating.
2094. Yours is not a quartz mine? Yes, it is; but the quartz is impregnated with pyrites, and a little copper.
2095. Arsenical pyrites? No, iron pyrites.
2096. Do you think that this mineral field is likely to be permanent? I think so. We have a strong lode at 700 feet down, and as soon as we get fairly to work we shall sink another 100 feet.
2097. What is the width of the lode that you are working on now? The width varies; but it averages about 5 feet.
2098. Is it a well-defined lode? Yes.
2099. With proper hanging walls? With proper walls. When the furnace is running there are about twenty men working in connection with it, and about as many more in the mine, while to work the battery would require about forty men, so that altogether we employ about eighty men.
2100. *Chairman.*] Can we take that number as any criterion as the number you would employ if the railway came to Peak Hill, and you could obtain your fuel more cheaply? No; that is the number of men that we are employing now. I do not say that we could employ very many more men if we confined our operations to our own ores, though if we double our furnace, as we probably shall, that will mean an increase in the number of men employed. The smelting process would be much more profitable if we could get a variety of ores to treat. At Swansea, in Wales, they get ores from all parts of the world, and therefore the cost of smelting is very low, but our process costs a good deal, because we have to use fluxes which contain very little mineral. If we could get ores of different qualities from other localities, we could smelt at a much lower cost, and so build up an industry there. I might point out that if you plot out on the map the country within 20 miles of the route of the line from Parkes through Peak Hill to Bullock Creek, you will find that it will serve almost every acre of the land that would be served by the Bogan Gate line which is not already served by the Condobolin line.
2101. If the line were taken *via* Peak Hill, where could you draw ores from? We should get ore at once from Orange Plains. The ore at the Albert Water Holes is like our own, highly silicious, but at Orange Plains the ore carries a good deal of iron with copper. At the present time we are using an iron-ore which we get on our own ground. If it contained 1 or 2 per cent. of copper, it would make all the difference in the world to us. Now it is only valuable as a slag forming material. What we should also like to do is to find a limestone carrying copper.
2102. If you were successful in establishing a fairly large smelting works at Peak Hill, from what district would you draw ore? From as far as Orange Plains in one direction; eastwards anything that was found in the Harvey's Range; and, southwards, anything that would not go to the Condobolin or the Parkes line. There are one or two mines near Parkes which contain rich copper, but we could scarcely expect to get that ore, because those mines are near to the main line, and the ore could be sent as easily to Lithgow or to Dapto. We could not expect to get anything from the country more than 10 or 15 miles south, unless we had control of a mine of our own.
2103. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there any other complication in your ore besides that created by the fact of it being sulphide? Unfortunately there is not as much sulphide as we should like. The difficulty is with the quartz. It is highly silicious—there being 50 to 70 per cent. of silica in it. It is necessary to convert that into fusible slag, and, therefore, we must have limestone and ironstone. If we could get either carrying copper or a little gold, it would pay for the treatment.
2104. Would it pay to reduce your ore, and then send it to Cockle Creek or Dapto? No; that has been tried.
2105. Is the cost of carriage too heavy? Yes.
2106. Your difficulty is to find good blending ores within reach? Yes; though we may find them any day. In an auriferous district like Peak Hill, one would expect any ironstone found there to carry a little gold. The ironstone does carry some gold, but, unfortunately, it is less than a pennyweight to the ton.
2107. Does not the Lithgow coke suit you? We have not tried it.
2108. Has not the Lithgow Contributing Company built furnaces at Lithgow? Not for coke. Those furnaces were built to treat matte after it had been through the coke furnaces. They use coal for that process.
2109. They get their own coke from Rix's Creek? I think so. The Rix's Creek coke is of very good quality.
2110. You have not tried to find out whether you could get coke from Lithgow? We have not tried to use that coke.

- J. Taylor, B.Sc., Wh.S., F.C.S., A.R.S.M.
7 Sept., 1900.
2111. Would their coal suit you? We do not use coal, because we can get wood.
2112. Is there much timber in your neighbourhood? A considerable quantity. We pay about 8s. a cord for it.
2113. In course of time a large smelting establishment denudes the neighbourhood of timber? Yes; that is what happened at Cobar; but if we doubled our output we should consume only a comparatively small quantity of timber, because we only use wood to raise steam. We purpose in the future to use wood to treat the matte, but coal could be used for that.
2114. You see your way to success if you can get the necessary materials? Yes. Metallurgically the problem is solved; the question is, how to turn the corner financially, and the railway would help us to do that.
2115. If your work proves a success, will it assist in the development of other mines in the district? Yes; because there would then be a market on the spot for the ores which they produced.

Robert Golding, manager, cyanide works, Peak Hill, sworn, and examined:—

- R. Golding.
7 Sept., 1900.
2116. *Dr. Garvan.*] Have you resided long at Peak Hill? I have resided about thirteen years between Peak Hill and Tomingley.
2117. Were you attracted to the district by its mineral developments? Yes.
2118. Have you followed mining as an occupation all through? Yes.
2119. You are thoroughly familiar with the character of the country there? Yes.
2120. You have heard Mr. Taylor's evidence;—do you corroborate it generally? Yes.
2121. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been connected with a mining company, or have you been mining on your own account? Sometimes I have been connected with companies; but at other times I have been mining on my own account. Recently I was working on tribute in the mine adjoining the Peak Hill Proprietary Mine.
2122. Have you been generally successful? Yes; more so than the general run of miners. With three partners I took about £3,500 worth of mineral out of the mine adjoining the Proprietary in something under three years.
2123. Is the district sufficiently proved to enable you to speak of the likelihood of its permanency? Beyond a doubt it is. I have resided in the district for something like eighteen years. I came there first to the opening of the Tomingley field, about eighteen years ago. Since then the Peak Hill field has developed, and the mine there has been working continuously from the first. At no time since its opening has that mining-field carried a larger population than it is carrying at the present time, nor at any time has it turned out a larger yield of gold than it turned out last year. The same remarks apply also to McPhail. Beyond a doubt, any mine which has worked continuously for eighteen years must be considered permanent. The mines in that district look better now than they have looked at any time since they started.
2124. What depth have they gone down? At McPhail and Tomingley the greatest depth is 400 feet. At McPhail they crush about 2,500 tons a month, and the tailings and everything else are afterwards treated by the cyanide process. The plant there is so complete that something like 5 dwt. to the ton will give a fair dividend.
2125. What is the thickness of your lode? At McPhail it varies from 3 feet to 30 feet. It is all quartz.
2126. Is it about the same all the way down from the surface? No. At the shallower levels it seemed much richer than it is lower down; but that is accounted for by the fact that the shallower levels were worked by individual miners, who only took out the richest stone. There is equally rich stone at the bottom now; but the good stone and the poor stone are bulked together.
2127. Do you think that the lode is widening as you go down? Yes; it has widened at McPhail.
2128. Is it richer or poorer than higher up? There is a pretty uniform average throughout.
2129. Are there distinct walls? Yes. At McPhail there are four different reefs in the big mine, and at Tomingley there are two distinct reefs. In some places the walls are broken a bit; but, taking it all through, there is a distinct hanging and foot wall.
2130. How far are the four reefs apart? I should think that they are all within about 130 feet.
2131. Do they seem likely to unite? It is generally considered that they will, because some of them underlay a little more steeply than the others. It is the impression at McPhail that the reefs will come together.
2132. How many mines are there working at McPhail and at Tomingley? There are five mines working at Tomingley, and there is one big mine at McPhail. To the south, three leases were recently applied for, and work will start there when the leases have been granted.
2133. Has the country been tested for any great distance? No; it has not been tested as much as one would expect.
2134. Has any alluvial ground been worked there? There is no alluvial ground at Tomingley.
2135. What effect would the construction of a railway to Peak Hill have upon the mines that you speak of? It would have no direct effect upon the Tomingley mines; but it would enable the people there to get their supplies more cheaply. At the present time it takes three waggons constantly going from Dubbo and Narramine to supply Tomingley and McPhail.
2136. Is Dubbo your nearest railway station? No, Narramine is; but most of the goods come from Dubbo.
2137. *Mr. Hyam.*] There is a better road to Dubbo? Yes.
2138. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the cost of carriage? Thirty shillings a ton from Dubbo to McPhail.
2139. Is your ore all treated on the spot? At the big mine at McPhail it is all treated on the spot. As they get down they find that there is more mineral in the stone, and I have very little doubt that eventually the stone will be found to be highly mineralised, and more difficult to treat.
2140. Is there a battery at McPhail? Yes, a 40-head battery; and about 250 men are employed there.
2141. Is that battery kept constantly at work? Yes.
2142. What fuel is used? Wood, chiefly. Even if the process that is now being tried at the Proprietary Mine at Peak Hill fails, it will not mean the extinction of the mining industry there, because, in my opinion, the ores might be crushed and concentrated as much as possible, and the concentrates might then be trucked to Dapto or Cockle Creek. That has already been tried by the "Crown of Peak Hill" Mine with very satisfactory results. There are two large mines at Peak Hill beside the Proprietary Mine,

Mine, and they are waiting to see what developments take place in the Proprietary Mine. If the Proprietary process fails, they will go on crushing, and will send their concentrates to Cockle Creek or to Dapto.

R. Golding.
7 Sept., 1900.

2143. Which would be the better line to make, one from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, or one from Parkes *via* Peak Hill to Bulbodney? I think one from Parkes *via* Peak Hill to Bulbodney. Going from Parkes to Peak Hill, the first town of any importance is Alectown, 15 miles from Parkes. Alectown, Peak Hill, Tomingley, and McPhail contain about half of the population of the Condobolin electorate. Then from Peak Hill to Tullamore the land is of the very best quality, and there are between 130,000 and 140,000 acres of leased land on Mungary, Bulgandramine, Genanagie, and other holdings, over 90 per cent. of which is good agricultural land, which will fall in shortly. Immediately that land becomes available for selection it will be secured.

2144. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there much alienated land in the district? Yes, a very large quantity. During the last five years land values in the district have increased very considerably, and within 12 miles of Peak Hill the increase has been something like 90 per cent., as the following list of sales will show:—

Name of Holder.	Area.	Value, 1895.	Value, 1900.
J. B. Wilson	acres. 2,560	£2,100	£3,000
—, Paynes	1,891	Ss. 6d. per acre.	18s. per acre.
R. J. and F. Edwards	4,500	8s. "	20s. "
J. J. McCudden	about 1,900	10s. "	24s. "
—, Rice	" 8,000	17s. "	25s. "

No sale has taken place in the district which has not shown an increase in value of at least 25 per cent.

2145. Was the land sold freehold land? Conditional purchase and conditional lease land.

2146. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Was it improved much in the period between the first and second sales? To some extent. When Paynes' land was sold, in 1891, it was well fenced, about 50 acres were under cultivation, and there was a comfortable house on it. Edwards' land was in something like the same position. On Rice's land no improvements were made between the time of the first sale and the time of the second sale.

2147. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What are the people using their land for? Wilson, Paynes, Edwards, and McCudden use their land for agricultural and pastoral pursuits, while Rice's land is used chiefly for sheep. All the places I have named lie north of Peak Hill, and in towards Harvey's Range. Edwards' selection runs right up to Harvey's Range.

2148. What area would support a family in that district under mixed farming? It would depend greatly upon the position of the holding. Within 4 or 5 miles of Peak Hill from 750 to 800 acres would maintain a family, but, getting out 8 or 9 miles, from 1,000 to 1,250 acres would be required; and, as you got back towards Bulbodney, the area will have to be still more increased.

2149. Do the farmers round Peak Hill grow fruit and vegetables to supply the miners? Yes. It is very good land for fruit and vegetables, and particularly for grapes. Grapes are the principal fruit grown.

2150. What is the population of Peak Hill? From 1,100 to 1,200 people. The population of McPhail is between 350 and 400, and the population of Tomingley between 280 and 300. For the last eight years the average rainfall of Peak Hill has been 23.48 inches; of Tomingley, 23.4 inches; of Wargo Rock, 23.57 inches; and of Wargo Rock No. 2, 23.74 inches. Those four stations are practically on the direct route of the line from Parkes, *via* Peak Hill, to Tullamore. The average rainfall at Bogan Gate, however, for a period of four or five years, was 18.33 inches; of Trundle, 21.35 inches; and of Fifield, 16.28 inches. The average of the four stations near Peak Hill was 23.45 inches, and of the Bogan Gate stations 18.50 inches, showing an advantage of something like 5 inches for the country on the Peak Hill side. The produce from Cannon Brothers' holding would be as likely to go to a line passing through Peak Hill as to a direct line from Bogan Gate. I should like to read a letter received by Mr. T. Brown, M.P., from the Public Works Department, in reference to the probable cost of constructing a line from Parkes, through Peak Hill, to Tomingley. That letter is as follows:—

Sir,

Department of Public Works, Sydney, 17th August, 1900.

With reference to your letter of the 16th ultimo, regarding additional surveys, &c., in connection with the proposed railway from Parkes, *via* Peak Hill, to Narramine, I have the honor, by direction of Mr. Secretary O'Sullivan, to inform you that the present survey from Parkes to Dubbo, which is a revised one, stands good for this proposal from Parkes as far as Tomingley, a distance of 43 miles, and an estimate made in April last set the cost down at £139,406, or £3,242 per mile. The remaining portion—*i.e.*, from Tomingley to Narramine, 24½ miles—has only been explored, and an approximate estimate made of this length, at the same time as that of the first mentioned section, amounted to £73,500, or £3,000 per mile. The total estimate for the line, therefore, amounts to £212,906.

I have, &c.,

R. HICKSON,

Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads.

A line from Parkes through Peak Hill to Tullamore divides the country pretty equally between the Western line and the Condobolin line. If such a line were constructed, any country to the north of it that was more than 20 miles from the Western line would be less than 20 miles from it, while any country to the south of it that was more than 20 miles from the Condobolin line would be less than 20 miles from it.

2151. *Mr. Nyam.*] Do not Harvey's Range come in very close to Peak Hill? Yes; but there is a good deal of cultivation on the other side of the range, and the produce from that part of the district would come into the line of which I am speaking, because that country is 50 miles from Molong, which is its nearest railway on the other side.

2152. *Chairman.*] What other pass is there over Harvey's Range besides the Gingham Gap? There is also the Gundongs.

2153. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far would that country be from the proposed line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? Over 40 miles. Bogan Gate would probably be its nearest point.

2154. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think that as large a farming population would settle along the line you speak of as is settled along the proposed line? Certainly. There is as good a farming population there

now.

- R. Golding.
7 Sept., 1900.
- now, and if the Bulderudgera-Warroo land exchange takes place it will make room for some more settlers.
2155. Do you advocate the Peak Hill route upon the ground that it would serve a mining district? Not entirely.
2156. Would it be as good an agricultural line as the proposed line? Yes; the average yield of the Peak Hill district is between 15 and 17 bushels of wheat to the acre. Within 12 miles of Peak Hill there are about 111 landholders, and something like 10,400 acres already under cultivation.
2157. How did the farmers there weather the recent bad seasons? At Peak Hill we have been extremely lucky. In our worst year we have had as much as 1.6 inches of rain.
2158. Then there has been no actual failure of crops? No; we have had very bad times, but not so bad as other people have had.
2159. Has the rainfall been as good as that over the whole country between Peak Hill and Parkes? That is a belt of country where there is always a good rainfall.
2160. Does more rain fall on Harvey's Range than on the land to the east and west of them? I think that, if anything, more rain falls on the west of Harvey's Range than on the east. The rains we get generally travel from the north towards the south, bearing a little to the east, or from south or south-west, coming the other way.
2161. *Mr. Hyam.*] You do not get so much rain from the south? No. The rains from the south rarely travel further than Parkes, but sometimes they come our way.
2162. *Dr. Garran.*] If the line that you favour were made, would the people between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney be sufficiently accommodated? I think so. From Trundle through to Fifield and Tullamore the population is very scarce. Most of the population in that part of the district is on land which is within 15 miles of Bogan Gate. That is the centre of agriculture in that part of the district. Most of the agriculture along the Condobolin line lies in and around Trundle.
2163. Does it lie to the east or to the west of the proposed line? On both sides of it.
2164. Would the making of the line that you favour do justice to the settlers between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? Certainly; because it would not leave any of them at a very great distance from a railway. We shall serve more people by constructing a line to Peak Hill than by constructing the proposed line.
2165. What is the distance to Tullamore? Tullamore is about 35 miles from Peak Hill, and between 35 and 40 miles from Bogan Gate.
2166. *Mr. Hyam.*] You say that half the population in the Condobolin electorate lives in the Peak Hill district;—is not that a mining population? Not entirely. Although the district is a mining district, it also contains a large pastoral and agricultural population.
2167. But are there not a great many people living in and around the mining townships who depend for their living upon the operations of the mines? I have seen Peak Hill when there was not one wages man there. No doubt some of the population in the district is due to the mining.
2168. Do you not look upon a mining population as a floating population? No, not altogether.
2169. Do you regard a mining population as a permanent population? Places like Parkes, Forbes, Grenfell, and Young were all opened up by mining operations; but when the mining began to fail agriculture started, and those towns are now all of them flourishing. The towns in the Peak Hill district, it seems to me, will follow that example.

Andrew Stewart, storekeeper, Liverpool-street, Sydney, sworn, and examined :—

- A. Stewart.
7 Sept., 1900.
2170. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you any knowledge of the Peak Hill district? Yes; I resided there from the latter part of 1889 until 1898. I was Mining Registrar and Warden's Clerk at Peak Hill.
2171. During the ten years that you resided there, was there any marked increase in the population? Yes.
2172. What was Peak Hill ten years ago? It formed part of the leasehold area of Genanagic.
2173. Were there any settlers there? A few; but there was practically no agriculture.
2174. Had much of the available land been taken up by selectors at that time? Yes; all the available land on Genanagic had been selected under the Act of 1884, five years before the gold-mines started.
2175. There was a large influx of population into Peak Hill after the mining started? Yes. In September, 1890, there were 7,000 people there.
2176. That is a larger population than there is there now? Yes; much larger.
2177. What is your opinion of the mining capabilities of the Peak Hill district? The ores at a depth from the surface are refractory; the oxidised ores which they are working on now are low-grade ores. Mining will continue to be carried on there under any circumstances, and will sustain a small permanent population, but if a satisfactory way of treating the refractory ore is discovered, the district will sustain a larger population than there is there now.
2178. Do you think there is any prospect of the difficulty being overcome? Yes; and I think that reefs of low grade ore, which have hitherto remained undeveloped, will be worked.
2179. Have any of the mines there been abandoned? None of the principal mines.
2180. I understand that a large number of mines were taken up there in the early days? A great many places were prospected, but no machinery of any value was erected. A good many miners have the idea that unless a reef is a payable one on the surface or near the surface, it is useless to go to any expense in developing it. A reef called Gorman's Reef has been taken up again.
2181. During the last few years has there been any increase in the number of men employed in the mines? Not at Peak Hill; but there has been at McPhail.
2182. How far does the mining district extend? Peak Hill is part of the Mudgee mining district, the border of which extends only to the Ten-mile Creek, a mile and a half from Peak Hill proper.
2183. Do you know the other mining towns near Peak Hill? Yes; I have a good knowledge of the whole district.
2184. What are the prospects of McPhail and Tomingley? Those are places where mining will always be carried on. The prospects of McPhail are very encouraging. They have a very large body of comparatively free ore there, and they have not tested their sulphides at any depth. They are only down 400 feet, so that they have not had to deal with the sulphide problem yet. The refractory ores are generally met with at the water level.
2185. Did mining commence at the other townships about the same time as it commenced at Peak Hill? It commenced at Tomingley and McPhail about ten years before it commenced at Peak Hill.

2186. Is there any likelihood of McPhail and Tomingley becoming permanent mining fields? Yes; the reefs there are decidedly payable. When they have exhausted the free ore at McPhail they will find that they have a large body of sulphide ore available.

A. Stewart.
7 Sept., 1900.

2187. Is the mining industry there suffering to any great extent from the want of a railway? I do not think so, though a railway would cheapen the cost of machinery and supplies. When they come to require coke, coal, and fluxes they will feel the want of a railway.

2188. Has that time yet arrived? It has arrived at Peak Hill.

2189. Do you think that if a railway were constructed from Parkes, *via* Peak Hill, to Bullock Creek, and so on to Bulbodney, there would be a large amount of mining traffic on it? I think there would be a fair amount of mining traffic on such a line—consisting chiefly of fluxes, coke, mining machinery, and supplies.

2190. Was there any difficulty in getting supplies when you resided at Peak Hill? There was great difficulty in getting machinery out to Myall, because there was a spell of dry weather at the time. Carriage is dearer than usual in times of drought.

2191. Have they not got most of the necessary machinery there now? As a field develops it requires new machinery. The machinery suitable for the treatment of free ore is useless for refractory ores.

2192. What is your opinion of the country from an agricultural point of view? It is so good that I made several unsuccessful attempts to secure land there myself. It is a very good district for mixed farming.

2193. Are you speaking of the land between Peak Hill and Parkes? Those remarks would apply to any part of the district between Peak Hill and Narramine; but I should not like to go far away from the ranges, because there the rainfall diminishes.

2194. Have you had any experience as an agriculturist? A little.

2195. Have you had any experience of pastoral pursuits? Yes; several years I was engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits.

2196. What is your opinion of the country between Parkes and Peak Hill? It is very good country for wheat growing, and for fruit, such as apricots, nectarines, grapes; and other fruits requiring a warm climate.

2197. Is it as good country for wheat growing as the country to the north of Peak Hill? Yes. I think it would yield better wheat than that country, because it is a heavy clayey loam, while the country to the north and to the west of Peak Hill is a lighter loam.

2198. Is it not flatter country? Yes; but the undulating character of the country near Peak Hill is rather an advantage from an agricultural point of view.

2199. Do you know the country between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek? Yes, fairly well; I have been through it on several occasions.

2200. What is your opinion of it in comparison with the country between Parkes, Peak Hill, and Bullock Creek? I think that the country round Trundle is about equal to the country between Parkes and Peak Hill; but, as you get further west, the rainfall decreases, and consequently the land becomes of less value for agriculture.

2201. There are considerable areas of land being put under wheat there at the present time? Yes.

2202. In the event of a railway being constructed through Peak Hill, would all the available land within its influence that was suitable for agriculture be cultivated? I think so; I think that the people would find that agriculture was the most profitable enterprise that they could enter upon. I believe that in time all the available land there will be cultivated.

2203. You are aware that there are large areas of land suitable for wheat growing between Parkes and Peak Hill which are not now cultivated? Yes; but most of that land is gradually being brought under cultivation. It takes some years to properly clear land for agriculture. To clear it cheaply, the farmers have to wait until the timber dies after ringbarking. It is not plain land like the land which Messrs. Cannon Brothers are cultivating.

2204. Have any attempts been made to cultivate the land between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? Yes; but that land was scarcely available for occupation in 1884. Myall, Tomingley and Peak Hill are all situated upon the leasehold areas of Genanagic and Bulgandramine, and consequently the people who went there were unable to get sufficient land to cultivate. It was not until 1895 that the remaining part of the leasehold area of Genanagic was made available for selection.

2205. Independently of mining; do you think that the agricultural settlement along the line to Peak Hill would give sufficient traffic to a railway? I have always thought so.

2206. Do you think that the mining of Peak Hill and the other towns there is likely to be of a permanent character? Yes.

2207. Do you regard the settlers there as prosperous? At first the district was settled by people of nomadic habits—by a mining population entirely; but some of these people took up land, and a number of small holdings were occupied round Peak Hill and Alectown by them.

2208. How have the settlers who took up land under the Act of 1884 got on? They have done very well. Very few of those selections have been sold; most of them remain in the hands of the original selectors.

2209. What is the usual size of the holdings? The average size of a selection there is 2,560 acres; but in many cases blocks of 6,000 or 10,000 acres are worked by several holders conjointly.

2210. Are there many large landholders in the district? Not a great number. Mr. McPhillamy holds the largest area of alienated land. He has between 23,000 and 24,000 acres.

2211. How far is his land from Peak Hill? Twelve miles, and about 5 miles from Alectown.

2212. What percentage of agricultural land is there in the district which would be served by the construction of a line from Parkes through Peak Hill? At least 90 per cent.

2213. What percentage of the land between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney is suitable for cultivation? There is one very large ridge there where the land is not good; but possibly 60 per cent. of that country would be suitable for cultivation.

2214. Where is the worst land there? After you pass Burra Burra.

2215. Between Bullock Creek and Bulbodney? Yes.

2216. What percentage of the land between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek is suitable for cultivation? That land is almost equal to the land between Parkes and Peak Hill.

2217. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you know Mr. Beazley's holding? Yes.

2218.

- A. Stewart. 2218. What is the size of that holding? There are four blocks there occupied by several members of a family, who work their land together. There are about 10,000 acres altogether.
- Sept., 1900. 2219. A lot of the land selected in that neighbourhood at one time formed part of the Bulderudgera holding? Yes.
2220. That land has been selected for some time? Yes; since 1885.
2221. Would you say that 90 per cent. of the land in the immediate neighbourhood of Beazley's selections is fit for agriculture? Yes.
2222. Where have you been engaged in agricultural pursuits? On the Namoi, near Gunnedah.
2223. Do you think that the land in the Parkes, Peak Hill, and Trundle districts is similar to the land about Gunnedah? Yes; but there is a better rainfall about Gunnedah, and the land is heavier there; it is a deeper alluvial soil.
2224. Do you think that it is as safe as the Gunnedah country for agriculture? No; not for agriculture alone, but it is for mixed farming.
2225. Would you be surprised to learn that the rainfall of Trundle is considerably higher than the rainfall at Bogan Gate? I am aware that it is.
2226. There is not a great deal of difference between the rainfall at Trundle and the rainfall at Peak Hill? No. The rainfall at Parkes is less than the rainfall at Peak Hill, though it is only 32 miles away. Peak Hill, Trundle, and Dandaloo get about the same rainfall.
2227. There is a good rainfall at Bullock Creek? Yes; it is just on the edge of the good rainfall.
2228. Would it be fair to take the average rainfall of the last three years as the average rainfall for the district? No; I think that to strike the mean average rainfall it is necessary to take about twelve seasons into account.
2229. Would 16 inches be your estimate of the rainfall at Bogan Gate? From 17 to 18 inches.
2230. What is the width of the range that you spoke of between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney? About 15 miles.
2231. How much poor country is there in a straight line there? Five or 6 miles, I dare say. There is a long stretch of inferior country there.
2232. Do you look upon that country as absolutely valueless? No; it may be capable of a considerable mineral development.
2233. If it were improved it would be fairly good pastoral country? Yes.
2234. Second-class grazing country? Yes.
2235. You would take it to be in the belt of mineral country that runs through the district? Yes.
2236. It has not been proved? No; prospecting there has been very trifling.
2237. Do you think that the Orange Plains will, in the course of eight or ten years, become a mining centre? I think there is a possibility of it.
2238. What sort of ore do they get there? Copper ore chiefly.
2239. Is it payable copper ore? I should think so.
2240. Then if the railway went through the district there would be a chance of mineral traffic as well as agricultural and pastoral traffic? Yes. Although that ore may not be payable to work by itself it may be useful to blend with other ores.
2241. Do you think it would be better to make a line from Parkes through Peak Hill to Bullock Creek, and then on to Bulbodney, than to make a line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney? I think so.
2242. Considering only the character of the country on each route? Yes. I think the character of the country on each route is much about the same.
2243. Going from Peak Hill in the direction of Bulgandramine, would you not get into myall and belar country? Yes; but I think that would be good country for cultivation.
2244. Would it stand a drought as well as the lighter soils? The experience of Messrs. Cannon Brothers has been that it stands a drought better if it is well worked. They stated that they had a better yield the year before last from the myall country than from the other country, though the wheat did not grow so high.

TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane. 2245. *Mr. Watson.*] Since you were first examined, the suggestion has been put forward that, in order to serve the people between Parkes and Tomingley, as well as those in the Bullock Creek and Bulbodney district, a line might be run, in lieu of that from Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek, from Parkes to Peak Hill, and then westerly to Bullock Creek;—have you had an opportunity to make investigations with regard to that matter? Yes. I sent Mr. Stuart over the line, and he has submitted a report, which I will read:—
- 18 Sept., 1900.

MEMORANDUM to the Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction.

Parkes to Bulbodney, *via* Peak Hill and Bullock Creek.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 6th September, 1900.

Sir,
I beg to report that I have examined the country between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, with the view of a connection between the present surveyed line, from Parkes to Dubbo at Peak Hill, and the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney survey at Bullock Creek; thus forming a through line from Parkes to Bulbodney, *via* Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, to be substituted for the present proposed extension from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

This

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY.

H. Deane.

18 Sept., 1900.

This connection, which I have shown by a green line on the accompanying diagram tracing, would leave the northern end of the proposed Peak Hill station about 306 miles from Sydney, *via* Parkes, and taking an almost due westerly direction, which is maintained throughout, it would cross the Bogan River at 300 miles, Back or Genaren Creek at 322 miles, the Gap, a low point in a small range of hills, at 327 miles, and Sandy Creek at 331 miles, and thence join the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney survey close to where that survey crosses Bullock Creek, at a point 338 miles from Sydney, by this proposal, and 332½ miles by Bogan Gate.

This connecting line would be a comparatively easy one to construct, and there should be no difficulty in maintaining the same grades and curves as on the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line, the only cutting of any importance being at the Gap, and this would probably not be more than 16 or 15 feet deep. The most expensive part of the line would be the crossing of the Bogan River, where a bridge, possibly 200 yards long, would be required; ordinary timber openings with one 60-ft. span would be sufficient.

The country passed through is good, varying from light sandy loam to rich myall flats, the latter possibly not quite as well adapted for wheat-growing as some of the freer and more easily worked ground.

In the immediate vicinity of the route all the available country has been taken up. It is, however, sparsely populated, and the areas under crop have not increased in the same proportion as in the few years prior to 1898.

The prevailing timbers are box and pine, with belah and myall on the flats. Stone suitable for ballast can be got at Peak Hill, and in the low range of hills in the vicinity of the Gap.

For a description of the country between Parkes and Peak Hill, I would refer you to my report R.S. 356, of 24th October, 1898.

The following distances may be useful for comparison:—

Bogan Gate to Bulbodney	75 miles
Peak Hill to Bulbodney	70 „
Parkes to Bulbodney (<i>via</i> Peak Hill and Bullock Creek) ...	104 „ (about 102 miles of new line)
„ „ (<i>via</i> Bogan Gate)	99 „

CHAS. McD. STUART.

I have had a comparison made between the estimates, which I thought would be useful for the Committee, so that they could see how the matter stands on a money basis. The comparison is as follows:—

COMPARISON between Bogan Gate, Bullock Creek, and Bulbodney; and Parkes, Peak Hill, Bullock Creek, and Bulbodney.

Description.	Length.		Estimated cost.	Average per mile.
	Mls.	chs.	£	£
Bogan Gate to Bullock Creek	40	40	119,658	2,955
Bullock Creek to Bulbodney	34	45	109,712	3,175
	75	5	229,370	3,056
Distance, Bulbodney from Sydney, 367 miles.				
Parkes to Dubbo	78	0*	256,000*	3,282*
Total of system	153	5*	485,370*	3,172*
Parkes to Peak Hill	31	52	112,808	3,564
Peak Hill to Bullock Creek	36	00*	122,400*	3,400*
Bullock Creek to Bulbodney	34	45	109,712	3,175
	102	17*	344,020*	3,375*
Distance, Bulbodney from Sydney, 371 miles.				
Peak Hill to Dubbo	47	00*	143,000*	3,043*
Total of system	149	17*	487,920*	3,270*

* These figures are only approximate.

If you take Narramine as the ultimate connection with the Western line, instead of Dubbo, the comparative cost will be exactly the same. The reason why I have taken the whole of the system is, I think, apparent. At some future time a connection will probably be made between the Condobolin line at Parkes, and the Western line at Dubbo or Narramine. If you take the line to Bulbodney by way of Peak Hill, you will have a portion of that line already constructed. Acting upon the assumption that we want to connect the Western line with the Condobolin line at some future time, and give Bulbodney the advantage of railway communication, it is only right to take the whole expenditure into consideration. I only wish to add that the total length of the two systems does not differ much; but calculating the distance of the Bulbodney connection by way of Bogan Gate, together with the Parkes to Dubbo connection, as 153 miles 5 chains, and calculating the length of the Parkes-Dubbo line with the Peak Hill-Bulbodney line as 149 miles, the cost is only £2,550 in favour of the Bogan Gate connection with Bulbodney.

TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

J. Harper. 2246. *Chairman.*] Have you prepared a statement as to the probability of the traffic of a line from Parkes to Bulbodney, *via* Peak Hill? Yes. In the first place, I will read the following report from the Railway Commissioners:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 2nd October, 1900.

Proposed Railway from Parkes to Bulbodney, *via* Peak Hill,—102 miles.

In compliance with the request of the Honorable the Minister for Public Works, and in accordance with section 13 of the Public Works Act of 1888, we beg to report as follows:—

Cost of Construction—

Engineer-in-Chief's approximate estimate, exclusive of land and compensation ... £344,920

Estimated Annual Expenditure—

Interest on capital cost, at 3 per cent. £10,348

Maintenance of line, and traffic and locomotive expenses 8,400

18,748

Estimated Annual Revenue—

Merchandise and live stock £4,961

Passengers, parcels, and mails 3,074

8,035

The annual expenditure is based upon a tri-weekly service, and the revenue upon the charging of arbitrary local rates and fares.

The country is similar to that between Bogan Gate and Bulbodney, *via* Trundle, upon which we reported on the 9th December last. It is admirably suitable for wheat-growing, and the average rainfall is somewhat better than on the Trundle route.

It is stated, by those who should be qualified to judge, that the gold-fields at Peak Hill, Tomingley, and McPhail will be permanent; but while that may be so, they are not, and it is very questionable whether they ever will be, of sufficient importance to justify such an extensive detour as would be necessary to directly connect Peak Hill with a railway from Parkes to Bulbodney.

There is only an average of about 8 miles of agricultural country between the proposed line and the Harvey's Range on the east, while 20 miles are not regarded as an excessive distance to cart wheat in such country.

If, therefore, it should be determined to construct the line from Parkes, instead of from Bogan Gate, we would respectfully suggest for consideration whether, after leaving Parkes, it would not be advisable that it should take a more north-westerly route, diverging towards Bulbodney at a point some distance to the west of Peak Hill.

Having regard to the present and prospective traffic, directly or indirectly connected with the mines, this diversion would not be of material importance, and it would have the effect of bringing a considerably larger area of agricultural land within the influence of the railway. Unless this is done, the area of wheat-growing land within carting distance of the line will not be so great as on the route from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of
New South Wales was hereunto affixed this
2nd day of October, one thousand nine hundred,
in the presence of,—

(Signed) W. M. LEHON,
Deputy Chief Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

H. McLACHLAN.

This is a report which I furnished to the Railway Commissioners:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY, PARKES TO BULBODNEY, VIA PEAK HILL.

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had careful inquiry made as to the probable traffic on the suggested line from Parkes, *via* Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, to Bulbodney.

The total length of the line is 102 miles, as against 75 miles of construction in the case of the line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney. The line, as surveyed, traverses generally very excellent agricultural country, but is limited on the eastern side by the Harvey's Range, which is of an average distance of 8 miles from the proposed line, and to that extent limits the area of production in that direction.

At the present time the business of Peak Hill is transacted with Parkes, a distance of 31 miles. The population of Peak Hill and municipality is about 900; and the villages of McPhail and Tomingley have a united population of about 950. These are at a distance of 9 and 11 miles respectively by road from Peak Hill, and would also be served by the proposed line. In the aggregate, there is a population of about 4,000 who may be regarded as immediately interested in it.

The agricultural development amounts to equal to about 32,000 acres of cultivation, of which about 15,000 acres are common to both lines.

The map, which I furnish herewith, indicates the trafficable area of the two lines. On reference to this, it will be observed that a population of about 400, and 11,500 acres of cultivation, between Bogan Gate and Trundle will remain unserved should the line to Peak Hill be constructed. The settlers concerned will then be compelled to cart a distance of from 7 to 30 miles to reach a railway station. The map referred to also indicates the Crown lands available in the district, and it will be observed that the larger areas of land of this character are on the route *via* Peak Hill.

As far as cultivation generally is concerned, there is no doubt that those who are settled on the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line have shown most enterprise, their areas being considerably larger than in the case of those situated along the route to Peak Hill.

Briefly stated, the settlement of the district may be described as follows:—

Name.	Population Number.	Distance to Parkes by proposed railway.	Distance to Peak Hill by road.	Occupation of Residents.
Alectown and district	600	miles. 15	.....	Farming and grazing; a little mining.
Peak Hill and district	2,250	31	.....	Farming, grazing, and mining; 70 miners employed.
McPhail	500	31	9	Mining; 200 men employed.
Tomingley and district	400	31	11	Mining and grazing, and a little farming.
Bullock Creek and Bulbodney	250	.....	.....	Farming and grazing.

With reference to the mining industry of the district, very little work is being carried on in the "Proprietary" Mine at Peak Hill, although it is considered that ultimately important developments will take place. The "Myall" Mine at McPhail is in full operation, with, I believe, successful results, some 200 men being employed there. As this, of course, is purely a gold-mine, there does not appear to be any immediate prospect of the carriage of ores or of coke. Firewood is plentiful and cheap in the neighbourhood of both mines. J. Harper. 2 Oct., 1900.

With regard to the existing rates of carriage, I find that from about 17s. 6d. to 20s. per ton is the rate prevailing between Peak Hill and Parkes for general merchandise, 3d. per bushel for wheat up to 20 miles, and 4d. per bushel up to distances of 40 miles. The business of the district is done chiefly at Parkes, Dubbo, and Narramine.

My estimate of the traffic, based upon arbitrary local rates, and in a favourable season, is as shown hereunder:—

	Tonnage.	Revenue.
Goods	2,214	£902
Wool.....	2,109	943
Stock—575 trucks.....	.....	470
Agricultural produce	13,900	2,646
	18,223	£4,961
Carriage of mails—102 miles @ £12.....		£1,224
Passengers.....		1,550
Coaching and parcels		300
		£3,074
Goods, wool, stock, &c.		£4,961
Coaching and mails		3,074
Total		£8,035

ESTIMATE of Traffic for proposed Railway, Parkes to Bulbodney, via Peak Hill, 102 miles.

Trucking point.	Distance in miles	Goods traffic.			Wool traffic.			Stock traffic.			Agricultural produce.			Totals.		
		Tons.	Rate.	Amount.	Tons.	Rate.	Amount.	Trucks	Rate.	Amount.	Tons.	Rate.	Amount.	Tons.	Trucks.	Amount.
			s. d.	£		s. d.	£		s. d.	£		s. d.	£			£
Allectown	15	102	3 11	20	150	3 0	23	50	4 5	11	2,700	2 6	338	3,044	50	403
Peak Hill	31	854	8 1	345	450	5 0	113	200	9 1	91	3,300	3 6	578	5,224	200	1,251
Intermediate.....	48	80	12 7	50	278	8 0	111	50	14 0	35	3,600	4 0	720	4,018	50	934
Bullock Creek ...	67	130	17 7	114	595	10 0	298	150	19 7	147	2,600	4 6	585	3,425	150	1,183
Bulbodney	102	107	26 9	143	636	12 6	398	125	29 9	186	1,700	5 0	425	2,512	125	1,190
		2,214	...	902	2,109	...	943	575	..	470	13,900	...	2,646	18,223	575	4,961

Goods, wool and stock, &c.	£4,961
Mails (102 miles at £12).....	1,224
Coaching and parcels	300
Passengers—	
1,000 at 3s.	£150
3,000 at 6s.	900
500 at 10s.	250
250 at 20s.	250
	1,550
	£8,035

2247. In making a financial comparison of the two lines, the loss on the line via Peak Hill would be greater than on the other line? Yes.

2248. Which of the two districts is likely the sooner to bring the revenue up to the annual expenses? That is a very difficult thing to say.

2249. Which district is the more capable of development? That is also a difficult thing to say. Personally, I am impressed with both districts, and it is a difficult thing to distinguish between either.

2250. Would a line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney be one from which you would anticipate considerable development in the near future? Yes; at the same time I should anticipate it on the other line.

2251. But a line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney would have a bigger sweep of country from which to draw traffic? Yes; on either side.

2252. Whereas a Parkes-Peak Hill-Bulbodney line would be limited on the eastern side by the Harvey's Range? Yes; and on the southern side by the existing line to Condobolin.

2253. Do you think, if it were desirable to construct the line from Parkes, a deviation, leaving Peak Hill out of the question, should be seriously considered? One phase of that matter, which has been emphasised by the Railway Commissioners, is that more agricultural land would be served. The members of the Committee would observe that the general direction of one line is due north, and the other due north and west—practically, two sides of a triangle. You will also see, from the estimates I have given, that the mines—I refer to the townships of Peak Hill, McPhail, and Tomingley—will only contribute a small quota of the revenue of the line. The bulk of the revenue will be made up of stock, wool, and agricultural produce.

2254. All other things being considered, the suggestion to go to Peak Hill is due, no doubt, to the settlement there in connection with the mining which is going on? No doubt.

2255. If that is not likely to be a large item in the annual revenue of the line, it would seem desirable to go from the point originally suggested, namely, Bogan Gate, inasmuch as it would have a much larger area to draw from? It would open up more country to draw from.

2256. And it would not involve so much initial loss as the Peak Hill line? No.

2257. Mr. Watson.] Do you think, if the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line is constructed, another line from Parkes

- J. Harper.
2 Oct., 1900.
- Parkes towards Peak Hill will be justified in the near future? I do not think so. I do not think there would be sufficient warrant for the construction of a line between Parkes and Peak Hill. If you refer to my statement you will see that a great deal of the revenue is made up of agricultural produce, wool, and stock which come from beyond Peak Hill.
2258. Of the estimate of nearly £5,000 for goods, wool and stock, &c., about one-half has, apparently, to be credited to the Peak Hill and surrounding districts, and another half to the Bullock Creek to Bulbodney section? Not that much; at Peak Hill there are only 450 tons of wool out of 2,109 tons. Peak Hill and Alectown would give 600 tons of wool altogether. Of all goods, Peak Hill and Alectown together represent £1,654.
2259. You give the intermediate traffic as £934. Does "intermediate" mean between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek, part of which might be drawn from the Bogan Gate-Bulbodney line if constructed? Yes.
2260. How do you make up the difference between £8,035, the estimate of traffic for a railway from Parkes to Bulbodney, via Peak Hill, and the estimate in the other instance of only £4,400? That is made up out of increased population. There would be increased passenger traffic; there is also an increase of 27 miles of mileage.
2261. The difference from Bullock Creek would be only one of about 7 miles? Twenty-seven miles of construction. The difference in distance through to Sydney is 4 miles. The local mileage would be much longer, although the difference in mileage through is only 4 miles.
2262. Do you think that the population around Peak Hill and district is not sufficient to make any wide detour to serve it? Personally, I do not think so, and the Commissioners are also of that opinion.
2263. It has been suggested that the Parkes-Peak Hill section might be used afterwards to connect with the Western line at Narranine? But what advantage will be gained by that.
2264. There has been talk of a cross-country line from Grenfell to Forbes, and then on to Narranine? Our experience of cross-country lines has not been a happy one so far.
2265. But leaving out the immediate future, would it not be well to keep in view the possibility of a cross-country line at a later day? I cannot see what advantage would be derived by a cross-country line in that direction, because the country is so similar. If one district is suffering from drought, the other is almost invariably suffering from drought.
2266. Do you think that the agricultural development around Peak Hill is not going to amount to much? It would be impossible to say. There is plenty of good land in that neighbourhood, and, given a railway, it would develop very materially. The same thing might be said in regard to the Bogan Gate to Bulbodney line. No doubt material development would take place there.
2267. The rough estimate placed before us by the Engineer-in-Chief goes to show that the two lines—one from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney, and the other from Parkes to Peak Hill—could be constructed rather cheaper than could a line from Parkes to Peak Hill, and thence across to Bullock Creek and Bulbodney. That would seem to infer that the difficulty of construction would be between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek? That is not contained in the report. I have had before me an estimate of the cost of the line, and the higher rate of construction per mile was between Parkes and Peak Hill. I think there must be some mistake in regard to the matter, because any one who has been over the country knows that difficulties are greater between Parkes and Peak Hill than they are between Peak Hill and Bullock Creek.
2268. I asked Mr. Deane a question with reference to the country between Parkes and Peak Hill, and he said that, although undulating, it was not such difficult country after all? I think he is mistaken there, because I have a clear recollection that he told the Commissioners and myself that that would be the more expensive portion of the line. The mileage is practically the same. On one route it is 35 miles and 75 miles, total 110; and on the other it is 106 miles.
2269. The portion between Bogan Gate and Bullock Creek is estimated at £229,370. The portion between Parkes and Peak Hill is £112,108. The two together make about £342,000. The estimate from Parkes to Peak Hill and on to Bullock Creek is £358,000? The estimate which I have submitted to-day from the Railway Commissioners is the very latest. I only got it ten minutes before coming here, and it makes the cost from Parkes via Peak Hill to be £344,920.
2270. *Mr. Hyam.*] Supposing you constructed the line over the Peak Hill route, and, in order to straighten the line, made a deviation so as to leave Peak Hill out, how far would you be from Peak Hill? That is simply a suggestion. The Commissioners have not sufficient knowledge of the country to state authoritatively how far to the north of Peak Hill might be left.
2271. Can you say approximately? Perhaps 6 or 7 miles. The feeling is that if Peak Hill were brought within that distance of the line it would not be badly served, and the fact of a line being built in that direction would, of course, open up much more agricultural land on either side.
2272. The people from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney have agreed to be taxed at so much per acre? I think that is so.
2273. Would that tax pay the whole or a portion of the annual loss upon the line? I should not think so, but no calculation has been made. It is rather a matter for the Committee or for Parliament to determine as to whether they could do it or not. The matter has been mentioned to the Commissioners, and they have referred to it in their report.
2274. *Chairman.*] Can you say what percentage of the land within 20 miles on each side and 20 miles beyond the terminus of a line from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney would be suitable for agriculture? That is too big a question for me to answer.
2275. Do you think we would be within the limit if we estimated it at 60 per cent? I could not say.
2276. *Mr. Hyam.*] I think it would be 60 per cent, except in regard to the patch about Harvey's Range? Of course the Harvey Range does not affect that line at all.
2277. *Dr. Garran.*] When you say that you expect the greatest sweep of trade from the Bogan Gate line, you refer to the available land on either side? Yes.
2278. The Bogan Gate to Bulbodney country is only feebly developed at present? Very.
2279. I suppose your expectations in regard to traffic are from a more thorough development of the land already taken up than from land 20 miles back? Decidedly; I refer to land which would have a frontage to the line, and within that mileage limit.
2280. How far back from the route is the land taken up already? I should say for about 20 miles at certain points.
2281. Is the land taken up for 20 miles on either side of the route? Yes, as already stated, at certain points.
2282. May it extend for another 20 miles if the railway is constructed? Yes.

2283. So that you really have two strings to your bow: a greater development of the land already taken up, and an increase of the extent of land which would be taken up? That is so.
2284. And you would not have that on the other route? No, because on the other route we are limited.
2285. As far as the available traffic is concerned, by the Condobolin line on the south, the area is limited to the south-east of the line, which would be fairly called the traffic of that line? I wish to emphasise the fact that the Commissioners and myself were strongly impressed with the character of the soil on the route of that line. I do not wish to say anything in depreciation of the character of the soil.
2286. *Mr. Hyam.*] Is not the country, after you leave Tomingley, rather flat? It is. It is not so good to the north.
2287. *Dr. Garran.*] On the first 10 or 15 miles of the line from Bogan Gate *via* Peak Hill, you would not get much, because it already goes to the main line? Yes; the map indicates the point at which we expect to pick up traffic—about 8 or 10 miles from Parkes. Harvey's Range limits the traffic, although, in order to put the case fairly before the Committee, it is represented locally that the traffic to the east of the Harvey's Range, which at present goes into Molong, would, if a road were constructed, find its way to that line.
2288. We have been told of one or two gaps where roads could easily be made, and which concentrate the traffic;—of course, it is doubtful whether they would come back? I do not think they would.
2289. In comparing the two routes a good deal depends on the importance of the district as a mining district? Yes.
2290. If that were a great mining district, its claims would be very strong? Yes.
2291. If it is only a feeble mining district it will not weigh very much against the great agricultural prospects of the other route? I do not think so; I do not think that as things are at present it would warrant the agricultural and pastoral interests being sacrificed.
2292. That confirms my statement that the importance of Peak Hill goes a long way towards settling the question? Yes. As I have stated in my report, we found that matters at M'Phail were going on very prosperously. At Peak Hill those who were engaged in operating the Proprietary Mine were full of hope as to its future, but up to the present very little has been done.
2293. Still, mining business is business for the railway all the year round? Mining business of this character would simply resolve itself into passenger traffic and the consumption of commodities by those who were engaged in it. We would not expect to carry any of the products of the mines.
2294. Still it is a uniformly spread traffic all over the year? Yes.
2295. Whilst the agricultural traffic comes in during two or three months? Yes.
2296. Is it not to the interests of the railways to have a traffic which is spread uniformly? Certainly, it is more economical to work; but still we have to submit to the circumstances and do the best we can to meet the demand.
2297. You do not look upon mining traffic as very important traffic to your revenue? We do if it is of such a character as that which we have at Cobar, where, as I pointed out recently to the Committee, we practically have the traffic balancing by carrying the coal in one direction and the matte in the other. If this line were ultimately extended to Nymagee I should expect important developments in that direction.
2298. I suppose you get a good deal of traffic in the carriage of ore from one mine to another for the purpose of mixing and blending? We do not on the Cobar line; but from other districts we carry ore to the smelting works on the Coast; the Cobar people are not getting any fluxes at present, but it is possible that they may have to do so some day.
2299. You get some of their trade to Lithgow? Yes.

J. Harper.
2 Oct., 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of G. C. Yeo, draftsman, Stock Branch, Department of Mines and Agriculture.]

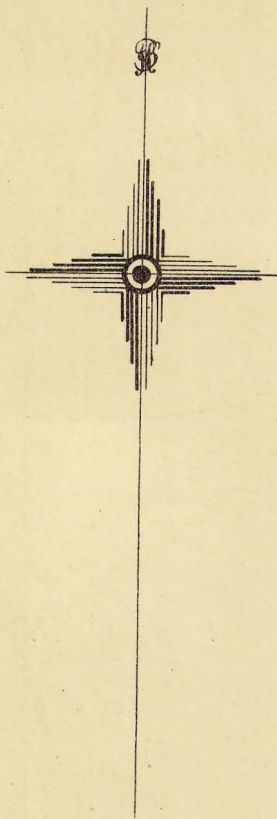
NUMBER of sheep owned by large and small owners in part of the area affected by the proposed railway from Bogan Gate to Bulbodney.

Holding.	1897.	1898	1899.
<i>Large Owners.</i>			
Melrose Plains D.	13,715	22,900	12,060
Orange Plains	29,000	27,000	12,993
Burra Burra	23,800	23,000	20,005
Carlisle	12,000	10,000	2,390
The Troffs	11,711	12,693	5,391
Tyrie	34,000	39,800	25,000
<i>Small Owners.</i>			
J. H. Lindley	549	429	262
Watson Bros.	1,798	1,500	.....
J. Lacy	588	617	293
J. Veitch	1,478	1,750	172
J. J. Hunter	1,400	.....	20
J. Hutchinson	1,488	1,368	85
R. J. Hutchinson.....	981	951	500
A. Wilson	1,706	1,250	114
A. Lindsley	2,020	676	506
A. Hutchinson	1,105	1,050	130

ne plan.]

BOGAN GATE TO BULBODNEY RAILWAY

Plan



62527

Photo-lithographed by
W. A. Gullick, Government Printer,
Sydney, N.S.W.

(SIG. 234-)

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLAN

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

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

Printed under No. 19 Report from Printing Committee, 4 December, 1900.

SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPELGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

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Railway from Bowral to Robertson--Diagram Plan.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Bowral to Robertson," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed railway be carried out; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (IV), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL BEING REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE.

1. The Committee are informed, in the official statement put before them, that the agitation for the construction of a line to connect the Robertson district with the Main Southern railway has been in progress for the last twenty years. In the early part of the year 1890 a proposed line between Moss Vale and Robertson was referred by Parliament to the Public Works Committee, who reported against the construction of that line, as they were of opinion that Bowral was the better point of junction with the Main Southern railway.

Beyond completing the survey of the route from Bowral to Robertson, no action has been taken on the Committee's report; but the residents of the Robertson district have continued to urge their claims to being provided with railway accommodation, on the grounds that the district is a populous one and a great food-producing centre, the land being very fertile and eminently adapted to the production of potatoes and other root crops, development, however, being retarded by the high cost of carriage to the nearest railway station. The climate, also, is described as equal to that of the Blue Mountains, and the district offers many attractions for visitors and tourists.

Recently a new phase has been imported into the agitation for the construction of the line, it being now asserted that the erection of large smelting works at Dapto, on the South Coast line, has given an impetus to mining in the southern districts, as well as in other parts of the Colony; and it is contended that in the near future it will be necessary to connect the Main Southern line with the South Coast line to give facilities to the mines in the southern districts to get their ores to the smelting works at Dapto.

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

2. The proposed line, 17 miles 44 chains in length, is described as a branch of the Great Southern railway, leaving the south end of Bowral station at 80 miles 21·61 chains from Sydney. Proceeding in a generally east-by-south direction, it crosses the Great Southern Road at about 2 miles from Bowral, and runs between the Robertson Road and the Wingecarribee River, till the latter is crossed near 86 miles. Here it takes a more southerly direction to 91 miles, where the road from Moss Vale to Robertson is joined, and the village of Wild's Meadows, or Myra Vale, reached at 93 miles. The line is then north-easterly, following the Meadows Creek to its origin, and terminating at Robertson parallel to and south of Congewoy-street, at 97 miles 65·77 chains. The line cannot be classed as a light one; but the ruling grade of 1 in 60 and numerous curves of 10 chains radius contribute to moderate its cost. The land required is practically all alienated.

ESTIMATED COST.

3. The estimated total cost of the proposed railway, exclusive of land and compensation, is £94,578, or £5,388 per mile. For the first 13 miles 12·837 chains—Bowral to Wild's Meadows—the cost is given as £60,405, or £4,590 per mile; for the remainder of the distance, 4 miles 31·32 chains—Wild's Meadows to Robertson—the estimate is £34,173, or £7,767 per mile.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

4. The Railway Commissioners, from the information before them, do not recommend the construction of the railway. In their report, they state the annual cost at £5,415—interest on capital expenditure at 3 per cent., £2,837, and maintenance of permanent way and for traffic and locomotive expenses, £2,578; and they estimate the traffic revenue at £2,131—merchandise and live stock £882, and passengers, parcels, and mails £1,249. The estimated traffic falls short of the annual working expenses to the extent of £447, which, added to the interest on capital, represents a total annual loss of £3,284.

The proposed line, the Commissioners say, will serve a larger area than the Moss Vale-Robertson line, which was under consideration some eleven years ago; but in the interval little, if any, progress has been made in the district. Those who advocate the construction of the line, the Commissioners further state, allege that the absence of progress is consequent on the difficulties experienced in getting the products to market. No doubt, they say, a railway would afford a better means of transit; but it must be remembered that Robertson is only 14 miles from Moss Vale and 15 miles from Bowral; and further, the district is fortunate in having good roads, though in some places of steep gradients. These roads are being steadily improved, both as regards formation and gradient, and the opening of the road over Macquarie Pass has facilitated traffic to such an extent that goods have been carried from Sydney to Shellharbour by steamer, and thence to the Robertson district by team. Some of the business people state that they would guarantee to use only the railway if an extension to Robertson were made. Experience, however, has shown that small reliance can be placed upon such guarantees. The district, in the opinion of the Railway Commissioners, is one capable of development, but the absence of railway communication cannot, they consider, be said to have created the stagnation which has prevailed for the past eleven years.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

5. The Committee, having taken evidence from the official witnesses, visited Bowral, Moss Vale, and Robertson, for the purpose of examining local witnesses and inspecting the country along the route of the proposed railway, and the route which would connect Robertson with Moss Vale. Accompanied by an engineer from the Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, the Committee, leaving Bowral, followed the Moss Vale Road for about a mile and a half, and then, taking the direct road to Robertson *via* the Sheepwash, travelled close to the railway route

route from Bowral as far as the Sheepwash, and thence parallel with it at a distance of about a mile. Returning from Robertson, they travelled by way of the Belmore Falls and Wild's Meadows to Moss Vale, and thence to Bowral. In the course of the inquiry, they had a further investigation made by the railway engineer respecting a suggested connection between the proposed railway at Robertson and the Illawarra line for the conveyance of ores from mines in the southern districts to the Dapto Smelting Works, and they visited Dapto and took evidence there on that subject.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

6. The details of the Railway Commissioners traffic estimate are as follow:—

General goods—2,000 tons, at 3s.; 250 tons at 7s. 7d.	£394
Agricultural and dairy produce—3,000 tons, at 2s. 6d.	375
Live stock—150 trucks, at 15s.	113
	882
Passengers—3,000 1st class, at 3s. 8d.; 4,000 2nd class, at 2s. 5d.	1,033
Mails—18 miles, at £12 per mile	216
	1,311
Total	£2,131

The local witnesses examined urged that the construction of the railway would lead to a much increased production of potatoes, cabbages, and fruit for supplying the Sydney market, and enable the farmers to send milk to Sydney. It would also lead to the district being largely patronised by tourists.

The Chief Traffic Manager in his report regards the official traffic estimate as in every direction a liberal one, but especially so in relation to produce, the tonnage of which is based on an estimated area under cultivation during 1899, the best season known in the district for four years. The figures referring to produce are:—

	Acres.	Tons.
Cabbages	75	1,300
Potatoes	300	1,200
Dairy produce		500
		3,000
Total		3,000

The experience of the Department in connection with the South Coast railway does not, the Committee are informed, show that reliance can be placed to any extent on milk as an article of traffic. With regard to the estimate for passengers, the population to be served is taken approximately at 3,500, including 1,000 in the Kangaroo Valley district, and two trips per year are allowed for each person. At present the bulk of the traffic expected on the proposed line finds its way through Moss Vale, the remainder being received at Bowral and Mittagong.

COMPETITION WITH THE RAILWAY BY STEAMERS.

7. A road was opened by the Government between Albion Park and the Macquarie Pass about two years ago, and this, the Chief Railway Traffic Manager states in his report, has enabled the storekeepers at Robertson and Burrawang, on the proposed line (and indeed at Bowral and Moss Vale), to obtain goods of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes cheaper than by rail to Bowral or Moss Vale. Heavy loading, such as sugar, iron, wire, &c., can be landed at Robertson, *via* Shellharbour, for 30s. per ton (10s. steamer's freight, and 20s. road rate), the distance by road being 20 miles. The same class of loading from Sydney to Bowral would cost 29s. 7d. per ton in truck-loads, and in smaller quantities, 36s. 5d. per ton, but in addition to this, there would be a cartage rate of 10s. per ton from Bowral or Moss Vale to Robertson or Burrawang. In the case of 2nd and 3rd class goods, the saving in adopting the coastal route reaches as high as 20s. per ton, or 33 per cent. In competition with a railway at Robertson, there is no doubt, the Chief Traffic Manager considers, that the road charge between Shellharbour and Robertson, which is now 1s. per ton per mile for 20 miles to Robertson, and the same to Moss Vale, 34 miles, would be considerably reduced, and it would be found hopeless to compete with the boats and teams for the high class traffic, especially as return loading would be secured by the teams in the shape of potatoes for disposal on the South Coast line.

CONNECTION

CONNECTION WITH THE ILLAWARRA RAILWAY.

8. The connection with the Illawarra railway is suggested under the impression that the line would be used for the conveyance of ores from mines in the southern districts of the Colony for treatment at the Smelting Works, Dapto, and of fluxes with which to treat the ores. The country between the Illawarra railway and Robertson was examined in June of the present year by a supervising engineer of the Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, and he reported that, speaking generally, any connection between the Southern and Illawarra railways would be a very expensive and difficult undertaking; and, considering the difference in height between the two places—about 2,400 feet—and the nature of the country traversed, it would be very difficult to determine if the line were within the range of practical consideration. The slopes on the eastern side of the Illawarra Range, he pointed out, are to a great extent very similar to those on the railway in the neighbourhood of Clifton, and would be liable to slips, which would probably make the cost of construction practically prohibitive. A more simple scheme, the engineer stated, might possibly be a rack railway; but this would be very costly, and the grade on the rack very steep. From an engineering point of view, owing to the very great difficulties to be encountered, he did not recommend a survey of the route. The further investigation, at the instance of the Committee, was made in August, the engineer giving his attention to routes *via* Mount Johnstone and Mount Terry, respectively, which he found impracticable, and to a route discovered by Mr. Carl Weber, which crosses the main Illawarra range at the lowest point between Mount Kembla and the head of the Macquarie Pass. This route was found to be more favourable than any one of the others; but, the engineer states in his report, “viewed in the most favourable light, it would entail very heavy expenditure, possibly running into £500,000, and the length required in order to obtain a grade is excessive, being some 45 miles from the junction on the Illawarra line to Moss Vale, as against 24 miles in a direct line. This difference is specially noticeable between the same point on the Illawarra line and the Devil’s Gap, where the distance is under 5 miles, as against 21½ by the proposed route.”

THE INQUIRY BY A PREVIOUS COMMITTEE.

9. When the question of constructing a railway to Robertson from Moss Vale was under consideration by a former Public Works Committee in 1890, the Committee were of opinion that a line from Bowral to Wild’s Meadows *via* The Sheepwash would meet the case. The report of the Railway Commissioners did not support the construction of the railway as proposed, but it pointed out that the district around Robertson itself was very rich, and if it were devoted more to the growth of fruit and vegetables a much greater traffic would be developed, which, later on, might perhaps justify the making of a branch line. Since that time the district does not appear to have shown any noticeable sign of progress.

CONCLUSION ARRIVED AT.

10. An extension of the proposed railway to the South Coast being, under the circumstances stated in clause 8, quite out of the question, the Committee have to consider only the line referred to them. Robertson is but 15 miles from Bowral by road, and 14 miles from Moss Vale, and the roads in the district, though steep in places, are very good. Most of the farmers are much nearer the Southern railway than this, and, generally speaking, can without difficulty make a trip to and from the railway in one day. The extent to which production would be increased if a railway were made to Robertson may be understood from the area of land available for cultivation. Much of the country between Bowral and Robertson is of a pastoral nature, and is used in connection with dairy-farming. The land that can be cultivated is confined to a few flats and hillsides, and in comparison with what is to be found in other districts is extremely limited in area. Very little opportunity exists for taking up and cultivating additional land, and new settlement is therefore impracticable. Some years ago the district was regarded as important to the milk supply of Sydney, but that trade has been diverted to Illawarra, and the railway authorities do not regard milk as an article which would add in any considerable degree to the traffic

traffic earnings of the proposed line. The milk produced in the district at the present time is used in the manufacture of butter, principally by the Berrima District Company. The traffic prospects of the line cannot be regarded as favourable. In view of the road carriage by way of Macquarie Pass, probably very little traffic would come to the railway at Robertson, and it does not appear that there would be much on the line between the terminus and Bowral. As for the district being attractive to tourists, there are two waterfalls and an extensive view of the Kangaroo Valley to be seen, but the better of the two waterfalls, the Fitzroy Falls, is within easy reach from Moss Vale by a very good road, and the other sights are within a reasonable distance of that town. Considering all these circumstances, in conjunction with the high cost of the line, and the anticipated annual loss in connection with it, the Committee have come to the conclusion that it is not expedient the proposed railway should be constructed.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

11. The following is the resolution passed by the Committee, as contained in the Minutes of Proceedings :—

Mr. Shepherd moved,—“ That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed railway from Bowral to Robertson, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Levien, and passed.

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 26th November, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

TUESDAY, 31 JULY, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Are you prepared to make a statement with respect to the proposed railway from Bowral to Robertson? Yes. The following is a statement which has been prepared for the Under Secretary:—

H. Deane.
31 July, 1900.

RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly on 22nd December, 1899, for the Committee's consideration, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson."

The agitation for the construction of a line to connect the Robertson district with the Main Southern railway has been in progress for the last twenty years, and in the early part of the year 1890 a proposed line between Moss Vale and Robertson was referred by Parliament to the Public Works Committee.

The Committee, after taking a considerable amount of evidence and visiting the locality, reported against the construction of that line, as they were of opinion that Bowral should be the point of junction with the Main Southern line. The resolution, which was arrived at by the Committee in April, 1890, was passed unanimously in the following terms:—"That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out, because the evidence shows that a line from Bowral to Wild's Meadows, *via* Sheepwash, would give more general accommodation to the district, and would be sufficient for the present."

Beyond completing survey of route from Bowral to Robertson, no action has been taken on the Committee's report.

The residents of the Robertson district have, however, continued to urge their claims to being provided with railway accommodation, basing such, chiefly, on the grounds that had been placed before the Committee in 1890, namely, that the land was very fertile, the soil being eminently adapted to the production of potatoes and other root crops, the district a populous one, a good class of people settled there, that it was a great food-producing centre; but development was retarded by the high cost of carriage to the nearest railway station. The climate, also, was equal to that of the Blue Mountains, and the district offered many attractions for visitors and tourists.

Recently a new phase has been imported into the agitation for the construction of this line. It is now asserted that the erection of large smelting works at Dapto, on the South Coast line, has given an impetus to mining in the southern districts as well as in other parts of the Colony, and it is contended that in the near future it will be necessary to connect the Main Southern line with the South Coast line to give facilities to the mines in the southern districts to get their ores to the smelting works at Dapto. The line now proposed from Bowral to Robertson, with its ultimate extension to Dapto, would, it is held, meet the requirements of the southern mining districts. This aspect of the proposal was prominently brought before the Legislative Assembly by the Minister (Mr. O'Sullivan) when moving his resolution of reference to the Committee. An examination of the route from Robertson to the South Coast line has been made by Mr. C. McD. Stuart, Supervising Engineer, whose report is hereto appended.

The official description of the proposed line is as follows:—

Bowral to Robertson Railway.

(Length, 17 miles 44 chains; estimated cost, £94,578, or £5,388 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.)

This line is a branch of the Great Southern railway, leaving the south end of Bowral station at 80 miles 21·61 chains from Sydney, and proceeding in a generally east-by-south direction, crosses the Great Southern Road at about two (2) miles from Bowral, and runs between the Robertson-road and the Wingecarribee River, till the latter is crossed near 8½ miles. Here the line takes a more southerly direction to 9½ miles, where the road from Moss Vale to Robertson is joined, and the village of Wild's Meadows, or Myra Vale, reached at 93 miles. The line is then north-easterly, following the Meadows Creek to its origin, and terminates at Robertson parallel to and south of Congewoy-street, at 97 miles 65·77 chains.

The line cannot be classed as a light one; but the ruling grade of 1 in 60 and numerous curves of 10 chains radius contribute to moderate its cost.

The land required is practically all alienated.

H. Doane. The following is the statutory report of the Railway Commissioners upon the proposal :—
(99/4,152-74.) Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 19 December, 1899.
31 July, 1900. Proposed Line of Railway, Bowral to Robertson—17½ miles.

IN accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act of 1888, section 13, we beg to report as follows :—

<i>Cost of Construction—</i>	
The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction (exclusive of land and compensation) at	£94,578
<i>Annual Cost—</i>	
Interest on capital expenditure at 3 per cent.	£2,837
Maintenance of permanent way and for traffic and locomotive expenses	2,578
Total annual cost	5,415
<i>Estimated Traffic Revenue—</i>	
Merchandise and live stock	£882
Passenger, parcels, and mails	1,249
Total annual revenue.....	£2,131

From the foregoing figures it will be gathered that the value of the estimated traffic falls short by £447 of meeting the annual working expenses; this, with the interest on capital, would involve an annual loss of £3,284.

The proposed line will serve a larger area than the Moss Vale-Robertson line, which was under consideration some eleven years ago; but in the interval little, if any, progress has been made in the district.

Those who advocate the construction of the line allege that the absence of progress is consequent on the difficulties experienced in getting the products to market. No doubt a railway would afford a better means of transit; but it must be remembered that Robertson is only 14 miles from Moss Vale and 15 miles from Bowral; and further, the district is fortunate in having good roads, though in some places of steep gradients.

These roads are being steadily improved, both as regards formation and gradient, and the opening of the road over Macquarie Pass has facilitated traffic to such an extent that goods have been carried from Sydney to Shellharbour by steamer, and thence to the Robertson district by team.

Some of the business people state that they would guarantee to use only the railway if an extension to Robertson were made. Experience, however, has shown that small reliance can be placed upon such guarantees.

The district is one capable of development, but the absence of railway communication cannot be said to have created the stagnation which has prevailed for the past eleven years.

From the information before us we are not justified in recommending the construction of the proposed line.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed, this nineteenth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, in the presence of,—

H. McLACHLAN.	}	CHARLES OLIVER, Chief Commissioner. W. M. FEHON, Commissioner. DAVID KIRKCALDIE, Commissioner.
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In connection with the question of the present condition of the roads between Moss Vale, Bowral, and Robertson, referred to by the Railway Commissioners, I append copy of reports (2) thereon by the Acting Road Superintendent of the district.

REPORT of Mr. Supervising Engineer C. McD. Stuart on the Illawarra to Robertson Railway.

Sir,

I beg to state that I have examined the country between the Illawarra railway and Robertson, with a view of a railway connection between these places, being portion of a direct communication with the Great Southern railway.

The first route I examined, shown by a red line on the accompanying diagram tracing, left the Illawarra line between Wollongong and Unanderra stations, and bearing in a north-westerly direction, crossed the main South Coast Road on the northern side of Byarong Creek; thence skirting for about 2 miles up a main spur off the Illawarra Range on the southern side of the road to the Mount Keira Colliery, the line would bend round to the south across Byarong Creek and the valley called "Hell Hole"; thence skirting round Mount Nebo it again takes a north-westerly direction till close up to the Main Range; thence in a south-westerly direction still on an ascending grade along the face of the range, and keeping at the back of the Mount Kembla Colliery, it would cross the range with a tunnel at the point A, and thence debouching into the valley of the Cordeaux, turn in a southerly direction and work up to the high country at the back of Robertson.

This route I abandoned, as there would be considerable difficulty in working up from the Illawarra line to where the tunnel would enter the Main Range, and it is doubtful if you could get sufficient length in working across the Byarong Valley and round Mount Nebo for a limiting grade of 1 in 40; as it is, the spurs off Mount Nebo are so sharp, curves of 5 chains radius would be essential. Again after crossing the range the country at the back of it is so very broken, nothing short of an actual survey would determine if a line was possible.

I then tried another route, also shown by a red line; this leaves the Illawarra railway between Unanderra and Kembla Grange stations, and bears in south-westerly direction on an ascending grade of 1 in 40 along the slopes of the Bong Bong Mountain spur; thence in a southerly direction along the face of the Main Range crossing the Avondale and Marshall Mount spurs, and thence turning round the head of the spurs which divides the waters of Marshall Mount Creek from those of the Macquarie Rivulet, it crosses the range at a narrow point with a tunnel at B, and taking advantage of a deep gully, one of the heads of the Avon River, it would work across some very broken country till the high ground round Stockyard Swamp was reached; thence it would work up in a south-westerly direction, and skirting along the northern side of Wingecarribee Swamp, would join the surveyed line from Bowral to Robertson about 5½ miles from Bowral. To work up to Robertson itself in anything like a direct line would be impossible.

This unfortunately would leave the present surveyed line to Robertson as a short branch off the Bowral-Illawarra connection, the working of which branch would entail a good deal of extra cost.

Speaking generally, any connection between the Southern and Illawarra railways would be a very expensive and difficult undertaking; and considering the difference in height between the two places, about 2,400 feet, and the nature of the country traversed, it would be very difficult to determine if the line was within the range of practical consideration: the slopes on the eastern side of the Illawarra Range are to a great extent very similar to those on the railway in the neighbourhood of Clifton, and would be liable to slips which would probably make the cost of construction practically prohibitory.

A simpler scheme might possibly be by a rack railway, as shown by a red dotted line, the rack starting from the end of the tunnel on the summit of the mountain at B, and running down the Marshall Mount spur; this latter scheme would also be very costly, and the grade on the rack very steep.

From an engineer point of view, owing to the very great difficulties to be encountered, I would not recommend a survey of the proposed routes.

The Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction.

CHAS. McD. STUART.

Department of Public Works, 16 June, 1900.

BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

State of Road.

This road is metalled to 6 miles 50 chains from Bowral Post Office, and has a very good surface.

From the above point some mile or more runs along a sound ridge which has not yet been formed; from the end of this to West Kangaloon there are a few chains without metal that get sloppy in wet weather, but, as a deviation is proposed, only necessary repairs have been done.

From West Kangaloon through East Kangaloon to Hindmarsh Hill, near Robertson, there are only a few short strips of metalling, as another deviation is proposed here.

In both these cases, I believe, head office stated that no extensive repairs were to be done.

Gradients.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.

Gradients.

H. Deane.

The worst grade on the metalled portion between Bowral and the 6 miles 50 chains is one of 9 chains 1 in 12, then 15 chains of 1 in 17·23; after that all are very easy gradients until the first proposed deviation is met with. I cannot supply these gradients, but believe some of them to be as bad as 1 in 7 or 8. Comparative sections will be found with the papers referred to above.

31 July, 1900.

Traffic.

This cannot average more than 10 tons per week, comprising, as the other road does, butter, cabbages, and potatoes. The light traffic on this road is considerably less than the Moss Vale-Robertson road. The steepness of the gradients may account for a portion of this; but there is not the population, and the Moss Vale-Robertson road is nearly 1½ mile the shorter route for the Robertson traffic.

THOMAS OATLEY,
Acting Road Superintendent.

Department of Public Works, 16 June, 1900.

MOSS VALE TO ROBERTSON, TOWARDS MACQUARIE PASS.

State of Road.

It is metalled throughout; the surface is in good condition, and I consider it one of the best roads in the district to travel on.

Gradients.

Between the municipal boundary of Moss Vale and 9 miles 38 chains there is nothing steeper than 1 in 18·26, and that only for a few chains, the remainder being 1 in 24, 30, 32, and as flat as 1 in 1,110.

Between the 9 miles 38 chains and the 10 miles 37 chains a deviation was proposed, but as there was great opposition (no doubt in view of the Robertson railway) no further action was taken. The present grades between the above points are 8 chains, 1 in 17·50; 31 chains, 1 in 15; but by rather heavy cuttings and fillings these gradients can be improved to a 1 in 19 or 20.

From 10 miles 36 chains to 10 miles 45 chains the worst grade is met with, viz., 1 in 11·60; for 9 chains after this the gradients are all very easy to the 13 miles 60 chains, which is opposite the post office in Robertson.

Traffic.

At 5 miles 43 chains the road from Wild's Meadows (now Myra Vale) junctions with the Robertson-road, and at 8 miles 12 chains the Burrawang-road. The population are principally dairy farmers, and only grow cabbages and potatoes for the outside market.

After careful calculations I find that the through traffic from Robertson does not exceed 18 tons per week, and 3 tons from each Myra Vale and Burrawang. The return traffic in good seasons is considerably less than half this, but in dry years, when produce has to be bought, it will equal the outward quantity.

There are two teams of six horses each on the road regularly, and make about four trips a week.

The cabbages and potatoes are carted in by the farmers themselves.

In addition to this, there is a very considerable amount of light traffic between the three places mentioned and Moss Vale.

THOMAS OATLEY,
Acting Road Superintendent.

2. *Mr. Hyam.*] What is the altitude of Robertson? At the terminus of the line it is 2,421 feet.
3. Was there a flying survey made some years ago of a line between Robertson and Kiama? There was an examination made, but it turned out to be impossible. The exploration with the best result is that made by Mr. Stuart.
4. *Chairman.*] Do you hand in the book of reference and plans and section of the line? Yes; I have also here a detailed estimate of the cost of the works. It is as follows:—

BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON. Summary.

Rails at £7 10s. per ton.

Part.	Description.	Length.		Estimated cost.			Average per mile.		
		m.	chs.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1	Bowral to Wild's Meadows.....	13	12·837	60,405	0	0	4,590	0	0
2	Wild's Meadows to Robertson .. .	4	31·32	34,173	0	0	7,767	0	0
	Total	17	44·157	94,578	0	0	5,388	0	0

BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.—Revised Estimates.—PART No. 1.

Bowral to Wild's Meadows.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 13 miles 12·837 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade 1 in 60. Sharpest curve, 10 chains radius.—New fastenings; new, 4 feet 6 inch T. Os.; full ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated cost.			Average per mile
	£	s.	d.	£
Earthworks	13,677	10	0	1,039
Bridges and culverts.....	7,187	10	0	546
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions.....	3,948	5	0	300
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	8,202	13	6	623
Freight	625	10	0	48
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £1,351 2s. 4d.				
Ballasting at 3s. 6d. = £4,053 7s.				
Sleepers at 3s. = £4,863 18s.				
Station works, including junction and sidings	3,591	10	0	273
Station buildings—waiting sheds, £220; platforms, £242; loading banks, £286; turntable, £550.....	1,298	0	0	99
Gradient and mileage posts	217	2	9	17
Telegraph	217	2	9	17
Miscellaneous	500	0	0	38
Cost of works.....	49,733	11	4	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	7,460	8	8	567
Add for extra cost of rails, at £7 10s. per ton	57,194	0	0	4,346
	3,211	0	0	.....
Total cost.....	60,405	0	0	4,590

BOWRAL

H. Deane.

BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.—Part No. 2.

Wild's Meadows to Robertson.

31 July, 1900.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 4 miles 31·32 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 60. Sharpest curve, 10 chains radius.—New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inch T.Os.; full ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	
Earthworks	11,236	5	0	2,554
Bridges and culverts	3,038	10	0	691
Overbridge	300	0	0	68
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	1,264	0	0	287
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	2,745	0	0	623
Freight	209	5	0	48
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £451 14s. 8d.	3,433	4	8	780
Ballasting at 3s. 6d. = £1,355 4s.				
Sleepers at 3s. = £1,626 6s.	2,675	0	0	608
Station works, including sidings	1,985	0	0	451
Station buildings; waiting shed, £220; platforms, £143; goods shed and platform, £330; 20-ton weighbridge, £230; 5-ton crane, £198; cottage, £270; trucking yards, £594 ...				
Water supply	1,500	0	0	341
Gradient and mileage posts.....	72	12	0	17
Telegraph	72	12	0	17
Miscellaneous.....	250	0	0	57
Cost of works.....	28,781	8	8	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly).....	4,317	11	4	981
	33,099	0	0	7,523
Add for extra cost of rails at £7 10s. per ton	1,074	0	0	...
Total cost.....	£ 34,173	0	0	7,767

5. How far, in a direct line, is Bowral from Robertson? To the centre of the town it is a little over 13 miles in a straight line.

6. How far is it from Moss Vale to Robertson in a direct line? Just about a quarter of a mile further.

7. Then, in order to get from Bowral to Robertson, even with a 1 in 60 grade, you have practically to go one-third more than the actual distance? Yes; it will be such a very crooked line. There is a great bend necessary in order to get round the Wingecarribee Swamp, and in order to negotiate the hilly country.

8. So that the very difficult character of the line involves a larger amount of railway construction per square mile of country to be served than is ordinarily the case with our lines? Yes.

9. I gather from the report of Mr. Stuart that the latter reason which has been urged in support of the line, namely a connection with the Illawarra line at Dapto, cannot be urged in favour of a line from Bowral to Robertson? No.

10. The only feasible way of carrying out that project would be to leave Robertson out of the question? Yes: it would junction a few miles out of Bowral. In fact, Robertson is not in the direct line at all.

11. Does this line lend itself to such a connection? No. If you wanted to connect the district with the Illawarra line you would not go through Robertson at all; it would be practically impossible to do so.

12. From the general nature of the report on the roads, would you say that the roads from Bowral and Moss Vale to Robertson are fairly good? From Moss Vale to Robertson the road is very good; but the road from Bowral to Robertson is not in such good condition.

13. Is the country of such a nature that, after connecting with Robertson, there is not much likelihood of any further extension, presuming the line were built? I believe so.

14. *Mr. Watson*] Is there a sudden drop on the coast side? Yes.

15. Going from Robertson towards the coast, does a sudden drop occur there? Yes.

16. If the line were taken to Robertson would it draw any traffic from any distance beyond there, or would the traffic be likely to go towards the Illawarra line? I should think it would make for the coast.

17. *Chairman*.] Are the last 4 miles of the proposed line much heavier as far as the nature of the country is concerned than the first 13 miles? Yes, very much heavier. There would be very great difficulty in getting a good line there. The section shows a succession of cuttings and banks.

18. *Mr. Shepherd*.] Was a trial survey of the line ever made to Moss Vale? Yes; that was the line which was first submitted to the Public Works Committee; but the last section would be common to the two, so that that proposal would not get out of any of the rough part of the country.

19. *Mr. McFarlane*.] If the proposed line were carried only as far as Wild's Meadows would there be any considerable amount of traffic, and how would the traffic compare with what there would be if the terminal point were at Robertson? All the traffic that comes from Robertson would go through Wild's Meadows, but really the traffic is very small on both roads from Moss Vale and Bowral.

20. Do you think that such a line would serve the country at Robertson? I doubt very much whether it would. When the farmers once put their produce on their carts I think they would go right on to the existing railway.

21. Supposing the line were continued from Robertson so as to join the Illawarra railway, would that be any material benefit to the district? I am very doubtful about it myself.

22. Which way would the traffic go from Robertson if the line were so extended? I think it would be very likely to go to the nearest port.

23. *Mr. Hyam*.] Would such an extension go by way of Kangaroo Valley? No, it would not go through there. The line that Mr. Stuart has explored keeps well north of the Illawarra Lake.

24. *Mr. McFarlane*.] Can you say whether the Railway Commissioners would approve of the terminus being placed at Wild's Meadows? They do not approve of the line at all. I do not think that they have been asked to consider the question of terminating the line at Wild's Meadows. They say that the construction of the line is unnecessary, on account of its short length.

25. Do you think there would be about as much traffic if the line stopped at Wild's Meadows as if it were extended to Robertson? I have not studied the circumstances of the district sufficiently to be able to say. H. Deane.
31 July, 1900.

26. Would not that bring about a considerable reduction in the cost of the railway? Yes, there would be less mileage.

27. Would not the cost of construction be £34,000 less? Yes.

28. In view of that saving of £34,000 in cost of construction, and the probability that the same amount of traffic would be carried, do you think that the Railway Commissioners would favour the proposal? I have no doubt that a line to Wild's Meadows only would show better proportionate returns than a line right through to Robertson; but I should say, that judging from the Railway Commissioners' report, that they would not favour such a line on account of its being so short, it is certainly unnecessary.

29. Do you think the Southern line is sufficiently near to the people in that district to answer all purposes? Yes. The original report of the Public Works Committee shows the kind of line that was projected between Moss Vale and Robertson. The ruling grade in that line was 1 in 40. An endeavour has been made, with regard to the line now submitted to the Public Works Committee, to obtain a ruling grade of 1 in 60. If a ruling grade of 1 in 40 were adopted, of course the line would be somewhat cheaper.

30. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has any attempt ever been made to get a practicable line from the Southern railway to the Illawarra railway? Not other than Mr. Stuart's exploration. Similar difficulties occur all the way along the coast right throughout the Colony. There is a difficulty even when we get down to Bombala, although there are leading spurs there which you could follow. The great difficulty here no doubt is due to the very sudden drop in a short distance and the absence of leading spurs.

31. *Mr. Hyam.*] Speaking of the Bombala country, is it not a little better there, because the coast range is further back, and there is a long spur running almost to the coast? Yes; but it is very difficult even there. The line running down to Wolumla is the best line of any, but it will be a very expensive line.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

32. *Chairman.*] Have you a statement prepared with regard to the proposed line from Bowral to Robertson? Yes; it is as follows:— J. Harper.
31 July, 1900.

PROPOSED RAILWAY, BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON, 17½ MILES.

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had an estimate prepared of the probable traffic for this proposed railway.

The estimated cost of construction is £94,578, or £5,338 per mile. Interest at 3 per cent. on this sum would amount to £2,837, and the working expenses would be £2,578, or a total of £5,415.

The estimated traffic is as follows:—

General goods—2,000 tons, at 3s. ; 250 tons, at 7s. 7d.	£394
Agricultural and dairy produce—3,000 tons, at 2s. 6d.	375
Live stock—150 trucks, at 15s.	113
	882
Passengers—3,000 1st class, at 3s. 8d. ; 4,000 2nd class, at 2s. 5d.	1,033
Mails—18 miles, at £12 per mile	216
	1,301
Total	£2,181

Although the line is 17½ miles in length, the bulk of the traffic (goods, produce, and stock) would not be carried more than an average distance of 15 miles, and the estimate has been based accordingly.

For mails and passenger traffic, however, the full distance (18 miles) has been credited. Local rates have been applied to general goods, and 2s. 6d. per ton for agricultural produce.

Approximately, the population to be served is 3,500 (including 1,000 in the Kangaroo Valley district), and two trips per year have been allowed for each member of the population.

It is considered that the estimate of the traffic is in every direction a liberal one for the line, especially as regards the produce, the tonnage of which has been based on an estimated area under cultivation during 1899, which is regarded as the best season known for four years. The figures are:—

	Acres.	Tons
Cabbages	75	1,300
Potatoes	300	1,200
Dairy produce . . . . .	. . . . .	500
	Total	3,000

The bulk of the traffic to be carried over this proposed line now finds its way through Moss Vale. A small quantity is received at Bowral and Mittagong. By diverting it *via* Bowral from Moss Vale, there would be a loss of 6 miles to the Main Southern line as against the earnings of a branch line of 18 miles. The loss by diversion of traffic has not been debited.

The distance by road to Robertson from Moss Vale is 14 miles, and from Bowral, 15, whilst the proposed line is 17½ miles. At least 90 per cent. of the Robertson traffic is carried to and from Moss Vale at 10s. per ton, and empty butter kegs are returned free. The road is an excellent one, and the return trip is made in the same day, yet with all these advantages it is admitted that the district is not as prosperous now as it was fifteen years ago, and it is stated that a number of old settlers have left it to take up land on the South Coast and the Richmond River.

The country for the first 9 miles of the line may be regarded as suitable for pastoral purposes only, whilst a large extent of that in the Kangaloon, Burrawang, and Robertson districts is no doubt of a rich volcanic character, but requires manuring to produce good crops of potatoes.

An idea of the progress made can be formed on perusal of the enclosed documents prepared by the Secretary of the Railway League at Robertson at the close of 1896. This gentleman points out that at the end of 1896 there were 321 farmers, holding 50,101 acres of the best land, out of which he admits there were only 220 acres of potatoes and 40 acres of cabbages. This would represent 1,580 tons. The estimate now submitted, based on information as to area under cultivation during 1899, provides for 2,500 tons of the same produce. Hay, &c., which is grown purely for local use, has not been included in the estimate.

Dairy produce.

It is represented that during the year 1896, 1,235,306 lb. of butter were made from 2,841,205 gallons of milk produced in the district to be served by the proposed line, the Berrima District Company making the butter, finding the salt, colouring it, &c., and delivering it at Moss Vale station (14 miles from Robertson) at ½d. per lb. It is claimed that with a railway a large quantity of milk would be sent to Sydney instead of being made into butter locally, and as a consequence a large traffic would result. The experience of the Department in connection with the South Coast line shows that reliance can only be placed upon butter and cream traffic, and not to any extent upon carrying milk.

Competition

Competition with Railway.

J. Harper.
31 July, 1900.

A road was opened by the Government between Albion Park and the Macquarie Pass about two years ago, which has enabled the storekeepers at Robertson and Burrawang, on the proposed line (and indeed at Bowral and Moss Vale), to obtain goods of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes cheaper than by rail to Bowral or Moss Vale. Heavy loading, such as sugar, iron, wire, &c., can be landed at Robertson, *via* Shellharbour, for 30s. per ton (10s. steamer's freight, and 20s. road rate), the distance by road being 20 miles. The same class of loading from Sydney to Bowral would cost 29s. 7d. per ton in truck-loads, and in smaller quantities, 36s. 5d. per ton, but in addition to this, there would be a cartage rate of 10s. per ton from Bowral or Moss Vale to Robertson or Burrawang. In the case of 2nd and 3rd class goods, the saving in adopting the coastal route reaches as high as 20s. per ton, or 33 per cent. A great deal of loading has already arrived for Robertson and Burrawang, and one large storekeeper in Bowral and Moss Vale has also obtained some sugar and kerosene *via* Shellharbour. In competition with a railway at Robertson, there is no doubt that the road charge between Shellharbour and Robertson would be considerably reduced (it is now 1s. per ton per mile for 20 miles to Robertson), and the same charge was only made to Moss Vale, 34 miles, and there is no doubt it would be found hopeless to compete with the boats and teams for the high-class traffic, especially as return loading would be secured by the teams in the shape of potatoes for disposal on the South Coast line. On the other hand, if the line is constructed to Robertson, an endeavour might be made to use it for carrying goods traffic from Shellharbour for Moss Vale, Bowral, &c., although such a contingency could be controlled by arbitrary rates from Robertson.

In preparing the estimate for this proposed line, the competition by teams has been kept in mind, and only a small percentage (250 tons) of high-class traffic has been allowed for. In any case the estimate would not be much increased if the whole of the high-class goods were credited at local rates.

I also produce a map showing the area of country which will be served by the proposed line.

33. How would you describe the limits of the trafficable area? The furthest southern point is about 12 miles, embracing a portion of the Kangaroo Valley. The traffic of the lower portion of that valley would continue to go to the coast under any circumstances. To the east the maximum distance would be about 8 miles; north-east, about 10 miles, and running from there to the existing line. The blue line on the map indicates the traffic which at present finds its way to the existing railway at Moss Vale, Bowral, or Mittagong. The portion of the map, shown in red, on the south-east side shows the additional traffic which it is anticipated would go towards the projected line.

34. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long is it since the first survey was made on this line? I do not know. I think I first reported on the line in 1886, and again in 1888. At that time it was proposed to take the line from Moss Vale to Robertson.

35. According to the report before us, there seems to have been a falling-off in the district during the last fifteen years? Yes; but it will be noticed that the estimated traffic shows really an increase of a couple of hundred pounds on the traffic estimated to be obtained in 1888.

36. Is there any cause assigned for that falling-off? A large number of the South Coast farmers have gone to the Richmond and other northern rivers in order to acquire larger areas, or for other reasons best known to themselves. That, no doubt, has militated against the progress of the district. My estimate, however, is based on what was produced in the season of 1899, and, from an agricultural point of view, that is regarded as the most prosperous season they have had in that district.

37. Are the principal products in that district dairy products? Yes.

38. Did they try to grow maize some years ago in that district? As far back as my recollection of this district goes, and that is about fourteen years, no maize has been grown to any extent.

39. Are the Railway Commissioners favourable to the construction of this line? I do not think so.

40. I suppose you are personally acquainted with the country? Yes; I have been over it a number of times.

41. What is your opinion as to the prospect of the railway paying? I must confess I cannot see any immediate prospect of its doing so. It will be a very expensive line, costing over £5,000 per mile to construct, and, like all short lines, it will relatively be an expensive line to work.

42. And the country has been so long occupied that there is not likely to be any new industry established there? No, and as I have stated in my report, we have very good reason to fear competition from the South Coast; in fact, that competition exists to-day. The rates for carrying goods by road are more favourable in certain directions than we can offer for the conveyance of goods by the existing railway.

43. Would goods be likely to find their way to the coast? No; but goods would be likely to find their way from the coast up to the Robertson district. Potatoes would probably find their way to the coast from the Robertson district, and they would furnish back loading for the drays carrying on the road traffic.

44. According to the plan, it would appear that Moss Vale is nearer to Robertson than Bowral is;—do you know why Bowral was selected instead of Moss Vale as the point of junction with the Southern railway? I think a line to Robertson from Bowral will serve a better district, and it will serve more of the district. Then, again, it has the advantage of being 6 miles nearer to Sydney.

45. Was there not a great deal of controversy on that point some years ago? Yes; and at one time Mittagong was mentioned as a good place for a junction; but that now appears to have dropped out of consideration.

46. I see in your report that you say there is competition already for that traffic of the Robertson district by way of Albion Park, on the Illawarra railway line and the Macquarie Pass? Yes; a road has been recently constructed over Macquarie Pass to Robertson.

47. Surely they would never attempt to bring anything up from the low country about there? Yes; they are now bringing goods from that point as far as Moss Vale and Bowral, and their rates are more favourable than our railway rates.

48. What route do they adopt? They come up from Albion Park through the Macquarie Pass. They are getting a good rate. They charge the same to Moss Vale as they do to Robertson. The distance is 34 miles. For general merchandise we cannot compete on the Illawarra railway with the steamers for Kiama and Wollongong. To those places steamers carry the bulk of the general merchandise.

49. *Chairman.*] It is urged, in support of this line, that there will afterwards be a further extension of it to the South Coast line, with the view of getting ore more easily and cheaply to Dapto and other smelting works on the South Coast line;—from a railway point of view, what would be the effect of a connection between the Southern line and the North Coast line for that purpose? From a railway point of view, it would not be very beneficial; it would mean the construction of a new line and the withdrawal of traffic from the existing railway, and the new line would be one with very heavy grades.

50. Is the carriage of ore over such a long distance to Sydney, and then down to Dapto, a fairly profitable branch of the railway traffic? No. We only charge $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton per mile, and it would take a lot of that kind of traffic to pay the cost of a line to the South Coast.

51. Would it make a saving by reducing the working expenses and the distance over which the ore has to be carried, if we were to charge a slightly higher rate for the conveyance of ore to Bowral and Moss Vale, and thence across to the South Coast line? No. As far as the carriage of ores is concerned, we make the charge uniform, and, simply because a new line was opened, you could scarcely put a differential rate upon it. J. Harper.
31 July, 1900.
52. Presuming, for the sake of illustration, that it cost 10s. per ton to take the ore round from Bowral to Sydney, and then down the South Coast line to Dapto, and if we constructed a line direct from Bowral to Dapto, would you be able to save a large amount of working expenses which is included in that charge of 10s. per ton? It would all depend upon the character of the new line which would be constructed. It might cost more to take the ore across that new line, owing to the heavy grades, than it would to take it by way of Sydney as at present. Then the chances are that a very large proportion of the trucks employed to carry the ore would have to be sent on to Sydney from Dapto in order to get return loading to the country.
53. Then you do not view such a proposal with great favour? No; I do not think that at present it is within the sphere of practical consideration.
54. How much of the country to be served by this proposed line from Bowral can be considered to be already fairly served by the Southern railway? If a man can make a trip to the railway and back in one day, he may be considered as being within a fair distance of the railway which exists to-day. The people in this district who are proposed to be served by this railway, are now able to do the round trip in one day.
55. How do those people manage with regard to obtaining supplies who live to the eastward of Robertson? They have the advantage of being able to make use of the Illawarra railway and the coastal steamers. The coastal steamers' rates are so low that the people to the east of Robertson are more favourably placed than the people living at Bowral and Moss Vale.
56. Have you considered the question of only taking the line as far as was indicated by the last Public Works Committee which considered this proposal—that is, that the terminus should be at Wild's Meadows? No. I have dealt with the line as a whole. The first 9 miles from Bowral goes through pastoral country. I have made out my estimate on the basis of taking the line as a whole. I imagine that if the railway were only constructed for a distance of 13 miles, a good deal of the traffic to the east of that terminus would probably not come in to it at all. That traffic would find its way down to the Illawarra railway, and the South Coast. If the railway is to be of any value at all it would be necessary to make the whole of it.
57. *Mr. Watson.*] Would not the working expenses amount to as much for a line 13 miles long as for a line 17 miles long? Yes; there would practically be only the extra cost of maintenance.
58. Do you think that the people living about Robertson would patronise the railway if it terminated at Wild's Meadows, rather than go right into Moss Vale, once they have their carts loaded? If the line terminated at Wild's Meadows, I think the people at Robertson would be likely to get their goods from the coast—that is to say, they would have to pay for 5 miles of cartage from the terminus at Wild's Meadows to Robertson as against 20 miles from the South Coast line, and very much lower freight by the steamers along the coast than they would have to pay if they got their goods along the Southern railway.
59. Taking the other suggestion, with regard to the connection to suit the consignors of ore from the south to Dapto, the construction of a loop line would save about 100 miles in the freight of southern ores which are now taken round to Sydney and back to Dapto;—allowing for the extra cost of haulage over the heavy grades between the Southern and the South Coast lines, what difference do you think you could afford to make in the freight charged on, say, a 400-mile run? It would be absolutely $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton difference as between the mileage; but you would require to put against that the loss which would be sustained on the existing main line. As the distance is greater to-day, the profit would probably be nil. More would be lost as a matter of revenue than would be gained.
60. Supposing that you could get a reasonable connection between the two lines, is it not possible that a reduction in the cost of carriage would mean the difference between a gain and a loss in the working of many mines? I have not gone into that question.
61. Do you do a considerable amount of business now in the carriage of ores? Yes; from all parts of the country.
62. Is it profitable enough to enable you to make up train-loads of ores? No; the business is done only in ordinary trucks—one or two at a time; there is no large volume of the traffic.
63. Do you anticipate that it is likely to be a large traffic at any time, or is it only spasmodic? I would scarcely like to call it spasmodic. I hope it will be regular; but I am not prepared to say that it will all come from the Southern line. My information indicates the contrary, and that it will be more extensively drawn from the west and the north.
64. Do you take any ores from the north to Dapto? Cockle Creek works deal with most of that, although some does come to Dapto.
65. Do any of the southern ores go up to Cockle Creek? I cannot say just now; but I know I am correct with regard to the other direction.
66. Unless there is some strong local reason in favour of a connection between the Main Southern line and the South Coast line, do you think that the ore question would be sufficient to justify such a work? I certainly do not.
67. Do you know of any other trade or class of produce that would be influenced by the construction of such a line? No.

Archibald Campbell, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

68. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the country which will be served by the proposed railway from Bowral to Robertson? I have not a great deal of knowledge of the route between Bowral and Robertson; but I have a good knowledge of the country between Illawarra and Robertson, and of the proposed extension between those two places. Archibald
Campbell,
Esq., M.P.
31 July, 1900.
69. Are you prepared to make a statement with regard to that locality, and the probabilities of a further extension? I did not come into the room with the view of giving evidence, but I am so familiar with all the particulars connected with the proposal that I am quite prepared to make a statement of the main facts

Archibald
Campbell,
Esq., M.P.
31 July, 1900.

facts at a moment's notice, as I am about to do in this instance. I look upon the proposed extension of this branch line to Robertson—I care not from what point it comes on the Southern line—as merely the first step towards what must be carried out in the near future—that is, a connecting line between the Main Southern railway and the Illawarra railway, mainly for the purpose, which I have heard referred to here, of the haulage of ores from the southern districts to be smelted in Illawarra. This Colony has two great coal-fields—the Newcastle in the north, and the Illawarra in the south. The Newcastle coal-field will be the smelting-ground for the northern ores, and in the same way Illawarra will be the natural smelting-ground for the mines in the southern part of the Colony. As sure as water finds its level, so surely will the smelting-ores in the two portions of the Colony find their way to these two great smelting-furnaces which have been provided by Nature. I have just heard Mr. Harper give evidence with regard to the haulage of ore from the southern districts. I have obtained particulars from the Railway Department showing that the charge of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton per mile means a difference of about 4s. 6d. per ton on ores coming from the southern districts to the Dapto Smelting Works by way of Sydney, as compared with taking the ores by a direct route by way of Robertson or thereabouts into the Illawarra district. Mr. Watson asked Mr. Harper some pointed questions upon that subject. I have statistics supplied by the Railway Department showing that on every ton of ore taken from the southern districts, including the south-western parts of the Colony in the direction of Wyalong and Young, coming down to the Dapto Smelting Works, round the “Horn” *via* Sydney, and then down the Illawarra line, means a difference of 4s. 6d. per ton for haulage compared with what would be charged if it were conveyed over a direct line, which would not be more than 40 miles in length as against 140 miles at present. Some months ago I mentioned this matter to Mr. A. Chapman, M.P. for Braidwood, who is well posted up in all mining matters. He made the statement to me that a saving of 4s. 6d. per ton would mean in the case of many mines all the difference between profitable working and working at a loss. Without using the words in an offensive sense, I think the matter has been looked at from a narrow railway point of view. In the present circumstances, assuming from a railway point of view that the Department would lose 4s. 6d. per ton if the ores were carried over a direct line by way of Robertson, any person of common-sense can see at once that if such a reduction were made, the tonnage carried would increase to an enormous extent. What the railway service would lose on the present carriage by way of Sydney would be nothing compared with what they would gain by the haulage of the extra quantity of ore which would be brought to Illawarra, by the shorter route, for smelting. According to the particulars I have obtained from the Railway Department, the difference, in a year and nine months, on the ore that was carried to the Dapto Smelting Works amounted to between £2,000 and £3,000. I look upon the haulage of ore from the gold-mines, copper-mines, and other such works in the southern parts of the country, in districts such as Braidwood, Queanbeyan, Tumut, Young, and Wyalong, as being infinitely the greatest matter to be considered in discussing the construction of this branch line. The extension of the line to Robertson, important agricultural district though it is, is not to be compared for a moment with the national advantages connected with the construction of a direct line to the Illawarra coal-fields in order to convey ore to the smelting works. So important is the question of conveying ores to the smelting works from the southern half of the Colony, that I think the Public Works Committee should take evidence on the point in the Illawarra district. What I am proposing is the extension of the proposed line from Robertson into the Illawarra district, which would only be a distance of about 20 miles. In my opinion, it would be an inestimable national benefit to the Colony. If such a line were made, many additional mines would be opened in consequence in different parts of the Colony, which would be of immense advantage to the mining industry.

70. To what point of the Illawarra railway line would you suggest this proposed line should be extended? Personally, I do not care where it touches the Illawarra line.

71. Which would be the most convenient place for a junction? It would be where the best grade could be obtained for getting up and down the mountain.

72. Can you suggest where that would be? No; that can only be shown by a thorough survey.

73. Do you know, generally, the nature of the country between Robertson and the place on the Illawarra railway where the lines are likely to be connected? Yes.

74. What class of country would it be? It would be difficult country over the mountain, wherever the range was crossed. There is a fall of over 2,000 feet; but I have no more doubt than I have of my own existence that a good route with fair grades could be obtained. In order to find that, it would be necessary to have a thorough survey made—one lasting for several months—in order to ascertain the best natural features of the country, so as to obtain easy grades. I wish to say a few words with regard to the cursory observations which were made by Mr. McDonnell Stuart, who has furnished a report which the Chairman of this Committee has been good enough to enable me to look over. That exploration was made during the holidays between last Christmas and New Year's Day, and that gentleman was only there for three or four days. No matter what professional ability a man may have, he cannot pronounce a correct opinion after so casual an inspection of mountainous country, extending over only a few days; it would require months to do the work thoroughly.

75. What is the distance from Robertson to the coast? I believe that a much better grade than 1 in 40 could be obtained; and assuming that there was a good deal of winding round about the spurs, in my opinion the distance would not be more than 20 miles—it might not be so much. I wish to impress upon the Committee, if Mr. Stuart's report comes before them, that his inspection of the country was of a most casual character. That was all he was intended to do. He only made a flying inspection, lasting three or four days, and that was wholly inadequate for the purpose.

76. Respecting the proposal before the Committee—that is, connecting Bowral with Robertson—what is your opinion concerning that:—do you think there will be sufficient traffic to make that railway a paying line? I do not consider myself a sufficient authority on that subject, and I would not venture to express an opinion on the point. I am not familiar with the country; but I know that the Robertson district is a very good one.

77. You would not care to express an opinion? I do not hesitate to express the opinion that it is a district which ought to have a branch railway. It is a rich district. It is one of the first parts of the Colony that was taken up under Sir John Robertson's Free Selection Act, and there was never any dummyism there. It is a genuine settlement, and there is no better yeomanry in the whole country than reside in that district. There has been no picking out of the eyes of the country. People went there and cleared the great bush which existed. The farms are still used for agricultural purposes, and families are living upon them. They are a most industrious class of people. Even if the line did not pay at the outset, I believe it would pay eventually.

Archibald
Campbell,
Esq., M.P.
31 July, 1900.

78. Is there any room for increased settlement, and would the construction of a railway bring about any increased traffic? It is a favoured and favourite district. In summer time it is almost as cool as it is in the neighbourhood of Kiandra; it is over 2,000 feet high. In summer it is much cooler there than in the lower districts, and if a railway were made, I believe a considerable number of people would go to live there on that account. Probably the larger farms would be subdivided, and would be taken up by a wealthy class of people who would settle there on account of the salubrity of the climate. There are also many waterfalls in the district, which would be an attraction to tourists.
79. Are there any available Crown lands there which would be taken up if better means of communication were afforded? I am not sufficiently familiar with that part of the country to answer that question. A great portion of the Crown lands immediately to the north of the district are reserved for the Sydney water supply; so that I suppose there could be little extension of settlement in that direction.
80. Your principal contention is that the proposal to connect Bowral with Robertson by railway should only form part of a scheme for connecting the Southern line with the Illawarra railway for the purpose of taking ore to the Illawarra district to be smelted there? My contention is that the question of extending the line from Bowral to Robertson is infinitesimal in importance compared with the extension of the line to the Illawarra district for smelting purposes.
81. Do you think that the traffic caused by conveying ore to the Illawarra district would be sufficient to pay interest and working expenses on such a line? Yes; that traffic and the traffic incidental thereto. There would, of course, be some general traffic as well. I have no doubt that such a railway would pay, and that in the near future it would more than pay.
82. Do you think there will be any other traffic besides the conveyance of ore? Yes; there is always incidental traffic where there is a railway.
83. Would it be an important feature? In my opinion the haulage of ore would be the great feature of the line. The mere fact that mine-owners in southern and south-western parts of the country now send ores all the way to Sydney, and back to Illawarra, shows that it would be a great advantage to have such a direct line. A difference of 4s. 6d. per ton in the carriage of the ore would cause other mines to be opened, and incomparably more ore would be sent than is now forwarded by the longer route.
84. But would not that mean a loss of 4s. 6d. per ton to the Railway Commissioners? I have already pointed out that, in my opinion, the increase in mining, and the increase in the quantity of ore that would be sent, owing to the reduction of 4s. 6d. per ton in the cost of carriage, would far outweigh the loss on the present traffic. I understand that at present the haulage by way of Sydney prevents the sending of a great deal of ore from the parts of the Colony referred to. It is not a question whether it should be sent to Illawarra or to Newcastle, because when the ore reaches Sydney it is then only a question of sending it 56 miles to Dapto as against about 100 miles to Newcastle.
85. Do you think that the reduced freight would mean an enormous addition to the present traffic, which would reimburse the Railway Commissioners for the loss they would sustain on the present route? Yes; that is only common sense.
86. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you know that, as far as the investigation by Mr. McDonnell Stuart went, he is of opinion that the most practicable route to connect the South Coast line with the main Southern line would leave Robertson some distance to the south of the railway? Yes; but that is only his opinion after making a flying survey lasting only three or four days, and he was nearly roasted to death when he was there, owing to intensely hot weather. I am not reflecting upon him, but it was impossible for a human being to do the work properly in such a short time.
87. The only point that seems to bear out his contention is that Robertson is 2,400 feet above the level of the South Coast line, and, at the same time, is 200 feet higher than Moss Vale or Bowral? The highest point on the Blue Mountains is 3,600 feet—that is, nearly twice as high above Penrith as Robertson is above Illawarra.
88. *Mr. Hyam.*] But there is a distance of 50 miles in reaching that height on the Western line, whereas on the Southern line there is only a distance of 20 miles? Yes; but in that distance of 20 miles the grade could be flattened out a great deal. The Macquarie Pass road was for many years thought to be impossible on an easy grade. Now, that road, which was constructed only two or three years ago, is so graded that there is not a part of it which a horse attached to a buggy cannot trot up if required. That is over a distance of only 4 miles.
89. Did not that road cost a great deal of money? Only about £5,000.
90. Did you say that you know the country pretty well between Robertson and Dapto, where the two lines would junction? I did not fix any junction.
91. I do not see where they could junction in any other place except at Kiama? I understand that my brother and a few other gentlemen have been exploring another route within the last few days—that is, between the Macquarie Valley and Jamberoo.
92. Do you not think that any railway taken from Robertson to the South Coast line, anywhere about Dapto, would cost an enormous sum of money? A portion of it would be very expensive; but that would only be for a few miles.
93. How much do you think it would cost? As I am not an engineer, I cannot answer the question.
94. Do you think that the increase of traffic would justify the construction of a railway from Bowral to the South Coast? I have no doubt at all about it, and in the national interest it should be constructed.
95. Do you advocate a line of that description? Yes. I have no personal interest or concern in the matter; I am simply speaking in the general interest. It is essential, in the general public interest, that the ores from the southern and south-western portions of the Colony should be afforded the best facilities for reaching the Illawarra coal-fields for smelting purposes.
96. When the Sydney collieries are at work, is it not likely that the ores, instead of going to Illawarra, will be treated in Sydney? That would shorten the distance; but still it would not be so short as going to Illawarra.
97. The distance of the connection with the Southern line and Illawarra would be about 45 miles? I believe it would be under 40 miles. I do not believe it would be much more than 30 miles. There is this feature to be considered in connection with the conveyance of ore—that the heavy load would always be downwards.
98. Would not this have to be considered—that there would be no loading back again, unless it might be coke? Such a thing is never known as a great volume of trade in one direction without some going in the other direction.

FRIDAY, 3 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Municipal Council Chambers, Bowral, at 10 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

William Frederick Brenning, farmer, West Kangaloon, sworn, and examined:—

W. F.
Brenning.
3 Aug., 1900.

99. *Chairman.*] How far is West Kangaloon from Bowral? A little over $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
100. How far is it in a direct line from the proposed railway? About $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
101. What is the character of the country of which West Kangaloon is the centre? The district is very fertile. We grow potatoes, and we follow the dairying industry.
102. Where is your principal market? Sydney.
103. Are many producers in the district you have named more than $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Southern line? Yes.
104. What is the character of the road? Very bad in some places, and very hilly.
105. Can farmers go to and from the railway with their produce in one day? Yes; to and from Bowral.
106. What is the population of West Kangaloon? I cannot say exactly; but I think the area of the district is between 10,000 and 12,000 acres, most of which is fairly good land.
107. Are the producers handicapped by reason of the bad road to Bowral? I am certain that if a railway were constructed *via* the Sheepwash, people would grow more potatoes than they do now. Some of them would also go in for market-gardening and fruit-growing. I have a small orchard, and I have had as many as thirty cases of apples from one tree. Last year the man who has the place now obtained twenty-five cases from one tree. The land is well adapted to the growth of fruit and cabbages.
108. Is there room for extension in the way of taking up land? There is plenty of room if those who have large holdings will cut them up and let them. There is plenty of room for agriculture.
109. Would the proposed line pass through much Crown land between Bowral and Robertson? I do not think it would pass through any.
110. Do you think that the owners of the land through which the proposed line would pass would hand their land over to the Government free of cost? Some might do it; others would not.
111. What is the average value per acre of the arable land in the Kangaloon district? There has been a great reduction in its value during the last five years. If a man were forced to sell he would not get more than half of what he would have got ten years ago. I myself have paid as much as £29 an acre for land at Kangaloon.
112. Was that a special value? It was a good value, although I have had good interest from the outlay ever since.
113. Do you anticipate any serious difficulty in the way of handing over the land for railway purposes free of cost? Unfortunately, the railway does not touch any of the land at Kangaloon.
114. I am referring to the land actually required for railway purposes? The land is not so valuable along the route of the proposed line.
115. From your knowledge of the district, do you think it is likely that the estimated annual deficiency of £3,100 upon the working of the proposed railway would be wiped off within a reasonable time? If we got good seasons I think the line would eventually pay, and that it will turn out better than what is represented by the report of the Railway Commissioners.
116. The report of the Railway Commissioners stated:—

Those who advocate the construction of the line allege that the absence of progress is consequent on the difficulties experienced in getting the produce to market. No doubt the railway would afford a better means of transit, but it must be remembered that Robertson is only 14 miles from Moss Vale and 15 miles from Bowral; and, further, the district is fortunate in having good roads, though in some places of steep gradients. These roads are being steadily improved, both as regards formation and gradient, and the opening of the road over the Macquarie Pass has facilitated traffic to such an extent that goods have been carried from Sydney to Shellharbour by steamer, and thence to Robertson district by team.

Do you consider that that estimate of the character of the roads is a fair one? I think it is very fair, but it is a mistake to say the roads are good. They are very hilly, and are not so good as represented in the report. The roads from the Sheepwash to Kangaloon are very steep, and at present they are not very good. I have been a resident of Kangaloon since 1863, and I know the country very well.

117. The report admits that the district is capable of development, and goes on to say:—

The absence of railway communication cannot be said to have created the stagnation which has prevailed for the past eleven years.

? There is no doubt the drought has affected us. We have been seriously handicapped by it, but with the return of good seasons and with railway facilities the district will develop.

118. It has been pointed out that if a connection be made towards the coast from Bowral or Moss Vale, it should be made in contemplation of a further extension to the South Coast line, in order that the ore may be expeditiously and cheaply carried to the coal at the coast; an engineer was asked to make a flying exploration of the country, and he pointed out that if the line went as far as Robertson it could go no further, and an alternative route was suggested by him a little further north;—have you considered that aspect of the question? I have. In my opinion it would be a very difficult line to construct. I am not aware what ores are available. No doubt it would be nearer to get them to the coast.

119. Presuming Robertson were left, as it would be by that survey, about 4 miles from the line, would the district of Robertson and surroundings, under such circumstances, be sufficiently provided with railway communication? I hardly think so, because the country about Robertson is naturally broken and hard to get at. A mile or two out of Robertson it is very steep. I do not think such a line would improve the position of Robertson at all.

120. Such a line would go through Stockyard Swamp? I know the place well, and it would be a very difficult route. It is very rocky country—somewhat similar to Waterfall, on the Illawarra line. 121.

121. Presuming the line is constructed, as proposed, the Chief Traffic Manager has mentioned in his report that, with the prevailing rates, and local rates as far as Robertson, it would still be possible to bring goods by steamer to Shellharbour, and then to send them by road to Robertson in competition with the railway;—do you think there is any danger to be anticipated in that respect? I think not. Certainly there is communication at present by way of the Macquarie Pass Road; but it is not so good as people imagine. Parts of the mountain road are very good, but in wet weather the lower part of it is very sticky, and a team could not bring much loading up. The storekeeper at Kangaloon has tried the experiment. He got some sugar and kerosene through from there, and the wet weather coming on, the goods were lying at the wharf at Shellharbour for some time. The result is that he will get no more that way.

W. F.
Brenning.
3 Aug., 1900.

122. The report goes on to say:—

In the case of 2nd and 3rd-class goods, the saving by adopting the coastal route reaches as high as 20s. per ton.

Do you not think that that would be so serious a handicap that in regard to these classes of goods the railway would not be able to compete with the coast traffic? The mountain is too steep. I think that men who contract to draw from there would soon give it up. I think that the railway could compete at the best of times. The road is not what might be called a good one; it requires metalling right through.

123. Do you know how many teams there are on the road between Robertson and the coast? I think there is only one. The Shellharbour Steam Shipping Co. has advertised for teams to draw goods from Shellharbour to Robertson. In wet weather teams could not cross the Macquarie Rivulet. That has to be crossed three times, and there are no bridges.

124. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has the Macquarie Pass Road been much altered during the last twelve or fourteen years? Yes; a lot of money has been spent upon it.

125. Is it zig-zagged? Yes.

126. What railway station do you use? Bowral.

127. Do you know of any Crown land in the direction to which you have been referring? No; the whole of it is alienated, and what little good land is left is water reserves.

128. Do you think it is likely that the people benefited by the proposed line would be willing to guarantee the Government against loss? That I could not say. Personally I think the estimate of the cost of construction is rather high. There are 8 miles of the line which I am certain could be constructed for less than the average which has been put down, the country being level. Those who are acquainted with the district as far as Myra Vale, know that the country is very level.

129. The estimate takes in the whole length of the proposed line, and an average is formed? Of course, that part of the line from Myra Vale to Robertson would be difficult of construction.

130. Is agriculture carried out to any extent in the district? Not to the extent to which it was carried out twenty years ago. The dairying industry is carried on now; but I have no doubt that if the district became overrun, the people, with proper facilities for getting to market, would go in for farming.

131. Is the country laid down with artificial grasses? Yes; most of it is roughed over with rye-grass and cocksbur.

132. What is the carrying capacity of the land which has not been sown, and of the land which has been sown with grasses? The Kangaloon district, in its natural state, was mostly brush land and brush forest. It had to be brushed thirty years ago and fired, and then rye-grass was sown.

133. What is its carrying capacity? Twenty years ago it carried a beast to the acre. I daresay it would carry that now if it were properly laid down with rye-grass and clover. Unfortunately, we have had to contend, of late, with an insect in the grass. Once the insect is got rid of I believe the land will carry a beast to the acre.

134. Have you had any report upon that? I think Mr. Thompson, of the Agricultural Department, reported upon it. His idea was, to put lime on the ground when the grass was sown. Personally, I think the last few dry years have caused the appearance of the insect.

135. Do you spell the land? We generally do that. We used to shut the paddocks up for two or three months. Of course spelling is of great benefit to the paddocks.

136. What proportion of the land, say, for 10 miles on each side of the line, would you class as good pastoral land? Most of it is fair pastoral land.

137. The whole of it would be fit for agriculture or pasturage? Yes.

138. *Mr. Levien.*] Has much agricultural produce been sent in to Bowral? No, only potatoes.

139. In what quantity? The last two or three years have been so very dry that not many have been sent in. I have no doubt the Railway Department could give you the full details.

140. What is the character of the rainfall? It is very good at Robertson and Kangaloon. Of course, during the last three or four years we have suffered.

141. How far would the proposed railway be from your holding? Four miles.

142. And at present you are $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the main line? Yes.

143. I suppose you know that in most parts of the country people are satisfied if the railway is within 15 miles of them? Yes.

144. Would you be willing to contribute towards the annual loss upon the proposed line? I would do it if the general public would do it.

145. Do you think that much of the estimated annual loss will eventually be made up? I could not say; but no doubt it would if the seasons were favourable, and the people did more cropping and grew more potatoes.

146. Do you rely principally upon potato-growing? Yes.

147. How does oaten-bay grow? It grows well; but potatoes grow better in a good season. We get about 8 tons to the acre.

148. Will the country grow maize? Good maize has been grown; but we could not compete with the Northern rivers.

149. How are you off for timber? A lot of it has been killed, and there is not much left, although there is plenty for firewood.

150. Is there no timber in the district suitable for railway sleepers? There is timber on the water reserve which would be suitable for railway construction.

151. How far is that timber from the proposed railway line? Seven or 8 miles. It is very good timber.

152. Is there any quantity of it? I would not say that there is any quantity; but there is some good box and stringy-bark.

Arthur Knox, auctioneer and farmer, Kangaloon, sworn, and examined:—

- A. Knox. 153. *Chairman.*] How long have you been at Kangaloon? Twenty years.
- 3 Aug., 1900. 154. What is the extent of your property? Two hundred acres.
155. What are you chiefly cultivating? I go in for dairying and potato growing.
156. How much land have you under potatoes? Last year I had about 10 acres.
157. What is your average crop per acre? From 5 to 8 tons in a good season.
158. What number of cattle do you run? About seventy cows.
159. Do you grow any feed for them? Yes; for the winter.
160. What kind of feed? Broadcast corn, oats, barley, and rye.
161. Do you find that these crops answer fairly well? Yes.
162. What is your average yield per cow? I have not made a calculation, but I should imagine that a cow would return about £7 to £8 per year.
163. Is there much cultivation in your neighbourhood? There has been a lot of cultivation, but, owing to the cost of transit—from 10s. to 15s. per ton—and the low prices ruling in the Sydney market, we cannot make it pay.
164. What distance do you live from Bowral? Ten miles.
165. Do you use the Bowral station? Yes.
166. What distance would you be from the proposed line? About 4½ miles.
167. So that you would still have half the distance to carry your produce, even if the proposed line were constructed? Yes.
168. What effect do you think the construction of the line would have upon the farmers generally? A good effect. At present the farmers cannot grow stuff to make it pay. I think the railway would bring people into the district. There is a lot of land which at present is almost valueless which would become of benefit. For instance, grazing flats would be turned into cabbage flats. I may state that those who grow cabbages grow from 22 to 30 tons per acre. An acre of grazing ground would, if it were utilised for cabbages, be worth a good deal in that way.
169. What is the average size of farms? The smallest is 40 acres, and they run up to 400 and 500 acres.
170. Do you think a farmer can get a fairly good living off 40 acres? Yes; from some of the rich land, through cultivation.
171. Do you carry out mixed farming in the district? Yes; but we principally go in for dairying.
172. Do the farmers, as a rule, appear to be prosperous? Yes.
173. I suppose that on nearly the whole of the farms the timber has been killed? Yes; on the farms which are using timber. There is plenty of timber on the Crown lands, about 4 miles from the proposed line, which could be used for railway purposes.
174. Have you any further evidence to offer? We consider we have a just claim to a railway, principally on account of the inconvenience of the present transit. The main roads are fairly good, but it is impossible for a farmer who lives a little way off them to load a team and get to Bowral and back in one day. At present it takes him two days, and that, and the cheap prices, prevents his farm paying. We claim that the proposed line will be a feeder of the main line. I believe that most of the farmers of the district are willing to pay local rates. I have to pay 12s. a ton in order to get my produce to Bowral, and I would willingly pay 5s. a ton to the Railway Commissioners. With reference to the question of competition by boats along the coast, I may state that I consider the amount of risk, and the transit from the coastal steamers to Robertson or Kangaloon, would be such that no storekeeper would think of sending goods that way.
175. Do you think it would be a fair thing for those who are benefited by the construction of the proposed line to contribute a certain amount towards paying off the deficiency;—supposing you are paying 12s. a ton for the carriage of goods, would you be willing to guarantee to pay to the railway to the extent of 6s. per ton? Yes; and I think most of the farmers would do so.
176. Have you mentioned that matter to any of the farmers? I have heard some of the leading men in Robertson say that they would be willing to do it.
177. Have you heard anyone object to it? No.
178. What do you do with your dairy produce? We have local creameries and central creameries in the district. We have two central creameries—one in Mittagong, and one in Robertson. We send our cream to them, and it is made into butter and sent on to Sydney.
179. Would the construction of the proposed line make any difference in the methods you adopt? Yes; I think we could send milk to Sydney. We have a cooler climate than that of the coast, and if we can get our milk away by train we can compete with any part of the Colony.
180. Do you think it will stand 80 or 90 miles railway carriage? Yes; especially as the climate is much cooler than that of the coast from which it is now sent.
181. The Railway Commissioners, referring to that point, say—
- It is claimed that with a railway a large quantity of milk would be sent to Sydney, instead of being made into butter locally, and as a consequence a large traffic would result. The experience of the Department in connection with the South Coast line shows that reliance can only be placed upon butter and cream traffic, and not to any extent upon carrying milk. You think the difference in the climatic conditions would place you in a position which would enable you to furnish the railway with that class of traffic? I think so.
182. The Commissioners also state that there is no doubt that the districts of Kangaloon, Burrawang, and Robertson contain a large extent of land of a rich volcanic character; but it requires manuring to produce good crops of potatoes? It does not require manure in Kangaloon.
183. Is that the general experience? Yes; very few go in for manuring on the rich land referred to.
184. Is it strong enough to do without it? Of course there are exceptions. If a man puts in half an acre of potatoes he may use a little manure; but as a general rule no manure is used.
185. *Mr. Levien.*] You state that the cost of carriage for produce is from 10s. to 15s. per ton? Yes. I may state that we are not asking for the railway to come right into Kangaloon; we are willing that it should come 4 or 5 miles from us.
186. Supposing it got within 4½ miles of you, what would be the railway freight? No more than half what it is at present by road.
187. Have you a good main road? Fairly good, although it is steep.
188. How many miles of good road have you coming into Bowral? Six or 7.
189. So that there are 3 or 4 miles of bad road? Yes.

190. Have you had any conversation with any of the landowners with a view to ascertaining whether they would give their land for railway purposes? No; I think, however, that some of the farmers would require compensation, and probably some would give it free.

A. Knox.
3 Aug., 1900.

191. Do you think the majority would require compensation? I could not say.

192. Do you think the estimated annual loss on the proposed line—£3,280—is likely to be reduced? I think it will be reduced every year. The cabbage-growing industry is quite a new industry in this district. At present they are not grown any distance away, because of the cost of carriage.

193. What do the growers realise for their cabbages per ton? £4 to £5, and they can produce 30 tons to the acre.

194. Then, how is it there are not more under crop? The industry has only been introduced lately. Very little has been done until the last three or four years. I have heard that between Bowral and Kangaloon people have realised as much as £100 per acre for cabbages.

195. What do you estimate as the profit per ton after deducting all expenses? I should say about £2.

196. And you think an enormous quantity would be grown if the proposed railway were constructed? I think so.

197. What do you estimate as the profit upon potatoes per ton, after deducting the cost of carriage and working expenses? About £2.

John Joseph Campbell, builder and contractor, Bowral, sworn, and examined:—

198. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in this district? Thirty-four or thirty-five years.

199. Do you know the district to be served by the proposed line? Yes.

200. What reasons can you urge in support of the construction of the line? It would be a great convenience to Kangaloon and Robertson. A large quantity of material which comes into the Bowral Station has to be conveyed to Kangaloon by dray.

J. J. Campbell.
3 Aug., 1900.

201. Do you agree with the statement that the roads are fairly good? Yes.

202. So the inhabitants of the district are not much handicapped in that way? I do not think they are handicapped as regards the roads. At the same time portions of the road about Robertson are very difficult.

203. What development is likely to take place as the result of the construction of the proposed line? It will enable the people to get their goods to Bowral at less expense, and I think it will be profitable to the Railway Department.

204. In what way will the construction of the proposed line stimulate the production of the district? There will be more farming, and more produce will be raised.

205. Do you consider that on account of the absence of a railway the arable land of the district is not put to its best use? That is my opinion. The people go in for the class of produce which is the easiest to get away, namely, dairy produce. If they could get farm produce away they would go in for it.

206. Do you think the production of the district would be doubled within a few years if the line were constructed? No.

207. What is your opinion of the district, from a tourist's point of view? Bowral would naturally benefit by the construction of a railway from that point of view.

208. *Mr. Levien.*] Is much stock bred in the district? There is not much about Bowral; but there are numbers of sheep on the other side of Sutton Forest.

209. Do you think much stock would be carried on the proposed line? I could not say.

Henry Milward Smith, dairy-farmer, West Kangaloon, sworn, and examined:—

210. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far do you live from Bowral? A little over 9 miles.

211. What is the size of your holding? 370 acres.

212. Is that considered a moderately-sized holding for that district? Yes. It includes rung lands. There are about 120 acres of inferior land included in it. We used to grow potatoes, but the seasons lately have been bad and the prices low, and there has also been difficulty in getting to market. The result has been that they have not paid.

H. M. Smith.
3 Aug., 1900.

213. What crops do you grow for cattle feed? Broadcast corn, imphi, barley, and oats.

214. Is the whole of your ground laid down with artificial grasses? All the good land is.

215. What stock have you on the property? About eighty head of dairy cattle.

216. Are you fully stocked? No; the seasons have been so bad.

217. What do you consider you could run in a good season? About a beast to the acre on the good land.

218. Have you left the timber growing on what you consider to be the inferior land? Yes, on some of it.

219. What kind of timber is it? Gum, messmate, and mountain ash.

220. Are you handicapped by your distance from a railway? Very much.

221. Do you use the Bowral railway station? Yes. Milk would be sent away very largely if we had a railway. It would be the chief product of the district.

222. Are you able to take a load in and come back the same day? Yes; by putting it on the dray the day before.

223. Do you generally take one or two loads at a time on the good road? We are on the good road. There are about 5 miles of good road, but the remainder is very indifferent. It is not metalled, and it is very hilly.

224. What is the value of the land in the neighbourhood in which you live? Originally the very best land was £30 per acre, but it has come down very much. Of course, railway communication would make a vast difference in its value.

225. But what is it valued at now? About £20 per acre.

226. Are you aware whether many people visit the Fitzroy Falls now? There are a great number during the summer months. During the five months of the year they are patronised almost every day.

227. Do you think the number of visitors would be largely increased if the railway were constructed? I am quite certain of it.

228. How far would the proposed line pass from the Fitzroy Falls? Three or 4 miles; but I am not certain.

229. Are the main roads macadamised? The road from Robertson to Moss Vale is metalled, but from Kangaloon to Bowral only one-half of it is metalled.

- H. M. Smith. 230. What do you think of the evidence which has been given regarding the guarantee of loss to the Government? I think the majority of people would be willing to contribute towards the deficiency.
- 3 Aug., 1900. 231. What does it cost you to land your produce at Bowral? As high as 15s. The average would be 10s. or 12s. per ton.
232. Then, if the railway were constructed, you would be in pocket to the extent of 7s. or 8s. per ton? I think so.
233. Do you think it would be reasonable to guarantee the Government to the extent of half your saving? Yes. It would pay us to do so, and to have the convenience.
234. Have you any idea of any other crops besides potatoes which could be grown? Any crop suitable for a cold district will grow, because the land is the best in New South Wales as far as volcanic soil is concerned. Turnips, cabbages, potatoes, peas, and beans will grow well.
235. Are swedes grown for fat stock? They are grown for household use, but not for stock at present. I imagine beetroot would also grow well, because the soil and climate are suitable for it.
236. Has wheat been grown to any extent? No; the soil is too good. It would run to stalk.
237. Do you think it would be possible to send milk away if you had a railway nearer to your holding? Yes. Formerly the milk was sent to Sydney, until the Illawarra line was opened. They sent such large quantities from there that we were knocked off. If we had a railway I should think one-half of the milk we produce would be sent away.
238. Does the milk pay better than the butter? It did in those days, and I think it would do so now.
239. Do not some of the Kangaloon farmers now send their milk to the Mittagong creamery? They send the cream there.
240. Is milk sent to Sydney from Mittagong? I think so.
241. What effect generally would the construction of the railway have upon the district served by it? It would have a wonderful effect. It would advance the district, and in a couple of years it would be a different district in every way. Large quantities of produce would be grown. I should like to refer to the question of the carriage of calves. At present the farmers kill the majority of the calves, but if we had a railway every one of them would be sent to Sydney. I may state, with regard to timber, that the small towns along the existing line consume a great amount of firewood. They have great difficulty in getting it at present. I think there would be a great amount of freight from firewood alone.
242. Do you think sufficient could be obtained from railway sleepers? There is ample in the district.

Henry Havelock Shepherd, General Secretary, Bowral to Robertson Railway Leagues, sworn, and examined:

- H. H. Shepherd. 243. *Chairman.*] Do you produce a statement from the Secretary of the Robertson Park sub-committee to the Robertson Railway League? Yes; as follows:—
- 3 Aug., 1900. The statistics have been collected under ten separate headings, and the results show that we have a population of 300, and a district area of about 14,000 acres, divided into 50 farm and dairy holdings. As a result of the farming industry, this season 250 acres have been planted with potatoes, the yield from which it is, of course, as yet, impossible to ascertain; but the soil here being well adapted to their growth, and having the expense and inconvenience of haulage to Bowral removed, potatoes would certainly be grown on an extensive scale here. Cabbage-growing is also an important industry in the district, 700 tons having been sent from here to Sydney during the three months ending 31st March, and the area occupied for the growth of this item is fast increasing.
- Our milk supply in any average good season is estimated at 3,000 gallons per day. This would not only be increased, with the facilities of rail here; but in conjunction with the other sources which the line would tap, and due consideration being given to climate and purity of water supply, &c., there is every reason to believe that this district would contribute a very important part of the best milk supply of the metropolis.
- Hay.—Though only grown for local use, 300 tons were harvested here this season.
- Fruit.—The district is particularly adapted, both in soil and climate, for the growth of all kinds of English fruits.
- Timber abounds in the outlying portions of the district, of superior quality and in great variety, including box, red and blue gum, white stringy, and iron-bark.
- Iron ore is also to be found here in abundance, and in close proximity to the proposed railway station, is easily obtainable, and likely to be of great importance.
- Stock.—As near as can be ascertained there are about 3,000 head of milking stock in the district, besides a large number of horses of all classes; and as a result of the dairying industry a very considerable number of pigs are annually fattened here.

John McPherson, dairy-farmer, Robertson Park, sworn, and examined:—

- J. McPherson. 244. *Chairman.*] How far is Robertson Park from Bowral? Six or 7 miles.
- 3 Aug., 1900. 245. Is it in the direction of the proposed railway? Yes; the railway passes partly through it.
246. Do you agree with the report of the Railway Commissioners, that the country for the first 9 miles along the route of the proposed line may be regarded as suitable for pastoral purposes? Yes; there is a lot of first-class agricultural land all round Robertson Park.
247. You say that the line goes partly through Robertson Park? Yes.
248. Can you give an idea of the cultivation which is carried on there at present? It is principally cabbages, potatoes, and the dairying industry.
249. What is the average size of the holdings at Robertson Park? From 100 to 400 acres.
250. Do you experience any disadvantage on account of the absence of a railway towards the Robertson district? To a certain extent.
251. Although you are only 6 miles away from a railway, you are at a disadvantage? Yes.
252. In what way? At present it takes us a whole day to come to Bowral with one load, whereas if we had a station at Robertson Park we could bring about four loads.
253. Does the fact that you can only carry one load a day prevent you going in for more cultivation? Not in regard to myself, but it does in regard to the majority of the people in the district.
254. What is the cost of carrying cabbages into Bowral? About 8s. per ton.
255. How many head of cattle have you? About thirty-five.
256. Do you agree with the evidence of the previous witness, to the effect that it would pay you better to send your milk to Sydney if you had the opportunity, than it does now to send your cream? Yes; the profits would be nearly double.
257. Which of the timbers in your district are suitable for railway sleepers? The red-gum, often called blue-gum.
258. Is there much of it available? Yes, on the Crown lands. Some of it is used at present for sleepers.

259. *Mr. Shepherd.*] A great many people think 20 miles from a railway is a fair distance for the cultivation of grain crops;—you are already within 6 miles of a railway, and yet you think you ought to have better facilities? We are pretty close; but our idea is that the easier we can put milk on a railway the better. We are too far from Bowral now to send milk to Sydney; it would not keep sweet.

J. McPherson.
3 Aug., 1900

260. What fruit do you grow? Principally apples.

261. What are your average potato crops? Five to 7 tons per acre.

262. *Mr. Levien.*] How many acres have you? I am a leaseholder, and have 208 acres.

263. *Chairman.*] Have you anything further to state? I think 700 tons of cabbages were sent to the railway station during three months of last season, and the growers are now putting twice as much land under cultivation as they did formerly, and with railway facilities that will be greatly extended. One of the cabbage-growers told me yesterday that he sold £200 worth of cabbages off 2 acres.

John Griffiths, farmer, Glen Quarry, sworn, and examined:—

264. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where is Glen Quarry? Two miles from Robertson Park, or 8 miles from Bowral.

J. Griffiths.
3 Aug., 1900.

265. What is the size of your holding? 600 acres.

266. Are you cultivating any of it? About 200 acres. The rest is ringbarked.

267. How many head of cattle have you? About 100, including 70 milking cows.

268. Will not your holding carry more than that? Yes; but we have to look out for bad seasons, although we have plenty of water.

269. Do you send milk to the factories? Yes; to the Robertson Park factory.

270. What do your cows produce per annum? From £8 to £10 per cow in a good season.

271. Do you grow fodder for them? Yes. We used to grow wheat until a few years ago, when the rust came.

272. What advantage would you reap from the construction of the railway? Unless there was a station at Robertson Park I would not reap any advantage. It would be a great convenience in the matter of sending milk to Sydney.

273. Would you, under those circumstances, send milk instead of cream? Yes.

274. What is the land in the neighbourhood in which you live valued at? It was very high some years ago; but from £10 to £12 per acre would be a fair average at present.

275. Do you think that those who would be benefited by the construction of the proposed line would guarantee the Government, to a certain extent, against loss, until the line became self-supporting? I cannot say. The construction of the line would greatly improve the district, and in the course of time the traffic upon it would greatly increase.

276. What does it cost you, per ton, to deliver your produce at Bowral? We carry with our own team, and I think it would cost 7s. or 8s. per ton. I consider that a team and a man are worth 16s. a day, and you cannot do the journey in and out in less than a day, and 2 tons is a good load.

277. Of course you know that if it were carried by rail it would not cost half that, and therefore you would effect a considerable saving;—would it not pay you to guarantee to pay, say, 1s. 6d. or 2s. per ton, for carriage, until the railway became self-supporting? Yes.

278. Would you be willing to do it? Yes.

279. Do you think fruit-growing would be likely to be encouraged by the construction of the line? Yes.

280. Is 6 or 8 miles a great distance to cart fruit? No; of course there is not a great deal of it.

281. Do you think the construction of the line would induce much passenger traffic to the Fitzroy Falls and other places. A large number travel there now by coach.

282. Do you think they would use a railway in preference to buggies and coaches? Yes.

283. Have you anything further to state? A great number of cabbages have been grown in the Robertson Park district, and it pays well. 10,000 plants will grow upon one acre.

Francis Boughton Kyngdon, Bowral, sworn, and examined:—

284. *Chairman.*] Have you any statement to make? Yes; especially in regard to the cabbage crop and other crops suitable to the district:—

F. B. Kyngdon.
3 Aug., 1900.

Cabbage Culture in the Berrima District.—About five years ago Messrs. Elliott Brothers commenced to cultivate cabbage for the Sydney market, on a small area of low-lying land adjoining the Maryvale Creek, which flows into the Bong Bong River, distant 4 miles from Bowral station. The ground is subject to high floods, but these are rare, and by open-cut draining the water-table is lowered sufficiently, so that the roots of the cabbage-plant can easily reach down to it. The family had experience in cabbage culture at Burrawang, some 8 miles away. The industry is now established at Maryvale and Robertson Park, the growers there being Messrs. Elliott Brothers, T. Madden, J. Madden, M. Madden, Seahull, Symon, Menzies and Norman, J. McPherson, T. M. Smith, A. M. Smith, J. J. Wood, E. Mullett, B. Jones. The above will have under cabbage this coming season about 81 acres. The crop is marketed from Christmas to April, coming into the Sydney market when the suburban supplies are off. The climate is, moreover, an additional factor, in that the quality and flavour of the district cabbages, is superior to those quick-grown and stimulated by manures in the hot clime of Sydney.

The profits are large, for the yield is heavy—some 20 tons per acre—and the cost of cultivation is not excessive, as will be seen from the subjoined figures:—

Cost of growing, harvesting, and marketing 1 acre of cabbage—

	£	s.	d.
The tilth—two ploughings, at 8s., 16s.; two harrowings, at 1s., 2s.	0	18	0
Plant seed-bed raising, preparing 2 rods of bed, 4s.; 4 oz. of seed, at 1s. 6d., 6s.	0	10	0
Planting out—four men per acre, at 4s.	0	16	0
Manure—2 cwt. fertiliser, at 6s.	0	12	0
Hand-hoing, &c.	1	0	0
Marketing (cutting and loading, per ton, 2s.; carting and putting in truck at Bowral, 8s.); yield—20 tons, at 10s.	10	0	0
Freight to Sydney—20 tons, at 7s. 1d.	7	1	8
Rent of land	1	0	0
	£21	17	8

Money return per acre—20 tons, e.g. 9,000 plants, weighing 5 lb. each (450 plants to the ton), sold in Sydney at 2½d. each	93	0	0
Less cost as above	22	0	0

Net profit per acre £71 0 0 The

F. B.
Kynndon.
3 Aug., 1900.

The variety most grown in the Berrima district is an introduction from America—the "Succession"—characterised by the uniformity of size and weight of each plant in a crop, a feature of considerable importance. The seed is sold at 1s. 6d. per oz., and 4 oz. suffice for an acre. The seed-bed is prepared in July. The area for the crop is prepared in August. The planting out is done in successive breadths, so as to yield a crop to be cut in succession over a series of weeks. Planting commences in October. The crop is cut from Christmas up to and through March. The land lies fallow till August. Farmers who add cabbage-growing to dairying find that the stalks and leaves left after cutting form good feed for stock, and that a catch crop can be taken off the land from April to August. The extra labour entailed by cartage to market during the season of three months is met by hiring vehicles. The charge from Robertson to Bowral is 8s. per ton, the man helping pack and load the covered railway trucks at Bowral. In marketing in Sydney the middleman is avoided. One grower has a member of the family attending a stall in Belmore Market, and others consign to a stallholder, one man finding three consignors sufficient for a stall. The losses to which the cabbage plant is liable in this district are chiefly caused by locusts. Aphis is not feared, and caterpillars are not taken into account. The favourite manure is the Sugar Company's special fertiliser, costing landed on the farm £6 per ton, and being used at the rate of 2 cwt. per acre.

There are large areas of land suitable for cabbage-culture in the neighbourhood of Robertson Park, which the contemplated railway would serve. When it is considered that 100 acres yield 2,000 tons of freight, in value about £700, and that the farmers would save 4s. per ton cartage—*e.g.*, £400 per 100 acres—it is evident that the cabbage crop is one that promises to benefit the railways to a large extent. There are other varieties of garden produce that can be sown with profit in this district. For instance, Messrs. Scahill and Wood have found pea-culture for marketing in the pod in Sydney quite as profitable as cabbage-culture, with the price 2s. 6d. per bushel. Then Brussels sprouts and cauliflower are suitable for culture in large breadth. The berry fruits are well adapted for this cold-climate district, since they need the rest in winter, such as raspberries, strawberries, gooseberries. Furthermore, celery and asparagus do well. Last year at the Consumptive Fair the Berrima district produce stall did a large business in produce, and the reputation for the butter, bacon, poultry, eggs, and minor products of the farm was astonishing. I mention this to indicate how much may be done in building up a trade from the district that the railway would serve, especially the Kangaroo Valley.

F. B. KYNGDON.

285. Do you know the acreage available for that class of cultivation? No; but it is a large one. Hundreds of acres of low lying land can be rendered sufficiently dry by open cuts.

286. Do you consider that this district offers special facilities for successful dairying, and that with the construction of the proposed line a considerable traffic will ensue to the railway in the carriage of milk? My opinion is that this cool climate makes a sweet, nutritious, and rich herbage—quite a contrast from the succulent watery herbage of the coast, which benefits the milk to this extent: that it is a richer milk, and therefore of better quality when landed in Sydney. Once upon a time the whole of the city supply of milk was derived from this district. The Illawarra line opened up very large quantities of milk from that district, and the farmers here at once went in for butter-making, so that if that trade could be regained the district would supply large quantities. My experience, when assisting the ladies to take charge of the Berrima stall at the Hospital for Consumptives' Fair, was that Berrima district butter had the highest reputation in Sydney. It was the best flavoured butter to be obtained in Sydney, and the way in which the stall was rushed by consumers was something marvellous.

287. Are you of opinion that the district would largely exceed its present output of dairy produce? The rich land is hilly land, and not very suitable for the plough; but if the farmers were to clear it more thoroughly, and rested their paddocks, so that the grasses, and particularly the native grasses, might have a chance to thrive, the dairy production of this district might be double. When they want to rest a paddock, they turn in the store cows which eat up all the roots. There is one good paddock of native grass in this district, and that is in the Bowral Cemetery, into which the cows cannot go.

288. The Railway Commissioners in their report indicate that no progress has characterised this district for the last ten or twelve years? That is correct.

289. They also state that in their opinion that is not due to the want of railway communication? The district, so far as culture goes, has not progressed. When we consider that 4 or 5 miles out the main roads are, with the exception of one or two steep pinches, excellently graded and well kept, the present railway should certainly have stimulated more dairy production. I think the district is capable of producing a great deal more butter and milk. The farmers hesitate a good deal about launching out.

290. Do you think the fact of the South Coast railway going through a rich district, and enabling the producer there to get his products speedily to market, has given this district a temporary set back? I consider that the shifting of the milk supply from this district to the Illawarra district took away the stimulus to the farmers. They have been gaining their experience in butter production in this district. Since they installed refrigerators in the two centres—Robertson and Mittagong—the quality of the butter has become extremely even all the year through, and very high. Prior to that, when summer came, the absence of cool storage rendered the butter more or less varied in flavour. That, I think, did something to prevent the expansion of this district, but now they are up-to-date in dairy appliances. I consider the district will go ahead.

291. Has any effort ever been made to combine for the purpose of catering for the export trade? No; nothing has been done in this district in the export trade in butter, because the Berrima Butter Company can sell the whole of its butter as high-class market butter in Sydney. It cannot supply all the customers; consequently there is no surplus for export. That is what Mr. Throsby told me last year.

292. When you refer to the Berrima district, do you mean all the district practically to be catered for by the railway? No; the Berrima district is that large district—Hilltop to about Exeter, and from Bullio to Robertson. The most important section is undoubtedly Robertson, although Exeter is very good. I would like to lay particular emphasis on the fact that if the railway tapped the Kangaroo Valley it would do good. The Kangaroo Valley farmers are interested in the production of butter, bacon, eggs, and poultry, and they could produce more.

293. Would the proposed railway be of advantage to the producers of the Kangaroo Valley? At present they have an outlet by team across the Cambewarra Mountains to Berry, but the Robertson railway will, the teams having to come up the mountain, bring the valley into close touch with the railway. It is a more direct railway line from Berry to Sydney, than from Robertson to Bowral, and Bowral to Sydney.

294. Have you considered the possibilities of the line, when still further extended to the South Coast line, for taking ore across the shorter distance? The question is where does the ore come from, and will not the Harden line supply the portion of the Colony which has Lithgow as a smelting centre. I do not lay much stress on the ore business, because as soon as enterprise starts smelting works at Lithgow, I have no doubt the great central ore-producing area of New South Wales will be better served there.

295. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You state that the cabbage grown is what is known as the "Succession" cabbage. Is that the only one which is being tried? It is the principal one. Other kinds have been tried, but not to much advantage.

296.

296. Do you think it is possible that some other variety may be introduced, inasmuch as the "Succession" cabbage takes a good time to come in? We might have to compete against Botany. Of course our cabbages come in when the Botany cabbages are out, and that keeps up the market price.
297. Is it found that the "Succession" cabbage suits the climate and the soil of the district better than any other? Yes. I might point out the rapid increase of acreage from Madden's—15 acres of five years ago, to 81 acres, and that without the stimulus of a railway.
298. Have the people confined themselves entirely to the use of one description of manure? At first I understand they were using a good deal of crushed bone, but they find the fertiliser answers best. I may state that the grasshoppers have bred very largely on the swamps during the last two or three years, and they have injured the plants very much. The moral of that is to keep poultry, which will hunt the grasshoppers, and turn them into meat.
299. Has the crop been troubled with aphid? That only comes when the crops are grown too freely in succession.
300. Have the farmers gone in for growing cauliflowers? They grow well, but they have not been grown in quantity.
301. *Mr. Levien.*] Will the district grow onions? Yes; in the more friable soil, but not in the wet soil. I may mention that we were told by customers at the Consumptive Fair that they had great difficulty in getting Brussels' sprouts, and all we had were snapped up at once. Brussels' sprouts will always sell well as a high-class vegetable, for which people are willing to pay, and they grow well in this district. We have strawberry culture in this district in the few spots where water is available. If the low-lying ground was tried with strawberries, they might do well, so that if strawberry culture could be introduced on a large scale, we should think nothing of growing from 500 to 700 acres of them. In that case a railway is essential, because the strawberries have to be packed the night before, and despatched by the night train, so that they may get to Sydney the first thing in the morning. On many railways in England special trains are put on for strawberries. Cabbages go to Mittagong from one or two other growers, and they would come to Bowral if the proposed line were constructed. When we find cabbages coming past us all the way from Victoria it is evident that there is plenty of room for their cultivation here. With regard to raspberries: this is a climate which rests the raspberry cane in winter. They would be grown to a much larger extent than they are now if water were available during dry weather. With regard to the free grants of land for the purposes of a railway construction, I may state that the areas here are very small, and the fairest way—when the areas are small—is undoubtedly to pay for the land. With regard to the local train rates, there is no doubt they should be high enough to cover a deficit, and as the deficits decreased the local rates would decrease.

F. B.
Kyngdon.
3 Aug., 1900.

SATURDAY, 4 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Moss Vale, at 11:45 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDBAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

Charles Lindsay Nicholson, J.P., grazier, Sutton Forest, sworn, and examined:—

302. *Chairman.*] Have you any statement to make with respect to the proposal before the Committee? I think the better connection with Robertson would be from Moss Vale.
303. For what reason? The line would be less expensive to construct, and there would be a better trade.
304. On the last occasion on which the Public Works Committee investigated the proposal it seemed that, in order to secure the maximum amount of traffic available, it was necessary not to connect with Moss Vale, but with Bowral, and that a connection with Moss Vale would leave out a lot of farmers at Kangaloon? I do not think it would affect those people to any extent. The country about Kangaloon is very inaccessible.
305. Could the producers in the Kangaloon district go directly south towards a line from Bowral to Robertson? I do not think they could.
306. They would have to tap the proposed line somewhere near the Sheepwash? Yes, at Robertson Park.
307. If a line were constructed from Moss Vale to Robertson, would it be any advantage to the people of Robertson Park? They would not come to a line from Moss Vale with their produce, but would go to Bowral by road.
308. Then, so far as the people of Kangaloon and Robertson Park are concerned, they would not use the line from Moss Vale to Robertson? I think not.
309. The two lines are common up to a certain point, from Robertson to Wild's Meadows;—taking the first part of each of the lines—that is, from Moss Vale to Wild's Meadows, and Bowral to Wild's Meadows—which of the two would open up the greater amount of good land? A line from Moss Vale. There is a larger population along that route, and the holdings are more numerous.
310. What is the character of the land upon the two routes as far as Wild's Meadows? I think the land from Moss Vale to Wild's Meadows is fair, good, and very good.
311. Which of the districts would have the most good land—Kangaloon and Robertson Park together, or the district between Moss Vale and Wild's Meadows? I think the largest extent would be between Moss Vale and Wild's Meadows.
312. Has there been any development in the amount of production between Moss Vale and Wild's Meadows? Yes.
313. We have had evidence that 700 tons of cabbages came from the Robertson Park district in three months;—has any similar development taken place here? I know that hundreds of tons of cabbages go from Moss Vale Station.

C. L.
Nicholson,
J.P.
4 Aug., 1900.

C. L.
Nicholson,
J.P.
4 Aug., 1900.

314. Is there any other reason you can urge in support of the Moss Vale connection as against the Bowral connection? The chief advantage of the Moss Vale to Robertson connection, is that it would be a feeder for the south country—Goulburn, Crookwell, Tumut, and other outlying places. There is a large consumption of flour, bran, corn, and lucerne hay, which comes south, and is taken off here and forwarded to the Robertson district.

315. In which direction is the maximum amount of traffic sent to the Robertson district—from Sydney or from the districts you have mentioned? I think the bulk would come from Goulburn.

316. You think that the extra haulage of the Bowral connection would be a disadvantage to that connection? Yes.

317. With respect to traffic which must necessarily come from Sydney, which of the two connections offers the best prospects from a railway point of view? It would only mean a difference of 3 miles in favour of the Bowral connection. The passenger traffic between Moss Vale and Robertson is a large item. The District Court is held at Moss Vale, and there is a considerable amount of traffic from Robertson to Moss Vale. The jurymen and others must come in three or four times a year.

318. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where are the vegetable gardens situated about Moss Vale? In various spots. Some of them are right in the town.

319. We had evidence at Bowral to show that there were 50 acres of cabbages between Bowral and Robertson? There may be more than half that between Moss Vale and Robertson.

320. Do not the farmers grow forage for their stock? Only green forage.

321. Have most of the farmers cultivation areas between Moss Vale and Robertson? Yes.

322. What do they chiefly produce? I do not think the production is very large on either route, so far as hay is concerned. Potatoes are grown largely on both routes. Turnips and other vegetables are also grown.

323. Are swedes for cattle grown to any extent? A great number are grown, and I think they are sent to Sydney.

324. Does the district appear to be in a flourishing financial condition? I think its financial condition has very much improved during the last five or six years, and it is still improving.

325. Has there been any increase in the laying down of pastoral grass or in the cultivation of potatoes? There has been a large and gradual increase. Dairying has gone up by leaps and bounds, and the growth of hay and potatoes is coming largely to the front again, which it has not done for thirty years.

326. Do you think that the annual deficiency on the working of a railway from Moss Vale to Robertson would be likely to be soon wiped out if the line were constructed? I have no doubt about it. Everything is on the upward grade now, and people have got their properties more securely fixed than they were before. I also think that families are now more permanently settled on the land, whereas, when the estimate showing the annual deficiency on a line from Moss Vale to Robertson was made eleven years ago, they were in an uncertain condition. The settlers, for instance, had not become settled.

327. Do you think the majority of the free-selectors have paid off? I do not think so; but they have become established, and I think they are more satisfied and will stay. The soil is good and the surroundings are good.

328. *Chairman.*] The length of a line from Moss Vale to Robertson would be 14 miles;—do you think the people who would be served by it suffer any great disadvantage at present, by reason of being 14 miles from a railway? Yes; the roads are bad, and it is almost impossible to keep them in order.

329. In a report, which we have received from the Public Works Department, it is stated—

With respect to the road from Moss Vale to Robertson, towards Macquarie Pass, it is metalled throughout, the surface is in good condition, and I consider it one of the best roads in the district to travel on.

Do you agree with that statement? It is a road which frequently and easily gets out of repair. Perhaps, when that report was written, the road was in good condition.

330. A calculation which has been made in regard to the traffic is as follows:—

The through traffic from Robertson does not exceed 18 tons per week, and 3 tons from Myra Vale and Burrawang each. The return traffic, in good seasons, is considerably less than one half this; but in dry years, when produce has to be bought, it will equal the outward quantity.

Do you think an amount of traffic of that kind would justify the construction of a railway? That is a question which I do not care to answer.

331. Do you think the prospects of a railway from Moss Vale to Robertson depend upon a considerably increased development of the district, or does the present state of the district justify railway construction? I can scarcely answer the question, because I do not know what justification there is for railways in many places; but I think the district ought to have as fair a show as many other districts in which railways are being constructed.

332. Do you think the efforts of the producers of the district towards greater development have been kept back owing to the want of a railway? I think a great deal more produce would be grown if the line were constructed.

333. What is your opinion of the prospects of the line from a tourists' point of view? I think it would lead to a larger passenger traffic.

334. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you think the owners of land through which a line from Moss Vale to Robertson would pass would give the land required for railway purposes free of charge? I think so.

335. Do you think they would contribute towards the annual loss on the line? No; I for one would not.

336. Do you agree with this statement:—

The proposed line will serve a larger area than the Moss Vale-Robertson line, which was under consideration some eleven years ago; but in the interval little or no progress has been made in the district.

? No; I think there has been a large amount of progress in the district.

337. Supposing you are paying 15s. a ton for delivering produce at the railway station, and the construction of the line reduces that freight to about one-half for the sake of getting a railway, would it not pay you to guarantee one-half of what you would gain? No.

338. Would it not be a saving to the farmers, even if they did it? Yes; if they could secure their customers. Personally, I do not like the idea at all.

Thomas William Lackey, J.P., grazier, Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

339. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where is your property situated? I have a property between Moss Vale and Robertson, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Moss Vale. I know every yard of both routes. T.W. Lackey, J.P.
340. What is the size of your holding between Moss Vale and Robertson? 500 acres. I am farming upon it. 4 Aug., 1900.
341. What extent have you under crop? About 50 acres. I do a little dairying, and grow potatoes and fruit.
342. Are you satisfied with the results? Thoroughly.
343. Would a railway assist you to any great extent? Very great.
344. What would be a fair distance from a railway station to successfully carry on dairying and farming operations? I could do it where I am situated— $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles away. I am fairly well served already.
345. How far would a line from Moss Vale go through your property? It would go right through.
346. Will you state your reasons for preferring the Moss Vale connection to the Bowral connection? The population is greater between Moss Vale and Myra Vale than it is between Bowral and Myra Vale. The holdings are smaller and more productive. Forty tons of cabbages per week are delivered at the Moss Vale railway station from the parish of Yarrunga.
347. Is that an average all the year round? Yes. The Moss Vale route would get the Kangaroo Valley traffic, and that is pretty good. The land between Moss Vale and Myra is much better than it is between Bowral and Myra Vale.
348. How far is Myra Vale out? Nine miles from Moss Vale. The land between Moss Vale and Robertson is better, and it is occupied by small holdings, which, I think, are more productive than the larger holdings. Upon the small holdings they go in for cabbage-growing, which they do not do upon the larger holdings. The population is greater on the Moss Vale route than it is on the Bowral route.
349. Are there many large holdings between Moss Vale and Robertson? No; the largest is Mr. Gilchrist's property, which is close to Moss Vale; the area of that is about 4,000 acres. I produce statements which have been made by various farmers who have consented to give their land for the purposes of railway construction:—
- I, T. W. Lackey, of Moss Vale, hereby agree that if the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson is made by the Bell route that I will give the Government the necessary land for the said railway to pass through my land.
Dated this 15th day of May, 1900. T. W. LACKEY.
Witness—HERBERT W. BLEASE.
- I, James Jefferis, of Adelaide, hereby agree that if the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson is made by the Bell route that I will give the Government the necessary land for the said railway to pass through my land.
Dated this 22nd day of May, 1900. JAS. JEFFERIS.
Witness—MARIAN JEFFERIS.
- I, Alfred Baxter, of Myra Vale, hereby agree that if the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson is made by the Bell route, that I will give the Government the necessary land for the said railway to pass through my land, providing the majority of landowners agree.
Dated this 22nd day of May, 1900. ALF. BAXTER.
Witness—HERBERT W. BLEASE, Law Clerk, Moss Vale.
- I, Henry Moore, of Myra Vale, hereby agree that if the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson is made by the Bell route, that I will give the Government the necessary land for the said railway to pass through my land.
Dated this 10th day of May, 1900. H. MOORE.
Witness—HERBERT W. BLEASE, Moss Vale.
- I, M. Moore, of Myra Vale, hereby agree that if the proposed railway from Moss Vale to Robertson is made by the Bell route, that I will give the Government the necessary land for the said railway to pass through my land. Buildings not included.
Dated this 10th day of May, 1900. M. MOORE, Myra Vale.
Witness—T. W. LACKEY.
- I think I shall be within bounds if I say that none of these holdings are over 500 acres in extent.
350. What effect generally would a railway have upon the district between Moss Vale and Robertson? There is a good road from Moss Vale to Robertson, but the back roads, along which the people are producing, are in a bad state, and in the winter time they cannot get out. Farmers out there whom I know of are growing cabbages, and are making £120 a year per acre out of them. That remark applies to places away from the main road. They have good soil, but bad roads before they can get upon the main road. In some instances they have to travel 4 miles before getting to the main road.
351. Has nothing been spent upon the by-roads? Yes; but it is not sufficient to keep them in repair—they are only metalled in patches. I think the construction of a line from Moss Vale to Robertson will assist the main trunk line considerably. The greater part of the produce which goes to Robertson comes from the south. Bran is greatly consumed in the Robertson district, and that is procured at Murrumburrah and Goulburn.
352. Is much milk brought into Moss Vale now? No; but a good deal of cream is brought in. People are now going in for their own separators.
353. Do you think the construction of a railway would induce people to send milk to Sydney instead of cream? Yes.
354. Do you think a connection between the South Coast line and Robertson would be feasible? Yes.
355. At what point? Albion Park.
356. Could a good grade be obtained from Albion Park? It would have to be tunnelled, but the distance is not great.
357. Do you think that would be of any assistance to the proposed line? Yes; because the minerals which will go to the smelting works would be taken off at Moss Vale, and that would save considerable carriage.
358. Do you think the producers in the Kangaroo Valley would be accommodated by a line from Bowral to Robertson? No.

Andrew Delfosse Badgery, J.P., auctioneer, Sutton Forest, sworn, and examined:—

359. *Chairman.*] Have you any statement to make concerning the proposed railway? I do not think you would be justified in constructing a line unless you considered the Kangaroo Valley, which is one of the best producing districts we have. The line which would catch that traffic would be the better of the two. I know each farm from Bowral to Kangaloon, and on the left of Kangaloon we soon run into poor country. A. D. Badgery, J.P. 4 Aug., 1900. 360.

A. D. Badgery, J.P.
4 Aug., 1900.

360. Which of the two routes intersects the more good land? I think the better land is on the Bowral route for a few miles; but I do not know where it is proposed to cross the Shipley Swamp. If it is done at the Sheepwash you will be a long distance from the Kangaroo Valley traffic. I think that traffic should come to the water-falls, and from there down to the head of Kelly's Creek.

361. You think the Kangaroo Valley traffic is sufficiently important to be a determining factor as to which line should be constructed? In my opinion it is. I may state with regard to fodder that we usually grow sufficient for our requirements. Of course, during the drought, we had to import it. My opinion is that the Wingecarribee Swamp will be a great bugbear to the route from Bowral. I understand that a number of the settlers in the Kangaroo Valley send a portion of their produce to Berry.

Thomas Oatley, Acting Road Superintendent, Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

T. Oatley.
4 Aug., 1900.

362. *Chairman*] Can you give a general idea of the character of the road from Moss Vale to Robertson? It is a good metalled road throughout.

363. Is it much affected by heavy weather? No. It has been metalled for some years now. The gradients are easy. Up to the 9 miles 38 chains point there is nothing steeper than 1 in 26; that is excluding the municipality.

364. How far does the municipality run out? Not quite 4 miles. Some of the gradients are as flat as 1 in 1,100. Between the 9 miles 38 chains and the 10 miles 36 chains the present grade is 1 in 17, and 1 in 15. A deviation was proposed, but it was opposed by the residents. Heavy cuttings and fillings would give a gradient of 1 in 20. The worst grade on the whole length is between the 10 miles 36 chains and the 10 miles 45 chains.

365. Can you give an idea of the annual cost of the up-keep of the road? It is 13 miles and 60 chains from one post office to the other, and we spend £520 per year upon it.

366. What is the general trend of the Kangaroo Valley traffic at present? It does not touch the Moss Vale to Robertson road until it junctions within the municipality.

367. Would the construction of a line from Moss Vale enable the producers to reach the railway more easily than they do at present? Yes.

368. At what point would they strike the old survey from Moss Vale to Robertson? At Myra Vale. There has been a trial survey from Myra Vale into Kangaroo Valley.

369. How far is Myra Vale from Moss Vale? Between 10 and 11 miles.

370. How much nearer would the construction of a Moss Vale-Robertson line put the Kangaroo Valley people to a railway;—could they get direct from the Kangaroo Valley to the nearest point of a Moss Vale-Robertson line? Yes. It would be a saving of 7 or 8 miles.

371. Would the road require much formation to enable them to get to the nearest point? No. There is a road formed right through from the Kangaroo Valley to the Moss Vale-Myra Vale road.

372. Then the construction of the line would be of considerable advantage to those people? Yes.

373. How do the roads between Moss Vale and Robertson compare with those between Bowral and Robertson? After you get 7 miles out from Bowral the gradients are bad. In fact, deviations are proposed all along through Kangaloon to Robertson.

374. *Mr. Levien*.] Can you say how much is spent on the Bowral to Robertson road per annum? £600.

Herbert Williamson Blease, Secretary, Moss Vale Committee, Bowral to Robertson Railway, Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

H. W. Blease.
4 Aug., 1900.

375. *Mr. Shepherd*.] How long have you been in Moss Vale? Three years.

376. Can you describe the country from Moss Vale to Robertson? The line would go through a valley winding round the foot of most of the hills, until it gets up to Myra Vale, where the other line from Bowral to Robertson is supposed to join. I know the portion of the line—from Bowral and Moss Vale to Myra Vale—that is where the junction is.

377. What is the character of the country? The land from Moss Vale to Myra Vale is first-class for market gardening. It is well sheltered. Along the Moss Vale route there are valleys in which there are large tracts of land, which are well sheltered, and on which vegetables can be grown both in winter and summer. The farmers, however, have not been growing winter vegetables, because there have been no means of getting them to the railway. The only road which they could follow is what is called the Falls Road, and in the winter it is impassable in places.

378. What sort of country is there between Bowral and Myra Vale? It is not so much sheltered as the other; it is more open and more fit for pasturage than for agriculture. There is only one part of it in which they seem to succeed in getting vegetables to grow, whereas there is land all the way through from Moss Vale which could be used for that purpose.

379. What extent of land is there in the spot you speak of on the Bowral route? I know of 70 or 80 acres in one lot which seem to be growing well. Several farmers on the Moss Vale route tell me they grow the vegetables, but it kills them to bring them in. It takes them a whole day to bring in half a ton. One gentleman, who stated that he would give his land free, told me that a short time ago.

380. What distance does he live from Moss Vale? Between 9 and 10 miles.

381. Taking the roads and the character of the country into consideration, what would be a fair distance from a railway station to successfully carry on vegetable gardening? Three to 4 miles. The supply of the Sydney market at this time of the year is principally from Victoria; but we can grow all the vegetables required for the Sydney market here. I know of one man who had 160 bushels of peas from an acre of land, and they are worth 5s. a bushel. All the small farmers would grow vegetables if they could get them to market. The same remark applies to cattle. We have large sales of cattle in Moss Vale, and the principal purchasers are the dealers, who give a low price. We cannot drive two or three cattle to a railway station.

382. Do you mean to say that you cannot drive cattle a distance of 10 or 12 miles? During some parts of the year it would take a whole day to do it.

383. We have had evidence to show that there are 80 acres of vegetables being successfully grown at Mary Vale, 4½ miles from Bowral;—have you anything to compare with that between Moss Vale and Myra Vale? I do not think there is a single place where they are growing such a quantity in one lot; but there is fully that, and more, along the route of the line. In a good season something like 60 tons a week go from Moss Vale.

384. Are there consignments every week throughout the year? I do not think so.

385. During what months are there consignments of vegetables to Sydney? They come in from December to about the end of May. Of course, they can grow them, and would bring them in, in the winter if they had the railway to help them.

386. Is fruit being grown to any extent between Moss Vale and Robertson? Yes; a great number of apples and cherries are grown, and they are beginning to cultivate strawberries, raspberries, and gooseberries.

387. Do you think the construction of a line to Robertson would largely increase the cultivation of land for industries of that kind? I am sure it would double it.

388. Is a large portion of the country laid down with artificial grasses? A portion is, at Robertson itself.

389. Would there be sufficient timber on the route for railway sleepers? Yes.

390. Do you think the estimated deficiency on a line from Moss Vale to Robertson would be wiped out within a reasonable time? Yes; I do not think the estimate you have, of eleven years ago, represents anything like what the traffic would be at present, and it would get better every year. Farms which I know of, which have been vacant for several years, have all been let during the last year. There is a general improvement all along.

391. What is your opinion about the Bowral to Robertson district? The proposed line goes through land where there is very little, if any, population until it comes to the junction of Myra Vale. I have not been here sufficiently long to tell what progress has been made there; but about Bowral itself there are more empty houses than in any place in which I have ever been. It has been over built. As far as Kangaloon is concerned, I do not think you would find one farmer out of twenty who would venture to bring his goods to the Sheepwash Station. It is the worst road in the neighbourhood. The natural outlook for the Kangaloon people is to Robertson.

392. If a line were constructed from Moss Vale to Robertson, would the Kangaloon and Robertson Park people use it? Not the Robertson Park people, but the Kangaloon people would use it at Robertson.

393. Have you any idea of the number of tourists leaving Bowral and Moss Vale for the various sights in the district? I am often at the Fitzroy Falls, and for one conveyance from Bowral you will see three from Moss Vale.

394. Do you think the number of visitors to these places would be largely increased if a railway were constructed? I am sure it would. It is very expensive to go to them by coach.

395. Then you think the passenger traffic may be looked upon as a fair asset for a railway? A very large one. You have to pay 15s. to £1 for a conveyance to Fitzroy Falls, and it is a heavy tax on a great number of people.

396. What is your opinion about connection with the South Coast line from Robertson? I think it would eventually be one of the best paying lines in the country. It would save the carriage of all the fluxing stone which will go right through to Dapto.

397. Where do you think the connection ought to be made? Somewhere near Albion Park.

398. Have you consulted with many people with regard to the line? Yes.

399. What do you think the feeling is in regard to contributing land gratuitously for the proposed construction of a line? There would be few, if any, opposed to it.

400. Do you think it would be fair to ask those who are benefited by a line to guarantee, not the whole lot, but a portion of the loss—say one-half? I do not think it would be fair to put it in that way; but I think it would be fair to say to the people that they must pay 10 to 20 per cent. on the amount of the freight they pay, in case there is a deficiency at the end of twelve months. I do not see why there should be any objection to that as long as they save money by it.

401. *Chairman.*] Do you think the ore-carrying aspect of the question is of sufficient importance to warrant the district of Robertson being left some 3 or 4 miles to the south of any proposed connection with the South Coast line, or do you think the main element to be considered is the development of the district? I think the main element to be considered is the development of the district.

Henry Bailey, railway station-master, Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

402. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided at Moss Vale? Nine years. Assuming that it is desirable to build a railway, the evidence I desire to give is simply as to the rival claims of Moss Vale as against Bowral, from a junction point of view.

403. Do you favour a connection with Moss Vale? Yes. One of the reasons is, that time is money now-a-days, and every passenger travelling from Robertson to the southward, or from the south to Robertson, would save thirty-five to forty minutes' journey by travelling *via* Moss Vale as against Bowral. That is because the journey from Moss Vale to Bowral occupies fifteen minutes, and all the trains stay at Moss Vale from twenty to twenty-five minutes for refreshments, making thirty-five to forty minutes difference between Moss Vale and Bowral.

404. How would that apply to the people coming up from Sydney when the Bowral route would be 3 miles shorter? They would not have the additional journey of from twelve to fifteen minutes from Bowral to Moss Vale, and they would not be handicapped with the twenty to twenty-five minutes' wait for refreshments which the up-passengers experience.

405. What amount of cabbages come to Moss Vale station to be sent away? The season lasts from three to four months, and during that time we are loading from 40 to 50 tons per week. We do not receive many peas. The two principal items of traffic in connection with the Robertson-Burrawang-Myra Vale district are cabbages, cauliflowers, butter, and cream.

406. It has been stated that if a line be constructed through this dairying district, people will be able to send milk to Sydney? I think it is purely a matter of choice with the producer as to whether he prefers to send his produce in as milk or butter. Everything depends on the state of the market.

407. Can you state where the greater number of cabbages and cauliflowers come from? The neighbourhood of Burrawang and Myra Vale contribute the larger portion. There are several reasons why the junction should be at Moss Vale. The Railway Commissioners have ample land here for the purpose, and that I do not think they have at Bowral. We have about 17 acres of land available for junction purposes, for making the necessary connections, and sheds. In establishing a junction it means the building

H. W. Blease.

4 Aug., 1900.

H. Bailey.

4 Aug., 1900.

H. Bailey. building of conveniences for watering engines, turning engines, and stabling stock and engines, and all that we have at Moss Vale. We have an abundant water supply, with the necessary connections for watering ten or a dozen engines, if necessary. In addition, we also have a turn-table, which is absolutely necessary. It is contrary to all railway law to run engines tender first. If you make a connection at Bowral you must incur a large expenditure for turn-tables and water, or you must have a fixed annual expenditure by running the engines to Moss Vale for turning purposes, which means a waste run of 10 or 12 miles.

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408. *Mr. Shepherd.*] It has been stated that there is an average of 40 tons of cabbage per week for the whole year round sent to Sydney from Moss Vale? That is incorrect. It is correct, so far as the season is concerned, which lasts three or four months. The season might extend over that period; but it would not maintain that average.

409. What amount of produce comes from the Moss Vale station from Kangaroo Valley? There is a large traffic. Teams travel to and fro twice a week, and carry flour and other produce. I do not think this traffic would work to Bowral station if the junction were there instead of at Moss Vale.

John Cullen, farmer, Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

J. Cullen. 410. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your farm from Moss Vale? Four miles; close to the route between Moss Vale and Robertson.

4 Aug., 1900. 411. What is the extent of your farm? About 1,100 acres. I carry it on as a dairy farm. I also cultivate a little. On one occasion I cultivated 80 acres, and if I had facilities for taking my produce to market I would cultivate more.

412. How long have you had your farm? Some of it for seven years, and other portions for three years.

413. Is the whole of it improved? Yes; to a certain extent. About 50 acres of it have been laid down with artificial grasses, and it carries at present about 150 head of cattle. I have about 300 acres fit for cultivation.

414. What advantage would you derive from the construction of a railway from Moss Vale to Robertson? It is impossible for me to say, because I would cultivate about three times as much as I have been doing.

415. What is a fair distance for a farmer to carry produce to a railway station? Two or 3 miles; so long as he can go there and back in one day. I consider that a line from Moss Vale would pay better than a line from Bowral to Robertson, and would be cheaper to construct.

416. Is the land better from Moss Vale to the Sheepwash than it is from Bowral to the Sheepwash? I think so.

417. Upon which route is most cultivation being carried on? Between Moss Vale and Robertson.

John Alexander Badgery, grazier, near Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

J. A. Badgery. 418. *Chairman.*] Where is your land situated? About 7 miles south of Moss Vale.

4 Aug., 1900. 419. Can you say that the district towards Robertson has been retarded in its development by want of railway communication? I think so. If people had a railway to their doors it would enable them to produce more.

420. What is your opinion of the capabilities of the district? A great deal of it is excellent land. I look upon it as a potato-growing and dairying country. It is not a wheat-growing country.

421. Can you offer any opinion as to the respective merits of the rival routes? I do not think there is any doubt that the route from Moss Vale is the more desirable. It passes through better country, and it would tap the Kangaroo Valley.

422. Do you think the Kangaroo Valley is of sufficient importance to justify the construction of a railway, taking into consideration other facts? It would greatly assist in making the line pay.

423. Do you think there is a reasonable prospect of the large annual deficiency which would be incurred by constructing a line from Moss Vale to Robertson being overcome in a few years? I think there is.

424. The proposed line from Bowral to Robertson would, according to the Railway Commissioners, serve a larger area of country and more people than would the Moss Vale connection? I do not think it would.

425. Would the people of East and West Kangaroo be able to avail themselves of a railway from Moss Vale to Robertson? I hardly think so. They could tap the railway nearer than by coming to Bowral, but it would hardly serve them—no more than going out from Bowral would serve the Kangaroo Valley people.

Henry William Taylor, Mayor, Moss Vale, sworn, and examined:—

H. W. Taylor. 426. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in the Moss Vale district? Sixty-two years.

4 Aug., 1900. 427. Have you any statement to make as to the comparative merits of the two lines under consideration? I may mention that the Bowral to Robertson line will run for 2 miles in touch with the main line into Burradoo. The southern end of this district—out to Yarrunga and the Kangaroo Valley River—is a large and important district, trade of which would come upon the Moss Vale line. A great portion of the produce is sold for what it will fetch. I have bought potatoes at 30s. a ton, because the people cannot afford to bring them in and send them to Sydney.

428. How far south would that district extend from the line? It goes through Yarrunga to the junction of the Kangaroo River, and what I might call the Bundanoon Creek. There is an enormous junk of land there—some hundreds of thousands of acres—the greater portion of which is Government land. It is heavily timbered, and is full of iron deposits and kerosene shale.

429. Would the whole of the country be within 20 miles of the proposed Moss Vale connection? It would be within less. I do not think it is more than 12 to 14 miles across.

430. Can you say why it has not been taken up and developed? The reason the coal has not been taken up is because there have been no means of transit. I should like to know the ultimate intention of the Railway Commissioners as to carrying the line through to the South Coast. A lot of produce is brought to the Goulburn district, which comes here and goes out to the Wingecarribee district.

431. Do you think there is as much land suitable for cabbage cultivation along the Moss Vale-Robertson route, as along the Bowral-Robertson route? Yes. There is also an amount of timber suitable for sleepers.

sleepers. If the line goes from Moss Vale there will be a fair traffic to the Waterfalls. At the southern end of this district there are a number of small selectors who are trying to improve their holdings, and it is only reasonable and fair that they should be encouraged. I believe that if the line be constructed it will eventually pay. There are large deposits of coal about the Waterfalls, and there is any amount of timber.

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432. Do you think there are more selectors upon the land now than there have been during recent years? The land is always being taken up.

433. With regard to the connection with the South Coast line, if, as we are informed, it is impossible to get past Robertson to the South Coast line, would you prefer to see a line starting from Moss Vale or Bowral, leaving Robertson entirely out? No; I think Robertson has a prior claim.

434. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think the farmers on a line from Moss Vale to Robertson would give up a portion of their land free for the purpose of railway construction? I believe the greater number between Moss Vale and Myra Vale would give it free, but I do not think they will do so between Myra Vale and Robertson. Most of the selectors in the Wingecarribee district have taken up their land under the old Robertson Act, and they have only paid 5s. an acre on it; therefore, the cost of resumption is not likely to be large. If the Government resume the land they will only have to pay the 5s. per acre, and the value of the improvements.

435. Do you think it is likely that those who will be benefited by the line will guarantee a portion of the loss? The difficulty can be got over by the enforcement of differential rates.

MONDAY, 6 AUGUST, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Court-house, Robertson, at 10 30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESEY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

William Rutter Hindmarsh, junr., farmer, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

436. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in the district? Eighteen years.

437. Can you give any idea of the extent of territory in the Robertson district, and the amount of products to be derived from it in case the railway is extended to Robertson? We have 50,000 acres of rich chocolate soil, besides second and third class lands. That includes from the edge of the mountain to the other side of Burrawang.

W. R.
Hindmarsh,
junr.
6 Aug., 1900.

438. What is the average carrying capacity of the best land in the district which the railway would serve? There are over 9,000 milk cows, and between 2,000 and 3,000 ordinary cattle.

439. How many factories are there in the district from which you draw these statistics? Eight.

440. Can you give a general idea of the amount of dairy produce sent from that district? In 1896, 1,250,000 lb. of butter were made.

441. It has been stated that the construction of the railway would alter the character of the dairying trade in this way: that where it does not pay to send milk to Sydney it would pay if you had a railway? I agree with that statement. The factories and private dairymen would send milk. They produce 3,000,000 gallons a year, and if a quarter of that went to Sydney it would amount to an annual income of £2,425 to the railway. This is a cool climate, and the milk would keep well. The cattle in this district are healthier than those on the coast, from which Sydney at present gets its supply.

442. What is the amount of cultivation carried on in the area to which you refer? There are over 3,000 acres under crop. The usual crops at present are grown for the maintenance of the cattle—such as broadcast corn, oats, and potatoes. I do not think any district in the Colony can grow better potatoes than this. The freights, however, are so heavy that it does not pay to send them to Sydney; in fact, they are often given to the cows and pigs.

443. What is the freight by road from Robertson to Bowral for such produce? From Robertson to Moss Vale the charge is 10s. to 15s. a ton.

444. Does that amount of freight debar cultivators from going in for that class of crop? Yes. If a man had a crop of 5 to 6 tons of potatoes to the acre, and he only had to pay 5s. a ton for freight, it would mean a profit—about 25s. to the acre.

445. Are there any disadvantages under which you labour on account of the absence of a railway? Yes. I think the passenger traffic labours under disadvantages. There are no regular conveyances on the road from Moss Vale or Bowral. Another industry of the district is the cabbage-growing industry, which has suffered very much from the want of facilities to get to market. At present we have in the district over 100 acres under cabbages, and if we had facilities for getting to market that would be doubled. There is any amount of land which is not used for growing potatoes which would grow cabbages successfully.

446. How far do you think a man should be from a railway in order to successfully carry out that kind of cultivation? If he is 3 or 4 miles away he can do it successfully.

447. Is it not a crop which yields very heavily? Yes. Thirty tons is considered a fair crop. If we had 200 acres under cabbages they would yield 6,000 tons a year, which is a low estimate. Some people consider we would have 300 acres under cultivation within twelve months of the railway being constructed.

448. Would freight as high as 10s. a ton be a serious handicap as far as the successful growing of cabbages is concerned? I think it would. If we had to pay 5s. instead of 10s. it would mean a difference of £7 10s. per acre.

449. What is the average price per ton for cabbages? They generally run from 3s. to 7s. 6d. a dozen. One man, a few miles from Robertson, has made over £300 off 1 acre; but that year he got as much

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junr.
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as 7s. 6d. a dozen for his cabbages. At 1s. a dozen an acre will bring £45 7s. 6d. I reckon that if we were allowed credit for what we should put upon the main line, the cabbage industry would contribute to the railway revenue £2,000 per annum.

450. Is the road from Bowral to Robertson a good one? Yes.

451. We have been informed that the construction of a railway will stimulate the calf industry, —what are the conditions which prevent you getting calves to market now? If calves have to travel 14 miles on a hard metalled road, they will become footsore before coming to the train, and they will scarcely be able to stand when trucked. If they could be put into trucks here they would go down fresh. As it is, a great number of calves are killed.

452. What number of calves would you get away per annum if the railway were extended? About 50 per cent., or 4,000 calves; —that is, allowing 50 per cent. to be destroyed or to die.

453. Do you think that if a railway were constructed to Robertson the whole of the trade which now goes to Moss Vale or Shellharbour would come over that railway? I think it would. A great deal has been made of the Shellharbour route by the Railway Commissioners; but during the last few months it has been almost impossible to get up there at all with a load.

454. What is your opinion of this statement by Mr. Harper, the Chief Traffic Manager:—

Heavy loading, such as sugar, iron, wire, &c., can be landed at Robertson, *via* Shellharbour, for 30s. per ton, that being 10s. the steamer freight and 20s. the road freight. The same class of loading from Sydney to Bowral would cost 29s. 7d. per ton in truck loads, and in smaller quantities 36s. 5d. per ton. In the case of second and third-class goods, the saving in adopting the coastal route reaching as high as 20s. per ton, or 35 per cent.

From that he infers that even if you had a railway to Robertson, in second and third-class goods the coastal route would successfully compete with it? I do not think it. We get regular rains, and the roads become so bad that it is impossible for the stuff to come up. I know that on one occasion there was some stuff there, which came from Sydney, and it had to be sold there, because it could not be brought here.

455. Then you think that it is only in dry seasons that the coastal route would successfully compete with the proposed railway? That is all.

456. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the distance to the edge of the mountain? Two and a half miles.

457. Is it all good land to the edge of the mountain? Yes.

458. What extent of land have you on the other side of the proposed line which you think the line would serve? It extends to Kangaloon on the north side, and to the parish of Yarrawa on the southern side.

459. What weight could you put on a dray, if you were sending goods to Moss Vale? From 1 ton to 1½ ton on a two-horse dray.

460. Would it not pay you better to get a good waggon which would carry 5 to 6 tons? The carriers here have waggons.

461. How long does it take to carry a load from here and get back again? Eight or nine hours. We do it in a day.

462. If you had a waggon with four horses, and could carry about 4 tons, would it cost you 12s. or 14s. for freight? Every farmer cannot keep the waggons and the horses. They must employ someone to do the work for them.

463. Twelve shillings to 15s. a ton on a splendid road of 14 miles, such as you have, seems to be a high rate, because in some of the country districts the carriage is only 12s. to 15s. per ton for a distance of 40 to 50 miles? I can only say that I heard a carrier state the other day that if anyone could do it for less, they could have his carrying from Robertson to Moss Vale.

464. How do you pack the cabbages? They are packed on a dray with a frame.

465. What kind of winter food do you grow? Oats and hay, and we go in for ensilage.

466. Have you a good deal of country laid down under artificial grasses? Yes; the last few years, however, have made the country look very bad, on account of the drought and the plague of grasshoppers we have had.

467. Is there much pasture in the winter? Yes; the farmers generally use the broadcast corn in the autumn, and save the paddocks for the winter.

468. Is cabbage the principal crop here? It is, as far as the market gardeners are concerned. They also send to market, cauliflowers, turnips, and green peas.

469. You say that 30 tons to the acre is a fair crop? Yes; and land at the present time is bringing £2 an acre for cabbage-growing purposes.

470. Have you discussed the question of the construction of the railway with the farmers of the district? Yes.

471. What is their opinion as to giving the land through which the line will pass? I think some would give it free, and there is an inclination amongst the people of the district to subscribe and help to pay those who would not give it free.

472. Do you think it is likely that within a reasonable time the estimated loss on the line will be made up? Yes; from three industries alone—milk, cabbages, and potatoes. I am sure they would make it a paying line within two years.

473. In the face of that, do you think that persons who would be served by the railway would be willing to guarantee the Government, not against the total loss, but against a portion of the deficiency, until the line became self-supporting? I am not in a position to say that, but the people are willing to pay differential rates.

474. That would amount to something like the same thing:—you say that you pay now from 10s. to 15s. a ton for carriage;—supposing the railway carried your goods at the rate of 5s. a ton, there would be a saving at once of, say, 6s. a ton;—would it not be to the advantage of the persons interested to guarantee to the extent of 3s. a ton? Yes; I think they would be willing to do that.

475. Do you think it would be a fair and reasonable thing to ask? Yes.

476. *Chairman.*] Have you any further information? Yes. I believe that if a quarter of the milk produced were sent to Sydney, it would give an annual revenue to the railway of £1,212 10s. on the line from Bowral to Robertson, and apart from that, there would be the addition of traffic which would go over the main line.

477. *Mr. Levien.*] Which would be the best connection for you—Moss Vale or Bowral? That is a matter which we would leave in the hands of the Government. We have no particular feeling one way or the other.

other. I may mention that the tourist traffic would be very great. During the holidays we always have a fair number of tourists in the district. Someone has stated that 3,000 pigs would be carried by the railway. In reality, there would be over 20,000 store pigs brought here by train, and the fat pigs would go out of the district by rail. They are generally brought in from the southern districts by train.

W. R.
Hindmarsh,
junr.
6 Aug., 1900.

478. *Chairman.*] How do you arrive at the number of 20,000 pigs? From personal experience; we usually fatten that number. Another matter which has been overlooked is the manure which will be required for the growing of cabbages. No matter how good the ground is, they require manure to force them. For that purpose 12 cwt. manure is required to the acre, which would be a large item, so far as railway freight is concerned. It would bring in a revenue of £240 to £250 a year. I may state that the average rainfall from 1890 to 1895 was 76 inches, so that we do not send a large amount of produce one year and nothing the next year. It is only the drought we have had during the last three or four years which has stopped produce to any extent for the last thirty years.

479. Leaving out of consideration the recent drought, do you consider the district as being uniformly progressive for some years? Yes.

480. Do you think it has a capacity for still further progress? Yes. Another matter to which I wish to refer has reference to chrome ore. There is a large deposit here which could be worked.

481. Where is it? Near the head of the Kangaroo River. It was stated in Sydney by the Railway Commissioners that the land is no good for growing potatoes or crops unless it is manured; but that is a mistake altogether.

482. Will the land stand potato-growing for successive seasons without becoming exhausted? Yes. After growing potatoes for a year or two it could be laid down under grass, and then brought under cultivation again for two or three years.

James Lackey, market gardener, Burrawang, sworn, and examined:—

483. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far is your property from Robertson? Four miles.

484. In what direction? In the direction of Burrawang.

485. What is the extent of your property? Fifty-one acres.

486. How long have you resided there? Thirteen years.

487. Have you been cultivating vegetables all the time? Yes; with the exception of eighteen months, when I was out of the district.

488. What is your average production per acre? In a good season, about 30 tons of cabbages to the acre. Upon 4 acres, during one particular season, I grew 120 tons; but that was an exceptionally good crop. I also grow peas and fruit.

489. Do you find yourself handicapped by the distance you have to send your produce to the railway? I have to pay 10s. per ton for all I send from Burrawang to Moss Vale, and when I started first I paid 15s. per ton. During the last eleven years I have never paid more nor less than 10s. for freight from Burrawang to Moss Vale—a distance of about 10 miles.

490. Do you use your own conveyance? No; but I draw some of my produce.

491. Do you find that the vegetables get injured in transit? Not a great deal.

492. Do you send them to an agent in Sydney? No; I sell them myself, principally.

493. Do you grow any other produce? Yes; potatoes, peas, and cauliflowers.

494. What average of potatoes do you get to the acre? About 5 tons is a good average.

495. What description of fruit do you grow? Strawberries, gooseberries, nectarines, and apples.

496. Do you find that the gooseberries and strawberries pay you well? Yes. With regard to the use of crates for cabbages, I may state that the cabbages which come from Melbourne by rail do not come in crates. They only come in crates by steamer. You cannot get the crates into the trucks.

497. Do you not think that crates would save the vegetables from being knocked about? No; I think they go better as they are.

498. Do you wish to add anything to the evidence of Mr. Hindmarsh? I was the first to start the cabbage-growing industry in this district. I started in a very small way, sending from 20 to 30 tons away during the first year. This year I should think that between Moss Vale and Bowral nearly 2,000 tons have been sent away. In view of the heavy cartage we have to pay for the stuff which is sent to Moss Vale and Bowral, I should think that, with the construction of the railway, the production would increase to double that.

499. Do you find that in a bad season you get a better price than you do in a good season? Yes.

500. And, in a great measure, that will make up for the deficiency in crop? It depends. If you have high and dry ground, which you cannot water, of course you lose your crop. If you are on flat ground you can get a good crop even in a bad season.

501. What variety of cabbage do you chiefly grow? We call it the "Succession" cabbage. We do not grow any of the "Savoy," and very little of the "St. John's Day." I am of opinion that if the railway were constructed, in a short time, instead of there being a deficiency, it would pay good interest on the money expended. We could get our stuff to market fresher, and it would not be knocked about so much. I do not think there are any of the growers who would not be satisfied to pay 6s. per ton carriage for a short line from Robertson, to tap the trunk line at any place the Government think fit.

502. What is a fair distance from the railway station to carry on your industry successfully? Three to 4 miles. We could go twice a day then.

503. Could you not carry on your industry successfully at a greater distance than 3 or 4 miles from the railway? I have been fairly successful up to the present, but with a railway I would be able to make a little more.

504. *Chairman.*] What is the cost of production of cabbages on good flats;—what would it cost you to prepare the land, put in a crop, and take it off? £10 per acre; that would include every charge until you started to cut the crop off. Then there is the cutting, which would be about £5 per acre.

505. Then, £15 per acre would include every charge but the road carriage? Yes.

506. What is a fair price to get for your cabbages? £4 per ton, or £60 an acre.

507. At present you pay 10s. per ton for carriage? Yes.

508. At 15 tons to the acre, that means £7 per ton per acre for carriage? Yes.

J. Lackey.
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- J. Lackey. 509. Are there any other charges? There is the Government charge of 9s. 8d. per ton, and 2s. 6d. for the loading from Darling Harbour to the market. There is also 1s. 6d. for market dues. That means about £33 an acre, which leaves a net profit of £27 per acre.
- 6 Aug., 1900. 510. Out of a total charge of £33 per acre there is a cost of £7 10s. for road carriage? Yes.
511. Do you think that, which is not a quarter of the cost of growing the cabbages, is a serious handicap to the development of the industry in the district? It would be very serious, because the industry has increased from 30 tons to about 2,000 tons. I think, however, that if we had the railway the industry would increase still more.
512. If you had a railway and the charge for freight was brought down to, say, £3 10s., that would be a reduction of 10 per cent. on the total cost;—do you think that that would greatly stimulate the development of the industry in the district? I think it would.
513. And it would make your profit £30 per acre, instead of £27 per acre? Yes.
514. Do you regard £27 per acre as a fair profit to make off land? Yes.
515. Do you not think that with a profit of £27 per acre every available acre would be put in, and that other gardeners would take up the land? I think they would.
516. Then you do not think the absence of a railway is seriously interfering with the development of the district, as far as that phase of the matter is concerned? I cannot say that it is, because it is increasing every year; but if we had a railway it would of course double. Again, it would benefit the main trunk line as well.
517. *Mr. Levien.*] What is the general feeling with regard to giving the land free for railway purposes? I cannot say; but if it were to come through my land I should be glad to give it free.
518. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you plough or dig your land? I plough it. When we put the plants in we put the manure in and dig it with a fork.

William White, butcher, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

- W. White. 519. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided in Robertson? Thirty years.
- 6 Aug., 1900. 520. Can you give us a general idea of the progress of the district during the period of your residence? During the last two years the district has been stationary; I might say it has been going back. That has been largely due to the bad seasons.
521. Previous to that, was the progress of the district fairly uniform from year to year? Yes.
522. Do you think the district has arrived at such a stage when its further progress is likely to be retarded unless it has a railway? Yes.
523. Can you give us an idea of the development which the construction of a railway is likely to bring about? Of course, the farmers would be advantaged to a great extent by the decreased cost of carriage. Their produce would be largely increased if they had a direct and speedy way of getting to market.
524. Would much live stock be sent from the district to Sydney? A large number of pigs and calves would go.
525. Do you think 14 miles is too far to drive them now? Yes.
526. What is done now with the calves bred in the district which are not kept for dairying purposes? They go in various ways. Some of the farmers give them away.
527. Can you say what amount of live stock would be trucked at Robertson if there were a railway to it? I should say that at least 1,000 calves and 2,000 or 3,000 pigs would be trucked per annum.
528. Can you give any evidence with regard to the development of the dairying industry consequent upon the construction of the proposed railway? It largely depends upon the success of the producers in being able to get their milk away.
529. Do you think it would be more profitable for them to send away at least part of their milk than it would be to have the whole of it converted into butter? Yes. It would be better to have a good trade in milk than to depend upon the vicarious market in butter.
530. Can you state what is the general destination of the butter from this district? A large quantity of it is exported, and there is a large consumption in Sydney.
531. Can you offer any opinion as to the possibility of the railway paying? I think the estimated loss is likely to be made up within a reasonable time after the construction of the railway.
532. Is any other industry likely to be carried on in the district which cannot at present be carried on on account of the absence of a railway? I believe that other industries would be carried on. For instance, I think there would be a large fruit trade in the district. I feel certain that people can afford to pay 50 per cent. on the trunk line rates for the privilege of this line of railway, and then they would largely benefit themselves.
533. The deficiency is calculated on local rates;—do you think they could pay higher than the ordinary local rates? I think they could pay 50 per cent. more than they do.
534. Do you think the producers of this district would be prepared to do as they are doing in the case of the Rock to Green's Gully railway—to pay a small amount per annum, based on the land-tax, to make up the deficiency on the railway? I believe a great many would, but some people are not satisfied unless they get things for nothing.
535. How many teams are engaged per annum in bringing up the traffic from Shellharbour? Only one.
536. What amount does it carry per month? I could not say—perhaps a ton.
537. You think, then, that the fears of the Railway Commissioners with respect to that railway are unfounded? They need not be the least afraid of it.

Joseph Scott Armstrong, farmer and milk-tester, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

- J. S. Armstrong. 538. *Mr. Levien.*] How far do you live from Robertson? Six miles; I live on the Upper Kangaroo River.
- 6 Aug., 1900. 539. Do you wish to make any statements? Yes. With regard to the upper portion of the Kangaroo Valley, I may state that a larger traffic would in the future be obtained from there than has been taken into account, because of the construction of a new road. Many people in the Valley think it would be more convenient to them to get a railway from the Nowra side; but if they do not get it, Robertson or Myra Vale would be the best outlet for the whole of that district, and that has not been taken into account.

540. Has the population increased of late? No; but since the former inquiry was held we have got a road graded 1 in 20. There is a good deal of land on the upper Kangaroo River which is under cultivation, and if we had a railway it would be greatly increased.

541. Do you know anything about the market gardening business which is likely to be done in that district? I think it is largely increasing. There must be 100 acres, if not more, under cultivation. Some people, however, have had to give up the industry on account of the length of carriage.

542. I suppose the statements you have heard to-day as to the cost of carriage are correct? Yes. It is only fair to state that Mr. Lackey has good roads from his place, whereas others have bad roads, which require bullock teams.

543. Do you think the construction of a railway would develop the market gardening industry? Yes; I am sure of it?

544. What business do you carry on? That of milk testing at the factories, and I have a farm of 100 acres in the Kangaroo Valley. I have from 8 to 10 acres under maize and green food for cattle. The soil is good for maize growing.

545. Have the people in the district in which you live been retarded in carrying out their industries on account of want of good roads? Yes. If the railway were constructed it would be worth our while to make roads to it ourselves.

546. Are any Crown lands available? Yes. 2,000 acres could be selected about the edge of the mountain, and if there were conveniences for getting goods away they would be selected.

547. What is the quality of the land to which you are referring? Some of it is the very best.

548. Is it fit for agriculture? The greater part of that of which I speak is rocky, but it could not be better for grazing cattle.

549. Do you think the estimated loss on the proposed railway is likely to be made up? I think the moment the line is taken in hand more land will be put under cultivation, and I also think there will be nothing like the estimated deficiency. I know of many lots of cabbages which have been lost on account of the difficulty of getting teams.

550. Do you think the people would be willing to contribute towards the loss on the line? I think they would pay extra charges to make up any loss.

551. Do you think they would be likely to sign a bond to that effect? I believe the bulk of the people would be quite willing to do anything towards assisting to make the line pay.

552. *Chairman.*] You have stated that you think the estimate of revenue does not include the traffic to be drawn from the Kangaroo Valley? Yes.

553. What population would be served by the proposed line in the upper end of the Valley? The part which has been spoken of has about forty farms—on the Upper Kangaroo River.

554. Are you aware that the estimate includes the traffic from 1,000 people from the Kangaroo Valley? Those who made the estimate must have taken in part of the township.

555. What part of the proposed line would the Kangaroo Valley people strike? The people on the upper part would strike Robertson; but about Barrengarry they would strike Myra Vale better.

556. Could we expect that traffic now if there were a fair road into Myra Vale? Yes; if the new road which has been graded is constructed. As it is, a good deal of the traffic goes over Cambewarra, but it would come to Myra Vale if the road were constructed.

557. Is there any special quality in the artificial grasses grown here which makes the butter of high quality? The grasses here make a rich milk and butter yield, but I do not think there is anything special in them. I have heard that the milk from the mountains is very much preferred for consumption. Many doctors consider it advantageous to use it, and I think it would be very much sought after.

558. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are there many visitors in the district during the summer months? Yes; a stream of visitors goes through in summer.

559. What are the principal places which they visit? The Fitzroy Falls. The Belmore Falls, however, are considered to be more attractive. Then there are the Carrington Falls, the Gerrigong Falls, and the Macquarie Falls, which lie close to Robertson—all within a radius of 6 or 7 miles. I have been to those places with visitors, who say that there is nothing equal to them on the Blue Mountains. There is a greater variety of foliage here, and between Robertson and my residence there are many falls which have not yet been opened out which would prove a great attraction. I heard of one yesterday, within half a mile of my residence, which I am told is about 200 feet high. I could enumerate twenty or thirty falls which are equally as attractive as the Fitzroy Falls.

560. How far is it from Robertson to the Macquarie Mountain? Five miles.

561. Is there a fairly good road? Yes.

562. Do you think the number of visitors would be largely increased by railway communication? Yes.

563. Do you think the railway would be likely to derive considerable revenue in that respect? Yes; but that might take up a little time.

564. Are you aware of what the superiority of the mountain milk over the low-land milk is? I think it is due to the amount of ozone there is in the air.

565. Does the milk from this district bring a higher price in Sydney than that from the low lands? I cannot say that it does; but our cattle are more healthy, and there is less tuberculosis amongst them here.

William Graham, storekeeper, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

566. *Chairman.*] How long have you resided at Robertson? Fourteen years.

567. Can you give us an idea of the amount of goods likely to come into this district along the proposed railway, and your opinion of the suggested competition from Shellharbour along the coast? I do not think the competition would mean anything at all, as far as I am concerned. Goods have been brought to me that way; but, as a rule, you can get them cheaper the other way. If the railway were extended to Robertson there would be no possibility of competition from the coast.

568. How many storekeepers are there in Robertson? Two.

569. What tonnage of goods do you receive per annum? About 500 tons.

570. Are they mainly brought from Sydney? Yes.

J. S.
Armstrong.
6 Aug., 1900.

W. Graham.
6 Aug., 1900.

James Alcorn, dairy-farmer, East Kangaloon, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Alcorn. 571. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you resided in the district? Since 1862.
 6 Aug., 1900. 572. How far is East Kangaloon from Robertson? A little over 3 miles.
 573. What is the extent of your holding? A little over 200 acres.
 574. And you carry on dairy-farming? Yes, and potato-growing. I have 3 acres under potatoes.
 575. What is your average return from those 3 acres? Five to 7 tons; but I do not use manure.
 576. How many cows have you on your run? Seventy.
 577. Is much of your farm laid down under artificial grasses? Yes, over 150 acres, which are under cocksfoot, rye-grass, and a little prairie grass.
 578. Do you grow crops for winter use? Yes; oats and barley.
 579. What effect will the construction of the proposed line have upon industries generally in this district? I think there will be a great increase in the potato and cabbage growing industries. There are many portions which are not of much use as grazing land, which would grow cabbages. If we had greater facilities for getting produce to market the cabbage industry would increase very largely. The great difficulty is to get the crops away, especially in wet seasons.
 580. Do you feel handicapped by the difficulty experienced in getting to a railway station? Not at present, because the milk goes to the factory; but during the recent bad seasons we have experienced a difficulty in getting food, such as bran, &c., for the cattle.
 581. Do you agree in the main with the evidence which has already been given? Yes.

John Thomas Hayter, farmer, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

- J. T. Hayter. 582. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How many years have you resided in the district? Thirty-four.
 6 Aug., 1900. 583. What is the extent of your holding? 320 acres.
 584. Are you carrying on dairy-farming? Yes; dairy-farming and agriculture. I also have a small orchard, in which I grow gooseberries, currants, strawberries, and raspberries.
 585. Do you find the Hobart market antagonistic to your interests? Yes, sometimes.
 586. Have you any difficulty in getting strawberries or raspberries to market? You cannot get them to market in good condition when the roads are rough, and where I am living off the main road they are very rough.
 587. How far are you from the main road? Three-quarters of a mile, and it is a very bad road.
 588. Do your crops pay you pretty well? Yes.
 589. What average do you get per acre for gooseberries? I could not say; but I get bushels off the land I cultivate.
 590. Do you get many strawberries? Not many. Some kinds do not bear well.
 591. What kind of gooseberry are you cultivating? The large green kind and the red gooseberry. I am also growing potatoes, and I get an average of about 6 tons per acre, without manuring.
 592. Do you find the want of a railway a drawback? Yes. I milk 109 cows, and about a quarter of the calves are killed as soon as they are dropped, because there are no means of getting them to Moss Vale.
 593. Would you go in more extensively for cultivation if the railway were handier? Yes. I have a lot of land in Yarrunga suitable for cabbage-growing.
 594. What extent of ground in the district is under cultivation for cabbage-growing? Between Robertson and Robertson Park there must be fully 130 acres.
 595. Do you know whether many of the settlers are going in for gooseberry, raspberry, and strawberry growing? I do not think that many of them are.
 596. Do you think that that industry would be largely increased if the proposed railway were constructed? I think it would.
 597. Do you usually pack your strawberries into small boxes? Yes.
 598. Can you get your raspberries carried to market without trouble? Yes; but sometimes they get very much bruised.
 599. Have you any information to add to that which you have already given? I do not think the proposed line would cost as much as has been estimated. There is plenty of clay in the district which would make the bricks which would be required. We also have blue-metal and timber. Of course, we do not want elaborate railway stations. I have heard the evidence of the former witnesses, and I fully agree with it.*

John Bernhard Wilson, Medical Practitioner, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

- J. B. Wilson. 600. *Chairman.*] Can you give any information concerning the Robertson district as a health resort? I consider it is an exceptionally healthy district. I have been here for nearly three and a half years, and there has never been any epidemic of fever.
 6 Aug., 1900. 601. Is it a district which, with railway facilities, is likely to attract a considerable number of persons in search of health? Yes.
 602. Does it offer advantages over other places already connected by rail? The summer climate is an exceptionally good one for lung diseases.
 603. Do people come here now on that account, or are they prohibited by the absence of a railway? I think the absence of a railway prevents them coming. It is a good climate for such people in the summer, and I am sure they would come if we had a railway.
 604. Can visitors to this district obtain good accommodation? There is plenty of accommodation, and, in the event of a railway being constructed, I believe sanatoriums would be built, at which people would stay exclusively for the benefit of their health.
 605. Is it a good district for a doctor? It is the worst I have ever been in.

Robert Wilson Moses, dairy-farmer, Myra Vale, sworn, and examined:—

- R. W. Moses. 606. *Chairman.*] How long have you been in the district? Since the settlement of it in 1862.
 6 Aug., 1900. 607. How far is Myra Vale from Robertson? A little over 5 miles.
 608. How far is it from Bowral? About 14 miles. 609.

* NOTE (on revision):—I wish to add that, if the proposed railway were constructed, tons of blackberries would be sent away from the district.

609. What is the size of your holding? 150 acres. R. W. Moses.
610. What is the average carrying capacity of the Myra Vale district? About a beast to 3 acres. 6 Aug., 1900.
611. Have your operations as a dairy-farmer been handicapped by reason of your distance from a railway? 6 Aug., 1900.
Yes. Twelve months ago we received an offer from the Fresh Food and Ice Company to supply milk to them at 7d. per gallon. At the same time we were receiving under 4d. per gallon at the factories, but the cost of carriage into Moss Vale was too much. It did not allow us profit enough.
612. You think that, with the construction of a railway, a portion of the milk will be sent direct to Sydney for consumption? Yes.
613. And that would give a larger revenue to the railway than would the carriage of butter? Yes.
614. Is there anything in the quality of the milk which would enable you to compete successfully with the South Coast districts? It is a very rich milk, and certainly we are more free from tuberculosis, and that, I think, would, in itself, be an advantage in connection with the delivering of milk into Sydney.
615. Do you think that the traffic in milk could be carried on successfully throughout the summer? Yes; because the climate is fairly cool.
616. Do you agree with the evidence which has been tendered by the other witnesses? Yes.

William Mackenzie, farmer, Myra Vale, sworn, and examined:—

617. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far do you reside from Robertson? Nine miles from Robertson, and 12 miles from Moss Vale. W. Mackenzie.
618. Have you any information to supply in addition to that which has already been given? I think the construction of the proposed railway would greatly improve the district; the distance is too great for the carriage of produce. 6 Aug., 1900.
619. Do you cultivate much land? Twenty acres, including oats, barley, corn, and sorghum for home consumption. I have also tried ensilage-making. I pile the stuff as I would an ordinary stack, and cover it with saplings. The Railway Commissioners say that the proposed line will not pay, but I think it will do so without difficulty in the course of a few years.
620. Do you think the people generally would guarantee to contribute towards it? Yes.

Robert Mansfield Graham, auctioneer, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

621. *Chairman.*] What is your experience of the value of land in this district? We have had many severe seasons, but during the twenty years I have resided in the district, I have, at one time or other, put up to auction or sold privately, three-fourths of the district. For farm land, the prices have ranged from £30 per acre downwards. Prices now are not so good as they were a few years ago; but there must be an inclination for them to increase in the near future. The last two years have been very unfavourable, but I have great expectations of an increase in value at an early period. Much has been said about cabbage-growing, but all other kinds of vegetables could be successfully raised here. The low-lying land is fed from the richer ranges, and is manured from time to time by the decayed vegetation and other matter deposited by floods passing over it, and it is not likely to be easily exhausted. We have hundreds and hundreds of acres of exceedingly rich black soil, which is highly suitable for the purpose of growing all kinds of vegetables. The fruit industry could also be successfully carried on. As far as tourists are concerned, I think this district would become a very important one in the course of time. At present, however, the facilities afforded tourists of getting in and out of the district are not very convenient or comfortable. It is only a matter of time before the district must become a most popular summer resort. R. M. Graham.
622. Has there been much loss of stock in the district on account of droughts? Yes. We have had to send thousands of stock out of the district. With regard to the raising of calves, I may state that at present we only get 6d. to 9d. for calves' skins. We kill the calves off, whereas if we had a railway line we could send thousands of them into the city market, and we could get from 30s. to £2 for them. The district sends thousands of stores and mixed cattle per year to the Goulburn market. They come chiefly from the coast. It is reasonable to expect that all that come from the coast for Goulburn, instead of travelling, would be trucked at Robertson and sent through. In fair seasons we import thousands of "springers," which we receive largely from the Goulburn district. Mr. Henry Dunn used to be a large supplier of this market, and we must in the future again obtain large supplies from the interior if the seasons continue prosperous. Pigs are also largely reared. 6 Aug., 1900.
623. Does the distance of the market prevent successful pig-raising? Yes, particularly fat pigs.
624. What number of calves and pigs would be trucked here if you had a railway? It would be very considerable. I should say that 9,000 or 10,000 would be a reasonable estimate.
625. Would there be any traffic in timber along the line? There are some timber mills here. They usually cut messmate, which is used for building purposes and bridge work. A road has been surveyed into the Kangaroo Valley, which would be 14½ miles from Robertson, and the grade would not exceed 1 in 14. If the proposed line were constructed to Robertson the traffic from that district would come to the line by teams.

Frank Anthony Tatlow, cattle-dealer, Robertson, sworn, and examined:—

626. *Chairman.*] How do you regard this as a fattening district? One of the best I ever saw in my life. F. A. Tatlow.
627. What is the nature of your operations? I go abroad to buy cattle for the district, and I also buy cattle in the district, which I send away. 6 Aug., 1900.
628. For what purpose are cattle usually bred in the district? For raising dairy stock.
629. Is this a beef-raising district? We have some of the best beef-raising stock in the Colony.
630. Do you send any cattle to Goulburn? I would do so; but on account of the want of railway facilities we are forced to sell them almost at our own doors.
631. Do you think that, with the construction of a railway, you could now and then get small consignments sent away? Yes, both ways. I have handled 1,100 head of cattle during the last eight months. I have also trucked many from the Picton and Camden districts; but I think it is as cheap to drive them as to truck them. There being no railway between Robertson and Moss Vale, we have to drive them 14 miles

F. A. Tatlow miles from Moss Vale to Robertson, and it is just as well for me to drive them from Picton to Robertson.
 632. Do you think the farmers would find a market for the calves which are now destroyed if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes.
 633. What market do they look to? Sydney for fat calves, and Goulburn for store cattle.
 634. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are the cattle which you bring to the district store cattle? No, cattle for milking purposes, and the cattle I remove from here are chiefly young cattle which are to be raised for dairying purposes.
 635. Do you consider that 14 miles is too great a distance to drive stock of that kind? It is not too great; but we are so isolated that we have to take a circuitous route. I may state 14 miles by rail sometimes means 50 miles by road.
 636. Can you get a nearer cut to Picton than by going to Moss Vale or Bowral? By driving I can save 20 miles.
 637. *Chairman.*] What is the quality of the cattle the dairy-farmers about here have? The best in New South Wales. We have cattle here which have taken the champion prizes at the Sydney Exhibition.
 638. Do they, as a general rule, keep up the quality? Yes.
 639. Have you anything further to add? Yes; with regard to the mineral wealth of the district. We have some of the richest iron deposits to be found in the Colony in the Jamberoo Mountains. Those deposits would be within the influence of the proposed railway if it were built. The best seam of coal in the Colony, 18 feet thick, is adjacent to it.
 640. Are there any bands in it? I could not say. Some years ago an expert was brought here from England by Sir Henry Parkes to examine it. Within from 5 to 15 miles of Robertson we have some of the richest outcrops of ironstone to be found in the colonies, and eight or ten men are engaged opening it out. The manager of the Smelting Works at Dapto inspected it last Monday, and considered it highly satisfactory. The outcrops of iron are frequent in the district. I have been given to understand that there is an iron outcrop towards the Macquarie Pass. At the Jamberoo Mountains there are areas of it in several places 30 and 40 acres in extent. Mr. Bruce Smith and a syndicate to which he is attached are prospecting it. They have coal, iron, and limestone there in close proximity. As I have stated, in years gone by, Sir Henry Parkes had an expert brought from England to prospect the coal, and he gave a friend of mine to understand that we had the keystone of the Illawarra mineral deposits, meaning that we have iron, coal, and limestone there alongside each other. The nearest outcrop is 5 miles from Robertson, and the coal and limestone deposits are to be found from 10 to 12 miles away.

MONDAY, 27 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D. | ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor, Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Department, sworn, and examined:—

W. H. Hall. 641. *Chairman.*] I understand you have some figures showing the estimated population and cultivation returns in regard to the districts to be served by the proposed railway from Bowral to Robertson? Yes; the estimated population of the Robertson district is 1,680; that of the Burrawang district is 600; making a total for the two districts of 2,880. The agricultural, pastoral, and dairying statistics are shown in the following return:—

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON.
 AGRICULTURAL, Pastoral, and Dairying Statistics, 1897-1900.

District.	Cultivation.													Live stock.					Dairy produce.			
	Total area cultivated.	Wheat.		Maize.		Barley.	Oats.	Other grains.	Hay.		Green food.	Area under—			Horses.	Cattle.			Butter made.	Ham and bacon cured.		
		Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.	Area.	Area.	Area.	Wheat, Oats, and Barley.	Lucerne.	Area cut.	Potatoes.	Fruit orchards.	All other crops.		Milch cows.	Ordinary, including calves.	Sheep, including lambs.			Swine.	lb.	lb.
Burrawang.	1897	1,352	3	16	1	2	42	731	6	803	152	67	25	303	2,700	1,727	18	646	100,874	...		
	1898	1,334	5	1	...	42	731	6	803	152	67	25	303	2,700	1,727	18	646	96,376	9,077	
	1899	1,985	...	...	...	6	3	423	...	1,252	183	76	72	433	2,727	1,801	20	536	66,844	1,772
	1900	2,037	12	186	6	...	5	14	111	637	...	917	181	91	53	363	2,043	1,844	11	516	76,179	...
Robertson.	1897	1,310	7	9	344	53	744	105	47	1	452	3,041	1,193	449	1,201	340,735	...	
	1898	1,265	11	310	...	1	342	4	764	99	42	2	432	2,914	1,244	176	785	257,318	7,122	
	1899	1,671	2	20	10	157	1	...	3	198	...	1,294	116	47	...	409	2,799	1,440	62	886	477,418	26,460
	1900	1,752	10	9	5	484	...	1,033	117	44	1	400	2,269	1,146	11	850	320,990	...

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

H. Deane. 642. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have the statement respecting the proposed extension of the Bowral to Robertson line to the sea-coast? Yes; I have two reports—one from Mr. Weber, who was appointed to take some levels, and whose proposal to connect with the coast I believe this is. I have a report sent in

in by Mr. McDonnell Stuart, Supervising Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, who has been over the line with Mr. Weber. I have also a plan of the proposed line prepared by Mr. Stuart. Mr. Stuart's report reads as follows:—

H. Deane.
27 Aug., 1900.

MEMORANDUM to the Engineer-in-Chief Railway Construction.

Illawarra to Robertson Railway.

Department of Public Works, Railway Construction Branch,
Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Sydney, 27 August, 1900.

Sir,

In accordance with instructions received, I have made a further investigation into the proposed Illawarra-Robertson connection, or, properly speaking, into a connection between the Illawarra and Great Southern Railways, notably with reference to routes *via* Mount Johnstone and Mount Terry respectively. The first of these, as far as an ordinary adhesion line is concerned, is altogether out of the question, the distance from the Main Illawarra Range to the foot of this spur being far too short. This is the spur next to the one on which I suggested the possibility of a rack railway in my previous report. Again, the route *via* Mount Terry, working its way up from the Illawarra line, *via* Stock-yard Mountain, would enter the Main Range by a tunnel at the foot of a high cliff, the difference in level between this point and the summit being several hundred feet, and as the plateau at the back falls away very slowly, this tunnel would be of such a length as to make any further extension in the direction required prohibitory.

Another route discovered by Mr. Weber, although very difficult and costly, would, possibly, be the most practicable, as it crosses the main Illawarra Range at the lowest point between Mount Kembla and the head of the Macquarie Pass. This route, shown by a green line on the accompanying diagram tracing (the previous exploration being shown in red), leaves on the southern side of Dapto station on the Illawarra line at a point 57 miles from Sydney, and thence proceeding in a south-westerly direction it commences to rise on the northern side of the Marshall Mount spur (and maintains an ascending grade till it reaches the summit at the back of the main range); thence bearing round to the right it crosses the valley of Duck-holes or Yallah Creek, and turning to the east contours round the Avondale Spur, gradually working back in a westerly direction till it reaches the slopes of the main range; thence it bears northerly along the face of this range until the lowest point in the same is reached, where it crosses with a short tunnel into the valley of Gallagher's Creek; thence it follows down this valley for a short distance, still maintaining the ascending grade, and again doubling back it winds its way up through some very broken country until it finally reaches the plateau at the back of the mountain, about the Devil's Gap; thence it gradually works its way through broken country till it gains the first explored line near the head of the Avon River, a tributary of the Nepean. The line can then be carried on to suit a connection with either the Bowral or Moss Vale to Robertson extensions by the routes shown in red and green respectively.

The best feature in connection with this proposal of Mr. Weber's is that it crosses the Illawarra Range at a very low point, and with a very much shorter tunnel than on the previous proposal *via* Mount Macquarie. Some difficulty will, no doubt, be found in locating the curves on the entrances to the tunnel; but this may be obviated by cutting the range on the skew without materially increasing the length of the tunnel. Against the route there are some of the same objections which I raised to the Mount Macquarie proposal, namely, crossing a series of spurs on the eastern side of the main range, necessitating very heavy earthworks and bridging, with a possibility of some slips. Added to this, the line debouches on the western side of the range into a narrow mountainous gully with steep sides, and out of this gully it works up to the summit round broken country, necessitating considerable curvature, heavy earthworks, and possibly tunnelling through some of the subsidiary spurs of the ranges forming the watersheds of the respective watercourses.

The ruling grade aimed at on this proposal is 1 in 50, with curves of 10 chains radius; but viewed even in the most favourable light, it would entail very heavy expenditure, possibly running into £500,000, and the length required in order to obtain a grade is excessive, being some 45 miles from the junction on the Illawarra line to Moss Vale, as against 24 miles in a direct line. This difference is specially noticeable between the same point on the Illawarra line and the Devil's Gap, where the distance is under 5 miles, as against 21½ by the proposed route.

CHAS. McD. STUART.

The following is Mr. Weber's report:—

The Honorable The Minister for Works, Sydney,—

Sir,

Wollongong, 24 August, 1900.

I have the honor to report my having explored the Coast Range from Mount Kembla to Stockyard Mountain, as instructed, to discover the best place to cross with a railway from Robertson to the Illawarra line.

The best and lowest point for crossing the mountain is almost due west from Dapto railway station. The line sketched on my rough tracing goes through the mountain at 1,000 feet above sea-level, with a tunnel about 30 chains long into a deep gully on the west, from which point a succession of gullies and ridges, requiring continuous curves, give ample length to make easy grades upwards to Robertson, the ridges being of a solid sandstone formation, and well timbered.

The eastern slope, immediately south from the tunnel, may possibly be liable to slips in places for the first mile, whence, by contouring ridges and gullies, a good grade is obtainable to Yallah, on the Illawarra line.

The line can possibly be much improved by any of the alternate lines dotted in red ink on the county map forwarded with the tracing, viz.:—By crossing the mountain without a tunnel, the length to Robertson would be reduced by some 2 miles, and the avoidance of the tunnel should more than compensate for the extra length along the face of the range.

There is nothing to contend with on any portion of the lines sketched that would require any special engineering skill, and a little extra care in laying out would, no doubt, avoid many expenses.

The grades need nowhere be steeper than 1 in 50, and the curves can be kept to a 10-chain radius.

The distance by the line sketched on tracing from Moss Vale to Dapto would be about 47 miles, leaving about 34 to make between Illawarra line and the Moss Vale and Robertson line, and even this can be reduced by 2 miles, and avoid the tunnel.

Estimates can only be gone into after a traverse has been made, and, if based upon the present mode of day work, could be worked out at about two-thirds, or nearly one-half, the cost of lines already constructed under the big contract principle.

Mount Terry, the continuation of Stockyard Mountain, would have been a good spur to descend by had it been practicable to get up the 600-foot cliff at the top, but even with a 3-mile tunnel the line would be too low to reach Robertson with reasonable grades.

All elevations of points inspected are marked on the map of the district now in possession of the Railway Construction Officers, and will, no doubt, be handed in with Mr. Stuart's report.

I have, &c.,
CARL WEBER,
Surveyor and C.E.

P.S.—A simple traverse of grade line without the expense of laying down curves would give a good estimate of cost, provided the mode of letting was previously determined on.—C.W.

643. Could you make a comparison between the distance in a straight line from Robertson to Albion Park and the distance according to this proposed extension—say, from the western point of the mountain to the nearest point on the South Coast railway? The distance from Robertson, in a direct line, to the railway at Albion Park is 11 miles.

644. Following the exploration, how long would it be? Thirty miles.

TUESDAY,

TUESDAY, 28 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq., (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

Charles McDonnell Stuart, Supervising Engineer, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

C. McD.
Stuart.
23 Aug., 1900.

645. *Chairman.*] You have been recently engaged in trying to discover a practicable route for extending the proposed Bowral-Robertson line to the South Coast line? Yes.

646. Can you give the Committee the general result of your investigations? I think it would be better described by reading it from the report. Speaking generally, you would leave the Illawarra line on the southern side of the Dapto station. You then gradually work your way up by a fairly steep grade along the slopes on the eastern side of the Illawarra range until you cross this range at its lowest point. That is between Mount Kembla and Macquarie Pass. You then get into rough broken country, formed by different branches of the Nepean River, through which you gradually work your way round, and thus up to the table-land at the back of Robertson. Thence you can join either with Bowral or Moss Vale, whichever is considered most expedient.

647. What is the character of the proposed line by the longer or latest route you have explored? It would be a very costly line. There would be one tunnel through the range—possibly more. In negotiating the eastern slopes of the Illawarra Range you work along land that is practically made country. This would be no doubt liable in places to slips such as is the case on the Illawarra line, between Stanwell Park and South Clifton along the foot of the range.

648. Could you give an idea of the approximate cost per mile of that section of the proposed line? Yes; it would cost about £15,000 per mile; that would be for about 25 miles of it. On the other part of the line the cost would be lighter.

649. *Mr. Watson.*] Twenty-five miles is the distance from Dapto, upon the oldest exploration, to where it joins the Robertson line? It is a little more.

650. But from where it joins the Robertson line, what distance is it from Dapto by your suggested route? About 33 miles.

651. And for 25 miles of that length the cost would be about £15,000 per mile? Yes.

652. Will you give us the distance, as the crow flies, from Robertson to a point on the Illawarra line, where the proposed extension joins? It is about 12 miles.

653. *Chairman.*] So that to get a suitable grade you have to go a roundabout course, involving about three times the distance? Yes. The worst point is from where you leave the Illawarra line to the Devil's Gap, on the western side of the range. Between those two points the distance, as the crow flies, is under 5 miles.

654. Of the 34 miles of new construction which this proposal would involve, 25 miles would have to be built at a cost of £15,000 per mile? Yes.

655. And the remainder? I have put it down at about £5,000. To lay the whole line down right through to Moss Vale would cost about half a million of money.

656. With respect to that portion of the line that would be liable to slips on the ranges, how many miles of construction would that involve? About 5 miles.

657. From your experience of the South Coast line and the Mudgee line, would you think it highly undesirable to construct this line? About 5 miles of it would be bad. It would be liable to slip; and I consider it extremely undesirable to construct lines in such country.

658. Is there no other way in which the South Coast could be reached so as to avoid that 5 miles of unsound country? No.

659. It has been suggested that the difficulty of connecting the Southern line with the South Coast line might be overcome by a rack railway down the Macquarie Pass;—do you think that would be a reasonable way of overcoming the difficulty? No, because the spurs are too steep to get a good rack railway; the grade would be too steep on the rack itself.

660. So that the only practical method is the one you now suggest, which involves a very large expenditure, and would also involve a large annual cost for maintenance over the bad ground? Yes.

661. Would there be any objections, from a railway construction point of view, to this proposal—that is, in the way of gradients or curves? I do not think so. The great objection to this line arises from its liability to slips in the dangerous part.

662. *Dr. Garran.*] Let us come back now to the purely local line, from the present main line to Robertson;—you are aware that some years ago the proposal was to carry the line from Moss Vale to Robertson? Yes.

663. Have you been over that route? Yes.

664. Was it a fairly easy line? Yes.

665. With regard to that proposal, do you think we could do it for £10,000 a mile? I should have said that it was a little easier than the route from Bowral to Robertson.

666. What is the cheapest route we could take? You have Mr. Deane's estimate. A line from Moss Vale to Robertson could be made more cheaply than one from Bowral to Robertson.

667. But by the new method of making cheap lines, could you give the Committee any idea of the cheapest line that could be made in this part of the country? I have not got the estimate with me.

668. You are aware that the Committee at that time recommended Bowral as a point of departure? Yes.

669. And I understand that one reason for that was that by starting from Bowral and keeping along the northern side of the swamp you could catch the West Kangaloon traffic first and then get the Wild's Meadows traffic on the southern side of the swamp, and so secure the traffic from both sides? Yes.

670. As you have laid it out, would there be a station to catch the West Kangaloon traffic? Yes; near the Sheep-wash.

671.

C. McD.
Stuart.

28 Aug., 1906.

671. Near Robertson Park? Yes.
672. The traffic coming from Bowral could easily come down to the station? Yes.
673. How far from the main road would they have to turn off? I do not know exactly the distance, but the hill is a steep one to go down.
674. Nor has the station a good access? No.
675. Do you think the dairymen, the potato growers, and other producers, having got their goods on the dray, would come down that hill, or do you think they would go straight into Bowral? I think they would prefer to go straight into Bowral.
676. So that a station there would only partially take the traffic? Only partially.
677. If that is so, the idea of starting from Bowral is partly neutralised? To some extent.
678. The idea was that the West Kangaloon traffic would come in by the Sheep-wash, and the East Kangaloon traffic would come in by Robertson, and that, therefore, the whole of the Kangaloon side would be served? Yes.
679. You think that would not be realised? Not to a very great extent; you would get some of the Kangaloon traffic, but I think people would prefer going to Bowral.
680. You have a line surveyed from Robertson Park, or the Sheep-wash, and you go across just at the outlet of the swamp and get to Wild's Meadows? Yes.
681. Is it fairly easy country? Fairly easy; it is undulating country.
682. But from Wild's Meadows to Robertson it is bad? Yes.
683. If we have to stop at Wild's Meadows, should we get the Robertson traffic too? I think you would get some of it.
684. To which station does the Robertson traffic mostly come—Bowral or Moss Vale? I do not know.
685. Instead of going to Wild's Meadows, would it be easier to go to the head of the waterfall—Cataract Village, as they call it? I think it would be very much the same. It is a good road from Wild's Meadows to Robertson.
686. Could you catch the traffic from both Wild's Meadows and from Fitzroy Falls by extending the line? I should think the traffic from Fitzroy Falls would go straight into Moss Vale.
687. But would a station at Wild's Meadows catch it? Some of it; but not all.
688. Could you have a line from Wild's Meadows to the Fitzroy Falls? It would be preferable to take it from Moss Vale. I should not think of going from Bowral to the Fitzroy Falls under any circumstances. I do not think the traffic would equal that from Robertson.
689. Then we may put Fitzroy Falls out of the question? I think so, unless you go to the Fitzroy Falls first, and afterwards down to Wild's Meadows.
690. If the line from Bowral will not catch much of the Kangaloon traffic, it is a better line to Robertson to go from Moss Vale? I think so.
691. What advantage would there be in going from Bowral? I do not think there is a great deal.
692. Is there any? As a local line, there might be a little in it; but if it is ever to be extended to the Coast railway, it would be better to go from Moss Vale.
693. You think that the people of Robertson would rather be connected with Moss Vale than with Bowral? I do not know.
694. By a line to Wild's Meadows, do you think the whole of the district south of the swamp would be accommodated? Fairly well.
695. That 4 miles of country that you spoke of, lying between Wild's Meadows and Robertson—that is hard, trap country, is it not? All trap country.
696. There are some stiff cuttings? Yes; and there is no room to get any curvature.
697. Suppose you only want to go from Bowral to Robertson, by keeping to the edge of the swamp could you get a more direct line that way? It might be a little cheaper. It was explored by us on a previous occasion; but that side of the swamp is pretty rough—you cannot get just on the edge of it.
698. It would not accommodate the district so well? I do not think it would be any better; you would lose the Wild's Meadows traffic.
699. Taking the south side of the swamp, could you have had level country from Wild's Meadows to Robertson by clinging to the swamp? You might get it by keeping on the southern side of the Winge-carribee Swamp; but you would not get right into Robertson.
700. And you would not so well accommodate the farming people? No.
701. The line you have laid out goes right through the farms? Yes.
702. Taking the local trade as a whole, which would be likely to secure most traffic to the railway—from the farmers on the north side of the swamp, or those on the south? Those on the south side would send most, I think.
703. If we could not serve the two sets of farmers equally by one station, which would it be better to try for—the trade on the north side, or that on the south? I think the south side.
704. That would rather be in favour of making Moss Vale the terminus? Yes.
705. And if there is to be any future extension, the connection would be better made at Moss Vale? Yes.
706. The great intention of this proposed extension is to carry ores to the coal-mine? Not necessarily.
707. But as they come from the south they had all better be shipped at Moss Vale than be taken on to Bowral? Yes; it would save 6 miles.
708. This line down to the Coast railway would be very expensive to make, and very expensive to work? Yes.
709. Unless they get extra prices for carriage, would it pay? I do not think the mineral traffic alone would pay, and there is not much other traffic to carry.
710. The mineral traffic is at present slight? Yes.
711. And what there is of it goes round by Sydney? Yes.
712. The idea is, that if this line were constructed it would multiply the mineral traffic by shortening the distance and decreasing freight? Yes.
713. Would it have to come up to a very large amount to pay? Yes.
714. Is there any immediate prospects of an increase of traffic? I do not know.
715. The freight for minerals is very low? Yes.
716. Apart from mineral traffic, would there be much passenger traffic, or much goods traffic? It is doubtful.

- C. McD. Stuart.
28 Aug., 1900.
717. At present there is nothing to justify the construction of this line as a mineral line? Not as an expensive mineral line.
718. Do you think the surveyors of your Department have found out all the defects in regard to the line that is now proposed? It was not one of our surveyors who discovered this last route, it was Mr. Weber. Certainly he has taken the lowest point on the mountain. You might go into the thing more in detail; but, considered as a whole, I think it as good a line as you could get.
719. You have examined the people living in the districts proposed to be served by this line? Only a few.
720. You do not think there is much probability of a better route being found? I do not think so.
721. It is not unexplored country? No; one can get on the range, and see the country for himself.
722. You have seen the new road lately made down the Macquarie Pass? Yes.
723. It would not be possible to take a railway by that route? No; there is a zig-zag at the top of that road to begin with, and the descent altogether from the top of the hills to the foot is nearly 2,000 feet. Up to Robertson it rises to nearly 2,400 feet.
724. In starting from Bowral, and going as far as the Sheepwash, you have pretty level ground to go over? It is fairly level. You follow the valley of the Wingecarribee River. It is undulating country.
725. All your cuttings would be in hard rock? The lower part of them, certainly.
726. *Mr. Watson.*] How does your most recent survey compare with the first suggestion you put forward, and which Mr. Deane mentioned in his report? I think in the recent survey or exploration there is more outcome for improvement than there would be in the first.
727. Do you think the total cost of a line made by the recent survey would be less than that by the original survey? I could not say without surveying both routes; but probably it would be less.
728. The gradient would be better? The gradient is better.
729. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you been over the route proposed by Mr. Weber? Yes.
730. What is the nature of the country from Robertson to the top of the mountain? Sandstone.
731. From there down until you get on to the lowest spurs it is sandstone; then the basalt country begins? No; you get into the shale and coal; the face of the main range is all sandstone.
732. That would not be so hard to work as the basalt? No.
733. Is there much of that country;—would there be 15 or 20 miles of it? Yes; from Robertson until you join the Illawarra line. You have to go through basalt country from Bowral to Robertson.
734. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you had any exploration made of a route towards the Illawarra line from any point about Marulan or Wingello, on the Southern line? There was an exploration made from Braidwood down to the coast, but it was abandoned as being impracticable.
735. But not down from Marulan? Not to my knowledge.

WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SILPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

Harold Clyde Manning, surveyor, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

H. C. Manning.
29 Aug., 1900.

736. *Chairman.*] You are aware of the nature of the inquiry before this Committee? Yes.
737. I understand you have been for some years professionally engaged as surveyor in the Bowral-Robertson district? Yes.
738. And, therefore, you have a pretty good knowledge of the district? A fair one.
739. The proposed railway line goes to the south of the Wingecarribee Swamp;—do you think the line as projected would serve the greater part of the good land in that district? No.
740. What deviation would you suggest in order to accomplish that? It should go to the northern side of the swamp.
741. But, if you took it by the northern side of the swamp, would you not lose much of the Kangaroo Valley traffic? Unless you run it on from Robertson to the head of the valley.
742. Do you know whether a practicable route for a railway, from Robertson to the head of the valley, could be obtained? I think you have a line of the kind shown on the map. There would be no engineering difficulties.
743. Then, to accommodate the Kangaroo Valley traffic, means that you would have to make the line double on its own track to the Southern line? Undoubtedly.
744. Do you think the Kangaroo Valley trade is of sufficient importance to justify an extension of that kind? I hardly think so; I do not know exactly what mileage there would be, but, probably, 10 or 12 miles extra.
745. There is this difficulty about the proposal: To go to the north of the swamp it would better accommodate the Kangaroo traffic; by going to the south it would better accommodate the Kangaroo Valley traffic;—which is the more important traffic to be catered for? That is not an easy question to answer. The Kangaroo Valley people make use of the ocean-going traffic to get a good deal of their produce away.
746. People at the head of the Kangaroo Valley have indicated that a railway towards the mountain would suit them better than one towards the coast? Kangaroo Valley is only a small portion of the rich dairying land. A great part of the good land is about Broger's Creek, a tributary of the Kangaroo River.
747. That is, the lower part of the valley? No, on the upper part of the valley.
748. Does that agree with your former statement as to its being a small valley? I might explain that the Kangaroo River runs through the Kangaroo Valley, and Broger's Creek is a tributary of the river. The place is always called Broger's Creek, not the Kangaroo Valley. The Broger's Creek people send their produce to Berry and Nowra, and thence by steamer to Sydney, thereby saving freight.* 749.

* Note (on revision):—The small part of the valley referred to is the narrow part extending upwards from Broger's Creek junction.

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749. Have the people resident on Broger's Creek to cross a high ridge to get to the ocean? They have.
750. Is that a serious impediment to them in the way of traffic? Not very; it is not so high as the Barrengarry Mountain; that mountain is the outlet from the Kangaroo Valley to Moss Vale.
751. The proposed line is estimated to cost £94,978;—do you think there is sufficient good land in the district to justify so large an expenditure? I really do not.
752. The land about there is very good, but it is limited in quantity? Yes; the railway could not go any further.
753. Is there any other reason you could urge in support of the construction of a line to the north of the swamp, in addition to what you have stated? The only reason to me is that it would tap the best country. If you put it on the southern side of the swamp you do not tap the best side of the country. On the northern side of the swamp the country is all of volcanic origin. On the southern side you run into much poorer country, only fit for grazing.
754. Do you think the land on the northern side of the swamp suited to railway construction—is it sound country? It is sound, but difficult to cut; the railway could be made along the north side of the swamp the whole way.
755. You have the Kangaroo-road, leading into the valley? Yes; but it is very lilly.
756. On the whole, the roads of the district are very good? They are, very.
757. Do you think the inhabitants suffer very much inconvenience in their business for want of a railway;—are there places from which they find it difficult to get their produce to market? They have much difficulty and would be much benefited by a railway.
758. A rival proposal has been suggested, viz., from Moss Vale;—which of the two would be the better to make to suit the district as a whole, Moss Vale to Robertson or Bowral to Robertson? I think that is a matter for the Railway Commissioners to decide; I do not think it would make much difference as regards cost or convenience of the public.
759. But if the line were taken to the north side of the swamp, would it tap much more good country? Oh, yes.
760. Which of the two connections would you prefer, Moss Vale to Robertson, or Bowral to Robertson? A line from Moss Vale to Robertson would go to the southern side of the swamp, and I should say that the best line would be from Bowral to Robertson.
761. It was given in evidence yesterday that a good deal of the traffic comes from the south side of the swamp? It is fairly good grazing country, but the rich soil is on the north side.
762. Is there a large area of good country to the east of Kangaloon? Not very large; I should think 3 miles would be the limit of it.
763. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you been residing in the Robertson district for some time? Yes; for a number of years.
764. Then you know the Kangaroo Valley very well? Very well, indeed.
765. You spoke just now of Broger's Creek;—is that not known as Broughton Vale? I think it was at one time; but it is always locally called Broger's Creek.
766. Is there a good deal of settlement there? Yes.
767. And also in the Kangaroo Valley? Yes.
768. Do you think the proposed railway, either from Moss Vale to Robertson, or Bowral to Robertson, would divert any of the traffic from those parts from its present outlet? That would depend upon which route is chosen.
769. By either route? You mean by going from Bowral to Robertson, on the north side of Wingecarribee, and stopping at Robertson.
770. Yes? I do not think it would divert any of the traffic. A great deal of the traffic from this side of the Kangaroo River and Kangaroo district goes to Moss Vale; and when the people have once got on to the mountain with their loads, they would hardly go to Robertson to meet the railway there, in preference to taking it on to Moss Vale, especially after they have been in the habit of going to Moss Vale for so many years, although they might, in doing so, save 2 or 3 miles of journey.
771. Since the construction of the Coast line railway, has a good deal of the traffic from the Kangaroo Valley been diverted to that line? Yes.
772. A good deal goes to Nowra? Yes.
773. You know the Cambewarra Mountain? Yes.
774. It is very much lower than the Barrengarry? Yes.
775. And it is your opinion that once the carriers get up the Barrengarry they would, instead of unloading into the train, prefer to go on to Moss Vale? If the railway be run from Bowral to Robertson, on the north side of the Wingecarribee, and stop at Robertson, the present traffic from Kangaroo Valley would still go to Moss Vale, I think.
776. They would not discharge their load on this railway, but would continue on to the Main South-western line? If a line comes from Moss Vale, I think they would divert, because it would be much nearer for them.
777. If there was a station at Wild's Meadows? I could not say; it is probable that they would, as they would save about 6 miles of haulage.
778. It hardly seems feasible that when they are loaded up with a good load from the valley, they would unload to save 6 miles, especially when they have a good road;—do you not think so? It is not so much on that account; but when people get into a groove they stick to it. They have been going for many years to Moss Vale.
779. Do you know the country immediately east of Robertson, trending towards the coast? Yes.
780. It is good country? Yes.
781. How far does that good country continue in the direction of Kiama, the nearest port? There is, I suppose, very nearly a mile of very rich, good country; then it gradually merges into poor country of no value whatever.
782. How much of that is there? It extends to the limit of the cliff.
783. The traffic of that good country;—do you think it would be attracted to Robertson if a railway were constructed? Undoubtedly.
784. It would not go east? It never has gone east; it all goes to Robertson as it is.

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785. You think the volcanic country only extends about a mile east of Robertson? I should say about a mile; it may be a mile and a half. Then there is very fair country for perhaps a couple of miles; then it gradually merges into swamp country.
786. I suppose that that stretch of country would be served by the main line running in from Loseby's Road? I think the proposed line goes north of the swamp.
787. I think I heard you say that you heard nothing of the proposed extension of the railway from Robertson to the coast? No; nothing at all.
788. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good knowledge of the country between Bowral and Robertson? Yes.
789. How would you describe it—from Bowral to Robertson Park would be very easy; but a line from there to Kangaloon would be difficult;—could you say if such is the case? The easy country would extend for about 7 or 8 miles. The total distance to Kangaloon is, I think, 14 miles; that would leave about 6 miles.
790. And from there to Robertson? I do not remember the distance; but that is difficult country too. For the first 8 miles to Robertson is difficult country for a railway. There are no cliffs; but it is hilly, and would require many cuttings.
791. In the difficult country you have referred to, is there much settlement? Yes; it is all settled; it is all good soil.
792. Is it settled by agriculturists? Yes.
793. How do they manage with their produce;—do they send it to Bowral? Yes.
794. They have sufficiently good roads, and there is no difficulty in getting produce to Bowral? Not that I know of. The roads are very good.
795. Is there now much land available for settlement? I think it has all been secured.
796. So that the construction of a railway would not increase settlement to any appreciable extent? Smaller holdings might, perhaps, suit people better.
797. Are they large holdings at present? I do not know the extent of the holdings. They are often cut up and leased. One which I measured a little time ago was 320 acres. It was divided amongst two brothers, each having about 160.
798. Would that be considered a large holding? For that district I think it is fairly large. Forty acres in that country will support a man very comfortably.
799. You think that the construction of a railway would have the effect of causing these areas of 160 acres or more to be subdivided? I think it would be an inducement to the holders to divide their estates, but whether they would do so or not I cannot say.
800. Is it costly to carry produce from Robertson to Bowral? I do not think so. I do not know what the rate is. I think the settlers nearly all carry their own.
801. Have you a knowledge of the country from Robertson towards the coast? Yes.
802. What class of country is it? On the plateau that Robertson is on, to the eastward of Robertson, there is some volcanic soil which extends for some distance. Then you get into poor and swampy country.
803. Is there much settlement there? On the good soil there is; but beyond that none. It is practically all taken up as mineral conditional purchases.
804. Would it be difficult to take a railway line from Bowral to Robertson, and then extend it further from Robertson to the coast? I think it would be very expensive, indeed, to extend it to the coast.
805. Do you think such a line would be desirable? I have not given the matter consideration at all. I do not see what object there would be in extending it. The returns would not be commensurate with the expenditure.
806. Robertson is a pretty high locality? Yes.
807. And between there and the coast it is difficult country? Yes; you would have to go down the cliffs. There is a belt of cliffs between the tableland and the coast.
808. Whereabouts is the good land you refer to between Robertson and the coast;—is it nearer Robertson? All of it is near Robertson.
809. Would a line of railway from Bowral to Robertson serve the whole of that area of good land near Robertson? Yes; of course everyone cannot have a station at his own door. It would be in a central position.
810. What distance from Robertson would include the good area you speak of? To the east it goes for nearly a mile or a mile and a half, to the north it might be as much as 3 miles. It branches off there. To the east again there is a little patch. That might be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Robertson. I do not think any of it would go more than about 3 miles.
811. The only argument in favour of continuing the line from Robertson to the coast is that there would be considerable traffic from country which the Bowral to Robertson line would not serve? I do not think there is any necessity for it at all.
812. Are there any other places between Robertson and the coast which the line would serve? There are many underneath the belt of cliffs.
813. After leaving the mountain? Yes; Jamberoo, for instance, is under the cliffs.
814. Have you looked at the map showing the route of the proposed extension from Robertson to the coast;—do you know the country? Fairly well.
815. What class of country would it be? Very mountainous; very difficult for railway construction.
816. You notice also that it leaves out the town of Robertson;—would that be desirable? I hardly think it would.
817. Do you think if a line were constructed connecting Bowral with the coast there would be much through traffic? No; it would be chiefly used by tourists.
818. Would it open much additional land for settlement—that is, taking the whole distance from Bowral to the coast? Do you mean new country.
819. Yes? No; it would not open a pennyworth of new country. The good country has all been secured. The bad country might be taken up by people who were ignorant of its real worth. Some people will even select rocks; but they do not stay for more than a few years. Something of that kind might happen on this new line. The land is only fit for residences; it will grow nothing.
820. It is not of any use for settlement? Not a bit. It is not fit for agriculture or grazing purposes.

821. Is there much dairying carried on in the Robertson district? Yes; a great deal.
822. Is that the principal industry? Yes; they do grow a small quantity of crops and potatoes. They chiefly grow stuff for their own stock. Potatoes they grow for sale.
823. Can you say if the dairying industry is increasing in the district? I could not say.
824. When produce is sent from any distance between Robertson and the coast, is it put on the train to Sydney or sent by steamer? I am under the impression that it is sent by steamer; but I cannot say definitely. City orders would go by train, no doubt. It does not pay anyone to send produce by train, unless they are compelled to, when they can get it carried by water; they will always send it by water—it is cheaper.
825. That would mean that those living within a distance of 10 or 15 miles from the coast, along the Illawarra line, would prefer to send it by steamer to Sydney than by railway? Do you mean if the train went by their door.
826. No;—I mean that those who are living that distance from the line, when they have carted their produce in, they would prefer to send it by steamer, and not by train? I do not think you can solve that question, because people living on the land down there do not go in for produce at all; they go in for dairying. The butter would have to be sent by steamer or train; but I am not in a position to say what they would do.
827. Has road-making in the district been expensive? Yes.
828. Is that from want of proper material, or is it difficult country? Because it is difficult country.
829. The roads now in existence between Robertson and Bowral;—were they very costly? I should imagine they were; but it is not in my province to say. I have nothing to do with the formation of the roads at all.
830. But you could give an opinion whether a road has been costly or otherwise? From the tableland, I do not think that the roads have been more costly than the average between one township and another.
831. Is there much timber on the inferior land? Oh, yes; it is fairly well timbered.
832. Is it good timber? Some of it is; that in the gorges and gullies is. You get good timber there in places; but on the tableland the timber as a rule is of an inferior quality; it is stunted.
833. Has much timber been got for the mills where you say the good timber is? No, I do not think so; although I cannot say definitely.
834. What class of timber is got? That I could not tell you. I have never actually been down that part of the country you speak of. The waste lands lie considerably to the north of this proposed railway line; but out nearer Kangaloon you come across fine timber, such as woollybutt, sometimes.
835. I understand there is a sawmill at Robertson? Yes; but that is not near the waste land.
836. Does the timber for that sawmill come from the good land? All the timber on the good land has either been ringbarked or cut down.
837. Where does the mill get its supply from? I cannot tell you now. The mill has been removed more than once. All the timber which I have seen going through Robertson is timber not suitable for putting into the ground; it is messmate, principally.
838. The marketable timber you refer to, is that to be found on the north of the proposed railway line? I do not think the line would run through any good timber country. The good timber has either been ringbarked or cut down, as I have said. There are patches of good timber further north.
839. You think the timber trade would not be a feature in connection with the traffic on the proposed line? I do not think so; it would only be a slight source of revenue.

H. C.
Manning.
29 Aug., 1900.

SATURDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

[The Committee met at the Drill Hall, Dapto, at 11:30 a.m.]

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Bowral to Robertson.

Carl Weber, surveyor and civil engineer, Wollongong, sworn, and examined:—

840. *Chairman.*] A short time ago you made an exploration survey, with the view of finding a practicable route for a railway from Robertson to the South Coast line? Yes.
841. You furnished to the Railway authorities a report upon that route? I did.
842. Will you kindly make a statement, either adding to what you put in the report, or amplifying anything you stated in it? I did not go into estimates on the report, and that is a most important point.
843. We have received on that point a rough estimate from the Railway authorities, that the line which you propose, as an extension to the South Coast line of the proposed Bowral-Robertson railway, and that estimate is between £400,000 and £500,000, a good deal of it being at the rate of £15,000 a mile? In my opinion that estimate is too high.
844. Can you give us a rough estimate of what you think the connection between Robertson and the coast would cost? Well, half of that amount should be enough.
845. Have you had any experience of railway construction? Of actual construction—none.
846. Or of the making up of the estimates for railway construction? Yes, a great deal.
847. The line indicated on Mr. Stuart's map is practically the route you discovered and suggested? Yes.
848. Is there any further information, apart from what you placed in your report, that you can give to the Committee? I think that a distance of 2 miles at least, and a tunnel, could be saved by actual survey, which the exploration survey would not allow of.
849. That is, it would be that improvement on the exploration survey? Yes.
850. Is the tunnel a costly item in the scheme? A very costly one. Mr. Stuart's estimate for the tunnel was £35 per lineal yard, and there are 30 chains of tunnel.
851. Can you suggest any other alteration that might be made? I think that is the chief one.

O. Weber.
1 Sept., 1900.

- C. Weber. 852. *Mr. Watson.*] Regarding the saving of a tunnel, do you mean that you think that it would be so if the route were actually surveyed? Yes.
- 1 Sept., 1900. 853. But did it appear from the exploration that it would be likely to be saved? It did not strike me until after I had finished my report, and when I went into the matter a little more carefully.
854. Have you any information on any other aspect of the question? In regard to utility resulting from the construction of the line, there is a good deal to be said.
855. What main advantages would you urge in support of its construction? Some time ago it was suggested to duplicate the Southern line from Moss Vale to Sydney on account of the heavy traffic. The construction of this line would do away with the necessity for that duplication.
856. This line would relieve the line from Moss Vale to Sydney of the ore traffic? Yes.
857. Can you say whether that would mean an appreciable relief of the Southern line? It should be an enormous relief.
858. Do you suggest that the construction of this line would relieve the Southern line, not only of the mineral traffic, but of general traffic as well? Yes.
859. Can you indicate in what particular ways the relief is likely to occur? One is the limestone traffic.
860. Where does that traffic come from, and where does it go to? All the limestone that goes to Sydney comes, as a rule, from Moss Vale and other points on the Southern line.
861. Any other kind of traffic? Not with regard to the relief of the Southern line.
862. Do you know what the distance is from Bowral to Sydney, *via* the proposed route, from Bowral to Robertson and Dapto, and what the distance is from Bowral to Sydney direct along the Southern line? I think there is very little difference.
863. *Mr. Hyam.*] You said just now that the limestone came principally from Moss Vale? Yes.
864. Is any limestone at all sent from Moss Vale,—do you not mean Marulan? Well, it all comes through Moss Vale from places on the Southern line.
865. But none from Moss Vale itself? From Moss Vale itself, none.
866. I suppose you know the distance from Bowral to Sydney along the Southern line? About 80 miles.
867. And the distance from Bowral to Sydney *via* Dapto, supposing this line were constructed? 100 miles, in round figures.
868. Do you think that, in face of that 20 miles further carriage, it is possible that any considerable portion of the heavy traffic would go over this line? Yes; a large portion of it.
869. Do you think that people would submit to paying an increased rate because of the 20 miles further haulage in order to send their goods over this proposed line to reach the Sydney market? Not to reach the Sydney market.
870. I mention that, because you said that the whole of the limestone would go to Sydney? I was talking of the limestone that did go to Sydney, as being one of the principal items.
871. Even if the Railway Commissioners were inclined to send that heavy traffic over this line, I do not think the consignors would consent to pay for 20 miles further haulage? No.
872. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Apart from this being a relieving line, can you indicate what direct traffic there would be from the Southern line to the coast line? Ores, to a very large extent, if this line were made. Ores that are now paying expenses in the Braidwood district at 10 and 15 dwt. per ton, with the most crude way of dealing with them, would be brought into profitable working at once by a better means of extraction.
873. Is there provision for better treatment of ores here than there is elsewhere? Undoubtedly.
874. Are there any other classes of goods that would come this way, or would there be any large passenger traffic? The passenger traffic, of course, would be principally tourist; and this being one of the most picturesque lines in New South Wales, would draw a great amount of traffic of that kind.
875. That traffic would be from the Southern line? Yes; to Dapto.
876. Would there be any additional goods traffic? Yes; coke and coal that are now blocked from going inland owing to the roundabout route through Sydney.
877. Could coal be supplied to places in the interior from the South Coast district cheaper than it can be from the Newcastle district? Yes; undoubtedly.

John Brown, Alderman, Central Illawarra, sworn, and examined:—

- J. Brown. 878. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you made yourself acquainted with the country between Robertson and Dapto? Yes.
- 1 Sept., 1900. 879. Where do you think the best junction would be for a line from Robertson—Albion Park or Dapto? I think Dapto; because I think that a tunnel could be driven through the mountain at West Dapto, immediately opposite where we are now.
880. Do you think that a fairly good grade could be secured? Yes; I have formed that opinion from a general knowledge of the mountain and the country through which the line would pass.
881. You have given this matter some consideration? Yes.
882. Would you kindly give the Committee the advantage of any knowledge you have that would assist them in coming to a determination in reference to the proposed continuation from Robertson to Dapto? I think, from my observation, that a tunnel could be driven through the mountain at West Dapto into a place called Fern Gully, and from there the line might be run to Mittagong. That has been my view for some years.
883. Would you kindly state any advantages that would be derived from the continuation of the line from Robertson? The advantages would be general. I think that a very large trade would be opened up between this district and the Southern districts, especially as regards bringing minerals to the smelting works at Dapto; and as the Government are now opening a harbour at Port Kembla, a trade would also be opened up between that port and the Southern districts.
884. Do you think that there is every probability of the line becoming self-supporting in the event of its construction? I think so.
885. You think that the carriage of minerals would form a large portion of the traffic? Yes. The passenger traffic would also be great. This line would, to some extent, relieve the line which runs now through Campbelltown and Liverpool. Passengers would travel this way to and from the Southern districts, which would be a relief to the present Southern line between Sydney and Mittagong, and the connection of the South Coast and southern lines would cause a great increase in the passenger traffic.
886. Is there anything else you would like to state? Nothing particular.

Charles]

Charles Henry Hayward, secretary, Smelting Company of Australia, Ltd., Dapto, sworn, and examined:—

887. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What position do you hold? I am the secretary for the Smelting Company of Australia, Ltd.

C. H.
Hayward.

888. Does the Company you represent do a large trade in ores? Yes.

889. From what part of the country do the ores principally come? They come from all over New South Wales and outside. 1 Sept., 1900.

890. But what are the principal directions they come from? The great bulk of the ores come from Broken Hill.

891. They come by steamer to Sydney? Yes.

892. Do you get any considerable quantity of ores from the Southern districts, *via* the Southern line? Yes; we get a considerable number of small lots.

893. Can you give us an estimate of the quantity in tons that you get annually from the southern districts? No, I cannot. I have come here suddenly this morning at the instance of the manager, who had to go away, and I had not time to get any figures on that point.

894. Do you think that there would be a very large quantity per annum coming from the southern districts? I have not really much of an idea at the present moment as to what would be the tonnage.

895. Do you think that, if the proposed railway from Bowral through Robertson to Dapto were constructed, the whole of the ore coming from the southern districts would come that way, instead of round *via* Sydney? Yes; I should certainly say so.

896. Are you aware of much trade that is likely to come from the Southern line to Dapto? The direction in which it would affect us most is as regards fluxes with which to treat the ore, and not the ore itself.

897. Would they come from places on the Southern line? Yes, from several points. The whole of our fluxes would come over this line. At present we are getting our ironstone from Carcoar; but if this line were made we would not get any more from Carcoar, but we would get our fluxes from either Picton, Mittagong, or Marulan, or from each of those three places.

898. Can you give us an estimate of the tonnage of that material which you use per annum? Roughly speaking, we use 10,000 tons of ironstone per annum.

899. Do you use any limestone? Yes; in round figures, 5,000 tons per annum.

900. From which direction does the limestone come? At present from Portland Siding, on the Mudgee line; but we would not get it from there if this line were made. We should certainly go to Marulan or Goulburn for our limestone.

901. Could you get it in quantity there? Yes.

902. Is there any other material in connection with your company you think would give traffic to this line? A certain quantity of lime would come from Goulburn, which does not come now.

903. Would that be an important item? Not a very great item.

904. Could you give us an estimate of the tonnage per annum? Perhaps 400 or 500 tons a year.

905. Is there any other company such as yours in Dapto? No.

906. Is there any other information you can furnish to the Committee with respect to any traffic that would be likely to pass over the proposed line? Only in general terms. I think that a great deal of ore would be brought to this district. Some very good districts would be tapped by this line, such as Cooma, Captain's Flat, Yass, and Gundagai. It would also bring in business from Wyalong, which originally supplied us with a great deal of ore, which we have, however, lost for some time past, on account of the railway freight. I understand that a line is going to be constructed to Wyalong. I do not know whether from Grenfell or from Temora, but in either case that would bring an increased quantity of ore to us. Certainly, if a line at the other end and one at this end were made, it would suit us very well to take a lot of the ore from Wyalong, and it would certainly tap a great many mining fields, and this would bring us an increased quantity of ore.

907. Do you think that it would be of mutual advantage to the mine-owners and to the company you represent to have this railway connection? Yes; because the greater the saving you can give the mine-owners in the way of railway freight, the more will they develop their output and send to you.

908. Have you calculated how much cheaper it would be to carry the ore over the proposed line than to bring it *via* Sydney? Yes; for instance, take ore from Temora, coming out of the Wyalong gold-field. At the present time the railway freight on that is 14s. 4½d. a ton, but with this proposed new line it would be about 9s. 7d.—that is a difference of 4s. 9d. a ton, which is a large consideration to get off the freight on the ore; and from other places it is the same in proportion, according to the distance.

909. Would any traffic from your company go from here to the Southern line? No; all our traffic outwards goes to Darling Harbour.

910. *Mr. Hyam.*] In mentioning the different sources from which you draw your ores, you did not mention Braidwood;—is Braidwood likely to be a contributor? Yes; Braidwood has given us a quantity of ore before, and it would be one of the places.

911. It is supposed that there are large quantities of low-grade refractory ores in the Braidwood district? Yes.

912. And naturally you think they would be trucked to Dapto? Yes.

913. In speaking of traffic outwards from here, do you think there would be any trade in coke from this district to the interior over the proposed line? I do not know where the coke would be consumed, if it went that way. Of course there are large coke-works here, but I do not know where they would find a market for coke over the proposed line.

914. Not for the different mines? The mines would not consume it, unless they had smelting works. Lithgow would not take coke from here, because it has its own coking-works in the neighbourhood, I understand.

Thomas Armstrong, farmer, Albion Park, sworn, and examined :—

- T. Armstrong.
1 Sep., 1900.
915. *Mr. Watson.*] You know the proposition before the Committee? I do.
916. And the suggestion that has been made that a line might be constructed from Dapto to join the Main Southern line, say, at Bowral? Yes.
917. Can you state in a general way what results might be expected to accrue from the construction of this line? The question of ores has been pretty fairly dealt with, therefore I need not go into that. Now that the Port Kembla Harbour Act Amendment Bill is practically law and a harbour will be constructed at Port Kembla, I anticipate that a very large quantity of wool, tallow, meat, and so on, which now has to go to Sydney, will come from the south and south-western districts to this district.
918. That will be for export, I presume? Yes; and in the near future this Illawarra district must be a large manufacturing district. We have the necessary coal, water, and building stone, and various ores, including iron ores. There will also be a very large local market in this district in the near future.
919. What for? All kinds of produce. I think that the farm produce grown in the Wingecarribee district will be a very considerable item of consumption in this district—fruit and vegetables of various kinds.
920. Are these not produced locally in sufficient quantities? No; we import a great deal. Even potatoes we do not grow locally except to a small extent. There is a large tract of timber reserves on the tableland, timber from which would find its way down to this district.
921. Is that timber suitable for export or for local consumption? Either.
922. Of what class is it? Hardwoods principally.
923. Would you state the kinds of hardwoods there are? Red-gum, spotted-gum, stringy-bark, some of the boxes, and some of the ironbarks. The country lying back there over the mountain is largely the watershed of the Sydney water supply, and a great deal of it would be invaluable for timber-growing, for I suppose we will go in largely for forestry there by and bye.
924. That being a water supply reserve, it would not be wise to go in for anything else there but timber-growing? That is my idea. It would not be possible to use that land for ordinary farming purposes. Even at present the farmers there are not allowed to run their cattle upon that land, because that would contaminate the water; but it could be utilised for timber-growing to a very large extent.
925. Do you think that it is likely that the producers of the southern district would send wool hither for export rather than send it to Sydney, where they can have a chance also with the local sales? I take it that Port Kembla will be an export port for a very large amount of our southern and south-western produce.
926. Is not the tendency rather to concentrate wool, for instance, in one market, with a view of submitting it locally for auction sale? There may be something in that; but the Sydney market trade appears to me to be getting congested, and while a considerable amount will go in that direction, there is always a considerable quantity exported.
927. Is there any produce that you think would be sent from here towards the interior by this line? Yes. The difference between the climate and soil of this district and the climate and soil of the tableland is so very marked that a considerable quantity of our produce would go up to places there. They cannot grow maize, but we can, and things that they can grow we can grow at a different season. There will be a constant interchange of produce between the tableland and this district. The principal population in this district now is the mining population, and we shall have a much larger population because of our mining and manufacture. I have just received a wire from a gentleman who lives at Shellharbour, and who runs a large pork and bacon business, regretting he cannot attend; but there will be a considerable trade of live stock in that direction.
928. From there to here? Sending it to here. We have the facilities for manufacturing here, and the conveniences of shipping and rail.
929. Is there any other feature that strikes you? I am not a military man, but it strikes me that, from a military point of view, some line like this is a necessity. There is scarcely a mile of this portion of the South Coast line that could not be shelled from the ocean. But with a connection between the South Coast line and the Southern line, and with the connection from Harden to Blayney on the Western line, assuming that any trouble came, the connection between the South Coast line and the Southern line would, in my opinion, be very valuable. As it is, our South Coast line might very easily be made useless; but if we had a connection with the Southern line, and then could connect with the Harden-Blayney line and the Western line, we would not be dependent on the South Coast line, as we are now.
930. Do you know of any better route than that suggested by Mr. Weber? I cannot say that I do. I have been a resident of this district for over forty years, and I think that Mr. Weber is about as good an authority on the question as we could get. He knows the district very well. I have travelled about with him a little in connection with the preparation of his report. As to the particular point where the two lines might converge, as a resident of Albion Park, I should say naturally that it should be there. But I know this is one of those cases where there is no local interest sufficiently strong to warrant the Department in bringing the line a mile this way or a mile that way.
931. Whichever suits the engineers best, I suppose, you would agree with? Yes. I do not think there is any local interest sufficiently large to divert it a mile from any particular point; but I should say that the further south it was the more trade it would get. For instance, Kiama, and places further south might send a lot of produce by rail to southern districts.
932. The further south you took it the less value it would be as a line to relieve the southern line, because that would give you a further round? I cannot see that it would. To get through the mountain you would have to go a considerable distance either north or south, in order to get a grade to come down by, and it is a question whether you might not have to go a little northward, and come back. It is an engineering question. I may say that I know that in the Marulan and Goulburn districts there is any quantity of limestone which would naturally come to this district. There are also the iron mines at Mittagong which has been opened, and afterwards closed for want of convenience of working, and there might be a large development there, where there is some of the best ironstone in the Colony. Locally we have ironstone and limestone of a class; but whether of any commercial value or not I cannot say. The timber question is a very important one, because in future large quantities of timber will be required here. The local supplies will hold out for a time, but eventually will give way.
933. Would the ironworks at Mittagong require to have coal brought from this district, or could they get it

it locally? I should say that it would pay them better to send their ore to us rather than establish such large works as otherwise would be required there. T. Armstrong.

934. And also rather than use the class of coal they have at Mittagong? They have tried it several times; but it was found not to be good enough, and the works were closed. Either the ore would be sent hither, or coal would be taken to Mittagong from here. Coal and coke, instead of going to the south and south-western districts from here *via* Sydney, would go direct by this line. 1 Sept., 1900.

William John Wiseman, Mayor, Wollongong, sworn, and examined:—

935. Mr. Hyam.] Do you know the route of the proposed railway from the South Coast line to Robertson, or near Robertson? I do not know the route, but I have travelled several times from Wollongong to Robertson *via* the Macquarie Pass and over the Bongbong Mountain. W. J. Wiseman.

936. Have you any knowledge of railway construction, from an engineering point of view? None whatever. 1 Sept., 1900.

937. You do not know whether the route is a practicable one or not? Only from hearsay.

938. Have you been present during the whole of the inquiry here since we commenced it;—did you hear the evidence given by previous witnesses as to the nature of the traffic this line would be likely to attract? I heard Mr. Armstrong say that it would, perhaps, attract the wool trade.

939. Do you think it would? Yes. I have been in the interior lately, as far as Cooma, and I know that large agencies there purchase wool, and I believe that if railway communication were made shorter and cheaper, and if the interior were practically brought nearer to a seaport, to which it is likely large steamers and other vessels would come, it is probable that eventually those agents would export their wool from such a port as Port Kembla.

940. Do you not think that it is very likely that those people who grow wool in the Cooma and other districts would send their wool to Sydney, because of its being a central market, where they might have the benefit of the local wool sales? Yes; but why could not they have wool sales at Port Kembla in the same way. I do not know why they should not. Port Kembla harbour, when it is completed, will be the best harbour in New South Wales. We have 36 feet of water there at low tide.

941. I suppose you are aware that wool sales were carried on at Newcastle some years ago? I have heard so.

942. You know that Newcastle is a port of considerable importance? Yes.

943. Do you know that they had to discontinue those sales? I am not aware of that. People used to send a large quantity of wool through Morpeth as well.

944. With all the wool that came from the north and north-west districts, still they could not carry on their wool sales successfully at Newcastle; and, in face of that, do you think it is likely that wool agents would establish a market here for the sale of wool? I suppose it depends upon the conveniences and whether it would pay the people who would do it. Of course, Port Kembla would make a good depôt for the wool, and a good place for exporting all kinds of produce.

945. Then you are very hopeful as to the possibilities of Port Kembla? Yes, I am.

946. When do you think Port Kembla will be completed? I do not see why its completion should take very long. We have stone right at the mouth of the breakwater, and if the Government here are like Governments are in other parts of the world, it will not take them long to run a breakwater out.

947. Have they commenced yet? I understood they could not commence until the matter was passed properly into law, and the amending Bill was passed only last week. When that harbour is completed we shall be able to float the largest ocean-going vessels in the world at present, and for years to come. They will not be able to take into Sydney such vessels as we could take in there. In going into Newcastle the depth of water is something like 22 feet; but the ocean-going vessels that carry wool carry something like 7,000 to 8,000 tons. Can those vessels get into Newcastle, and is it a wonder that the wool industry there failed.

948. Well, then, one big steamer would take the whole of the wool brought to Port Kembla? Perhaps it would. We have had in our port already a vessel of 8,000 tons. Independently of the wool, there is the mineral traffic. I was in Cooma recently, and found at Bushy Hill several mining industries that are stagnant because the cost of sending mineral to the smelting works either here or at Newcastle is really too much for them. The Monaro district is full of gold and other minerals, and I have no doubt that we should help to develop those mining industries if we could only shorten the distance of railway communication. I was speaking to some of the company there who own the mine, and they told me that they are sending the ore right to Newcastle now. I suppose there is sometimes a lot of red-tapeism about sending stuff to Newcastle from the interior, because of small detentions at Darling Harbour, or something of that kind; but if we had railway communication between here and the interior it would shorten the distance, it would cheapen the cost, and therefore it would help those industries. It would give increased employment there, and make it better for the Railway Commissioners and better for the country.

949. I suppose you are aware that the charges for conveying ores and fluxes are so low that, unless traffic of that class were augmented by some other class of traffic, it would not pay to construct a railway for the conveyance of that particular class of goods? Yes; but still that would be only one class. There is the wool, as well as many other things.

950. Do you think there would be any great augmentation of trade from other sources? Well, Federation is coming about, and we have such a large quantity of coal. Some time ago I took up the cudgels to fight against the Illawarra Lake Company when the Government were absolutely going to hand that lake over to the company. Over ten years ago I had more than 300 maps printed, and sent one to every member of Parliament. That map will show you that, even at that time, this railway was contemplated. That gives an idea of all the coal measures and the owners of the coal-mining properties. At that time, if I had not taken the matter up, the Government would have absolutely handed over that large sheet of water to that company. At that time we contemplated a railway from Moss Vale.

951. Was there not a strong contest between the Port Kembla Company and the proposed Illawarra Harbour Company;—was that not a great deal the cause of the fight? The people of Wollongong would try to help them along so long as they went on right lines.

952. Did you not give evidence before a Select Committee of the House? Yes, I did; and you will find that

W. J.
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that I did not offer any strong opposition to the lake, and I said that if the lake could be opened properly by that company I believed there would be room for both companies.

953. You have spoken of wool and ores;—do you think there would be any other traffic? Yes. The distance from Goulburn to Sydney will be shortened by this route. It is 86 miles from Moss Vale to Sydney, and only about 45 miles from here to Moss Vale. From Goulburn, Cooma, and other places on the Southern line, if people want to come to Wollongong, the distance will be shortened by 102 miles by their coming across by the proposed railway instead of going round by Sydney. So long as business people could depend on vessels coming to Port Kembla for goods, they would, in the course of time, have their imported goods brought to that port, especially if we had a train running up and returning; and if the people, not only of Goulburn, but also of other large centres, could shorten the distance, and thus save a few shillings, they would do it, and that would help this line by imports.

954. Do you think there would be any considerable trade in live stock from the Southern line to the coast line? There might be. People might go in for sending cattle home from a port in this district as they now do from Sydney.

955. I meant for local consumption;—where are you supplied from now? We could be supplied from there.

956. Do you think there would be any return traffic from the coast in the direction of the Southern line? There would be return traffic in regard to both coke and imports.

957. Were you here just now when the accountant for the Smelting Company gave evidence? Yes; but I was not listening.

958. Did you hear him say that it was not likely that great quantities of coke would be sent from here, but that ores would be brought hither for treatment? I did not hear him say that.

959. What do you think of that argument? I think it would be cheaper to bring the ores hither than to take the coke to the mines.

960. Even supposing that your argument holds water, that Goulburn and other places would get their goods from Port Kembla, would that not be starving the other line? I believe in decentralisation, and I think that in the course of a little time, with the advent of Federation, a city will spring up in Illawarra, and I believe that it will help the revenue of the country, and of the Railway Commissioners too. Sir William Lyne, in a speech in the House lately, said that a company were now prepared to start a large ironworks near Port Kembla; and he said that something like 100,000 people will be fed directly and indirectly by that.

961. At Port Kembla? Yes. It may, perhaps, seem a small thing.

962. I think it seems a very large thing? Well, it might take a thousand years to bring it about; but if they start ironworks in this district, a very large number of men will be employed. We have the coal and coke industries, and two more good coke industries are being started in Illawarra—one on the Mount Keira land and the other at Bellambi.

William Brownlee, farmer and miner, Tongarra, sworn, and examined:—

W. Brownlee. 963. *Chairman.*] Where is Tongarra? Four miles east of Robertson, close to the Macquarie Pass.

964. Are you a coal-miner or a gold-miner? I mined for about ten years on gold and copper, and for about twenty-five years I have been connected with coal-mines.

965. Do you carry on farming at your present residence? Yes; and coal-mining, too.

966. What is the extent of your agricultural operations? Mine is only a small dairy-farm.

967. Where do you generally send your produce to? Sydney.

968. By which way? By the South Coast line.

969. Do you corroborate in general the statements that have been made with respect to the anticipated traffic on this line? Some of them.

970. Would you state on what points you disagree with them? I do not disagree with much that has been said in regard to the anticipated traffic. But there is a great deal more traffic to come on this line than any gentleman has suggested this morning.

971. Will you kindly suggest what omissions have been made? There are large quantities of iron-ore on the South Coast, but we have no lime to smelt these ores.

972. This line you think would afford a means of obtaining the necessary fluxes? Yes; and in return we could send large quantities of coal and coke on to the Great Southern line.

973. What centres do you think would take coal and coke from here? It would be consumed at places on the Great Southern line. I could put "Illawarra" coal—coal obtained from a mine 16 or 18 miles from Illawarra—on the Great Southern line at Moss Vale, whereas at present the "Illawarra" coal has to be sent round *via* Sydney from Port Kembla and Wollongong, and also sent up the Southern line. Some years ago I was connected with a mine when we sent small coal to Mittagong to make iron, and it cost us as much to land 3 tons of small coal there from Illawarra, to make a ton of pig-iron, as they could land the pig-iron for on the Circular Quay. By the proposed line we could land this coal at Mittagong, where there are large quantities of iron ores. I have made iron from some of them for Mr. Lahiff. We could also fetch ore from Mittagong and mix it with our poorer ores. We have millions of tons of iron-ore in the Illawarra ranges that will go from 22 to 40 per cent.

974. How many tons of coal does it take, on the average, to smelt a ton of iron-ore? About 3.

975. Would it be cheaper, then, in all cases to carry the ore to the coal than to carry the coal to the ore? The ore should come to the coal by all means. That is the reason why the Mittagong ironworks were a failure so often.

976. Then your statement with respect to coal being despatched from this district to the Southern line did not refer to coal to be used for smelting purposes? Not for that alone, but also for commercial purposes. I have analyses from the Government Geologist and others, proving that at Tongarra we have some of the best coking coal in New South Wales, and a good seam of household coal also. The analyses show that some of the coal is of good coking quality. It has one of the smallest percentages of ash in the Colony.

977. Is there anything further you would like to say? With regard to the industries, there is most valuable cement-ore equal to making the best Portland cement. We had a gentleman there from Sydney some years ago, and I have brought a sample to show you. There are millions of tons of it at Tongarra. It is 40 feet thick, and I have traced it for some miles.

978.

978. Is there any other point you would like to bring before us? If this new line were to go by Albion Park, all this new industry could be brought into operation. W. Brownlee.
1 Sept., 1900.

979. *Mr. Watson.*] From what you say, it would appear that the coal that has been used hitherto at Mittagong—local coal—is not suitable for smelting purposes? The Mittagong coal is not suitable for making iron.

William Smith Thompson, farmer, Dapto, sworn, and examined:—

980. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you been farming for a long period in Dapto? Yes; I have been carrying on dairy-farming for the last forty years here. I have been about forty-five years in the district. W. S. Thompson.
1 Sept., 1900.

981. Do you endorse the statements generally that have been made this morning relating to the probable traffic on the proposed line? Yes; I believe there will be a large traffic, and that in the near future we will have a large population here. I also believe that produce will be brought from the interior for consumption here; and there is a good deal of iron back near Wingecarribee. One of the foundrymen and a few others, eight or ten months ago, found a very good seam of iron about 7 miles from where Mr. Weber said the railway would cross the mountain, near Mount Murray. I think there will be a good deal of traffic with coke. Mr. Wiseman said there would be no traffic with coke, but I think that coke and coal will be taken back. Mr. Brownlee did once supply the milk factory at Robertson with coal from Illawarra. I know the whole route, and I think that if ironworks were carried on here, there would be a large traffic in limestone coming from Marulan and other places on the Southern railway. When the Mittagong ironworks were being carried on, there was a very large cart traffic between Marulan and Moss Vale. I believe that in the near future we shall have a large population here engaged in mining, smelting, and so on.

982. Would the proposed line be likely to be used largely by the farming population in this district? Yes.

983. In which direction? I believe the Kangaroo Valley traffic would come this way, because the route would be much shorter.

984. Would that be a large traffic? Well, the Kangaroo Valley is a beautiful district and very prolific.

985. Do you think they would use this line? They send now to Bowral, but I believe they would send this way, because this route would be much shorter.

986. Which is your market for your produce? Sydney. Very few people grow any produce here for sale. Whatever green-stuff they do grow they mostly use for fodder.

George McPhail, farmer, West Dapto, sworn, and examined:—

987. *Chairman.*] You have given some consideration to the question of connecting the South Coast line with the Southern line by an extension of the proposed railway from Bowral to Robertson? I have; a good deal. G. McPhail.
1 Sept., 1900.

988. Can you supplement the evidence given this morning? I approve of the bulk of what has been said in regard to the traffic. I know that there is a considerable quantity of coal every year going from the Lithgow Valley mines to the principal towns along the Southern line, and if the South Coast line were connected with the Southern line coal would go from this district instead. I have been several times to Lithgow, and have a son-in-law who is a manager there, and I know that coal would go from here to the Southern line if this proposed railway were constructed. This district being a dairy district the fat stock consumed in it chiefly comes by rail, and instead of coming *via* Flemington the bulk of it would come by this proposed line if it were constructed.

989. Do you know from what districts the fat stock is mainly drawn for the supply of this district? A friend of mine, who has been butchering for the last fourteen years, has received some hundreds of head from Braidwood, which he had to travel by road over the mountain, as there was no good railway communication.

990. Would there be any traffic not mentioned this morning? I feel convinced that there would be a considerable quantity of fish going from Lake Illawarra up Goulburn way.

991. Any other point? As regards the traffic, I do not know that I can add anything to what has been already said.

992. You agree in the main with what has been said about the course of mineral traffic along the proposed line? Yes; I believe that that will certainly increase, because there is such a large quantity of poorer ores obtained on the Southern line which would not pay if sent through Sydney to be smelted here, whereas this short cut would enable those ores to be worked to a large extent. As regards the route, I am not a practical man, but I took two or three days, two or three months ago, in exploring at the back of the mountain here, and I believe that there are not many men living who are better acquainted with the whole of the country between Mittagong and the top of the mountain here than I am. Many years ago I had stock there, and knew every nook and corner of it. I ascertained from Mr. Weber, on his return from his exploration trip, that he had an idea of the railway going through the mountain at West Dapto. I agree with him that that would be the easiest place to tap the mountain, but I am not so much in favour of that as I am in favour of another locality, simply because the northern passage through the mountain would make the line at least 7 miles longer, and it would go through 8 miles of barren country. There are two spurs capping the mountain, one is called Marshall Mount Range, and the other is called Avondale Range, and there is a very large depression at the back of the mountain that could be got down into from the Robertson direction, or from any direction at the back there. To penetrate the mountain there would make the line 7 miles shorter, and my idea was that the line would be connected with the South Coast line between here and Yallah platform, about 3 miles from here.

Thomas Gillard, carpenter and builder, Dapto, sworn, and examined:—

993. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand you have had some mining experience? Yes.

994. You know the proposal to connect the Southern line with the Illawarra line? Yes. T. Gillard.
1 Sept., 1900.

995. Is there anything you would like to state in addition to what has been already stated, bearing on the question generally? Yes. I have here a sketch of the locality I propose to bring under your notice. It is on the Shoalhaven River, and I think that if the proposed railway were constructed it would be developed. It is all auriferous country, and abounds with reefs. It is about 15 miles from Marulan railway station. The ore would have to be trucked at Marulan, and as the cost of carriage would be materially lessened

- T. Gillard. lessened in consequence of the railway going across from here almost direct, it would give an inducement to companies to take up the reefs that exist in that locality.
- 1 Sept., 1900. 996. You think that they would send the ore to the Dapto Smelting Works if this line were constructed? Yes.
997. Is it ore that requires smelting for treatment? It does not necessarily require smelting; but to erect machinery there means an outlay of £10,000 at least, whereas by transmitting the ore to the smelting works here direct, you could avoid that great outlay, and there would be a bigger inducement held out to companies to go into the matter in consequence of not having to erect machinery there. If the railway were to be run direct to Dapto, that would be a great inducement for people to develop that country. As a matter of fact, I am now forming a company to take up reefs in that particular locality, with the object of transmitting the ore to these smelting works. Two years ago I wrote to the Mines Department in order to get information in reference to that locality. It abounds with reefs, and does not seem to be very well known, either to the mining community or to the Mines Department, and that country has been entirely neglected up to the present time. As far back as 1870, when I was a boy, I obtained prospects there equal to 3 oz. to the ton, and the ore to be obtained there would pay handsomely if it be brought to the smelting works, though not otherwise.
998. You think that the cost of carriage to the smelting works at the existing rate would be too great? It might not be too great even now; but the expense would, of course, be materially lessened by a railway running direct from here, and I am sure the back country would be developed in due course. Both sides of the river there for several miles is auriferous country—in fact, there are payable reefs within 11 miles of Marulan which I do not think are being worked now. There were some reefs opened there; but, in consequence of the cost of machinery and other things, they have been abandoned for the time-being. There are a number of reefs that show good assays; but they have never been properly opened up.
999. *Mr. Hyam.*] You mentioned the gold-reefs near the Shoalhaven;—that is commonly known as the Shoalhaven gullies, is it not? I refer particularly to Yellow Springs and Spring Creek.
1000. How far is that from the nearest point on the Southern railway? Very nearly 15 miles, I think.
1001. It is very mountainous country? Yes.
1002. And very broken? Yes.
1003. Would it not be difficult to get a road from those reefs into Marulan? No; it would not be very difficult. Although the country is mountainous, there is a way of making a road in between the mountains. It would not increase the length of the road very much, and you could get the ore out.
1004. Which way would you go then from the Shoalhaven? You would leave Spring Creek a little to the right in going from Yellow Springs, and you would then go *via* Croker's Creek.
1005. There would be a lot of heavy haulage, and the cost of taking ores from the Shoalhaven to Marulan would be considerable? Well, with 3 oz. to the ton, I think there is a very fair opening. At any rate, I have a company that intends to try it.

Patterson Bryen, dairy-farmer, Arondale, sworn, and examined:—

- P. Bryen. 1006. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you acquainted with the country pretty well from Dapto to Robertson? Passably well; but not particularly well. I have been along the road through Macquarie Pass to Moss Vale, and other places.
- 1 Sept., 1900. 1007. You have a fairly good knowledge of the country? Yes.
1008. What is your opinion as to the desirability of constructing a railway from Bowral, *via* Robertson, to Dapto? I think that the line would be a payable line. It would go through fertile country all along, except, perhaps, a few miles on the top of the mountain, and I consider would develop the mineral wealth of the locality. I quite agree with the last evidence given, because I myself have been prospecting in the Marulan district for minerals.
1009. You have heard the evidence that has been given? I have heard what was said by Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Weber, and I concur in that.
1010. Is there anything you could add to it? Nothing, except that I consider that our coal on the mountain is equal to any coal above us. I have prospected on my own property, and have spent about £300. As far as I have gone, I have found a coal which is as satisfactory as any coal that has been produced in the coast district.
1011. Do you think there would be a considerable quantity of coal required on the Southern line, in the event of this railway being constructed? I certainly do. The smelting works here are a great boon to our district, and I think that this railway would help the district very materially.

Carl Peterson, storekeeper, Dapto, sworn, and examined:—

- C. Petersen. 1012. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you considered the proposal to construct a line of railway from Bowral to the Illawarra line, near Dapto? I have heard all the evidence that has been given before the Committee to-day.
- 1 Sept., 1900. 1013. What is your opinion concerning it, as regards traffic? In regard to traffic, it is a line that eventually would be bound to pay, inasmuch as the Government are constructing a harbour at Port Kembla. That I consider is an inducement to connect the Southern line and the coast line.
1014. Do you think it would pay in the near future? Yes; in the very near future.
1015. You have heard evidence given to-day by a number of witnesses concerning the traffic and other matters in connection with the proposal;—do you endorse generally what was stated by the previous witnesses? Yes, I do. Perhaps the country from the coast inland might not turn out so good as has been anticipated; but I maintain that the coal trade on the South Coast is growing very extensively, and with the construction of this cross railway there will certainly be a very large opening for an additional coal-field. The coal-field I mean is over the mountain. It has not been properly prospected or really proved beyond that we know that under the mountain we have a coal of better quality than the coal on the face of the mountain.
1016. When you say over the mountain, what do you refer to? The table-land. There are Government reserves and mineral leases to a large extent.

C. Peterson.
1 Sept, 1900.

1017. Would that coal be sent to the Southern line? Not from immediately over the mountain here.
1018. How far from here or from the Southern line? To the mountain from here is 3 miles; from the base of the mountain for 10 miles west good coal exists.
1019. Would that coal be as good as the coal obtained on the coast? Yes.
1020. Do you think there would be much trade in coal from here to the Southern line? No; I do not think there would be a great deal of coal trade from here south. There would certainly be some; but when I referred to the opening of that coal-mine I meant for export trade.
1021. Could they not send that coal by the Southern line? They could, but only at a bigger expense to an export port in taking it through Sydney.
1022. But I mean for places on the Southern line? It would be cheaper coal for places down south than people there could get from Lithgow or Newcastle or from the Southern mines now in operation.
1023. Then there would be no traffic in coal from the coast to the Southern line in the event of that mine being opened up? Yes, some; but no material traffic. I referred to it merely for export business. Coal would be carried by this new route over the mountain to Port Kembla for export purposes. If the proposed railway were constructed along Mr. Weber's route, it would follow the mountain out towards Avondale, a distance of 7 or 8 miles, to get a good grade; and on the face of the mountain there are coal-mines now, and people are only waiting an opportunity to open these mines, particularly in view of the completion of Port Kembla. There is a property under offer in Melbourne, which will probably be floated very soon, known as Wongawilli.
1024. Is there any other source of traffic you think of that has not been mentioned by previous witnesses? Yes; there is one kind of traffic that I consider, in the course of a few years, would be very considerable for this railway. I refer to the cattle trade that would come from the Southern line and the meat-export trade. From the Southern line a quantity of live stock goes now to Sydney, and is treated at various refrigerating works around Sydney. The live-stock could be carried right down over the mountains, and there are good pastures near the mountains in which cattle could be rested and refreshed before being killed for the export trade. It is better for cattle before being killed to be rested and refreshed, and I do not know of any place, either on the Newcastle side or about Sydney, where such pastures can be obtained as those on the South Coast.
1025. Do you think that that would mean a considerable traffic for this railway? Yes. I maintain that that would be a very considerable traffic in the course of years. I do not say that it would be an immediate trade.
1026. Is there anything you wish to add? Seeing that the Government are about to construct a harbour at Port Kembla, it seems to me that this railway in conjunction with that harbour would create trade in itself. In the four Colonies there is no port as good as Port Kembla will be for boats of very deep draught. Now, vessels with very deep draught have some difficulty in entering either Sydney harbour or Newcastle harbour, but in that respect there would be no difficulty at Port Kembla. Thirty-five or 40 feet is no question there, and, in view of what is promised in connection with that harbour, I think that the construction of a railway of this kind is absolutely necessary, and eventually, if not in the near future, I think that it will have to come about.

[One plan.]

RAILWAY FROM BOWRAL TO ROBERTSON

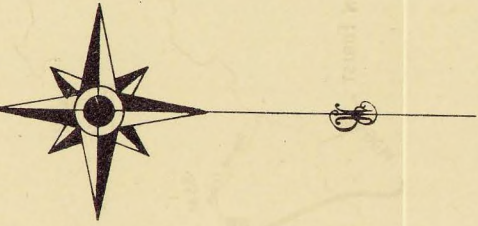
Diagram

Plan

Scale 4 Miles to One Inch

H. Deane

Engineer-in-Chief
for Railway Construction,
27-11-00.



1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

THIRD REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

TEMORA TO WYALONG.

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

Printed under No. 14 Report from Printing Committee, 11 October, 1900.

SYDNEY : WILLIAM APPLGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEB, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM TEMORA TO WYALONG.

THIRD REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is expedient the proposed railway should be constructed; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (IV), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly :—

REASON FOR THE PRESENT REFERENCE.

1. The present reference to the Committee, to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Temora to Wyalong, was consequent upon the resolution passed by the Committee in their further inquiry respecting the proposed Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong,—that it was not expedient that proposed work should be carried out, as, in the Committee's opinion, a line from Temora to Wyalong was preferable.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RAILWAY.

2. The proposed line, which would be 41 miles 48 chains in length, is officially described as an extension of the Cootamundra to Temora branch railway, and would proceed north-north-westerly, occupying one side of the main road, to within $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Barmedman, at which point it would diverge slightly to the north, and after crossing the main road, and passing Barmedman on its western side, would again follow the main road generally to Wyalong, where, passing south of the township, it would end at the southern side of West Wyalong. The works would be light, and the ruling gradient 1 in 100. The land passed through would be almost entirely Crown land. The line is longer than that submitted on the previous occasions when it was under inquiry. In those cases it terminated at the Government township, or East Wyalong; as now proposed, it is extended to the private township, or West Wyalong.

ESTIMATED COST.

3. When previously considered the estimated total cost of the line, when first referred, was £104,430, or £2,707 per mile, and on the second reference £92,000, or £2,300 per mile; it is now £126,810, or £3,048 per mile, the increase being due to the higher prices ruling at present for rails and fastenings, and to extra station accommodation.

In

In 1895, when this line was last before the Public Works Committee, the price of rails was £4 10s. per ton delivered in Sydney; it is now £7 10s., which, the Engineer-in-Chief explains, means that the rails and fastenings add to the cost to the extent of about £360 per mile. The requirements of the Railway Commissioners with respect to station buildings and other accommodation, which are greater now than originally contemplated in connection with pioneer lines, are also, the Committee understand, responsible for some of the increased cost. Platforms on lines of this nature are made 2 feet 9 inches above the rails, though the late Mr. Eddy thought a height of 9 inches sufficient; and the extra height, in addition to cost of material, means, in many instances, extra cost of earthworks. Instead of dead-end sidings at platforms, loops are provided; and the station buildings, waiting-sheds, goods sheds, and platforms are more commodious, and, although of a cheap class, generally better than at first contemplated. All this, it is pointed out in the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief, materially adds to the cost of a railway.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

4. As the question of a railway to Wyalong from Temora was very fully inquired into on three previous occasions, the Committee did not consider it necessary to take much evidence in the present inquiry, and they, therefore, examined only official witnesses. The list comprised the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, who supplied the necessary details relating to the construction of the railway; the Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, who produced the Railway Commissioners' report on the proposal, and gave evidence with regard to the present traffic prospects of the line; an officer from the Government Statistician's Department, and the Government Astronomer, in respect to population, production, and rainfall in the districts that would be within the influence of the railway; and the Chief Inspector of Mines, with reference to the present condition of mining at Temora, Reefton, Barmedman, and Wyalong.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

5. The Railway Commissioners, in their report, estimate the annual cost connected with the line at £8,242, which comprises interest at 3 per cent. on the capital expenditure, £3,804, and maintenance, traffic, and locomotive expenses, based upon a train service every week-day, £4,438; and the annual revenue at £5,715, made up of merchandise and live stock, £2,980, and passengers, parcels, and mails, £2,735. These figures show that the working expenses are exceeded by revenue to the extent of £1,277. The Commissioners say that the time has arrived when Wyalong should be afforded the advantages of railway communication, but they are still of opinion that the connection should be with Grenfell.

• TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

6. A report by the Chief Traffic Manager to the Railway Commissioners states that there has recently been considerable agricultural development within a radius of 20 miles of Temora, in the neighbourhood of Reefton and Barmedman, and also an increase in the Wyalong district since the consideration of the Grenfell-Wyalong railway proposal. The intermediate traffic between Temora and Wyalong, which was not an important factor at the time the railway question was dealt with in 1894 and 1895, is now deserving of consideration. Altogether, there are about 23,000 acres of cultivation to be served at the following trucking stations:—

Reefton, 12 miles from Temora	...	...	...	11,000 acres
Barmedman, 22 miles from Temora	...	...	...	5,000 "
Wyalong 42 " "	...	...	...	7,000 "
				23,000 acres

These figures relate to land under cultivation or cleared ready for the plough. It may, however, be confidently expected that the construction of the line will lead to further large areas being placed under cultivation. The bulk of the cultivation shown for Reefton is, it is pointed out, within 14 miles of the existing line at Temora, but it will be better served at Reefton.

Wyalong

Wyalong is reported to be in a very prosperous condition, the amount of gold having increased every year, and reached, in 1899, as large a quantity as 44,675 oz., valued at £178,700. Assuming that Wyalong will retain its present population, the following is the Chief Traffic Manager's estimate of the traffic that will be obtained by the railway :—

Goods, 4,120 tons	...	...	...	...	...	£1,532
Wool, 1,982 tons	...	...	...	...	...	595
Agricultural produce, 7,700 tons	...	...	...	...	...	601
Live stock, 600 trucks	...	...	...	...	...	252
						<hr/>
13,802 tons			600 trucks			£2,980
Passenger traffic	...	...	...	...	...	£1,881
Parcels and other coaching	...	...	...	...	...	350
Mails	...	...	...	...	...	504
						<hr/>
						£2,735
						<hr/>
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£5,715

REASONS FOR SUPPORTING THE ROUTE FROM TEMORA TO WYALONG AS AGAINST THAT FROM GRENFELL TO WYALONG.

7. The Committee repeat the reasons given by the majority, in the last Report upon the proposed Railway from Grenfell to Wyalong, for their preference for the Temora route as against the Grenfell route :—

- (1) It is considerably shorter than the route from Grenfell to Wyalong.
- (2) It will cost £45,000 less.
- (3) It will serve a larger population.
- (4) It will open up a larger area of land suitable for close agricultural settlement.
- (5) It will serve the mineral area around Rcefton and Barmedman.
- (6) It will preserve existing trade relations.
- (7) It will allow the residents of the districts affected an opportunity of trading indifferently with either Sydney or Melbourne.
- (8) It will facilitate the transfer of stock in times of drought from the west to the high country about Gundagai and Tumut.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

8. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings :—

Mr. Hyam moved,—“ That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is expedient the proposed Railway from Temora to Wyalong, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Levien, and passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 4.		Noes, 3.
Mr. Dick,	|	Mr. Shepherd,
Mr. Hyam,	|	Dr. Garran,
Mr. Watson,	|	Mr. McFarlane.
Mr. Levien.	|	

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 2 October, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM TEMORA TO WYALONG.

WEDNESDAY, 22 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] I understand you have a statement you desire to read to the Committee in respect to this inquiry? Yes; I have a statement prepared by the Under Secretary on the proposal now before the Committee. It reads as follows:—

H. Deane.
22 Aug., 1900.

RAILWAY FROM TEMORA TO WYALONG.

The proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration on the 9th August, 1900, in the following terms:—"That it be again referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Temora to Wyalong."

The question of providing the important mining district of Wyalong with railway facilities has been frequently before the Public Works Committee during the last six years.

The first proposal was, as now, to extend the line from Temora; but after due inquiry the then Committee resolved, in May, 1894, to defer their decision thereon for a period of six months. On the proposal being again brought up, the proposal was, in June, 1895, negatived by the Committee on the following grounds:—

- (1.) That the population of Wyalong alone does not justify such an expenditure.
- (2.) That the successful development of the field depends largely upon a permanent water supply which, at present, is not in existence.
- (3.) That the policy of the Government with regard to the leasehold areas in its vicinity has not yet been disclosed.
- (4.) That the Parkes-Condobolin line having been approved by the Committee, an extension, *via* Wyalong, can no longer be regarded as a line to tap the western country.

After an interval of four years the question of railway extension to Wyalong was again referred by Parliament to the Committee, the fresh proposal being to extend the line from Grenfell to Wyalong.

In the course of that inquiry, the question of the route from Temora had also careful consideration by the Committee, as being a rival of that from Grenfell, and they reported that much could be said in its favour, as being shorter, cheaper in cost, and passing through mostly good agricultural land. The Committee, however, approved by a majority of one, of the Grenfell route; but on their report being submitted to Parliament, the Legislative Assembly saw fit to refer back the proposal to the Committee, "because the matter had not received sufficient consideration."

The Committee, whose *personnel* had meanwhile been subject to some changes, after a second inquiry resolved, by a majority of one, that the proposal should not be carried out, "as, in the opinion of the Committee, a line from Temora to Wyalong was preferable."

Consequent on this resolution, the Minister felt compelled to ask the Legislative Assembly to refer the present proposal to the Committee, namely, a railway from Temora to Wyalong, which will form the basis of a line to Hillston.

The official description of the proposed railway:—

Length, 41 miles 48 chains; estimated cost, £126,810, or £3,048 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.

This line is an extension of the Cootamundra to Temora branch railway, and begins at 291 miles 63 chains 54 links from Sydney, and proceeds north-north-westerly, occupying one side of the main road to within 4½ miles of Barmedman, where it diverges slightly to the north, and passing that township on its western side, again follows the main road to Wyalong at 330 miles; here the line bends westward, passing south of the township, and ends at the southern side of West Wyalong, at 333 miles 31 chains 54 links.

The works are light, and the ruling gradient is 1 in 100. The line passes almost entirely through Crown land.

The following is the statutory report of the Railway Commissioners submitted to the Committee in 1894-1895:—

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE COOTAMUNDRA-TEMORA BRANCH LINE TO WYALONG.

(1)—B.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 11 May, 1894.

In reply to your letter of the 29th March, I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to inform you, for the information of the Secretary for Public Works, that they have, at the earliest possible moment (having regard to other pressing matters of business), inspected the proposed extension from Temora to Wyalong.

It is estimated that the line should, if constructed as a pioneer line, as described by the Commissioners, in a paper dated the 10th October, 1892, and referred to in their annual report for the year ending June, 1891, be made, and all necessary accommodation provided, at a cost of £85,000.

H. Deane.
22 Aug., 1900.

The estimated annual cost would, under these circumstances, be—

Interest on estimated cost of construction, at 4 per cent.	£3,400
Estimated cost of working :—	
Traffic expenses	800
Permanent way expenses	2,000
Locomotive expenses.....	750
	3,550
	£6,950

As regards the probable revenue, really nothing definite can be stated. In railway construction the proposal, from a traffic point of view, is unique, as the future entirely depends upon the permanency of the gold-field at Wyalong, which it is understood, is the basis of the extension. There is country adapted for agricultural purposes around Wyalong, and *en route* thereto; but there is no present necessity for providing it with railway communication, while there are large areas suitable for the purpose contiguous to existing railway lines available.

The present population of Wyalong (about 5,000) cannot be accepted as any indication of the future. Everything there at the present may be said to be in an abnormal condition, as was the case at Peak Hill, where, it is understood, there were, when the field was first discovered, 12,000 people, the present population being 1,500; however, basing the estimate of traffic on the assumption that there will be a permanent settlement at Wyalong, to the extent that now exists at Temora—about 1,800—the value of the annual revenue will not exceed £2,800.

In view of the great uncertainty of the future of Wyalong, the Railway Commissioners recommend that the proposed extension of the Cootamundra-Temora branch line be deferred for six months, or until such time as there can be no reasonable doubt as to the future of the place.

I am to add that the Commissioners have ascertained that both passengers and goods are being carried at reasonable rates between Temora and Wyalong; and, therefore, no hardship would be consequent upon the postponement suggested.

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

2—(B.)

Government Railways of New South Wales, Secretary's Office, Sydney, 15 May, 1895.

In reply to your letter of the 14th instant, requesting a further report from the Railway Commissioners as to the proposed extension of the railway line from Temora to Wyalong, for the information of the Secretary for Public Works, I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to state that little can be added to the information conveyed by my letter of 11th May, 1894—copy attached. Twelve months' experience of the gold-fields and its requirements had not indicated anything to warrant a change of opinion as to the probable result of the extension of the line.

The population was at that date estimated at 5,000, and at the present time it does not equal that number; and the output of gold for the twelve months ending 15th March last—the date of the latest information before the Commissioners—was 7,328 oz., which does not indicate a large field, or evidence of extensive working.

The Public Works Department have placed the worst portions of the road in fair order, and the cost of carriage between Temora and Wyalong is as low as 15s. per ton, passenger fares being equally reasonable, and there does not appear to be any great disability, consequent upon the want of railway communication.

The question of the extension, moreover, would appear to a very large extent to affect local interest only, as the course of traffic from the outlying districts would, it is thought, be better served by the extension of a line in another direction than *via* Wyalong.

The present requirements and those of the near future of the gold-field are reasonably met, and the probable results would not, in the Commissioners' opinion, warrant their recommending that the line be undertaken.

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

In view of the present improving conditions of Wyalong as a mining district as compared with five years ago, and of the increased estimate of cost, the Railway Commissioners have been asked to furnish a further report on this proposal.

The details of cost are stated as follows :—

TEMORA TO WYALONG.—*Permanently staked line.*

23 March, 1900.

ESTIMATED cost of a single line of railway 41 miles 48 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100. Sharpest curve, 20 chains radius.—New fastenings; new 4 feet 6 inch T.Os.; $\frac{1}{4}$ ballast. Sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.			Average per mile.
	£	s.	d.	
Earthworks	9,162	5	10	220
Timber bridges	4,856	0	0	117
Level crossings, cattle stops, fencing, and road diversions	3,079	0	0	74
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 5s. per ton).....	25,910	4	3	623
Freight	5,819	8	0	140
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £4,270 18s. 8d.	24,588	6	2	591
$\frac{1}{4}$ ballasting, at 4s. = £3,660 16s.				
Sleepers, at 3s. 3d. = £16,656 11s. 6d.				
Station works, including sidings	11,538	14	0	277
Station buildings, passenger station, £1,212; waiting shed, £720; platforms, £888; loading banks, £780; goods sheds and platforms, £900; station-master's houses, £1,224; 20-ton weighbridges, £504; cranes, £636; trucking-yards, £1,536; carriage-shed, £240; engine-shed and pit, £840; turntable, £660; coal stage, £204	10,284	0	0	247
Water supplies	3,000	0	0	72
Gradient and mileage posts	686	8	0	17
Telegraph	686	8	0	17
Miscellaneous.....	1,000	0	0	24
	£100,610	14	3	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	15,091	5	9	363
	£115,702	0	0	2,781
Add for extra cost of rails and fastenings at £7 10s. and £13 2s. per ton respectively.....	11,108	0	0	.....
Total cost	£126,810	0	0	3,048

2. Have you anything yourself to add to that statement? I may say that the line is longer than the one submitted before. It goes to the private township. The first two lines submitted stopped at the Government township.

3. Is there any other variation in the line now submitted as compared to the one submitted before? No; there is no alteration. The location of the line is the same. The cost is considerably higher; and that

is

is due to the higher price of rails and fastening, and the extra siding accommodation. I think that is pretty well all. Of course, we are paying higher wages now.

H. Deane.
22 Aug., 1900.

4. Would you describe this as being a light line? Yes; it is a light line—an unballasted line. You see by the summation of the first six items that this line is of the same character as those we have had before. The cost of the running road would be £1,765 per mile. You cannot expect to make earthworks much under £200 per mile. The cost of the permanent-way materials and freight is absolutely fixed; then there is the cost of hauling. In the estimate the sleepers may prove to have been a little higher in price than necessary; if so, there would be a saving in that respect.

5. *Mr. Watson.*] If you could get sleepers there you would not have to pay much freight? No; if we have a free hand, there will be a saving.

6. *Chairman.*] Do the same remarks apply to this line as to the Bogan Gate—Bulbodney line with respect to increased estimate for station buildings and appliances? The requirements of the Railway Commissioners with respect to buildings and other accommodation and incidental expenses are higher than originally contemplated for these pioneer lines.

6½. Is there any other reason for the higher cost per mile? If reference is made to the estimate submitted to the Committee, when they last considered this proposal, on the 22nd May, 1895, it will be seen that rails then were very low. They were then £4 10s., delivered in Sydney. They are now £7 10s. The last rails ordered cost us that. That means that rails and fastenings would add an additional cost to the line of about £360 to the mile.

7. *Mr. Watson.*] How does the cost of the Temora to Wyalong proposal compare per mile with the Grenfell to Wyalong line? If the Committee will allow me, I will submit a comparative estimate at a future meeting.

8. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you of opinion that cross lines are more useful than parallel lines? As a general rule, parallel lines are the best. On the whole, they give shorter distances to the central port.

9. But they are likely to cut up the country to more advantage? Yes; I think that may be admitted.

10. With regard to the expense, the line *via* Grenfell could not be constructed at a less cost per mile than one from Temora to Wyalong? I would not like to say; but I propose, with the Committee's sanction, to answer Mr. Watson's question by submitting a comparative statement showing the cost of both lines.

11. Would you care to give an opinion as to whether the line from Grenfell to Wyalong would leave the larger portion of country unserved, that is, presuming the line from Grenfell to Wyalong will never be constructed? I do not think I could give an opinion on that which would be of any value to the Committee, because I have not really studied the country.

12. But you express an opinion that you consider parallel lines preferable to cross lines? As a rule, I have no doubt about it.

13. *Dr. Garran.*] These additional stations and accommodations that are required, are they mostly at the terminal points, or are they at little local roadside platforms? It makes a difference to local roadside platforms as well as to the terminus. As I explained to the Committee the other day with regard to other lines, all the station requirements have been increased in every case.

14. Even to the platforms? Even to the platforms. Instead of dead-end sidings we have loops now; the station buildings, waiting sheds, and goods sheds, and platforms are more commodious; they are of a better class, although of still a cheap class; they are better and more commodious than I was allowing for previously on the estimates on the basis of what Mr. Eddy himself laid down. I think the Railway Commissioners have come to the conclusion that the accommodation previously asked for was a little too small.

15. Taking the platforms we have on the Western line, for instance, are your platforms going to be like those? I think they would be about the same class of stations.

16. Would the stations, for instance, be anything like the Springwood station? I do not think they would be anything like the Springwood station.

17. Could you name a station as a pattern one? No, not exactly; but I can show the Committee the diagram plans of the station buildings and explain the difference between what is now proposed and what was proposed originally. It was after Mr. Eddy came here that pioneer lines were talked about. They were to have low platforms about 9 inches above the rails. We are now making in every case platforms 2 feet 9 inches above the rails, so that in addition to the cost of material there is in many instances an extra cost for earth works. Most of these lines are not in cuttings; but are embankment lines. The foundations of the buildings have consequently to be raised. Then again the buildings are more commodious. They may be of the same class; but the dimensions are larger. The overhanging of the roof is greater. That applies especially to certain classes of passenger stations, shelter sheds, and so on, and also to goods sheds. They all have a wider overhang, and the platform attached to the goods shed is wider. That all means extra expense.

18. Are the stations you propose on the Temora to Wyalong line going to be more expensive than on the line to Moree? Yes. No doubt the changes are good; but these small items all help to mount up the cost.

19. *Chairman.*] It seems on a review of the estimates of station buildings and station accommodation that from the time when these pioneer lines were mooted by Mr. Eddy there has been a steady increase of accommodation, and consequently a steady increase of cost? Yes.

20. At whose instance is this increased accommodation placed on the estimates? At the instance of the Railway Commissioners.

21. Do you think as a matter of railway policy it is a good thing in regard to these developing lines to make the requirements for passengers and goods at stations as commodious or extensive as on lines that serve highly-developed districts? No, that would not be wise.

22. Can you state what the practice in other countries is in the case of lines built for the purpose of developing the country? The practice is to put down just as much as you want at the time, and leave room for the rest to be added when required.

23. If that course were pursued here it would considerably lower the cost per mile for construction? I do not think it would.

24. Would it not mean a lower cost per mile? I think it is very likely that a railway company which is not so immediately answerable to the public as a governmental body is would not put up things so extensively. They would try to do with a good deal less at first. At the same time, I think, a good deal

of

H. Deane. of the expenditure which the Commissioners now ask for is very well laid out. I think, according to the first ideas, the accommodation was a little too small, too cramped. I think Mr. Eddy would have acknowledged that himself. A case in point is the Moree station. That was declared to be, soon after it was opened, too cramped.

22 Aug., 1900.

25: Was it not one of the peculiar circumstances in connection with the Moree line that the traffic was far greater than was anticipated before the line was constructed? Yes.

26. Have you had similar experience in any other part of the Colony? No, I do not think so.

MONDAY, 27 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D. | ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong.

William Henry Hall, Sub-editor, Statistical Year Books, Government Statistician's Department, sworn, and examined:—

W. H. Hall.
27 Aug., 1900.

27. *Chairman.*] You have some statistical information to submit to the Committee with regard to the proposed line of railway from Temora to Wyalong? Yes. As supplementary to the evidence I gave about twelve months ago, I have brought the returns down for the past year. The statistics are drawn from an area of about 20 miles from each side of the proposed line.

28. Do your figures include the return from Hillston? Yes.

29. How far is that from the Wyalong line? I was asked simply to continue my figures which I furnished last year, and to bring them down to the latest date. My figures last year included Hillston. If you exclude Hillston you have the influence of the line only as far as Wyalong.

30. Do the Hillston figures seriously affect the total result? So far as results are concerned they do not, because the wheat yield is only about 1½ bushels to the acre.

31. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What was the yield in previous years, say in 1897? About 8 bushels to the acre; then in 1898 it was only a trifle over a bushel.

32. *Chairman.*] Now, will you read to the Committee the returns you have prepared? The estimated population that will be served by the construction of the proposed line from Temora to Wyalong, and thence to Hillston, is as follows:—Morangarell, 610; Reefton, 440; Barmedman, 790; Wyalong, 3,500; Ungarie, 400; Yalgogrin, 280; Hillston, 1,340—total, 7,360. The mineral production for the district is as follows:—Barmedman, 1,172 oz. of gold, of the value of £4,542; Reefton, 340 oz. of gold, of the value of £1,340; Wyalong and Wyalong West, 44,675 oz. of gold, of the value of £178,700; Yalgogrin, 1,060 oz. of gold, of the value of £4,240. The cultivation returns are shown in the following table:—

STATEMENT showing the area under cultivation, and yield therefrom, for the year 1899.

District	Cultivation.														Area under—	
	Total area cultivated.	Wheat.		Maize.		Other grains.	Hay—area cut.						Green food.			
		Wheat.		Maize.			Wheaten.		Oatcn.		Lucerne.					
		Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.		Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.	Area.	Yield.		Potatoes.	Other crops.	
	acres.	acres.	bushels.	acres.	bushels.	acres.	acres.	tons.	acres.	tons.	acres.	tons.	acres.	acres.		
Morangarell	5,381	4,204	23,570	..	..	8	1,081	559	..	..	..	..	..	..
Reefton	6,585	4,940	6,561	..	..	..	1,645	1,074	..	..	..	..	..	..
Barmedman	9,255	5,783	30,050	..	..	..	3,402	1,238	60	20	..	..	1	9
Wyalong	4,147	1,605	4,220	12	..	12	2,518	431	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ungarie	4,165	1,837	7,524	..	..	..	2,321	632	..	..	7	..	..	..
Yalgogrin	423	6	48	..	..	..	417	119	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hillston	12,480	5,221	8,873	..	..	..	7,235	725	..	..	..	..	..	24

Henry Chamberlaine Russell, C.M.G., Government Astronomer, sworn, and examined:—

H. C. Russell,
C.M.G.
27 Aug., 1900.

33. *Chairman.*] Can you furnish the Committee with any particulars of the rainfall over that part of the country which will be served by the proposed railway line from Temora to Wyalong? Yes; I have some figures which will give you the information. At Morangarell, just near the starting-point, the average rainfall is 21·64 inches; at Barmedman it is 19·32 inches. There are very few stations actually on the line. Wyalong has only about four years' record, which give an average of 18·64 inches; Blow Clear is just about on the line; it has an average of 17·42 inches. Ungarie, a little north of the line, has 17·48 inches. Youngara, a little further south, has 17·50 inches. A few miles north of that comes Murrumbogie, with an average of 21·34 inches; that is about 10 miles north of Youngara. The record for Naradhan extends over twenty years, and that place has an average of 18·97 inches. Cudgellico has an average of 17·24 inches. The records for that place extend over about sixteen years. Yarawa, a little north of the line, has an average of 22·46 inches. The record for that place extends over about sixteen years. Hillston, with a record for thirteen years, has 15·61 inches. There is no other station immediately adjacent to Hillston; but at Yathong, about 15 miles west of it, there is an average rainfall of 14·94 inches. At Cowl Cowl, a little further down the river from Hillston, the average is 14·98 inches. The stations I have enumerated are all within a moderate distance of the proposed railway line.

34. Would it be difficult to give any general idea of the character of the rainfall in that district as a whole? It is getting into the margin of 16 inches, you see. The average at Hillston would only be about

about 16 inches, even if it were so much—that is, if you took in all the stations around it. The distribution is fairly good; but it is getting into the most uncertain country we have; it is going so far west.

H. C. Russell,
C.M.G.

35. What is the average rainfall at Temora;—did you give us that? It is 20·29 inches.

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36. From what you know of the district, is it more subject to drought than other parts of the western country? No, not more so.

37. I think you indicated that Wyalong had only about four years' record of rainfall? Yes. Barmedman, immediately under it, has thirteen years' record, showing an average of 19·32 inches. Marsden's is too far to the east, but it has a rainfall of 19·72 inches.

38. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you consider the rainfall sufficient to carry on agriculture in that district? So far as my own opinion is concerned, I do not think it is. I do not think a rainfall which averages only 16 inches is sufficient to make satisfactory progress in wheat-growing. Of course, if wheat-growing was limited to seasons when the rainfall is abundant, its cultivation would be safe enough; but such seasons as we have had during the last four or five years would not be sufficient.

39. Do you think that there will be occasional years of failure? Yes. It seems to me that wheat-growing is limited to districts where the rainfall exceeds 16 inches. If the rainfall gets much below 16 inches there is not much hope for the industry.

40. Have you any record of excessive rainfall in this district? Yes.

41. Have excessive rainfalls been frequent? No; very heavy storms that affect that part of the Colony are far apart.

42. Do you think that any other produce could be grown with a lighter rainfall? I am afraid my opinion would not be of much value in that respect, because I do not know much about agriculture; but I think this: if the rainfall of abundant years could be conserved, many of the difficulties of the drought could be got over.

43. Would that apply to agriculture? Yes.

44. You mean by irrigation? Yes.

45. For stock purposes, do you think the rainfall sufficient to enable you to call it a good stock district? I do not think so. I know one squatter, who lives 20 or 30 miles west of that, has been complaining terribly of the drought. At times he has had to buy hay for his stock.

THURSDAY, 30 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD,

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong.

William Henry John Slee, Chief Inspector of Mines, Department of Mines and Agriculture, sworn, and examined:—

46. *Chairman.*] You know the district from Temora to Wyalong, I suppose, very well? Yes. I have given evidence here with reference to it several times. In 1894 I gave my first evidence on the same line.

W. H. J. Slee.

47. Will you start from Temora and, going out in the direction of Wyalong, give us a general description of the character of the country from a mineral point of view, and the operations have taken place there, and what developments are likely to take place? Between Temora and Wyalong, and between Barmedman and Wyalong, it is auriferous country right through.

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48. Auriferous country right through from Temora to Wyalong? Yes. I do not think that any silver or copper ores of a payable nature will be discovered there.

49. What are the prospects of Reefton as a mining field? The prospects of Reefton have rather gone down.

50. Is that due to the difficulty of water, and not to the poorness of the ore? They are quartz reefs. They have not found any alluvial so far.

51. But have not the operations of the miners there been hampered greatly by water? Yes.

52. At Barmedman, recently, a new development has taken place? Yes; at Barmedman they have taken up the old reefs—at the Phoenix, the Fiery Cross, and one or two others—and are working them again. Those reefs have been idle for a great many years.

53. What is the character of the mineral there? Well, all our auriferous deposits, after they get into the water-level, become refractory, and there is no doubt that those at Barmedman will fare the same. Some of them go to a depth of over 200 or 300 feet.

54. Is it an ore that will require furnace treatment? Yes; and concentrating.

55. As regards the construction of a railway, would the same remark apply to Barmedman as to Peak Hill—that a railway would enable them to carry on their operations better through being able to obtain fuel more cheaply? Yes. If they require, as they will no doubt require, coke and such like, they will be able to get it cheaper than they could at the present time.

56. Do you anticipate that, between Temora and Wyalong, any further discoveries of auriferous deposits are likely to take place? I believe there will be. I believe there is likely to be alluvial as well as quartz reefs.

57. Do you look upon Wyalong as being a permanent field? I said in 1894, when the population was 8,000 or 9,000, that it would not carry that population. I stated that in my evidence here, but I also said at the same time that I believed it to be a permanent field. I certainly think that Wyalong ought to have a railway, whichever way it may come.

58. Does this mineral belt go further west than Wyalong? To Yalgogrin, and right on further west to Hillston.

59. Is the mineral character of the country the same right out to Hillston? No; the geological formation is not the same. At Wyalong, the reefs are all found on hornblende granite, whereas, in the other places, they are found in slates on porphyry rocks.

- W. H. J. Slee. 60. Would the construction of a line from Temora to Wyalong stimulate mining operations? Of course it should. If you can get everything carried more cheaply, it should do that to some extent. Mines that hardly pay now might pay well then.
- 30 Aug., 1900. 61. Can you supply us with any details of the yield of gold that has been obtained at Wyalong;—has it been increasing? The warden last year gave the yield as having increased, compared with that of former years, but that is, of course, a great deal through the cyanide process being carried on. However, independently of that, the reefs have gone down a good depth in hard country, and so far they have never lost their gold-producing power.
62. *Mr. Hyam.*] Did I understand you rightly to say that the reefing country about Wyalong was granite country? Yes; and all the country between Temora and Wyalong is auriferous country.
63. Did I understand you rightly to say that it was hornblende granite? About Wyalong the reefs are discovered in hornblende granite country, but in going to Temora you have diorite, porphyry, and slates.
64. But immediately about Wyalong it is granite country? Yes; the reefs there are found in granite.
65. Is granite country considered good auriferous country? Yes; at Lambing Flat, Young, and in the Braidwood district, the reefs have always gone down to a depth, but as soon as they go below the water-level they become refractory.
66. You think then that the Wyalong gold-fields are permanent—that they will carry the reef down with them as they go down, notwithstanding the ore being refractory? Yes; I think the same to-day as I said here in 1894. I believe that Wyalong is a permanent gold-field, and deserves to have a railway, no matter where it may come from.
67. Are the ores at Wyalong very hard to treat? The first 150 to 200 feet is all pick work, and then the hard rock comes in to a depth of 150 to 200 feet. The water comes in, and very hard rock comes in with it, and it requires blasting; but on the top levels for 150 or 250 feet it is pick work. Wyalong was an unusual gold-field, having so many reefs and no alluvial.
68. Would they be able to treat the ores at Wyalong without coke or coal? They cannot very well. They have to get coke, to a certain extent, to keep their furnaces going, but so long as there is firewood close by they will use as much wood as they can.
69. Would they require furnaces for the treatment of the ores? Not at the present time. As soon as the firewood ends they must have other fuel.
70. Do you think that the mines are of sufficient permanency for you to say that in time they will use up the whole of the fuel obtainable in the neighbourhood, and will have to resort to outside places for a supply of fuel? Yes, I think so. I think there will always be a fairly large population settled in that district. I have never had extravagant views of Wyalong, as most people have.
71. But you have had a fairly good opinion of it? Yes; I had a fairly good opinion of it, which I have now. I may be considered conceited, but my reports have been borne out almost to the letter.
72. You have said that that belt of country extended to Yalgogrin, and from there towards Hillston? Yes; but when you have left Yalgogrin 10 or 20 miles the country becomes less mineralised.
73. There is less chance of getting a payable gold-field in the locality of Hillston? Yes; you must not look for much gold towards Hillston, nor for much other mineral towards Hillston.
74. Nor at Hillston, I suppose? No; you must not.
75. Do you know anything of the country between Temora and Wyalong from an agricultural standpoint? Yes; there is fairly good agricultural land between Barmedman and Wyalong. I do not know whether it has been taken up or not.
76. Have you been off the road—at right angles, say, to the road? Yes; I have been all round the district.
77. And the nature of the country is all the same? Yes.
78. Fairly good agricultural country? Yes.
79. But a great deal of it unimproved? Yes; as far as I could see. But I have not been over that land for two years.
80. *Chairman.*] You have a return of the yield of the various mining centres along the proposed route;—will you kindly hand them in? Yes. It is signed by our Under Secretary for Mines, and, therefore, it must be as correct as it could be got. It is as follows:—

TEMORA (LATE BAKER'S).

GOLD-MINING in this Division dates back to 1879. The following are the statistics, as to yields from this field, to date:—

Year	oz. dwt. gr.		valued at	£ s. d.		Year	oz. dwt. gr.		valued at	£ s. d.	
	oz.	dwt. gr.		£	s. d.		oz.	dwt. gr.		£	s. d.
1879	200	0 0	760	0 0	1891	309	1 7	1,199	1 0		
1880	9,167	13 0	32,503	14 0	1892	288	6 3	1,112	17 3		
1881	35,227	17 12	136,508	0 4	1893	520	0 0	2,007	0 0		
1882	33,348	4 3	129,224	4 11	1894	1,875	0 0	7,308	0 0		
1883	12,415	2 3	48,108	2 6	1895	7,473	2 16	28,218	18 0		
1884	11,333	0 0	43,917	2 10	1896	4,066	0 0	16,094	14 8		
1885	6,222	0 0	24,110	5 0	1897	3,419	12 20	13,381	19 3		
1886	4,200	0 0	15,278	0 0	1898	2,849	0 0	9,258	10 0		
1887	2,191	0 0	8,490	2 6	1899	2,794	5 0	8,390	11 8		
1888	1,771	0 0	5,862	12 6							
1889	690	0 0	2,672	10 0							
1890	474	17 0	1,840	1 0							
								140,335	18 21	£536,247	7 5

It will be noted that ever since 1881 there had been a steady falling off of gold won in this Division up to the time of the discovery of the Wyalong field, which appear to have given a fresh impetus to the mining fields adjacent to it. During the last year or two mining matters within the Temora Division have been seriously hampered by want of water, caused by drought, by the want of crushing plants, and by the want of capital generally wherewith to develop its mineral resources. It is believed that with the advent of capital a large quartz-reefing field, capable of supporting a considerable number of miners, would be developed. There are two cyanide plants at work within the Division, and a good deal of the gold recently won has been from the treatment of old tailings by this process. There are at present about 425 men engaged upon the field, and the value of machinery, plant, &c., is stated at £3,350.

REEFTON.

THE Reefton Gold-field, which lies about midway between Temora and Barmedman, formerly formed portion of the Barmedman Division. The effect of the Wyalong discovery is here again in evidence, for the reopening of the quartz-reefing industry in the locality of Reefton was undoubtedly due to the attention directed to the surrounding country by the great Wyalong rush, when several abandoned reefs were taken up by experienced miners who had been attracted to the district, with determination of giving the ground a thorough trial.

The

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM TEMORA TO WYALONG.

The following are the yields from this field to date :—

Year	Yield (oz.)	valued at (£)
1895	1,603	£5,075
1896	1,820	6,949
1897	1,339	4,500
1898	305	1,186
1899	340	1,310
Total	5,402	£19,050

W. H. J. Sles.

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At present there are about twenty-six miners employed on the field. Work, however, during the last two years has not been encouraging owing to the claims at work having reached the water level, a stage at which the working miner finds it difficult to earn a remunerative wage, and the assistance of capital is essential if further development is to be proceeded with.

BARMEDMAN

BARMEDMAN is situated about 20 miles from Temora, and is about midway on the main road from the latter place to Wyalong. The records of the mining industry in this Division date from 1882, and the following are the yields to the end of 1899 :—

Year	oz. dwt. gr.	valued at (£ s. d.)	Year	oz. dwt. gr.	valued at (£ s. d.)
1882	108 9 15	431 5 0	1892	267 1 3	1,346 3 9
1883	4,652 8 12	18,029 10 0	1893	412 8 18	1,577 11 6
1884	3,351 5 12	12,986 2 6	1894	890 0 0	3,404 5 0
1885	1,798 4 0	7,000 0 0	1895	117 0 0	447 10 6
1886	2,054 10 1	7,961 3 11	1896	.....	.....
1887	1,541 19 7	5,075 2 3	1897	4,693 0 0	15,213 4 3
1888	989 4 15	3,833 5 5	1898	2,959 0 0	8,456 10 0
1889	450 0 0	1,743 12 0	1899	1,172 5 0	4,541 10 0
1890	327 0 12	1,250 17 5			
1891	54 5 0	207 10 0	Total	25,829 1 23	£93,505 3 6

The renewed activity in this Division, as a mining centre, is also due to its proximity to the Wyalong field. Unfortunately, during 1896, little or no work could be done on the principal claim owing to the water-level having been reached, and the want of capital needful to overcome the difficulty. During 1897 a large amount of tailings were treated by cyanide with very satisfactory results, but the Fiery Cross Gold-mining Company's claim was still under suspension, its capital being exhausted through the heavy expense incurred in trying to cope with the great influx of water. During 1898, with the exception of the cyanide plant, which was still at work, mining matters were almost at a standstill. The Fiery Cross Gold-mining Company, which has been attempting to secure fresh capital wherewith to proceed with the work, had its leases forfeited. These were applied for by another, but the application was opposed, and litigation ensuing prevented work being done, or the importation of capital. During 1899, however, mining matters in the Division have shown improvement, and at the present time there are three large mining concerns carrying on operations, besides a number of smaller claims, from some of which very good returns have been obtained. The principal mine, the Fiery Cross, started work in earnest about the middle of the year, but most of the time up to the present has been occupied in dead work—unwatering the mine, &c. The product of the field for the current year should show a marked increase. There are some sixty or seventy men employed. Machinery and plant in the Division are valued at about £15,000.

WYALONG.

This gold-field was discovered at the latter end of 1893, but it was not until the early part of 1894 that general attention began to be directed to it. As the lodes in which the gold occurs have been proved to extend downwards into the undecomposed rock, and to preserve their character and productiveness to a considerable depth, the permanence of the field appears to be assured. It has already proved itself to be both a rich and extensive one, and its importance will be recognised when it is pointed out that in 1897 Wyalong produced 2,484 oz. more gold than any other single Division in the Colony. During the first five years of its existence it produced no less than 136,593 oz. of gold, valued at £533,628. The annual yields up to the end of 1899 have been as follows :—

Year	Yield (oz.)	valued at (£)
1894	9,649	£35,946
1895	24,497	91,864
1896	33,495	130,000
1897	34,370	137,490
1898	34,582	138,328
1899	44,675	178,700
Total	181,268	£712,328

The foregoing figures exemplify the marked and steady progress the field has been making since its discovery.

The population of the towns of Wyalong and Wyalong West (which are practically one) at the end of 1898 was estimated at about 4,200, and there can be no doubt that during last year some slight increase must have occurred. Sixteen hundred miners were employed in 1898, being some 500 less than those employed in 1897. For last year (1899) the same number is returned, but it is thought to be an underestimate, as the Warden in his report to end of 1898 stated that the decrease then reported would shortly disappear, as four of the chief mines intended putting on a large number of men. From the large increase in the output of gold during last year it would appear extremely probable that an increase in the number of miners must have taken place.

The value of machinery and appliances on the field at present is estimated at £52,000, and includes three substantial batteries—one Huntingdon Mill, three cyanide, and two chlorination works.

YALGOGRIN.

This field lies some 25 miles to the west of Wyalong, and is practically an extension of the discovery of that field. There are at present about 125 men employed in quartz-mining, and the population would probably be between 400 and 500.

The following are the yields of the field to date :—

Year	oz. dwt. gr.	valued at (£ s. d.)
1894	348 12 0	1,296 6 0
1895	804 5 0	3,116 9 4
1896	1,250 0 0	4,375 0 0
1897	1,631 0 0	5,872 0 0
1898	1,180 0 0	4,130 0 0
1899	1,060 0 0	4,240 0 0
Total	6,273 17 0	£23,029 15 4

It will be noted that during the last two years there has been a falling off in the quantity of gold won. This, however, is in no way due to depletion of the field. On the contrary, some very satisfactory results were obtained last year from crushings, one small parcel giving 14 oz. to the ton, and the greater portion of the stone raised during this period remains yet to be treated. There is one 10-head stamper battery on the field, and two small cyanide plants, with a plentiful supply of water. It is thought possible that the present year will show a record for the locality.

81. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is it not a fact that the returns from Reefton and Barmedman have been decreasing for the last few years? Yes; but not for this year. The returns from Barmedman for years back have been very little; but this year the mines have been taken up again, and gold is again being obtained there.

82. Can you account for the gradual falling-off for some years? No; it is just the ups and downs of mining—just the same as it was at Cobar. At the Great Cobar Copper-mine there were only two men and

- W.H.J. Stec. and the manager at work in the whole of the mine, and the late Mr. Wilkinson and I were always looked upon as blockheads for reporting so favourably of the Cobar district; but now the Cobar railway is one of the best paying lines we have; and so the railway might be in this case. Mining is always up and down. I shall have had forty-six years' experience of it next November.
- 30 Aug., 1900.
83. Have you found that to be the case generally with first-class mining districts? With the exception of Broken Hill, that is the case throughout Australia. Broken Hill has kept continually going.
84. With regard to Reefston, in 1896 the return was 1,820 oz.; in 1897, 1,339 oz.; in 1898, 300 oz.; and in 1899, 340 oz.; that is a tremendous come-down? Yes, as far as Reefston is concerned; but that is a small place.
85. What would you generally gather from a falling-off of that kind? The reefs there have always been very narrow, and have gone to a depth only to which individual miners could go with their poor means and primitive appliances; and the proprietors of the quartz-crushing plant, which was on the place, got into trouble with each other, and they could not crush there. For over eighteen months they had not sufficient water in the dam to crush, and that may have had a lot to do with the falling-off.
86. Under such circumstances, do you think it would be encouraging to construct [a railway with a view of assisting these mines? Yes; I think so. I cannot say otherwise than I have said so many times here—that I always favoured a line to Wyalong, whichever route it might come by.
87. The same rule almost would apply to Barmedman, although during [the last two or three years the returns seem to have picked up again? Yes; and this year it will show a very good return.
88. In 1895 they had only 117 oz.? Yes; Barmedman was opened long before either Wyalong or Temora was known as a goldfield.
89. Then, in 1897, they seemed to have had a big jump-up, and since then they have gone back? Yes; since then Wyalong broke out, and the Conroys and other people went to Wyalong, and took up some of the best claims there; but they have since sold out, and gone back to Barmedman to retake their mines—the Phoenix, for one of them.
90. Wyalong seems to have had a steady progress from the commencement? Yes.
91. There does not seem to have been any falling-off there; but in the case of the other two mines, the returns seem to have fluctuated very much; what is your opinion really of Barmedman;—do you think you are justified in saying that it will be a permanent field? I believe that the last time I was here I said that the mines were all idle, but I thought that they would be retaken, and be found good gold-producing mines. I hold the same opinion now.
92. What is the greatest depth they have attained at Barmedman? About 250 feet. Barmedman was discovered in 1871 or 1872. I crushed the first quartz stone ever crushed from Barmedman. I had a quartz-crushing machine at Grenfell then.
93. Is the lode there at a depth as wide as it is on the surface? Yes. Now you require to keep all the tailings, and use the concentrating plant, so as to save everything. Formerly it was thought that the gold saved on the blankets was all, but now we find that the slimes take a lot of the gold away, and that has to be looked after.
94. Do you know the number of miners employed at Barmedman? I should say there are not 100 men employed there at present. But there is a population surrounding the place, and Barmedman is a fair-sized township, with three hotels, stores, &c.
95. Has the number fluctuated much? It came out far lower than that during the height of the Wyalong rush, but now it is gradually creeping up to the old standard.
96. There is no alluvial? No alluvial has ever been found at either Barmedman or Reefston, but I believe we shall get alluvial between Barmedman and Wyalong.
97. *Dr. Garran.*] Admitting that there should be a railway to Wyalong, is the importance of Barmedman and Reefston sufficient to give to the route from Temora a superiority over the route from Grenfell? I always favoured the Temora route. I have been over the Grenfell route since I gave evidence here last. Of course, that is a good agricultural route. My interest is with Grenfell, but I favoured this route. I thought that starving stock out in the far west, coming to Hillston, could be taken to the mountains, and I took that into consideration as well.
98. Supposing that the Grenfell route were adopted, these two places, Reefston and Barmedman, would be still within fairly easy reach of a railway? Barmedman is 22 miles from Temora, and about the same distance from Wyalong.
99. How far do you reckon Reefston is from Temora? I think it is only about 9 miles. It is about half-way between Temora and Barmedman.
100. That is not an out-of-the-way distance for a mine to be from a railway? No.
101. Therefore, you would not say that Reefston would be kept back by the want of railway communication? No.
102. How far do you say Barmedman is from Wyalong? About 22 miles, but the road is very bad, and I think the Barmedman people would go to Temora.
103. But supposing they want to get coal from Lithgow? They would have to go to the Western line.
104. What I mean is that both these townships, which are not very strong at present as gold-field townships, are within a practicable distance of a railway, even if a line to Wyalong were made by another route? Yes.
105. They would be better off than they are now? Yes.
106. Wyalong would have a complete railway to itself, and these other towns would be the one within easy reach of Temora, and the other within easy reach of Wyalong? Yes.
107. So that if a line were made for agricultural and other reasons by way of Grenfell, these two townships would be fairly supplied? Yes; they would be fairly supplied so long as Wyalong gets a railway, which, taking a natural view of the matter, I think it ought to have. I have given evidence here four or five times, and I have always advocated the Temora line, and I cannot go back on it. But I would like to see Wyalong get a railway even if it had to come by another route.
108. *Mr. Hyam.*] Still you are of the opinion that a railway from Temora to Wyalong would be the better line of the two? A railway from Temora to Wyalong would better suit the Wyalong people, I think, than the Grenfell line would.
109. Do you know anything of the wishes of the Wyalong people;—do you know whether they prefer one route to the another? The Wyalong people are like the people of all other little townships. There are always two sides, they fight against each other, and keep away what they would otherwise get. 110,

110. *Mr. Watson.*] It is a fact, is it not, that at Barmedman there has recently been rather a large development? Yes. People at Barmedman have recently taken up the Fiery Cross and the Phoenix—the very mines I mentioned in my last report, I think. W. H. J. Sloe.
30 Aug., 1900.

111. Was not the sudden jump in the apparent production of gold at Barmedman in 1897 due to the fact that they were treating ores that were then coming from Wyalong, but that afterwards the Wyalong people, having plants of their own, had no necessity to send ore to Barmedman? Yes. The only crushing plant in the district was at Barmedman. The Wyalong people sent ore to Barmedman to have it tried or crushed. That was in 1894.

112. So, as a matter of fact, the gold production around Barmedman has been increasing lately as compared with what it was a few years ago? Yes.

113. The actual production? Yes.

114. The Fiery Cross people have not begun to get ore yet—I mean those who have taken up the mine recently? Yes. It has been taken up and abandoned, and taken up again for years past. They have always been fighting with each other.

115. The people who have it now, I understand, have got the water out, and have erected a lot of machinery on the ground? Yes.

116. You have not seen it since they have taken it in hand? No; I have not been there for two years; but I was in the old workings only a short time before they were abandoned. I know the Fiery Cross reef, and everything else. I went into the Phoenix and other mines before they were abandoned. They were abandoned for some years.

117. You know that at the Phoenix they have within the last few years put up very expensive new machinery? Yes; and they have broken into the old workings, and are now sinking a deep shaft to get below them.

118. There are no mining developments or appearances between Grenfell and Wyalong that you know of? There are not at the present time. But there has been prospecting on the Bland and at other places.

119. No results so far? No.

120. Do you think it is likely that there will always be a mining population of greater or less extent between Temora and Wyalong, leaving Wyalong out of the question? Yes; I think so. Temora was opened in 1880, and Barmedman long before that, and they are still townships.

FRIDAY, 31 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works,
sworn, and further examined:—

121. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have a comparative estimate you wish to hand in? I have a comparative statement asked for by Mr. Watson, showing the estimated cost of the Grenfell to Wyalong line, brought up to date and prepared on the same basis as the estimate for the Temora to Wyalong line. It is as follows:— H. Deane.
31 Aug., 1900.

GRENFELL TO WYALONG.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway, 59 miles in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grade, 1 in 100 against, and 1 in 75 with the load. Sharpest curve, 10 chains radius.

Description.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
	£ s. d.	£
Earthworks	12,850 0 0	218
Timber bridges	10,903 0 0	185
Level crossings, cattle stops, and fencing	3,894 0 0	66
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £5 8s. per ton, see below for extra cost)	37,582 9 4	637
Freight	8,564 17 6	145
Platelaying, at 1s. 2d. = £6,057 6s. 8d.	} 34,872 18 8	} 591
½ ballasting, at 4s. = £5,192		
Sleepers, at 3s. 3d. = £23,023 12s.	10,339 13 7	175
Station works, including sidings		
Station buildings:—Passenger stations, £1,212; waiting-sheds, £720; platforms, £996; loading-banks, £936; goods-sheds and platforms, £900; cranes, £636; twenty ton weighbridges, £504; station-masters' cottages, £930; trucking-yards, £1,536; engine-shed and pit, £840; carriage-shed, £240; turn-table, £600; coal-stage, £204	10,254 0 0	174
Water supply	5,000 0 0	85
Gradient and mileage posts	973 10 0	17
Telegraph	973 10 0	17
Miscellaneous	1,000 0 0	17
	137,207 19 1	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	20,581 0 11	349
	£157,789 0 0	2,674
Add for extra cost of rails and fastenings, at £7 10s. and £13 2s. per ton respectively	14,794 0 0	.....
Total cost	£172,583 0 0	2,925

H. Deane. 122. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you say what goes to make up the extra cost per mile of the Temora-Wyalong line, in view of the fact that, under the old set of estimates, taking the two lines, the Temora-Wyalong line was held to be the cheaper? The Temora-Wyalong line was always a little more per mile—£3,048.

31 Aug., 1900.

123. The estimate in 1899 for the Grenfell to Wyalong line—that is, on the old price of rails—as furnished to the Committee was £2,411 per mile? Yes. I think there was a previous estimate for the Temora to Wyalong line—£2,300. They were made at different times.

124. The previous estimate for the Temora to Wyalong line was about £2,300? All I can say is that I have had this matter very carefully gone into, and that is the way it comes out.

125. The increased amount per mile for the Temora-Wyalong line is, perhaps, due to the greater number of stations compared with those on the other line? Yes; and the increased amount of accommodation.

126. If you had even the same number of stations and accommodation to provide for the shorter length of line, it would mean so much more per mile in making the estimate? Yes. As a matter of fact, in making out this estimate I have put down for station buildings and for station works practically the same amount for the two lines. I think that the cost of the station works, including earth-works, metalling, and sidings, comes to rather more on the Temora to Wyalong line, and I believe that it is chiefly due to the proposed Barmedman station; there happens to be more earth-work there.

127. How many stations do you propose to have on the Grenfell-Wyalong line? I cannot say how many have been included without referring to the details.

128. I should think there would be one more required on the Temora line than on the other, judging by the centres of population;—going from Grenfell, I suppose, there would probably be a station at Piney Ridge, and one at Carragabal, near Marsden, whilst on the other route you would have a station at Reefton, one at Barmedman, and possibly one between Barmedman and Wyalong, as well as one at Wyalong, and another at Wyalong West? I have taken the passenger accommodation as being about the same in each case; but the cost of such accommodation as loading-banks—for wool, for instance—would be higher on the Grenfell to Wyalong line.

129. That is on the plain? Yes; but some of the other items come out more on the Temora to Wyalong line, so that they just about balance. Of course, this is merely an estimate; it is possible that when it came to the actual construction of the line we might have to modify these things. It is not worth while to go into every little detail until authority for construction is given; but, approximately, I should say that the estimate is correct, and that the cost of the accommodation, although it might be different in its items, comparing the two lines would come to the same total.

130. But you have a greater population to provide for in the way of stations on the Temora-Wyalong line than you have on the other route? Yes.

131. *Dr. Garran.*] Will not this Temora-Wyalong line, if it be made, make rather a sharp angle with the projected line to Ariah and Gunbar? Yes.

132. For the first 10 or 15 miles they would fight for the traffic, I suppose? Yes; I suppose they would, to some extent.

133. That is unavoidable? Yes.

134. Do you still adhere to your original opinion that there is no material difference in crossing the Bland country? Yes.

135. You have heard of what has been said about the overflowing of the land there, and the risk of washing away a low embankment? Yes; but I am not at all afraid of that. The flood is so very low that even if it went over the line it would not matter.

136. Have you arranged for your banks to be covered by water in a flood? No; I have got them out of flood level, and I can put in cheap waterways to do all that is required.

137. You think that will be sufficient? Yes; I think so.

138. Is the flow of the water strong or very quiet as it runs along? I think it is very quiet.

139. Unless it were pinched up by having insufficient waterway, it would not make a strong current anywhere? No.

140. What is the full length of line you expect to be nearly covered sometimes with water on the Grenfell to Wyalong railway? In giving evidence on the Grenfell to Wyalong railway, at Question 46 I was asked:

Have your officers who have been engaged on the detailed survey got any particulars as to the flooded area, and the depth, and the velocity of the water in flood-time? They have reported on the flood levels. There is a considerable extent of flooded country; but the current is for the most part slow, and the depth of water for the most part very small. In going through the question of the waterways on this line, I added £1,500 to the estimated expenditure over and above what the surveyors recommended. That would be chiefly applied in crossing the Bland and Back Creeks.

In crossing the two main creeks? Yes; and the flooded waters.

141. I wanted to know the full length of the flooded country, and also the length of all your waterways put together;—what proportion would your escape bear to the whole length of the flooded line? The extent of the flood may be very considerable; but some of it is only a question of a few inches, and really consists of backwater very largely. On referring to my evidence I see that the bridge-work for crossing the main Bland Creek I calculate would amount to about 1,000 feet of viaduct and bridge, which I should say would be quite sufficient; but if it were found necessary we could put flood-openings right across from end to end of the flood-country.

142. You think that that central opening would carry off the whole of the water? The 1,000 feet,—Yes. It might, and probably would, be divided up according to the flood channels of the creek.

143. Have you provided for anything more than that central opening? Yes. The main opening is 240 ft., and the viaduct on each side of it would probably be between 700 ft. and 800 ft. altogether.

144. But I mean east and west of that, have you any other openings? There would be the Back Creek. That would be provided for.

145. Your officers estimate that that would be enough? Yes; in fact they put their estimate lower, and I have increased it myself. A reference to Question 55 might, perhaps, give some information to the Committee. I thought that that would meet the case, and nothing has occurred to alter my opinion with regard to the matter. The question is:

How high is the embankment which you have provided across the plain? The water does not generally rise high. All you want to do in a case like that is to bring the top of the formation, say, about a foot above the possible level of the water, so that in parts where the water was only 6 inches deep it would be only necessary to make the embankment about

18 inches high. Between these higher places you would naturally run on a level, so that it might be any depth above that, according to the position and the levels of the ground. I should say that the formation over the worst places, that is, the long flats, but not over the parts where there is a defined watercourse, is from 4 ft. to 3½ ft. high; and that would be quite sufficient, according to the flood levels which have been observed. H. Deane.
31 Aug., 1900.

I mention that because it means that openings would be provided all over those places where the water is deeper, but I suppose that where the water is only a few inches deep for the most part it would not be necessary to put any openings in at all. However, for the money that is put down, I am quite sure that satisfactory waterways can be built.

146. You do not think there will be any risk of these banks melting away with water on both sides of them? I am not in the slightest degree afraid of that. The only danger to the higher banks is the washing out at the ends of the bridges, and in all cases where they are liable to flood I put sheeting so as to protect them. The mere standing of the water against an embankment does not hurt it.

147. Are there not some clay soils that will dissolve a good deal from water pressing against them? I think that where the water flows against them in such a way as to erode them it might be so, but they are not in any sense soluble. At the ends of the bridges the embankments will be protected against scour. At any rate, whatever difficulty there might be could easily be got rid of by protecting the sides of the embankment with large stones. As regards these railway embankments, the water does not stop very long at its full height. Even if it did, I do not think it would hurt very much. Where the water would be standing—the deeper parts—there would be waterways; therefore, as a matter of fact, the water would not be standing against the embankment for any length of time.

148. *Mr. Hyam.* Can you tell me the length of the country that would be affected by flood and by backwater on the Grenfell to Wyalong proposed extension? I am afraid I cannot tell you that now, without reference to the section of the line. My experience with regard to flooded country is that the accounts, as a rule, are very much exaggerated. Where water stands during rain, where it appears on the surface, it is looked upon very often as flood country, whereas that is simply the effect of local rainfall which cannot get away quickly.

149. Do you not think that the construction of that embankment to carry the railway across the Bland would have the effect of backing up a lot of this water in the early part of a flood, unless you had a great number of openings, and would it not conduct the water down the sides of the embankment, and possibly wash them away? No, it would not wash them away. It might dam up the water if the waterways were not sufficient, and the water might go over the rails. But the mere contact with the embankment would not cause it to wash away. However, if I were authorised to construct that line, I should take very great care to investigate the matter and to be quite sure that we had got the right thing, if it were possible to get the necessary information. That is one reason why, in these estimates, I like to include a considerable amount for contingencies. You do not know what direction the demand may come from—whether in the way of waterways or increased cost of earthworks; but it is always very desirable to have a stand-by in the way of contingencies, and I have that in connection with this line. I think that having that reserve, so to speak, I shall be perfectly safe in this estimate.

150. You would be within your estimate? Yes.

151. You spoke of two viaducts, one on each side of the bridge—would these be timber viaducts. Yes.

152. Are they included in the estimate? Yes.

153. They would be long viaducts? Yes.

154. Would they be very high? No, the worst part only 3 to 4 feet high, except in the main channel of the creeks.

155. Would the bridge over the Bland Creek be of wood or of iron? Wood. It is cheaper, and sufficiently durable.

156. What would be the average height of the embankment across this country? I can find that out for you.* I have been making lately a very cheap kind of waterway with 100 lb. rails. Previously, in using only the 60 lb. rails over the smaller openings, only a short stretch could be given, but for these light railways I find that one can use the 100 lb. rails as bridge girders for lengths of 5 feet, and by putting a couple of piles and a head-stock on those, to serve as a pier, I get a very cheap and efficient waterway. The water can rise up to the under side of the rails and there is no obstruction in the shape of wooden beams or stanchions. I save the sleepers over that part, so altogether it comes out very cheap.

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK JANDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, J.L.D. THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	}	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq. ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq. JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.
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The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

157. *Chairman.* Have you a statement to make in regard to the traffic on the proposed railway? I produce the following report of the Railway Commissioners:— J. Harper.
26 Sept., 1900.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of N.S.W., Sydney, 26 September, 1900.

Proposed Line of Railway from Temora to Wyalong—41 miles 48 chains.

In compliance with the request of the Honorable the Minister for Public Works, and in pursuance of the Public Works Act of 1888, section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

Estimated Expenditure—

Engineer-in-Chief's estimated cost of construction (exclusive of land resumption), £126,810, at 3 per cent.....	£3,804	
Maintenance, traffic and locomotive expenses.....	4,438	
	£8,242	

Estimated Revenue—

Merchandise and live stock	£2,980	
Passengers, parcels, and mails.....	2,735	
	£5,715	The

* NOTE (on revision):—The average height would be less than 1 foot.

J. Harper.
26 Sept., 1900.

The expenditure is based upon a train service every week day. When this line was last reported upon—on the 11th May, 1894—the future of Wyalong appeared so uncertain that its construction could not be recommended.

There is now, however, every indication that the settlement has become permanent, and, in our opinion, the time has arrived when Wyalong should be afforded the advantages of railway communication.

In compliance with a request from the Minister for Public Works, we reported, in December, 1898, upon a proposal to connect Wyalong with Grenfell; and, having had the advantage of traversing both routes, we had no hesitation in stating that when the time arrived for Wyalong to have the benefit of railway connection it should be from Grenfell.

We are still of that opinion, notwithstanding that the distance from Grenfell is about 17½ miles greater than from Temora.

The country is capable of greater development. The objective point, Wyalong, will be brought 8 miles nearer to Sydney than by the Temora route, and about 60 miles nearer to the western coal-fields—a factor which we regard as of considerable future importance.

Although increased cultivation has taken place between Temora and Wyalong since 1894, approximately one-half of that which now exists is within 14 miles of existing lines.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was herewith affixed this 26th day of September, one thousand nine hundred, in the presence of,—

W. M. FEHON,
Deputy Chief Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner

H. McLACHLAN.

I also put in the following report:—

25th September, 1900.

Estimate of Traffic for a proposed Railway, Temora to Wyalong, 41½ miles.

As directed by the Commissioners, I have had very careful inquiries made as to the probable traffic to be carried by this proposed railway, which is shown to be 41½ miles in length, and estimated to cost £126,810, or £3,048 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation, the ruling gradient being 1 in 100.

When an estimate for this line was made by the Commissioners in 1894, Wyalong had only been a few months in existence, and there was practically little or no intermediate traffic to be served; but according to the latest information I find there has recently been considerable agricultural development within a radius of 20 miles of Temora, in the neighbourhood of Reefton and Barmedman; and there has also been an increase in the Wyalong district since the consideration of the Grenfell-Wyalong proposal. The intermediate traffic between Temora and Wyalong, which was not an important factor at the time this question was previously dealt with, is now deserving of consideration. Altogether there are about 23,000 acres of cultivation to be served at the following trucking stations:—

	Miles from Temora.	Acres under cultivation.
Reefton	12	11,000
Barmedman	22	5,000
Wyalong	42	7,000
Total.....		23,000

But the bulk of the cultivation shown for Reefton is within 14 miles of the existing line at Temora, although it will be better served at Reefton.

Wyalong is reported to be in a very prosperous condition, the output of gold having increased every year, and has reached as high as 46,675 oz., valued at £178,700. The population is also reported to be almost stationary, and numbers about 4,200, but including the district the proposed line will serve, about 6,000 souls.

Assuming that Wyalong will retain its present population, the following is my estimate of the traffic, based upon a favourable year for wool and stock, namely, 1894-5 season, and upon the latest information concerning agriculture and general goods traffic:—

Description.	Tons.	Trucks.	Amount.
Goods traffic	4,120	...	£1,532
Wool traffic	1,982	...	595
Agricultural produce	7,700	...	601
Live stock .....	...	600	252
Totals.....	13,802	600	£2,980

Passenger traffic.....			£1,381
Parcels and other coaching.....			350
Mails			504
Total.....			£2,735

Summary.		
Goods, wool, and stock		£2,980
Coaching and mails		2,735
Total.....		£5,715

The trafficable area allowed for is as shown in the accompanying map. It takes in Trungley, Barmedman, and Cooraboorama stations. The Bland country, Marsden and Lake Cowal on the east and north-east; and Mandamah, Wyalong, No. 3 Wyalong, Yalgogrin, and Narriah stations on the west, and also extends about half way to Condobolin and Euabalong on the Lachlan River, in which area the following principal wool clips are embraced:—Billabong, Youngee Plain, Ungarie, Wollongough, Four-bob Camp, Bolygamy, Murringreen, Youngara, Bygalorie, Malonga.

From the wool stations enumerated there would be a diversion of 102 tons of wool from Condobolin, 110 tons from Whitton and Narrandera, and 336 tons from Young; total, 548 tons. The loss by diversion from the three first-mentioned points would amount to about £110. No loss would be sustained on the consignments diverted from Young.

In dealing with the estimated traffic, consideration has been given to the influence of the Grenfell section, and the proposed line from Temora to Gunbar. I think the estimate furnished is a liberal one in every direction.

J1 HARPER.

I also put in the following tabulated statement:—

ESTIMATE of traffic for proposed Railway, Temora to Wyalong—41½ miles.

Goods Traffic Estimate.

Trucking point.	Distance from Temora. Miles.	Goods traffic.			Wool traffic.			Stock traffic.			Agricultural produce.			Total Goods, &c., traffic.		
		Tons.	Rate.	Amn't.	Tons.	Rate.	Amn't.	Trucks.	Rate.	Amn't.	Tons.	Rate.	Amn't.	Tons.	Trucks.	Amn't.
Reefton	12	60	3/-	9	...	...	£	...	...	£	...	...	£	...	...	£
.....		40	2/-	4	138	2/6	17	...	...	...	3,700	1/-	185	3,938	...	215
Barmedman	22	200	6/-	60	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
.....		220	3/-	33	556	4/-	111	400	6/5	129	1,700	1/6	128	2,676	400	461
Wyalong	42	1,750	11/-	963	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
.....		1,850	5/-	463	1,288	7/3	467	200	12/3	123	2,300	2/6	288	7,188	200	2,304
Total		4,120	...	1,532	1,982	...	595	600	...	252	7,700	...	601	13,802	600	2,980

<i>Coaching Traffic Estimate.</i>		
Passengers, 5,000 at 7s. ....	.....	} £1,881
" 750 at 3s. 6d. ....	.....
Parcels and other coaching .....	.....	350
Mails, 42 miles, at £12 .....	.....	504
Total		£2,735
<i>Summary.</i>		
Goods, wool, and stock	£2,890	
Coaching and mails	2,735	
Total		£5,715

J. Harper.
26 Sept., 1900.

I may state that the traffic of Barmedman would not come in under the Grenfell estimate; but the quantity of the traffic which would come in at the Bland crossing under the Grenfell estimate is also shown in this estimate as likely to be attracted towards Wyalong. I put in the map to which reference is made in my report upon the estimate of traffic over the proposed railway.

158. I believe that the last estimate of revenue for the Grenfell to Wyalong extension was £5,863? Yes.

159. Seeing that the distance is 40 per cent. longer, would it not be reasonable to expect, if the country were equally good, that the estimate of traffic would be 40 per cent. higher? No.

160. For what reason? Because you are controlled by the influence of local rates—that is to say, of maximum rates. For instance, the maximum rate for the Southern line is £5 a ton. Wherever the rate exceeds that you could not credit the lines with it.

161. Do you mean that the Wyalong-Temora extension will rob existing lines more than will a Grenfell-Wyalong extension? No. I have indicated in my report all that the line will rob existing lines of, namely, about £110.

162. Do the Railway Commissioners and yourself still hold to the opinion that the district between Grenfell and Wyalong is capable of greater development than is the district between Temora and Wyalong? Yes.

163. Have you had an opportunity of seeing the Bland country recently? I have not been through it since 1898. Of course I do not know what agricultural development has been going on there; but, I think the Railway Commissioners hold the view which they have all along expressed, namely, that a Grenfell to Wyalong line will better divide the country, and that, with a line at Wyalong, the district between Wyalong and Temora will be served within 20 miles from a central point of a line on either side.

164. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you not think that the country between Wyalong and Temora would be fairly well served by a line running from Grenfell to Wyalong? That is the point I have indicated just now as being the view of the Railway Commissioners—that, from a central point, there would be a line 20 miles on either side.

165. The furthest point would not be much more than 20 miles from a railway? That is so.

166. You state that the Railway Commissioners favour the construction of a line *via* Grenfell? So they have stated in their report which I have read.

167. Did you report on the comparative returns of the two lines? Yes; the returns are comparative as far as the different items are concerned, and the map indicates, generally, the areas which would be served by either line.

168. Are the returns in favour of the Grenfell-Wyalong line as against the Temora-Wyalong line? No; the earnings are greater on the Temora-Wyalong line.

169. But still there is room for greater development on the Grenfell-Wyalong line? That is so, and the Grenfell-Wyalong estimate did not include agricultural produce, although it is only fair in that connection to say that the agricultural produce shown in the Temora-Wyalong return only represents £601.

170. And being a line parallel with other lines the Grenfell-Wyalong line would possess another advantage as opposed to a cross line, and would divide the country better? It is the view of the Railway Commissioners that it would divide the country better, and it is also my own impression.

171. *Mr. Watson.*] I notice in the estimate given to the Committee last year in connection with the Grenfell-Wyalong proposal, that you have put down, as coming upon that line at the Bland crossing, traffic which will return £584? Yes.

172. Can you tell the Committee where, with a line constructed from Temora to Wyalong, you anticipate that that traffic will go? A great deal of it will go to Barmedman.

173. Will any of it go into Wyalong? I daresay that some of it will find its way into Wyalong.

174. All that you have credited Barmedman with is £461—that is, inclusive of the amount which will come in from Bland Crossing? I will show you how the items are made up. Barmedman is credited with 556 tons of wool, the greater part of which is Bland wool. Then there are 400 trucks of stock, which will be Bland stock. Then, at Wyalong, there are 1,288 tons of wool which represent a certain proportion of the Bland wool, and 200 trucks of stock.

175. What I want to get at is this: you have an attraction towards Barmedman of a certain proportion of the Bland trade in wool and stock; how much of the traffic which, with the construction of the Grenfell line, would have gone to the Temora line, have you credited to Barmedman—that is, the traffic proper to Barmedman? I could not separate the items.

176. Have you included the 400 trucks of stock, the greater part of which you say comes from the Bland, and the 556 tons of wool, a great part of which comes from the Bland, and which leaves very little either of stock or wool to come from the district immediately around and westward of Barmedman. In the Grenfell estimate you see that 740 tons of wool were shown as coming in at the Bland Crossing, and 661 tons of wool as coming in at Wyalong. That is practically 1,400 tons of wool.

177. Your estimate shows that the stock traffic will be 600 trucks, which is about the same as you expected upon the other line? I do not expect any fat-stock, except from the Bland district.

178. Do you think you have given a full and liberal estimate in regard to agricultural produce? Yes.

179. Have you counted upon the influence which the construction of a new line will have upon agricultural produce? I have dealt with the country actually under cultivation. In the case of the Grenfell to Wyalong line, I did not give any estimate under that head at all. My estimate is in respect of all the land cleared at the present time.

- J. Harper.
26 Sept., 1900.
180. Once you get past Barmedman and out to the west—leaving out of consideration for the moment any possible competition on the part of any future line which may go towards Gunbar—you find a great area of agricultural country which has not yet been touched;—do you anticipate that there might be any revenue coming from that country later on? Wherever there is good agricultural land within easy reach of a railway line I should expect that, under ordinary conditions, there will be cultivation.
181. Your estimate of 7,700 tons of agricultural produce is based upon the land either under cultivation or cleared for cultivation? Yes; and it assumes that all the wheat in the vicinity of Reefton will be brought to the proposed line, instead of going into Temora.
182. The probability is that they would not cart it 10 miles by road when they can get it carried that distance by rail? It depends, I suppose, on the distance they are from Temora.
183. What has led to the increase in the working expenses? The difference in working expenses is chiefly due to the increased cost of maintenance. The traffic expenses are almost the same.
184. Do you anticipate that the cost of maintenance on a line from Temora to Wyalong would be greater than it will be on a line from Grenfell to Wyalong? There will be more miles to maintain on the Grenfell-Wyalong line.
185. Should not the saving of 17 miles of haulage make a little reduction in the cost of working expenses? On the other hand, you have the increased cost of maintenance.
186. The estimate of working expenses on a line from Temora to Wyalong is £4,438 per annum; last year the estimated working expenses upon a line from Grenfell to Wyalong was £4,843—the difference between the two being about £400;—the cost of maintenance of the Grenfell to Wyalong line will be greater than that of the Temora to Wyalong line? That is so.
187. The cost of running, I should imagine, will also be greater on that line, because of the greater length of it? Yes; proportionately.
188. It seems strange to me that there is not a greater reduction in working expenses than £400;—can you say whether, in connection with the Grenfell to Wyalong line, it was estimated that six trains per week would be run? Precisely the same in both cases.
189. It seems a small reduction in the cost of maintenance when there is a saving of 17½ miles out of 59;—there is a saving of 40 per cent. in length, with approximately the same number of stations. On the Temora to Wyalong line, I presume that there would be a station at Reefton, Barmedman, the Half-way House, and Wyalong. On a line from Grenfell to Wyalong there would, I presume, be a station at Weoga, Bland Crossing, Piney Range, and Wyalong? As far as Wyalong is concerned, the traffic expenses will be the same. We should have an officer in charge at Barmedman on the Temora-Wyalong line, and probably an officer in charge at Bland Crossing on the Grenfell-Wyalong line. We should possibly have a caretaker at Reefton on the Temora-Wyalong line, and possibly one at some point on the Grenfell-Wyalong line. The traffic expenses would be almost the same on both lines. I am unable to speak with regard to locomotive expenses, but I am sure that the Commissioners would be properly advised, because the estimates are worked out on the mileage which would have to be run in each case.
190. I should have thought that the difference would have been greater than that which has been mentioned, especially when you consider the difference in length of construction; that means a saving of haulage and a saving in maintenance, one line being subject to some extent to floods, and the other being over dry country along its whole course? I can only give the figures as those of the Railway Commissioners. I may state that my traffic charges are almost the same; they scarcely differ. Of course, they would not vary in proportion to the mileage.
191. On your estimate of revenue—without a line allowing for increased land to be put under cultivation—there is an apparent deficiency of £2,500 per annum? That is on interest and working expenses.
192. Do you think that would be too great a risk to undertake, leaving out of consideration for a moment your opinion regarding the respective routes? Certainly not, because the Railway Commissioners have indicated, in connection with previous railways, that where a line will pay working expenses, and show a reasonable prospect of paying interest, they are prepared to recommend it.
193. In the statement which you have read, the Railway Commissioners say that there is a greater prospect of development between Grenfell and Wyalong than there is between Temora and Wyalong; have you any information which will show us where that possibility of development lies;—in view of the fact that the District Surveyor's evidence is that there are only large holdings of land suitable for pastoral purposes between Piney Range and Wyalong, is there any likelihood of those holdings being developed? I should not think that they would be developed from an agricultural point of view.
194. Apart from those holdings, where is the land which is available for development? Between Grenfell and the black soil—Piney Range.
195. Is it not apparent that there is just as great an amount of country suitable for development between Barmedman and Temora as there is on the other side? A great deal of that is already under occupation, and is shown in the return.
196. Beyond Barmedman again, and north-westerly from it, is there not a large area of land suitable for agriculture which is at present too far away from railway communication? I should imagine that that country will be served by a line at Wyalong, no matter whether it goes from Temora or Grenfell.
197. Assuming that the land about Buddigower would be within a reasonable distance of a line at Wyalong, could not the same be said in regard to the land about Piney Range, which is within 20 miles of the existing terminus of Grenfell? Decidedly; but that would not meet the whole of the case, because if the line were extended to Wyalong, it would suit that country as far as Piney Range is concerned, and it would leave the people at Buddigower in precisely the same position as are the Piney Range people, and then they would not be very much closer to the proposed line.
198. They would be closer at what we call the Half-way House; however, none of the land so far spoken of as suitable for development would be more than 20 miles from a railway, even if the proposed line were constructed? I could not speak of my own knowledge.
199. *Dr. Garran.*] You have shown us an encouraging increase in the agricultural development of the country between Wyalong and Temora; I presume that has been partly due to the mining activity of the neighbourhood? More or less.
200. And to the fact that there is a fairly good road between Temora and Wyalong? The whole of it is not a good road.
201. North of an imaginary line from Grenfell to Wyalong there is a very large block of country extending from

from Grenfell to Forbes on the east, to the river on the north, to the eastern side of Lake Cowal on the west, and to the imaginary line itself on the south;—is not a great deal of that block of land fitted for mixed farming? I believe so.

J. Harper.
26 Sept., 1900.

202. Would not the construction of a railway between Grenfell and Wyalong thoroughly stimulate the development of that large area of country? That is my impression. I may mention that, as a matter of fact, no agricultural results were shown in the report on the Grenfell to Wyalong line. They were only indicated generally; but you have before you an absolute development of the district to be served by the proposed line.

203. If you look at the wall-map you will see two proposed lines converging at an acute angle, which will over supply a certain district. If we construct those lines, and do not construct a line from Grenfell to Wyalong, we shall leave the large square area to which I have referred without any accommodation additional to what it possesses at present, namely the line north of the river. If we construct the Wyalong and the Gunbar line we shall over supply part of that country? That is so.

204. *Mr. Watson.*] With regard to the area of country mentioned by Dr. Garran, and assuming that a terminus remains at Grenfell and one at Wyalong, do you think there will be any agricultural country at a great distance from a railway between those points? That I am not in a position to say.

205. The country easterly from Wyalong, so far as Back Creek, which is the extent of the country suitable for agriculture, will be served from the Wyalong side? Yes.

206. The cultivation on the Humbug Creek will be served as well by a line from Grenfell to Wyalong as by a line from Temora to Wyalong? Yes; the north-west portion of Humbug Creek.

207. It will make no difference to the people of Humbug Creek whether the line goes *via* Grenfell or Temora? No. The only thing is, that it will increase the number of what are called cock-spur lines. If the line is extended from Grenfell to Wyalong, it will represent, in the future, a more valuable section of line than will the other one.

208. So far as the pastoral aspects of the Bland are concerned, the people there will not be at any great disadvantage? No; they will have to come a greater distance, of course, into Barmedman.

209. Do you think that will be too great a handicap for them? Of course, it will be a handicap for them. I may mention that I have given Barmedman and Wyalong full credit for all the traffic of the Bland country. Whether, of course, any portion of the traffic will go into Forbes—20½ miles—or whether it will or will not go into Grenfell, I cannot say; but I have practically given the proposed line credit for the whole of the Bland country traffic, so as to leave no doubt about the matter.

210. Assuming that the Bland country, as far as the lake country, is more than 25 miles from a railway, is that too far for people to convey their stock to that railway? Assuming that it is 25 miles, it is not too great a distance.

211. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you well acquainted with the country about Barmedman and Wyalong? Only by travelling through it six or eight times.

212. Have you been off the line to the west? Yes. I have been in the neighbourhood of Rcefton, and I have been to Maudamah, and in the neighbourhood of Buddigower, coming into Barmedman from Rankin Springs. Generally speaking, I have been a good deal about the district.

213. Have you been any distance to the west? Yes; right through to Hillston from Wyalong.

214. Do you consider the following description of that country by Mr. J. Wilkinson, the manager of the Buddigower station, to be a fair one:—

From 75 miles to 150 miles west of Barmedman and Wyalong is a dense scrub of mallee, ironbark, pine, and other useless scrubs, and is only a harbour for wild dogs, rabbits, and other noxious animals.

—? West of Wyalong and Barmedman there is a great deal of very worthless country; but I would not like to say how much; in fact that is one of the reasons why the Commissioners have reported adversely against the line.

215. *Mr. Watson.*] As against the quotation just read by Mr. Shepherd, have you read the evidence given by Mr. District-Surveyor Sharpe, stationed at Forbes, in regard to the land to the south; he says that on Buddigower, which comprises 80,000 acres, there is a large area, three-fourths of which is first-class agricultural country; it is leasehold area, which was thrown open three years ago? I have not read the evidence.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLAN

RELATING TO THE

PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

CARLINGFORD TO DURAL.

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

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 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCPARTLANE, Esquire.

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PLAN.

Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RAILWAY FROM CARLINGFORD TO DURAL.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Carlingford to Dural," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed railway be constructed, but the Committee recommend that steps be taken to have surveys made for a tramway along the road from Carlingford and Westmead to Dural, plans and estimates of cost prepared, and reports obtained from the Railway Commissioners on the subject, with a view to ascertain whether requirements may be met by a tramway along either route; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (IV), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

1. The present inquiry is the second carried out by the Public Works Committee respecting the proposed railway, the first inquiry having been made in 1898, when the Committee, by eight votes to five, negatived the proposal, on the grounds that the traffic would not be sufficient to make the line profitable, and whatever it might be a large proportion of it would be withdrawn from the Great Northern Railway, and that the fruit-growers of the district could, without further railway expenditure, find, by means of existing roads and railways, reasonable transit for their fruit to market. On that occasion the proposal was coupled with one for the purchase of the Rosehill-Carlingford Railway, which the Committee recommended, and which has since been effected for the sum of £22,500.

In the official statement prepared for the information of the present Committee by the Under-Secretary for Public Works, it is explained that in order to make full use of the Rosehill-Carlingford Railway, and render it profitable, the line must be taken on to Dural. "The districts of which Dural is about the centre," it goes on to say, "are in themselves held to be entitled to better railway facilities than they now enjoy, comprising as they do some of the richest horticultural regions of the Colony. There is a large and prosperous population already settled there, and the proposed line, it is believed, will open up for settlement a further large extent of rich country."

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY.

2. The proposed railway, 9 miles 6 chains in length, would commence at the point where the Rosehill-Carlingford line now ends, 17 miles 37 chains from Sydney, and follow the course of the road to Pennant Hills and Dural until about a mile and a quarter beyond the Pennant Hills Post Office, where the road would be crossed, and the line approach the main road from Parramatta to Dural. Then, crossing and re-crossing this road four times, the line would end on the east side of it, at Dural, 26 miles 43 chains from Sydney. The ruling grade is 1 in 40, and the sharpest curve 10 chains radius. The country passed through is undulating, and notwithstanding that the steep grades and sharp curvature on the constructed portion of the branch would be continued, the works would be moderately heavy. The land required is practically all alienated.

ESTIMATED COST.

3. The estimated total cost of the line, exclusive of land and compensation, is £67,690, or £7,459 per mile. The earthworks are the largest item, £22,843. Including the cost of land required for the line, the estimated total cost would be £75,690.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

4. The Railway Commissioners' report is unfavourable to the proposed line. They estimate the annual cost at £4,822, and the traffic revenue at £1,025, the difference being £3,797. "We reported upon this proposal," they say, "on the 4th November, 1897, when the capital cost was estimated at £57,000, and stated that in our opinion the line would prove unprofitable. We are still of this opinion, and cannot, therefore, recommend its construction—at least until experience has been gained of the working of the line from Clyde to Carlingford."

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

5. The Committee have taken very full evidence on the proposal before them, and have inspected the route of the proposed line and the district to be served. Besides examining official witnesses, every facility has been given the residents of the district and others interested in the railway question to state before the Committee anything they desired to put forward in support of the proposal, and an opportunity was afforded the residents, through one of their principal representatives, to peruse the official evidence, and to reply to it where they thought necessary. As far as possible, therefore, the evidence obtained is complete.

THE PRINCIPAL POINTS IN THE INQUIRY.

6. The chief points which appear necessary to be considered in relation to the proposal are as follows:—

- (1.) The reasons put forward in support of the proposed railway.
- (2.) The nature of the districts which the railway is intended to serve.
- (3.) The traffic prospects in connection with the line.
- (4.) The existing railway and road facilities available.
- (5.) Whether requirements may be met by some modification of the proposal.

REASONS IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSAL.

7. The principal reason in support of the railway, put forward in the statement prepared for the Committee by the Under Secretary for Public Works, is that in order to make the Rosehill-Carlingford line profitable it is necessary to extend that railway to Dural; but, in reply to this, the Committee were informed that this is certainly not the opinion of the Railway Commissioners. The reasons which actuated them in approving of the purchase of the Rosehill railway were that industries are
springing

springing up near the Parramatta River. One of these is the Austral Meat-works, which, though not in operation now, will be soon, and another is the Australian Kerosene and Oil Company's works. Then there is already a railway business connected with the Rosehill Racecourse amounting to £2,000 per year, and additional traffic arising from this on the main line between Clyde and Sydney. The other reasons advanced in support of the proposed line are those put forward by the residents of the district asking for a railway. The fruit-growers, it is said, are hampered by the difficulties attendant upon the conveyance of their fruit to market to an extent that reduces their profits, and prevents an increase of cultivation, such as would take place if the facilities for reaching a railway were improved. There is a large quantity of private land which, it is stated in evidence, has not yet been brought into cultivation, and also a considerable amount of Crown land suitable for fruit-growing which has not been touched. The district, it is pointed out, is one of the most attractive in regard to scenery, and one of the most healthful in New South Wales, and would be largely used for residential purposes if the means for travelling to and from Sydney by railway were sufficiently easy. Although the Great Northern railway is close to the different fruit-growing centres in the district, it cannot be reached, it is explained, without travelling a considerable distance—in some cases from ten to twelve miles—over roads of very steep grades, and, in wet weather, exceedingly heavy.

NATURE OF THE DISTRICT TO BE SERVED.

8. The scenery of the district is undoubtedly attractive, the climate healthy, and fruit-growing is carried on extensively. The population of those places which are regarded as interested in the construction of the proposed railway is given as 2,583, and the acreage in the hands of the fruit-growers 32,578 acres, of which 6,857 are cultivated, principally as orangeries, 5,260 acres bearing fruit, and 1,204 acres not yet bearing. 393 acres are under other tillage. Comparing these figures with those put before the Committee in the inquiry of 1898, they represent an increase since that date of 89 in population, 1,795 acres cultivated, and 1,314 acres bearing fruit. The names of the different fruit-growing centres to which these figures relate are,—Dural, Kenthurst, Glenhaven, Galston, Arcadia, Castle Hill, Pennant Hills, and Glenorie.

TRAFFIC PROSPECTS.

9. The traffic prospects in connection with the railway, as given by the Railway Commissioners and the Chief Railway Traffic Manager, are much less favourable than those put before the Committee by the residents of the district. The total revenue expected by the Railway Commissioners is, as stated in their report, £1,025, which is made up as follows:—

150,000 cases fruit, at 1d.	...	...	...	...	...	£625
2,000 tons special class goods, at 1s.	...	...	...	...	...	100
Sundries	...	...	...	...	...	100
Passengers	...	...	...	...	...	200
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£1,025

The estimate for the carriage of fruit is based upon the assumption that the people proposed to be served by the line would pay double the rate now charged on the Great Northern Railway.

The local traffic estimate is as follows:—

Traffic along the whole length of the line.

313,400 cases fruit, at 2d.	£2,611
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Intermediate Traffic.

From Castle Hill and Glenhaven	£460
From Pennant Hills	212
Carriage of manure, 2s. 6d. per ton	...	...	...	...	...	275
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£3,558

In

In addition to which it is stated there would be a considerable traffic in the carriage of horse-feed to the district, and of white metal from the district to Sydney to be used on the roads, and, as with the railway, private residences in the district would increase in number, there would be a large passenger traffic. The fruit traffic is represented as below what it may be fairly estimated at, for, as the district contains 5,260 acres of bearing trees, the average number of trees on an acre being 100, and the production of fruit one case to a tree, there would be 526,000 cases to send away annually.

It will be observed that the rate in the local estimate for the carriage of fruit is given as 2d., while that stated by the Railway Commissioners is 1d., and that the locally-stated rate for carrying manure is 2s. 6d., as compared with the Railway Commissioners' 1s. The 2d. rate, it is explained, is used in the estimate because the fruit-growers are willing to pay double rates in order to get the railway, as these represent far less expense to the growers than is involved in the present system of carting their fruit to the Great Northern Railway at Pennant Hills or Hornsby. The matter was discussed at a meeting of the Railway League representing the whole district, and it was unanimously decided, the Committee are informed, that the growers could afford to pay a charge of 3d. per case from Dural to Sydney.

With regard to manure, it costs the growers at the present time, the evidence states, about 8s. per ton to get it from the railway to their orchards, and therefore, the willingness with which they will pay a railway rate of 2s. 6d. is apparent. The loss of the traffic on the Northern line, it is contended, will be compensated for by the carriage on the Clyde to Sydney line, as well as by the higher rates on the proposed line between Carlingford and Dural.

One other matter which the residents of the districts advanced as a reason in support of the railway, is the statement that there are large areas of Government land which would be enhanced in value if the railway should be constructed, and which would be taken up for fruit-growing purposes; in proof of which it is alleged that in the districts of Glenhaven and Arcadia, land inferior to these have been selected and are now supporting a considerable population. On this question the Committee examined two witnesses well acquainted with the district—one a Staff Surveyor of the Department of Lands, and the other the Inspector of Conditional Purchases for the Metropolitan District. Their evidence does not entirely agree; but while one of them states that of the Crown land open to settlement within 10 miles of the proposed line, about the parishes of Berowra, Maroota, Frederick, and Cornelia, not more than 10 per cent., as an outside estimate, is fit for cultivation (where he made an absolutely careful examination of the country he has not found anything like that); the evidence of the other is to the effect that of the available Crown land not more than one-fourth is really cultivable. Generally speaking, he says, while the best land in the district has been taken up, and is now under fruit, there is a fair amount of land which, with better facilities for getting to market, would undoubtedly be put under fruit-culture.

EXISTING FACILITIES FOR GETTING TO MARKET.

10. At the present time the fruitgrowers of the district find a market, by way of roads, well constructed, but of somewhat steep gradient, to the Great Northern Railway at Hornsby and Pennant Hills, or by way of easier roads to Parramatta. Portions of the roads, no doubt, in wet weather are difficult for heavy traffic; but taking them as a whole they are well maintained, and there are ample supplies of road-metal in the district. There is a steep gradient on the road to Pennant Hills Station, but the carts when loaded with fruit travel down hill. In a similar manner the road between the fruit centres and Hornsby is steep in places, but it is down hill from Galston to the valley of Berowra Creek, and a grade of 1 in 15 on the rise from the valley to the railway. A new road from Arcadia to Berowra, which will materially shorten the journey to the railway, is in course of construction.

Under the present system, in addition to finding a market for the fruit in Sydney, it is admitted that fruit can be and is sent at a satisfactory profit from any place in the district to Melbourne and New Zealand.

QUESTION

QUESTION OF A TRAMWAY INSTEAD OF A RAILWAY.

11. While it seems improbable that the proposed railway would pay, owing to the heavy capital cost involved, the Committee are of opinion that cheaper carriage would lead to the development of the district, and have endeavoured to ascertain the possibility of serving the residents with a tramway at a low cost. The Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, stated that a tramway could be constructed from Westmead to Dural for under £44,000, with a grade of 1 in 30, and keeping mainly to the existing road. Against this a tramway from Carlingford to Dural, also following the road for the most part, could be constructed for about £33,000. The latter route seems to be preferred by the Railway Commissioners, for, though it would have to compete to some extent with the Northern line, it could be worked in conjunction with the existing railway to Carlingford. The Westmead line, however, would be further from the existing railway, and would serve more country to the westward.

CONCLUSION ARRIVED AT.

12. In view of the much smaller cost of a tram-line, as compared with that of the proposed railway, and the fact, as will be seen from the evidence, that the fruit-growers admit they would be fairly served by a tramway, the Committee are of opinion that steps should be taken to have a survey for a tram-line made along the road from Carlingford to Dural, and also from Westmead to the same point, plans and estimates of cost prepared, and reports obtained from the Railway Commissioners on the subject. The proximity of the Great Northern railway to the proposed railway line, and the element of doubt as to a railway between Carlingford and Dural paying, to which a careful consideration of all the circumstances of the case gives rise, lead the Committee to the conclusion that the proposal submitted should be negatived with the object of meeting the requirements of the district by means of a tramway.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

13. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings:—

Mr. Watson moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed railway from Carlingford to Dural, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out; but the Committee recommend that steps be taken to have surveys made for a tramway along the road, from Carlingford and Westmead to Dural, plans and estimates of cost prepared, and reports obtained from the Railway Commissioners on the subject, with a view to ascertain whether requirements may be met by a tramway along either route.”

The motion was seconded by Dr. Garran, and passed.

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 27th November, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

RAILWAY FROM CARLINGFORD TO DURAL.

TUESDAY, 28 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have an official statement with respect to the proposed line of railway from Carlingford to Dural now under consideration by this Committee? Ycs; I have a statement which was prepared by the Under Secretary. It reads as follows:—

H. Deane.
28 Aug., 1900.

RAILWAY FROM CARLINGFORD TO DURAL.

The proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration on 2nd August, 1900, in the following terms:—

“That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of railway from Carlingford to Dural.”

The proposed line of railway will extend from the terminus of what is known as the Rosehill line at Carlingford to the village of Dural, a length of 9 miles 6 chains.

The question of its construction has already been before the Public Works Committee. After due inquiry in January-February, 1898, the then Committee, by a majority of eight to five, negatived the proposal on the following grounds:—

- (1.) That the traffic upon the proposed railway extension would not be sufficient to make the line profitable.
- (2.) That whatever the traffic might be, a large proportion of it would be traffic withdrawn from the Great Northern railway.
- (3.) That the district is so situated in regard to road communication with, and distance from, the existing railways, that fruit-growers can, without further railway expenditure, find reasonable transit for their fruit to market.

The Committee's decision was arrived at on 13th April, 1898, and attention is now invited to the report and evidence respecting the proposal as then presented to Parliament.

Since that date, although there may not have been any specially marked developments in the districts to be served by the proposed line, a step of great importance, and closely related to the proposal, has been taken in the purchase by the Government of the Rosehill Railway. During the inquiry in January-February, 1898, the question of acquiring the Rosehill Railway—that is, the privately-owned line running northwards from Clyde on the Government main line to Carlingford with a deviation to Parramatta River, having a total length of 5 miles 48 chains—had been prominently before the Committee, and they recommended that the purchase be made if the price did not exceed the sum of £20,000. The original cost of this line was stated to have been £110,000; and it was offered to the Government for the sum of £25,000.

The purchase has just been completed for the sum of £22,500, and it is estimated that it only requires a further outlay of some £8,000 to put the line in first-class trafficable condition. In order, however, to make full use of the purchase and render it profitable, the line must be taken on to Dural. The districts, of which Dural is about the centre, are in themselves held to be entitled to better railway facilities than they now enjoy, comprising, as they do, some of the richest horticultural regions of the Colony. There is a large and prosperous population already settled there, and the proposed line, it is believed, will open up for settlement a further large extent of rich country.

The official description of the line is as follows:—

CARLINGFORD TO DURAL RAILWAY.

Length, 9 miles 6 chains; estimated cost, £67,690, or £7,459 per mile, exclusive of land and compensation.

This extension of the existing branch line from the main suburban railway near Clyde platform to Rosehill and Carlingford, begins at 17 miles 37 chains from Sydney, and follows the course of the Pennant Hills Road, and crossing the continuation to Dural of that road, about a mile and a quarter beyond the Pennant Hills Post Office. Approaching the main road from Parramatta to Dural, it crosses and recrosses it four times, and ends at the east side of the same road at Dural at 26 miles 43 chains from Sydney.

The ruling grade is 1 in 40, and the sharpest curve 10 chains radius.

The country passed through is undulating, and notwithstanding that the steep grades and sharp curvature on the constructed portion of the branch are continued the works will be moderately heavy.

The land required is practically all alienated.

H. Deano. The following is the statutory report of the Railway Commissioners on this proposal:—
 28 Aug., 1900.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 6 July, 1900.

Proposed Extension of Railway from Carlingford to Dural—9 miles 6 chains.

In accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Act of 1888, we beg to report as follows:—

<i>Cost of Construction—</i>	
The Engineer-in-Chief for Construction estimates the cost of construction of the line (exclusive of land resumption and compensation) at	£67,690
<i>Estimated Annual Cost—</i>	
Capital expenditure at 3 per cent.	£2,031
Cost of maintaining permanent-way and for traffic and locomotive expenses	2,791
	£4,822
<i>Estimated Traffic Revenue</i>	£1,025

We reported upon this proposal on the 4th November, 1897, when the capital cost was estimated at £57,000, and stated that, in our opinion, the line would prove unprofitable. We are still of this opinion and cannot, therefore, recommend its construction—at least until experience has been gained of the working of the line from Clyde to Carlingford.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this sixth day of July, one thousand nine hundred, in the presence of, —
 W. M. FEHON, Deputy Chief Commissioner.
 DAVID KIRKCALDIE, Commissioner.
 H. McLACHLAN.

The estimated cost is stated as follows:—

CARLINGFORD TO DURAL.

REVISED estimated cost of a single line of railway 9 miles 6 chains in length, with 60-lb. rails. Ruling grades, 1 in 50 against, and 1 in 40 with the load. Sharpest curve, 10 chains radius. New fastenings; new 4-ft. 6-in. T.O.'s; full ballast; sleepers, 2,464 per mile.

Description.	Estimated Cost.	Average per mile.
Earthworks	£ 22,843 9 10	2,517
Culverts and small timber openings	5,197 10 0	573
Overbridge	5,102 3 0	502
Level crossings, road diversions, and fencing	4,281 6 8	472
Permanent-way materials (rails taken at £7 10s. per ton)	7,769 6 0	856
Freight	167 16 6	18
Platelaying at 1s. 2d. = £931 14s.	7,759 15 3	855
Ballasting at 4s. = £3,194 8s.		
Sleepers at 3s. 3d. = £3,633 13s. 3d.		
Station works, including sidings and signals	1,922 5 4	212
Station buildings; waiting sheds, £220; platforms, £242; loading banks, £286; station-master's cottage, £270	1,018 0 0	112
Water supply	1,500 0 0	165
Gradient and mileage posts	149 14 9	17
Telegraph	149 14 9	17
Miscellaneous	1,000 0 0	110
	£58,861 2 1	.....
Engineering and contingencies, 15 per cent. (nearly)	8,828 17 11	973
Total cost	£67,690 0 0	7,459

- I have also the plan and the parish map showing the course of the line, and also the book of reference.
2. In the first part of the report it states: "In order, however, to make full use of the purchase, and render it profitable, the line must be taken on to Dural"; and later on in the report it states that the Railway Commissioners are hostile to the extension of the line to Dural;—can you explain those two opposite statements? The Public Works statement has not been prepared by myself; the Under Secretary for Works is responsible for it
 3. And you do not know why that first statement was put in? I do not.
 4. Starting from Carlingford and going on to Dural, could you give the Committee approximately the distance of this proposed extension from the Sydney-Newcastle line, say from Eastwood, Pennant Hills, and Beecroft, then at the widest portion, then from Dural to Hornsby? The distance from the end of the purchased line to the Eastwood station is a trifle over 2 miles in a direct line.
 5. Then from Beecroft bend? The nearest approach of the line to the bend near Beecroft Station is as nearly as possible 1 mile.
 6. And now in the widest portion? Perhaps I had better take the terminus from Hornsby—that is a little over 4 miles.
 7. Could you state what the widest point is about a mile south of Dural? It is about 5½ miles.
 8. That is the maximum distance of the proposed extension from the Newcastle and Hornsby line? Yes.
 9. What is it that makes the cost of the earthworks so exceedingly high;—I see that they are put down at £22,843, or £2,517 per mile? The country is very rough, and it is sharply undulating. In fact, the undulations are so sharp that they do not lend themselves to the smallest available radius of a curve.
 10. Could you tell us what saving you would effect if you reduce the grading from 1 in 45 to 1 in 30? I do not think it would be very material. The book of reference shows the character of country it passes through; some of it is grass, and some bush land, and some of it orchard land.
 11. Mr. McFarlane.] Since the Government have taken over the line from Clyde to Carlingford, has it been working? Only to the racecourse. I made an inspection in company with Mr. Firth and Mr. Parry, of the Railway Commissioners' Department, with a view to seeing to what expense it would be necessary to go in order to render the line fit for carrying traffic.
 12. Is that beyond Rosehill? Yes. The Railway Commissioners wish, in order to provide for the running of traffic beyond the Rosehill Racecourse, to make considerable alterations at the Clyde Station; some of that expenditure would no doubt have to be incurred, whether this extended line had been purchased

H. Deane.
23 Aug., 1900.

purchased or not; but a great deal of the expenditure is necessitated by the purchase of the extension. The estimated cost of alterations at the Clyde junction is about £3,000. The Commissioners propose to widen the right-hand platform, and to put up waiting-sheds and lay a new line on the right-hand side of the junction, and a loop for running the engine round, an overbridge across the whole of the three lines of rails, with steps and approaches to the platforms, and complete new interlocking arrangements. At the same time they will shift the signal-box from its present position to the other end of the station. A number of other items of expenditure are necessary, such, for instance, as gate-houses at the crossings. I think there are four level crossings between Clyde Station and the river. Some extra accommodation is also necessary at the stations along the line. A loop at the terminus is also required. I have not the details at present with me of all that is required; but, altogether, the improvements will cost something over £7,000 in order to make the railway convenient for working.

13. Was any estimate of the traffic made by the Railway Commissioners prior to the purchase of the line from Clyde to Carlingford? I find on looking on page 3 of the evidence bound up with the last report that the report of the Railway Commissioners is very similar to that submitted by them now, and it only varies to the extent of the interest on the actual expenditure. The cost of maintaining the permanent-way, and traffic and locomotive expenses, is put down at £2,791. The estimated traffic revenue is £1,025. In the previous report the interest on capital expenditure was put down at £1,710. Now it is put down at £2,031; that is, of course, due to the interest to be paid on the larger sum.

14. Would that be the traffic of the proposed line? Yes.

15. I am referring to the estimated traffic of the proposed line from Carlingford to Dural? I do not think the Railway Commissioners have furnished any particulars of that traffic; the only report I find is on page 3 of the printed report, which is headed "Rosehill Railway."

16. Did the Railway Commissioners anticipate that the Rosehill line would pay after they purchased it for £22,500? I am scarcely in a position to say what inducements they had in their minds when recommending the purchase of the line. I have no doubt that they all thought it would pay. There is a good deal of traffic now at times to the Rosehill Racecourse, but I am not in a position to say what the receipts are. The line might pay very well when only about £25,000 to £30,000 has been paid for it, and it might pay very badly if the capital cost was £110,000.

17. Could you state where there is much traffic, or has been much traffic, between Rosehill and Carlingford? The line has never been worked.

18. Do you think there will be much traffic on the proposed extension to Dural? I am afraid not.

19. Are the different places *en route* thickly populated? The country is very well suited for residential purposes, but you could scarcely call it thickly populated. It is nearly all orchard or grass land. There is some bush still left.

20. Do you think that the construction of the proposed line would cause a denser population? Yes; I think so.

21. Do you think it likely that additional land would be cut up into blocks for orchard purposes if we made the proposed line? Do you mean for residential purposes.

22. Yes? I think it is very likely some of the land would be cut up for residential purposes. It is a beautiful bit of country, eminently fitted for residential purposes.

23. Is there a likelihood of an increased traffic in produce and fruits? Yes.

24. Would it induce further production? It would, undoubtedly.

25. Would that be at the cost of the Northern line to some extent, through its being so close to it? I think it might give a greater impetus to settlement there, and greater cultivation of the land than the Northern line has already caused; although I should say that the whole of the country will eventually be cultivated, and the traffic from the land adjacent to the Northern line would go to that line, and so in a certain sense this line would compete with the Northern line. At present, I think, a great deal of the produce comes into Parramatta by road.

26. The average distance between the two lines is about 3 miles? Yes, not more than that.

27. Do you not think that is rather close? It is rather close for lines where the chief return is derived from carrying produce. It is only 3 or 4 miles from the terminus to Parramatta.

28. And the construction of the proposed line will be to make the purchased line from Clyde a paying one? I think it would contribute to that result.

29. Do you think both together would pay—that is to say, with a total purchase of £67,000 and £30,000—that would be about £100,000 in all? It would be very difficult for me to say. I should not consider the extension a very good investment.

30. *Mr. Levien.*] What is the length of the line to Rosehill which the Government purchased for £22,500? Five miles 48 chains altogether. I think it would be 4 miles 48 chains without the sidings to the wharf.

31. They bought the 5 miles for £22,500? Yes.

32. Do you not think it was very cheap? Yes.

33. What did it cost originally to construct? It is said to have cost £110,000.

34. What could it be constructed for now? I can only repeat the answer I gave at a previous inquiry, when I stated that it would cost between £40,000 and £50,000 for construction alone. I adhere to that statement now. I afterwards made an estimate, and I estimated that it would cost £45,000.

35. Then these 9 miles 6 chains which it is proposed to construct at an estimated cost of £67,000 are really not cheap as compared with the line which has been bought for £22,500? No.

36. The Rosehill line was bought very cheaply? Yes, very cheaply.

37. Do you not think it best to go on constructing this line, considering that you have got it so cheap;—is it not better to continue it to Dural? It is a matter of calculation whether it is going to pay or not.

38. You say that the purchase has just been completed, and that a sum of about £8,000 is required to put it in good working order;—that is, the whole of the 5 miles 48 chains? Yes.

39. Then the actual cost would really amount to about £30,500? Yes; a little under that.

40. Considering the district and its growing capabilities, do you not think it best to complete the line, even though the expenditure goes up to £67,000? I am not in a position to give an opinion. There is another important consideration: What is going to be paid for the land. £67,000 will not cover the whole cost.

41. That is the actual expenditure of the Public Works Department? Yes, on construction.

- H. Deane. 42. The report you have read to the Committee says the line must be extended to Dural? That is the Under Secretary's statement, not mine. I do not see any necessity for it myself.
- 28 Aug., 1900. 43. You do not express any opinion as to the probable traffic? No.
44. It is all valuable land along there, and would be subject to greater cultivation if the line were extended? It is very good land.
45. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you been over the proposed line? Yes.
46. You know the country pretty well? I have been over it more than once.
47. Have you been as far as Galston? Yes; the country is patchy beyond that.
48. Beyond Galston it is inferior country? Yes.
49. You would not look for so much traffic beyond Galston? You get to the sandstone beyond Galston.
50. Can you tell me the distance from Clyde to Carlingford by rail? It is 4 miles 48 chains.
51. You say that the line from Clyde to Carlingford has not been worked? No; the Rosehill line is working, but not the other.
52. It is completed, is it not? Yes; and it is in pretty good order.
53. Would it not pay to work it to Carlingford? The Railway Commissioners intend to work it as soon as they get the alterations made—the alteration at the junction, and one or two extra things along the line.
54. That will be in the near future? Yes. I believe they have already started to make the points and the crossings, and to do the interlocking work.
55. With regard to the bridge over the Parramatta River, connecting the Rosehill line with Carlingford, is it a good bridge? It is an old style of bridge, not suitable for heavy rolling stock. It will do for the engines which it is intended to use for working this line.
56. Would it be sufficiently strong to carry freight trains and passenger traffic? Yes, with the lighter class of engines that will be used.
57. About 40-ton engines? Yes; they would not be heavier than the suburban engines.
58. The bridge would not carry express engines? No; I believe the bridge was never designed for heavy traffic. I went over it just before it was completed, and I suggested it should be stiffened up, and it has been stiffened up to some extent. If it had been designed in my branch I should have made it very much stronger. I make all bridges to carry the heaviest engines; but it will do for the purpose for which it was intended.
59. Would an ordinary suburban engine be able to take a fairly good load up these heavy gradients—1 in 40, with a 10 chain curve? I think as much as will be wanted. The chief portion of the loading will be down-hill. There will be very little back loading. I think the grade on the purchased line is 1 in 35.
60. Personally, you are not in favour of the extension of this line? No; you mean in constructing.
61. Yes? It is the best that could be made out of it. It is an expensive bit of line. It does not look as if it were a line that would ever pay.
62. Under no circumstances could there be an extension beyond Galston? No.
63. Even if the line was taken beyond Dural to Galston, that would have to be the terminus—it could not go on? No; the country is so broken.
64. *Mr. Levien.*] Why do they not open the line to Carlingford? The purchase has only just been completed.
65. The line has been built for some time;—was it the Rosehill junction that prevented it from going on to completion? No; the money has only just been paid over. The transfer has only just been effected; about a week or a fortnight ago.
66. There are no engineering difficulties that are keeping it back? No, nothing whatever.
67. *Dr. Garran.*] On the plan before the Committee there is a possible line marked west of Castle Hill;—has that any advantages over the Carlingford route? No; I do not think it has. I think if the line is to be taken to Dural now that this purchase has been made, it would be best to extend it from the purchased line; but if that line had not been carried across the Parramatta River from Rosehill I should say that the western route would be worth consideration.
68. Could you not now turn off from Carlingford and go to Baulkham Hills and to Dural? No, there is too great a drop.
69. So that you have got to keep to this ridge now that you are on it? Yes.
70. There is no other way, except sticking to the ridge? No; you are running along ridges and spurs all the way.
71. Are the roads anything like the Blue Mountain line? They are much on the same principle; you cannot get away from the one route. It is a difficult class of country.
72. But so far as the ridge is concerned, you are pinned to it when once on it? Yes.
73. Is there any range going out towards Kenthurst? I have not been to Kenthurst.
74. There has been a good road made from Galston to Hornsby? Yes.
75. All the fruit goes that way? I am not sure; it is a very steep drop into the Berowra Creek valley.
76. *Mr. Hyam.*] That line from Westmead *via* Castle Hill—after leaving Castle Hill, would there not be a big hill and cuttings? Yes; an awkward hill there. The line takes a curve through it.
77. It would be very expensive work? We go round it. I think there is a large cutting at one special point, but we can get round it right enough.
78. Would this railway serve the Castle Hill people with their produce—or do you not think they would rather go into Parramatta instead of facing the hill? I think they would get used to the hill, but for some time they might go into Parramatta. Eventually they would take the shortest route in spite of the hill.
79. *Mr. Watson.*] Has a survey been made of the line from Parramatta to Dural, following the main road, *via* Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill? Yes.
80. Could you tell the Committee what that was estimated to cost? I am working it out now, and I dare say I shall be in a position to give the Committee the latest figures in the course of a day or two.
81. That line appears to follow the main road, except a little piece near Parramatta? Yes. I propose to go along Church-street, Parramatta.
82. *Mr. Hyam.*] Was there not a private tramway there? No; that is in George-street, and goes down to the river.

83. Was there not a private line of tramway surveyed from Parramatta to Dural? No; we have had surveys along the road. H. Deane.
84. *Mr. Watson.*] If that road were followed by a tram-line it would be considerably further from the Northern line than the proposed Carlingford railway? Yes, it would; but it would follow the same general line of population. 28 Aug., 1900.
85. With regard to these alterations you speak of as being necessary at Clyde—before the Railway Commissioners sanctioned the purchase of the line it could be worked—is it not a fact that very heavy traffic has been worked from that junction on the Rosehill line already, in connection with race meetings, eight-hours' sports, and so on? Yes.
86. Then can you explain why, to work the two or three trains that will be necessary for this little extension beyond the Parramatta River, there should now need to be so great an expenditure for alterations? I should prefer to leave that to the Railway Commissioners or their officers to reply to. I would point out that the Rosehill traffic is an exceptional thing, whereas the traffic on this line from Clyde will be of daily occurrence, and the line, of course, should be made suitable for it. In other words, you can put up with an insufficiency of arrangements on an emergency; but you would not consider it proper to have insufficient arrangements if the line were worked continuously.
87. It seems strange to me that they can deal with a vast number of people on such occasions as the Eight-hour Demonstration and big race meetings and yet not be able to deal with a smaller amount of traffic that has to be provided for day by day;—do you know whether they propose debiting the £8,000 to the Construction Branch? The money will be found by the Public Works Department. The purchase of the line has been made by the Public Works Department, and the Railway Commissioners are anxious that the line should be put in proper condition for continuous working.
88. It looks as if they were asking for more facilities now than they have been working under for years past, seeing that the greater part of this expenditure is to be made at the Clyde junction? *Mr. McLachlan* will be able to give you better information than I can on that point. The traffic to the Rosehill Racecourse is occasional; but the traffic on this line would be daily.
89. *Mr. Hyam.*] Did the Government survey a line of tramway from Parramatta to Dural? We have surveyed a tramway there. I think there was also a proposal for a private tramway.
90. I think you gave evidence to a Select Committee in regard to that proposal—and it was condemned by a Select Committee of the Upper House—we considered the preamble not proved? Yes.
91. That is not the tramway you refer to? No.
92. It was not possible to take the tramway further than Castle Hill, because of the physical difficulties? I think my evidence in regard to the matter would be scarcely reliable, as I should have to give it from memory, and I would rather look the matter up.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

93. *Chairman.*] Have you any general statement to make to the Committee in regard to the proposal for constructing a line of railway from Carlingford to Dural? I have nothing further than what is contained in the report of the Railway Commissioners. H.
McLachlan.
94. In the report of the Under Secretary it is stated that in order to make the purchase of the Clyde to Carlingford line profitable, it will be necessary to extend the line to Dural;—that evidently is not the opinion of the Railway Commissioners? No. 28 Aug., 1900.
95. Have not the Railway Commissioners reported strongly against it? Yes.
96. I suppose there has been no similar proposal made for a short line of 5 miles to run at an average of 3 miles from the nearest railway? No; it seems to me that it cannot be held to be a necessity that the line should be extended in order to secure its profitability, because the district traffic partly goes to a competing line. Pennant Hills station is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile away by a good road, and you have this further advantage, that it is 2 miles nearer Sydney by the present line.
97. Where does the Dural traffic go to now? Some of it goes into Parramatta, some goes across to Hornsby. Most of the district traffic goes to the Pennant Hills Station.
98. Is there any hope that a line to Dural might tap a large district to the north and west? No; because the country beyond Dural, and especially beyond Galston, is very broken. Galston itself is a very fertile place, but as soon as you get beyond that you get into very broken country. The area of good country is limited.
99. The estimated traffic revenue from the proposed line is £1,025 per annum;—how much of that would represent traffic diverted from the Hornsby line? I am not quite sure on that point. I do not think consideration has been given to it.
100. Do the Railway Commissioners anticipate that the Clyde to Carlingford purchase is likely to prove profitable, considering the price they paid? The Commissioners considered it a reasonable thing to do in many ways. One reason which actuated them was that industries were springing up near the Parramatta River. Then there was also good business to the Rosehill Racecourse; the revenue from that was equal to £2,000 per year, and it brought business to the main line; they thought that as the line could be obtained so cheaply it would be wise to purchase it.
101. It has been suggested that the proposed line would open up a large district suitable for residential purposes? I think that is a claim that will not hold water. We have a line nearer Sydney, and alongside the proposed line, only 3 miles away, and passing through equally good country; and yet that does not show much in the way of establishing a large residential population.
102. Taking the whole line, from Carlingford to Dural, at the estimates set down, and excluding the cost of land and other compensation, the average cost per mile has been about £6,000—in order to make a line of that cost profitable it would require to be taken through exceedingly rich country? Yes; it would require the traffic of a large area.
103. Do you know within what radius this line would draw traffic? I think the traffic from Castle Hill would go into Parramatta. The farmers generally bring in their fruits and take back supplies. A large amount of fruit traffic goes to the western stations—that is, a great deal of Parramatta fruit, at certain times of the year, goes to Bathurst, Wellington, and other places on the Western line. And the growers would still find it equally convenient to come to Parramatta with it.
104. So that this line could hardly be expected to bring traffic from the east, and only traffic from a very restricted area on the west? That is what I think. 105.

- H.
McLachlan.
28 Aug., 1900.
105. It would practically have a dead-end at Dural? Yes.
106. *Dr. Garran.*] When you have made the improvements at Clyde, which are to cost £8,000, the line will have cost the Department a little over £30,000 altogether? Yes.
107. Is the interest on that not very heavy? No.
108. And if you get your working expenses paid on this line, the burden would not be very heavy? No. Indirectly we look to the business on the original Rosehill line to help to outweigh the deficiency on the line to the north of it.
109. But you can pretty well make the Carlingford line a self-supporting line;—there is no need to go on further for the purpose of making that productive? No.
110. So that this proposed extension to Dural must be considered entirely on its own merits? That is how the Commissioners consider the matter.
111. The line to Carlingford would be a complete property itself? Yes.
112. And it would not be a great burden? No, considering all the circumstances.
113. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I see the estimated annual cost is set down at a little more now than it was set down at in 1898? The interest cost may have gone up a little.
114. In the Commissioners' report, read to the Committee just now, it says, "Capital expenditure at 3 per cent., £2,031"? It is due entirely to a different estimate from the Engineer-in-Chief. Mr. Deane increased his estimate.
115. Then now the line is really estimated to cost a little more than it was estimated at two years ago? I take it that that is due to increased cost of labour and materials. I understand that the capital cost would be increased by something like £10,000 by the purchase of land. It would run along the frontages of a large number of properties.
116. From the estimate of revenue it would appear that the district has remained precisely in the same state as it was in two years ago? Yes; there has been no development to any great extent.
117. And there is no more encouragement now than there was two years ago to construct the line? The Commissioners think not.
118. *Mr. Hyam.*] When the alterations are made at the Clyde junction, is it the intention of the Railway Commissioners to open the line to traffic as far as Carlingford? Yes.
119. Would it be a daily service? Yes.
120. Only one train a day? More than one train a day.
121. Will it be opened almost immediately? As soon as the line is ready to work. We have not been formally advised by the Government that the line has been taken over.
122. And Carlingford for the time being will be the terminus? Yes.
123. Suppose you had bought the railway only to the river, before the bridge was erected—I suppose there is no doubt that in that case the Commissioners would not have constructed that portion of the line between the river and Carlingford? I think not. It was there, however, and was offered for little more than nothing.
124. But for that you would not have constructed that part of the line? No; I think not.
125. *Mr. Watson.*] Mr. Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, informed us that it was proposed to expend something like £8,000 in connection with the Carlingford-Rosehill railway;—the greater part of that expenditure would be made in improvements at the Clyde junction? £3,000 out of £8,000 would be expended at that junction.
126. Can you say why it is necessary to go in for such a large expenditure there, in view of the fact that you have had a large traffic there for years past? We dealt with it under different circumstances. Now we are going to have a branch-line service; and the Commissioners are going to have platforms for transfers, and to deal with goods traffic. They are also introducing a proper interlocking system. One was a direct through service; this will be a branch-line service.
127. Will you run through trains from Sydney for this branch? No.
128. People desiring to go that way will have to change at Clyde? Yes; and the Commissioners desire to provide proper accommodation and facilities for the public.
129. Do you know whether the Railway Commissioners have looked into the suggestion to run a tramway from Parramatta to Dural, along Baulkham Hills way? I think they did some years ago, and they were not favourably inclined towards it; they did not think there would be sufficient business to pay. The road is fairly good now, and the cartages are not long.
130. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you remember that some few years ago there was an idea for running a tramway from the Parramatta Railway Station to Castle Hill? Yes; I think the Parramatta River Company proposed to do it.
131. You gave evidence before a Select Committee in regard to that proposal? Yes.
132. Was your evidence in strong disapproval of that tramway? Yes.
133. I think you then stated that it would be possible to take it to Castle Hill, but that it could not be continued to Dural, on account of some obstacle—some big hill, I think? I think that was outside of Galston. The Commissioners did not think the prospects of the tramway were such as to make it remunerative. They were not in favour of it.

WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESBAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, J.L.D.
 The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

134. *Chairman.*] You understand the nature of the inquiry now before this Committee? Yes.
135. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I see, by the last Committee's report regarding the proposed railway from Carlingford to Dural, that the estimated traffic is supposed to yield £1,025 per annum? Yes.
136. What would that traffic consist of;—have you the details on which that estimate was framed? Yes. The information was given by me in 1898, when I was being examined by this Committee. I then stated that I did not think, taking all circumstances into consideration, that this section would produce more than the following traffic:—150,000 cases fruit, at 1d., £625; 2,000 tons special class goods, at 1s., £100; sundries, £100; passengers, £200; making a total of £1,025.
137. Has there not been some increase during the last two years? Not any quantity. The increase would not be appreciable; not sufficient to vary that estimate, as it was an outside estimate I gave.
138. Has there been no increase of population or settlement? There may have been a small increase of population.
139. Would that not mean an increased passenger traffic? It would be inappreciable. It was an absolutely outside estimate that I gave, and it would cover any small increase there has been in the way of population or production since I gave it.
140. Is there much country to be served by the proposed line? Not very much.
141. What extent of country would it serve? About as far as Galston and Kenthurst. Pennant Hills would come in at a point between Dural and Carlingford.
142. Is it similar country in that direction? Yes; it is all broken country. A good deal of it is agricultural country, but some of it is inferior.
143. Is most of the land that would be served by the proposed line as good as that now served by the present line? Not the larger proportion of it. A large proportion is not cultivated at all where the line would serve.
144. Is it suitable for orchard purposes? More or less.
145. Do you think the construction of the proposed line would cause an additional area of land to be cultivated? I do not think so. The estimate I have given supposes, practically, that the people proposed to be served by the line would pay rates double those which are now charged on the existing line. When last examined by the Committee I expressed a doubt as to whether they would pay them.
146. The proposed line from Carlingford to Dural is only a short distance from the Northern line? Yes.
147. The average distance from it is something like 3 miles? I think from 2 to 3 miles.
148. Then, do you think that the construction of this line would interfere with the traffic on the Northern line? Decidedly. It would create very little new traffic for itself for a good many years to come. No doubt by-and-by it would become a large residential area; but at present there is not much population.
149. Then, this estimate you have made of the traffic, namely, £1,025, has reference only to the new line;—would not that revenue be got, to some extent, at the expense of the existing line? No; the estimate is based on the assumption that the people would be willing to pay double the rate now charged on the present line.
150. Do you think they would use the new line at double rates? That is very doubtful; there are some who would use it. As a matter of fact, on the mileage the addition to the existing line rates is only about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to $\frac{1}{2}$ d., and you notice in my former evidence that I have given an arbitrary penny; that would be practically in addition to what we are getting on the main line at the present day. For instance, Pennant Hills people are paying us an additional penny now.
151. Could you say whether the proposal for the line now under consideration arose out of an agitation on the part of the residents—the fruit-growers in the locality? I do not know who started the agitation; but I imagine that the proposal did come from them.
152. Would it be any great convenience to the fruit-growers to cart their fruit 3 or 4 miles? No doubt if you have the railway station closer to their property it would be an advantage to them; but the wider question is, would it be to the general advantage of the community. I do not think the district is in a bad position as compared with many other districts of the Colony.
153. It is well served by railways now? I think so.
154. Where do the fruit-growers at Dural send their fruit to? A great deal goes to Pennant Hills; some of it goes to Hornsby—but it chiefly goes to Pennant Hills. There are varying distances. In my evidence before the last Committee I gave the distances; for instance, there is one point on the line, Regan's, that would come within half a mile of the line; Thompson's is at the junction of the Pennant Hills road; that is another point from which fruit would come in; then a portion of Kellyville would not be more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles away.
155. Do you think the construction of the proposed line would have the effect of increasing the residential population of the locality? There is no doubt about it that in the near future—but not in the immediate future—there will be a large residential population. There are some very fine sites for residences. But, in the first place, I think the sites on the Milson's Point line will have to be exhausted before the people go Dural way. There would always be more trains per day on the Milson's Point line, by reason of its connection with the Great Northern line.
156. Has population increased on the main Northern line, towards Hornsby? Nothing like what was anticipated.
157. And in view of that you do not think there would be any material increase of population along the proposed line? I should certainly expect it to increase on the Northern line before it increased on the other.

J. Harper.
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- J. Harper. 158. You have no knowledge of the recent purchase of the line from Carlingford to Clyde? Yes.
- 29 Aug., 1900. 159. What is your opinion concerning that? I think it was a very good bargain at the price that was paid for it. I think the fact of having acquired the right to the railway—which in my opinion should never have been parted with—will probably be to make it pay.
160. You think the traffic along it will be sufficient to make it pay? I think so. Of course you have the advantage of the Meat Works there. They are not in operation now, but they will be again soon; and then you have the Australian Kerosene and Oil Company's Works.
161. Apart from the traffic on the line to Rosehill, do you think a line to Carlingford would pay? Certainly not.
162. And on the proposed new line there will not be any special advantage? No, we did not look to the records of traffic very much, so far as the country beyond Carlingford is concerned; a great deal of the traffic of that district finds its way down to the wharf at Ermington.
163. And you think there would not be much increase of population along the proposed line? Unless the people engaged at the Clyde Works and other industries took up their residences in that direction.
164. How long has that line been constructed? I should think about nine or ten years.
165. I understand it has only been worked as far as Rosehill? That is all.
166. Has the line from Rosehill to Carlingford been constructed ten years? I do not know when it was completed; but I think it would be about nine or ten years. It was open to the river in 1898.
167. So that in reality only one portion of the line from Clyde to Carlingford has actually been used? That is so.
168. Can you give any opinion as to why the remainder of the line is not used for traffic? Mr. Chapman, in his sworn evidence in 1898, said it would not pay to work it.
169. Is it the intention of the Railway Commissioners to work the line as far as Carlingford? Decidedly.
170. Do you think it would pay to work it? The Carlingford section on the Northern side of the Parramatta River is not an appreciable quantity. It is the portion of the line beyond that that would add to the working expenses.
171. I understand that considerable outlay has to be incurred to make the line serviceable? Yes; the junction requires to be completed, and other improvements are also wanted.
172. Do you think the proposed extension would help to make the other part of the line more remunerative? No; I should think it would be a drag on it, considering that the proposed expenditure is £67,000, and that there will be additional working expenses. I should think the outlay would not be recouped by the revenue received from it.
173. You do not think it would induce additional traffic? I do not think so.
174. *Dr. Garran.*] In estimating the traffic for the new line, I think I have understood, from your previous evidence, that you always look about to see what are the prospects of increasing settlement and production? Yes.
175. Now, do you think that in the districts that would be served by this railway the quantity of fruit and other things grown there would be much increased by making this railway? I do not think it would to any extent.
176. Pretty well all the land fit for fruit-growing is already laid out in orchards? A very large proportion of it.
177. Do you think the mere construction of this line would in a few years double the fruit production, or, say, in ten years? No; I should not think so.
178. So that you do not look for any great increase in the traffic simply by making the railway? No. One of my reasons for that is that at the present time the district is very largely served by the main line, and along the river on two sides of it. When you get to the south-western portion of it it is served by the Richmond and Windsor line.
179. With better approaches to the existing lines and stations, would the orchardists be fairly well served by the existing line? Yes; by improving the grading of the roads and metalling them.
180. Plenty of good metal is obtainable—plenty of traprock and bluestone? Yes.
181. You do not consider that the making of this line on to Dural would help to make the existing bit of railway more profitable than it would be without it? On the contrary; I think it would rather add to the burden.
182. We were led to understand by a witness, yesterday, that it might very nearly pay expenses as far as it extends to Carlingford? Yes; that, of course, would be due to the traffic to Rosehill.
183. It is very profitable on a few holidays? Yes.
184. But it is only a few days in the year that you get them? Yes; but we get a good deal of traffic on holidays.
185. And that has to help to pay for the line to Carlingford? Yes.
186. But the Rosehill to Sydney line is a non-paying one? Yes.
187. You do not think the finances would be improved by adding the proposed extension? No, I do not.
188. The part that is least served by the railway would be that between Pennant Hills and Dural? Yes.
189. The part between Carlingford and Pennant Hills is well served now? Yes. A portion north of Carlingford, a mile or two beyond the cross roads, is well served by the Pennant Hills station.
190. We are told that from Dural, right across to the junction of the Northern line at Hornsby, is only about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles? Yes; it is good hard country there.
191. The Dural people have to come round by way of Pennant Hills;—if we had a better road across there, would the people be as well served as if this proposed railway were constructed? It would simply be an improvement.
192. Could they make a shorter road to Hornsby? I cannot say.
193. Then this is not a district that would promote much fresh settlement on the soil? That is a very difficult question to answer. No doubt, under given conditions, fruit cultivation in the county of Cumberland would increase; but it would take an enormous quantity to represent much-increased traffic on the railway.
194. But it may become a residential district? Yes; but not in the immediate future.
195. We have a good deal to fill in before we can open fresh ground for settlement? Yes.
196. It would be a considerable distance from the city? Yes.
197. There is no immediate source of profit in that? No; the disposition of people would be to go and live where the best service exists.
- 198.

198. Is the fruit trade, on the whole, a fairly profitable trade for you? No; but you get indirect advantages arising from fruit cultivation, in the shape of supplies which are carried back. J. Harper.
199. But the freight itself? It is a very low freight; by the time you have carried the empty cases on the return, there is very little left for us. 29 Aug., 1900.
200. It is the return business and incidental passenger and other traffic that helps to pay? Yes.
201. I suppose these people, as a rule, get their supplies from Parramatta? A great deal of it is carted from there, and then there are supply carts that go about the neighbourhood; there are only one or two stores in the whole district.
202. And it used to be the custom for fruit-growers to take out a load of manure when they went in with their produce—if they did that they would still stick to their carts? Yes.
203. You do not think much manure would be taken by the railway? Not very much.
204. You take the stuff from Homebush? Yes; that is carried away by railway.
205. You get a profit out of that? We get the freight on that; but that is not much when you take the cost of loading up.
206. Do you load it up? Yes; we do it by contract.
207. And you get a fair price for carrying it? The ordinary rates.
208. They pay you better than bringing produce in? They pay the same rate. It is a very low rate for manure.
209. *Mr. Watson.*] Was there not a tramline projected from Parramatta to Baulkham Hills, to Castle Hill, and on to Dural,—do you think there is any greater prospect now for traffic for such a line along there? You would get more passenger traffic on that road—a good deal of the local traffic, people from Parramatta—but I do not think it would be quite the same amount of traffic as on the other one, because the rates would have to be high to pay. Then you would have to tranship at Parramatta unless it was practically a railway line.
210. Could you not run a tramline in that direction? No; the curves, &c., would not permit of it.
211. *Chairman.*] I understood you to say that the rates on the proposed line would be higher than those on the main Northern line? I have estimated them higher, otherwise there would be absolutely no profit at all; of course in framing my estimate I assumed that people would pay 3d. per case extra; they never undertook to do that, but they undertook to pay 1d. additional, and I have given them the benefit of it.
212. If that scale of rates was imposed, would it not induce them to go rather to the main line than patronise this extension? My opinion is that many of them would not pay the 1d., but would go to the main line.
213. How far west do you think this extension would draw traffic? Certainly not from Pennant Hills, or Baulkham Hills, or Castle Hill. I think a considerable portion of the traffic of the western side of the road would continue to go to Parramatta; it is an excellent road.
214. Could you say that on an average it would draw traffic for 4 miles on the west? Yes, it probably would.
215. And how far from the north? That would depend upon the roads which lead to the main line. At present the road is good to the main line.
216. How far north? From Galston.
217. Yes—The traffic on the other side of this line would come from an extremely restricted area? Yes; some of the roads might be both better metalled and graded. Outside that area there is still good communication with Parramatta, and the North Coast line, and the line to Carlingford.
218. And it is a line that cost something over £7,000 per mile? Yes; it will cost about £57,000 altogether, I think.
219. How is the Richmond branch paying? It is amongst the non-paying lines.
220. It has been an expense to the country from the time it was constructed? Yes; a mistake was made in the first instance, in the construction of it, in its not having been properly graded. It was really built for a horse tramway.
221. How many years has the Richmond line been working? Over thirty years.
222. Has there been any appreciable improvement, recently, in the returns? I do not think so, speaking from memory.
223. Is the district somewhat similar to that which would be served by the line from Carlingford to Dural? It is a larger agricultural district than the one that it is proposed to serve by the Dural line; it is a fruit-growing district all along to the Kurrajong.
224. Is it a more populated district? Yes; the population is considerably larger, and the line also has the traffic from the Riverstone Meat Works, which represents more than all the other traffic put together on the proposed line. It has created a large settlement and increased population. The loss on the Blacktown-Richmond line, in 1899, was £5,940; that was £1,700 worse than it was in 1893.
225. Could you give the total traffic on that line? No, I cannot; but the capital cost was £198,000.
226. Could you give us the figures after deducting the Riverstone traffic from the total traffic on the Blacktown-Richmond line? I cannot give the exact figures, but of the goods earnings of £6,489, £1,560 is due to the Riverstone Meat Works.
227. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Has a new estimate been made as to the traffic that we should get on this proposed line of railway from Carlingford to Dural since the estimate that was made two or three years ago? No; it is precisely the same. We know that the quantity of freight to be carried has not increased during that period.
228. It was stated, two and a half years ago, that there were 7,438 acres of bearing trees, which represents 150,000 cases of fruit; at the same time there were 24,382 acres of non-bearing trees? Yes.
229. Were they worn-out trees or young trees? A great many of them were worn-out trees.
230. It does not say so in the return? No; but there is nothing like that quantity in the district. Those 150,000 cases practically represent the whole of the fruit of the district, and a great deal of it was grown east of the proposed line, and would naturally go to the main Northern line, under any conditions.
231. Because, even if a fourth of those trees were young trees, and would by-and-by be bearing, they would give a large quantity of traffic? Yes; but our returns do not show that that has been the case.
232. *Mr. Hym.*] What is the length of line from Richmond to Blacktown? 16 miles 12 chains.
233. And you say that it cost £198,000? Yes. I have explained that that large expenditure is due to the way in which the line was first laid out; a great deal of it had to be regraded.

- J. Harper. 234. It would not cost that much now? Nothing like it. It might be constructed now for probably £3,000 or £4,000 per mile. It is easy country; much easier country than that beyond Carlingford.
- 29 Aug., 1900. 235. I suppose, during the thirty-five years of its existence, it has been undoubtedly a great loss to the country? Oh, yes. I do not think the loss has ever been lower than £4,000 per year.
236. And this proposed railway to Dural, if constructed, would be on the same footing? It would be even worse, I think.
237. Mr. Levison.] What is the revenue from the Windsor and Richmond line? I think it is £11,688 a year.

MONDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

John Charles Hunt, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and examined:—

- J. C. Hunt. 238. Chairman.] I understand that you have prepared some statistics which show the area of land under fruit in the district which would be served by the proposed extension of the railway from Carlingford? Yes. My statement is as follows:—
- 10 Sept., 1900.

Place.	Population.	Acres.					
		Holding.	Cultivated	Bearing.	Not bearing.	Other tillage.	No. of holdings.
Dural	417	4,698½	1,229½	942	217	70	69
Kenhurst	370	8,236	886½	682½	181½	23	134
Glenhaven	64	823¾	114½	84½	30		
Galston	441	6,174½	1,056½	824	198½	34½	150
Arcadia							
Castle Hill	990	8,028½	2,489½	2,041	282	166½	200
Pennant Hills							
Glenorie	301	4,618	1,081½	686	294½	99½	89
	2,583	32,578¾	6,857½	5,260	1,203½	393½	642
	Increase 89	.....	Increase 1,795	Increase 1,314	Decrease 357	Decrease 163	.....

239. Within what distance of the proposed extension does that cultivation lie? Between Castle Hill and Pennant Hills; we have taken into account almost entirely the country on the western side of the proposed line. There are very few holdings on the eastern side of the line there included in the statement which I have read.

240. Would the whole of that cultivation lie within an average distance of 5 miles from the proposed extension? Yes, for the first part of the distance; but getting out towards the end of the line the area to be served by it would extend much further away from it.

241. What is the greatest distance to the north of the proposed terminus from which you have drawn your figures? About 11 miles.

242. It has been pointed out to the Committee that the proposed railway would be within a mile and a half of the Northern line at its nearest point, and within 5 miles at its furthest point:—why, then, cannot people in the district use the Northern line? Although Dural is only 4 miles in a straight line from the Northern railway, it is impossible to get to that railway by road in less than 10 or 11 miles, because of an almost impassable creek which runs nearly parallel to the railway almost from Pennant Hills. Although the Northern railway is so close to many parts of the district, a great many people have to travel 20 miles by road in order to get to it. My own orchard is within 4 miles of Hornsby in a straight line, but it takes me 19 miles to get there by the surveyed road, which goes over very hilly and rocky country. I go chiefly to Pennant Hills, which is within 9½ miles of my place.

243. At the present time there are 7,857 acres under cultivation in the district;—how does the area now under cultivation compare with the area under cultivation five years ago? The area now under cultivation shows an increase of 1,795 acres over the area under cultivation two years ago. Those figures will appear to be wrong if you refer to the statistics given about two and a half years ago, but at that time we included the Carlingford district in our calculations, whereas this time we have left that district out of consideration.

244. Is the district capable of being still further cultivated? Yes; I think that the cultivation might be made three times as great as it is now. There is a large quantity of private land which has not yet been brought under cultivation, and there are also many acres of Government land which have not been touched.

245. Is the Government land in the district suitable for fruit-growing? A great deal of it is.

246. Then why has it not been taken up? Largely because it has been reserved from sale. Some of it is included in population reserves, while some of it has been surveyed and an upset price put upon it. Land which would cost £1 an acre, if selected in the ordinary way, has been reserved at from £3 to £7 an acre.

247. Is that timbered country? Yes.

248.

J. C. Hunt.
10 Sept., 1900.

248. What would be a fair average price for clearing the timber off the land in the district? From £6 to £14 an acre.
249. How many acres would be required to enable a man to make a decent living by fruit-growing there? About 10 acres of good land would support a family. I know instances where people are doing well on that area, and are purchasing more land.
250. What is the staple fruit-crop in the district? Citrus fruits.
251. What proportion do the citrus fruits bear to the other fruits grown in the district? About nine-tenths of the fruit grown in the district is citrus fruit.
252. Does that fruit suffer much from road carriage? No; but summer fruits suffer very greatly.
253. What is the most material handicap to the production of the district at present? The loss of time occasioned in the taking of fruit to market. The smaller growers are now half their time on the roads. It takes such a man two or three days a week to drive his fruit to the Northern line.
254. If a man had 20 acres under fruit, would he have to give a great deal of his time to the cultivation of his land? Yes; all his time, and it would be profitable for him to employ another man to help him.
255. Then every day spent in carting would be so much time lost? Yes.
256. Do you think that the road cartage seriously interferes with the speedy development of the district? I am sure that it does.
257. Have you included the Baulkham Hills district in your returns? No; we only included the district which we knew would use the proposed railway.
258. Have you made an estimate of the number of cases of fruit which would be sent to the proposed railway? Yes; there are 5,260 acres of bearing trees in the district, and, averaging them at 100 trees to the acre, and at one case to a tree, that would give a traffic of 526,000 cases to the railway.
259. What rate would be charged per case from Dural to Carlingford? The rate to Sydney at the present time is a penny a case from Pennant Hills or Parramatta, and 1½d. from Hornsby. I estimate that 313,400 cases of fruit would be sent along the whole length of the line, and I put them down at 2d. a case for that portion of the journey between Dural and Carlingford, because we should be willing to pay double rates, in order to get the railway.
260. That would mean a revenue of about £2,611? Yes.
261. What would the intermediate traffic be worth to the railway? I have estimated that £160 would be received from the Castle Hill and Glenhaven traffic, and £212 10s. from the Pennant Hills traffic. Mr. Harper has stated that 150,000 cases is an outside estimate for the whole of the traffic of the district; but such a statement is ridiculous, because there are sixty-nine growers in Dural alone, and three of those growers sent to market as many as 30,000 cases of fruit a year.
262. I think that Mr. Harper assumed that a certain amount of traffic would go to Parramatta, and that some would go to the Northern line? We have not included any traffic except such as would come to the proposed line. The traffic on the proposed line would be very much greater than his estimate.
263. Do you think that the residents of the district would be satisfied to pay a special rate? The matter was discussed at a meeting of the railway league representing the whole district, and it was unanimously decided that the growers could afford to pay a charge of 3d. per case from Dural to Sydney.
264. Do you think that the residents of the district would be inclined to pay a special tax of so much per acre instead of a special railway charge? I cannot say, but I think that such a charge would be likely to press unfairly upon small growers. Where a man has the fruit to send away he can afford to pay the railway charge; but if there were an acreage tax it would have to be paid even by men who had no fruit to send away.
265. Why do not the fruit-growers employ carriers to take their fruit to the railway station, and thus save their own time? The carriage of fruit is a different thing from the carriage of other produce. Fruit is a perishable article, so that it is impossible to store it, and it must be sent away when it is ready. If a man employed a carrier he would, perhaps, not be there just when he was wanted, and he might come when the grower was not ready for him.
266. Therefore it is incumbent upon every grower to use his own vehicles to draw his produce to market? Yes; though sometimes one grower will get another grower to carry a few cases for him.
267. Have you seen other fruit-growing districts in the Colony? Yes.
268. How do those districts compare with the Dural district? Other districts may have better soils than our district, but, considering its general suitability and its nearness to the city, I do not think there is a better fruit-growing district in the Colony, especially for citrus fruits.
269. Do you get a good yield, year in and year out? Yes; there is generally a good yield every year. The inferior land which we despised a few years ago is now proving the better land for citrus fruits.
270. Is there any disposition to make the district a residential district for city men? There are suburban residences near Carlingford and in towards Parramatta, and several round Dundas, and I know of gentlemen who would be ready to come to the district to live directly it was given railway communication. Visitors come to the district now to stay there a few weeks.
271. It has been stated that Glenorie is practically a dead end, so far as traffic is concerned—that no traffic will come from the district further north? Five years ago there was not a residence between Glenorie and Wiseman's Ferry, but now the country is occupied for the whole distance.
272. What is the character of the holdings there? In a 40-acre block they can always get a fair area of land to cultivate there, and 5 miles from Glenorie there is one of the finest orchards in the district, although it is only about five years old. Then the ridge, going out towards Pitt Town, is also occupied by fruit-growers, and so, too, is the ridge going out towards Kenthurst. There are three ridges in that district now occupied by fruit-growers which were not occupied a few years ago.
273. How far west of a line from Dural to Glenorie does the good country extend? Taking the road from Dural to Glenorie as such a line, the good country extends about 8 or 9 miles to the west of it.
274. And how far to the east? From 4 to 7 miles.
275. As far as the Berowra Creek? Yes; that creek limits the country on the eastern side. It is the upper portion of the Berowra Creek that separates the Dural district from the Northern railway.
276. And there is a considerable area of country within those limits which has not yet been developed? Yes.
277. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the yield of a tree in a fairly good season? We think it a very low average yield to get only one case to the tree. In some places the average yield is two or three cases to the tree.

- J. C. Hunt.
10 Sept., 1900.
278. Has there been any failure in the crops during the last seven or eight years? No; but every now and then the production of a tree decreases. We generally find that a citrus tree bears two fairly heavy crops, and then a lighter crop, though, of course, that falling off in the crops does not occur with every tree in the orchard at the same time.
279. Where is the bulk of the fruit sent now? To Pennant Hills, and to Horusby through Galston.
280. Is there likely to be much traffic upon the proposed line? I cannot estimate the passenger traffic; but I have given you the population of the district.
281. Is the business of the district transacted with Sydney or with Parramatta? Most of the business at the extreme end of the district is done with Sydney.
282. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed the balance of the land which is fit for fruit-growing would be used for that purpose? A fair proportion of it would, though I do not say that the whole of it would go under cultivation immediately.
283. Is there a noticeable increase in the area put under fruit each year? Yes; nearly every grower adds a little to his area each year.
284. How long has that increase been going on? The statistics show that the increase has been continual.
285. Do you think that the whole of the fruit-growers would agree to pay 2d. a case for the carriage of their fruit on the proposed line? Yes; those at the Dural end would.
286. Would not the imposition of such a charge have a tendency to send the traffic to the Northern railway? No; because it would cost twice as much to cart to the Northern railway.
287. Are there many roads from the district to the Northern railway? No; there is the main road towards Pennant Hills, and a road through Galston to Hornsby.
288. What is the country like north and north-west of Galston? It is somewhat the same as the country north of Glenorie. The soil is poorer than the soil about Dural; but it is good orchard land.
289. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it open up a large area of that country? Yes; and I believe that every acre there that is suitable for fruit-growing would be taken up.
290. Would Dural be the nearest point on the proposed railway to that country? Yes.
291. That country does not lie nearer to the Northern railway? No; it is 5 or 6 miles nearer the proposed railway, and the traffic would have a better road to come over.
292. Is much of the country timbered? Yes; the greater part of it. There are very large areas of timbered country down about Galston, and the greater part of many of the holdings round about Galston has not yet been cleared. There is an unlimited supply of timber.
293. Is this timber on Crown land or on private land? There is timber both on the Crown land and on the private land.
294. Is it timber suitable for market? Yes; it is suitable for firewood, for girders, and for sawing. There are ironbark, black-butt, mahogany, gum, blood-wood, and oak in the district.
295. Would there be much timber traffic upon the proposed railway if it were constructed? A great deal of firewood would be sent over the line. Thousands of tons of timber are now destroyed which would be made use of if a railway were constructed. I cleared 7 acres of ground last year, and every bit of the timber on it had to be burned to get it out of the way.
296. The Railway Commissioners estimate the traffic revenue of the proposed line at £1,025 per annum;—do you think that that is a low estimate? I think that it is a very low estimate. Mr. Harper stated, in reply to Question 203, that he did not think much manure would be taken by the railway, but, in my opinion, a great deal of manure would be carried over the line. It would be profitable to use half a ton of manure on every acre cultivated. The manure is not used now, because it costs too much to bring it out; but, if there were a railway, there would be something like 2,000 tons of manure used in the district lying round Dural. Mr. Fagan has carted a great deal of stable manure from Pennant Hills, but that manure is so bulky that it is very expensive to cart it. I use a great deal of "B and B" manure, which I obtain from the Sydney Meat Works. We estimate that £275 would be received by the railway authorities for the carriage of manure alone. We put down 2s. 6d. per ton for the carriage of the manure. At the present time it is sent from Auburn to Pennant Hills by train, and then carted out. At the Carlingford end of the line they do not use so much manure, but we have allowed £50 for the carriage of the manure used at that end of the district.
297. Would there be much traffic in produce from Sydney—horse feed? I think that every bit of the dry feed used in the district would be brought by rail.
298. Is much produce grown in the district? Very little. I grow a little hay, but I am about the only person in the district who does. A good many people grow their own green stuff, but all the hard feed used in the district is brought from Sydney.
299. *Mr. Shepherd.*] In your statement, you have estimated that there are so many non-bearing trees in the district;—are those young trees that have not yet come into bearing? Yes.
300. You have not taken into account worn-out trees? No; we have only taken account of bearing trees, and of young trees that are coming into bearing.
301. How many acres of orchard can one man work? From 7 to 10 acres.
302. How long does a crop last? I begin to cart my crop about July, and I am sending away until the end of February, or until the beginning of March.
303. As a rule, you have two crops a year? The lemon crop lasts pretty well the whole year round, and the orange crop from July until February. Our fruit hangs better than the fruit grown in other districts. I have had two crops coming in together.
304. Is 100 trees to the acre the general thing in the district? Yes.
305. What is the age of the trees that you have put down as bearing? From 5 to 6 years and upwards.
306. The older trees ought to produce more than a case to the tree? Yes; some trees always produce more than a case, and I have known a tree to produce twenty cases; but I have put down one case to a tree as the average yield.
307. At what age do the trees begin to fall off in their yield? When they are about 40.
308. What is the manure chiefly used in the district? I use the blood and bone mixture sold by the Sydney Meat-works Company.
309. Is there any lime in the soil? The soil is deficient in lime.
310. Do you not use bone-dust? Yes; bone-dust is largely used. People manure according to their fancy, and they may use bone-dust one year, and the "B and B" mixture another year.

311. Is orange-growing as a rule pretty successful? Yes.
312. Are those who are engaged in fruit-growing in the district satisfied with the results they obtain? Yes. A number who were only struggling a few years ago are pretty well-to-do now. I know one case where a young man, who was axeman to the Survey Department, took up a piece of poor ground, and in ten or twelve years he has become an independent man.
313. Is the fruit grown in the district generally sent to the nearest railway station? Yes.
314. There is not much of it carted into Sydney? No; not a case.
315. It is consigned to agents in Sydney? Yes.
316. At what distance from a railway can a man carry on fruit-growing successfully? I think that 4 miles is a fair distance.
317. A man living 4 miles from a railway station could send away two loads a day? Yes.
318. Do you not think that if the railway were constructed, and you were charged a special rate of 2d. a case, you would petition the Commissioners for a reduction of the freight? Of course, people always want to get things as cheaply as they can; but we should be greatly in pocket if we had to pay only 2d. a case, and we should have to use the railway if the Commissioners refused to make the rate any lower.
319. *Mr. Levien.*] To make fruit-growing a success, it is necessary to be able to get the fruit expeditiously to market? Yes.
320. A delay of a few hours sometimes makes a great difference in the price obtained? Yes.
321. Does road cartage injure the fruit? It injures the summer fruits.
322. Does your fruit obtain better prices in one part of the season than in another? Yes. The later on in the summer we send it, the better the price. A fortnight ago oranges were worth 4s. a case in Melbourne; to-day they are worth from 8s. to 10s. a case; and next month they will be worth from 15s. to 16s. a case. We can always keep our fruit back longer than they can keep back the fruit in districts south of us. We do not begin to sell until their season is fairly well advanced.
323. Why are the clumps of timber left which the Committee saw on some of the holdings? A great deal of timber has been left because the holders have not yet been able to use all their land; but narrow strips are also left as shelter strips to break the force of the westerly winds. Sometimes a belt of timber will be left right round an orchard in order to protect it.
324. Is the district a health resort? I am not a medical man, but I believe it to be one of the healthiest districts in the Colony. Dr. MacLaurin has for some years recommended his patients to go there, and evidence will be given by medical men as to its value as a health resort.
325. Is its drainage good? It is undulating country, and very easily drained. We find that surface drainage is generally sufficient, though in a few cases we make stone drains, or use piping.
326. Are you able to conserve water in underground tanks? Yes; by digging down into the shale.
327. *Chairman.*] What would be the distance from Dural to Sydney by the proposed railway? Twenty-five or 26 miles.
328. The rate for fruit from Gosford, which is 50 miles, is only 2½d. a case;—would the Dural people be satisfied to pay 3d. a case for half the distance? I think so. It costs us more than that now, and we lose a great deal of time in carting.
329. How far north of Dural is the country suitable for orchards? Right on to Wiseman's Ferry.
330. *Dr. Garran.*] But that is all sandstone country? Yes; but there is good land there, both in the valleys and on the ridges.
331. Is the land as good as the land in Mr. Pye's orchard? It is similar land. I do not think you could get poorer land than Mr. Pye's was, and he grew some of the finest oranges in the district.

J. C. Hunt.
10 Sept., 1900.

TUESDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

John Charles Hunt, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and further examined:—

332. *Chairman.*] You desire to make a statement to the Committee? Yes. The statement which I desire to make is largely in reply to evidence which has been given during this inquiry. It is as follows:—

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In reply to Question 136, the witness not only gives an estimate that is far too low, both as regards the number of cases of fruit to be carried and the rate to be charged per case, but he adds an estimate of 2,000 tons of special goods, at a rate of 1s. per ton. I would point out that this amount of special tonnage would be exceeded in amount by carriage to the districts that would receive their goods at the terminus of the proposed extension; and taking into consideration the fact that it now costs the growers of those districts about 8s. per ton to get manure from the present railway to their orchards, the rate the witness proposes to charge, viz., 1s., is altogether out of proportion to the benefits derived. In my own case it takes a man and a four-horse team a day to carry 3 tons from Pennant Hills station. I think the amount of rate we propose to pay for such goods over the proposed line, viz., 2s. 6d., much nearer the mark than the 1s. per ton. I would draw attention to answer given to Question 145. The witness states that the estimate given supposes double rates. This is misleading. It may be so if taken as per mile rate at which such goods are carried long distances; but the present rate at which manure is carried from Auburn to Pennant Hills is 2s. 5d. a ton, and therefore 1s. a ton over the new line would not represent double rates.

In dealing with answer given to Question 148, I wish to point out that, as the growers are willing to pay a special rate over the new line and the usual rate over the old line, the loss to traffic on the Northern line would be compensated for by the carriage on the Clyde to Sydney line; and I would emphasise the fact that the growers are willing to pay the extra charge, and that although it may seem to the Committee a heavy rate in comparison with existing lines, still to the grower it would be a large saving on present haulage.

The

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The reply to Question 146 is also very misleading, for while the actual distance is not great, the distance by road from the terminus is from 8 to 10 miles, and correspondingly distant along the route, the districts beyond the terminus being at much greater distance.

The replies to Questions 175 to 177 I take strong exception to. Given railway communication, there is not the slightest doubt but that the output from the districts served would be very much greater, for the following reasons:—

1. The time now spent on the roads would be spent in improving the orchards.
2. With cheaper manures a very much larger amount would be used, and as manure is essential to the production of fruit a larger crop would result.
3. Land now lying idle would be brought under cultivation, and fresh holdings would be taken up at distances that are now too great to allow of this being done.

In reply to the statement that the districts would not double their production, say, in ten years (answer to Question 177), I would draw the Committee's attention to the expansion that has already taken place—

Galston, about sixteen years ago, had a population of six families, now 150.

Kenthurst, at the time named, had only five or six holdings, now 134.

Glenorie, with less than ten at the same time, has now eighty-nine, and where one school supplied the education for all these districts, including Dural, there are now eight Public schools. Taking this development into consideration, and also the fact that only about one-quarter of the holdings are under cultivation, also that there are large areas of land yet to be taken up, I think it only fair to assume that the growth of these districts would be more than double within the time named by Dr. Garran in his Question, viz., ten years.

In regard to the Government lands, I would draw the attention of the Committee to my evidence given before the last Committee, under Question 2282.

It is desired to bring under the notice of the Committee the fact that there are large areas of Government land which would be enhanced in value by the construction of a railway. In the Carlingford district, and within a short distance of the proposed route, there are about 300 acres. In Dural, about 2 miles from the proposed terminus there is an area of several hundred acres of fair orchard land. At Arcadia there are large tracts of land suitable for orchards. Part of this land is surveyed into blocks averaging 35 acres each, and described as being good. It is considered that this land would fetch £5 per acre. The greater portion of the whole of the Government land is reserved from selection. The tract of country between Glenorie and Wiseman's Ferry has already been brought under the notice of the Committee, but it is desired that the Committee's attention should again be drawn to its importance. In proof that these lands would be settled upon, I beg to say that in the districts of Glenhaven and Arcadia inferior lands to these have been selected, and are now supporting a considerable population.

I would also refer to the evidence given by Mr. Fagan, on the 19th January, 1898. He says, in reply to Question 1018 of the minutes of evidence taken during the former inquiry, that:

There is a reserve on the other side of Arcadia of some thousands of acres. It is about 5 miles from where I live.

Then, in reply to Question 1021, he says:

That this reserve would be very well suited to the production of citrus fruits and passion fruit. There is a great area of country to be taken up there, and I am sure a great many persons will be willing to settle upon it.

I take exception to the answer given to Question 213, viz.: That traffic would not be drawn from Castle Hill. We have in taking statistics allowed for all growers who would be likely to use the Parramatta line, but certainly a large portion of the Castle Hill district would be served by the proposed line, and would be used in preference to existing lines. As one of those responsible for the statistics placed before the Committee, I take strong objection to answers given to Questions 229 and 230. The whole of the non-bearing trees, representing young orchards and not old worn-out trees as stated by the witness, and 150,000 cases given by the witness does not at all represent the amount of fruit grown. I also wish to state that I have an unlimited supply of timber upon my holding, and, if I could get closer railway communication, I should be prepared to erect a sawmill in order to cut up that timber for firewood. It would pay me to do that, and the sending of the wood away would give traffic to the railway. Since the Dural railway was under inquiry in 1898, a first-class white-metal quarry has been opened up within about three-quarters of a mile of the proposed railway, and there are millions of tons of the very best white-metal to be obtained from that quarry. Then, near Glenorie, there is a blue-metal quarry, which has been tested by the Government officials, and the stone has been pronounced to be of the best quality, while there is an unlimited supply of it.

333. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you not think that the imposition of special rates upon the proposed line would be likely to drive some growers on to the Northern line? No; because it would be cheaper for the growers in the district referred to in my statement yesterday to pay the special rates which I quoted than to send their produce to the Northern line. For instance, we put down an extra halfpenny a case for fruit going from Pennant Hills, and it would not pay the growers who would use the proposed railway at Pennant Hills to drive their fruit to the Pennant Hills station on the Northern line in order to save that halfpenny. Then for the Castle Hill district we have put down an extra penny a case. As the fruit-growers in that district are from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 miles from the Pennant Hills station on the Northern line, they would find it cheaper to pay the special rate on the proposed line than to lose time and incur expense in carting their produce to the Northern line. The Dural district is 10 miles from the Pennant Hills station on the Northern line, so that it would not pay to cart fruit there from the district if there were a railway to Dural. Still less would it pay people living out towards Galston and beyond Dural to cart their fruit to the Northern line.

334. But, where people were nearly equi-distant from the two lines, they would naturally send their fruit to a line on which the freights were cheaper? In our estimate of traffic we have not included any of the country on the eastern side of the road which runs along the route of the proposed railway.

335. *Mr. Harper,* in reply to question 228, admits the existence of 24,382 acres of non-bearing trees in the district;—I understand that those figures are wrong? Yes; an error crept into the Glenorie statistics through the figure $\frac{1}{4}$ being mistaken for the figures 14, and that, of course, affected the total.

William Rudlan Hawkins, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and examined:—

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336. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How many acres have you under fruit? Twenty acres, including the bearing and non-bearing trees.

337. Is any of your land not under fruit? Yes; about 4 acres.

338. Is that land suitable for fruit-growing? Some of it is.

339. Would you like to make a general statement to the Committee? Yes; I assisted in the compilation of the statistics which were given to the Committee yesterday by Mr. Hunt, and I wish to state that the figures read by Mr. Hunt are as nearly correct as we could make them. With regard to the imposition of a special rate on the proposed railway, I should like to say that I know that the people of the district are prepared to pay such a rate. To take my own case as an example, I can now send to the Pennant Hills station,

station, on the Northern line, using two horses, about fifty cases of fruit in a day; but when I get back I cannot use my horses any more that day, so that practically the day is spoilt for anything else. If, however, the proposed railway were constructed, and I had to pay 2d. a case extra on the fruit sent along it, the charge on fifty cases would be only 8s. 4d., and I should save a day. It would, therefore, be much cheaper to me to put my fruit on the tram at Dural than to cart it to the Pennant Hills station, on the Northern line, although the freight on the Dural line might be higher than the freight on the Northern line. There are gentlemen living in the district who have been paying 3d. a case for the carting of their fruit from Galston, but this year the carrier has refused to take it for that sum.

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340. Where was their fruit carted to from Galston? To Hornsby.

341. A distance of how many miles? About 10½ miles. The growers with whom I, as a member of the Railway League, have come into contact are all ready to pay a special rate, and I do not think that there will be the slightest cavil at its imposition. I wish to emphasise what Mr. Hunt said in regard to the quantity of manure that would be imported into the district if the proposed railway were made. A large quantity of manure from the Flemington yards, of stable manure from the city, and of lime and hair from the tanneries, would be brought into the district if the proposed railway were constructed. One carter alone last year drew something like 200 tons of lime and hair, which came from the tannery at Concord, to Kenthurst, to Middle Dural, and to Upper Dural.

342. *Mr. Hyam.*] Was that manure sent to the Pennant Hills Railway-station first? Yes; and carted from there.

343. *Mr. Levin.*] What would the distance be? About 9 miles to Dural, from 12 to 14 miles to Kenthurst, and about 15 miles to Upper Dural.

344. *Mr. Hyam.*] What is the cost of carting from Pennant Hills to Dural? From 8s. to 8s. 6d. a ton. Very large quantities of stable manure and other loose manure would be brought into the district by the proposed railway. I would rather use the loose manure than bone-dust; but at the present time the cost of bringing such manure into the district is so great, because of its bulk, that we have to use more concentrated manures. We use about half a ton of manure such as bone-dust to the acre, but if we could get stable manure we should use several tons to the acre. I should like to bring under the notice of the Committee the valuable character of the timbers in the district. At Arcadia and Galston we have magnificent timber. We have ironbark there which would be suitable for girders and railway sleepers, and would last for a number of years. There is not the least doubt but that that timber will be used directly the railway is brought to Dural. A relative of mine was offered £2 for his trees as they stood, but he refused to sell his timber until the railway should come. We have also an abundance of good black-butt, and at the far end of Glenorie, at Blue-gum Creek, we have an unlimited supply of turpentine and blue-gum. The turpentine is a timber eminently suitable for piles, and at the present time is very costly.

345. *Mr. McEurlane.*] What area of ground does the marketable timber within easy reach of the proposed railway cover? It begins 6 or 7 miles beyond the proposed terminus, and extends to Beckett's Forest, 7 miles out.

346. Is there good timber on both sides of the proposed line? Yes; timber that is suitable for post and rails, and for firewood. Mr. Hunt has stated that he will be prepared, as soon as the railway is brought to Dural, to erect a saw-mill on his property, and I have a relative who is going to do the same thing.

347. Does the marketable timber to which you refer come close in to the Northern line? No; it is shut off from the Northern line by the Berowra Creek. It grows out more towards Galston and Arcadia.

348. How far is it from the Northern line? From 12 to 15 miles.

349. Is any of it cut and sent down by train now? Yes, some of it. Mr. Mander had contracts for the supply of sleepers and girders, and he was drawing timber from the district for a considerable time. He drew his timber to Parramatta. There is any quantity of good timber still untouched.

350. Is there any marketable timber upon the Crown lands, which would be within the influence of the proposed railway? Yes; most of the timber about Glenorie is on Crown lands.

351. Do you think that the timber trade will give a large amount of traffic to the proposed railway? There is no doubt of it. The trade has not developed for want of a railway.

352. What class of ironbark is it—grey or red? I should call it red ironbark. The inside wood is a dark red colour. It is timber that is generally used for girders and sleepers.

353. Is there any quantity of timber which is suitable for those purposes? I cannot tell you how much there is, but I know that when I was running a store, I supplied twenty men, who were getting sleepers and piles for, I suppose, a period of two years.

354. Is the timber sufficiently large for saw-milling? The timber to which I refer is from 2 to 5 feet in diameter, and there is plenty of it going up 70 feet as straight as a rush, and without a branch. I have brought with me a specimen of the stone obtained from the white-metal quarry referred to by Mr. Hunt. That quarry is within three-quarters of a mile of the proposed railway, and about a mile and three-quarters from the proposed terminus at Dural. It is one of the best quarries that the Government own, and the stone from it is now being used on the Dural Road. I have also brought a specimen of the stone from the blue-metal quarry which has been discovered up near Glenorie, though it has not yet been opened up. The Government Geologist says that there is an unlimited supply of that stone, and that the deeper we go, the better it will be.

355. Has the white-metal been in use long enough to enable you to form an opinion as to its lasting qualities? Some of it has been on the road for twelve months—stone which was picked up on the surface before the quarry was opened, and it has stood better than any white-metal we have used before. The chief ganger, who is working the quarry, says that it is the best quarry that the Government own, and to give you an idea of its quality I may say that the men who were employed to break it grumbled at receiving 1s. 9d. a yard, and are now receiving 2s. 3d. a yard, a wage that was never heard of in our district before.

356. Will the stone you refer to compare favourably with the blue-metal which is used in various parts of the Colony? We prefer the white-metal to the blue-metal, because it settles more easily; but it will not last so long.

357. Is it your opinion that if the proposed railway were constructed large quantities of this stone would be brought by train to Sydney and to other places? I think so.

358. Do you think that it could be obtained more cheaply than stone can be obtained in other localities about Sydney? The man working it has told me that it can be worked more cheaply than any other quarry which the Government own.

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359. Do you think that land in the district which is not now under cultivation would be put under cultivation if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes, because we should have so much more time for attending to our orchards, and greater facilities for sending our produce away. We are sometimes stuck up now with our carting.

360. What is the average size of the orchards in the district? I can hardly say, but I suppose the largest orchard in the district would be about 200 acres in area.

361. Is the land in the district which is not under cultivation suitable for cultivation? Yes; most of it is suitable for fruit culture.

362. Would the balance be put under fruit if the proposed railway were made? A great deal of it would. I think that the production of the district would very nearly be doubled if the proposed railway were made.

363. Would the fruit-growers, in the district referred to by Mr. Hunt, all use the proposed railway rather than the Northern line? Yes, all of them, because it would pay them to do so.

364. Do you think that the imposition of special rates will send some of them to the Northern line? No; because we have not included in our estimate the traffic from properties at all likely to use the Northern line.

365. Is any other fruit besides oranges grown in the district? We grow both citrus and deciduous fruits, and there are also a few vineyards in the district; but there is very little agriculture there. Mr. Hunt is about the only person in the district who grows hay.

366. Is there a considerable amount of horse-feed used in the district which is not grown locally? In Dural, Kenthurst, Galston, Arcadia, and Glenorie, there are 412 holdings, the produce of which would be sent to Dural station, while their supplies would be brought from there. It is reasonable to allow at least two horses to each holding, because that number of horses is required in order to work the orchards, and to draw produce to the railway station. Each of these horses would require 56 lb. of corn, 56 lb. of chaff, and 20 lb. of bran per week. That is a very low ration, being below the Government ration. If all that horse-feed were brought by train to Dural it would mean a total traffic of 52 tons per week.

367. But you do not allow for the feeding of some of the horses on grass? Ours is a very poor grazing district, and we keep very few but working horses, and they must be fed. In the Pennant Hills and Castle Hill district there are about 200 horses, and they would require to be fed at the same rate.

368. Where does most of the produce used in the district come from now? From Sydney. It goes as far as it can by rail, and then it is distributed through the district by carts from Parramatta, Pennant Hills, and Hornsby. Many of us buy produce by the truck load, while others get it from the store-keepers.

369. Has there been a marked improvement in the district during the past ten years? Yes.

370. How long have you been living in the district? All my life; I was born there.

371. In what direction has the district improved? The number of residences has increased, and there has been an increase both in the population and in the production of the district.

372. Has the increase in production been a marked one? Yes; within the last ten years we have nearly doubled our acreage under fruit.

373. Do you think that the increase is likely to continue? I think so; and I think that the district will improve at a greater rate if railway facilities are given.

374. Is the road cartage injurious to the fruit? Yes; and during the winter months our roads are almost impassable. I have had to put my fruit on to a dray more than once for fear of upsetting or of breaking the springs. Although a case of fruit might be very carefully packed—as well packed as if it were intended for show—by the time it got to Pennant Hills, if the roads were rough, it would be all shaken up.

375. Are there any particular days when you send in your fruit? There is fruit going in nearly every day, but most of the fruit from Dural and Galston is sent out of the Colony now, and, under present arrangements, we have to pick on the Friday and Saturday and send to the railway station on Monday, in order to catch Tuesday's boats. If the railway came to Dural, and we had an early morning train, we need not pick our fruit until Monday, and then it would be two or three days fresher when it reached the market.

376. *Mr. Watson.*] Where is the exported fruit fumigated—in Sydney? Yes.

377. Would there be time for fumigation if the fruit did not leave Dural until the Tuesday morning? Yes; if there were an early train. Of course, freshness is everything with fruit.

378. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Where is your fruit chiefly sent to? Chiefly to Melbourne, to Brisbane, and to New Zealand. Mr. Hunt was asked yesterday whether the line did not come to practically a dead-end at Glenorie, so far as traffic was concerned, and Mr. McLachlan speaks of it as coming to practically a dead-end at Dural. He makes that statement in reply to Question 105, and it was because of that evidence that I was anxious that the Committee should see the country beyond Dural, out towards Glenorie, Kenthurst, and Galston. Mr. McLachlan's evidence upon that point is incorrect.

379. *Chairman.*] How far beyond Arcadia does the good country extend;—does the country become inferior as you go out in that direction? Six or 7 miles beyond Arcadia you come to Calabash, an arm of the Berowra Creek; but there are thousands of acres throughout that district which are fit for cultivation, and especially for the growing of lemons and passion-fruit. The best passion-fruit sent to market is grown upon poor soil, and Arcadia is becoming noted for the passion-fruit grown there upon poor soil. Mr. Deane, in reply to Question 18, informed the Committee that there would not be much traffic "on the proposed extension to Dural;" but a little further on, in answer to Questions 21 and 22, he contradicts that evidence by stating that he thinks

it is very likely some of the land would be cut up for residential purposes. It is a beautiful bit of country, eminently fitted for residential purposes.

Then, in reply to Question 23, he admits that there is a likelihood of an increased traffic in produce and fruit, which he says would undoubtedly induce further production.

380. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Mr. Harper says, in answer to Question 227, that he knows that the quantity of freight to be carried has not increased since an estimate of traffic was made two or three years ago? There has been a marked increase in the production of the district every year.

381. How long is it before an orange tree becomes remunerative? A tree begins to bear when it is four, five, or six years old; but it does not come into full bearing until it is eight, ten, or twelve years old, and seedlings do not give a full crop until they are nine or ten years old.

382. Then I suppose that, two years ago, there were a number of orchards which had been planted a few years previously, and had not come into bearing, but which would now be bearing freely? Yes.
383. What is the cost of cultivation per acre, including the cost of manure? If we hoe, it costs about £1 an acre, and we use about half a ton of manure to the acre. At the present time, I am paying £5 5s. a ton for bonedust, and I have to draw it from Pennant Hills, so that it costs me nearly £6 a ton, or about £3 an acre. Many of us cultivate with ploughs instead of with hoes, and that is much cheaper. I could not answer your question without considering the whole matter carefully.
384. Cannot you say what your orchards costs you per annum to cultivate? I pay about £60 a year in wages, but the men are not always employed in the orchards. In wet weather they often work in the bush.
385. What is the average yield of a tree over five years old? I have about 15 acres in bearing, and last year I pulled 2,000 cases, and about 1,900 cases the year before. Mine is only a young place, and the trees are not yet in their prime.
386. I suppose the returns you get for your fruit vary? Yes, according to the time of the year. In July and August fruit is very cheap, but I have not picked an orange for market yet. We expect to get high prices in October, November, and December.
387. Do you cultivate only citrus trees? I had an acre of plum trees, but I grubbed them out, because I found that the citrus trees paid me better.
388. What proportion does the area of land under stone-fruit and passion-fruit bear to the area of land under citrus fruits? At our end of the district there is not much stone-fruit grown.
389. What is the average life of a stone-fruit tree? I cannot say, but I should think from twenty to thirty years. There are apricot and pear trees in my father's orchard, which are as old as I am. Peaches are not so long-lived as other trees.
390. How does a stone-fruit tree compare with an orange tree in the matter of longevity? I think they will both continue to produce for about the same length of time, if they are properly attended to. Mr. Harper's estimate of 150,000 cases for the production of the district is a ridiculous one, because as the total acreage under bearing trees is 5,260 acres that gives a return of only 28 cases to the acre, and we could not live on that.
391. *Mr. Hyam.*] In averaging your crop, do you take in the non-bearing, as well as the bearing-trees? No.
392. How many trees have you to the acre? About 100.
393. Then your yield has been about a case and a quarter to the tree? Yes.
394. Is that the general average for the district? Plenty of orchards give a better return. I can point to orchards which would give twice as good a return as that.
395. But none of the orchards give a smaller return? Yes, some of them do. There are some orchards which would not average more than three quarters of a case to the tree.
396. That would mean a return of 75 cases to the acre? Yes.
397. Would it pay to grow fruit with a return of only 26 cases to the acre? No.

W. R.
Hawkins.
11 Sept., 1900.

James Purser, fruit-grower, Castle Hill, sworn, and examined:—

398. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you lived in the district long? I was born there, fifty-nine years ago.
399. Have you been growing fruit all your life? I have been amongst fruit all my life, and I have also been connected with other business. I have been fruit-growing for thirty-five years.
400. Have you a large area under fruit? Yes, a good area. I have something like 7,000 fruit trees in all, including both citrus and deciduous fruit trees.
401. Is a large part of your area under citrus fruits? Yes; I have rather more citrus fruits than deciduous fruits. I have about 4,000 lemon and orange trees, the rest of the trees being stone-fruits; but chiefly apples.
402. Do apples grow well in the district? Yes; we grow as fine apples there as can be grown in New South Wales. I have about 1,000 trees in one square block, some of them thirty years old, and I have pulled as many as fifteen cases from a tree.
403. Do plums and pears do well in the district? Yes; I have pulled as many as 700 cases of plums in one season.
404. How many acres have you under cultivation? About 60 acres. As a rule we plant about 100 trees to the acre, but in some places, round the creeks for instance, my trees are planted closer together than that.
405. Is your place far from the route of the proposed line? No; the line would go within a few rods of my property.
406. How far are you from the Carlingford railway station? Fully 6 miles.
407. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you use it? Yes; but I do not advocate the construction of the railway merely because it would go near my own property. As a matter of fact, I do not really require the railway, though it would certainly benefit me; but I want to see the Colony go ahead, and become prosperous, and I know that there are hundreds of fruit-growers who are worse off than I am, and who require the railway.
408. The Northern railway serves you very well? Yes; I have a good road to it, and I do not mind the distance. I live in a secluded spot, and I am free from bad characters.
409. Do you think that a railway would bring undesirable characters to the district? It would bring both good and bad.
410. What is the size of your holding? I have 112 acres altogether. I disposed of some of my land lately.
411. If the proposed railway were made, would you be likely to increase your cultivation? I have not planted out any fresh land lately; but I have occasionally to replace an old tree with a new tree.
412. Do you think that the country between Glenorie and Dural is good country for fruit-growing? I have travelled throughout New South Wales, so that I am able to make a comparison, and I say that there is no part of New South Wales which is better adapted to the growing of all kinds of fruit than the district extending out in a northerly direction from Parramatta for a distance of 20 or 30 miles. It is in the northern part of that district that the people most need the assistance of the Government. The average rainfall is a sufficiently good one to enable us to grow all kinds of fruit without irrigation, and it is a part of the Colony where the Government should try to establish closer settlement. The Premier stated

J. Purser.
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- J. Purser. stated only recently that it was on the country near the seaboard that we should try to settle our people, and I agree with him.
- 11 Sept., 1900 413. If the proposed railway were constructed, would it bring about more settlement? Yes; I do not believe that any part of New South Wales would be more sought after.
414. Would the area under fruit be increased? Yes; because there are thousands of acres which at the present time have not been cultivated, and are not even cleared; but that land would be brought under cultivation if the proposed railway were made.
415. Is it not possible that, with a large increase of production, the fruit market would become over supplied? No; the market for citrus fruits is better now than it has been for many years past.
416. Is a big export trade likely to develop? Yes; because we can produce good fruit, and there will, therefore, be a demand for it all over the colonies, and, in time, in foreign markets also. Mistakes have been made in the past, but eventually the export trade in fruit will be a successful one.
417. Do you find it profitable to export your fruit? Yes.
418. Is it better to export it than to sell it locally? The large growers keep back the best fruit for the local market.
419. Do you not send away the first-class oranges? Not as a rule. On the whole, we do not send away the best fruit.
420. Do you send away apples? Yes.
421. Very early apples? Yes; I can send away apples in the second week of November. I produce samples of oranges taken from old Parramatta trees. Some of the trees from which these oranges were plucked are 60 years old.
422. I presume that they are seedlings? Layers from seedlings.
423. The life of a seedling is longer than that of a grafted tree? Not if the graft is put on to good healthy stock.
424. Would there be any traffic besides fruit from the district? Fruit would be the chief traffic, but there are thousands of bushels of peas grown in the district, and other vegetables are also grown there. I have received from £25 to £55 a week for vegetables alone, and others have cleared this winter as much as £160 an acre from cauliflowers; they have got 5s. a dozen for them on the ground, and eight dozen go to the rod. There is a market for all the vegetables that we can grow.
425. Do you know anything of the timber in the district? At the far end of the district there is plenty of good timber, and the construction of the proposed railway would cause the erection of saw-mills, and thousands of tons of timber would be sent from the district.
426. Do you think that traffic would come from Kellyville on to the proposed line? Yes. Kellyville is about 8 miles from Parramatta, whereas at one point—by the road coming to Castle Hill, near the public school—it would be only 5½ miles from the proposed railway, and at another point only 3 miles.
427. That is a large fruit-growing district? Yes; it is a place that is just springing up.
428. Do you know the quarries to which the last witness referred? I have not inspected them, but I am satisfied that what has been said of them is true.
429. Do you think there would be much goods and passenger traffic on the proposed railway? Yes. Mr. Harper estimates the entire annual traffic of the line at £1,025, which is absurd, because I think that the passenger traffic alone, including excursions, would make up as much as that.
430. Do you think that the district would attract tourists? Yes; and I am satisfied that it will be much sought after as a health resort. It is within a few miles of the city, and at an elevation of from 600 to 800 feet, and when it becomes known people will resort to it as a sanatorium. I have heard medical men say that there is no more healthy climate in the Colony than we have there. Although the days may be hot, there is generally a north-east wind, and in the evening we get a south-east breeze to cool the atmosphere. Whereas the climate on the Blue Mountains is often very severe, we have a genial climate.
431. Do the trees continue to bear well in your district? Yes. If an orchard is well looked after, pruned, and manured, and the trees are first-class, I think they will live 100 years.
432. What about apple-trees? I have apple-trees which were planted thirty-five years ago, and which are doing as well now as they did twenty years ago. The district has gone ahead by leaps and bounds during the last five or ten years. Notwithstanding the present inconveniences, gentlemen have come to the district, and spent thousands in building houses and in laying out orchards there, and, if the proposed line were made, the country would undoubtedly be taken up for residential purposes, as well as for fruit-growing.
433. How many cases per acre do you get from citrus trees? I have had as much as 500 cases to the acre.
434. Would 125 cases be a big average yield? Not for a good bearing orchard.
435. What is the average yield? That is a difficult thing to answer, because some years the crops are better than in other years. Next year I expect to have 100 tons more fruit than I have this year, or than I got last year.
436. The Commissioners estimate the average yield at twenty-six cases to the acre;—have you known a yield to be as low as that? Not for a well-kept orchard. I do not think the average yield of the district would be much under 100 cases.
437. What is the average for stone-fruit? It would be about the same as for the citrus fruit.
438. *Chairman*] Would it be profitable for you to cart your fruit into Parramatta instead of paying an extra 1d. per case to have it sent over the proposed railway? No. I could afford to pay 2d. a case.
439. How do you get your manure now? I have it carted out from Parramatta.
440. What does that cost you per ton? I could not engage a man to cart it for less than 7s. 6d. a ton.
441. Could you afford to pay 2s. 6d. a ton for the carriage of manure on the proposed line? Yes. I am satisfied that the fruit production of the district is very much larger than the Commissioners' estimate, and that the resources of the district are much greater than most people imagine. Glenorie is a new place, but from there on to the Hawkesbury there are thousands of acres which have not yet been taken up, but which would be suitable for the growing of all kinds of fruits. The soil which produces fruit is very unlike good agricultural or good grazing land. Land which, twenty years ago, would hardly have been taken as a gift, when cultivated produces first-class lemons, oranges, and passion-fruit; and if the proposed line is constructed, I believe that the whole of the country to the north will be taken up, and that, ultimately, the railway will be carried across the river right north towards Cassilis, and that it will open up splendid country.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—RAILWAY FROM CARLINGFORD TO DUBAL.

Christopher John Moore, fruit-grower, Castle Hill, sworn, and examined :—

- 442. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How far are you from the proposed railway route? It almost touches my land.
- 443. What extent of orchard have you? About 30 acres.
- 444. Is that the whole of your holding? No; I have 48 acres altogether.
- 445. Are the 30 acres all in bearing? Yes; the youngest trees are just coming into bearing.
- 446. I suppose it was not all planted at the one time? No; there are about 20 acres in which the trees are from 3 to 10 years old, and 8 acres are old orchard, though some of the old trees have been dug out and new ones planted. I have apricot trees which were planted sixty-five years ago, and are still bearing good fruit.
- 447. What is the average yield of a 10-year-old tree? About a case.
- 448. Is that counting two crops, or only one crop? One crop. The season before last I took 1,500 cases off 10 acres.
- 449. Do you use the scarifier through the summer? Not very much; I generally use the plough and the hoe. As a rule, I plough twice a year.
- 450. What manure do you use? Stable manure, and bonedust, and stock-yard manure.
- 451. What does it cost you per acre to cultivate? It is rather hard to say, because the men are not regularly employed in the orchards; but I should think that it costs something like £7 an acre.
- 452. Your return would be something like 100 cases to the acre? Yes; that would be an average crop. I grow summer fruits chiefly.
- 453. What kinds? Apricots, plums, and peaches.
- 454. Do summer fruits give as good a return as citrus fruits? Scarcely as good; but eight or ten years ago, when I planted my orchard, the return from summer fruit was every bit as good as the return from citrus fruit.
- 455. Do you find it necessary to use subsoil drains? No; I am on a hill, and there is a good slope all round.
- 456. Do you agree generally with the evidence already given? Yes.
- 457. Is there anything you would like to add for the information of the Committee? I know the whole of the country for miles on each side of the main road from Glenorie to Wiseman's Ferry. There are thousands of acres of good orchard land there, and there is good orchard country across the river right on to Wollombi.
- 458. Do you think that the construction of the proposed railway would give an impetus to the cultivation of fruit in the district? Yes.
- 459. What proportion of the country within easy reach of the proposed railway is still uncultivated? One half, or perhaps more.
- 460. What would you consider an average holding in the district;—I suppose 10 acres would be about the smallest holding? Yes; I should think that 50 acres would be about an average holding. There are a lot of large holdings in the district; but there are not many as small as 10 acres.
- 461. How many acres would support a family? Twenty acres, if the trees were well attended to.
- 462. *Chairman.*] Are the residents of the district unanimously of opinion that they could afford to pay special rates on the proposed railway? Yes; all that I have spoken to.
- 463. Both inwards and outwards? Yes.
- 464. Do you think that there is any doubt that the proposed railway, if constructed, would draw the whole of the traffic to and from Castle Hill? I feel certain that it would.

C. J. Moore.
11 Sept., 1900

John Speir Heron, fruit-grower, Pennant Hills, sworn, and examined :—

- 465. *Chairman.*] The proposed railway would go quite close to your property? Yes.
- 466. Do you agree in the main with the statements which have been made this afternoon as to the probable development of the district, if the proposed railway were constructed? Yes.
- 467. In your immediate vicinity, is there much room for the further extension of orchard-growing? Not so much in our immediate vicinity. The district there is more closely settled than it is further out.
- 468. Do you suffer serious disadvantages at the present moment through want of railway communication? No.
- 469. How far are you from the Pennant Hills station on the Northern line? Two and a half miles.
- 470. Have you a pretty good road? Yes.
- 471. If the proposed railway were constructed, and a rate of 2d. a case were charged on it, would you continue to send your fruit to the Northern line? The advantages of sending to either line would be about the same in that case, but if the extra rate on the proposed line were only a half-penny a case, it would be a distinct gain for me to be able to send it to the proposed line.
- 472. If the total charge were 1½d., would you send your produce along the proposed line? Yes.
- 473. How far would the nearest station on the proposed line be from your property? I am told that there would be a station at the foot of Regan's Hill, and that would be within a quarter of a mile of my property.
- 474. If there were an extra rate of 2s. 6d. a ton upon the manure carried upon the proposed line, which line would you use? The balance would be equal.
- 475. Does it cost you 2s. 6d. a ton to have things carted from the Pennant Hills station? That is the rate always charged. We had a house built about five years ago, and the contractor paid that rate for the cartage of the material used, though wages were lower then than they are now. Probably the carting would cost 3s. a ton now. It would probably cost 6d. a ton to cart from the proposed line.
- 476. What development would take place beyond Dural if the proposed line were constructed? I do not know that country very well, so that I am not prepared to give a definite answer to that question; but I think that there would be a great development. I know that there is a great deal of unoccupied land in the district which is suitable for fruit-growing.
- 477. From what you know of the district, would you say that the producers there are prosperous? I think that they are as prosperous as any class of people similarly situated.
- 478. Do you look upon the district as a superior fruit-growing district? Yes.
- 479. Would the proposed line go through your property? No; but it would go through some property belonging to my mother.

J. S. Heron.
11 Sept., 1900

- J. S. Heron. 480. Have the residents considered the question of compensation? I think that where a small holding is cut in two, or where a building is destroyed, the people would require compensation.
- 11 Sept., 1900. 481. Have any of them considered the advisability of giving their land for the construction of the railway? I have not heard the matter discussed, so that I should not like to make any statement in regard to it.
482. Would the people of the district sooner pay special rates on the proposed line, or subscribe to a guarantee fund to make good half the estimated loss, the payments to be proportionate to the advantages received? It would be difficult to answer that question without knowing how much each one would be expected to pay; but I think that the people would prefer to pay special rates.
483. *Mr. Hyam.*] How many acres have you under cultivation? Forty acres of my own, and 20 of my mother's.
484. Is it all in full bearing? No, very little of it. Twenty acres of orchard is less than two years old.
485. What is a fair average yield, per acre, for good bearing trees? I think about 100 cases, if the trees are well looked after.
486. And that answer would apply to both citrus and summer fruits? Yes.
487. You would not grow fruit for a yield of forty-six cases to the acre? No; it would not pay to do so.
488. *Mr. Watson.*] Does the fruit which is sent from the district go away by railway, or is some of it sent by steamer down the Parramatta River? It is nearly all sent by rail; very little goes by steamer.
489. Where do you send yours from? By railway from Pennant Hills. With reference to Mr. Harper's statement about the non-productive orchards in the district being old orchards, I should like to say that no part of my holding can be classed under that heading.

WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.		ROBERT HENRY LEVINE, Esq.
		JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Samuel Fagan, fruit-grower, Galston, Dural, and Arcadia, sworn, and examined:—

- S. Fagan. 490. *Mr. Watson.*] What is the area of your Galston holding? The total area of our holdings at Galston and Dural is something like 450 acres, of which about 181 acres are under fruit.
- 12 Sept., 1900. 491. Where do you send your fruit at the present time? We send most of it to the railway at Hornsby, and the balance, when the roads are fair, to the Pennant Hills railway station.
492. So that the whole of it is taken away by rail? Yes; though in holiday times we may send an occasional load by road to Sydney, but that is very rarely done.
493. What would be the effect of the construction of the proposed railway upon the country beyond Dural, out towards Galston and Arcadia? The proposed railway would be a great help to the fruit-growers in the district, because it would enable them to send their fruit to market more quickly, and in better condition than they can now. It would be a great advantage to them in many ways.
494. Would it lead to the cultivation of larger areas? I feel satisfied that if the proposed railway were made, a great deal more land in the district would be put under cultivation.
495. How far is Arcadia from Dural? The middle part of Arcadia would be about 6 miles from Dural, but Arcadia runs back a good way.
496. What would be the northern limit of the country from which the proposed railway would draw traffic? Beyond Arcadia there is a lot of Government land, which I understand is reserved from sale now, but no doubt there are some thousands of acres there which will be taken up in the near future, if the railway is made. A good deal of the country there is broken country, but, with attention, fruit can be grown very successfully upon it.
497. How far north does that country run? Ten or 11 miles beyond Dural. The outskirts of it would be 12 or 13 miles beyond Dural.
498. Do you think that Glenorie would be the limit? No; I understand that there is good country for fruit-growing right on to what is known as the Forest.
499. How far is that from Dural? I am not quite sure, although I have been through the district.
- 500-1. Are the 181 acres which you have under fruit-trees all in full bearing? No; only about 130 acres are in bearing.
502. In an average season how many cases do you get from your trees? Last season we marketed 15,000 or 16,000 cases.
503. It has been stated that the total production of fruit in the district which would furnish traffic to the proposed railway is about 150,000 cases per annum;—do you consider that an under-estimate? Yes. There are about 5,260 acres of bearing fruit-trees in the district which would send traffic to the proposed railway, and we allow for a case to the tree, and 100 trees to the acre, though the yield is very often more than that. On that basis, the total yield of the district would be 526,000 cases. If Mr. Harper's figures were correct, the yield per acre would be only twenty-seven or twenty-eight cases, which would not pay expenses.
504. It has been said by a number of the local residents, that if the proposed line is constructed they will be willing to pay a rate of 3d. a case from Dural to Sydney;—could you afford to pay such a rate? It would pay me well to do so. At the present time we maintain our own horses and lorries for the carrying of the fruit to a railway station, and it takes a driver with a lorry and a team of four horses pretty well a day to take fruit to Hornsby at the present time. At 2d. a case, that is equal to about 10s. 8d.; but if we had only to draw to Dural we could send away three or four loads in a day, and we could afford to pay the extra sum you mention. If we have more fruit than we can cart with our own teams, we have to pay 3d. or 3½d. a case to get it taken away.

S. Fagan.

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505. To the railway station? Yes.
506. And you pay another 1d. a case to get that taken from the railway station to Sydney? Yes.
507. Then you would save 1d. or 1½d. a case if you could send your fruit from Dural? Yes. Yesterday we had rather more fruit pulled than we could take away ourselves, and had to hire someone to cart it, and we expect to have to pay him at the rate I have mentioned, because that is the usual charge.
508. Do you think that the people living round about you would be likely to do the same? Yes. We try to do what is best in our own interests, and other people will do likewise. I feel satisfied that they would be only too glad to pay the extra rate to get the railway.
509. Does any considerable portion of the fruit from the district go to markets along the Northern, Southern, or Western lines, or does it all go to Sydney for distribution? I do not think that very much of it is sent away direct to those markets. Most of it goes to Sydney, though, no doubt, there is a little up-country trade.
510. Is the greater part of the fruit sent from the district consumed in the Sydney market, or is a lot of it shipped abroad? A great deal of it is shipped abroad.
511. Then it is of importance to have the fruit carried by rail instead of by road? Yes; because if it is carried by rail it can be put upon the market in better condition than if it is carried by road.
512. The importance of rail carriage is greater where you have an export business than where the fruit is intended for home consumption? Yes; but people everywhere like to get their fruit as fresh and nice as they can.
513. Would the proposed railway serve the Kellyville district as well as the Dural district? I have no doubt that the Kellyville people would use the line, because it would be within a reasonable distance of them.
514. It would be nearer to them than any other railway? Yes, very much.
515. Can you say anything with respect to the passenger traffic that is to be expected from the district? I have not made an estimate of it; but there are two coaches running daily from Galston to Hornsby, and a daily mail coach from Dural to Parramatta.
516. Is there only one coach running between Dural and Parramatta? Only one coach runs right out to Dural; but there are three or four running out to Castle Hill.
517. Do most of the people in the district want to get to Sydney, or do they want to get to Parramatta? A great many of them take the train from Parramatta to Sydney.
518. Is not Parramatta an important business centre for the people in the district? No; not a very great business centre. Very few of the people in the Dural and Galston districts get much from Parramatta.
519. People who went to the Northern line would probably take the train right on to Sydney? Yes, and the majority of the fruit-growers out there do that.
520. The people interested in Simpson's line of railway paid nearly £6,000 for the land they resumed to make the 3 miles 28 chains of railway between the Parramatta River and Carlingford, so that it appears likely that land resumption will be a pretty heavy item in connection with the expenditure upon the proposed railway? It is more than likely that the piece of railway already made taps some of the most valuable properties in the district.
521. Can you compare the land through which the railway has been constructed as far as Carlingford with the land through which the proposed railway would go? I am acquainted with a good part of it, and I think that a great deal of it would not be anything like so valuable as the land which was resumed for the construction of Simpson's railway. As you get further out the land becomes of less value.
522. Do you think that the owners of land in the district would be willing to contribute towards the cost of resumptions? I could not say, but no doubt some of them would.
523. Would it be worth your while to do so? If any contribution had to be made, I would rather make it by paying higher freights.
524. There will be a considerable deficiency in the working of the line, even if the local estimate of traffic proves to be correct, and this deficiency will be largely increased if the cost of resuming land is anything considerable;—the local people, however, have not considered that aspect of the question? I do not think they have; but, for my own part, I should be quite prepared to make the contribution.
525. If any contribution were asked for, I presume that you would rather pay it in yearly instalments than as a lump sum? Yes.
526. Do you think that the proposed railway will be largely used for the conveyance of manure? Yes; I think that a good deal of manure would be carried on it. We consider that it would be profitable to use about half a ton of manure to the acre, which would mean about 2,200 tons for the land under cultivation round about Dural, Galston, Arcadia, and Kenthurst, while the Castle Hill people would probably use, at a very low estimate, 1,000 tons, making in all 3,200 tons. Then we should also be glad to use large quantities of stable manure and street sweepings, if we could get it sent up in the trucks.
527. What rate could you afford to pay for the carriage of manure? 2s. 6d. or 3s. a ton. It costs us now 8s. or 9s. a ton to cart it from the railway station.
528. But you would still have a certain amount of carting to pay for? Yes; but I am allowing for that.
529. How much manure do you use in a year? We use a great deal. During the last three months we have had to cart from Hornsby about 62 tons of manure and other things. During the previous four months we carted about 150 tons of bricks, lime, and other building material from Pennant Hills.
530. Would you require for your own holding half a ton of manure to the acre? If we could get it brought to Dural by railway we should use quite as much as that; but very often now, if the roads are bad, we cannot get manure when we require it, and we have to do without it. During June the roads were very bad, so that it was almost impossible for us to cart at all.
531. I suppose you would use manure most during the winter months? I do not say that. We are always using manure, more or less. We have a large place, and it takes a long time to get round it; but as we work the ground we manure it. Very often we use a great deal of manure in the autumn. The proposed railway would bring a good deal of agricultural produce into the district. There are 442 holdings in the district, and the people occupying those holdings keep from one to a dozen horses; but, allowing two horses to each holding, and a weekly ration of 56 lb. of corn, 56 lb. of chaff, and 20 lb. of bran to each horse, that means a total consumption of about 52 tons per week, or 2,704 tons per annum.
532. Fifty-two tons per week would give a return to the Railway Department of about £1 18s. a week, the freight credited to the new line being about 9d. a ton at ordinary rates? We should be prepared to pay

S. Fagan.
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pay more than the ordinary rates. At the present time we pay 4s. 2d. a ton for single-ton loads, 3s. 1d. a ton for 2-ton loads, and 2s. a ton for full truck-loads from Sydney to Hornsby, and it costs us 8s. or 9s. a ton to cart the produce from the railway station. When I was carting the building material to which I have referred, I used the Pennant Hills Road in preference to the Hornsby Road, although it is the shorter by 4 miles; but the Pennant Hills Road is the safer and better. In some places the curves on the Hornsby Road are so sharp that you can hardly get round with a load of timber. There is very fine timber in the district, and there would, no doubt, be a fair amount of timber traffic. We have ironbark, white mahogany, blue-gum, and other timbers.

533. Where is the ironbark to be found? I know of as fine ironbark at Galston and Arcadia as there is in the Colony. The supply of firewood in the district is unlimited, and, if there were a railway into Dural, it would, no doubt, be sent to market. During the winter months, when it is rather wet to work in the orchards, people employ some of their time in clearing new ground; but we have to burn the timber which we take down, to get rid of it. If there were a railway to Dural, we should find it more profitable to cut that timber into billet-wood, and send it to Sydney. This would help the fruit-growers, and would lead to an increase of cultivation.

534. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The Railway Commissioners estimate that there will be an annual loss upon the line of £3,797;—do you think that that is a fair estimate? No. As I have pointed out, Mr. Harper has very considerably under-estimated the fruit production of the district.

535. The Commissioners' estimate is exclusive of the cost of land resumption and compensation;—do you think that the majority of the people in the district would be willing to give what land is required free of cost? I am not prepared to answer that question; but, no doubt, some of them would do so.

536. What is the value of the land within a mile or two of the proposed route? It is very hard to say; but it is worth between £10 and £20 an acre. No doubt, if the line is made, its value will increase.

537. Land that has been planted and improved would be worth more than that? It would be worth a little more.

538. Do 5,260 acres include the young non-bearing orchards? No; only the bearing orchards. There are 1,203 acres of non-bearing trees in the district. Some of those trees will come into bearing every year. We had some trees which were giving about half a case to the tree, but I did not put them down as bearing, because they are not in full bearing; but, in another year or so they will be what I should term bearing trees.

539. At what age do the trees give a fair yield? The trees begin to make a good return when they are from four to six years old; but a great deal depends upon the way in which they are looked after.

540. You estimate the average yield as a case to the tree? I think that is a very reasonable estimate. As this evidence is taken on oath, we do not want to run the risk of making an excessive estimate.

541. As a rule, you have two crops a year? With some kinds of fruit. The lemons bear two or three crops a year, and the passion-vines bear two crops. The citrus crops last the greater part of the season.

542. Does a case to the tree represent the yield for a whole year? Yes.

543. I suppose all the orchardists in the district are pretty well satisfied that the proposed line if made would be self-supporting within a reasonable time? I think that they are.

544. Would you be willing to give a guarantee to make good a portion of any deficiency? I should be quite willing to do so, and I believe that a number of others will also be willing to do so.

545. How far is your property from the nearest railway station on the Northern line? Our Arcadia property is about 12 miles from a railway station, our Galston property, 8 or 8½ miles, and our Dural property, about 9½ miles by either of two roads.

546. What does it cost you on the average to cart your fruit to the railway station? I think that it costs at least 3d. a case. During the wet months we have to feed our horses, although they are kept idle. If we were carting every day, no doubt the expense per case would be less. It is, however, a great inconvenience to us to have teams constantly on the road at times when we could better employ them in connection with the cultivation of the orchards.

547. Your property would be within about a mile of the proposed railway? Yes; one of them. Our properties would be from a mile to 7 miles from the proposed railway.

548. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you much land under cultivation at Arcadia? About 30 acres.

549. Is it an orange orchard? The trees are most of them orange-trees.

550. Is the Arcadia country good country for orchards? Yes; fruit-trees do very well there.

551. Where do you cart your fruit from there? At the present time we cart the greatest part of it to Hornsby, a distance of about 12 miles.

552. Where do you cart the Galston fruit to? It is taken on to Hornsby by the waggon which comes from Arcadia.

553. How far has it to go? Eight or 8½ miles.

554. By a bad road? The road has a hard surface; but it is a dangerous road, because it is very steep in places, and has very sharp curves. Sometimes, when you are going round a curve, one or two of the horses in the team have to do nearly all the work.

555. The road from Galston to Dural is fairly level? It is not a level road, but it is a fair road in dry weather.

556. It is a much better road than the Hornsby road? Yes.

557. Then it is not likely if the proposed railway were made you would take your fruit to Hornsby, even though the rates on the Northern line might be lower than the rates on the Dural line? No.

558. What kind of soil have you at Arcadia? There is black soil there, and further on there is sandy loam, which has proved very suitable for fruit. It suits passion-fruit, and it suits citrus fruits very well.

559. Is not the black soil very shallow? It is not very shallow. It is fair soil, and suits fruit-trees.

560. Do you not get the rock close below it? Not too close.

561. What is the subsoil? Red clay, and down further you get pipeclay and shale.

562. That is on the Galston side? Yes.

563. But what is the soil like when you get well into Arcadia? When you get beyond the places which are cultivated now, you come on to sandy loam.

564. It is fairly white sand? If anything, it is a dark sand. It is more a loamy sand.

565. You have a very good orchard at Arcadia? Yes; I believe it is as good as there is.

566. Is it as good as your orchard at Galston? It is very much better. It is one of the best orchards out there.

567. Galston country is good country? Yes.

568.

568. Do you call the soil there black soil? Yes; there are trees out at Arcadia which are older than I am, and they bear very good fruit still. S. Fagan.
569. How old is your Galston orchard? Some of the trees must be 40 years old. I was born on the property, and I am 38. 12 Sept., 1900.
570. *Chairman.*] How would you describe the soil in your Arcadia orchard? There is a road there, on one side of which there is good black soil, and on the other a loamy sand.
571. Is the sandy soil good for fruit? Yes; it is very suitable for fruit.
572. Is there any large area of land round about Arcadia which is not yet under fruit, but which is suitable for fruit? Yes; further to the north there are some thousands of acres which are locked up from settlement at the present time.
573. Do you consider your orchard at Arcadia as good as the Dural orchard? I look upon it as rather better; it is older and more profitable.
574. Can we take it for granted that the soil in that orchard is typical of the soil in the district? Yes; there is a lot of land out there which would make quite as good orchards if proper attention were given to it.
575. Is it a fact that land, which some years ago was regarded as inferior, is now coming into favour, and is proving as productive as the richer land? The poorer sandy land is at the present time doing better than a great deal of the black soil and the richer land. It is very suitable for passion-fruit, lemons, mandarins, and oranges; but it requires more manure. If we could get stable manure, which we believe in very strongly, there are thousands of acres in the district, upon which people could make a very comfortable living.
576. Without a railway, they are handicapped? Yes.
577. Which would you rather travel—the road to Dural, or the road to Hornsby? The road to Dural at any time.
578. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed, the producers of Arcadia, Galston, and the country to the north would use it, even if the rates were higher than the rates on the Northern line? Yes; it would pay me to use it, and I think that what would pay me, would pay the smaller growers.
579. Has the road between Galston and Dural been improved since the Dural railway proposal was under the consideration of the Public Works Committee in 1898? Yes; they have cut down part of the road and formed it, and some of it has been metalled since the last inquiry.
580. *Mr. Levien.*] But nevertheless you would sooner have the railway? Yes.

Sholto Montgomery Cay, fruit-grower, Galston, sworn, and examined:—

581. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Where do you cart your fruit to? To Hornsby Junction. S. M. Cay.
582. How far is that from your place? About $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. 12 Sept., 1900.
583. What is the extent of your holding? Forty acres, about twenty of which are under cultivation, but some of the trees are very young.
584. How long have you been there? Four or five years.
585. I suppose you know the district well? I cannot say that I know it very well, because I have been pretty hard at work on my holding all the time, but I have driven about the district a bit.
586. What is the character of the country round about Arcadia? It is dark soil, and some of it sandy soil.
587. Is it suitable for orchard work? Very much so, as far as I can judge by the appearance of the trees there.
588. I suppose there is not much cultivation in Arcadia yet? A good deal of fruit is grown there.
589. Is that fruit sent to Hornsby railway station? Yes, almost entirely.
590. What distance is it from Arcadia to Hornsby? Nearly 12 miles.
591. Is there a fairly good road from Galston to Hornsby? The surface of the road is fair enough; but I consider it a dangerous road, and a road which is very hard upon horses. You cannot hurry your horses on it, and you have to spell them frequently, and if anything goes wrong you may break your own neck and kill your horses too. It is a road which I should not use if I could avoid it.
592. I suppose the journey to Hornsby and back occupies nearly a day? Yes; a man cannot do very much else in a day.
593. Is there much land beyond Dural which could be brought into cultivation if the proposed railway were constructed? There are hundreds of acres there which are very suitable for fruit-growing.
594. What sort of timber is there in the country beyond Dural? Ironbark, white gum, and other timbers.
595. Useful timbers? Yes; very useful timbers. Some of the land is very heavily timbered.
596. I suppose that in the event of the proposed railway being constructed it would pay to send that timber by rail to Sydney? Yes; and I believe that handsome offers have already been made for even the dead wood on the ground now.
597. Has the timber in the neighbourhood of the route of the proposed land been destroyed? Most of it was burned off in clearing the land. The long road carriage prevents people from sending timber to market now.
598. Are the people in the district willing to pay special rates on the proposed railway? Yes. I am a member of the Railway League, and I know no one who would be unable to pay special rates.
599. Have you had any conversation with the residents of the district as to their willingness to give what land may be required for the railway? No.
600. Is much improvement taking place between Galston and Arcadia? Yes; the district is being improved every year. Every year each one plants a little more ground—it may be only an acre, or it may be more.
601. Would the construction of the proposed railway give an impetus to the development of the district? Yes.
602. Have you any doubt about the line becoming self-supporting within a reasonable time? No. It might not be self-supporting at once, but it would become so in the future.
603. Do you agree with Mr. Fagan's evidence? Yes; in every instance. I have gone through his figures, and I believe that they are correct, so far as I can judge. I consider that the Hornsby road is
not

- S. M. Cay.
12 Sept., 1900.
- not a fit road for the traffic of the district, and the people of the district use it only because they have no choice. A horse cannot pull a fair load upon it day after day, and half a ton makes a very good load.
604. Have you to manure your land at Galston? Yes, every year. I am doing so now.
605. What kind of manure do you use? I use bone-dust a great deal; but I change about. Sometimes I use the Colonial Sugar Company's manure, and at other times other manures.
606. Are your trees in pretty good health? Yes, most of them; but I should like to use more manure than I do.
607. *Chairman.*] Would you use more manure if the proposed railway were made? The railway would offer an inducement to me to use more manure, the carting is now a big item.
608. A disease which attacks the trunk of the trees near the ground used to be very prevalent in the district some years ago; is it very prevalent there now? They call that disease "collar rot." It is not more prevalent than it was, and, in fact, seems to be declining. My neighbours do not complain about it very much.
609. Do you drain your orchard at all? Yes.
610. Do you use subsoil drains? Yes. I am putting in some now.
611. Do the growers seem pretty satisfied with the returns which they get from their orchards? Yes, taking them as a body they seem to be contented.
612. What are the principal fruits grown in the district? The citrus fruits.
613. Passion-fruit? Yes. The growing of passion-fruit is on the increase.
614. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think that "collar rot" is a disease? The Department say that it is; but I fancy that it is not. I think it is caused sometimes by a blow from a hoe, and sometimes by want of drainage. I had a patch of orchard where the trees were affected by the disease when I came to the district; but the land there was very badly drained, and I am convinced that if it had been properly drained the trees would have been healthy.

Joseph Basil Byford, baker and storekeeper, Galston, sworn, and examined:—

- J. B. Byford.
12 Sept., 1900.
615. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you resided in Galston for any length of time? A little over two years.
616. Have you a knowledge of the district through which the proposed railway would pass? I have become acquainted with it since I have been living in it.
617. Would you class it as a good fruit-growing district? Yes, so far as I know, it is fairly good.
618. Have you a knowledge of fruit-growing? No; I do not know anything about it.
619. Do you have many goods sent to Galston? Yes; on the average I have from 25 to 26 tons a month carted from Hornsby.
620. General merchandise? Yes.
621. Where do you get your supplies? From Sydney, by railway to Hornsby.
622. How far is Galston from Hornsby? Seven and a half miles from where I live.
623. How much does your carting cost you per ton? 8s. 6d.
624. Do you consider that a fair charge? Yes; that is a very fair thing.
625. You have also to pay railway charges from Sydney to Hornsby? Yes.
626. If the proposed railway were brought to Dural, do you know what it would cost you to get up the goods? At the present time I can only bring one load a day from Hornsby to Galston, but if the proposed railway were made I could bring up three loads a day, because my place is only 3 miles from Dural, and I have a good road. I should be willing to pay special rates on the proposed railway.
627. Do you think that if the railway were made your business would increase? Yes; because I could sell my goods more reasonably.
628. Would there be more settlement in the district? Yes. The district is going ahead now. My carting during the first month that I was there amounted to only 14 tons, but now it has increased to 25 or 26 tons a month.
629. Was there only one person in your line of business at Galston when you went there? Yes; and now there are two.
630. Have you heard complaints from the fruit-growers as to the disabilities under which they labour in having to cart their fruit to the Northern railway? Yes; I have frequently heard them complain.
631. Do you think that they have substantial reasons for their complaints? Yes.
632. Some of the fruit-growers in Galston are much further from Dural than you are? Yes; the Arcadia people are much further away.
633. If the proposed railway were made, and special rates were charged upon it, would those fruit-growers use it rather than send their produce to Hornsby? Yes. All of those fruit-growers have to come past my place, and it would be nearer for them to go to Dural than to go to Hornsby.
634. Do you think that if the proposed railway were made the Galston people would discontinue sending to the Northern line? Yes; they would all go to Dural.
635. Even though the rates on the Dural line were higher than the rates on the Northern line? Yes. The road from Galston to Hornsby is very steep and heavy, and it takes us a day to go to Hornsby and back.
636. What is the road like between Galston and Dural? It is a very good road. The Hornsby road is very good, so far as its surface is concerned, but its grades are very heavy.
637. How far in the direction of the Northern line would the Dural railway influence the traffic? I think that three people out of four would go to Dural.
638. That is taking the whole of the country between Dural and the Northern line? Yes.
639. What goods do you generally get up from Hornsby? All sorts of goods; but principally produce—chaff, corn, and so on. I am a general storekeeper.
640. Is the importation of produce on the increase? Yes; it has steadily increased from month to month since I have been there.
641. Is not any produce grown locally? No.
642. Is it all obtained from Sydney? Yes. The people in the district find that fruit-growing pays better than growing produce.
643. Is the land suitable for growing produce? No.
644. So that the traffic in produce will be permanent? Yes.
645. And will increase as population increases? Yes.

646. Is it a fact that your carter, in coming from Hornsby to Galston, has to unload part of his goods when he gets to the creek, because he can only take part up the hill? Yes. The grade is too heavy to allow him to draw as big a load up to the top of the hill as he brings down. J. B. Byford.
12 Sept., 1900.
647. That means a considerable loss of time? Yes.
648. Have you to do the same sort of thing on the Galston to Dural Road? No, because that is a level road; there are no hills there.

Oliver Thompson, storekeeper, Galston, sworn, and examined:—

649. *Chairman.*] How long have you been engaged in business at Galston? Nearly two years. O. Thompson.
12 Sept., 1900.
650. From which railway station do you draw your supplies? From Hornsby.
651. Do you find any difficulty in bringing them to the store with reasonable despatch? We can get our goods delivered; but it costs 8s. 6d. a ton for carting.
652. If the proposed railway were made, and the rate for merchandise was 2s. 6d. a ton more on it than on the Northern line, would you have your goods sent to Dural? Yes.
653. What would the cartage be from Dural to Galston? About 2s. 6d. a ton.
654. It was stated, when this question was last under consideration, that the roads from Galston to Dural is bad in wet weather, whereas the road from Galston to Hornsby goes through hard country, and has been thoroughly drained and metalled;—do you agree with that statement? Yes. In wet weather the road from Dural to Galston gets cut up a bit; but it is a good road in fine weather.
655. But the length of the Hornsby-road, and its heavy gradients, discount its advantages considerably? I think the people would rather go through the mud to Dural than use the Hornsby-road.
656. It was also stated that it was doubtful whether traffic from Arcadia and Galston would go to the proposed railway at Dural? I think that it would all go to Dural.
657. Even if special rates were charged on the Dural line? Yes.
658. Do you look upon the fruit-growers in the district as fairly prosperous? I think they are pretty well to do.
659. Do you have business relations with the people right out beyond Arcadia? Yes.
660. Has there been any development in the fruit-growing industry there? Yes; there has been great development.
661. How far beyond Arcadia has this development taken place? Right down to Berowra.
662. Do you think there is any chance of the produce from Arcadia and the country further north going to the Northern line if the Dural line is constructed? I do not think so.

John Charles Hunt, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and further examined:—

663. *Chairman.*] You desire to make a statement about the Dural to Hornsby Road? Yes. The creek which that road crosses was at one time considered impassable, but, through the influence of some people from Sydney, a track was made across to Galston, and the surveyors converted it into a zigzag road; but in many places that road goes along the side of sheer precipices, where, if you were to fall over the side, you would drop hundreds of feet, and if your horse stumbled, nothing would save you. There have already been two accidents on the road, and in one case the horse was killed. I will not allow my teams to go that way, for fear of accidents, and I know that it is a source of anxiety to other people who send their teams that way. While the surface is very good, the grades are very heavy, and the curves are so sharp that very often the shaft or pole horses have to do all the work while the driver is getting the leaders into position. Mr. Fuller, who does Mr. Byford's carting, has to unload when he gets down the hill into the creek, and leave half of his load on the side of the road, returning for it later on. The road is a dangerous one, although it has a good hard surface. J. C. Hunt.
12 Sept., 1900.

THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Luke Gallard, fruit-grower, Kenthurst, sworn, and examined:—

664. *Chairman.*] Have you a statement to make to the Committee? I have a few figures which I should like to give to the Committee. The district which I represent has developed considerably since 1898, when the Dural railway proposal was last before the Committee, the population having increased by forty-seven, the area of the holdings there by 651½ acres, and the area under cultivation by 136½ acres. The area under bearing trees has increased by 255 acres; but there has been a decrease in the non-bearing area. Of course, a lot of the trees that were not bearing two years ago have come into bearing since. If the district continues to develop at that rate, it will double its production in ten years, even without a railway, and I ask, therefore, what would it not do with a railway. We have not taken in the Carlingford district this time. The figures which I have just given are for the Kenthurst district only. In the whole district, excluding Carlingford, *i.e.*, from Pennant Hills to Glenorie, the population has increased by eighty-nine, the holdings by 1,440 acres, the area under cultivation by 1,000½ acres, and the area under bearing trees by 1,313½ acres, while there has been a decrease in the non-bearing area and in the acreage under other tillage. The great increase in the bearing area and the decrease in the non-bearing area, show that a great many of the trees which were returned last time as non-bearing were trees that were coming into bearing; and if the proposed railway is sanctioned, and the construction of it carried out at once, many of the trees that are now non-bearing will be bearing trees before it can be completed. Between Castle Hill and Glenorie I have reckoned five individuals to a family, which, on the present population, gives 417 families. If only one member of each family L. Gallard.
13 Sept., 1900.

- L. Gallard.
13 Sept., 1900.
- family made a trip a week, the Commissioners would receive, at 2s. 3d. for the return ticket. £2,430 8s. 9d. from the passenger traffic on the line. Then there is the fruit traffic. Castle Hill extends about three-quarters of a mile from Rogan's Hill, towards the Northern line, and I have, therefore, not taken into account the whole of the fruit from that district, because possibly some of it would go to the Northern line. Making allowance for that, I estimate that there are 4,719½ acres in the district, which, at 100 trees to the acre, would mean 471,950 trees, and, at half a case to the tree, 235,975 cases, which, at 2d. per case, would return to the railway £1,924 15s. 10d. There would also be a large manure traffic. There are 5,301 acres in the district under fruit-trees, bearing and non-bearing, and, allowing a third of a ton of manure to the acre, that area would require 1,766 tons, which, at the rate of 5s. to the ton, would give a return to the railway of £441 10s. I estimate that the carriage of horse-feed and other stores would also return to the railway the like amount. Then there would be a considerable timber traffic—fencing stuff, rails, sleepers, and so on, which, allowing for one truck-load daily, at 2s. a ton, would return £5,564 4s. 7d. Twenty years back the population of Kenthurst had not reached thirty; but now our population is 370; and whereas sixteen years ago we had only one school and found it difficult to get fourteen children to attend it, we have now two schools and an attendance of about ninety-six children.
665. Is there room for the further expansion of the fruit-growing industry in Kenthurst? Yes.
666. What land is available for settlement there? A great deal of land has been taken up there by selectors, in the hope that they would get a railway; but there is still land to be taken up, and there are a lot of large holdings, which, if there were a railway, would be cut up, and would give opportunities for closer settlement.
667. A large number of non-residential selections were taken up some years ago? Yes; in areas of from 100 to 340 acres; and very little has been done to that land. The development of the district to which I have referred is due almost entirely to the owners of about twenty-five holdings, who have been active in working their places, and who are people who use manure for their land. A third of a ton per acre is a very low average supply of manure for the land in our district, and, in fact, we could do with twice that amount; but I have averaged the requirements of our district with those of some of the richer districts in the vicinity. The soil in our district is poorer than that in any other district; but it answers to manure, and when the land is well manured, our fruit competes well with that of other districts. One man in our district uses £6 worth of manure—about a ton and a half to the acre—and another man £4 10s. worth to the acre. There are six or seven people in Kenthurst who use over a ton to the acre, and they get good results from their land in consequence, being the most prosperous growers we have.
668. Would that quantity of manure be used every year? Yes. By using manure in this way these people were able to get very much better returns with very little extra labour.
669. What lands are there in the Kenthurst district not under fruit? Some of the non-residential selections to which I have referred, while most of the people in the district do not cultivate the whole of their holdings. For my own part, I have about 80 acres at Kenthurst, and only 13 of them are under fruit; but within a few years I could double my cultivation if we had a railway, and a great many others would do the same. The roads lately have been bad enough to take the heart out of anyone who used them, and last year we had some terrible experiences. On two occasions I saw men digging their carts out with shovels, and a few months back many of those who were driving carts were obliged to carry shovels with them to fill the holes in the roads, so that they could get along safely.
670. Is the bad state of the roads a serious obstacle to the success of the fruit-growing industry? Yes, because it makes it much more costly to get our fruit to the railway.
671. What does it cost you to cart your fruit to the railway station, taking time and labour into consideration? With really good roads it would cost 3d. or 4d. a case to send fruit from Kenthurst, but with the roads we had last year it would cost not less than 6d. a case. I had as strong a horse as anyone round about, but I could not take a load of more than twelve cases from my place to the railway station.
672. Where do you take your produce? To Pennant Hills.
673. What distance are you from Pennant Hills railway station by road? About 9½ miles. From the Round Corner the distance is between 7 and 7½ miles.
674. Why do you not take your fruit to Hornsby? To get to Hornsby we should have to go through Dural. To go towards Riverstone we should have to travel about 11 miles.
675. In allowing for a yield of only half a case to the tree, do you not think that you are under the mark;—other witnesses have allowed for a yield of a case to the tree? That was decided upon as a fair average, taking the good orchards with the bad, but it would not be a fair average for the good orchards. I can refer you to a place where, only three years ago, they took 700 cases off an orchard.
676. Mr. Harper gives the average yield of the district as about twenty-six cases to the acre;—do you think that that is under the mark? Yes. We should not be able to live upon such a yield. He also said that there would be no increase in the settlement of the district, and he did not seem to be able to recognise the possibilities of our district, which, from the residential point of view, are as good as that of any suburb. We are at an elevation of from 700 to 800 feet above sea-level at the top end of the district, the climate is equal to that of the Blue Mountains, and all the surroundings are good.
677. It has been suggested that a larger area of good land would be opened up if the railway turned off to the north-west through Glenhaven, and went up Cattai Creek;—do you think that that is a reasonable suggestion? I do not. I think that it would be better to continue the railway through Dural towards Maroota and Wiseman's Ferry.
678. Has your part of the district made as rapid progress as other parts of the district which would be served by the proposed line? Our part of the district and the Dural-Glenorie district are about the two most progressive districts which the line would serve. People settled in our district years ago, and they are obliged to go on doing something in order to get a living. They deserve consideration, because they went there before there was any talk of a railway, and settled there, while in other parts of the Colony railways are often made to induce settlement.
679. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you think that a case to a tree is an excessive estimate of the average yield of the district? Not for a decent orchard.
680. But for the whole of the producing orchards? I should say that three-quarters of a case to a tree would be more like a fair average than half a case.
681. *Mr. Lovien.*] What is the average weight of a case of fruit? About 60 lb. A case of plums will weigh as much as 90 lb., whereas a case of passion-fruit will not weigh more than 30 lb.

682. Fruit is a thing which you would have to get to market as quickly as you can? Yes; and the railway would save us a lot of time, and enable us to look after our orchards better. If the proposed railway were made, we could pull the summer fruit and send it into market all in the one day; whereas, now, the fruit is in the case a night, and sometimes two nights, before it gets to market, and that decreases its value to the extent of 1s. or 1s. 6d. a case. Summer fruit often decreases one-fourth in value in that way. During the last two years there has been a midday train from Pennant Hills, and people who are able to pick their fruit in the morning, and send it down by that train, get 1s. and sometimes 2s. a case more for it than those who cart their fruit in from long distances, and pick it the night before.

L. Gallard.
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683. *Mr. Hyam.*] Can you grow peaches at Kenthurst? Yes; but they get knocked about a good deal in the carts. It is not profitable to grow the very tender kinds. With regard to my statement as to the average yield of a tree, I would like the Committee to bear in mind that that is the average of bearing and non-bearing orchards; but I think that three-quarters of a case to a tree would be a fairer average. I know of places where they have taken 400 cases off an acre, and one place where they took 700 cases off an acre.

684. *Chairman.*] What would you consider a fair average yield for the bearing orchards, year in and year out? The average yield for bearing orchards would be over a case to the tree, or about three-quarters of a case to the tree, taking the bearing and non-bearing orchards together. I mentioned half a case as the lowest estimate I could make. With regard to the proposal to put a tax upon the land in the district in order to pay for any loss on the line, I should like to say that I would rather see this loss made up by the imposition of extra rates on the fruit sent by the line, because if such rates were imposed they would fall upon men who were able to pay them. If a man had a large quantity of fruit to send away he would be able to pay a considerable amount to the railway, and if he had less he would not pay so much.

685. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How about the men who have large properties which they do not improve at all? Of course it might be a good thing to get at them.

Joseph Hemers, nurseryman and fruit-grower, Kenthurst, sworn, and examined:—

686. *Mr. Hyam.*] What kind of fruit do you usually grow? Chiefly citrus fruits, though stone fruit is grown in some parts of the district.

J. Hemers.

687. Have you many trees in full bearing? I have not many trees in full bearing myself, the oldest trees in my orchard being about three years old.

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688. You have not a great acreage under fruit-trees? I have 9 acres under cultivation.

689. What is the size of your holding? About 30 acres.

690. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you increase your cultivation? Yes.

691. How far would you be from the proposed station at Dural? About 2 miles.

692. Which railway station do you use now? Pennant Hills.

693. How far are you from it? Between 8 and 9 miles.

694. The last witness stated that fifty cases to the acre was a fair average yield for an orchard;—do you think so? I understood him to say that that was the average yield of full-bearing orchards and orchards only just coming into bearing, taken together; but I know a place where a man took 700 cases of fruit off an acre of lemon trees in one year. Half a case to the tree would be a very low average for full-bearing trees. If people use manure they can get very large returns from the soil.

695. Taking the trees just coming into bearing and the trees in full bearing, what would be a fair average yield? About a case and a half to a tree.

696. That is 150 cases to the acre;—do you think the district could produce as much as that? Yes, if it were cultivated and manured properly.

697. Are there any neglected orchards in the district? Yes.

698. Many? Not many.

699. Are they producing any fruit? Some of them may be producing crops.

700. Are they owned by people who live in the district, or by people who live away from the district? Most of them are upon non-residential selections, and the people who own them have a little work done upon them occasionally, perhaps by men who do not understand their business, and therefore the places go back.

701. But it would not be fair to include those orchards? Not in estimating the average yield.

702. The land you speak of was thrown open for selection fourteen or fifteen years ago? About fifteen years ago.

703. Was it taken up for speculative purposes? Yes.

704. Is it still held by those who took it up? Yes. I went out to the district fifteen years ago as caretaker for a 300-acre selection, which to-day is no further improved than was necessary in order to comply with the provisions of the Land Act. Five or six years ago they were trying to subdivide that area.

705. Do you think that if the proposed railway were made people would buy this land and come into the district to settle? Yes. There are thousands of acres in the district which are capable of producing good fruit, but which are now in a natural condition.

706. What is the character of the Kenthurst soil? It is a sandy loam, with occasional patches of black soil. It is a remarkable district, because you will find a patch of black soil 20 or 30 acres in extent, while the surrounding soil will be loamy soil.

707. Is the loamy soil good for fruit? It is all good soil for fruit.

708. It requires a great deal of feeding? Yes; but with feeding it produces fruit of first-rate quality.

709. Are there any old orchards in the district? Two or three.

710. How old are they? They were old fifteen years ago.

711. Do they still bear well? Yes.

712. The trees show no signs of deteriorating? As the old trees begin to die out they are replaced with new trees; but some of the best orchards in the district, where the trees were planted fifteen years, are in full bearing now, and the trees are a picture to look at.

713. Would you be prepared to pay double rates on fruit sent over the proposed line? Yes. I was at a meeting of the Railway League when it was decided to agree to pay special rates on all produce carried over the third section of the proposed line.

714. Do you think that the people in the district generally would agree to pay special rates? Yes. The people of the district were well represented at that meeting.

715.

- J. Hemers. 715. Did anyone object to pay special rates? No.
 13 Sept., 1900. 716. Have you carted any fruit to the railway station? Yes; and I have also paid to have some carted. I have paid 6d. a gin-case and 3d. a box to have fruit carted to the Pennant Hills railway station—a distance of 8 or 9 miles.
 717. Then you could afford to pay extra rates upon the proposed line? Yes; because it would make the carriage of the fruit cheaper, and it would save my time. A man is better employed in attending to his orchard than in driving a cart.
 718. Have you noticed any disease among the trees in the district? Yes; there are several diseases, such as scale, black spot, and other ordinary diseases.
 719. Are the people able to combat those diseases? Yes, we prevent them to a certain extent; but so far as the red scale is concerned, I do not think it is possible to eradicate it, because it seems to be a climatical disease.
 720. There is very little scale on the oranges themselves? That is due a good deal to the manuring they receive.
 721. Do you find that there are more speckled oranges where the trees are starved? Yes; healthy trees appear to throw off diseases.
 722. You do not think that these diseases are likely to destroy the fruit-growing industry? No, because we are able to keep them down.
 723. Do you think there is room for an increase of production in the districts around Kenthurst? Yes, in the country between Kenthurst, Glenorie, and Cattai Creek.
 724. What do you think of the country near Cattai Creek? It is good fruit-growing country. The traffic from the country west of Cattai Creek goes into the Windsor line.
 725. Anything 3 miles beyond Kenthurst would not be likely to come to the proposed railway? Traffic comes to Pennant Hills railway station from places 5 miles beyond Kenthurst.
 726. Therefore it would come to the proposed railway? Yes.
 727. And the traffic from out Glenorie way would also come to it? Yes.
 728. What is the country like from Glenorie to Wiseman's Ferry;—is it suitable for fruit-growing? Yes; it is all similar country.
 729. Why do you state the average yield of the district as a case and a half to the tree? Because of what I have seen of it. I have known mandarin trees, only 3 years old, to bear three-quarters of a case to the tree.
 730. *Mr. Shepherd.*] At what age do you think a tree is in full bearing? At 7 or 8 years.
 731. The yield is not likely to increase after that age? With good working and manuring it may increase a little for the next two or three years. A tree will keep improving if you keep feeding it.
 732. Is the country beyond Dural likely to be largely planted with fruit-trees? Yes.
 733. Is it as good as the country through which the proposed line would pass? Yes.
 734. Has much improvement taken place at any distance beyond Dural? Selections have been taken up there, but other witnesses will give you information with regard to that part of the district. The country out there consists of flat ridges divided by very deep creeks. Glenorie and Kenthurst are very close together, so close that in a straight line the distance is not more than a mile and a half, whereas to go round with a cart would mean a journey of 12 miles.
 735. Mr. Harper stated that there had been very little development in the district during the last two years;—do you think that that is a correct statement? No, I do not.
 736. What would be the average acreage of orange trees coming into bearing this year? It is very hard to say; but in the last three months I have supplied between 5,000 and 6,000 young trees, and not 100 of them have gone out of the district. The last witness had something like 2,000 or 3,000, and very few of them went away from the district. Mr. Harper stated that the non-bearing orchards referred to in the last statistics were chiefly old orchards which were dying out. There may be a few orchards on the main road, but most of the orchards are replanted from time to time with young trees. On the back lying ridges they are continually planting young trees. I think that Mr. Harper was altogether mistaken when he made that statement.
 737. How is the land in the old orchards prepared for replanting? The old trees are grubbed out, the soil is well worked up, and a load of new soil is carted in to give the new trees a fair start. Under that treatment the old orchards will continue to produce good fruit.
 738. Do you not consider that the soil of an orchard is to some extent worn out by the time the trees begin to be worn out? Yes; but every two or three years we cart in new soil and artificial manure to keep the trees healthy.
 739. I suppose you find that by cultivating and manuring the land you are able to keep the trees free of disease? Yes; the better the trees are looked after the fewer signs of disease are seen.

John Williams Foster, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and examined:—

- J. W. Foster. 740. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How long have you been residing at Dural? I have had property in Dural for some years, but I have only been residing there permanently during the last six months. I have been a property-owner in the district for upwards of thirty years.
 13 Sept., 1900. 741. Have you a good knowledge of the country through which the proposed railway would pass? Yes; I know every acre of it.
 742. Do you consider it a good fruit-growing district? I consider it the best fruit-growing district in the Colony.
 743. What has been your experience? If a place is properly looked after, fruit-growing is a paying industry.
 744. How many acres of land have you under fruit? About 25 acres.
 745. Have you much land that is not under fruit? Yes; 170 acres in Dural. Twenty acres of that area, however, are cultivated for fodder.
 746. Is the land sufficiently good to grow fodder? Yes; with a little manure.
 747. Is there any special reason why the whole of your land is not under fruit? If I could get my fruit away more easily, I would cultivate more land. The land there is worth very little if it is not cultivated.
 748. Is the rest of the land suitable for fruit-growing? Yes; every acre of it. 749.

749. Is it in close proximity to the route of the proposed railway? It lies 3 miles north of the proposed terminus at Dural. J. W. Foster.

750. There is not a large proportion of the land in the district under fruit? No; when I left Dural, some fifteen or sixteen years ago, there were only four families living north of my holding, but when I was compiling statistics to place before the Committee, I found that there was something like 100 holdings, and a population of over 300 persons, north of the proposed railway, and at least 3 miles from it. 13 Sept., 1900.

751. What area of country do those figures include? They include the Glenorie district.

752. Is the land in the district through which the proposed line would pass, which is not now under fruit, sufficiently good for fruit? I feel sure that it is, though some of the most exposed parts on the highest hills may not be.

753. Has there been any tendency to increase the area under fruit each year? Fifteen or sixteen years ago there were not 50 acres under fruit there; but at the present time there are nearly 700 acres of bearing trees, and 300 acres of non-bearing trees.

754. Do you know the country to the north and north-west of Dural? Yes.

755. How does it compare with the country between Dural and Carlingford? It is broken country; but a great deal of it is adapted for fruit-growing. The best orchards in the district are on a poor, sandy, loamy, soil.

756. Is much land under fruit at Galston? Yes, a large area.

757. What is the land like round Glenorie way as compared with the land near Carlingford? The land at Carlingford and Castle Hill has a heavier soil than the Glenorie soil. The Glenorie soil is the better for fruit-growing, though it takes a little more manure. I do not think they can grow passion fruit at Carlingford.

758. Have you experienced any difficulty from the want of railway facilities? Yes.

759. Where do you send your fruit? At the present time I am paying to have it carted to Pennant Hills.

760. What does it cost to have it carted there? Sixpence a case.

761. What is the distance? Nine and a half miles.

762. Are there other fruit-growers in your neighbourhood who have to do the same thing? I think there are a few; but most of the people there do their own carting.

763. How much of the country lying towards the northern line would the proposed railway serve? That part of the district is very broken country. There is an enormous gully between the two lines.

764. There is not much cultivation there? No.

765. Do you think there ever will be? No.

766. What is the condition of the road between Dural and the Northern line? It is a very difficult road to travel in bad weather. Last winter it was impassable. It is a very hilly road.

767. What would you consider a fair average yield per tree for a productive orchard? Taken together, trees just in bearing and full-bearing trees, I think that a case to a tree would be a fair average. I have pulled 200 and 250 cases to the acre off trees 7 and 8 years old.

768. There are usually 100 trees to the acre? Yes; and a yield of 100 cases to the acre is a low average yield.

769. Would the yield of other fruit besides oranges be about the same? It might be a little less; but I have not had much experience of summer fruit.

770. If the proposed railway were constructed, do you think that the whole of the fruit-growers within a reasonable distance of it, and to the north and north-west of it, would use it, even though the rates might be higher than those on the Northern line? The majority of the fruit-growers there would sooner use the Dural line, even if they had to pay special rates.

771. In the event of the proposed line being constructed, from how far north and north-west of Dural would fruit come to it? The proposed railway would influence the country right through to Maroota—15 miles.

772. Would it bring about the opening up of new country for fruit-growing, and the cultivation of land along the route which is not now under fruit? I am sure that, if the proposed line were made, nearly all the land in the district would be used for fruit.

773. Do you think that the district generally is improving? I am certain that it is.

774. Is it steadily improving? Yes.

775. Is the area under fruit increasing? Yes; every year.

776. Are there many private residences in the district owned by people living in Sydney? I think there are a few in Glenorie, but not many. The majority of the people having holdings there are *bonâ fide* settlers.

777. Would the construction of the proposed line increase the number of private residences? I am certain that it would. I should like to contradict the statement of Mr. Harper that there is very little settlement north of Dural, and very little land there to be taken up for settlement. There are thousands of acres there open for selection. There is the Canoo Ridge and the Maroota Ridge, which contain some of the best orchard land in the Colony.

778. Do you consider Mr. Harper's estimate of revenue a fair one? No; I think it a mistaken one. 150,000 cases of fruit at double rates would return £1,200 a year.

779. Is 150,000 cases a fair estimate of the production of the district? No; I think it is an underestimate.

780. Have you a knowledge of the timber in the district? Yes; there is a great deal of timber in the district. Between Glenorie and Wiseman's Ferry there has hardly been a tree cut, and you can get the very best timber there—blue-gum, black-but, and mahogany, amongst others.

781. Is that on Crown land? Yes. There might be some difficulty in getting some of it out; but it would all be got out in time.

782. How far would the marketable timber be from the proposed railway? Some of it would be 20 or 25 miles away.

783. On an average, how far would it be from the proposed line? About 15 miles.

784. How far from the Northern line? About 30 miles.

785. Do you get supplies from Sydney? I deal from the local storekeeper.

786. *Chairman.*] Do you require to work your orchards just at the time when the fruit is ready for market? Yes; this is the time of the year when people are taking their fruit to market, and it is also the proper time for cultivating the orchards.

- J. W. Foster. 787. Would it pay a man to save 1d. a case—8s. 4d. a day—by carting his fruit to the Northern line instead of sending it to the Dural line? No; it would not pay a man to neglect his orchard to cart his fruit a long distance.
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788. Could the timber in the district be profitably drawn 15 or 20 miles by road? I do not know; I have had no experience in connection with the timber trade. In the Galston district there is plenty of ironbark within 4 or 5 miles of Dural. Mr. Harper stated that the proposed railway would rob the existing lines, but I should like to point out that the line from Clyde to Carlingford is an existing line.
789. *Mr. Hyam.*] If the Commissioners open the Carlingford line, will you send your fruit there instead of to Pennant Hills? No; because it would be fully a mile further.
790. *Chairman.*] During the last inquiry some of the witnesses stated that they would be willing to pay 3d. a case to send fruit over the proposed line, but the railway authorities were of opinion that such a charge would send traffic to the Northern line;—do you think that that is so? No; I feel certain that the people living along the first and second section of the line would be willing to pay higher rates, though I cannot speak for people down about Pennant Hills.
791. Does a difference of 7 miles in cartage make a material difference to the grower of fruit? Yes; if a man has only to drive a short distance, he has all the more time to devote to his orchard. If the proposed railway were made, the Kenthurst and Glenorie people could take their fruit to the Dural station and be back by midday, whereas the journey to Pennant Hills and back takes a whole day and part of the night. The road into Dural is a very evenly graded road.
792. The Commissioners estimate a large loss upon the line;—would it be more to the advantage of the people in the district, to secure a railway, to pay special rates for the carriage of goods over the line or to submit to the levying of a tax upon their land, the tax to be modified by the distance from a railway? I think it would be fair to make the producers pay on what they send to the railway. I think that those who use the railway should be those who have to pay for it. No doubt, if the railway is constructed, the value of the land in the district will increase, and the landholders there will have to pay a higher land-tax.
793. Do you agree with previous witnesses, that there would be considerable traffic in manure? I am certain of it. Our great difficulty now is to get manure brought out from the railway station. A man cannot bring a return load of manure with him after sending fruit away, because he has generally a cart-load of empty cases to bring back.
794. What does it cost you to cart manure? I get mine from a local man.
795. How much manure is used to the acre, on the average? I agree with Mr. Gallard that at least a quarter of a ton to the acre is required, and for a full-bearing orchard half a ton to the acre would be a very fair average. Manure ought to be put on every year.
796. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Half a ton of what kind of manure? Bonedust, or artificial manure. It costs about £4 10s. or £5 a ton.
797. *Chairman.*] Do you know the stone quarries which have been discovered in the district? Yes. The white metal is the best that I have ever seen, and the quarry is inexhaustible. The blue metal quarry has never been properly opened up, but I think it is first-class stone, and inexhaustible.
798. How far is the blue metal quarry from the nearest point on the proposed railway? About 5 miles.
799. Do you think that that stone would be used for railway purposes generally, just as the Bombo stone is, if the proposed railway were made? There is no doubt about it. It would almost pay to run a line up there. There is a very level grade from Dural.
800. Is the white metal suitable for heavy traffic? I do not think it is quite as lasting as blue metal, but it makes a much better road for traffic. The Government would save £100 or £150 a year in the carriage of mail matter if the proposed railway were constructed.
801. *Mr. Hyam.*] How long have you been in the district? All my life.
802. Have you ever known a total failure of the fruit crop in the district? I have seen a great many failures through neglect, and sometimes through bad trees having been supplied by the nurserymen.
803. But have you ever known a general failure of the citrus crops? Yes.
804. And of the stone fruits? No.
805. Have there been failures from drought or excessively wet weather? I do not think drought interferes with the crop much, but occasionally the winter weather interferes with trees in low-lying places.
806. Some five years ago you had very heavy frost throughout the district;—did they interfere very much with the fruit-trees? In some of the low-lying places.
807. But on the higher lands? I do not think so.
808. Did they affect the trees about Galston and Dural? I did not hear of any being affected.
809. Frosts do you no harm? Nothing to speak of. They sometimes nip the tops of the young trees.
810. How many failures of crops have you had since you have been in the district? It is very seldom that there is a failure. If you have a bit of a failure with the summer fruit crops, you perhaps gain in the citrus crops.
811. You have never known the total failure of the fruit crop? No. When one fruit crop has been a failure, another crop has been a success.

James Edward Dale, fruit-grower, Glenorie, sworn, and examined:—

- J. E. Dale. 812. *Chairman.*] How far do you live from Dural? Six and a half miles.
13 Sept., 1900.
813. It has been stated that Glenorie is the extreme limit from which traffic will be drawn to the proposed railway;—what is your opinion of the country beyond Glenorie? Five miles north of Glenorie, on the Wiseman's Ferry road, there is one of the best orchards in Central Cumberland.
814. Where is that? At Maroota, or what is commonly known as the Five-mile Forest. That orchard is a young orchard, just coming into bearing, and is situated on what was formerly a special area. I took up a portion of that special area as a conditional purchase, at £7 an acre; but the Government reduced the price to £5, and afterwards to £3 an acre. There are three young fellows there, who hold 60 or 80 acres, and they have about 20 acres cleared and planted. The soil is a sandy loam.
815. How much country north of Glenorie is there suitable for fruit-growing? Between Glenorie and Wiseman's Ferry there are 15,000 or 20,000 acres good for orchards. The whole district is suitable for orchards.
816. It is not being developed now for want of railway facilities? No.

817. Would the extension of the railway to Dural lead to its development? Yes; I know lots of people who would take up that land if it were not so far from a railway station. At the present time the Maroota people have to bring their fruit into Glenorie, and send it from there. It is too far for them to cart it into market in one day, and the last part of the road, that from Dural to Pennant Hills, is the worst. J. E. Dale.
13 Sept., 1900.
818. East and west of Glenorie is the land suitable for fruit-growing? Yes; there are ridges and spurs there upon which there is the very best land for orchardists. A lot of that land is in special areas.
819. Has there been any inquiry for that land recently? Yes; but everyone thinks it is too far from the railway.
820. Is the distance a handicap because of the waste of time it involves in carting, or because of the deterioration of the fruit on the road? It is a handicap for both reasons.
821. Citrus fruits do not suffer very much from road carriage? They do if the roads are bad, as they have been during the last two years. There is land where summer fruit could be grown; but without a railway it would be impossible to grow it, because it could not be carted to market.
822. Have you any statistics relating to the Glenorie country? Since the last statistics were taken, there has been an increase of 300 acres in the holdings there, and an increase of 232 acres in the area under bearing trees.
823. Is it the general complaint in the district that progress is hindered by the want of railway communication? That is the principal drawback.
824. Do you do your own carting? Yes.
825. What does it cost you? I can cart twelve cases a load in wet weather, and about fifteen when the roads are good, and it takes me the whole day to get to the station and back, leaving at 6 o'clock in the morning, and getting back at 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening, and next day I have to spell the horse altogether.
826. What does that cost you per case? Sixpence a case. People have been carting fruit for that, but they found that their horses would not stand it. With regard to Mr. Gallard's estimate of the average yield, I should like to say that I have 270 trees of "Emperor" mandarins, which are 6 years old, and an expert who looked at them this year, before I pulled any, estimated the yield at 400 cases.
827. Would a case to a tree be a fair average yield? Not for full-grown trees. There are some trees in the district which always average five or six cases, whilst some of the large apple trees yield from ten to twelve cases. I should think that a tree which yielded only one case is hardly in bearing.
828. Have you ever paid for the carting of manure? Yes, 15s. a ton. If you can get someone to bring it as back carriage, you pay about 10s. a ton.
829. Would the construction of the proposed railway substantially improve your condition? Yes.
830. How much further north would its influence be felt? A good way further north. The Government have a lot of special area land there which would all be taken up if the proposed line were made. That land would be considered cheap at £3 an acre if the line were made.
831. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the distance from Dural to Wiseman's Ferry? Twenty-four miles.
832. At what distance from a railway station can an orchard be profitably worked? At Glenorie we find it profitable to work our orchards at a day's journey from the Pennant Hills railway station.
833. But what would you consider a fair thing—8 or 10 miles? I do not think a man should be more than 6 miles away. A man who is only that distance from a railway station can pick his fruit and take it to market in the same day.
834. I suppose you never use stable manure? It is too far to cart it.
835. How many tons of stable manure would you consider equivalent to a ton of bone-dust? I could not give you an estimate, as I never used stable manure in large quantities; but I believe that it would be better than the other manure if we could get enough of it, because it adds to the soil.
836. Is the country towards Wiseman's Ferry very rough? Yes; but there is good land on the ridges, and the sandy loam has been proved better than the black soil. It does not get so hard in dry weather, and it can be worked almost immediately after heavy rains, when you cannot work the black soil for a week. The roots of the trees do not rot in that soil, because the soil does not hold the water.
837. Is there much cultivation on towards Wiseman's Ferry? Yes, a good deal.
838. I suppose the people there send their fruit away by steamer? Yes; but if the proposed railway were made it would come to Dural, because the freight on the steamers is very heavy, and the running of the steamers is uncertain. Sometimes fruit lies on the wharf for a week.
839. Do you cultivate citrus fruits exclusively? Apples and citrus fruits.
840. Do you find that apples do pretty well? Yes.
841. What varieties do you grow chiefly? Alsopp's and the Lady Carrington.
842. Which give you the best return—apples or oranges? I think oranges. We grow apples on the low ground, which is liable to frosts, and, perhaps, a bit wet at times.
843. *Mr. Hyam.*] How long have you been living at Glenorie? Eight years.
844. How many acres have you? I have 12 acres cleared; the total area is 54 acres.
845. Have you had any experience in fruit-growing in any other part of the country? No; I had no experience before I went there.
846. I suppose you have done fairly well? Yes; I am very well satisfied, and I am improving every year.
847. I suppose there is plenty of room there for men who are desirous of settling? Yes; there is a lot of ground to be taken up. The Bank of New South Wales has a lot of property there which would be sold if there were railway communication. The bank sold a block of about 30 acres opposite my place last year.
848. What did they sell it for? From £8 to £15 an acre.
849. Cleared land? No, bush land; but it is superior soil. The whole of it is good, from fence to fence.
850. Is it heavily timbered? Yes.
851. Is the timber of any value? It was beautiful timber, but they burnt it all to get rid of it. There was ironbark, white mahogany, and blue-gum.
852. What does it cost to clear that land? £10 an acre; it is very heavily timbered.
853. With a railway, could you make use of the timber? I have heard it said that the value of the timber would pay for the cost of clearing.
854. Would you be willing to pay extra freight on the proposed railway? Yes; I would pay anything rather than do the carting I have to do now. I question if I could get my carting done all the year round for 6d. a case. I am 16 miles from Pennant Hills.
- 855.

- J. E. Dale.
13 Sept., 1900.
855. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How do you prepare the land—by trenching or by ploughing? By ploughing deep.
856. With a sub-soil plough? Very few use sub-soil ploughs, because of the expense.
857. To what depth do you plough? To a depth of 9 inches. The loamy soil does not require to be ploughed so deep as the heavier soil.
857½. Do you generally make sub-soil drains? Yes. We find draining a great advantage.

FRIDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. | The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Alfred Trethowan, fruit-grower, Arcadia, sworn, and examined:—

- A.
Trethowan.
14 Sept., 1900.
858. *Chairman.*] Have you any statistics in regard to the district which the proposed railway would serve which you would like to give the Committee? I think that other witnesses have gone pretty well into the matter of statistics, but there are a few things to which I should like to draw attention. Mr. Smith, the Engineer for Roads, and Mr. Harper, of the Railway Department, when examined during the former inquiry, and Mr. Harper, when again under examination during the present inquiry, stated that the Galston and Arcadia people would not use the proposed railway, but would go to Hornsby, the road there being the better one. That, however, is not so. We can draw quite one-third more to and from Dural than to and from Hornsby, and the journey takes only one-third the time. At the present time we have to pick our fruit one day and cart it to the railway station the next; but, if the proposed railway were made, we could pick and cart in the fruit on the one day, and it would arrive in Sydney twenty-four hours fresher than it does now. Summer fruit deteriorates sometimes 50 per cent, by being kept in the cases in hot weather, and the knocking about on the road is bad for all fruit. Mr. Harper also stated that there was not much country beyond Galston to be served by a railway, as the land there was broken sandstone country; but, in replying to that statement, I should like to say that there are thousands of acres beyond Arcadia, towards Coba and Calabash, which is really first-class land for passion fruit. No better passion fruit comes into the Sydney market than that which comes from that district, and it can be brought into the market at times when it is worth a lot of money. The soil is also good for citrus fruits, some of the best citrus orchards in the Colony being planted on sandy loam. I know of trees 40 years old which, although they were neglected for fully twelve years, are to-day bearing as well as any trees I know; and they are on this sandy loam. From Galston we should have only 3 miles to go to the proposed railway terminus at Dural, whereas it is 8 miles to Hornsby; and the road, as I have stated, is a very heavy one. Mr. Harper has also stated that he does not think there would be much increase in the production of the district if the proposed railway were constructed; but there are many people in the district who have only one-third, and some who have only one-half, of their holdings planted, and, no doubt, if the proposed railway were made they would plant more ground. When I came to the district fifteen years ago, there were very few families there, and there was no school at Galston. When we did get a school it was difficult to get as many as sixteen children to attend it; but now we have a school with an attendance of nearly 100 children, and another school at Arcadia with an attendance of nearly fifty children. There is some very choice ground round Arcadia, which would be planted if the proposed railway were made, and that would bring about a still further increase in the population. Mr. Harper has estimated the total fruit production of the district at 150,000 cases per annum, or about twenty-eight cases to the acre; but the fruitgrowers could not live upon so small a yield as that. There are some orchards in the district which average three cases to the tree, and I think that the smallest average yield would be one case to the tree. If we had a railway we could use much more manure than we are now using; but the long cartage is so expensive that we cannot use a great deal now. It would pay us to use a larger quantity of manure, because in doing so we should increase our yield, and I believe that we could use as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ a ton to the acre. Mr. Harper also stated that most of the non-bearing trees in the district were old worn-out trees; but in Arcadia there are no old worn-out trees, so far as I know, and, as a matter of fact, most of the non-bearing trees there are young vigorous trees which are coming on well. If the proposed railway were made, all the people in the Arcadia district would use it. Mr. Harper has stated that most of the supplies used in the district come from Parramatta; but the only supplies which come to Arcadia from Parramatta are what are brought by one butcher. All the goods that are used there are either imported directly from Sydney by the growers, or are obtained from Sydney through the storekeepers at Galston.
859. Where do the storekeepers get their supplies? Mostly from Hornsby, though one of them gets some of his supplies from Parramatta and from Pennant Hills. The Hornsby-road is an extremely trying road for horses.
860. What area is there in and around Arcadia suitable for fruit-growing? There are thousands of acres of good land beyond Arcadia which are good for fruit-growing, besides the land in Arcadia. The land to which I refer belongs to the Government, and runs out towards Coba.
861. Does the yield per acre in the Arcadia district compare favourably with the yield per acre in the Dural and Castle Hill districts? Yes; and in the near future our district will put those districts in the shade.
862. Is your soil superior for fruit? It seems to suit citrus trees better than the soil around Castle Hill does.
863. If there were an extra charge of 2d. a case upon the fruit sent on the Dural line, would the fruit-growers of Arcadia use that line, or would it pay them better to send to Hornsby? They would use the Dural line, because they would make a saving by doing so, both in money and in time. Although it has been stated that the fruit can be carted for 3d. a case, it is only the large growers, who can pack a full waggon, who can get it taken for that. The ordinary charge is 6d. for the large gin-cases, and 3d. or 4d. for the half-cases.
- 864.

A.
Trethowan.
14 Sept., 1900.

864. If the proposed railway were constructed, could you pull your fruit and get it to market in the one day? Yes. We could pull it until as late as 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and then have time to cart to the train at Dural. Last year I sent some apricots to Hornsby, but they were in the cases all night, and the weather happening to be very hot, when they got to market they did not fetch half of what they would have brought if they had got there twenty-four hours earlier.

865. If the fruit-growers in the district used more manure, the Railway Department would benefit in two directions—by the increased traffic in manure, and by the increased traffic in fruit? Yes; I believe that in twelve years Arcadia will produce twice as much fruit as it does now. My own orchard yields twice as much now as it did two or three years ago, and I expect to double my production again in the next five years.

866. Upon what area there could a man make a decent living by fruit-growing? I believe that a man with an ordinary family could make a nice living on 5 acres in Arcadia.

867. What is the average size of the holdings there? They vary very greatly.

868. What is the largest holding that you know of? Mr. Fagan has about 40 acres of orchard, Mr. Samuel Moore has about 25 acres, Mr. William Black has about 30 acres, and Mr. Harry Moore has a large place.

869. Those are what you consider large holdings? They are the largest orchards there.

870. Do you anticipate that there will be a large traffic in timber to the proposed railway? There is some first-class ironbark in the district, suitable for girders, sleepers, and other purposes; and there is any quantity of timber which is suitable for firewood. No doubt, with a railway to Dural, there would be a great deal of timber traffic. On the Southern and Western railways they draw firewood for a distance of 8 or 9 miles.

871. If the rate on manure on the Dural line were 2s. 6d. a ton higher than on the Hornsby line, could people afford to bring their manure from Dural instead of from Hornsby? Yes. In my own case, I could cart three loads of manure from Dural in a day, and bring a third more in each load than I could bring from Hornsby, from which place I could only bring one load in a day.

872. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How much per tree do the forty-year old trees which you have mentioned produce? They average three or four cases to the tree, year in and year out, but they are not doing what they will do. On the sandy loam, and with the climate that we have, we can get twice as much for our fruit as people closer to town can get.

873. I have known over twenty cases to be pulled from a tree? There are two trees in Arcadia which have yielded over thirty cases, but they are in an exceptional situation, and where the yields are so heavy the fruit is generally not of the best quality.

874. As a rule, the older the tree the better the quality of the fruit, because the skin is thinner? Yes, but if you give too much manure you will get thick skinned oranges even on an old tree.

875. What varieties of orange do you chiefly grow in Arcadia? Chiefly the common orange.

876. The Parramatta orange? I have some St. Michael oranges and some Saleta oranges, but we class them with the common oranges. The trees in our district bloom late, and the fruit will hang until Christmas time, with very little waste. Nearer town the fruit will not do that.

877. Do the people of the district stick to one or two kinds of oranges, or do they try some of the more recent kinds—such as the Washington navel? Some of them have tried Washington navels, and have cut them down to make room for Emperor mandarins. A man going on to the land in Arcadia can begin by planting passion fruit vines on trellises, putting his fruit trees in between the rows, and in twelve months or two years the passion fruit vines will bear enough to pay for the working of the orchards, and after that he will be able to get a living from the passion fruit while the orange trees are growing.

878. Do they chiefly use orange stocks or lemon stocks in the orchard? Both. The orange stock is supposed to take longer to grow the trees on, and some people fancy the lemon stock because it throws a lighter coloured orange, which sells well in the Sydney market. The old trees that I have spoken of are either layers or seedlings.

879. Is not the road from Galston to Hornsby in good order? Yes; but it is a very steep road, and you have to go down and climb a hill in whichever direction you are proceeding. The steepness of the road causes the traffic to tear it up a good deal, so that it is a most expensive road to keep in repair. Then, too, it is a dangerous road to travel. The least thing may send a horse over the side. I think that three horses have gone over the side already.

880. How many orchards are there in Arcadia now? Taking Galston and Arcadia together, the population is 441 people; the acreage of the holdings, 6,174½ acres; the area under cultivation, 1,231½ acres; the area under bearing trees, 824 acres; the area under non-bearing trees, 198½ acres; and other tillage, 34½ acres. Arcadia has come forward within the last fifteen years, there being only two or three people there before that time. It is a most vigorous district, and the orchards there seem to be growing fast and bearing well.

881. Is there a likelihood of a large increase in its production? I think that in ten years' time the production will be twice, if not thrice as large as it is now. As the trees get older, people will have to employ more labour to attend to them, and new holdings will be planted out, and they will require the employment of extra hands. During the last few years people have been employing more labour than they employed formerly.

882. *Mr. McFarlane.*] When cases have been spoken of in this inquiry, have gin-cases been meant? Yes. We use gin-cases, packers, and half-cases. There are two half-cases to a gin-case, and four gin-cases will fill five packers. The great advantage Arcadia has is in having the fruit hang so late in the season, so that we can get a higher price for it than can be obtained by orchardists living nearer to Sydney.

883. How does the land at Arcadia compare with the land round Dural? We have some of the same kind of soil in Arcadia that they have in Dural, and that soil is very good for summer fruit; but the sandy loam seems to suit the oranges and mandarins even better. In Arcadia we have both sandy loam and rich black soil. It is the sandy loam that produces the best passion fruit.

884. In which direction does the country run from Arcadia that you say will be developed if the proposed line is made? It runs out for 7 or 8 miles towards Cobb, which is in the direction of the Hawkesbury.

885. How far would that land be from Dural? The furthest end of that district would be 16 miles from Dural; but some of it—Government land—is within 7 or 8 miles of Dural.

886. What is a fair distance from the railway station for a fruit-grower to be? In Arcadia people have made fruit-growing pay even when they had to cart their fruit to Parramatta, a distance of 18 or 20 miles.

A. Trethowan. 887. But people living within 6 or 7 miles of a railway would make the industry pay much better? Yes, because where a man has a long distance to cart his fruit he must be a great deal of his time away from his orchard.

14 Sept., 1900.

888. Would the country people in the country between Dural and Carlingford have 17 miles to cart their produce now? No; you would have to go out beyond Kenthurst to get a distance of 17 miles.

889. The distance which the proposed railway would serve is within 17 miles of a railway now? Yes. I believe that most of the people round Kenthurst cart their fruit to Pennant Hills; but the country is very rough.

890. What are the roads like between the proposed line and the Northern line? The road to Hornsby is what is called a good road, but it is a very heavy road on horses. I took a horse, with which I was offered a 30 cwt. trial a short time ago, and which is regularly fed on grass with some dry chaff added, to Hornsby a short time ago with a load of ten gin-cases—about 5 cwt.—and when I got back I could take the girth up 4 inches. Another man, who was offered a ton trial up the Hornsby Mountain with a horse, took that horse to Hornsby with a load of ten cases, and found that it had quite enough to do to get there and back in a day. Going towards Pennant Hills or Parramatta you get very heavy pulling, but the horses get a spell on the down-hill bits. The Hornsby road is a metalled road, but the grades are very heavy, and the curves are very severe. Coming out of Hornsby the road drops nearly 600 feet, and then you have to rise again between 800 and 900 feet.

891. Apart from fruit, would there be any traffic on the proposed railway? Yes; there would be a traffic in firewood, sleepers, and girders. There is a lot of timber there which is suitable for wheelwrights' work. Then, at Dural and at Glenorie, there are metal quarries which will prove very valuable. A coming industry in the district is poultry raising. When we can get our eggs to market regularly we can get a penny, and sometimes 3d., a dozen over the ordinary quotations, and lots of small growers there now have as many as 100 fowls. If there were a railway, they would have food for the fowls sent up by train, and would send back eggs and poultry.

892. How do you get horse-feed and fowl-feed for the district at the present time? Our most direct way is to get it from Hornsby, while the Dural people get it from Pennant Hills. If we had a railway to Dural, it would pay us better to grow fruit on the ground that we now use for growing horse-feed.

893. Is there a large area of land in the district upon which there is marketable timber growing? Yes. Out on the Government reserves towards Coba there is any quantity of turpentine, ironbark, and grey-gum.

894. Is there good timber on any of the private land? Yes, first-class timber.

895. Has any of it been cut for market? During the last three years sleepers have been supplied from Arcadia for railway purposes, and fifteen years ago, timber was taken from the district to make sleepers and girders.

896. Was that timber drawn to the Western line or to the Northern line? The timber sent away during the last two or three years has been drawn to Hornsby, and the timber sent away fifteen years ago was drawn to Parramatta, a distance of 16 or 18 miles.

897. *Mr Hyam.*] What is the size of your holding? I have 40 acres.

898. How many acres are under crop? I am making a fourth of my holding over to my son. I have 10 acres of orchards, and about 2½ acres under crop, and my son has 2½ acres planted out.

899. Do you grow passion-fruit as well as citrus-fruit? Yes, we have some passion-fruit.

900. Do you grow any stone-fruit? Yes; I have about an acre of stone-fruit—apricots, apples, and peaches.

901. Do summer fruits do well there? Yes; but in summer the carting spoils their condition, and summer fruit improves in flavour the longer it hangs on the tree.

902. Will your district produce as much and as good fruit as the Castle Hill and Dural districts can produce? Yes. We have as good soil for summer fruits, and we can beat them in growing citrus fruits.

903. What crops do you grow? Oats, corn, and sorghum. I had corn last year which was over 10 feet high. I sow it in very close together, and cut it for chaff.

904. Is the yield sufficient to make the cultivation of the ground profitable? I think it pays us to grow produce for our own use; but if there were a railway to Dural, it would be more profitable to use the land for fruit.

905. Can you grow oats, maize, and sorghum on the land without using manure? Yes; but we get better crops by manuring. The people who had the place on which I am living over forty years ago grew oats on parts of it without using any manure. They did that for years, and grew the oats for market.

Wellesley Walsh, fruit-grower, Arcadia, sworn, and examined:—

W. Walsh 906. *Mr. McEurlane.*] Have you been long in the district? About eighteen months.

14 Sept., 1900. 907. Previous to that where were you living? In the Orange district.

908. Have you been engaged in fruit-growing long? Not for a good many years before coming to Arcadia, and that was in England.

909. How does the Arcadia district compare, so far as its fruit-growing capabilities are concerned, with other parts of the Colony with which you are familiar? A great deal of fruit is grown in the Orange district, but, I think, that the land in the Arcadia district is equally good for many kinds of fruit. We cannot grow citrus fruits and passion fruit in the Orange district, and, I think, that the summer fruit grown in Arcadia is as good as the summer fruit grown in Orange. Of course, fruits like cherries grow in Orange while they will not grow in Arcadia.

910. Do you cultivate much land? My orchard is only a young one. Last year I put in 6 acres of passion fruit vines, and I am doing some more planting this year.

911. What area have you under fruit? About 20 acres; but most of the trees are not bearing yet.

912. Have you a large holding? About 60 acres.

913. Is the land which you have not cultivated suitable for fruit-growing? About 10 acres of it are.

914. On the whole, how much of the land in the district is suitable for fruit-growing? I do not think I could give you an estimate. There are holdings where every acre could be cultivated, while on other holdings not more than 50 per cent. of the land is suitable for fruit.

915. How far are you from a railway station? I am about 12 miles from Hornsby.
916. Is that too far to cart fruit? It is a great distance, and the road is a very heavy one, so that it is a long day's work to take one's fruit into the station, and one cannot take a very big load.
917. Can you get there and back in a day? Yes.
918. What would you consider a fair distance to have to travel? Six or 7 miles. That would enable us to pick our fruit and to send it in on the same day, but now we have to pick it and pack it the day before.
919. Is that a disadvantage? Yes; especially to summer fruit, and to passion fruit in the summer.
920. Do you think that the fruit industry has been hampered by this long carriage? Yes, and especially the growing of summer fruit. A great deal more summer fruit would be grown in the district if the district were nearer to the railway station. A man attempted to grow strawberries in the district, and found that they would grow very well, but he could not get the fruit to market in a proper condition for sale.
921. Would strawberries stand a long carriage? They will not stand much carting, but with a railway to Dural they could be landed in Sydney on the same day as they were picked.
922. Is there much room for the expansion of the fruit-growing industry in Arcadia? Yes; I know of 650 acres between Arcadia and Galston, which are held by three private individuals. That is now heavily timbered bush land. The timber upon it is very valuable, and the land itself is some of the best orchard land in the district. If it were cut up into orchards, it would produce a large quantity of fruit. Then, there is a lot of land beyond Arcadia, out towards Cobs Creek, which is suitable for fruit-growing, and especially for passion fruit.
923. Is it the poorer land which is adapted for passion fruit-growing? Yes; the sandy loam. The frosts are not sufficiently keen in that district to hurt passion fruit.
924. How far is that country from Dural? From 7 to 15 miles.
925. It would appear from the evidence which has already been given that 15 miles is too great a distance to cart fruit? No doubt it takes away a certain amount of the profit to cart fruit such a great distance; but before the Hornsby line was made the fruit-growers of the district had to cart their fruit into Parramatta, a distance of 18 or 20 miles.
926. What is your opinion of the road to Hornsby? It is a very difficult road. The horses which are used by fruit-growers are generally light cart-horses, and they cannot draw heavy loads.
927. What is the load which is generally carried? Half a ton is a good load to take to Hornsby. I never attempted to take so much myself.
928. Is that a one-horse load? Yes; but it is a good load for one horse. Then there is back loading, in the shape of horse feed, poultry feed, groceries, and so on.
929. What are the roads like from Arcadia to Dural? The road into Dural is a much better road than the Hornsby road.
930. Do you think that the timber in the district is good marketable timber? Yes; it is supposed to be some of the best. There is ironbark, turpentine, and mahogany in the district.
931. Is there any large quantity of timber? The 650 acres to which I have referred are heavily timbered. There is also good timber on the Government land beyond Arcadia.
932. Do you think that if the proposed railway were constructed that timber would be sent to market? Yes, I think so.
933. Would the timber traffic be a permanent thing? It would take a good many years to get rid of all the timber, and as the trees are cut down the land would be used for fruit-growing, which in its turn would give traffic to the railway. Then there would be a certain amount of tourist traffic on the line, and it is more than likely that the district would become a health resort, because of its splendid climate. There is no reason why Dural should not become a suburb of Sydney.
934. Do you think that land would be sought there for residential purposes? I think so. The climate is equal to that on the North Shore line, and it is better than that on the Mountains, because you escape the very cold weather that they get at places like Blackheath and Mount Victoria.
935. Is there anything grown in the district besides fruit? Not at the present time; but if the railway were nearer you could grow vegetables. The land will grow excellent vegetables.
936. Do you obtain your horse-feed from Sydney or from Parramatta? From Sydney. I never go to Parramatta for anything.
937. Would the traffic in horse-feed be a considerable item? Yes; and it would increase.
938. Has it increased during the past few years? I should judge so from the statistics I have seen.
939. What is an average yield for an acre of orchard in that district? I have made inquiries from some of the oldest orchardists about there, and 100 cases to the acre has been given to me as a fair estimate. Passion-fruit would run about 150 cases to the acre.
940. Does not the yield fluctuate? Yes; it varies, of course, with the seasons that we get.
941. Do you think that that estimate is a fair one, allowing for that fluctuation? I take that to be the estimate of the average yield. Of course, in some years the fruit would be more plentiful than in other years.
942. Would you be prepared to pay a higher rate on the proposed railway than on the Northern railway? Yes; I think that I could afford to pay 2d. a case extra to send my fruit from Dural. I think that it would be cheaper by two-thirds to send to Dural.
943. How far is your property from Dural? From 6 to 7 miles.
944. Would the residents of the district be willing to pay a higher rate on the proposed railway? I think so. I might mention that poultry-raising is an industry which is growing in the district, and one which I believe will increase very largely. That, of course, will give a large amount of traffic to the railway.

Samuel James Moore, junr., fruit-grower, Dural and Galston, sworn and examined:—

945. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What is the extent of your holding? I have 46 acres in the Galston district, 25 of which are under cultivation.
946. How long have you been engaged in fruit-growing? Fourteen or fifteen years. I purchased the Galston property nine or ten years ago, when it was forest land.
947. How far are you from a railway station now? Between 9 and 10 miles. Where I live at Dural is about

W. Walsh.
14 Sept., 1900.

S. J. Moore,
junr.
14 Sept., 1900.

- S. J. Moore, junr.
14 Sept., 1900.
- about as far from Pennant Hills as my Galston property is from Hornsby. I send to Pennant Hills from Dural, and to Hornsby from Galston.
948. How near would you be to a station if the proposed railway were constructed? Five miles from Galston; my Dural property is close to the terminus.
949. Could you afford to pay a special rate upon the proposed railway? Yes; I am paying now to have my fruit carted to the railway station, and last season I paid 2½d. a case for 3,107 cases to a man who had back carting to Byford's store. Under these circumstances, I could easily pay 1½d. per case on the proposed railway, and even if I paid 2d. a case I should be in pocket.
950. Is it the pretty general feeling of the orchardists in the district that they could pay a special rate on the proposed railway? I think so.
951. Have you met with any opposition to the proposal? No. Most of the large growers would only be too glad to pay a special rate. The bulk of my fruit goes from Galston to Hornsby, and the road by which it has to be carted is a very steep and winding one, so that very often the shaft horses have to do the whole of the pulling. It takes much longer to travel the 9 miles to Hornsby than it would take to travel a similar distance on an ordinary road.
952. Is the whole of your orchard in bearing? Yes; the whole of the Galston orchard.
953. What is the average yield per acre? Last year my trees gave 160 cases to the acre, but I do not say that that is the average yield for the whole district. I sent 3,107 cases away by one man, and about 900 by a second man, because one contractor could not take the whole of them. I pulled altogether over 4,000 cases, and between the 6th of August and the 19th December I paid for carting £41 6s. 2½d. to one man alone.
954. Do you grow citrus fruits exclusively? Yes; at Galston, because it is too far from a railway for summer fruits, although the land is admirably adapted for them.
955. The river comes in pretty close to Galston at one place, and I understand that money has been voted to make a road down to the water;—is it likely that steamers will ever compete for the traffic of that part of the district? No.
956. How many trees do you plant to the acre? 100 or 110.
957. Are the trees planted on the square or on the quincunx principle? They are generally planted at distances of 19 x 21 feet. I think that 100 trees to the acre is as much as the land will carry.
958. Do you use much manure? Yes; bone-dust, blood and bone, phosphate, and other manures. I use a lot of stable manure.
959. Would the summer fruit suffer so much if it was gathered when it was not quite ripe? Summer fruit should be allowed to ripen before it is sent to market. We do not export much summer fruit, and for local markets the fruit should be sent in fresh and ripe. We can grow apples very well in the district, and although we can grow peaches, apricots, and plums, it is not worth while to send them to market, because of the loss in condition caused by the road carriage.
960. Has any attempt been made in the district to can or preserve the summer fruits grown there? Only for household use.
961. Have you any means of watering your orchards in times of drought? No.
962. Is your land drained? Some of it is, where I think drains are necessary.
963. Subsoil drains or surface drains? Subsoil drains, about 3 feet deep.
964. Does not the land pay an orchardist better where it is drained than where it is not drained? I cannot say that I have proved it to be so. I think the orchards in which I have no drains do as well as those where I have drains.
965. What is the nature of your soil? I have a loamy sand, and I have also a black soil, with clay and shale beneath.
966. Do you grow citrus fruits on both soils? Yes.
967. Which do you find to be the better? I think that the oranges hang better when they are grown on loamy soil. That soil is poorer than the other, and does not force the growth of the tree as the black soil does.
968. Are diseases more prevalent amongst trees grown in one kind of soil than amongst trees grown in the other? No.
969. With care and cultivation you can keep your trees pretty clean? Yes, fairly clean.
970. To what depth do you work the soil before planting? Nine or 10 inches at the first ploughing.
971. Do you use the plough or the scarifier? The plough. I do not use the scarifier at all, though sometimes I put a light harrow over the land.
972. Do you think that the estimated loss upon the railway will be made up? I think so. I think that there is a great future before this line, and that it will pay on its merits.
973. Do you think 150,000 cases an under-estimate of the fruit production of the district? Yes. Not a fraction of the land that could be used for fruit-growing has yet been cultivated. The men who were referred to by Mr. Trethowan hold some of the finest land in the Galston district, and they are only waiting for the railway to put that land into use. It is very heavily timbered land, and I know of trees there which are worth £2 on the stump. There is an unlimited supply of timber in the district.
974. Is the timber usually burnt off now when the land is being cleared? Yes; except a little that may be required to make a fence. If there were a railway it could be sent to market. In many other parts of the Colony people draw timber for miles, and make a living out of it.

John Charles Hunt, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn and further examined:—

- J. C. Hunt.
14 Sept., 1900.
975. *Chairman.*] I understand that you desire to supplement your evidence? I wish to say, in regard to the statement of Mr. Trethowan, that people had done well by orcharding who had had to cart their produce long distances; that these men had to get up at 2 o'clock in the morning, and travel all day, to get their fruit to market. While they have been able to make fruit-growing pay, it has been at the expense of their health and comfort. With regard to the probable produce traffic on the railway, I should like to say that there is no grain grown in the district for horse-feed—all that is grown is a little greenstuff. I think that I am the only person in the district who grows crops for hay.

Harry

Harry Moore, fruit-grower, Arcadia, sworn, and examined:—

H. Moore.
14 Sept., 1900.

976. *Mr. Hyam.*] How far are you from Dural? Five miles.
977. What is the extent of your holding? Fifty-six acres. I have 30 acres under orchard.
978. Is your orchard in full bearing? Yes.
979. The whole of it? All but a couple of acres of young trees.
980. Is it an old or a new orchard? The oldest part of it is about 14 years old.
981. What kind of fruit do you grow? Chiefly common oranges, lemons, and mandarins. I have also a few apples, peaches, pears, and plums. Apples do well there.
982. Is the ground that you are cultivating as good as the ground round about Dural or Castle Hill? Yes.
983. Does it give you the same results? I believe it gives better results.
984. How many cases do you send to market in a year? About 3,000.
985. Where do you cart your fruit to? To Pennant Hills, as a rule. Perhaps one load out of ten goes to Hornsby. I can take heavier loads to Pennant Hills than I can take to Hornsby.
986. Do you do your own carting? Yes.
987. How far are you from Pennant Hills? About 13 miles.
988. And from Hornsby? Between 10 and 11 miles.
989. Can you get to Pennant Hills and back in a day? It takes a day.
990. Is it an easier day's journey than to Hornsby? Much easier.
991. Can you do it in less time? In about the same time, but it is easier, and you can take a bigger load. The road to Hornsby is very steep, and has a great many curves in it. There are seven turns on the Zig-zag.
992. How far are you from Dural? Between 4½ and 5 miles.
993. If the proposed railway were constructed, how many loads a day could you take to it from your place? Three.
994. I suppose the grade of the road from Arcadia and Galston to Dural is a fairly good one? Yes.
995. Could an ordinary horse draw from half a ton to three-quarters of a ton over that road? Yes.
996. Is the road in fairly good condition? Yes.
997. If the proposed line were constructed, could you pull your fruit and send it into market in the one day? Yes; I could pull my fruit up to 4 o'clock in the afternoon then.
998. I suppose you are compelled now, by your distance from market, to confine yourself to the growing of citrus fruits? Yes.
999. If the proposed railway were made, could you also grow summer fruits? Yes.
1000. What summer fruits would grow best with you? Apples and peaches would do very well.
1001. Can you grow all varieties of apples? Not all varieties. We grow the early apples very well.
1002. Do you grow plums? Yes; eight or nine kinds of plums.
1003. How do you find the Japanese plums answer? Very well.
1004. They come into bearing very early? Yes; and bear very heavily.
1005. Which varieties do you grow chiefly? The Blood Plum and the Purple Monster.
1006. Do you find that a good bearer? Yes.
1007. Are those good plums for export? I think so, but we do not export any. There are thousands of acres in the district which are as suitable for fruit as the land which is already cultivated.
1008. Is the balance of your land suitable for fruit? Yes, every rod of it.
1009. If there were a railway to Dural, would you go in for more cultivation? Yes.
1010. Do you know the country in the direction of the Hawkesbury? Yes; a lot of good country. The soil is chiefly a sandy loam, but there are just as good orchards in that soil as in the black soil.
1011. And the fruit hangs longer? Yes. I have only very little of that sandy loam in my orchard, but I have found that it suits lemons better than the black soil does.
1012. Do your trees attain any great height in this so-called poor soil? Yes.
1013. Is the growth as good as on the black and red soils? Yes. Only last week I cut 7 feet of growth off trees growing in sandy loams, and I left 2 feet of wood on them.
1014. Do you know of any older orchard in the district than yours? Yes; Mr. Fagan's is an old orchard, and Mr. Waddell's is an old orchard. The two or three people who have old orchards there used to cart their fruit into Parramatta, and the journey used to take them a whole day and part of the night as well.
1015. Are the trees in those old orchards still in a healthy state? Yes; they are beautiful trees.
1016. Do you grow oranges for export? We do not export many; we send most of our oranges to Sydney.
1017. Does the fruit grown on the poorer soil keep better than the fruit grown on the heavier soils? Yes.
1018. How much manure do you use to the acre? I do not suppose we use half a ton to the acre. We should use more if it were not for the carting.
1019. If the proposed railway were constructed, would you use much more manure? Yes; a great deal more. If the railway were constructed, we should use a lot of stable manure and street sweepings.
1020. Would people use the railway to bring up manure from Sydney and Homebush? Yes; at the present time, however, it costs too much to cart manure from a railway station. Stable manure makes soil, whereas the artificial manures do not.
1021. Would the construction of the proposed railway permit of larger settlement in the district? I am sure that it would.
1022. Would the private land between Dural and Arcadia be cut up and brought into use if the proposed railway were made? Yes; I know that many of us are only waiting for the construction of the railway. There is any quantity of timber on that land.
1023. Would your land compare well with the land in the Kellyville, Kenthurst, and Glenorie districts? Yes; it is quite as good, if not better.
1024. Could you afford to pay special rates upon the proposed railway? Yes.
1025. Could you also afford to pay special rates for manures? Yes.
1026. What does it cost to cart manure from Pennant Hills? About 9s. a ton.
1027. You could not pay a very high rate on stable manure? We could pay a fair rate.
1028. Do you think that 150,000 cases is a fair estimate of the yield of the district? No. I think that the yield is about 526,000 cases.

- H. Moore. 1029. Have you been long in the district? Yes; I was born in Dural.
- 14 Sept., 1900. 1030. The greater part of the produce of the district would be sent to the railway? It would all be sent to the railway.
1031. Do you think that a special rate on the proposed line would drive some of the traffic to the Northern line? No.
1032. How are the roads between Arcadia and Pennant Hills? In wet weather they are very bad; but at other times they are pretty good. They are grading the road now, and metalling it.
1033. What is the greatest distance from a railway station at which a man can make fruit-growing pay? Six or 7 miles is a fair distance.
1034. Could people from 7 to 15 miles from Dural make fruit-growing pay if the proposed railway were made? Yes. Some people are carting fruit similar distances to Hornsby; but there is not much profit in it.
1035. Some of the people at Galston used to cart their fruit to Parramatta, a distance of 21 miles? Yes; but they were all day and half the night on the journey. If the railway went to Dural a great deal of extra land would be cultivated, while the timber in the district would provide traffic for the railway in the shape of firewood, sleepers, and girders.

Edwin Hall, fruit-grower, Kenthurst, sworn, and examined:—

- E Hall. 1036. *Chairman*] How far is Kenthurst from Dural? My place is 9 miles from the Dural Post Office. Kenthurst is a very wide district. I am about 2½ miles from the Cattai Creek, on the road from the Castle Hill road to Pitt Town.
- 14 Sept., 1900. 1037. Is much of the land in the Kenthurst district suitable for fruit-growing? Yes. In the parish of Nelson there are three big roads; one of these is the Pitt Town road, which starts at what is known as the Round Corner, and goes right on to Cattai Creek. On both sides of that road there is uninterrupted settlement for a distance of 10 miles. There are ninety farms on that road.
1038. Where do the growers there send their produce at present? To Pennant Hills and to Parramatta. It has been stated that we are well served by the Windsor line; but, although we are nearer to that line than we are to other lines, we cannot use it, because the approach to the Cattai Creek is too precipitous, and the creek sometimes rises in flood to a height of 50 feet.
1039. Would the construction of the proposed railway materially benefit the people of Kenthurst? Yes. We have as good land as there is in the district, but it is not worth much to us if we cannot get means of sending our produce away.
1040. How would you describe the soil there? It is a sandy loam, and grows very fine lemon-trees. The finest orchards in Australia are within a couple of miles of my place—orchards like Mr. Wrench's orchard and Mr. Edwards' orchard.
1041. Is there any Crown land there good for settlement? The land is all taken up, and we are waiting for some means of getting our fruit away.
1042. What is the average size of the holdings there? It is difficult to say, because they vary so much. The soil is extremely suitable for fruit, though the country is very broken. There are glens where there is a peaty soil, upon which you could grow all the vegetables required to supply Sydney.
1043. Is Kenthurst a new place? It is new in the sense that it is least opened up of any of the districts there; but the orchards which are there show it to be high class ground for fruit.
1044. What is the average yield of those orchards? There are plenty of trees there which would give a yield of seven or eight cases to the tree. The yield of an orchard depends very much upon the way in which it is cultivated.
1045. Would 100 cases to the acre be a fair average? If I were to pick out six or eight orchards which I know of I should say it would not be anything near it. Besides the road I have mentioned, the district is traversed by the Rouse Hill Road, which is 8 miles long, and the Porter's Ridge Road, which is 2 miles long. On the three roads there are 20 miles of unbroken settlement. A man who has an orchard next to mine sent some of his fruit to the Agricultural Department, and the people there thought so much of it that they had it photographed for the *Agricultural Gazette*. I have about 4 acres of young trees, which are not yet bearing, and I will put 25 acres under fruit the day that the railway is started. We do not have to wait five years for a return in that district, because we can get a tolerable return from passion-fruit in eighteen months.
1046. Do the residents of the district regard the construction of the proposed railway as absolutely necessary for its fullest development? Yes, unquestionably.
1047. Has fruit-growing been seriously retarded in the district for want of means of communication? Yes. There are men with some capital out there who would put money into their places if there were a railway. I should like to open market gardens there if I could see a way of getting my stuff to market.
1048. *Mr. Hyam*] Have you been long in the district? Twelve years—seven years where I am now.
1049. A good deal of land is held there for speculative purposes? Not so much. Most of the holders cultivate part of their land, and would be glad to cultivate more.
1050. Was not a good deal of the land there taken up by city people, who only made sufficient improvements to comply with the conditions of the Act? Yes, some of it was.
1051. If there were better facilities for getting the fruit to market would more of the land be brought into cultivation? Yes. There is no place in the Colony where you can grow citrus fruits so well as in that district. There are no frosts there, and the fruit hangs well.
1052. How much land have you? 248 acres, about four of which are planted, while twelve are ready for planting.
1053. You have more land there than you can ever use for fruit-growing? I will use nearly all of it in some way or another. Of course, some of it is very broken country.

MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Cecil Purser, medical practitioner, Petersham, sworn, and examined:—

1054. *Chairman.*] Do you know the district to be served by the proposed railway? Very well; I was born in the district.

C. Purser.
17 Sept., 1900.

1055. What is your opinion of it, from the point of view of a health resort;—is it a place to which, with railway communication, it would be desirable to send convalescents? Yes; anywhere from Castle Hill to Dural, Galston, or Glenorie, I do not think you could find a better district to which to send convalescent patients. It might be equalled, but it could not be excelled. It is from 600 to 900 feet above the level of the sea. It is altogether out of the reach of the sea air. The only difficulty I have experienced in getting patients there has been the inconvenience in regard to carriage. It is only within the last two or three years that I have been able to send patients there at all, because no one in the district ever thought of opening a boarding-house to receive them. During the last couple of years, however, I have sent patients from time to time to the district between Dural and Galston. It is an excellent district for any form of chest trouble, and for patients who wish to recoup.

1056. Do you think the district is superior to that from Ryde towards Hornsby, or from Hornsby to Milson's Point? Yes. I have patients at Hornsby at present, and I would be glad to get them to Dural if I could. You do not get out of the range of the sea atmosphere at Hornsby. There is no doubt that if the railway were constructed, residential sites would be obtained, and houses built.

1057. *Dr. Garran.*] Hornsby is only 5 miles from Dural, and there is no ridge between the two places? At the same time, you are altogether away from the sea atmosphere at Dural. Up to Hornsby you get the sea air.

1058. In order to bring about a change you require a range of hills or forests between you and the sea air, and you have not that in the locality to which you refer? There is forest, more or less, all the way from Pennant Hills to the Hornsby heights; it is wooded all the way.

1059. Is it not getting cleared very quickly? No; there are parts there which it would be impossible to clear, extending from a width of 2 to 4 miles.

1060. But it is the timber on the ridges which affects the prevalence or otherwise of the sea breeze? Yes; but no sea breeze reaches Dural, and it certainly does reach all the way up the North Shore line.

1061. Then, when a strong sea breeze blows, you get a comparatively still air there? You get the fag-end of a north-easter there, but it has not a depressing effect, because by the time it reaches there the moisture has pretty well gone out of it.

1062. You get none of its damp chill? No, and none of its depressing effect. I lived in the district until seventeen and a half years of age. I visit it frequently. I have visited all parts of the Colony—the Southern, Western, North Shore, and Illawarra lines, and when I wanted to invest and to build a cottage for myself I selected Castle Hill. I have been in private practice for seven years, and it is only within the last two years that I have been able to get a place there to which to send patients. Another point in its favour is that, excepting in the very wet weather, when the roads are bad, you can obtain splendid drives, which you cannot do on the North Shore line.

1063. Are you familiar with the medical institutions of Parramatta? Yes.

1064. Knowing what we know now about the climate of Parramatta, and the climate of the higher ground north of Parramatta, would it not have been an enormous advantage to the health of the inmates of those establishments if they had been located on the northern side? There is no doubt about it. Parramatta is a very hot place.

1065. Then, if we ever think of rebuilding those old shanties, we ought to go further north? You could not get a better site, a more salubrious climate, or a more open place than the district to which I have referred.

1066. Your special praise of the district begins about Pennant Hills? Yes.

1067. Could you go as far north as Arcadia? Yes; but I would prefer to go the other way—to Glenorie, on the Wiseman's Ferry Road.

1068. Is Galston in a hollow, sheltered from the sea breeze? Yes.

1069. I suppose that sometimes the wind sweeps down into the hollow? You will get that wherever you go.

1070. I mean that a hollow is not always a protection from a breeze? Not necessarily.

1071. *Chairman.*] Do you think the district would offer attractions to residents of Sydney as a summer resort? I feel sure it would. People who have visited the district have endeavoured to obtain accommodation there, but have failed. Two people whom I sent up last Saturday had to travel 7½ miles from the railway, which is rather too far.

1072. Has the district ever been considered as one suitable for consumptive hospitals? It has been thought of. There is no doubt that a sanatorium as far out as Glenorie or North Dural would be well situated.

1073. Do you think that the district from Castle Hill towards Dural, and onwards, would be as suitable a locality for a consumptive hospital as Thurlmere? In some respects I think it would be more suitable. Patients, of course, do very well at Springwood; but I prefer Dural or Glenorie, because you avoid the excessive cold of winter. Again, at Springwood, you cannot get the drives.

1074. You regard the fact that there are numerous interesting drives in the district as an important factor in the recovery of patients? Yes, because there is such a change of scenery.

1075. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you found the climate of the district particularly salubrious? Yes, more particularly in convalescing chest cases, such as acute bronchitis and pneumonia. It is also good for people who have been overworked.

1076.

- C. Purser.
17 Sept., 1900.
1076. Do you think the district would be likely to be sufficiently populated, as a sanatorium, to affect the railway receipts? I think it would, eventually. Of course, it has also to be considered from a visitor's point of view. Personally, I would go there much more frequently if I could do so by rail. My experience of the coach from Parramatta to Castle Hill, and on to Dural, is that seven times out of ten you cannot get a decent seat in it.
1077. Is there any particular portion of the country, between Carlingford and Dural, which is more likely to be recommended as a sanatorium than others? Anywhere from Castle Hill to Dural, and beyond, to the 5 and 10 miles forests would be suitable.
1078. As the district is a fruit-growing one, it is not likely to be thickly populated? I do not think it is likely to be thickly populated.
1079. And that would be greatly to its advantage as a sanatorium? Yes. If the North Shore line goes on as it is doing at the present time it will become too thickly populated, and the people will want to get further away.
1080. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is the condition of the country with regard to settlement? I had not been beyond Dural for five or six years, until two years ago. Then I went for a trip through Galston and Arcadia, which are practically new places, both in regard to the increase of population and the increase of the area under cultivation. In the following year I was on the Wiseman's Ferry Road, and at North Dural, Glenorie, and Maroota. These places could be hardly recognised, because, during the last ten years orchard after orchard has been planted. Again, Kenthurst, when I was a boy, only boasted of three or four houses, and now a large number of orchards are there.
1081. Has there been any marked increase in the population and in fruit-growing during the last ten years? There has been a marked increase in the number of orchards and in the number of new residences.
1082. Does that remark apply to the district between Carlingford and Dural or to the whole of the district? More particularly with regard to Dural, Kenthurst, Arcadia, Galston, and Glenhaven. The latter is a new place altogether. There must be fifteen or sixteen orchards on that ridge, at least.
1083. How does the country between Dural and Galston compare with that between Dural and Carlingford, in regard to fruit-growing? Galston and Glenorie are supposed to produce some of the best oranges obtainable. Going further out, the bulk of the fruit grown is passion-fruit and stone fruit, which seem to do well. The oranges, of course, are far better there than they are at Carlingford or Seven Hills.
1084. Do you think that the land which has been laid down is suitable for fruit-growing? I should think that there is as much, and more, land suitable for fruit-growing, as there is already under cultivation.
1085. Is the area of cultivated land increasing every year? Yes; every year I go out I see new orchards.
1086. Do you think the proposed line, if constructed, would have the effect of causing an increased area to be placed under cultivation? Yes; because the wear and tear caused by carriage on the roads would be far in excess of what you would have to pay in railway freight.
1087. Would not a number of those who are growing fruit between the proposed line and the Northern line continue to send their produce to the Northern line? Some of the Pennant Hills people may do so, but not beyond. The whole of the Dural, Galston, and Arcadia people would not cross the ridges and Berowra gullies. It would be far easier for them to bring their produce to Dural than to Hornsby.
1088. It has been stated that the roads leading to the Northern line are not of the best? They are not only not of the best, but they are hilly. For instance, I have a farm $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Parramatta station, and I do not suppose that it is more than $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Pennant Hills station by road, but the wear and tear is so great that it is much easier to go to Parramatta station. That is due to the hills.
1089. What is the character of the roads from the fruit-growing centres to the proposed line? The proposed line runs pretty well parallel with the main Northern road. I presume there would be stations at intervals, and that there would be a very little distance to travel.
1090. Do you think the residents within the influence of the proposed line would send their fruit on the line at a higher rate of carriage than is now paid on the Great Northern line? I believe they would. I have heard the matter spoken of, and I understand the bulk of the large fruit-growers would be willing, if they had railway facilities, to pay increased rates. It would save their time, and the wear and tear of horses and vehicles. Again, I think they would get better prices for their fruit, which would be put upon the market in a better condition.
1091. Would that be an important consideration? Yes; they would get enhanced prices, and I think that would help to recoup them for the payment of increased rates, presuming they had to pay them.

Francis Alexander Nicholson, fruit-grower, Maroota, near Glenorie, sworn, and examined:—

- F. A. Nicholson.
17 Sept., 1900.
1092. *Mr. Hyam.*] Where is your residence? At Maroota, almost 5 miles due north of Glenorie, on the Wiseman's Ferry Road.
1093. What is the size of your holding? I, and two brothers, own 120 acres.
1094. What is the character of the soil? Sandy loam.
1095. How much have you under orchards? Twenty-seven acres, of which 15 acres are my own.
1096. What do you grow? Citrus and passion fruits. The whole of my ground is double planted.
1097. Is the orchard a young one? Yes; it has only been planted two years. The citrus trees are not bearing yet.
1098. Do you grow stone fruit? A little. We do not grow more on account of the difficulty of getting to market.
1099. Is the land better adapted to citrus fruit than to passion-fruit? Only on account of the difficulty of getting to market. When the citrus trees are 4 or 5 years old we shall do away with the passion-fruit.
1100. What return would an acre of passion-fruit give you? Off 8 acres I have sent away 350 cases. The vines are planted 15 and 20 feet apart—that is about twice the usual distance apart. On account of the shelter the country is specially adapted to the growth of passion-fruit.
1101. What elevation are you? Over 900 feet.
1102. Have you much frost? Very little. We are at the extreme end of the present cultivated area. We have the only passion-fruit orchards which are at present unaffected by frosts. The bush shelter is a factor in our favour.

F. A.
Nicholson.

17 Sept., 1900.

1103. Are many people residing in the neighbourhood? There are only eight or ten families between Glenorie and my place.
1104. Is the land between Glenorie and your place taken up? Nearly all. A number of working men live there, and they improve ground in their leisure time. There are about eighteen holdings of that description between Glenorie and our place, a distance of 5 miles.
1105. Is there any settlement beyond? Not for a considerable distance. Five or 6 miles away from us three or four selections were taken up, but the people were, I think, starved out, owing to the distance from a railway.
1106. Where do you carry your fruit? To Pennant Hills station, a distance of over 18 miles.
1107. Can you go there and back with a load in one day? It is really a day and a half's journey. At present I am carting fruit to Glenorie, and pay 6d. per case from there to the station. I am working short-handed. My place is not in full bearing, and it pays me better to engage someone to cart most of my fruit rather than keep additional horses myself. If I had to cart myself it would cost me 9d. a case. There is only one man in Glenorie who makes a trade of carting.
1108. How far are you from Dural? Eleven miles.
1109. Could you go in and out in a day? Yes. The road is rough between our place and Glenorie, and the road from Dural to Pennant Hills is a difficult one.
1110. Have you heard anything about the proposal to charge an extra rate over the proposed line, and would you be willing to pay it? With the greatest of pleasure.
1111. It would not stop you from patronising the railway? No; and no one else in the neighbourhood in which I live.
1112. What sort of timber is to be found in the locality in which you live? There is abundance of first-class turpentine, red mahogany, stringy-bark, and blue-gum, and some ironbark.
1113. Is there any black-butt? Not where I am residing. You have to go 5 miles out for that.
1114. Is much turpentine to be found? To get abundance of it you must leave the ridges and go into the gullies.
1115. What manure do you use? Artificial.
1116. Where do you get it from? Pennant Hills.
1117. What does it cost for carriage? It costs 15s a ton to land it at our place from Pennant Hills.
1118. If the railway were constructed to Dural, would it lessen the cost? I think it could be obtained then for 7s. 6d. a ton at the outside.
1119. How much manure do you use to the acre? On 15 acres, since 1st January last, I have used 7 tons. I have to give the passion-fruit and the trees another dressing between now and the summer.
1120. Is it necessary to use that quantity every year? Nothing less than that. After passion-vines reach 2 years of age they should have at least a ton of manure to the acre in twelve months. We can grow fruit there, not so much on account of the rich quality of the soil, but on account of its retention of moisture in hot weather.
1121. Are there many orchards in full bearing in the neighbourhood? There are three about 6 years old, but two of them have been neglected.
1122. Will your land grow any kind of crop? Yes; it is the best land I have ever had anything to do with for vegetables.
1123. With the use of artificial manures? Yes.
1124. Do you use stable manure? None whatever. It is good ground for potatoes, tomatoes, pumpkins, peas, beans, cabbages, and cauliflowers. I was told that the ground would not grow cauliflowers, but last year I grew some weighing 10 lb.
1125. Have you plenty of water there? Yes, we were specially favoured last summer. We had more rainfall in the shape of thunderstorms and showers than they had at Glenorie, 5 miles away. Those conditions have prevailed each summer I have been there.
1126. Is there much timber suitable for girders and piles in the locality? Yes; in the gullies where I live, and further out, there is abundance.
1127. How much further out? Six miles, or 16 or 17 miles from Dural station.
1128. What do you think is a fair return, in your district, for a tree in full bearing? A case to the tree. I know of 1 acre of lemon trees from which they picked 283 cases of lemons in twelve months. It was a well-manured patch.
1129. I suppose that, up to a certain point, the more manure you give the trees the better the return? Yes, if you manure in the winter. If you leave it too late in the spring you will, when you get hot dry weather, do considerable damage.
1130. Is the country adapted to the growth of stone fruit and apples? Yes.
1131. I suppose you could not possibly cart the softer fruits to market on account of the distance? No.
1132. Could you cart them to Dural if you had a railway there? Yes.
1133. If the railway were constructed, could you pick your fruit in the morning and have it in Sydney in the evening? Yes; I could do the trip from my place to Dural with a load in three and a half hours.
1134. Have you any further information with which to supply the Committee? In the district between Glenorie and Wiseman's Ferry there is a considerable amount of country which has not been cultivated, and which is suitable for passion and citrus fruits.

John Garratty, builder, Parramatta, sworn, and examined:—

1135. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you well acquainted with the country traversed by the proposed railway? Yes; *J. Garratty.* with about 8 miles of it from Carlingford.
1136. Have you ever been engaged in growing fruit there? Yes; more's the pity. I suppose it was not my occupation, and I could not make it pay. I have attended to give evidence in regard to the suitability of the district for buildings and small holdings. I consider it one of the best districts in New South Wales for that purpose. If the proposed line were constructed, it would open up the country, and would be a great boon to the Sydney people, and there would be no difficulty in disposing of land with small houses upon it. I have built several houses in the district, and I have had no difficulty in selling them.
1137. Have you been employed in many instances to put up buildings? Yes; I have been doing it all my life, until I got 12 acres of land along the route of the proposed line, and it cost me £100 an acre to clear and plant it.

17 Sept., 1900.

- J. Garratty. 1138. Has the district been largely used by business people in Parramatta and Sydney for residences?
Yes.
- 17 Sept., 1900. 1139. How do the people get backwards and forwards? By coach.
1140. What railway do they come to? To the Northern line or to Parramatta station.
1141. What distance have they to travel? Some of them have to travel 4 miles to Parramatta. The construction of the line would be a great advantage to the Sydney people, who would be able to obtain fruit straight from the trees, instead of having it carried along a dusty road. There is a great difference in the flavour of fruit obtained near the tree and that obtained in the market. I have not the slightest doubt that, if the line were constructed, it would pay in a very short time. I was in Sydney for over thirty years, and never knew there was such a nice locality as this so near to Sydney.
1142. You say that you had 12 acres of land out there? Yes; I had 12 acres of land under cultivation. I kept the trees for seven years and worked at them; but I got nothing from them, as the trees were too young.
1143. To what do you attribute your failure? The trees were too young when I sold out. I built three houses upon the land, and sold each of them.
1144. What kind of fruit were you growing? Oranges, lemons, apples, peaches, nectarines, and passion-fruit. The trees bore some fruit after the second year.
1145. Many of those would bear very quickly? The passion-vines bear very quickly.
1146. The peaches ought to bear the second year? They require a great deal of attention, and some one to understand them. Some of them came to perfection and died off again, and I could not tell the reason why. I think the black aphid got to the roots.
1147. Did you not understand fruit-growing? No.
1148. Did you attribute your failure to that fact? It was not due to the want of labour, cultivation, and manure. I think it was due to the soil; fruit land requires a good depth of soil.
1149. How far is your place from the station? 500 yards from the Kissing Point Road station.
1150. That part would not be affected by the proposed line? No.
1151. In the buildings which you have put up, have you used the local timber? No, because we could not get it sawn timber. The local timber would be useless except for slab huts.

FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

William Rudlan Hawkins, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and further examined:—

- Mr. W. R. Hawkins. 1152. *Chairman.*] Do you desire to supplement the evidence you have already given? Yes. I desire to put in the following statement:—The large discrepancy between the estimate given by the Chief Traffic Manager, of fruit that would be carried over the proposed railway, and that given by the League, has led me to examine the figures, and I wish to lay before the Committee the result. Mr. Harper has adhered to the statistics given by him before the former Works Committee as practically correct, and on them has based his evidence at the present inquiry, so I will, in comparing them with the League's statistics, also take those statistics placed by the League before the last Works Committee, so that any increase which we show in the present statistics will not come into unfair comparison. Mr. Harper, in his report (page 27), says that for the districts of Dundas, Carlingford, Rydaimere, and Ermington, which practically comprise the trafficable area of Simpson's line, the estimated production of fruit is 120,000 cases per annum. If you turn to the statistics taken by the League you will see we only claimed an average of one case per tree on 925 acres, or 92,500 cases for the districts named, and which, Mr. Harper says, is governed by the existing Carlingford to Clyde line; so that Mr. Harper's estimate is 28,000 cases more than we claim; but when we compare the statistics of the districts that would be governed by the proposed extension a totally different result is found. The figures for the districts (page 28)—Castle Hill, Kellyville, Galston (which comprises Galston and Arcadia), Pennant Hills, Kenthurst, and Dural (which comprises Dural and Glenorie)—are given as 250,000 by Mr. Harper, and 398,700 by the League, and in the League's estimate Kellyville is not included, which makes the League's figures less than they should be. The difference between the two estimates is 148,700 cases. Now, taking Mr. Harper's figures as being correct, the area that produces 120,000 cases, in the case of Carlingford, &c., is 925 acres, while the area that only produces 250,000 cases is 3,987—or, in other words, the Carlingford district produces a little over one and one-third cases per tree, while the other districts produce about three-fifths of a case per tree. The statistics show that the proposed extension would serve an area more than four times as large as the area served by the Carlingford-Clyde line, and, taking Mr. Harper's estimate for the Carlingford districts as correct, it is only fair to assume that the League's estimate would be more than realised in the other districts. There is another aspect in which the statistics may be examined, to which I wish to draw the Committee's attention. In the case of Carlingford, &c., 90,000 cases are deducted as produce that would be carried by water, at 2d. per case (Question 269), leaving 30,000 cases to be carried at ½d. (page 28). For the other districts, 100,000 are deducted as the amount that growers would still send to the Northern line, leaving 150,000 to be carried over the proposed extension, at an extra 1d. freight per case—assuming (page 28, bottom of page) that a certain number of growers would be willing to pay the extra 1d., assuming also, I suppose, that the growers of the 100,000 deducted would not be willing to pay for any convenience. Mr. Harper admits that, for some reason, growers are willing to pay 2d. per case by boat in preference to 1d. by train (answer to Question 629), and yet he deducts 100,000 cases, because he thinks growers would not pay an extra penny for the convenience of a railway. The assumption that only 150,000 cases out of the 250,000 would be carried by

by train may possibly be explained by the basis on which Mr. Harper works out his figures. In his report, page 28, he says:—"The estimate of quantity is also, in my opinion, too sanguine. Most of the fruit-growers employ horses on their holdings; then employed labour is relatively cheap, and cartage for several miles extra, which is all that is involved, would be amply compensated for by the difference between the present railway rate—1d. per case from all North Coast stations except Hornsby in the district, and 2½d. *via* Rose Hill. The difference amounts to 5s. per ton, which is nearly equal to the ordinary rate paid for a man, horse, and cart for the whole day." I wish, just here, to correct two errors that Mr. Harper has made in the part of his report which I have just read, viz.—that the difference per ton would amount to exactly 3s. 9d. per ton, and not 5s.; and that 10s. a day is paid throughout the district for hire of man, horse, and cart. This would show, not, as Mr. Harper suggests, about an even balance, but the difference between 3s. 9d. and 10s. per ton in favour of the grower sending by rail. I only wish to add that, as far as the statistics taken by the League are concerned, the acreage is correct, the only estimate made in the statistics being in regard to the number of cases, and there was no other way in which an estimate could be taken but that taken by the League.

Mr. W. R.
Hawkins.
21 Sept., 1900.

MONDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

The Hon. Jacob Garrard, President, Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage, sworn, and examined:—

1153. *Mr. McFarlane.*] I believe you formerly represented the electorate of Central Cumberland? Yes.
1154. Have you a knowledge of the district through which the proposed railway will pass? Yes; I think I know it as well as anyone.

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1155. Do you desire to make a statement, giving your views in connection with the proposal? The first question is as to what would be the zone of traffic which would be influenced by the line, if constructed. My idea is that the traffic from about one-third of the distance between Castle Hill and Baulkham Hills would go to the line. A good metalled road exists from Baulkham Hills into Parramatta, and it is a down grade. I think the division of the traffic would commence, roughly speaking, half-way between Castle Hill and Baulkham Hills.

1156. How far is that from the proposed line? From 1½ miles to 2 miles. At present the Kellyville traffic comes along the New Windsor Road, and on to Parramatta via Baulkham Hills. That road winds considerably. The distance between what is called the Cross Roads at Baulkham Hills, and the centre of Kellyville, is from 4½ to 5 miles. A road runs from near Kellyville, past the show-ground, and up to Castle Hill. There is a probability, therefore, that some portion of the Kellyville traffic—I do not say much of it—will go to the railway. In addition, there is another road from the main road to a branch of the Cattai Creek. On the borders of the Cattai Creek there is a considerable amount of settlement, some portion of which I have no doubt would tap the Dural line by going through Glenhaven. At the present time there is no bridge there, but the road runs through Glenhaven to the creek. There is a good grade and a good road there in all weathers. The soil is sandy loam, which forms a good road in the worst of weather. I think, therefore, that some portion of the Kellyville traffic, instead of facing the long roundabout road, would go *via* Glenhaven to the railway, if constructed; but, as I have said before, not very much of it. With reference to the Rouse Hill Ridge road, which runs from the Round Corner, at present the traffic for half-way—about 3 miles to 3½ miles from Round Corner—finds its way to Parramatta or to Pennant Hills, the other portion going out *via* Rouse Hill to the Windsor line at Riverstone. I think that the traffic for another 2 miles at least on that ridge would undoubtedly come to the proposed railway, instead of to Riverstone. In other words, you would attract more traffic to the proposed line, because the road to Riverstone is a bad one. It is a severe grade. It is true that there is not much settlement there at present.

1157. What point is that? Annangrove and the Rouse Hill Ridge Road. There is not much settlement there compared with other portions of the district. At Kenthurst marked progress has been made. The settlers are all small landholders who cultivate a comparatively small area, and cultivate it well. Some of the most intelligent people in the whole of the district are to be found there, and they are people who pull well together. At present the whole of that traffic comes to Pennant Hills. The Kenthurst road continues on to Pitt Town. There is not much settlement along the same, but it is gradually extending outwards. Six miles from Round Corner, along the road, I should mark as the division of the trade running towards Dural and that towards Windsor. If you bring the line to Dural—and the same thing holds good in regard to Rouse Hill—you exclude several miles of country the traffic of which would come to the line. With regard to Galston, there may be a difference of opinion as to whether the trade at Galston and Arcadia would come to a railway whose terminus is at Dural. I know the district intimately—I live now, and have been living for five years, at Hornsby—I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that I believe that owing to the heavy grade on the road from Galston via Berowra Creek to Hornsby, which necessitates only half a load being carried at a time—the hill is from 2½ to 3 miles long—at least 80 per cent. of the trade of Galston and Arcadia would go to the railway station at Dural. The reason why the other portion would not go to Dural is simply because it might sometimes suit the convenience of the producers to send it to Hornsby. Perhaps a man might want to go into Sydney and back quickly. Therefore, he would take a light load and catch the more frequent train service at Hornsby to Milson's Point. The trade of the Main Northern road out to Glenorie would, of necessity, come to Dural. One witness, in giving evidence, has stated that Glenorie is the limit of possible cultivation. That I dispute. From
Glenorie

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Glenorie to Wiseman's Ferry, a distance of about 15 miles, there are admirable spurs of land suitable for cultivation. It is not the deep rich soil which you find about Dural and Castle Hill, but it is the sandy, loamy soil, which seems to so admirably suit the citrus and passion fruits. I have had the opportunity of comparing the growths of different portions of the districts, and if I were starting orcharding, I should certainly prefer the sandy, loamy soil to the soil of the Dural or Castle Hill districts. I desire to point out that there is land still available for cultivation beyond Glenorie. In addition to that, it seems to me that a considerable amount of traffic will soon come there, because I think, if the railway is extended to Dural, it will be extended further on. Take the tourist traffic which now exists on the Windsor railway and down the river. Many people object to the long trip from Windsor and to the liability of being stuck up on the river. If people go by way of Windsor, they have a journey of 7 or 8 miles before they get into the steamer, and then the fear of being stuck up on the mud flats. If that fear could be removed, and tourists could make a round trip to Peat's Ferry, and up the river to Wiseman's Ferry, and back to Sydney by the Dural railway, traffic would be encouraged. We all know the objection, from a tourist's point of view, to coming home by the same route as we leave. Therefore, round trips are always prolific of more trade than those which go and return by the same way. I may state that the population of these districts has largely increased. The district was included in the old Central Cumberland electorate, which I began to represent in 1890, and its growth has been remarkable. At Castle Hill the growth during that time has not been so large, because the land was fairly well cut up. Nevertheless, there has been a great growth there, as evidenced by the large increase in the number of children. I attended the school sports the other day, and I happened to come across the teacher at Castle Hill. When I vacated the position of representative of the district, there was ample room in the school for children; but now it is crowded out. At Annangrove a school was established a little time ago. At Kenthurst there has been a remarkable increase in the population during the last four or five years, necessitating larger school accommodation. The same can be said of Dural, Middle Dural, and Glenorie. There is a large school at Galston, and another one at Arcadia. All this goes to show the great growth of the district. I feel persuaded that, with railway communication, there will be a large increase, not only in the number of orchards, but in residences. The district is specially suited to those who suffer from lung or pulmonary troubles. I have given a good deal of attention to that question during the last four or five years, owing to the fact that my wife is a sufferer. In view of my knowledge of the district, I feel certain that, with the construction of a railway, there would be a great demand for residences along that hilly country.

1158. Taking the country between Dural and Carlingford, and more particularly between the proposed line and the Northern line, what distance would the proposed line tend to serve the fruit-growers between it and the Northern line? I look upon the piece of country between Carlingford and Pennant Hills as being an unprofitable piece; but you cannot have the extension to Dural without that. In other words, the country from Carlingford to Pennant Hills is now served by the Northern line.

1159. Do you think that the proposed line would catch traffic which now goes to the northern line from between Pennant Hills and Dural? Undoubtedly. I should imagine that 40 per cent. of the trade of the districts to which I have referred now goes to Pennant Hills, 30 per cent. to Hornsby, and the balance may filter through to Parramatta.

1160. It has been stated in evidence that the country between the proposed line and the Northern line is difficult to travel over, and that it is difficult to construct roads, owing to the steep grades? Undoubtedly it is, in the northern part. The only access between the two main ridges upon which the railway runs, and what you may call the Dural-Kenthurst district is at Pennant Hills, and on the road from Galston to Hornsby the country is rough.

1161. Where, between the proposed line and the Northern line, is the most difficult part to be found? Between Pennant Hills and Dural. What is known as the back road, although it cuts off about 2 miles, is not much used, excepting by the people living near to it, because of the heavy gradients. The country between the road from Dural to Pennant Hills, and the main Northern line, is broken up. There are spurs of land there suitable for cultivation. The traffic on the eastern side of it would go to the Northern line, and on the other side by the road on the west. As you get further down, immediately opposite Hornsby, the country is broken and rough. You cannot get across. The only accessible way is by the road which has been made from Galston to Hornsby. A road, which is shown on the map as a straight road, zigzags for 3 miles, and that is where the whole of that traffic has to come up. It was not possible to zigzag on the western side of the creek, and, therefore, it is steeper still, and the people travel with light loads. Whilst people could carry 15 cwt. with two horses up the grade towards Hornsby, going home they could not carry more than 10 cwt.

1162. Can you say whether the fruit-growers of the district have suffered much hardship in being compelled to convey their fruit and other produce to the Northern line? There is no doubt they have, especially with the summer fruit. The rough roads and steep grades knock the summer fruit to pieces. They also necessitate a long round, and it must cost them something. I may state that Mr. Harper, in giving evidence, estimates the production of the fruit of the district at 150,000 cases per annum. I think he has very much understated it.

1163. The residents put a much higher estimate upon the production? I should think so. Personally I should multiply it by three.

1164. Do you think that, if the proposed line were constructed, the fruit-growers within a reasonable distance of it would send their fruit to market by it rather than by the Northern line? I have given you my reasons why I think they would.

1165. Are you aware that it is proposed to charge local rates on the proposed line? I can quite understand that, and the people ought to be quite able to pay them, because of the saving they will affect on the present means of transit.

1166. Do you think, notwithstanding the local rates, they would use the proposed line, if constructed, rather than continue the present system of sending their produce to the Northern line at Parramatta? I think so. Besides, it will pay them to do it. It must cost them now about 3½d. to 4d. a case from the more distant parts about Dural and Galston. The railway freight from Hornsby is 1½d. or 1¾d., and Pennant Hills or Thornleigh about 1d. Therefore, it seems to me that they would be well able to pay 3d.

1167. I suppose the fact that they would be able to get their fruit to market earlier and in better condition by the proposed line, than by carting it the distance you mention to the Northern line, is an important consideration?

consideration? Very important. In wet weather the road between Castle Hill and Dural gets into a heart-breaking condition, and carts are frequently stuck up. I have seen the horses taken out of the carts, because of the condition of the road, and the fruit left behind.

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1168. What is the condition of the roads leading to the proposed line from the outlying districts? The worst parts are between Castle Hill and Dural, on account of the shale and clay. From Pennant Hills to Castle Hill—with the exception of one little patch—there is white metal upon the road. When you get past Dural you get into harder country—into more sandstone and loam, and that is less difficult to travel over than is the clayey soil. All the out-lying roads, therefore, are fairly good.

1169. Has the district progressed materially during the last twenty years? In a most remarkable degree. I do not know of any other district which has increased in the same ratio. I am speaking more particularly of Galston, Arcadia, Kenthurst, and Glenorie. All the other portions of the district have increased more or less, but in those portions progress has been remarkable.

1170. Are the holders principally small holders? Yes.

1171. The Committee, who went through the district, noticed that there were considerable portions not yet used for fruit cultivation;—is the balance of the land not now under fruit suitable for fruit-growing? I think so, excepting well down in some of the valleys, where the country gets rough, and where you find the sandstone. The greater portion of the area still unused is, in my opinion, capable of fruit production.

1172. Do you think that if the proposed line were constructed it would have the effect of causing the land which is not now under cultivation to be put under cultivation? Yes. It would pay people a great deal better to obtain their feed for their horses and cattle from other districts, and put the ground which they at present use for grazing under fruit cultivation.

1173. Are the sites for residential purposes, to which you have referred, better than those along the Northern line to Hornsby? They have more extended views. If I were fitting out a place as a residence for a person suffering from lung trouble, I should go further out than between Castle Hill and Dural. I should go 2 miles beyond Dural towards Glenorie. Although I might miss a little of the extensive view, I should get what is more desirable—a sandy loam instead of a clay subsoil.

1174. Has there been a large increase in the number of sites which have been purchased for private residences on the Northern line as far as Hornsby? The increase has been marvellous. You get an altitude there of 500 to 600 feet in a shorter distance than along any other road from Sydney.

1175. Do you think there would be a corresponding increase in regard to residential sites on the proposed lines? Perhaps it would not be so rapid and so large, because of the distance.

1176. There would also be more trains on the Northern line? Yes.

1177. Do you think there would be much trade, apart from the fruit trade, on the proposed line? There would be the trade which arises out of it. There would be the supplies to the people living in the district. I have no doubt a great deal more manure would be used in the orchards.

1178. I believe that manure is largely used in connection with fruit-growing? Yes; and it would be more largely used were it not for the cost of getting it there.

1179. Some evidence has been given respecting the large quantities of marketable timber in the locality? Beyond Arcadia there is a very large area of Crown land. There is some good timber lying between the Northern line and the proposed terminus at Dural. There are some Crown lands there. There are Crown lands north of Arcadia and about Glenorie. Between Dural and the main Northern line there will be 1,000 acres of Crown lands upon which there is good timber. At Arcadia, on private as well as on public lands, there is splendid timber on what is known as Hall's grant.

1180. Would that be opened up if the proposed line were constructed? I have not the slightest doubt of it.

1181. Have you any further information to supply? No. I may point out that it is merely because of my knowledge of the district that I have attended to give evidence. Personally, it would be to my interest to concentrate all the traffic from the district at Hornsby, because I am a property owner there. I merely mention that to show that I am not biased in the matter.

1182. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think the importance of the district justifies the construction of the railway? I do. I think the mistake made in the past has been in holding out inducements to men to go too far away, and they have landed the State, in taking conveniences to them, in an enormous expense, and have sometimes ruined themselves, because they did not at first realise all their difficulties. If you utilise the lands in or near the seaboard you form a stepping-stone for population later on to go further out.

1183. You have stated that, in your opinion, Dural is not likely to be the terminus? My opinion is that, if the line is constructed, the Railway Commissioners will see the desirability of extending it on towards Wiseman's Ferry.

1184. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What proportion of the fruit-growers of the district have to cart their fruit more than 10 miles? I should think 80 per cent. of the growers now send their fruit to Pennant Hills and to Hornsby, and if you gave them a railway you would intercept the lot.

1185. What would you consider a fair distance to successfully cultivate fruit, from the railway? People have done it at Glenorie successfully, but after a very hard struggle, and that is distant from Parramatta 15 to 17 miles, and from Pennant Hills, 14 to 15 miles.

1186. Would you consider it a fair thing if a person could take a load in and out on the same day? Yes.

1187. Do you not think that the lines, as shown on the map, are too close to justify the construction of the line? They would be, if the country were accessible. Between the present terminus at Rosehill, and Pennant Hills, they are comparatively close together, but you are tied up to that ridge to get to the district beyond, because there are depressions between those two points which cannot carry a railway. Beyond Pennant Hills the country is of such a nature that it would be impossible to get across.

1188. You are aware that the Government have already purchased the line to Rosehill? Yes. I do not know what you are going to do with the Rosehill line unless it is continued. Although obtained very cheaply—£22,500—it will practically be of no use for earning money unless it is extended.

1189. *Chairman.*] You have indicated that there is room for extension for fruit culture in the district;—have you made any rough estimate of what extension is likely to take place owing to the construction of the line, say within a period of five or ten years? I should imagine, but I am not quite sure, that the population in the area to which I have referred, is between 4,000 and 5,000. I have not the slightest doubt that, given a railway to Dural, you may, within five years, reckon upon the population nearly doubling.

1190.

- The Hon. J. Garrard.
24 Sept., 1900.
1190. And with that the amount of cultivation as well? Yes.
1191. Is it a fact that the best patches of the good orchard country are already occupied? No; there is plenty of timbered country which has been left. It has been left in some instances to serve as break-winds, but primarily to obtain the leaves which fall, in order to feed the orchards. That is due to the difficulty of obtaining manure from Sydney. That land is just as good as the land which has been cultivated.
1192. I suppose you know that the estimate for the construction of the line is £7,000 per mile? Yes. It is not a country through which a cheap line can be taken. Its very altitude prohibits a cheap line. Therefore, I am not prepared to challenge the statement of the engineers who have worked out the cost; but I think the future will justify it.
1193. Even with the handicap of a high initial cost, you think that the possibilities of the district are sufficiently great to justify the construction of the line? I do.

Sobey Lyne Vivian, land-owner, Castle Hill, sworn, and examined:—

- S. L. Vivian.
24 Sept., 1900.
1194. *Mr. Shepherd.*] In what way are you connected with the district through which the proposed line will run? I bought property there nine years ago, and I am gradually developing it. I have a desire to live upon it and make it my home.
1195. Have you any statement to make to the Committee? I take the statistics as given to you by the President of the League in Dural as correct, knowing the men who have compiled them. I am not, however, connected with the League, nor was I asked to give evidence by it. I have found from experience that the number of cases of fruit per acre, as mentioned by Mr. Hunt and others, is well within the mark. My trees are small, and when they are older they will certainly bear a larger quantity of fruit. I have 30 acres of land, including 10 acres of orchard, all of which has been taken from the bush itself.
1196. In what portion of the district is your property? Beyond Castle Hill, at the Eight-mile post.
1197. To what station do you carry your fruit? Pennant Hills, a distance of 5 miles.
1198. Do you find that a handicap? I certainly do. I cannot get it carried to the station under 3d. a case.
1199. What do you consider a fair distance from a railway station for orchard cultivation? I can cultivate my orchard at a profit where it is; but the handicap is that I can only grow certain classes of fruit. There are many other classes which I could grow, but which at present I am unable to touch. At present I have planted out citrus trees between the summer fruit-trees, intending to do away with them as I have so poor a system of getting the summer fruits to the market. It is not because the summer fruits do not pay; but they get injured and damaged before they can be got to market.
1200. What do you consider a fair distance from a railway station to successfully cultivate an orchard? I could cultivate citrus fruits 10 or even 15 miles from a railway station, but under great difficulties. At the same time I could not cultivate summer fruits more than 2 or 3 miles away.
1201. How long have you been cultivating? I purchased the land in 1891.
1202. What is the age of your citrus trees? I have some in their seventh year.
1203. What do you estimate you get per tree? Just over a case.
1204. You find the citrus fruits pay you best? Simply on account of the carting.
1205. What number of citrus trees do you plant to the acre? 125; I put them in on what is known as the septuple principle—an equilateral triangle, instead of in squares.
1206. What is your opinion as to the proposed line being a success? I am absolutely certain it will be a success. I have spent many days and weeks in the district at various times, and I have seen an enormous amount of traffic on the road,—not only in the shape of fruit traffic but in passenger traffic,—people going out for holidays. There is an enormous population there which would be able to use the railway. I do not think the amount put down by Mr. Harper, as to the passenger estimate, is anything like what it should be. I have information which has been given to me voluntarily, showing the names of gentlemen who are prepared to develop their properties, and four of whom are prepared to take season tickets on the line. Mr. W. H. Fleming (who has an office in Hoffnung's Chambers), has 40 acres of land just beyond Dural, which has been selected from the Government under the non-residential clause. He has complied with the requirements of the Government, and is now waiting for some means of conveyance before he goes on.
1207. Are all the properties you propose to name at present uncultivated? The one to which I have referred is quite uncultivated. Five acres have been cleared, and a fence has been put round it, and a room of some sort erected.
1208. Have these people stated that they will bring their properties under cultivation if a railway is constructed? They are only anxious to do so. Mr. Mason (who is employed by W. Gardiner & Co.), has a holding on the Kenthurst Road. He is already cultivating, and he would be prepared to extend his present dwelling—he is not using it himself, only residing there occasionally, as business permits,—as well as to develop his orchard. This gentleman has already, at his own expense, imported direct from America several of the new varieties of trees. I do not know the extent of his area, but he has about 10 acres under cultivation. I think he selected so that he would not have less than 40 acres at all events. The next two are brothers—Mr. E. E. Hassall, who has 20 acres, and his brother R. M. Hassall, who has 100 acres. Mr. R. M. Hassall would be prepared to build. At present he has no residence on the property, and both would be prepared to live there and travel daily to Sydney. Both are anxious to develop their properties, but they find it would be useless unless railway communication were provided. Mr. M. H. Johnston, at present employed in the Bank of New South Wales, would be prepared to build and live on his property at Dural. His property is near to Mr. S. Moore's, and it is well within the railway influence. He would, of necessity, have to journey to Sydney every day. When the present Carlingford line was being constructed I took a house for one year at Granville, where I at present live, with the option of renewal for one, two, or three years, the stipulation being that I thought the line would be continued, and that I should be able to live on my own property. I have been there for five years, and it has not been constructed yet. That shows the purpose I had when I bought the property some years ago.
1209. Have you had conversations with a number of the residents of the district in reference to the proposed railway? Yes, when opportunities offered.

1210. A great many have stated their willingness to pay a special rate in the event of the railway being constructed;—do you fall in with that view? At the present time it costs me 3d. a case, and if the railway be constructed it will then cost me 1d. S. J. Vivian.
24 Sept., 1900.

1211. A special rate might be 2d. a case? Even in that event it would be an advantage.

1212. Do you think that the owners would be willing to give the land required for railway construction free of cost? Some might, but I think there are many poor men to whom giving the land would mean ruin. For instance—if a man has 5 or 10 acres of land, and you go through it and ruin it, it stands to reason that he must have compensation; but there are many larger holders who would be prepared to give the small percentage of land you would require from them.

1213. Are you aware whether the proposed line goes through much cultivation in its course? There is a lot of land which is simply bush land, which is not under cultivation. I do not think there is a large percentage of it under cultivation.

1214. In the event of the Government having to pay for the land, at what would you estimate the value per acre? I could scarcely venture an opinion. I bought land, as good as any you can find in Castle Hill or Dural, at £10 an acre, but I also paid £22 10s. an acre for similar land formerly.

1215. At what would you fix the average? About £15 per acre.

1216. Do you think the fruit-growers of the district, who would be served by the proposed railway, would be willing to contribute a certain amount until the line became self-supporting, so as to relieve the Government from loss? I do not think the estimate, showing a loss upon the line of £4,000 per annum, is a correct one. The imposition of an acreage tax to cover expenses would press harshly upon those who have selected, say, 50 to 70 acres, with the object of getting 20 acres of good land out of it. There is a good deal of that country upon which you can only get 20 to 45 per cent. of good land. Therefore, an acreage tax would hardly be a fair one.

1217. Do you think a special rate would be a fairer rate than a tax on the land? I do. Of course, if you impose a tax it might force some of the land held for speculative purposes—if there is any—to be brought under cultivation.

1218. Have you any further information? I desire to use more manure on my property. I do not want to use the bush leaves, which has been the usual method of fertilising the ground, as it deprives the land I hold in reserve of the nutriment I want in it. At present I cannot afford, on account of the cartage, to use as much manure as I would desire. Even 5 miles of cartage is an expensive item.

1219. Do the orchards suffer very much during droughty seasons? Not where they are well cultivated. In spite of all the dry weather last summer I lost nothing.

1220. Do you mean by well-cultivated, working the ground deeply before planting, or cultivating after the ground is planted? Both. I may state that there is a large increased growth to be had out of strawberries and tomatoes—things with which we do not even supply ourselves at the present time. In that district where we get so little frost there would, with easy transit to the city, be a large production in those articles. I also think that the poultry industry would be largely developed.

1221. Is there much waste of stone-fruit in the district? I think the waste is enormous. I, myself, have had the peaches knocked off the trees, and would not send them to market. I may state that, notwithstanding the thousands of pounds which have been spent during the last few months in making the Castle Hill to Dural road sound, it is still a big drawback. To-day I cannot go to Parramatta or Pennant Hills without crossing over unmade and unformed roads.

1222. Do you find the fruit-growers of the district a fairly prosperous class? Whenever a fruit-grower gets a chance he buys more land, clears it, and plants it. I know of one man who went through the court, not on account of his orchard, but on account of other entanglements, and the first thing he did when he was clear was to buy more land and plant it.

1223. *Mr. Hyam.*] How far is your place from the proposed railway line? One-half mile.

1224. Are you in the heavy-soil country? Yes.

1225. With a railway would you cultivate more than you are cultivating at the present time? I should be very glad to cultivate the lot.

1226. Can you produce good stone and summer fruits? Yes; I have apricots there now over an inch in size. Of course, I cannot grow summer fruits successfully without a railway.

1227. Will you, with the construction of a railway, continue the growth of summer fruits? Yes.

1228. But not without? No.

1229. Would there be a great increase in the growth of summer fruits in the district if the line were constructed? I believe that on certain portions of the land they would be grown.

1230. Do you find that the yield of summer fruits is about the same as that of the citrous fruits? I think we can grow peaches, apricots, nectarines, apples, and pears, as well as they can be grown in any district in New South Wales.

1231. *Chairman.*] Have you any further information? With regard to the question of firewood, I find that I cannot get rid of the timber on my place for firewood. It is not a question of price; but I cannot even give it away. Once I managed to sell 500 tons, which had been cut into lengths, for £20. The purchaser carted it away, and said he did not want any more, because the cartage was too great.

1232. If the railway were constructed, I believe that large quantities of timber would be cut up and sent away for firewood; it would be a great assistance to a small man to get a few pounds for his timber on the ground;—reference has been made to the construction of a tramway through the district? I am afraid a tramway would be inadequate to the requirements of the district. If the figures are correct, the 526,000 cases representing the produce of the district would give 10,000 cases a week. The bulk of it would have to be carried in eight or nine months. That means 2,000 cases, or 75 tons per day. That carried over 12 miles on a tram would hardly, I think, be a fair thing for the fruit. Apart from that, a tram is not proverbial for its speed, and I think the people would prefer to get into their own carts or sulkies, and travel the road themselves. It might do for a few of the poorer people, but certainly not for a man who has a buggy of his own. I know men who even now do not use the 'bus. If there were a railway station within a reasonable distance of their home they could dispense with a certain amount of horseflesh, and save time as well.

1233. *Mr. Watson.*] I understand that the passenger traffic is not likely to be of great moment? I do not think that the estimate of the Railway Commissioners has treated the line fairly. I do not think an estimate has been made of the season-ticket holders who will go out there.

S. L. Vivian 1234. The experience of the North Shore line, from that point of view, has not been very gratifying? I think the crossing in the ferry may, to a great extent, have militated against that line. The Dural district is away from the sea atmosphere. Personally, I could not live at Manly or Sydney, but I can do so at Dural.

24 Sept., 1900.

1235. Does the proposed line go through your property? No.

1236. Do you think it would pay you or other holders near to the route of the proposed line to make any contribution towards the cost of land resumption? I volunteered to Mr. Hunt to give £30. I spoke to the two Mr. Hassalls, and they would be prepared to give £70. On one occasion a list of those who would give was prepared. On that occasion Mr. Mason promised to give something, but what it was I do not know, and he is still prepared to give the amount offered. I do not think the resumptions should involve much cost. The land is not worth as much between Castle Hill and Dural as it is about Carlingford.

1237. We are told that it is better land? It is better land, but it is not in such close proximity to Sydney.

1238. *Mr. Hyam.*] Are you aware that the proposed line will go through two or three orchards? I cannot say.

1239. What do you think is the value of a full-bearing orchard per acre? £10, at the outside.

TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LUNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM. |

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Walter Alexander Smith, District Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

W. A. Smith. 1240. *Chairman*] Are you in charge of the Metropolitan District? Yes.

1241. I believe that the district to be served by the proposed line is a section of the Metropolitan District? Yes.

25 Sept., 1900.

1242. Have you any general statement to make concerning the nature of the roads of the district, and the amount of annual expenditure upon them? Yes. I produce the following statement, showing the scheduled roads affected by the construction of the proposed line:—

STATEMENT showing Scheduled Roads affected by the construction of proposed Railway from Rosehill to Dural.

Name of Road.	Expenditure from 1892 to 1896-7.	Expenditure from 1897-8 to 1899-1900.	Total.
Kenthurst Post Office to Porter's	£ s. d. 120 0 0	£ s. d. 81 0 0	£ s. d. 201 0 0
Galston Road to Berowra Creek	530 0 0	92 0 0	622 0 0
Galston to Dural	238 10 0	290 0 0	528 10 0
Galston to Middle Dural .....	.....	135 10 6	135 10 6
Galston to Pagan's	170 0 0	333 5 6	503 5 6
Hornsby to Galston	6,864 7 6	1,266 8 10	8,130 16 4
Mobb's Hill to Rogan's Hill	1,276 14 4	33 1 6	1,309 15 10
Pennant Hills to Mould's Corner	650 14 0	1,996 16 1	2,647 10 1
Pennant Hills Road to Beecroft Station (Murray Road)	178 2 0	133 1 9	311 3 9
Round Corner, at Dural, to Wiseman's Ferry, Old Northern Road ..	972 10 0	1,107 19 9	2,080 9 9
Parramatta to Pennant Hills Road	452 17 10	316 7 3	769 5 1
Baulkham Hills to Round Corner, at Dural	1,756 19 0	1,169 0 1	2,925 19 1
Broken Back Bridge to Pennant Hills	619 16 7	421 2 9	1,040 19 4
Castle Hill Road, at Banks', to Dural Road	110 0 0	63 0 9	173 0 9
Old Castle Hill Road to Government Reserve	105 0 0	54 0 0	159 0 0
Round Corner, at Dural, to Rouse Hill	525 0 0	276 0 0	801 0 0
Rouse Hill and Dural Road via Kenthurst, at Fisher's	422 0 0	246 0 0	668 0 0
Cattai Creek, at Pearce's, to Great Northern Road, at Black's	110 0 0	190 0 0	300 0 0
Castle Hill Hall to Banks', late Old Northern Road, to Government Reserve	101 0 0	86 17 6	187 17 6
Aitken Lane .....	.....	43 13 4	43 13 4
David's Road .....	.....	43 0 0	43 0 0
Pearce's Corner to Pennant Hills	306 15 0	630 6 8	937 1 8
Ray's Road, Carlingford	98 5 8	299 6 2	397 11 10
Schedule A II.			
Parramatta to Pennant Hills	330 0 0	199 6 10	529 6 10
Battingen Lane	176 0 0	85 6 8	261 6 1
£	16,114 11 11	9,592 11 11	25,707 3 10

1243. Out of the total amount, the Galston to Hornsby Road is put down at £8,000? Yes.

1244. Does that £8,000 represent a certain annual expenditure, or has a large sum of money been spent in making the road recently? The original construction of the road—that is simply the formation of the line of road—cost about £5,400. That includes the two bridges and the road.

1245. Is that out of the £8,000? Yes, and the rest has been for maintenance and metalling.

1246. Does the return you have put in include the money recently spent on the road to Dural? Yes.

1247. Which of the roads do you find requires the largest annual output to keep in order? What is called the New Line Road is a very bad road. The North Road from Baulkham Hills to Castle Hill is a very

very expensive road to keep up; and the Hornsby to Galston Road has also been very expensive. Of W. A. Smith. course the cost of maintaining that road is now less expensive, because the metalling has been completed.

1248. Will the construction of the proposed railway ease your department in the way of annual expenditure? I do not think it will very much. ^{25 Sept., 1900.}

1249. Do you think it will lead to the necessity for the construction of more short roads to the stations along the railway? Yes, I think it will. Assuming that it opens up the country, certainly more accommodation roads will be required amongst the various farms.

1250. What length of experience have you had in the use of white metal for road making in that district? With a break of four years, I have had thirteen year's experience.

1251. Do you look upon it as a superior article for road construction? Yes, for second-class roads—not for very heavily trafficked roads.

1252. It is suitable for the character of the traffic which is common to that district? Yes. It would not suit the Main Western Road or the Main Southern Road, but it is suitable for all the roads in the Pennant Hills and Castle Hills district.

1253. Is it a costly metal to work? No, it is rather easy to work.

1254. How would you compare it with blue metal? I should say it is worth about 70 to 80 per cent. of the value of blue metal.

1255. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Does it last as long as blue metal? No; not under similar conditions.

1256. I mean for an ordinary road? No; under similar conditions it would not last anything like blue metal.

1257. Does it wear out or crumble? It does not crumble; it wears very well indeed. Probably Members of the Committee will have noticed it around Sydney, in the vicinity of La Perouse. As it wears down, each stone seems to keep in its true position, and it wears to the very bottom without breaking up. You see upon the road little sections of individual stones which have been put down, and they wear flat and smooth.

1258. Can it be obtained in the district? Yes, since we have found a new quarry.

1259. Do you think it would be used for road purposes outside the district? I think that would depend very much upon whether blue metal came more freely into the market than it does at the present time. At present blue metal is very expensive, and there is really only one source of supply for Sydney.

1260. Could the white metal be obtained from that district for other suburbs as cheaply, or more cheaply, than blue metal can be obtained now? Yes; I should say 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. a yard cheaper.

1261. Are large quantities of it available? Yes, very large.

1262. If the proposed line were constructed, do you think it would be used for conveying this metal to other parts? I do not think so, unless a loop line were constructed to the quarry.

1263. How far is the quarry from the proposed line? About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

1264. Is it between the proposed line and the Northern line? Yes.

1265. How far is it from the Northern line? A very long distance. Hornsby would be the nearest place.

1266. What distance is that? Four or 5 miles, and there is no road across.

1267. Has any of the metal from the quarry you are speaking of been conveyed to any other part for road-making, by the Northern line? No, it has not been used outside the immediate district.

1268. Have you a personal knowledge of the district through which the roads you have enumerated pass? Yes.

1269. Evidence has been given concerning the country between the proposed line and the Northern line, and it has been stated that it is very difficult for road-making, owing to steep grades? That is so. The country is rather mountainous between the two lines all the way along. Much of it is very rough and useless.

1270. It has also been stated that, even on the existing roads, a full load cannot be drawn in the direction of the Northern line from some place along the proposed line? I do not think that is so, except in the case of a few very unimportant roads in the vicinity of Castle Hill. There are rather steep roads leading from the orchards to the main roads; but as far as the main roads are concerned, horses can draw heavy loads.

1271. Where is the main road to which you refer? In the vicinity of Castle Hill. The steep grades are on the road from Baukham Hills to Dural.

1272. I am speaking more particularly of the roads between the proposed line, and the Northern line, along which the fruit-growers have now to send their produce? The grades are very good on the existing road, excepting at Thompson's corner, near Pennant Hills. That is rather steep. Apart from that, there are no other steep hills about the main roads.

1273. What is the condition of the road from Galston towards Hornsby? In perfect order. The grades are rather steep between Galston and Berowra Creek, but in that instance the loads would be going downhill to the railway station. As soon as you begin to ascend from Berowra Creek to Hornsby, the ruling grade, which is an up grade, is 1 in 15. When carts return they are generally empty, or are carrying manure only. In one place the grade is 1 in 10.

1274. Do you think that if any one stated that only half a load of fruit can usually be carried towards Hornsby, that he would represent the true condition of the road? No. A horse can draw a ton easily up a grade of 1 in 15, and the fruit-growers at Galston and surrounding districts who bring their stuff to Hornsby have a ruling grade of 1 in 15 up hill. Down the hill they have a grade of 1 in 10, which of course does not matter.

1275. What sort of a road is it? It is metalled from end to end.

1276. Would you class it as a good road? Yes.

1277. Are there any other cross roads leading to the northern line between the Galston and Hornsby Road and the road from Castle Hills to Pennant Hills? No, there are no roads of any importance about there.

1278. Would it be difficult to construct roads there if they were required? Yes, the country is very precipitous about there. From the top of the ascent to Berowra Creek there is a fall of 700 ft, and the same on the other side.

1279. *Mr. Hyam.*] In how many miles? About 2 miles.

1280. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you mean 2 miles in a direct line? No, along the road. As the crow flies it will only be $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile.

1281. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Then the Dural people have to send their produce in a very round-about way to reach the railway station by the existing road? Yes. They come to Pennant Hills *via* New Line Road.

- W. A. Smith. 1282. If a road could be constructed from Dural to Hornsby, would there not be a great saving in distance? It is very rough country, and it would be very expensive.
- 25 Sept., 1900. 1283. Is road metal expensive? Not so expensive now that we have the white metal at Dural. Previous to our finding that white metal we had to get blue metal, which is very expensive.
1284. Have you sufficient material locally for the construction of bridges and culverts? In connection with bridge building we usually get the best timber from Wyong. For instance, Radley's Creek and Greek Creek bridges were built with timber obtained from Wyong.
1285. It has been stated in evidence that very valuable timber for piles and girders can be obtained near to where the proposed railway will run;—have you any experience of its quality? Yes; the timber is very good, but I think the district is one of the past, so far as timber is concerned.
1286. Do you think that the best of the timber has been picked out? Yes, except on a few private properties, and I do not think the owners allow it to be cut. Those properties, however, are comparatively small. I do not think much of the country, so far as the timber industry is concerned.
1287. Would the timber be sufficiently good for railway sleepers? It is principally black-butt, and it is about the best black-butt I have ever had to deal with; but I do not think there is enough of it to place much importance upon it.
1288. Do you think there would be any considerable traffic in timber in the event of the railway being constructed? I do not think so. If the timber were there, it would be drawn now to Pennant Hills, Hornsby, or Parramatta.
1289. Has much of it been drawn in those directions in the past? Not in my time; but I understand that prior to—from twenty-five to thirty years ago—the timber trade was very extensive.
1290. *Mr. Hyam.*] What does the white metal consist of? Vitrified sandstone.
1291. Is it porphyritic? No; it is simply the stone which has been fused around the basalt dykes, where the basalt has intruded into the ordinary sandstone. Wherever there is white metal there is supposed to be basalt in the vicinity.
1292. Do you consider it a good road-metal? It is a first-class road-metal.
1293. Do you consider it as good as blue metal? No; but for all second-class roads it is very good.
1294. How is it fractured? It is very tough and hard to break.
1295. Does it wear round? No. It settles down very hard indeed in the road, and the surface wears perfectly smooth and flat.
1296. Does not basalt wear well? Not if it is not looked after and properly maintained.
1297. Are you aware that there is a basalt quarry some distance from Dural? Yes, on Mr. Black's land.
1298. Do you know the quarry? I have seen it, and I know where it is.
1299. Evidence has been given to the effect that there is a great deal of basalt about there? Yes; but it is rather inaccessible at the present time. I believe it is 4 or 5 miles from the road.
1300. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you any idea of the quantity of cultivated land the proposed line passes through? If you take the Dural end of it—assuming that there is a station at Dural—it will serve, approximately, 1,500 acres of cultivated land.
1301. What I want to know is the area of cultivated land through which the railway, if constructed, would pass? I am unable to state.
1302. Does it pass through any? I should imagine it does in certain places; but I am not quite sure.
1303. What is the distance from Hornsby to Galston by the road? Six miles.

Oswald Gordon Morton, Road Superintendent, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

- O. G. Morton. 1304. *Chairman.*] I believe you have made a report to the Department respecting the white metal quarries in the Dural district? Yes; also in regard to a basalt quarry. The report is as follows:—
- 25 Sept., 1900.

Dural Metal Quarries.

Parramatta, 18 September, 1900.

I have to report that I visited and examined, on the 17th instant, the metal quarries in the vicinity of Dural, from which stone is likely to be obtained, and conveyed by the proposed Dural railway extension for the repair of roads in the county of Cumberland.

At present only one quarry is being worked, and that is situated at a point about 1 mile 30 chains east of surveyed line at Dural. This quarry is on Crown lands, and from which, when existing works have been completed, there will have been removed some 4,500 cubic yards of what is known as "vitrified sandstone," or "white metal." This quantity will make no material impression on the quarry, which covers, as at present worked, about 1 acre of ground, and there is in sight at least one half-million tons of stone. It is capable of further development, when twice that quantity could be obtained if necessary.

Should a loop line be constructed to the quarry—and there are no engineering difficulties in the way, the country being all practically level—I anticipate that a large quantity of this metal would be conveyed annually over the line for the repair of roads through the Western suburbs and other roads in the Metropolitan and Parramatta districts.

The cost of quarrying this stone I estimate at 1s. 2d. per cubic yard; conveyance by rail at similar rates to those in existence on the Great Western Railway, viz., 1s. 6d. for the first 15 miles; loading and unloading in trucks, 6d.—would bring the cost at Clyde junction to 3s. 2d. for spawls; the breaking, drawing, spreading, &c., would increase the cost to about 6s. 9d. or 7s. per cubic yard, and it would, for roads other than the heavily-trafficked main roads, be extensively used. Basalt is now principally used, and is costing this year from 11s. to 12s. 9d. per cubic yard. The supply is limited to two sources, namely, the South Coast Metal Co's quarries at Kiama and the Fmu Gravel Co. at Peurith. The Department has no basalt quarry which could be profitably worked in the county of Cumberland, and this Dural quarry, being on Crown lands, would, I think, make us, to a certain extent, independent of private supplies in metalling second-class roads, although I do not think the stone would be used for roads outside the county of Cumberland.

I also examined the stone at what is known as Black's quarry. It is of a basaltic formation, but has never been worked; but from what is in sight I should judge a good quarry, covering between 1 and 1½ acres, is to be worked. It is, however, 5 miles from the nearest point of the railway, and this distance renders it of no value for any other than local works.

I have, &c.,

O. G. MORTON,
Road Superintendent.

1305. Is the white metal likely to be used for anything but the making of second-class roads. I think not.
1306. Is the Railway Department likely to require it? I think not.
1307. Do you know what is the grade of the road from the quarry near Glenorie towards Dural? It is a rising gradient. I think the ruling grade is 1 in 15.
1308. What is the grade from Glenorie to Dural? The road is a gradually rising one.

1309. Would a road coming from Glenorie be on the down grade? Yes; nearly all the way. O. G. Morton.
1310. What is the cost of breaking up the white metal as compared with the blue metal? The cost of breaking varies, according to the labour market, from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 9d. per cubic yard. Basalt varies from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 9d. per cubic yard. 25 Sept., 1900.
1311. Do you look upon the basalt quarry as one which the proposed line is likely to develop? No, it is too far away. It means haulage by road for 5 miles.
1312. The Railway Commissioners at present obtain broken blue metal, by rail, from the south? Yes, cheaper than they could get it from the Dural district. I have obtained a metal supply from Kiama to Liverpool for 10s. 9d. per cubic yard. That was conveyed by steamer to Sydney, and thence to Liverpool by rail.
1313. Is there any other basalt quarry besides the one at Black's? Yes, there is another about midway—what is known as the Pennant Hills quarry. That was reported upon by Mr. Smith in connection with the former inquiry.
1314. Is that likely to be developed by the construction of the proposed line? I look upon that quarry as being fully developed now. It is rather an expensive quarry to work. The white metal, I think, will take its place. At present it is leased to the Municipal Council, and they charge 2s. 7d. for the spawls, which is rather a high price. In fact it cannot compete now against the Emu or Kiama quarries.
1315. You do not regard the white metal as a metal which is likely to be used outside the district? If the line were there it would be used as far up as Liverpool. By second-class roads, I mean roads other than the main roads, such as the Great Western and Great Southern roads. It would be extensively used, I think, in all the minor streets of the western suburbs, starting, for instance, at Strathfield, and going through Auburn, Granville, and Rookwood.
1316. Then we may reasonably expect some traffic upon the line from the white metal? I think so. At present they are confined to using the soft sandstone and the basalt, and the white stone would come in between the two.
1317. Mr. Hyam.] You say that the Railway Commissioners get the bulk of their metal for railway purposes from Illawarra? I could not say, authoritatively. They have their own quarries there, and machinery for breaking and screening.
1318. Under those circumstances, it is not likely that they would patronise the local metal? I think not. I do not think it is hard enough for railway works.
1319. You do not think that it would answer for ballasting a railway line? No.
1320. Supposing the line were constructed to Glenorie, would Black's quarry be accessible? Yes.
1321. Close to the railway line? Yes.
1322. How far distant from the railway line would it be? I think it would be within 30 chains.
1323. Do you consider Black's quarry a good one? Yes.
1324. Is there a large bulk of stone there? Yes.
1325. Is there much earth upon the top of it? No; it is right up to the surface.
1326. Have you seen the Prospect quarries? Yes.
1327. Is it anything like them? No; you could remove a foot of soil, and then you would be upon the metal.
1328. Has the quarry been proved to any depth? I have seen it down to a depth of 4 feet, and I think it would go down 15 to 20 feet.

FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Broughton Barnabas O'Connor, Esq., M.P., sworn, and examined:—

1329. Mr. McFarlane.] You represent the electoral district of Sherbrook? Yes.
1330. Have you a knowledge of the district through which the proposed line will pass? Yes; I have an intimate acquaintance with the whole of it. I have known the district for the last thirteen years. B. B. O'Connor, Esq., M.P. 28 Sept., 1900.
1331. How would you describe the character of the country generally? The district through which the railway will pass is of an undulating character in some places. The grades are steep; but there would be no serious obstacle to railway construction. The quality and productiveness of the soil is quite apparent to those who visit the district. It is of such a character that small holdings of 10 to 14 acres are quite sufficient to supply a man with a competency, and a very good competency too. The only difficulty which stands in the way of a man going there and taking up a small quantity of land for an orchard is the difficulty of transporting his produce to a convenient railway station. For instance, a man must cart his produce from Kellyville to Parramatta, a distance of 10 miles.
1332. Dr. Garran.] How far to Pennant Hills? He would have to come from Baulkham Hills, and then go to Castle Hill, in order to go to Pennant Hills.
1333. Would he have to come as far south? Yes, as far south as Baulkham Hills, because that would be the only good road he would have. The other roads are of such a character that it would be impossible for him to take his fruit the other way. Although, according to the map, one district may be close to another, by reason of the character of the intervening country, it is impossible to get at it. If a man did not come to Baulkham Hills, he would have to come down within 1 or 2 miles of the place, and cut across into Castle Hill, and he could not do that in bad weather. That is the important factor in determining the question of the necessity of the railway to this district. The main portion of the citrus fruit is gathered from June and July right up to November.
1334. Do you know where the trigonometrical board is at Castle Hill? Yes.

1335.

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1335. Is it not a good road from there to Pennant Hills? Yes; but you would have to go down through Kellyville to get there. The gradient from Baulkham Hills to Parramatta is a down gradient. Going the other way he would have to toil up steep hills all the way, and even if it should be shorter—although I do not think it is—he would never think of going that way, by reason of the difficulty of travelling the intervening country. The district from Glenhaven to Kellyville, and further west, is quite of recent growth. A tremendously large settlement has taken place there. The orchards are of quite as good a character as the orchards between Carlingford and Dural. They are quite as productive and quite as profitable.
1336. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Would that hold good in regard to Galston? Undoubtedly. The whole of the country between Carlingford and beyond Galston, right to the Hawkesbury River, is cultivated. The only thing which militates against the increased production of the district is the fact that a man has to carry his produce such a long distance. A man at Kenthurst has to carry his fruit to Pennant Hills. To bring a ton of fruit from Kenthurst to Pennant Hills you require two horses.
1337. During the thirteen years you have been in the district has there been any marked increase in its development? Undoubtedly. Speaking generally, Glenorie, Galston, Kenthurst, Kellyville, and the intermediate districts, are the growth of that period. It is only seven years since Galston was refused a postal delivery for three days a week, unless the people guaranteed the loss upon it. Now the profits of the Postal Department amount to £50 or £100 per annum. The whole of these districts, right away to Arcadia, are entirely new country which has been opened up. When Central Cumberland was one electorate the furthest point north to which a politician would go to speak was Dural. He would speak in Dural for the whole of the district north, east, and west of it. Now a politician would speak in six or seven places, and would get an audience of from sixty to seventy people in each place. Kenthurst is a thickly-settled district, with small farms. The character of the settlement around Kellyville is characteristic of the settlement around Galston, Kenthurst, Glenorie, and Arcadia. Arcadia is producing passion-fruit which is topping the market. The producers have to carry their stuff from Arcadia right away to Hornsby. The Roads Department had such an opinion of that district that they constructed a road—they had to make it zigzag—from Hornsby to Galston, and it cost them from £12,000 to £15,000.
1338. What class of country is it for road-making between the proposed line and the districts you have mentioned and the Northern line over which the fruit-growers have to carry their fruit to the railway station? The steepness of the grades, and the large amount of soil, makes it necessary to expend a tremendous amount upon the construction of roads. It is necessary to make them of metal, in order to enable people to travel over them. Between Castle Hill and Dural and to the north traffic was suspended whilst the Department were making the road to which I have referred. The Pennant Hills Road is of such a character that in wet weather you cannot get along it, and when the road is dry you require two horses to do the work of one.
1339. Is there a road between the Galston and Hornsby Road and the Dural Road? No; the country is of such a difficult nature that it would be impossible to construct one except at an enormous outlay of money, and that is the only possible way the Kenthurst people have of getting out. They must either go to Pennant Hills or to Hornsby.
1340. Some of the fruit-growers have stated that it frequently happens that they can only take half a load towards the railway station? That is so—in other words, they require two horses to a one-horse load.
1341. Can you state what percentage of land is under cultivation for fruit-growing within the influence of the proposed line? No; but I saw the statistics compiled, and I know they were accurately and honestly taken.
1342. Is there not a large area which is not being utilised for fruit-growing? Yes. The quantity of land not under cultivation largely exceeds the amount under cultivation.
1343. Is the land which is not under cultivation suitable for fruit-growing? Yes. The only thing which has hampered the extension of the industry is the difficulty of transport.
1344. Do you think the construction of the proposed line would cause the whole of the land to be utilised for agricultural purposes? Every bit of it. Strange to say, that particular belt of country between Carlingford and Dural, or between Dural and Kellyville, or between Dural and Galston, is of such a fertile character, and so suited to the growing of fruit, that I do not think there would be 20 acres which would not be cultivated. It is the same class of country from beginning to end.
1345. How far to the North and North-west would the proposed line serve, if constructed? It would serve Kenthurst right out to the Cattai Creek. It would serve about 5 miles beyond Glenorie, that I know of. I know of people who immediately the line is constructed will go in for orcharding, 5 miles on the other side of Glenorie.
1346. Do you think that the fact of the proposed line, if constructed, being in close proximity to the Northern line, will have the effect of diverting a lot of the traffic which now goes to the Northern line? It is a case of "needs must where the devil drives." The only way a man has of getting out is that way. A man at the present time is absolutely debarred from getting manure for his orchard; it is too costly for him. The down gradients of the roads are towards the station. No attention is paid to the grades coming from the station. For instance, anyone who has been over the road between Hornsby and Galston, knows that they get down from Galston to the Berowra Creek by means of a zigzag. They get out of the creek to Hornsby in a similar way. You can understand that if a man takes a lot of fruit from Arcadia, his horse is not fit to bring back manure, the up-grades being so steep.
1347. Is a large quantity of manure used by the fruit-growers? Yes, and more would be used if it could be obtained more cheaply. I live at Fairfield, on the Southern line. A large number of tanyards are there. The lime and hair are valuable to the fruit-growers. They have endeavoured to obtain this at a certain price, but were unable to do so. They are unable to go above that price, because the cost of bringing it from Pennant Hills or Hornsby is so great. Therefore, valuable as that manure is, they are forced to have some other kind, or do without.
1348. Are you aware that if the line were constructed local rates would be charged? Yes.
1349. Do you think the fruit-growers generally would be willing to pay a local rate? I am sure they would; it would be cheaper for them to do so. Another element which has to be taken into consideration is this: There are, at present, men who sometimes go out with their fruit at 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning, and do not get back till 8 and 9 o'clock at night. That means about eighteen hours, whereas if
the

- the railway were constructed it would only mean four or five hours. It is only reasonable to suppose that they would be willing to pay a local rate, as it would mean such a lot in the matter of time.
1350. They would be able to get their fruit to market more quickly? Yes.
1351. I suppose that is an important consideration? Yes, especially when the market is up.
1352. What is your opinion of the country along the proposed line for residential purposes? I am of opinion that it would become the favourite suburb of Sydney. It is a magnificent situation: it possesses magnificent views, extending in many places for miles. You can look right down the valley of the Parramatta, across to Prospect Reservoir, and to Windsor. In fact, at Dural, on a clear morning, you can see the houses at Windsor. I would live in the district myself if the railway were constructed. All the people I know, who have visited the district, state that it is the most lovely they have ever been in. Along the Northern line numerous residences have sprung up; and the surroundings of that district are not to be compared with those of the Dural district. People would not hesitate to reside in the Dural district if it came to a choice between the Northern line and the Dural district.
1353. I presume there is a better train service on the Northern line than there will be on the proposed line? But in the first instance there was a very bad service on the Northern line. It was only after repeated pressure had been brought to bear that the Commissioners gave anything like a decent service, and that only in the morning and evening. One objection is that after you get out of the train you have to cross the water.
1354. Do you think that within a reasonable time after the construction of the line, the passenger traffic will be an important item? The general opinion of business people, such as auctioneers and others whom I have consulted is, that if the line is constructed the settlement and development of the country will follow, and that it will be the most favourable district for residential property in and around Sydney. That is the opinion of the auctioneers of Parramatta.
1355. Do you think the construction of the proposed line will assist in making the line from Clyde to Carlingford, which the Government have purchased, a paying one? I do. I cannot understand, bargain or no bargain, why the line between Rosehill and Carlingford was ever purchased, if it was not intended to carry it on to Dural.
1356. I suppose you are aware that the cost of the proposed line, per mile, is rather high? Yes; and it came as a surprise to myself, and to a good number of people who are interested in the line. I have consulted a man who is a large contractor, and he said to me,—“I only hope that the construction of the line is thrown open for public competition. I am prepared to build the line for hundreds of pounds per mile less than the estimate, and I should then make a large sum of money out of it.” That is the opinion of a man who is a very large contractor.
1357. Is there a large area of Crown lands within the influence of the proposed line? Yes; on the other side of Glenorie. There is a large amount of Crown lands in and around Arcadia.
1358. Are they suitable for settlement or residential purposes? I know a man named Frater, who is building a large hotel to the west of Arcadia. That is a private speculation. There are some magnificent sites there. A man named Clegg is erecting a large house on the point overlooking Berowra Creek. Mr. Chillcott, a prominent commercial man, has also gone to Arcadia, and has spent a large amount of money. A man named Barnett, an hotel-keeper, of Woollahra, has expended £5,000 in the cultivation of fruit at Arcadia.
1359. There is a considerable discrepancy between the estimate of the Traffic Superintendent and of the residents in regard to the number of fruit-cases sent to market;—do you think the railway estimate is a low one? I know that Mr. Hunt and Mr. Fagan, who made up the estimates, are above reproach in a matter of this character. I would be quite content to believe that theirs would be a truer estimate than that of the Railway Department.
1360. They base their calculation at 100 cases per acre of fruit-bearing land;—do you think that would be a fair estimate? If Mr. Hunt or Mr. Fagan gave an estimate as to the productiveness of an acre for orchard, I am sure it would be absolutely correct. I would be content to pin my faith to their estimate.
1361. Is there any other matter to which you desire to draw attention? I think that if the line is built it will soon prove its value to the country, from a financial point of view. The development of the district would be extraordinary. That statement is borne out by the development which has taken place without a railway during the last two or three years.
1362. Do you think that the country north of Dural is of such a character that if the proposed line were made its further extension would be warranted? Yes; the line is bound to go north towards Glenorie.
1363. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think that the district around Glenorie and further out is a good one for invalids? I have been told by a Sydney doctor that the Arcadia and Dural districts are better than the Blue Mountains for invalids.
1364. Are those districts out of the influence of the sea air? Yes.
1365. You state that if the line is constructed it will, in your opinion, eventually be extended? Unquestionably. Originally it was intended that the Northern line should go in the direction in which the proposed line will be extended.
1366. Do you know the country from Glenorie for a distance further out than 5 miles? No; but people tell me it is just as good land as that around Glenorie.
1367. Do you know what sort of timber is to be found about Arcadia, and north of Glenorie? It is either box or ironbark. The turpentine timber is to be found there. There is any amount of timber between Dural and Kenthurst, and on the west of Dural.
1368. In your visits to the district have you noticed whether there are any neglected orchards—take Kenthurst and Kellyville, for instance? There are no neglected orchards here. There are any amount of young orchards, which are continually being added to year by year.
1369. You have stated that if you had facilities for reaching the district you would live there;—do you know of many other people who would do the same? Yes; because of its magnificent climate.
1370. Do you think the importance of the district warrants the construction of the proposed line? Yes.
1371. *Dr. Garran.*] The remarkable characteristic of this district for the last ten years seems to have been the extension of orchards on land previously neglected;—is there much equally good land still remaining? Yes. As soon as you pass Dural there is an immense amount of land suitable for orchards. There is also an immense amount of land suitable for orchards around Castle Hill.
1372. It is sandstone country, scored with gullies? Yes.

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1373. Is the cultivatable land on the ridges, the slopes, or in the valleys? It is all cultivatable until you get towards Hornsby. Of course, you cannot get into the gullies there, but as you go towards Hornsby the quality of the land begins to decrease until you get to Berowra Creek. From Berowra Creek to Hornsby you could not cultivate. It is rocky, precipitous country.
1374. Is there much Winamatta shale left on the flat tops? Yes.
1375. In the older country that class of ground was principally picked upon for growing orchards? Yes; by reason of the perfect system of drainage.
1376. In the country beyond is the soil too dry? No. The old idea in regard to orchard property was that you must get on to Winamatta shale? Towards Arcadia there is a shale which is entirely different from that around Dural and Kenthurst, but yet it is of such a nature that it is producing even better fruit than that produced upon the Winamattas shale.
1377. Some years ago great damage was done to the trees, many of which died, and the explanation was that the wet season had been too much for them in that clayey country;—is the new country which has been taken up likely to rot them in a wet season? No; it is a peculiar class of country. It is like sand interspersed with a large amount of this peculiar kind of soil. It is a self-draining soil; there is no clay in it.
1378. Is it self-draining in a dry season? No.
1379. During the last ten years have they had a fair test of dry and wet seasons? Yes; during the last five years they have had a greater test of dry than of wet seasons.
1380. I can understand that this country would stand a wet test very well; but has it stood a dry test? It has stood it magnificently.
1381. Better than the old clay-topped ridges? Yes.
1382. Going along the railway from the junction, northwards to the Hawkesbury River, the country seems to be very sandstone? Yes; between Hornsby and Berowra Creek the country is useless.
1383. If the market for citrus fruits keeps good, is the quality and the quantity of the land sufficient to give a promising outlet? Unquestionably. I do not know of any industry in which a man—given, of course, a knowledge of it—would be more likely to succeed.
1384. Is it not a fact that in the majority of cases in which people having business in Sydney, have endeavoured to manage an orchard with hired labour, the result has been failure? That is so.
1385. It requires a man to reside on the property? Yes.
1386. And to have learned his experience? Yes.
1387. It is not a business for everybody? No; a man cannot say, "I will plant a tree and get a crop from it." I know of plenty of men who, disregarding the experience of those who have resided there, have failed in the industry.
1388. The soil in the district of which we have been speaking is quite different soil from that in the Seven Hills district? Yes; of course you get the Winamatta shale about Seven Hills.
1389. Has the Seven Hills country been more successful than the old Parramatta country? No; I should say that the best fruit in the citrus family is grown around Galston, Glenorie, Kellyville, and Kenthurst, on quite new ground. They get the best prices in the market, and the fruit hangs longer on the trees.
1390. You say that the sandstone stuff which was formerly condemned is now coming into popularity? It is.
1391. In the top soil in the sandstone country, is no trace left of the Winamatta shale, or is it only reducing in quantity? It is reducing in quantity.
1392. The North Road to Wiseman's Ferry is about the worst specimen of sandstone country you have? From the Northern line to the Berowra Creek is very bad country. On the Wiseman's Ferry Road there is no bad country whatever, right up to Glenorie.
1393. The worst part, then, is along the route to the ferry? Yes.
1394. And the country along the old Wiseman's Ferry Road will, you think, be found to be cultivatable? Undoubtedly.
1395. Between the Dural country and the Hawkesbury River, due west, there is a lot of country around Cattai Creek;—is that too clayey to work? No; I know men who are out there now and who are doing well.
1396. Would the construction of the proposed line assist the cultivation of land in that district? It would.
1397. If that country were taken up and proved productive, in which direction would the Dural line have to be extended to accommodate it? The only extension of the line would be due north to Glenorie, and on to Wiseman's Ferry.
1398. Not more to the west? No; it should go straight ahead, and it would divide the cultivatable area.
1399. You think, according to the present lookout, that, given a sufficient amount of transit, there is a possibility of the extension of the citrus fruit-growing business in the northern part of the county of Cumberland? I am sure of it. If the line is constructed you will see it almost immediately.
1400. *Mr. Hyam.*] Of summer fruits as well? Yes.
1401. *Dr. Garran.*] It is very easy to prove that this may be a nice district for orchards; but what we have to look at is the painfully practical "£.s.d." part of the business,—what can you say that would encourage us to think that the proposed line would pay? The greatest proof I have is the prosperity of those who are engaged there at the present moment.
1402. Which are the most struggling parts of the district? Kenthurst, Glenorie, Galston, and Arcadia.
1403. Galston has a pretty good road now? Yes; but it is a zigzag to the Berowra Creek, and also to Hornsby.
1404. A man would require to put on an extra horse? That sometimes means a large amount to a small man. The people in that district drive the best heavy horses I have seen, and give £20 to £25 each for them.
1405. How long does it take a man to get from Galston to the station and back with a load of fruit? Two and a-half to three hours. Galston, of course, is the nearest point to Hornsby.
1406. Is there any good orange-growing country between Galston and Hornsby? No. As soon as you start to descend the zigzag the orchard property ceases.
1407. That is rather a long distance without good soil? No; it is merely a gully. From Galston to Hornsby,

Hornsby, as the crow flies, it is no great distance. The people cultivate right up to the ridge where it descends to the Berowra Creek.

1408. I am merely drawing attention to the large area of non-productive ground the road goes through? Yes; and that road was constructed at an enormous expense to the State to get these people an outlet.

1409. If there had been a railway to Dural you could have had a shorter route to it? Yes.

1410. And you might have had more cultivatable land on the route? Yes. If the railway had been constructed years ago the saving to the country in the money which has been expended on the roads would have been a tremendous item.

1411. Have you ever tried to ascertain what quantity of oranges can be produced within a 10-mile radius of Dural in order to make a line pay? No. All I can say is that if a railway is constructed I am satisfied that the whole of the land about Dural will be put under cultivation. A man who has an orchard has now to employ a man for a great portion of the year to do nothing else but cart his fruit a distance of from 10 to 15 miles, and he has to use two horses to do one horse's work. That, of course, naturally tends to restrict the amount of land under cultivation.

1412. Do you know whether anyone has endeavoured to ascertain what will be the actual area of fruit-growing land within a radius of 10 miles of Dural if the proposed line is built? I do not know that anyone has.

1413. Allowing six years for the trees to mature, what will be the probable growth of oranges at the end of that period? That is too big a problem for me to deal with.

1414. I want to know the area which would be actually under cultivation if the railway were constructed? Between Dural and Glenorie it is impossible to find 10 acres of land which could not be used in an orchard.

1415. Within 10 miles of the road on each side? I would not go to that extent.

1416. *Mr. Hyam.*] Would you go 3 miles on each side? I would go that on the east, and further on the west.

1417. *Dr. Garran.*] With regard to the west, we had interesting evidence from Dr. Purser, who showed that for climatic purposes the Dural district is superior, on account of it being screened from the damp, chill north-easters by the trees;—of course, the more you cultivate the country the more you will take that screen away? That seems to follow as a natural consequence.

1418. It is always understood that orange trees do not like a strong wind; they like to be screened by a belt of trees;—of course, the timber belt of trees may be taken away at any time? That is a rock upon which they all split. For instance, one man will say that with westerly winds the orchards will not be so good. At Kellyville, however, there are no trees at all. From Rouse Hill to Windsor there are no trees which can have any appreciable effect upon the climate. The Kellyville fruit, however, reaches the highest price in the market.

1419. Which is supposed to be the worst wind for orange trees? A westerly wind.

1420. I suppose that the question of sheltering fruit-trees by belts of timber trees has not taken much hold of the people? Of course, the pressing necessity has not arisen.

1421. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you ever lived in the district? No, but I will do so if there is a railway there.

1422. What do you consider is a fair distance for a man to cart his fruit to enable him to carry on an orchard successfully? As soon as he goes over 5 miles I do not think he has a fair chance of making it a success.

1423. A good many of the orchards are not more than that from railway stations? Kellyville, Kenthurst, Glenorie, Galston, Arcadia, and Dural are over 5 miles away.

1424. Do you think that the land which is not under cultivation is equal to that which is under cultivation? It is identically similar.

1425. Is it not usual to pick out the eyes of a country? I admit that. The reason why a large amount of land is not under cultivation is because whole families have held tremendous tracts of country, and have only cultivated certain spots. Land which at one time was disregarded, and was thought nothing of, has been found to be magnificent country, and has been cultivated.

1426. Are there still many large holders of land there? No.

1427. Do you think those who do hold considerable portions would be likely to cultivate any portion of their land themselves, or let it out? I think the demand for land would increase so much that they would sell to small holders. Of course, a large portion of the land was taken up as residential and non-residential selections around Kenthurst, Glenorie, and Arcadia. A lot of those selections, unfortunately, were non-residential.

1428. Do you not think that a weak point in connection with the proposed line is the fact that it runs so closely to the Northern line? No, because of the difficulties which exist in getting to the Northern line. Whilst you are close to it in point of distance, you are a long way from it in point of time.

1429. I believe that at one point it is only a mile from the Northern line? Yes; but as you advance it becomes more divergent.

1430. But even the furthest point is under 5 miles? Yes; but it would be impossible to get across there.

1431. So that a good deal of the country within easy distance of the line is useless for cultivation? That is so.

1432. There appear to be a good many orchards in the district which have been thrown out of cultivation, can you account for that? Yes; the cultivation of the orange has been made so difficult. I know a doctor who wanted to go to Dural. First he had to go from Parramatta to Hornsby; then across the good road between Hornsby and Galston, approaching Dural from that end. Many men have been ruined by reason of the fact that on account of wet weather and bad roads they have been unable to take any part of their crop to market.

1433. Have any of the orchards been neglected because the owners could not get their fruit to the railway? Yes; in addition, they have been unable to obtain manure. They were compelled to allow the orchards to keep on eating up what nature provided, and then they were unable to put in artificial manure. The result was that the trees had to go.

1434. You say that you consider the estimated cost of the construction of the line excessive? Yes, in view of the information I have obtained from a large contractor.

1435. Do you not think that people are often in the habit of talking big about these things? I do not think

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B.B. O'Connor, Esq., M.P. think there is a solitary instance where the railway authorities have estimated a line at so many thousand pounds per mile, and have then afterwards reduced it by thousands of pounds per mile.

28 Sept., 1900. 1436. Is it not a fact that the estimates are generally under rather than over the mark? No; I would not say that. I think the experience is that the Government get their work done for less than they anticipate.

1437. The annual expenditure on the line will be over £4,000, and the annual income over £1,000? One man—Mr. Hunt—authorised me to say that he would guarantee to contribute to the revenue of the Colony £100 per year.

1438. Do you think that the line is likely to be self-supporting within a reasonable time? Yes, I honestly believe it will. I believe that any man who visits the district will be so struck with it that he will reside there if he can. Anyone who knows anything about fruit-growing would select it for fruit-growing. The country only wants to be seen to be appreciated.

1439. Are you personally aware whether a large number of the fruit-growers are willing to pay a special rate? Yes; they are prepared to do that until the line becomes self-supporting.

1440. You have stated that the purchase of the Rosehill-Carlingford line is not likely to be a good thing for the State unless it is extended:—will you tell us how the land between Carlingford and Rosehill compares with the land between Carlingford and Dural for fruit-cultivation? The Rosehill-Carlingford section is not likely to earn much to the State by the growing of fruit.

1441. Can you offer any opinion as to whether the Kellyville traffic would come to the proposed line, or whether it would go to Parramatta? It would come to the proposed line. I believe it is proposed to construct a tram from Parramatta to Baulkham Hills. I find, however, that it is not intended to carry fruit upon it.

1442. That being out of the way you think the Kellyville traffic is certain to come to the Dural line? It must do so.

Stephen Edward Perdriau, Surveyor, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

S.J. Perdriau. 1443. *Chairman.*] You produce a map showing the details of Crown lands in the district which will be served by the proposed railway? Yes; the map shows the Crown and reserved lands. Near Baulkham Hills is a patch of Crown lands 780 acres in extent. The land from Kenthurst to Maroota, which is not yet alienated, is generally of a uniform character, and not attractive for settlement. There is a very small portion of Crown lands not yet alienated likely to be cultivatable.

TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

John Harper, Chief Traffic Manager, Department of Railways, sworn, and further examined:—

J. Harper. 1444. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Some of the fruit-growers who have given evidence, estimate the fruit production per annum at a much higher amount than that mentioned in your statement;—you stated that the amount was 150,000 cases per year? My estimate was arrived at by obtaining the actual number of cases of fruit which had been carried from all parts of the district.

1445. Could there be any possibility of any fruit going in some other direction than that from which you obtained your information? No; the returns were obtained at the stations from which the fruit would go—Hornsby, Thornleigh, and Parramatta. Those are the three points which fruit from that district would reach. It will be observed that I have allowed for 150,000 cases to be carried on the line, out of a total of 250,000 cases which were carried from the whole of the district, including points which would not be affected by the line. It will also be observed that I credited that fruit at 1d. per case; whereas, as a matter of fact, if the rates are charged which, no doubt we shall have to charge if the line is constructed, they will be, as I have stated, 1½d. and 1¾d. per case: that is to say, ¼d. and ½d. upon each case of fruit, instead of 1d., as mentioned. Therefore, even assuming that you double the amount of carriage, the estimate will not be exceeded.

1446. Would any fruit go by steamer? Yes; but that would not affect the proposed line,—that is really between Carlingford and the river. If you look at my evidence in connection with the Rosehill to Carlingford line, you will see that I pointed out the quantity of fruit which went by the river; and if you double the estimate the effect will be precisely the same.

1447. Mr. Hunt stated that 526,000 cases would be the total production of the district? I may say that Mr. Hunt gave me a great deal of information. He allowed me access to his books. A great deal of that fruit finds its way by river and by road. Mr. Hunt embraced too large an area altogether as the trafficable area of the proposed line. I took the precaution to have the actual number of cases of fruit sent by rail taken out of our books.

1448. He based his estimate in this way: He stated that the total number of acres of fruit-bearing trees was 5,260;—he estimated that 100 trees went to an acre, and that there would be a case of fruit from each tree? That is absolutely an estimate. My information was as to the actual number of cases booked at the various stations, and that I obtained from the official books. Again, the district was very liberally treated, inasmuch as I estimated that 150,000 cases of fruit would be carried by rail out of the 250,000 cases which are carried altogether from the whole of the district. I allowed 1d. per case for these, instead of 1½d. and 1¾d., which would be the normal rate, over and above the existing main line rate.

1449. Evidence was also given with regard to the country between Dural and the Hawkesbury River, and it was stated that the development of fruit-growing was rapidly increasing? As a matter of fact, the

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the carriage of 100,000 cases of fruit at the increased rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per case would only mean an extra £108 a year to the railways. If they were carried at $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. per case it would mean an extra £216 a year. It would thus take a good many hundreds of thousands of cases of fruit to pull up the estimate.

1450. It has been stated that a very large area suitable for growing purposes exist, and that it would be put under cultivation if there were facilities for sending the fruit to market? I have no doubt that such areas would be found, but, as I have already indicated to the Committee, in view, to my mind, of the necessity of railway extension to undeveloped and more distant parts of the country, I do not think this is a line which has any pressing claims. I may also mention that this is a line which is, more or less, a rival line. I may instance the Belmore line, upon which we are losing to the extent of £7,000 a year. When that line was under consideration all kinds of things were hoped and promised of it.

1451. Is not that a line which depends solely on passengers? Yes; but the promise was there. In one case fruit was promised, and in the other case passengers were promised; and if you get passengers who travel regularly you make more profit out of them than out of fruit.

1452. It is difficult to guarantee passengers, and it may be more easy to guarantee fruit? Yes; but if you guarantee fruit traffic you still have the figures I have quoted before you. Each additional 100,000 cases of fruit carried at $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. per case, instead of at 1d. per case, would mean an additional revenue of only £216.

1453. Do you think the country beyond Dural is of such a character as to warrant the extension of the line, if constructed, further on, to meet the requirements of the fruit-growing industry? I should not think that the circumstances of the Colony will warrant the extension of the line in country of that character for fruit-growing purposes.

1454. One of the arguments used by nearly the whole of the fruit-growers who have advocated the construction of the proposed line, is that the country between the proposed line and the Northern line is very difficult to traverse, owing to its steep grades? Yes; but there is a good road from Galston into Thornleigh. No doubt the roads of the district would be improved if they were regraded.

1455. Would that be a costly matter? I should not think so. As a matter of fact, I am firmly convinced that the roads of the district should be improved; but when it comes to the question of constructing and maintaining a railway line it is a very different thing.

1456. Evidence has been given to the effect that the proposed line would help to make the newly-purchased line from Clyde to Carlingford pay? I do not think it would, if you added the capital cost and the working expenses of the other line to it.

1457. Would the Rosehill and Carlingford line be likely to pay without further extension? As a matter of fact, by far the most profitable portion of that line, if not now, in the near future, will be to the river; and I think that that weighed with the Commissioners—I know that it weighed with me personally—in suggesting its acquisition, the object being to obtain connection with the river and with the manufacturing industries which have been, or will be, established there, together with the traffic to the Rosehill racecourse.

1458. The fruit-growers have also stated that there will be considerable traffic for fruit-growers if railway facilities are afforded them;—they state that the cost of maintaining manure almost prohibits them obtaining the supplies they require? I have allowed a good margin for that. I think I have allowed £1,000 to cover it.

1459. The witnesses stated that half a ton per acre was required every year? Our experience in that direction is this: The main Northern line, which practically runs into a fruit-growing district, does not carry much manure upon it.

1460. It is also stated that there would be considerable traffic in the future upon the proposed railway in the conveyance of horse-feed? That is a very poor item. As far as the carriage over the 9 miles of railway is concerned, it would repay us something like 6d. a ton. It would require a good deal of that carriage to make the line pay.

1461. Particulars have been given as to the probable quantity of chaff which would be consumed in the district? I think the estimate I have given is fairly liberal enough to meet the traffic.

1462. Your opinion is that the estimate of 526,000 cases as the yield of the district is excessive? It is, in view of our experience. I am not giving you our experience as orchardists, but our experience as carriers of fruit.

1463. Then you think, from the information you have received, that the estimate you have given represents the amount of fruit which would be carried? The impression I have gained from our books is that my estimate will cover the revenue from that source. As I have stated, the margin which has been allowed is of such a character that even if the trade did increase by 100,000 cases per annum, it would only mean a difference of £108 or £216, according to the distance over which the fruit is carried.

1464. A number of the witnesses were very hopeful that there would be a large increase of population in the district, and that a large number of people would use the district for residential purposes, the result being that there would be a good deal of traffic with Sydney? To-day we have Hornsby and the North Coast line, with a very frequent train service, and the population certainly has not increased in the way in which it was anticipated. As a matter of fact, it has increased very slightly. We are asked to believe that a branch line, such as this, or with a correspondingly small train service, would offer attractions greater than those on the existing Northern line. As far as a residential population is concerned, we have largely to rely upon those who have their businesses in town. We have not a very large leisured class who can afford to reside at a distance; and our experience on the Northern line, as I have stated, has not been favourable.

1465. Do you consider that a similar class of country to that through which the proposed line would pass? A great deal of it is. I do not do think there is much difference in the elevation of Hornsby or Pennant Hills.

1466. Has not the line from North Shore to Hornsby had the effect of taking population into that district? Decidedly; but look at the difference in the two lines. That is practically a suburban line, with a maximum distance of 13 miles to Hornsby Junction. The average distance over which the population travel is only about half that distance, to Chatswood. That is a material difference compared with a line distant 27 miles from Sydney. We have not found a residential population of any great extent, excepting those who are engaged in their avocations on the spot, going to Penrith, Campbelltown, or anywhere on the main Southern line. Liverpool, a distance of 22 miles, is about the limit from which we have any large number of people travelling to and from their business, and that is on the main line. The disadvantage

- J. Harper. of the proposed line from a residential point of view, would be the fact of its being a branch line, and with no dense population which would justify a frequent train service.
- 2 Oct., 1900. 1467. What is the distance from Sydney to Dural? Twenty-seven miles.
1468. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you been over the country from Galston to Hornsby? Yes.
1469. Did you take much notice of the country about Galston? There is very good orchard country about there.
1470. Did you notice a good deal of scrub and ironstone? Yes; but in this part of the country you find good orchard land under so many varying conditions.
1471. I suppose that one great object of the construction of the line is to bring into use the line from Roschill to Carlingford;—I suppose that that line is almost a dead letter? No; we should have a certain amount of traffic between Carlingford and Parramatta and Sydney. There is a larger population settled in that neighbourhood—that is, the population is comparatively more dense than it is at Dural. Then it has the advantage of being so much closer to town.
1472. I notice that your estimate of the probable revenue is the same as it was two years ago? Two years ago I gave an estimated rate per case of one penny. During those two years, our experience in regard to promises which have been made to pay additional rates in certain places has been such that I look upon them with very grave doubt. Even assuming that you doubled the estimate of 150,000 cases—and I am quite sure that the production has not been doubled—and charged the normal rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per case, it would practically amount to the same thing.
1473. I suppose you are aware that an almost unanimous expression of opinion has been given to the effect that the fruit-growers are willing to pay a special rate? Yes; but our experience is that when people make promises of that kind as soon as the line has been opened two or three months they want trains run at mail-rate speed, and precisely the same rates charged as those which they would pay on the main line. The proposed line will run absolutely parallel with the Northern line, upon which fruit would be carried at a lower rate than upon the other.
1474. The residents of the districts are clamouring for the proposed line, and if they are willing and promise to contribute a special rate, do you not think that it is fair that they should pay it until the line becomes self-supporting? But they cannot bind themselves. If we sought to impose the special rate, no doubt a large number of them would use the main line. We could not prevent them doing that if they wished to do it. If it meant to them a difference of 1d. per case in carriage, that is undoubtedly what they would do.
1475. Then you do not pay much attention to the expression of their willingness to pay a special rate? No; we have had such extraordinary experiences in connection with matters of that kind. It is no exaggeration for me to say that I have known, within three months of the opening of a line, the Commissioners approached and requested to charge through rates instead of local rates. Again, after it has been stated that a 12 miles an hour service would be all they required, and they have been allowed a 15 miles an hour service, they have agitated, within twelve months, for a 20 miles an hour service.
1476. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you seen the evidence of the fruit-growers? No.
1477. Do you know whether it would be possible to make a cheaper line? I should not think so. In a country of that character, a strong, well-built line would be required.
1478. You do not think there is any hope in that direction? I do not think so. If they contoured the line, so as to follow the ravines, it would not be as useful; therefore, I do not think it is possible to make it cheaper.
1479. *Chairman.*] Do you know the Kellyville district? Yes.
1480. Is not that a thriving district? Yes; it is one of the most thriving places in the district.
1481. *Mr. Hunt*, in making an estimate from which traffic would be drawn, omitted Kellyville? My estimate includes Kellyville. My estimate was made up from the actual number of cases carried by rail.
1482. The fact that *Mr. Hunt* omitted to include Kellyville seemed to indicate that he had exercised a certain amount of care in making his estimate? I am convinced of that. I went through the figures with him, and derived a good deal of information from the books he had. His was an estimate of the number of cases of fruit produced; my figures represented the actual number of cases received at the railway stations.
1483. The fruit-growers who gave evidence were pretty well agreed as to the number of cases of fruit which could be obtained from each tree, and stated that it would not pay them to grow anything less? Even if 520,000 cases of fruit were produced, the whole of it would not come upon the proposed line.
1484. To what other line would it go? To the main line at Pennant Hills, or at Hornsby. It is an open question whether some of the Galston fruit would not do so under any circumstances.
1485. The witnesses allow that some of the Galston fruit would go along the Pennant Hills Road;—they say, however, that the road from Galston to Hornsby is of a very heavy grade, and that there is no chance of improving it, so that there is no possibility of fruit going there? I think that if there were a difference of 1d. per case in the freight the grade would not stop them.
1486. I put the question to several of those who are residing there whether a difference in freight of 2d. per case would induce them to go to the main line, and they said that it would not be a sufficient inducement if there were a line at Dural;—they stated that from Galston to Dural they could, on the down grade, make two or three trips per day, whereas, in the other case, it would take them the whole of the day and part of the night to make one trip? That is not our experience.
1487. This question and answer is typical of the evidence we obtained:—
- Do you think the residents of the district would be satisfied to pay a special rate? The matter was discussed at a meeting of the Railway League representing the whole of the district, and it was unanimously decided that the growers could afford to pay a charge of 3d. per case from Dural to Sydney.
- If that rate could be maintained, do you think the line would come close to being a profitable one? No; as a matter of fact, it could not be maintained. I do not see how the Commissioners could possibly make a rate of that character when they are charging a rate of one-third that amount on a line within a few miles of the one under consideration.

William Edwin Tunks, clerk, Land Valuation Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1488. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you any statement to make with reference to the value of the land in the district through which the proposed line will pass? I inspected the land through which the line will pass, and assuming that a strip $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains wide, and including sites for two stations—20 chains x 5 chains, and 25 chains x 5 chains—is taken, there will be affected twenty-nine blocks of orchard lands. Out of that we take 54 acres; thirty-two blocks cleared, 56 acres; six blocks unimproved, 14 acres; making a total area of 124 acres to be occupied by the line, including the stations, and that I estimate is worth £5,950. There are some buildings on the land. Four buildings I estimate at £550; severance at £3,000; forced sale, £650; and the cost of transfers and conveyances, £550. That will make a total of £10,700. I deduct, under the 24th clause of the Public Works Act, £2,700 for betterment, and that would leave a balance of £8,000.
1489. That would include the whole of the land taken up by railway stations and everything else, as far as Dural? Yes, and including the station at Dural.
1490. Does that include any land under cultivation? Yes; twenty-nine blocks of orchard land.
1491. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you mean orchard lands or orchards? I should have said actual orchards.
1492. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose you have estimated the value of the crop which is on the ground? Yes; it is principally citrus and stone fruit.
1493. Your estimate includes the whole valuation to Dural? Yes; over the whole of the 9 miles.
1494. How did you arrive at a conclusion as to the value of the orchard land? From my knowledge of orchard property. I was reared on a fruit farm, and I possess one at the present time myself. I know exactly what they cost, and I know what they are selling for in the district, and what the people are asking for them. If anything, my valuation errs on the side of liberality.
1495. You have been engaged in the fruit industry yourself? Yes. At present I hold an orchard and work it, but not in that district.
1496. Are you acquainted with the whole of the district to be served by the proposed railway? I am acquainted with the southern end of it.
1497. Do you consider that the land which has not been brought under cultivation is equal to that which is under cultivation, or have the best portions been picked out? I think the best portions have been picked out; but I consider the residuo of a very good character for orchards. Mr. Godby's farm, at Sandhurst, has produced fruit equal to any in the district, and that on very poor land; it was very stony and sandy. Of course, plenty of manure was used, and the quality of the fruit was excellent. It was superior to anything in the district.
1498. Can you form any rough estimate as to the quality of land in the district which would be likely to be brought under cultivation? I should say that three-fourths of it would be fit for cultivation.
1499. Can you offer any opinion in regard to the country beyond Dural? I know about 5 miles of the country on either side of the proposed line, and I think that three-fourths of it will be fit for cultivation.
1500. *Mr. Hyam.*] How long have you been in the Government Service? I have been connected with the Land Valuation Branch for the last twenty years.
1501. What value do you put upon an acre of orchard land in full bearing? It is variously estimated from £50 to £100.
1502. How do you grade them? According to the quality. Some are in good condition, and have been well cared for, and are first-class orchards.
1503. Do you estimate £100 an acre for a good orchard in full bearing? That would be a fair thing for a citrus orchard in first-class order.
1504. What sort of an orchard would it be that you would value at £50 an acre? One which bears evidence of neglect, and would consequently require time and money to restore it to first-class condition.

WEDNESDAY, 3 OCTOBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HEBBERT HYAM.	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Frank Farnell, formerly M.P. for Ryde, sworn, and examined:—

1505. *Mr. Watson.*] I believe you were formerly a Member of the Legislative Assembly? Yes; I represented Ryde. F. Farnell.
1506. Are you well acquainted with the district through which the proposed line will pass? Yes. 3 Oct., 1900.
1507. Do you desire to make a statement to the Committee? I have a knowledge of the district extending over a period of thirty-five years, and I have watched its growth from the time I was 3 years of age. The districts which the line will touch were, of course, not settled in the early period of the time I have mentioned, and it is only during the last ten or fifteen years that noticeable development has taken place. This question is one which has not alone agitated the minds of the residents of Castle Hill and Dural, and the district beyond, but it has also been considered over and over again by the several Governments. Indeed, I may say that the line had every possibility of being constructed when I was representing Central Cumberland, about 1891, and it was only the simple fact of a diversity of opinion existing as to the route the proposed line should take that precluded the proposal being submitted to Parliament in the shape of a Bill. At that time it had every prospect of being favourably considered by the existing Government, and I have no doubt there would have been sufficient evidence adduced before the Committee to warrant them in recommending Parliament to pass the necessary Bill authorising its construction. The obstacle which was placed in the way was that which inevitably occurs in connection with all proposals of this character—that is, people submitting rival routes. Proposals were submitted to construct a line from Westmead to Dural; another one was proposed as an extension from Rosehill—that is the project under consideration—and another proposal was to run a branch from the Northern line, starting

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starting from Pennant Hills, the objective point in all these cases being Dural. Since that period developments have taken place which, to my mind, clearly prove beyond doubt the necessity for giving the residents and settlers the facilities afforded by railway communication. It has, I believe, been asserted by the railway authorities, that the line will not be a profitable one. In my official capacity as a member of the Public Works Committee some time ago I had to consider the evidence which was brought forward. It may appear to the members of the Committee that I was somewhat biased or prejudiced because of the views I have just expressed; at the same time nothing will turn me from the opinion at which I arrived some years ago, and which I hold to-day, namely, that the progress of these districts is being materially retarded owing to the want of proper railway facilities being given. The products of these districts are of a perishable character, and they require as little handling as possible. The people who resided there twenty years ago were prepared to carry on their operations in the old groove, and, consequently, it was an expensive thing for them to plant orchards and get their produce conveyed to market. Since the Northern line has been opened up facilities have been given to growers—more particularly about Dural—to get their produce to market in a more speedy way. Still those facilities are far from satisfactory. They are somewhat hampered in their operations by the fact of not having the best of roads. Although one or two main roads may be in a fair condition the branch roads or feeders are not in such a condition as to offer encouragement to people to place further areas under cultivation. I have seen these districts develop from settlements of three or four people. Take, for instance, the Kenthurst and Glenorie districts. I have known the time when there were only two or three residences there. There are now some hundreds there. One of the features which mark the progress of a district is to be found in the establishment of Public Schools. In the districts to be served by the proposed railway there are now no less than eight or nine Public Schools where, I suppose, ten years ago, only one existed. That appears to me to be a sure sign of the improvement and settlement of the district. The people are anxious to increase their holdings, and to put increased areas under cultivation. The output from the district is very considerable, but the people are hampered on account of the want of proper roads and facilities for getting perishable fruit to the market. I am satisfied that if railway communication were given they would be able to use a great deal more fertilisers than they use at the present time. The haulage is very costly indeed, and, of course, the time taken up has to be considered. If they could get their manures more speedily, they could utilise the time otherwise occupied in attending to their orchards. One point which has struck me very forcibly is that when the railway officials were giving evidence they referred to the probable receipts of the proposed railway if constructed. I have come to the conclusion that they have under-estimated the value of the products and of the freight which would accrue to the line. I must admit that in Mr. Harper the Railway Department has a splendid officer, and one who has had a great deal of experience; but in this instance I hardly think he has gone closely or searchingly enough into the industries which are applicable to the district. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the prospective freight of the line will be doubled within a very short period. I speak from a knowledge of the people of the district, who seem to be inclined even to be saddled with an extra rate—a local or special rate—if it is thought desirable by Parliament to incorporate such a provision in a Bill authorising the construction of the line. They are so anxious to obtain the convenience of a railway that they are prepared to pay—and it will be a saving to them—from 1d. to 2d. per case more, as a local rate, towards making up any deficiency. I have not the slightest doubt that the Crown lands which are available beyond Dural will be readily taken up, and that the available timber reserves and forests will be utilised to a very great extent. It seems to me that the district is one which can command sympathy, not only from the fact of the settlers cultivating the soil and producing, but also from the fact that it can be made into a great sanatorium. The district is one of the most healthy in the Colony, and it is within the suburban area prescribed by the Railway Commissioners. I have not the slightest doubt that residential areas would be taken up, and that there would be a great deal of settlement under that heading. One feature in connection with the proposal which has struck me as worthy of consideration is that as the Government have already taken up the Rosehill to Carlingford railway, it seems to be natural that the line should be extended. Of course we know the conditions under which that line has been acquired. They have been very favourable; but even though it may be supposed that there would be a slight loss in connection with the project, I look upon it in this way: That the prospective development is sufficient to justify the construction of the line, even though there may be an annual loss for a short period. The main line must gain by the traffic which will be taken over it from the proposed line.

1508. The chief point of objection at present seems to be the fact that the proposed line would go close to the existing Northern line at one or two places, and at no point would be further than 5 or 6 miles from it;—do you think there is a reasonable chance of both lines attracting a fair amount of traffic if the proposed line is constructed? Yes. I think the Northern line will return a certain amount of traffic which it gets at the present time from the Dural, Glenorie, Kenthurst, and Galston districts; but a great deal of the traffic which goes to the Northern line at present will come within the influence of the proposed line. At the same time, with the increased production, the loss, otherwise credited to the Northern line, would be made up by the extra carriage of products. I would point out that the nearest point of a railway from Dural is Hornsby, and that is 10 miles distant by road. Galston, I think, is about the same distance from a railway station. The line certainly runs a little near to Beecroft and Pennant Hills.

1509. There is, I believe, a good road between those two points? Yes; but as a matter of fact not a great deal of fruit is sent from that district.

1510. What distance is it by road from Dural to Pennant Hills railway station, on the Northern line? Eight or 9 miles, and they have very bad roads to go over. All the district lying to the west and north-west of Castle Hill and Dural, as well as the district north, would be served.

1511. What do you regard as the maximum distance which it would pay a man to cart fruit? They were compelled to carry it to Parramatta in the old days.

1512. Under present conditions, prices, and yields, how far from a railway would a man be justified in commencing fruit-culture, assuming the land to be good enough? He should not be more than 10 miles away. That means 10 miles there and back, or a day's labour in going to and from a railway station.

1513. The Commissioners' estimate is that the annual expenditure on the line will be £1,800, irrespective of land resumption, and that the income will be £1,000 per annum; that estimate is based on a charge of 1d. per case upon 150,000 cases;—the local estimate is 500,000 cases at 2d. per case;—do you know sufficient of the district to be able to say which of those estimates is nearer the mark? I would

would be inclined to say that, if the railway were constructed, it would mean an output in production, in no time, of 300,000 cases. F. Farnell.
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1514. Even if 2d. per case is charged on 300,000 cases, unless there are other large items of revenue, it would not mean that the line would be a paying one;—then you would leave out of account any subtraction from the revenue of the Northern line? The Northern line, as a Northern line, would lose the traffic, but the railway system, as a whole, would not lose it. If I thought for a moment that the traffic of the Northern line would be interfered with to any considerable extent I would not advocate the proposed line. It is more particularly the districts beyond which require serving, not the districts within a mile or two of the Northern line. The objective point right through has been Dural. I think the promoters of the private line looked for the traffic they were going to get beyond Dural rather than between Pennant Hills and Rydalmere.

1515. Do you think it would pay the people of the district to make any contribution towards the cost of land resumption or the maintenance of the line? I have always opposed such a thing being incorporated in any Bill. I look upon it as imposing a state of things which is exceptional, and I have thought that if a line could be charged with it—that is, by the imposition of an extra rate—the people would be prepared to pay it in that way, whereas they would probably not be prepared to purchase the necessary land. Of course, the land can be secured pretty cheaply now.

1516. Might not the imposition of a higher or special rate on the proposed line have the effect of causing people to continue to send their goods to the Northern line? No. The tremendous advantage which would be obtained from the facilities which would be afforded would compensate them over and over again. They would never go to the Northern line, because fruit is a commodity which requires very gentle handling, and the less handling the better. It is not likely that they would carry it an extra mile if they could afford it. They would rather pay an extra rate than carry it an extra mile. If the proposed line is constructed they will be able to pick their fruit in the afternoon and to send it away at night. At present they have to pick it in the afternoon and to send it away the next day. It is probably sixteen or seventeen hours on the journey before it reaches the market, and then it is, perhaps, kept for a few hours in the market.

1517. Unless there is some system of guarantee or contribution by the local landowners, do you think it is practicable, from a financial standpoint, to build lines so closely together, even in Central Cumberland? This project stands in a somewhat different position from any other proposal, because one section has already been taken over. It is a question as to whether it is more economical to extend the existing line than to start one which would not run parallel, say, from Westmead. It appears to me, looking at the matter from all points of view, that the present-proposal is the more economical of the two. It has always been my opinion that the proposed line will serve the people better, and that it will also serve a greater district.

1518. *Dr. Garran.*] Were you born in the Ryde district? Yes.

1519. And I suppose you could see orange-trees from every window of the house in which you lived? Yes.

1520. The orange-growers, in those days, took their produce to the river to send it to Sydney by steamer or carted it to Parramatta or Sydney? Yes.

1521. Were those the only methods of carriage they adopted? Yes.

1522. Do you recollect when the orange-growers first obtained the benefit of railway communication? The first occasion was when the Northern line was constructed.

1523. Was it not when the Western line went to Seven Hills? Yes; that was when the fruit-growers first obtained the benefit of railway communication.

1524. Do you know whether that railway communication greatly stimulated orange-culture in the Seven Hills district? I think it did.

1525. Did not orange-culture exist before the railway was constructed? Yes; but I think larger areas were cultivated, and it induced greater settlement.

1526. Could you say whether it doubled the settlement? No.

1527. I want to ascertain the definite influence produced by a railway the first time it was brought to bear upon the citrus business;—you think an impetus was given? Yes, I am certain of it.

1528. The second occasion was when the Northern railway was constructed? Yes.

1529. Taking the district from the water's edge on the northern side of Parramatta River right up to the junction, has there been much increase in orange cultivation since the line was opened? Yes; all the districts I have mentioned have come within the influence.

1530. But has there been a large increase of cultivation? Yes; and of settlement.

1531. Do you think the citrus cultivation has doubled? Yes.

1532. Has it more than doubled? I could safely say it has doubled. New orangeries have been planted within 4 or 5 miles of the line.

1533. Has it given a help to the orangeries further out? It has done that as well.

1534. What would be most likely to strike a person now in going up the line—the increase of residential houses, or the increase in orangeries? If he went into the districts of Dural, Kenthurst, Galston, and Glenorie, he would be surprised at the great cultivation. I might state that a great many of the districts which originally comprised orchards has been cut up for residential purposes. Take, for instance, Beecroft, and round about Pennant Hills and Hornsby. The people there have found it more profitable to sell their land at from £300 to £400 an acre than to cultivate it.

1535. Its value for house-building was too much for people to keep the land under orange-trees? Yes.

1536. Is that the only reason why it went out of cultivation? Yes.

1537. And, of course, new land has since been taken further back? Yes.

1538. Looking at what the influence of the two railways has been, do you think there is anything to justify us in saying that a line from Carlingford to Dural would greatly stimulate orange cultivation? I am sure it would.

1539. Then you advocate the line, not merely in order to help those who are already cultivating, but because you think a great deal more land will be brought under cultivation? Yes.

1540. I understand you to say that you do not anticipate that the line will obtain much traffic between Carlingford and Pennant Hills, inasmuch as it runs close to the Northern line? That is so.

1541. And it would only help the people lying between that part and the Baulkham Hills Road? Yes.

1542.

- F. Farnell.
3 Oct., 1900.
1542. Is not that pretty well taken up? Yes. There are some hundreds of acres of Government lands available there which, no doubt, if the line was constructed, would realise a very good price. It does not pay a man to give a heavy price for land if he intends to be an orchardist.
1543. Would not the land from Carlingford and Pennant Hills and the Baulkham Hills Road be too valuable for residential purposes to make it worth while going to the expense of planting an orchard? I have no doubt that would happen.
1544. If that is so, we cannot expect too much additional cultivation between the proposed line and the Baulkham Hills Road? No; I think that district would be more residential.
1545. Then the effect of the line on citrus cultivation would begin at Castle Hill? Yes.
1546. And would go on from there to Dural, and further still, if the line were extended? Yes.
1547. So that only about two-thirds of the proposed line will act directly in stimulating fresh cultivation? Yes.
1548. The settlers who are already in the district beyond Dural commenced their orchard work simply with the accommodation afforded by road and the existing railway? Yes.
1549. They have faced all the difficulties upon the assumption that they might not obtain anything better than that for years to come? But during the last two or three years they have been led to believe that the proposed railway was likely to be constructed. No doubt that has acted as a stimulant.
1550. What I mean is, that they have laid out their money and labour with only the existing accommodation? Yes.
1551. Do you think we have reached the limit of orange cultivation in that district, having regard only to the existing accommodation? Speaking personally, I would not care to go out any further.
1552. How far would you like to be from the river or railway if you were growing fruit? Not more than 10 miles.
1553. Are there any orangeries now which are more than 10 miles from Dural? No doubt there are.
1554. Even before the road was made from Galston, they used to come round to Pennant Hills? Yes.
1555. How far is that? About 10 miles from the centre of Dural.
1556. Do you know of many orange-growers who are at the present time more than 10 or 12 miles from a railway? Yes; there are orange-growers who are 16 miles away—out towards Galston, and the other side of Kenthurst.
1557. I suppose they obtained the land cheaply, in the first instance? Some of them did.
1558. Do you anticipate, to the west of Dural, and between that and the Cattai Creek country, any development of orange cultivation? Yes; I think there will be a development there, although the whole of the land is not of one character. There is some inferior land; but whatever areas are available for settlement will, no doubt, be taken up immediately there is any prospect of the line being constructed.
1559. You admit that there will be a loss on the line at first? Yes.
1560. Looking at the matter, not from the local, but from the legislative point of view, how much loss do you think would be justifiable? I am not in a position to be able to estimate what would be the probable traffic. I am satisfied that the estimate of the railway authorities is only one-half of what it should be.
1561. Supposing that their estimate is right, and that we shall lose £4,000 per year upon the railway in stimulating further development, do you think it would be worth while for the country to bear that loss? Yes, I do.
1562. You would not care to face the maximum loss which the Railway Department estimates? No—that is for a year or two. I contend that it will be wiped off within a reasonable time.
1563. In five years? Yes. I should say that there could be no harm in risking a loss of £20,000 in five years. Ultimately the return would recoup the whole of it.
1564. Do you think the construction of the line would lead to fresh *bona fide* settlement? Yes.
1565. And the settlement of orchardists is a good kind of settlement? Yes.
1566. As a rule, they are able to live comfortably, and to bring up their families decently? Yes.
1567. Do you think there is any danger of the fruit trade being rapidly overdone? I think not. I think that under Federation we are going to have an increase in the produce of the Colony generally.
1568. Still the neighbourhood of Parramatta is not the only place in which we can grow oranges? I am aware of that; but it is one of the best of places.
1569. Do you think the trade will be over-stimulated in other parts? I think not.
1570. You know how easy it is to glut a colonial market? Yes. I might tell you, however, that the fruit-growers have been labouring under serious difficulties for years, on account of the serious restrictions laid upon trade by the other Colonies—I refer to restrictions as to the import of fruit.
1571. That is only within the last two or three years? For many years they have been met with all sorts of obstacles by the other colonial Governments. Of course, they will disappear with Federation.
1572. Every Government will have the control of its own imports as far as disease is concerned? But not as far as the imposition of duties is concerned.
1573. Do you know the country north of Dural? Yes.
1574. Do you think that, if the line were constructed, and it proved to be fairly satisfactory, there would be a reasonable prospect hereafter of its further extension? No; I think it will go almost to its limit when it goes to Dural.
1575. You look upon Dural as the terminus? Yes. I think 10 miles beyond Dural would embrace the area which would really be suitable for cultivation purposes.
1576. Some of the witnesses have stated that there are pieces of good land all the way to Wiseman's Ferry? There are patches of it; but it would not pay to go beyond Dural.
1577. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are you thoroughly acquainted with the whole of the country as far as Wiseman's Ferry? Yes.
1578. Does the country seem to be suitable for orange-growing all the way out? Not all the way out. The country round about Dural, and to the north of it for 8 or 10 miles, seems to be peculiarly suitable, but further on it is patchy.
1579. What about Galston? That is a most suitable place for orange-growing; there is no better in the district.
1580. Is there not a good deal of scrubby and ironstone land there? It is thickly timbered, and there is a good deal of scrub.
1581. You say that there are a large number of Public Schools in the district? Yes.

1582. Do the people seem to be fairly well off and prosperous? They are a very industrious set of people. They are a people who live, one might say, as a community by themselves, inasmuch as they do not allow any means to exist whereby their earnings may be frittered away. They do not allow any public-houses in the district. F. Farnell.
8 Oct., 1900.

1583. A good many of the settlers have complained that their fruit is damaged in carrying it to market;—is that a fact? Yes, it is. I have seen it over and over again. I have seen hundreds of cases sent away, not one of which has landed sound.

1584. Is that not due to the fact that they allow the fruit to get too ripe? No. They have to pull it the day before they send it away. It occupies them a day to get it to the nearest railway station, and then there is the train journey. Of course, you know that a few hours will affect fruit.

1585. Does that remark apply to citrus fruits? No; not so much as it does to stone-fruits.

1586. Supposing that 10 miles is a fair distance from a railway to enable a person to cultivate an orchard, do you think that the construction of the line would be justified, in view of the fact that it would run parallel to another railway? They are not exactly parallel, although they are parallel at certain points. There would be a certain portion of the traffic now within the influence of the Northern railway which would come to the proposed railway. Of course, no one can contend for a moment that the Northern line will not be robbed, to a certain extent, of the present traffic. I hold, however, that it is necessary, in the interests of the fruit-growing industry, that the residents of this district should be given railway facilities, in order that the general public may obtain the citrus and stone fruits in as good a condition as possible, and also in order that the fruit-growers may obtain a fair return for their products.

1587. The Northern line and the proposed line will not be more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles apart at the widest portion? As the crow flies, they will be 5 miles apart, and from $9\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 miles apart by road.

1588. Is there much good land on the eastern side of the proposed line? Very little. The line would depend on the west, the north-west, and the north.

1589. Do you not think that a line further to the west would be preferable to the proposed line? No; I think the proposed line will be the most serviceable line, and will meet the requirements of the several districts better than any other.

1590. The estimate in regard to the proposed line shows that the working expenses will considerably exceed the revenue? But the railway officials are not infallible. I may mention one instance. It was contended by Mr. Harper himself, in connection with the proposed extension from Narrabri to Moree, that the line would not pay for axle grease. We find, however, that that is a section which pays almost better than any section of our railways outside the suburban area.

1591. Your opinion is that the proposed line will become self-supporting within a reasonable time? Yes; within five years.

1592. Have you been through the district of late years? Yes.

1593. Have you noticed whether the best portions of the land had been taken up, or whether the land which is still uncultivated is equal to that which is being cultivated? I believe it is. There are hundreds of acres which are still available which are equal in every respect to the land which is being worked profitably.

1594. Have you noticed several orchards which have been thrown out of cultivation? Yes.

1595. Can you give any reason for that? One reason is that the people who originally took up the holdings have depended too much upon Nature, and have not used fertilisers to any extent. They did not understand the fruit-growing industry as it is understood to-day.

1596. One would have imagined that any one who had once cultivated an orchard could easily obtain expert assistance? No. Some of those orchards have been worked for fifty and sixty years.

1597. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you know the country from Dural to Glenorie? Yes.

1598. Do you think it is probable that if the line is constructed to Dural there will be a further extension to Glenorie? I do not think it would be required. The people of the district and the settlers of Glenorie would be satisfied to be within the influence of the line as far as Dural.

1599. You have referred to the district as a sanatorium? I spoke more particularly of the district about Castle Hill, Baulkham Hills, and Pennant Hills.

1600. Do you not think that the proper place for a sanatorium would be at or beyond Glenorie? Of course, I am not a competent authority, but I think any of the districts could be included within the category of sanatorium areas. The best evidence of the health of those districts is that no doctor can live in them.

1601. Is it your opinion that the people 5 or 6 miles beyond Glenorie would be within easy access of the railway? I think they would be well satisfied.

1602. Do you know the country between Galston and Hornsby? Yes.

1603. Do you think the road between the two places serves the district as it ought to be served? No.

1604. What is the chief objection to it? The cartage is too far, and the grades are not sufficiently easy to allow of a good load being carried. They can only carry half or quarter loads at a time.

1605. Judging by the development of the district the road has answered very well up to the present? It has given the fruit-growers some means of getting their fruit away.

1606. I suppose you think that the time has arrived when they should obtain better facilities for sending goods to market? Yes.

1607. Do you consider that the importance of the district is sufficient to warrant the construction of the railway? I do. The fruit-growers, as a community, do not trouble the Government much; they pay the ordinary taxes, and they have had little consideration in the past, although they have a great many difficulties to contend with. They are asking for the proposed line, not only as a means of improving their condition and the productiveness of the district, but also as a means of proving the products which they send to the public for consumption.

Charles Robert Scrivener, Staff Surveyor, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

1608. *Chairman.*] On the eastern side of the proposed line there are two patches of Crown land which are unoccupied;—can you tell us what is the general character of those areas? One has a frontage to Lane Cove River, adjoining the Field of Mars Common subdivision. There is another large area north-west of Thornleigh. Both of them contain land of a very inferior character. The smaller area would not be useful for fruit-culture. It might possibly be used later on for residential purposes.

C. R. Scrivener.
8 Oct., 1900.

C. R.
Scrivener.
3 Oct., 1900.

1609. How would you describe the irregular-shaped pieces of land around Arcadia and Glenorie and on to Maroota? There is a large reserve north of Arcadia which was originally reserved for railway purposes. I have examined it to ascertain what land there is in it suitable for occupation, and in an area of 5,000 acres I could only find about four blocks which would be so suitable.

1610. What was the area of each of the blocks? Forty acres. I should say that not 10 per cent. of that area would be suitable for other than residential occupation.

1611. Do you think that the whole of the land suitable for orchard culture from Dural to 5 miles north of Glenorie has been taken up? The greater portion of it has, as well as a good deal which is not suitable.

1612. Do you look upon that part of the district as one capable of much greater development in the shape of orchard culture? I do not think it can ever carry a heavy population. There is land near the junction of what we call the North Road, or the road from Dural to Wiseman's Ferry, and the road from Windsor to Wiseman's Ferry, which is better than that about Dural, and it is, relatively speaking, within easy distance of water, and yet only a little of it has been selected. That land is within 6 or 7 miles of steam carriage on the Hawkesbury.

1613. Would you say that, as a general rule, the country going north from Dural to the Hawkesbury becomes inferior? It does. The same may be said of the remaining lands about Kenthurst and Maroota. Some years ago we made a subdivision of what we considered to be the best lands about Maroota. The amount taken up has been very small indeed.

1614. Is it a fact that land which, a few years ago, was regarded as being too poor for orchards, is now being worked at a profit? Yes. It depends entirely on how you make the calculation. You can grow fruit or anything else in raw sand if you add fertilisers in a certain proportion, and that is how fruit is grown in that country.

1615. We have also been informed that within easy reach of the proposed line there are some patches of good forest land. Can you state where they are? I made an examination of a great deal of the Maroota land. I think that on some of the private lands about Maroota there is ironbark. I was unable to find any large quantities of it on the Crown land. Turpentine is to be found occasionally in the gulleys, but it is very difficult to get at.

1616. You do not think it is likely that much revenue will be derived from timber if the line is constructed? I should certainly say no—not even for firewood. Of course, in places, there is oak timber which could be used for firewood, but that is the only timber I know of, and there is not much of it.

1617. *Mr. Shepherd.*] What proportion of land would you describe as being fit for cultivation—I refer to land which has not been taken up, and which is within 10 miles of the proposed line? I should say that an outside estimate would be 10 per cent. of the remaining land. Where I have made an absolutely careful examination of the country, I have not found anything like it. I should say that a liberal estimate would be 10 per cent.

1618. That would include 10 miles on the western side of the line and beyond it? That is so. It includes the whole of the Crown lands about the parishes of Berowra, Maroota, Frederick, Cornelia, and Nelson. From some parts of the parishes—Frederick, Berowra, Cornelia, and Maroota—the produce would not come to the railway.

1619. Would that proportion be maintained still further north—up to Wiseman's Ferry? The parish of Frederick embraces Wiseman's Ferry, and I think the limit would not be exceeded there.

1620. Is the country broken and rocky? Extremely so. There are narrow spurs, which, in places, are not 5 chains wide. They widen out, and a man with a good deal of energy might cultivate there, but no one else.

1621. I suppose that, on account of the very rough country between Dural and Wiseman's Ferry, it would be difficult to reach a market with fruit? Of course there is a road to Wiseman's Ferry; it is not in the best of condition, but down-hill. There is not, however, a vast amount of traffic upon it; it is the mail road from Windsor.

1622. *Mr. Hyam.*] Have you had an opportunity of observing the orchards about Glenorie, and between Glenorie and Dural? I was there last Wednesday.

1623. You have stated that a great deal of the land which has been taken up there is unfit for cultivation? A large proportion of it is.

1624. Is not some of the land fit to be cultivated? Yes; in making reappraisements lately we found that the proportion of the land which was cultivatable was about 30 per cent. of the area occupied.

1625. In which particular district is it? About Kenthurst, between Dural and the Cattai Creek.

1626. Would that remark apply to Glenorie as well? I think it would apply equally well to it. I am speaking of Crown lands. Some of the older grants embraced the better land, and there the proportion would be larger.

1627. Do you mean that there is only 30 per cent. of cultivatable land or of bad land? Thirty per cent. of cultivatable land, which is now occupied for fruit culture.

1628. What about Kellyville and Glenhaven? About Glenhaven it is much the same. Kellyville is a private subdivision, and there the land—especially near the Windsor Road—is of a different class altogether.

1629. Do you think the trade of Kellyville would be attracted to the Dural railway? I do not see what they would want with the railway. Their trade would come by the main road. They have a good road through Baukham Hills to Parramatta.

1630. *Chairman.*] Could you say that the land north of Arcadia resembles in character the land between Hornsby and Berowra? Very much indeed; it is the same class of country.

1631. *Mr. Shepherd.*] The Chairman some time ago asked you a question respecting land which has been passed over, and which has afterwards been found fit for cultivation. I suppose it is usual to take up the best land first, and when that is absorbed, to take up land which has probably been passed over? Of course, that is absolutely the case. If people will have land, of course they must take what there is.

James Bordley Brown, Inspector of Conditional Purchases, Metropolitan District, Department of Lands, sworn, and examined:—

J. B. Brown. 1632. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you a good general knowledge of the country through which the proposed line will pass? I have known it intimately for the last fifteen years.

3 Oct., 1900. 1633. How would you describe it? It is good sandstone country. It is rough and scrubby in parts. The timber is not very valuable; but portions of it, when cleared, make fairly good orchard and straw land. It will not grow maize strongly; but it will grow wheaten hay or oaten hay.

1634. How would you class it as a fruit-growing district? Generally speaking, it contains some of the best fruit land we have. The only land I know of to compare with it for fruit-growing is the Kurrajong Heights. J. B. Brown.
3 Oct., 1900.
1635. Has there been any considerable development in fruit-growing in the district during the last fifteen years? Yes. I should say that the area under cultivation has doubled in that time. Most of the fruit-growers tell me that fruit-growing does not pay; but, as a rule, they drive out in buggies, and add a few acres every year to their cultivated land.
1636. Is the land which is not under cultivation suitable for fruit-growing? A large amount of it would be, with easy access to market.
1637. Is the bulk of the land which is not being used for fruit-growing equal or approaching to that which is being used for fruit-growing? I scarcely think it is; I think the best land is under fruit; but there is a fair amount of land which, with better facilities for getting to market, would undoubtedly be put under fruit-culture.
1638. Do you think the construction of the proposed line would add materially to the area which would be put under fruit? I think it would. Many of the old residents have a considerable quantity of land which they could put under fruit if they had facilities for getting speedily to market. Although they are within a reasonable distance of Pennant Hills, in wet weather the roads are scarcely trafficable. I have seen the roads in such a condition that it has been as much as one could do to get a horse and a light buggy over them.
1639. What roads do you refer to? Those leading from Dural to Pennant Hills, or Parramatta, or Berowra Creek. The road to Berowra Creek is a recent one, and I think the greater portion of it is now metalled. Still there are very heavy grades upon it.
1640. Is there anything in the contention of the fruit-growers that they are heavily handicapped in having to traverse the roads in order to get to a railway station? I think there is.
1641. Would it be possible to improve the condition of the roads? Yes; that is always possible.
1642. Would it be very costly? I think it would, because they have not road-metal there of good quality. The road metal they use is generally slate.
1643. Have you any knowledge of the white metal which is to be found there? There is a sandstone which grinds up as soon as you get any heavy traffic upon it.
1644. Do you think the white metal is good for road-making? I am not able to say.
1645. How would you compare the land between Dural and Carlingford with the land which is used for fruit-growing purposes on the Northern line near Hornsby? I should say that the Dural and Carlingford country is the better for fruit-growing.
1646. Would a larger percentage than that to be found on the Northern line be fit for fruit-growing? I think so.
1647. Have you a knowledge of the country between Dural and the Hawkesbury River in a northerly direction? Yes.
1648. What is your opinion of it? I think there is a fair amount of country beyond Dural which would be available for fruit culture. Six or 7 miles beyond Dural there is land which has been conditionally purchased at £7 per acre.
1649. Was it taken up for fruit-growing? Yes; principally for passion-fruit. There are citrus fruits upon it as well, but I think it is found that passion-fruit pays the best. One man told me he had 2 acres of passion-fruit, and that there was not a week during the year in which he did not send a few cases to Sydney, and that he realised out of his 2 acres, within twelve months, the sum of £90.
1650. Has there been much increase in settlement during the last ten years north of Dural in the direction of Wiseman's Ferry? Six miles beyond Dural there has been a large increase. A few people went to live further north than that, but they were so handicapped by the distance from the road, and by its terrible condition, that they had to leave.
1651. For how far beyond Dural would you class the country as being fairly good for fruit-growing? Twelve miles. At a place known as the Little Forest and Beckett's Forest there is some exceptionally good land.
1652. Is there fair land beyond that point to the Hawkesbury River? I am speaking of the land on the main road. The land runs off in spurs, and it is upon the crowns of the spurs that you find the best land. The gulleys, of course, are useless.
1653. How would you compare the country north of Dural with that between Carlingford and Dural? The better land is between Carlingford and Dural. Six miles beyond North Dural the land gets poorer.
1654. Is there a large area of Crown lands available for settlement? I am not able to state the exact area; but I should think there is something over 1,000 acres which might be made available. I do not think more than one-fourth of the land, out of every 40 acres, is really cultivatable.
1655. Are you referring to Crown lands? Yes. I am not speaking of the Crown lands already occupied.
1656. Do you think that the importance of the district, in view of the fruit-growing industry, warrants the construction of a line of railway which would be close to the Northern line? I do not know that I am competent to express an opinion. It is an important district with a large population. I may state that 10 acres of good land will keep a family there, and the population is increasing fairly fast—faster than in any country district I know of.
1657. In the event of it being found desirable to construct the proposed line, do you think there is anything to warrant it being continued in a northerly direction beyond Dural? I do. Beyond Dural you would bring a larger amount of Crown lands within the influence of the railway.
1658. Do you think there would be a marked increase in settlement if railway facilities were given? If railway facilities were given, I believe every acre of it would be rushed, and taken up almost immediately.
1659. Do you think it would be largely taken up for residential purposes between Carlingford and Dural? There is no doubt that it is a healthy district, and that there is every inducement for people to take up residential sites.
1660. Have you any knowledge in regard to the marketable timber to be found within easy distance of the proposed line? I do not think there is a large amount of marketable timber there. There is not a great deal to be found until you get 10 or 12 miles beyond Dural.
1661. You would not consider the timber traffic of the railway an important item? No. I think there would be a large traffic in fruit and passengers.

- J. B. Brown. 1662. *Chairman.*] Do you think it is a district which is likely to develop very much further in the way of orchard culture? I think that with increased facilities for getting to market a much larger area would be put under fruit.
- 3 Oct., 1900.
1663. Do you find the people of the district complain of the present difficulties of transit? Yes.
1664. Do you think that that is a material handicap to them? Yes.
1665. Do you think that, with railway construction, the area under orchards could be doubled? Quite, and perhaps more.
1666. That is in the district to be served by the proposed line reaching as far as Glenorie? Yes.
1667. Do you know what is the average yield of fruit per acre? No; but I should say that three cases would be a large average per tree, and that would mean about 300 cases to the acre. No doubt the ground would have to be manured to produce that.
1668. Do the people complain of the difficulty of getting manure to their orchards? They complain of the heavy cost of cartage.
1669. Do you think that with a rate practically double that which is now charged on the Northern line, the orchardists within easy distance of the proposed line would patronise that line, if constructed? I think they would; it would be to their advantage to do so.
1670. Which do you think would serve that part of the country best—a tram-line from Westmead to Parramatta or Dural, or the proposed extension from Carlingford? The proposed extension from Carlingford.
1671. Do you know whether there is any inquiry in the district for small plots of land for residential purposes? There is an inquiry, and they are still being sold occasionally. I think it would be a large residential district if people had the means of getting there. They complain that there is no line of coaches, and that they cannot get there on Sunday.
1672. Do you think that with a railway to Dural the district is likely to commend itself to city men for residences? My experience of city men is that they do not like to get beyond half-an-hour's journey from Sydney, and that journey could not be done under an hour or an hour and a half.
1673. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you find that the people who have taken up the land have complied with the Act as regards improvements? The great majority have. Those who have not done so have had to forfeit. We have had very few forfeitures.
1674. I suppose you have had some? Only odd ones.
1675. Has the land which has been forfeited been taken up by other people? Yes; I think that those who forfeited took up the land for speculative purposes.
1676. Was much of the Kenthurst land thrown up by the people who took it up? No; they have it still.
1677. Are they doing anything with it? No; they are waiting for some one to come along and buy it. It is lying there unimproved, except what was necessary to comply with the Act.

WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER, 1900.

Present.—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.	

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane. 1678. *Mr. Watson.*] When you were last before the Committee you promised, if possible, to supply particulars of the estimated cost of the proposed tramway from Parramatta to Dural, following generally the main road *via* Baulkham Hills? I think I mentioned that there was a tramway proposed to Baulkham Hills.
- 21 Nov., 1900.
1679. The tramway is shown on the map as having been surveyed as far as Dural;—the survey, I believe, was made before the Rosehill line was resumed? The line I have been considering is one to Baulkham Hills, but the line on to Dural would be of much the same character as regards permanent way, except that the present proposal to carry a line to Baulkham Hills contemplates an electric line, and the estimate would include the rolling-stock and power. The permanent-way portion of the line to Baulkham Hills, nearly 5 miles from the starting point at Parramatta, is estimated to cost a little over £20,000, or about £4,000 a mile.
1680. Is that for permanent-way without equipment? Yes; the electrical equipment would about double the amount. The line, as regards permanent-way, might be carried on to Dural, cheapening the work a little by keeping on the road. As regards equipment, it would not be the same thing, because it would not pay to apply electrical equipment to a long extension such as that to Dural. The traffic would be so small that you could not get a good average load on the engine.
1681. *Dr. Garran.*] You think that steam would be cheaper? Yes; if you carried a line on to Dural, and if you had the first part worked by electricity, certainly the end portion ought to be worked by steam.
1682. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you say what are the grades of the road as far as Baulkham Hills in connection with which you propose to use electricity? The worst grade is about 1 in 19½.
1683. Would it be practicable to use steam on that grade at a low rate of speed? Yes; we have grades in Sydney and its neighbourhood on the tramways of 1 in 17; 1 in 18 is considered about the maximum, but we have one or two grades of 1 in 17.
1684. *Dr. Garran.*] What is the stiffest tram grade we have in Sydney? There are one or two grades of 1 in 17. I do not exactly remember where they are, but there is one out at Waverley, I recollect, although it is only a short length.
1685. *Mr. Watson.*] What load would the steam motors at present in use draw on such a line as that you have mentioned at Parramatta, assuming the track from Baulkham Hills to Dural to be as easy as that from Parramatta to Baulkham Hills? I should think three or four trucks—probably four. From
Dural

Dural in the direction of Parramatta the grades would be easier, and they could be made even better than they are. The grades I have given are, of course, adverse to the outward traffic.

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1686. If it were decided to construct a tramway in lieu of the suggested railway, I suppose the cost—taking into account the large resumptions in the case of the railway—would work out at about half the cost of the permanent-way? It would be very much cheaper to construct a tramway, because you would be able to follow the road nearly all the way, and avoid very large resumptions.

1687. Would there be a much greater cost of maintenance on a tramway as compared with a railway, taking into account the cross-road traffic? I do not think so, if the tramway could be carried along the side of the road, as, no doubt, would be the case. If the tramway were carried in the middle of the road the maintenance would be a very serious item, because the Railway Commissioners would have the responsibility of the repair of the principal part of the road.

1688. In the estimate which was prepared for the tramway as far as Dural, was it contemplated to make the line in the centre of the road, or to make it alongside the existing road, involving, of course, the cuttings where necessary? It was always intended that the tramway should be laid along the side of the road.

1689. The estimate covered the cost of the cuttings? Yes.

1690. I understood from your previous answers that you advocated keeping the line at the side of the road? Yes; away from the part of the road where the wheeled traffic runs.

1691. It would not materially interfere with access to gates and other conveniences? No; you could still leave space for a footway 10 or 12 feet wide.

1692. Where the general traffic would cross the tramline, would the rails be knocked about to any considerable extent? No; we should have to fill up and make a good surface.

1693. You would use guard-rails? Yes.

1694. The traffic generally in that district is not of a heavy character, it is mostly that of light vehicles—spring-carts and drays? I think the vehicles are pretty heavily laden sometimes. The roads used to be in a terrible state from the traffic, and there is at times a good deal of it. I suppose it would consist chiefly of drays and carts laden with produce from the orchards, and the oscillation in the case of two-wheeled loaded vehicles causes a great deal of wear.

1695. Suppose it were proposed to run the tramway along the suggested route, and to use steam, would you require any special equipment in the way of trucks, or would you use the ordinary trucks with the existing steam motors? The wheels would have to be specially adapted to the tramway, because it would go through the main street of Parramatta—that is, Church-street. Of course, there you must have guard-rails, and the truck wheels would have to suit the curves.

1696. Could you give us the distance from Parramatta to Dural by road? The total distance would be about 12½ miles. The first 5 miles of construction to Baulkham Hills, as I have said, would cost a little over £20,000, and the second portion of 7½ miles would cost about £24,000, making £44,000 altogether. That would include all the cutting down of grades and so on, giving a grade of about 1 in 30 approaching Parramatta.

1697. If the trucks used on such a tramway had flanges suitable for straight running, could they be run into Sydney over the ordinary line so as to avoid the transhipping of the freight? They could be; but I do not know whether the Commissioners would care to do so. The trucks could be run in just the same way that the tramway motors from the Ashfield line are run into Eveleigh over the railway, but I should imagine that a good deal of care had to be exercised in taking them over the points and crossings where they would be likely to be derailed unless they were taken along very carefully.

1698. Would it be possible by making a deviation near Parramatta to avoid going through the streets, and thus render it practicable to use the ordinary trucks? You could, of course, go along other streets than Church-street; for example, you could go along O'Connell-street, but you would lose a good deal of traffic in the neighbourhood of Parramatta. It has been estimated in connection with the Baulkham Hills proposal, that a good deal of revenue would be obtained within a certain radius of Parramatta—that is, within the first 2 miles—from local traffic.

1699. But you would not necessarily lose all that by going into a street a little further back than Church-street? I should be afraid that you would lose nearly the whole of it. I do not think many people would care for walking through into another street. O'Connell-street is the second street from Church-street.

1700. Would it not be possible to get a route along a street not used so much as Church-street? The line I at first recommended followed Marsden-street, and crossed the river just below the Dam, turning round at the back of King's School into O'Connell-street which it followed into Clifford-street, turning into the Windsor-road just before you get to the bridge.

1701. That route, of course, does not provide for the pick-up traffic in Church-street? No; it was thought at that time that it was undesirable to go along Church-street with a steam tramway, especially as the Lennox Bridge over the Parramatta was pronounced to be not strong enough for the purpose. In the case of an electric tramway, however, the conditions would be entirely altered; there would not be the same objection.

1702. Assuming the main objective to be Dural, would it be practicable to start from O'Connell-street, and keep straight on until you joined your original survey, near the King's School? You could not join the railway at O'Connell-street.

1703. You think you could run ordinary trucks along the route you have just mentioned, speaking from an engineering standpoint? No doubt the ordinary permanent-way could be laid down there. The only thing is that the curves are small. I doubt whether you would get ordinary four-wheeled trucks round by whichever route you might adopt. Unless you adopted the railway route to Westmead you would have, I think, to provide special rolling-stock at the Parramatta end. As soon as you get outside Parramatta, you could adjust your curves so as to admit of the use of ordinary trucks. It would add somewhat to the length of the line; but probably the cheapest way of meeting all requirements would be to have a tramway for passengers along Church-street, and connect with the main line for trucks out at Westmead. That is a matter that requires very serious consideration, because I am not certain at the present moment whether suitable junction arrangements could be made at Westmead.

1704. *Dr. Garran*] If you took the route through the back streets, could you make use of the Lennox Bridge, or would you have to make another bridge? If we went from Westmead there would be only an ordinary timber bridge over the Parramatta; you would not have to touch the Lennox Bridge.

- H. Deane.* 1705-6. But suppose you crossed the river parallel with Lennox-street? Then you would have to build a bridge of some kind.
- 21 Nov., 1900. 1707-8. Would that be more expensive than the reconstruction of Lennox Bridge? No; I do not think it would.
1709. You would have to make some alterations at Lennox Bridge if you took the traffic over it? It would be good enough as it is for an electric tram.
1710. But you would have to widen it, would you not? I do not know that that would be necessary; it is only a short bridge.
1711. *Mr. Watson.*] As far as either the goods or passenger traffic is concerned, after you get a few miles away from Parramatta there would be no objection to junctioning? No; I do not think so.
1712. Would the total cost be approximately the same for a tram-line junctioning at Westmead as for a line junctioning at Parramatta? I think it would be a little less for a line junctioning at Westmead. The construction would be easier, I think.
1713. Are we right in inferring that a line to carry the ordinary trucks could be constructed from Westmead to Dural for a little over £44,000? Yes; I think you can depend on that.
1714. That would serve all the goods traffic and so much of the passenger traffic as is beyond the suburban influence of Parramatta? Yes.
1715. Do you remember what number of trucks are usually taken in a train by the small locomotive on the Camden tram-line? No; I do not remember.
1716. It would be more powerful, I presume, than the ordinary steam motor? They are pretty light locomotives on the Camden line; but I could not give you trustworthy information on the point. It would be easy, of course, to have a stronger locomotive if you had a line laid with fairly good curves. You could have a better locomotive than the existing motors, which are intended to go round very sharp curves.
1717. Do you think that the line to which I have just referred from Westmead to Dural, following generally the main road, after you strike it near Parramatta, would permit of easy curving? Of sufficiently good curving.
1718. Sufficient for a heavier class of locomotive? Yes; but the whole matter would require to be worked out.
1719. *Dr. Garryan.*] What is the idea of starting from Westmead at all? You cannot get off from the railway line at Parramatta. The line there is over the level of the street, except just at the Parramatta station itself, which is on a little bit of a hill.
1720. It is a question of levels? Yes.
1721. Is Westmead lower than Parramatta? I do not think there is very much difference between the two places; but there is a dip in between.
1722. But the climb from Westmead to Baulkham Hills is just as bad as the climb from Parramatta to Baulkham Hills? Yes.
1723. It is rather a shorter distance? Yes; but it would not make very much difference, because the first part of the tramway through Parramatta would be approximately level. You would have to rise from about the same point in either case.
1724. If you had a tramway up Church-street, how would you get on to the railway level? The line would come up into the goods yard by one of the roads.
1725. It would be a pretty stiff climb, would it not? No; it could be done with a grade of about 1 in 40. Of course you could not get exactly on to the level of the rails; you would come in at the back of the goods yards, which is somewhat lower.
1726. Then was the idea to unload and transfer the freight? No.
1727. But you would want to take the tramway on to the level of the rails, would you not? Yes; but the connection would be made further on.
1728. You would have to go some distance beyond the goods-shed to make a connection;—would it not be rather awkward to take the trucks some distance beyond the goods-shed, and then shunt them back? I think it could be arranged very easily. You would land the passengers near the goods-shed.
1729. But you would have to take the goods further on, and then shunt back? There would be no shunting back; the goods trucks would be drawn out by an engine from the station-yard, and put on to the fore part of a train.
1730. Whatever course is adopted, it would be necessary for you to take the goods beyond the actual platform? Yes; but there would be no additional running.
1731. *Chairman.*] Why was not the proposal to build the tramway proceeded with? I could not say; I do not think it was thought sufficiently well of. There have been such a number of rival schemes, that there may have been some difficulty in making a selection.
1732. Do you know why the private line proposed from Castle Hill was not gone on with? I believe it was considered by the Legislative Council that the preamble of the Bill was not proved.
1733. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think there is any possibility of reducing the cost of the construction in the case of the Carlingford-Dural railway? Not appreciably, I think. The location of the line is bound partly by the admissible curvature, and partly by road-crossings. You could not very well cheapen it by putting in steeper grades, because the grades are already only such as should be allowed.
1734. Could no easier route be found? I think not. A great deal of attention has been paid to the location of the line. Several deviations have been tried on both sides of the road, and I am sure that no better line can be got. The road runs along the ridge, and you are bound to follow the ridge; otherwise you get into difficulties.
1735. Speaking of the difficulty of taking the trucks direct into Sydney, would not the cost of working the traffic be seriously affected, if the goods had to be unloaded and reloaded? There would not only be all the extra charge for unloading and reloading, but there would be the possibility of damage to the fruit from the extra handling, which is a thing to be avoided.
1736. The fruit freight upon the line would hardly bear the increased cost of two handlings? No; without having consulted the traffic officers on the question, I might say that I think the best way to serve all the traffic would be to run a goods line from Westmead, and a passenger line along Church-street, and to join the two somewhere beyond the crossing of the creek.
1737. Running all the goods traffic to Westmead, in order to avoid a change of trucks? Yes.
1738. The trucks would then run through from Westmead to Sydney? Yes; otherwise you would require

- require to have special goods trucks to run over the sharp curves going through Parramatta, and you would have the extra handling involved in shifting the goods from one truck to another at Parramatta.
1739. Speaking generally, do you prefer the idea of constructing the tramway to the extension of the railway from Carlingford? I think it would serve the interests of the place better.
1740. You have no doubt that it would answer the same purpose? I think it would.
1741. Have you any idea of what rate of speed would be observed upon the tramway;—I suppose it would be about 8 or 9 miles? About that, I should think. At times no doubt they would run faster than that. If there were a good bit of straight running, they could safely run 12 or 15 miles an hour.
1742. That is a high rate of speed on a tramway, is it not? They can run much more than that if required.
1743. With any degree of safety? Yes.
1744. And with a big load? With a fair load.
1745. I mean with a passenger carriage and two or three trucks? I should not recommend running faster than 15 miles an hour. That would be about the maximum; but I do not think there would be any particular danger, except at the sharp curves in running at a higher speed.
1746. There are very few instances of trams leaving the rails on the curves? It very seldom occurs; they are always protected by guard rails.
1747. *Chairman.*] Would you offer an opinion upon this point: which of the two tramways, the line running through Parramatta and keeping to the side of the road, or the line from Westmead, would best service these two purposes—the development of the fruit industry and the carriage of passengers? I do not think either of them would serve both purposes.
1748. *Dr. Garran.*] You do not contemplate the goods traffic from this branch line being carried as separate trains into Sydney;—it would be hooked on to other trains? Yes; I do not think the train loads would be big enough to go through separately. With regard to a question put to me by Mr. Watson some time ago, I should like to say that although the general passenger traffic would be just as well served—I mean the passenger traffic to and from the main line—by the Westmead line as by the other line, I think a certain amount of traffic might be lost if the line went to Dural from outside the junction of the two lines. Persons from outside wanting to come into the heart of Parramatta would scarcely care about coming up to the Parramatta station, and for that reason it is possible that some of the traffic might be lost.
1749. You mean persons wishing to come into the shops at Parramatta? Yes. I believe the Parramatta people would object, as they objected some time ago to any proposal bringing traffic past Parramatta, as it were.
1750. *Mr. Watson.*] The Westmead line would still land the passengers at the Parramatta station? Yes.

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Hugh McLauchlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and further examined:—

1751. *Mr. Watson.*] The Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction stated that a light tramway line might be constructed from Westmead towards Baulkham Hills, following that road on to Dural at a comparatively low cost—something like £4,000 a mile—and in speaking of the probable traffic from Dural the residents calculated an output of fruit equal to 500,000 cases per annum. Spreading that over nine months of the year, it runs out at something like 13,000 cases a week as a maximum. There might be under that estimate, say, 3,000 cases a day? Yes; the traffic would be very heavy about December or January.
1752. Assuming that you had to carry 3,000 cases a day, how many trucks would it be necessary to load? It would depend upon whether the fruit were packed in gin or packing cases. Oranges are often packed in gin cases, and summer fruit in packing cases. We generally load about 200 gin cases or 300 packing cases, to the truck. The average would be about 250. That would mean twelve trucks for the 3,000 cases.
1753. Could you say whether a locomotive similar to that in use on the Camden line would draw twelve trucks to the load? It depends upon the grade.
1754. Assuming the grade to be 1 in 30, would it take six trucks? Yes; I should say it would take six.
1755. So that in two loads it would be possible to bring in the 3,000 cases? Yes.
1756. Assuming that you had to divide the train in two, there would be no difficulty in dealing with it? No; naturally you would make more than one journey, because you would run mixed trains. If you took the roundabout way you suggest, however, I think the traffic would still come to the old line. There would be a local rate from Dural to Westmead, and another local rate from Westmead to Parramatta, and I think you would find business would still be principally with the Pennant Hills station.
1757. If the contention of the Dural people be correct, it would pay them to give something extra to get on to the Carlingford railway;—that being so, it must be assumed that it would pay them equally well to get on to the Westmead line? Yes; but that would be a more expensive proposal than the other line.
1758. The total cost of the proposed line from Carlingford to Dural is £67,690, plus the cost of land resumption, which would be about £8,000 or £10,000; Mr. Deane states that the tramway from Westmead to Dural, following the main road the greater part of the way, with a grade of 1 in 30, can be put down for less than £44,000? But I should like to know what the distance would be.
1759. It is 3 miles greater, but the reduction of the cost per mile leaves a saving? The public will have to pay for the length of haulage, and if a tramway is desired, I cannot see why you should not make it by the shortest route—that is, by an extension from Carlingford. If you wish to supply the Dural district with a tramway I cannot see any need for constructing one from Westmead when you could construct one from Carlingford, a much shorter distance. By doing so you would save the additional haulage.
1760. But would such a line serve the Baulkham Hills district equally well? You must bear in mind that Dural is the objective point. Both lines would merge on to that point. It is not altogether a question of first cost; there is the question of daily cost to be considered.
1761. What is the distance from Clyde station to Westmead? It is a little over 2 miles, I believe.
1762. I find that it is 26 miles 34 chains from Dural, *via* Carlingford to Sydney, and that the distance by the other route, *via* Westmead to Sydney, is 27 miles 40 chains;—I suppose the difference in the cost of haulage, in the case of fruit, would not be very much for the extra mile? It would not be very much. I thought the difference in distance was greater.

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- H. McLachlan. 1763. Practically, the haulage would be much the same by either route? Yes; but you must also look at the matter from the point of view of the passenger business. A mile to a passenger means something.
- 21 Nov., 1900. 1764. Would a tramway serve the people of Baukham Hills and Castle Hill, going from Westmead, to better advantage than would a tramway from Carlingford to Dural? It might; but a tramway from Westmead, if it were carried by the side of the main road, would be more costly to maintain than would a tramway from Carlingford to Dural; and there would be the maintenance of 9 as compared to 12 miles.

FRIDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LYNDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and further examined:—

- H. Deane. 1765. *Chairman.*] Since giving evidence before, you have had an opportunity of investigating a proposal to connect Carlingford with Dural by tramway instead of by railway? Yes. I am sorry to say that we have no information as to levels on the road between the end of the Carlingford line and where it would join up with the Parramatta and Dural tramway, but I imagine that there would be no great difficulty in carrying a line through there. For a short distance the present line would have to be continued through the orchards so as to get up on to the road. And from there I daresay it could be carried, with a few deviations, practically along the road. I think the cost of such a line would be about half what the railway would cost. And there would be very little land resumption; so that item would be very nearly knocked out.
- 23 Nov., 1900. 1766. *Dr. Garran.*] We should like to know the levels on the road from Carlingford to Dural and also from Westmead to Dural? Yes. I have the levels between Westmead and Dural.
1767. With regard to the wear and tear of tram-road rails on a road, can you get any information as to the life of a tram-road rail in the city? There is no information such as would be useful to the Committee.
1768. It would not be a corresponding wear and tear? No. Some of the tram rails of course wear for a very short time, but that is largely due to the action of the brakes in stopping as well as to the road traffic over the rails. But in a line of this kind, with a small amount of traffic, they would probably last for a very long time. I do not think there is any experience to show that they would wear out at all rapidly.
1769. If you laid a rail on the road, by the side, as you propose, you would not make it stick up as on a rail-road, but it would be level with the road? It would be level on the outside, but there would be a little dish between the rails.
1770. Because you could not prevent carts from going on to the track when it is on a part of the public road? You could not prevent them from going on to the track. It would be all right for a cart that got on to that track would be able to proceed very well, but of course the driver would not choose it.
1771. In wet weather these roads get very bad, and we constantly hear of the carters complaining; if your track happened to be the better they would use it;—for instance, if you had an asphalted portion, and it was very smooth, the carters would use your road in preference to the main road? The road would be made of broken metal, and would be kept fairly smooth, so that anybody could travel along it; but it would be like a newly-made road.
1772. You think there would be no difficulty on that score? No difficulty at all.
1773. *Chairman.*] Would not the construction of this tramway materially reduce the ordinary traffic on the road? No doubt it would.
1774. Can you state what load you are likely to be able to draw along a tramline from Carlingford to Dural, over the proposed grades? I should like to work the whole thing out. As this is a very important modification of the proposal, perhaps I may be allowed to suggest that it had better be worked out very carefully. I think the Committee would then have something really valuable to go upon.
1775. I suppose that in any case, it would require an ordinary locomotive to take trucks over the line? I cannot exactly say. Of course there is a difficulty in the way of making use of the small tram-motors. The drawbars are so much lower in level than the drawbars of the ordinary rolling stock, and therefore some adjustment would have to be made. I suppose it could be done readily enough; but, if it were not, every pull of the tramway locomotive would pull down, and you would lose a lot of force, and the reaction would tend to tip up the locomotive and cause an uneven rocking or pitching motion which would be very undesirable.
1776. Do you think that Mr. Hanna could give us some rough outline of the grades on the roads? I think he might be able to do so; but I do not think there is anything in the way of grades at all bad. I have been over the roads. The really bad place is on the other line. At Castle Hill, where the road forks, there is a very awkward hill, and whether we made a tramway or a railway, we should have to deviate round that.
1777. But that would not affect the Carlingford-Dural line? No; it does not affect the branch line from Carlingford. An ordinary tramway would cost from £2,500 to £3,000 per mile, if placed on the road; but here and there we should have to depart from the road, and perhaps go around a hill or enter into a little cutting, and so on, and I think that if you put the amount down at £3,500 per mile that would cover all the cost.

Walter Alexander Smith, District Engineer, Roads Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

W. A. Smith.
23 Nov., 1900.

1778. *Mr. Watson.*] You know the main road from Carlingford to Dural—the one going by Pennant Hills? Yes.

1779. Can you give the Committee a rough idea of the grades along that road? The worst grade is at Thompson's corner—the junction of the Carlingford and Pennant Hills road,—the road leading to Pennant Hills railway station.

1780. *Dr. Garran.*] Is that the summit-level on the whole road? Very nearly. It rises slightly from Pennant Hills to Castle Hill. Speaking from memory, I should say that the altitude of the road varies from 650 feet to 720 feet.

1781. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you say what would be the worst grade between Carlingford and Dural? There would be two bad grades,—one at Milson's Hill, near Castle Hill; and the next worse grade would be just below Thompson's corner.

1782. What are those grades? I have no section of them; but I should say that Thompson's corner hill would be about 1 in 13, and Milson's Hill about 1 in 12.

1783. Would there be any great difficulty in making cuttings at those places to reduce the grades, say, to 1 in 25? It could not be done.

1784. Would it require any considerable deviation to get that grade at those two points? No; it would not be a very serious matter.

1785. Is the rest of the road generally a fair grade? Yes. Those are only the two serious grades.

1786. Speaking generally, would you say that it would be an expensive matter to get a ruling grade of 1 in 25, or 1 in 30? It would be rather expensive at those two places, because the gullies are very precipitous near Pennant Hills, and this road is right on the ridge, which falls away suddenly in different places; but, on the whole, it could be done without very great expense.

1787. Supposing you were taking a tramline from Carlingford to Dural, would it be better to follow the main Castle Hill road rather than what is known as the "back road"? The back road, or, as it is known, the New Line Road, would be a very expensive road. It is nothing but up and down hill. The grades are very long and steep.

1788. So that, from a tramway point of view, the better track would be the main road? Yes; I should call the back track, or New Line Road, impracticable.

John Charles Hunt, fruit-grower, Dural, sworn, and further examined:—

1789. *Chairman.*] Since you gave evidence, some time ago, two or three suggested alternatives have been placed before the Committee, as means by which Dural could be served with railway communication; one of these being a tramway from Westmead, which would join the Baulkham Hills road a few miles out from the main line; another being a tramway starting from Church-street, Parramatta, and following the road out to Dural; and the other being the construction of a tramway from Carlingford to Dural, constructed, as far as possible, along the side of the road;—can you state whether any of these three proposals meet with your approval, as representing the fruit-growers of the district? As you are aware, I am the Chairman of the Rosehill Railway League, and I certainly think that the road from Carlingford to Dural is the shorter; and as I am associated with the fruit-growers living along that route, I should prefer a line from Carlingford to Dural to any other line.

J. C. Hunt.
23 Nov., 1900.

1790. That is, you prefer the railway as proposed? Yes; I should prefer that to a lighter line.

1791. Would either of the two tramways—one from Westmead and the other from Parramatta—serve as large an area of fruit-growing country as the Carlingford-Dural line would? Yes, I should think so. I should like to ask whether the ordinary rolling stock, that is used on the railways, would be used on any of these lines?

1792. It is suggested that on the Carlingford-Dural line the ordinary rolling stock could be used? If a tramline that would not carry the ordinary rolling stock were laid down it would be of no use to the fruit-growers.

1793. In whatever way this district may be opened up by rail, you regard it as absolutely necessary that the ordinary rolling stock of the railways should be able to run upon it, so as to avoid the necessity of transhipping? Yes. I gave evidence on that point on the last occasion. I then stated that the transhipping would do away with any benefit that might arise from having a tramway. The less handling fruit gets the better. The fruit would be injured by the extra handling.

1794. Presuming that the ordinary rolling stock could be run to Carlingford—trucks which could run right through on the main line either to Sydney or Melbourne, as you might desire—would a tramway, as suggested by Mr. Deane, supply the wants of the people of the Dural district and the surrounding districts? In the absence of a railway, of course it would be better than nothing; but I should like to see a railway constructed, if we can possibly get it. In the absence of a railway, I daresay that for a time a tramway would carry all the fruit that would be produced in the district.

1795. Mr. Deane has informed the Committee, as a rough estimate, that the cost of the tramway from Carlingford to Dural would probably be less than half the cost of the railway, and that the absolute cost of the Carlingford-Dural line would be even less than that, as it would avoid the necessity for expensive land resumption; that, of course, has a material effect on the finances of the line, a matter we are supposed to inquire into;—taking that into consideration, and also the fact that the officials estimate the annual expenses, without considering land resumption, at £4,822, and the estimated revenue at £1,025, do you think that, under the circumstances, the tramway is a proposal which should be seriously considered? I should think so.

1796. Would it hinder, in any way, the development of the district? That is one of the points I wish to touch upon. There is, no doubt, a great future before that district, and, whatever may be said as to the probability of its expansion and development, I think they have been under-estimated. There is no doubt in my mind that in a few years a railway will become a positive necessity there. A tramway would, no doubt, be of some service at the present time; but I believe that the incurring of a greater expense at once, by the construction of a railway, would be justified in a very few years.

1797. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Do you think that the tramway would pay from the start, supposing that it cost only about half as much as the railway would cost? I think so.

1798.

- J. C. Hunt. 1798. What do you think of the routes proposed? I should prefer a continuation of the line from Carlingford to Dural.
- 23 Nov., 1900. 1799. Of course, the same objection would apply there to a tramway that now applies to the railway—being so close to the Northern line? Yes, it would.
1800. That is a serious objection on the part of many; of course, the further line would be more than double the distance from the Northern line, and consequently, I suppose, would open up a much larger area of country? It would be more equi-distant between the two present-existing lines.
1801. Is the good fruit-growing country extensive in a westerly direction? It is all about the same kind of country.
1802. Of course, the tramway would run at a slower speed than the railway;—do you think that would be any very great objection? It would be an objection, certainly. The shorter the time used in transmitting our fruit would be to the advantage of the fruit-grower, there is no doubt.
1803. The speed, at the outside, would not exceed 15 miles an hour, and probably would be a little less than that? If they keep to the road from Parramatta, right to Dural, it is an up-hill grade the whole way to Dural.
1804. Do you know the whole of the country? Yes, well.
1805. And the line from Parramatta, you say, would be a steeper grade than the line from Carlingford? It would be necessary, no doubt, to make some deviations, either way; but starting where Mr. Watson has suggested, you begin a grade right away at the Old Mills, and there is about a mile before you get to the top of the first grade.
1806. Do you think that the fruit-growers along the line would be as ready to contribute towards any deviation, in the event of the line being a tramline, as they would be if it were a railway; of course, the deviation would be very much less? I am not prepared to answer that question.
1807. Is there anything further you would like to state in reference to the new proposals? I think that at several points, where they might be induced to keep to the road to save resumption if they do construct the tramline, it would be far better and cheaper in the long run to make some deviations, as Mr. Deane suggests. The haulage would be very much easier, and no doubt in the future that would save a great deal of expense.
1808. Of course, you are much more likely to get a cheaper line than a dearer one, and I suppose that under those circumstances you would be quite satisfied with the tramway? I would be more satisfied with a light railway or tramway than with nothing; but I am still of the opinion that the district justifies a railway, and that in a few years it will be a necessity. There is no doubt that with a railway the district would develop far more quickly than it would with a tramway.
1809. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you ever seen the tramway from Camden to Campbelltown? No.
1810. If you have the railway you will have to take your goods to the stations? Yes.
1811. The trains will not pick up between the stations? That would be one of the objections. Whether there were a tramway or a railway it would be necessary to have a fixed time at which the train should start and arrive.
1812. Do you know that the way our railway system is worked, the trains stop only at certain platforms or stations, and that you must take your goods there? Yes.
1813. A tramway might pick up your goods exactly where the branch line joins the main road;—would not that be more convenient for your fruit-growers? Yes, if there were stated places to take in things; but it would certainly be necessary, in our business, to know within a few minutes the times when the trains would start.
1814. A great many of your orangeries are in the valleys, and the fruit-producers have to go up by second-class roads to get on to the main road? Yes.
1815. Well, if the tram stopped there to pick up your fruit, that would be more convenient for your fruit-growers than if they had to go 2 or 3 miles along the road to get to a station? Yes; so long as they had a fixed place for picking up.
1816. For that purpose the tram would be rather more convenient to some of your people than the railway would be? It would be convenient to have stations at the junction of the roads.
1817. Would a tram service that would run three or four trucks, at the rate of 12 or 15 miles an hour, practically go as fast as you would want to go? Yes, it would.
1818. If I understand your evidence rightly, your trouble is caused by the bad state of the roads in wet weather, as well as the distance? Yes.
1819. The bad state of the roads in wet weather is a great drawback? Yes.
1820. You want to send your fruit in a hurry to catch a particular market, and if the weather happens to be very rainy your horses cannot drag an ordinary load right through? Yes.
1821. If you could get as far as the tramway, and then get your goods taken the rest of the way on the rails, you would get over that trouble? Yes.
1822. The road part of your journey will be much easier? Yes.
1823. And that would be a benefit to all your fruit-growers? Yes.
1824. The mere question of time is not of so much importance to you? Travelling up to 15 miles an hour will be fast enough for all purposes.
1825. Are there any days in the week on which your traffic goes in in greater quantity than on other days? It is greater on the Monday and the Thursday, or else on the Tuesday and Friday, according to when it will catch the Melbourne boat.
1826. What determines your desire to send a greater quantity on any one day or another;—is it the export business? Yes. But I take it that if the proposed railway is constructed a great deal of the fruit will go direct to Melbourne by rail, so long as there is no transshipment. It would be put on goods trucks and sent right through to Melbourne by railway all the way.
1827. Does any of your fruit go that way now? All the Seven Hills citrous fruit goes that way now. The objection is that it has to go to Sydney to be fumigated and handled several times. But Mr. O'Sullivan is constructing a fumigating-shed at Albury, and is going to charge the same rate as for ordinary fumigating, and the fruit will be fumigated there. That will necessitate only one handling.
1828. If you were to get your fumigating done on your own orchards satisfactorily you would not have that trouble? We cannot get it done there. An inspector has to be present.
1829. You think there is no chance of getting your orchard so clean as to get over that difficulty? Not at

at the present time. But with a fumigating-shed at Albury there will be no necessity to send that fruit at all to Sydney. It will go direct to Melbourne by rail. The rail-carriage is nearly as cheap as water-carriage, and the fruit is carried much better. J. C. Hunt.
23 Nov., 1909.

1830. You must change at Albury, because of the break of gauge? Yes.

1831. But you would fumigate there? Yes. Mr. O'Sullivan is having a fumigating-shed built there now.

1832. Then this tramway would serve you as well as a railway if ordinary trucks were run on the line? Yes.

1833. And that is all you stipulate for? Yes.

1834. The Camden tram goes 8 miles in half an hour—that is, at the rate of 16 miles an hour;—that is quite quick enough for you? Yes, I think so.

1835. Whether you had a railway or a tramway, your shipments would be the same;—what would you call a full day's export from your district on your business day? Sometimes from Pennant Hills twelve or fourteen trucks go away in a day, and I should say ten to twelve trucks full weight. With lighter haulage it would necessitate more trucks, and less weight in each truck.

1836. Is that all by one train, or spread over two or three trains? Spread over two or three trains. Some goes by passenger train at the present time.

1837. A suitable tramway could deal with that traffic as well as a railway could? Yes. If one train would not take it all, they would no doubt send two or three trains.

1838. It is not a very large amount of traffic for a railway to carry? No.

1839. A tramway could easily manage that? There is no doubt there would be a great industry in wood-cutting for a few years, and that would necessitate other trains, but these could be run in the middle of the day.

1840. The Camden tram carries a great deal of wood—in fact, that is the principal paying freight; and that is a very good test of what a tramway can do with regard to wood traffic;—you would not expect to task your tramway more severely than the Camden tramway? I think there would be more traffic on our line than on the Camden line.

1841. What, in wood? I think so. They are drawing wood to the Camden line now 12 or 14 miles.

1842. Much of your fruit could be as well carried at night as in the day? Under some conditions. We could send our fruit away on Tuesday morning, and catch the Melbourne train Tuesday night.

1843. Will the profit on the citrus fruit bear the heavy expenditure of railway freight all the way to Melbourne? There is very little difference.

1844. Do you mean to say that the water-carriage to Melbourne does not cut the railway rate? They are having a cut at one another.

1845. I am afraid the Railway Commissioners make very little profit out of you? They charge something like 10d. a case, I think.

1846. How much do you consider the handling costs, per case, at present? About 2½d. for the handling in Sydney.

1847. Exclusive of the fumigating? No; 2½d. for fumigating and cartage; and then there is wharfage.

1848. I am talking of the handling from one truck to another to go to Melbourne? That costs us nothing.

1849. The Commissioners do that free? Yes.

1850. All you object to in the handling is the knocking about? Yes, and the delay.

1851. It costs you nothing out of pocket? No; they charge for the whole journey.

1852. If this tramway were made, the Commissioners would make you a charge from Dural to Melbourne? Yes.

1853. And they would do the handling at Albury as well? Yes. They do that now.

1854. Do you ship any fruit to Tasmania? Not to Tasmania, but to New Zealand.

1855. It must, of course, be taken from the railway to the ship? Yes.

1856. Is that done by cartage in Sydney? Yes.

1857. It would be of no use to run that fruit down by railway to Darling Island, I suppose, because the steamers would not go there to load it? No. They go from a Darling Harbour wharf.

1858. And they would not shift from that? No.

1859. It seems to me from your statement that a really first-class tramway would be quite equal to your present requirements? There is no doubt that it would be equal to present requirements; but I firmly believe that a railway would be more suitable to the development of the district, as regards residential sites and otherwise; and I believe that in the future there would be an extension to the Northern line. The old survey ran right through the district to Singleton.

1860. *Mr. Hyam.*] I gather from your evidence that you favour the railway in preference to the tramway? I certainly do.

1861. Do you think that a tramway would not develop the district as rapidly and as advantageously as a railway would? It might carry the fruit; but, for passenger traffic, it would be detrimental to the district. The railway would attract far more population to the district.

1862. In reply to Dr. Garran you said you thought that a tramway would answer for the present? Yes.

1863. Do you look upon the matter in this light: that even if you had a tramway a railway would be an absolute necessity in a few years? Yes.

1864. It will be almost imperative to have a railway? I believe that it will be within ten, fifteen, or twenty years—in fact, I believe that a railway will be running through there then.

1865. And this tramway would be no good? No good, of course, then.

1866. You think, therefore, that the better plan would be to construct the railway at once, in preference to a tramway? Yes; I think the first cost would be really the best cost. I have some evidence here given by Mr. Harper; but that bore on the old tram system. It does not apply to the proposal, as I understand it, now before the Committee. But I think that travelling along the roads is an objection to the tramway. I think that such things are better off the roads if possible.

1867. Do you think that a tramway along that road would hinder the ordinary traffic in any way? There is always a danger in connection with traffic.

1868. Do you not think that, through having the tramway there, some of the present vehicular traffic would decrease? No doubt some of it would.

- J. O. Hunt.
28 Nov., 1900.
1869. To a considerable extent? Yes; but if the tramway picked up goods at the junctions of the different roads, there would, no doubt, be increased traffic from other directions.
1870. Failing the railway, I suppose you would be satisfied with a tramway? Well, I would sooner have it than nothing at all.
1871. The rolling stock that would travel over this tramway could travel on any of the tramways? I understand that.
1872. A great consideration is to get your fruit into the market without any transshipping, and with little handling? Yes. There is no doubt that there will be a great saving in time and labour.
1873. I suppose the people of the district are not aware of this altered proposal, and you do not know their feeling in regard to it? No. I received a letter only yesterday, asking me to attend to-day, and I did not communicate with anybody.
1874. You could not venture an opinion as to the feeling of the people of the district? I take it that they would be better satisfied with a light line than to have nothing.
1875. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you to bring your fruit into Sydney to get it fumigated? Yes.
1876. What do they charge you per case? One penny per case.
1877. Did you ever apply for local fumigating treatment? No; it would not answer unless they did it near the railway, and then there would be delay and handling there.
1878. Are you obliged to fumigate all your goods, whether for exportation or not? Only for exportation.
1879. *Mr. Levien.*] Supposing the Committee should not recommend the construction of a railway, would you be content with a tramway? It would be better than nothing.
1880. It would run more often than a railway would? There is no doubt it would be of advantage to us.
1881. *Mr. Hyam.*] In the event of the railway being constructed, the people of the district, and I think you also, have consented to pay an extra rate on fruit—a double rate, I believe? Yes, a double rate.
1882. Would you agree to pay that double rate for a tramway? I would be willing to pay according to the advantage I received. If the cost be brought down as much as Mr. Deane says it will be, I do not think it will be necessary to charge a double rate.
1883. If the trucks were to be run more frequently, would you get your fruit away as you desire? No doubt the people would be willing to pay a certain amount for a certain benefit. But I do not think it would be necessary to pay double. If the tramway were put down at half the estimated cost of the railway, I believe the people of the district would have to pay very little more than the ordinary rates.
1884. But if the tramway did not pay expenses, would you object to paying an extra rate? I would not object to paying a little extra.
1885. The full amount you agreed to pay for the railway? I would certainly pay up to all the advantage it would be to me, and am willing to pay something over and above what the carriage costs me at present.
1886. *Dr. Garran.*] You would be willing to pay extra freight so long as in the long run you gained by so doing? Yes, I would.
1887. And you think that would be the general feeling? Yes, I think so.

James Purser, fruit-grower, Castle Hill, sworn, and further examined:—

- J. Purser.
28 Nov., 1900.
1888. *Mr. Watson.*] Since you last gave evidence the Committee have had suggested to them the propriety of constructing a tramway in lieu of the proposed railway, alternatively from Westmead to Dural, following the main road after the first mile or so; and, as against that, a tram line from Carlingford to Dural, also following the main road after leaving Carlingford a short distance;—can you say how, in your opinion, that would affect the district? We have certainly not had much time to think over it, and I am not here to turn my coat and go against the railway, for undoubtedly we prefer a railway to a tramway; but if you cannot see your way to recommend a railway, we had better have a tramway than have nothing at all, or be situated as we are at present. I consider that a tram line would meet the present circumstances of the fruit-growers, if it were laid down as a strong line that would carry the fruit and all other produce of the district. A tram line from Parramatta or Westmead would be preferable to a tram line from Carlingford, because it would open up a far larger area of country. The country from Parramatta to Castle Hill is splendid country. The Baulkham Hills district is a good district. The land is good, and there is plenty of land available for settlement, and the people of the district, right through to Castle Hill, and on to Dural, are connected in business chiefly with Parramatta. My father was a resident of Parramatta seventy years ago, and I have always done my business in Parramatta, and we have an interest in Parramatta. That tram line would link the surrounding districts to Parramatta, and would be good both for Parramatta and for the people of the surrounding districts. I am not here to advocate a tramway in preference to a railway, but as you are considering the difference in cost between a tram line and a railway, I say let us have a tram line rather than the inconvenience we suffer from at present, for it would be far preferable. There is no one in any part of New South Wales to whom a railway or a tramway connection with the city, through Parramatta, would be more acceptable than the people of Parramatta, and those living on the lands around Parramatta. We have been agitating for the last thirty years for better communication than we have at present, and I believe that these districts are deserving of that communication. We are in a good sanitary position, and the land is good. We can produce all kinds of fruits that can be produced in almost any tropical part of the world, and we are so situated that I am sure people would take up land there for settlement. Better communication with the city will induce people to settle in these districts, because of their healthiness. From Parramatta out to Dural the land is all good. If a man takes up 5 acres of land it will produce anything he likes to plant in it. These districts are not poor districts. The line would go through a prosperous part of the country. The people in these districts are, I think, the most well-to-do people now getting a living on the land in New South Wales. Their average income runs from £100 to £2,000 a year. You can pay the expenses of working a farm with about one-third, or a little over one-third, of your returns. Nothing can be produced from land like fruit for profit. It is a well-to-do part of the country, and it would pay the Government, for the sake of the prosperity of the country, to construct a line there, because it would cause people to settle where they could get a living. I believe there are no districts in the country which can surpass the northern districts of Parramatta; therefore, I would go in for a line from Parramatta rather than from Carlingford, because it would open up country that would take in Kellyville, and up to Cattai Creek on the left, and also right away to Dural. I should prefer a railway, because I believe that in the future it would open up the country better than a tram line would. 1889.

1889. You know the two roads—the road from Carlingford to Dural, and the road from Parramatta to Dural? Yes, well. J. Purser.
1890. Which do you think, without any alteration of grades, is most suitable for tramway traffic? From Parramatta. 23 Nov., 1900.
1891. Is that an easier grade? Yes, by far.
1892. Not so steep as from Carlingford? Not to compare with it.
1893. The objection to going through Parramatta itself with the suggested tramway is that, if you were to do so, you could not lay down such a line in the streets of Parramatta as would allow you to use the ordinary large trucks which would be required to carry the fruit on the main line;—and, to get over that difficulty, it is suggested that you should start from about Westmead, and join the main Baulkham Hills road just about the bridge near Murray's mill? If that is a fact, we would prefer it from Westmead, because we must have a line sufficiently strong to carry the fruit and other produce.
1894. It is necessary that you should have rolling stock that will go on the main line? Undoubtedly.
1895. Otherwise it will not be of much value to you? No.
1896. Assuming that such a tramway were constructed as would carry the rolling stock referred to, would it then be worth the while of the people of the district to pay an extra rate, as suggested, in respect to the proposed railway? I think so. I believe the people would be so pleased at getting what they have been asking for the last thirty years that that would not cost them a thought.
1897. That would be, of course, only until the line paid? Yes.
1898. Do you think there would be a greater probability of the line paying if it were taken *via* Baulkham Hills than by Carlingford? Yes, two to one.
1899. You think that the extra traffic coming in from Kellyville, and west of Baulkham Hills, would make up the additional revenue required? Yes; I am not exaggerating when I say two to one.
1900. You think the people about Pennant Hills are well served by the present Northern line? Yes.
1901. But that the Baulkham Hills people would naturally prefer the line that went near them? Yes; and also, Kellyville, and right away to Cattai Creek.
1902. In the estimates put before the Committee by the local people they did not count on getting a great deal of the Kellyville traffic for the Carlingford-Dural Railway? No; very little.
1903. So that any traffic got from there by a line going *via* Baulkham Hills, would be in addition to the estimates previously put before us? Just so.
1904. Mr. Hyam.] You know the road from Dural to Castle Hill? Yes.
1905. Supposing the tramline be extended from Castle Hill to Dural, is there not a very big hill to get over—Rogan's Hill? There is only one hill—Rogan's Hill.
1906. Is it not a serious obstacle? I think it could be cut 5 feet or 6 feet, at little expense; and then the grade would not be very bad. It would not be so bad as the grade of Kenny's Hill, on the Camden line.
1907. There was a proposition, some years ago, to run a tramway from Parramatta to Castle Hill, with the idea of extending it to Dural; and in the evidence put before the Committee, everyone agreed that it was impossible to take a tramline over Rogan's Hill? Well; it is only a very short hill.
1908. It is your opinion that a tramway could go over it? Yes; the difficulty could be easily got over.
1909. The Engineer-in-Chief suggested that in order to get over that difficulty a deviation should be made so as to go round Rogan's Hill? No doubt that could be done. On two occasions surveys have been made through my property in order to miss the hill.
1910. Would that deviation be expensive? I do not think it would. It would go through a great deal of my property, and I would give it to-morrow for nothing.
1911. Even if it were for a tramway? Yes. That is, if the deviation did not go through the orchard, but only through the paddocks. I heard Mr. Hardy say that he would give his land free, and my son has property which I am sure he would give free. Probably the Bank of New South Wales would also give theirs free. Little more than that would be required; and, therefore, I think the deviations would probably cost nothing for land. I do not think you would have to buy more than fifty rods, and perhaps the people owning that would be willing to give it.
1912. You think there would be very little to pay for land resumption on that line? Yes.
1913. I think that Mr. Deane said, as regards his proposed line, that the heavy goods traffic could be dropped at Westmead, and put on to the main line, and the passenger traffic taken on to Parramatta? That is a good idea.
1914. You think that idea is workable? Yes.
1915. Dr. Garran.] You have an idea that if we constructed the Baulkham Hills line, we should draw a good deal of traffic from west of that line? Yes.
1916. How far? I consider you would take in from 6 to 7 miles by the Baulkham Hills line. There are many people who would prefer that line to the Seven Hills line. Though they might be a mile or two nearer to the Seven Hills line, that is such hilly country that I am sure they would prefer the Baulkham Hills line.
1917. You see the map on the wall? Yes.
1918. Does the end of that map reach to about the full distance of what you would call the land that would be drained of traffic by that line? Yes.
1919. Or would you go beyond the margin of that map? I believe that people beyond the margin of that map would prefer the Baulkham Hills line to the Seven Hills line.
1920. There is a road running to the west from about Castle Hill, and another running to the west from about Dural; is it good orchard country along both those roads? Yes. In fact it is the best land in the country for fruit-production.
1921. So that we should really accommodate traffic by making the Baulkham Hills line, which we should lose by making the Carlingford line? Yes.
1922. Therefore, that would help to make the line pay better? Yes; I feel sure the line would pay well, because people have been asking so many years for better communication than the present, that it would certainly be availed of very much.
1923. If we had a tramline as far as Dural, would there be any necessity to carry it further along the road at some future time? I have no doubt that it would go further north. There is orchard land further on than Dural. At Glenorie there is good orchard land that could be selected right away to the river.
- 1924.

- J. Purser.
23 Nov., 1900.
1924. Would a tramway greatly assist you in the bringing of manure to your land? It would. It is costly to purchase manure at Parramatta, and draw it to my place from there; but if I could get it to within a mile or two of my place by rail, I would have several tons of it.
1925. In working either a railway or a tramway, you could unload heavy goods only at platforms or stations where there is a siding? Yes.
1926. You could not do that at every branch road? No; there would be certain stopping places.
1927. You might stop at a branch road to take up cases of fruit, because they could be put in quickly? Yes.
1928. But you could not unload manure there? No.
1929. Do you think there would be a return traffic in the way of manure? Yes.
1930. What is the principal manure you would like to introduce into the district? We use all kinds of bone-dust and lime manure; and if we could secure stable manure we would use much of it.
1931. In starting a new orangery, would you begin with lime at once? It is according to the land. A subsoil of clay requires more lime than sandstone land does.
1932. Are the fruit-growers handicapped at present, on account of the cost of carting lime? We are very much handicapped.
1933. In the old days you used to think that the ridges were the only places that would grow oranges? Yes.
1934. You have altered your opinion? I have.
1935. Now you think that the flats are better? Well, we want protection from the winds.
1936. Does not the wind sweep down the hills? No; the hills protect the fruit-trees.
1937. Without having protecting trees? Yes. I have very little damage done by winds in my place, and it is just protected by hills. I consider that the passenger traffic on the tramline would be very great.

MONDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Railway from Carlingford to Dural.

Harry Richardson, Traffic Superintendent, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

H.
Richardson.
26 Nov., 1900.

1938. *Chairman.*] We are seeking some information concerning the possibility of working a tramline either from Westmead to Dural, or from Parramatta to Dural, or from Carlingford to Dural; the points we should like a little information upon are, first, whether the grades on the proposed lines, which are nowhere worse than 1 in 30, and which in most cases would be against the empty trucks, and with the heavy loading, would preclude the use of tramway motors—for instance, in drawing the traffic;—and also whether the tramway motors could be conveniently coupled on to the ordinary railway trucks, with the view of taking fairly large loads over the proposed lines? First of all, there is a difficulty with the coupling. You cannot couple the tram motors to our existing rolling stock. We are using a tram motor on the Morpeth line, running between Morpeth and West Maitland. But that is comparatively level country. There we have what we call a "dummy" truck, which we place between the tram motor and the waggons, and that dummy truck is fitted with duplicate couplings, and will couple either on to the motor or on to the railway trucks.
1939. Is the dummy of any great weight? The weight of an ordinary truck.
1940. To that extent it would be a handicap? Yes; it would be, I suppose, about 4 tons in weight.
1941. Would that be a very serious handicap? It would be a handicap on a 1 in 30 grade. Of course, the dummy could be used without loading it up. On the Morpeth line we load it up with goods, but that means transshipping at the junction. On a line like this we would be compelled to load it up; we could not afford to pull an empty truck about on such a grade.
1942. If it were found undesirable to use a dummy of that kind, would a small engine, somewhat similar to that in use on the Camden tramway, be able to deal with the traffic expected over this line, and which the evidence goes to show would not be more than about 3,000 cases of fruit in any one day? Yes; it would do it if it made three or four trips a day. A motor such as we have on the Camden line could take only about four ordinary trucks. That would convey about 24 tons of fruit each load on a 1 in 30 grade. On the Camden line, which is a 1 in 20 grade, we are taking only two trucks and a passenger car; and on the Yass line, which is a 1 in 43 grade, we are taking six trucks and a passenger car. We use the same kind of engine on the Camden and Yass lines—a small engine made for the purpose.
1943. What is the weight of that engine, and what is its traction power? I cannot tell you.
1944. How would the power of those two engines—the one on the Yass and the other on the Camden line—compare with the power of a tram motor? Just about the same.
1945. Would there be any very great economy in using a tram motor instead of the ordinary locomotives, such as are in use on the other lines? On the Morpeth line we have only one man to attend to the motor.
1946. It would require two men on an engine? Yes.
1947. Is there any other way of getting over the difficulty of the coupling besides that of having a dummy between the cars and the engine? Not unless you have an engine without buffers.
1948. Could that be done in the case of a tram motor? They could not alter the present tram motors to do that.
1949. If you had to build a new motor you could do it? Yes; but the existing motors could not be altered. They would have done it for the Morpeth line if they could. The framework is altogether different—the frames are lower.
1950. *Dr. Garran.*] In addition to the coupling difficulty, there is also a difficulty about the flanges of the wheels, which are quite different on those used on the city tramway, and those used on the general lines;—could you get over that difficulty? Yes; there would be no trouble at all.
1951. You could lay a tramline on this road for the ordinary trucks without any difficulty? Yes.
1952. So that is not a serious matter? No.
- 1953.

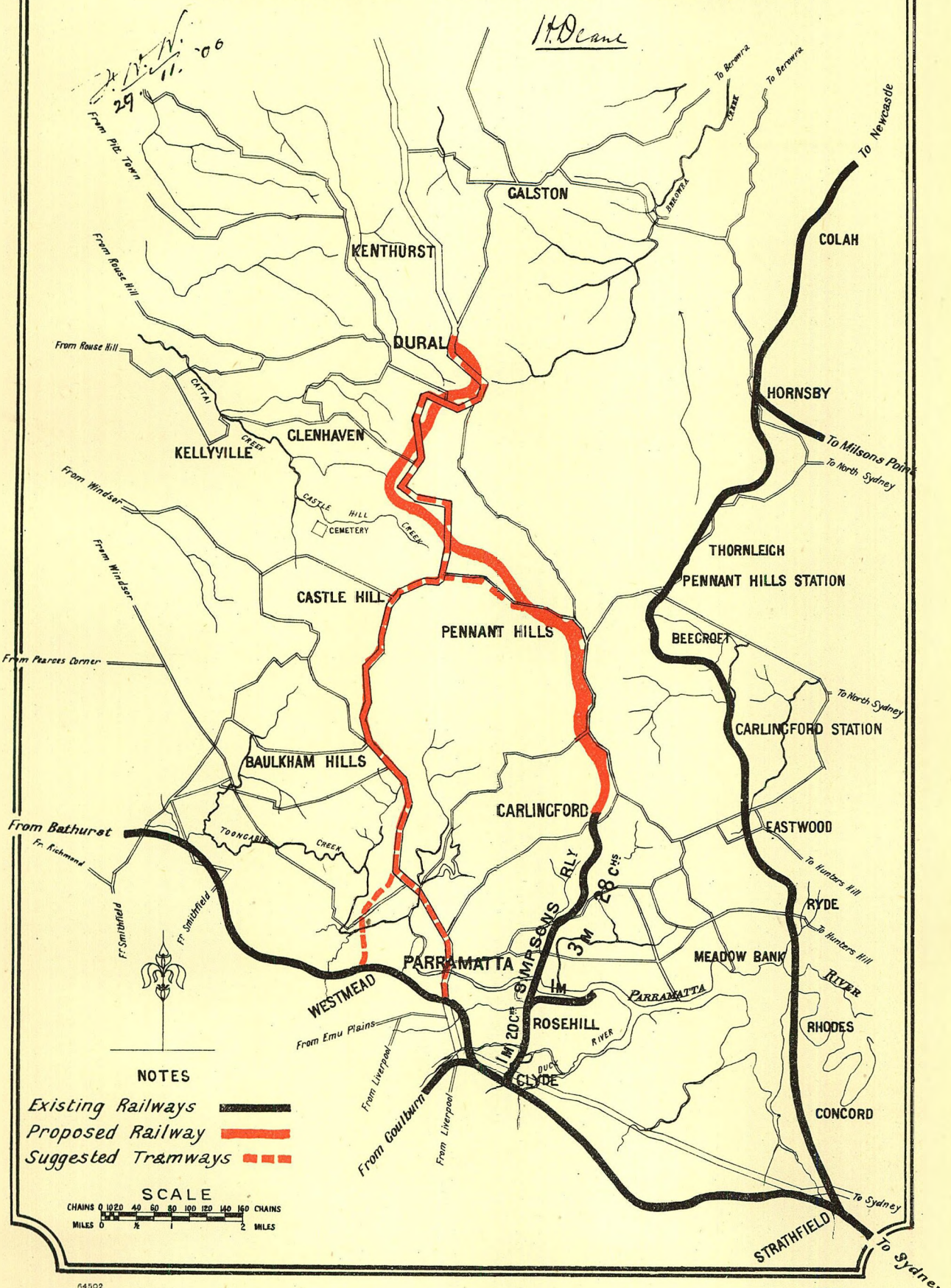
H.
Richardson.
26 Nov., 1900.

1953. And the other matter we spoke of would be entirely got rid of, if we had fresh engines for this line? Yes.
1954. The difficulty would exist only if we wanted to use up the existing old motors? Yes.
1955. So there would be no difficulty in the nature of the case itself? No.
1956. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you know anything of the traffic of this district? No, I do not. I have no idea what the traffic would be. Besides fruit, I think there would be a firewood traffic.
1957. Do you think that a tramway would meet the requirements of the district for the time being? I daresay it would.
1958. In preference to building an expensive railway? Yes. From what I know of the country, I should think so. I think there is not a great deal of traffic out there. Fruit is the principal thing.
1959. There is a great deal of very close settlement? Yes.
1960. *Chairman.*] Can you tell us whether the wear and tear of the rails would be greater in the case of a tram-road laid on the road, as this is proposed, than in the case of an ordinary railway or tramway? I believe it is. I have not much experience of it, but I am told it is.
1961. *Dr. Garran.*] You had the Camden tramway under your special care? When it was first opened.
1962. Not since? No.
1963. Have you not the whole of the Southern line under your care? No; only the Western and the Northern lines.
1964. In bad weather, especially if this line were laid by the side of the road, this would be a better road than the ordinary road, and perhaps the carts would all go on it? Yes.
1965. Will an ordinary tramline stand the wear and tear of a heavy cart full of manure, or laden to the top with fruit? Yes, I think so. I recollect the Camden line some years ago. There was heavy traffic there, and that line stood it.
1966. Would that refer to special crossings, where you had guards, or to the general run of the line? The general run of the line.
1967. You understand that this line would be sometimes in cuttings, and sometimes on little embankments on the side of the road? Yes.
1968. And the ordinary road traffic would run right on to it in bad weather? Yes.
1969. And you think it would stand that? Yes.

[One plan.]

CARLINGFORD TO DURAL RAILWAY

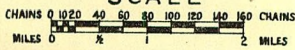
H. O'Leary



NOTES

- Existing Railways
- Proposed Railway
- Suggested Tramways

SCALE



1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM MANILLA TO BARRABA.

(REPORT BY MR. ROBERT E. JONES, M.I.C.E.)

Printed under No. 10 Report from Printing Committee, 30 August, 1900.

Report on Proposed Railway from Manilla to Barraba.

Muswellbrook, 18 May, 1900.

UNTIL recently the whole of the very large scope of country lying between the North and North-west lines was assumed to be adequately served by those railways; but at the inquiries held by the Public Works Committee respecting proposals for branches from Tamworth to Manilla, and Moree to Inverell, it was found the great growth of settlement within the abovementioned area demanded some better access than that already provided; hence both lines were authorised. The first-named has been constructed, and is now duly open for traffic; whilst the Moree-Inverell line is being made, and, in fact, its first section to Gravesend has been in use by the public for some months past. It is, however, alleged that what has been done is not sufficient, and that a large stretch of country lying between Manilla and Bingara, 68 miles in length by about 45 in breadth, bounded east and west by natural barriers of high mountains, is still imperfectly served, so that a further extension of railway is needed, and the line that will afford the greatest relief at the cheapest cost is believed to be that from Manilla to Barraba, which, although not all that Bingara residents would like, is still as much as can reasonably be expected. It is not lost sight of that a connection with the cross-line from Moree to Inverell may at some time be deemed a national requirement, as forming part of an alternative line to Queensland; but with the Moree railway already constructed to within 73 miles of the Border at Goondiwindi, it is extremely doubtful the large cost of making a line 75 miles longer to Barraba will be incurred, even though an additional amount of local traffic were to be obtained thereby. The idea, too, of continuing a railway to Inverell *via* Bundarra is not now wise, as such a line would serve but little of good country, would be very expensive to construct, and in most injurious competition with the railway now being made from Moree. It is very possible the Great Northern line should have adopted the Bundarra route in preference to that over the "Moonbis," but this mistake, if it be one, cannot now be altered, unless ample justification be shown for such a duplicate railway.

The extension from Manilla to Barraba must, therefore, be dealt with on its own merits as giving improved access to 1,955 square miles, or 1,250,989 acres of country, of which 605,260 acres may be considered alienated, 472,194 still belonging to the Crown, but open for selection or sale, whilst 173,535 acres rank as reserves, which must remain as such.

As denoting the character of the country within the trafficable sphere of the proposed railway, the acting district surveyors of Tamworth and Moree classify it thus: Of alienated lands arable, 18 per cent. (mean for both districts), balance, 82 per cent., grazing. Crown lands are put as all pastoral, except a trifle over 1 per cent., which ranks as cultivable land.

With very great diffidence I venture an opinion that in the Tamworth district the percentage of arable country is put too low, both for alienated and unalienated lands (7 per cent. for whole), and as I do not wish to be accused of lessening the importance of the district, I have increased the cultivable lands to what I consider is justified, and classify them as follows:—

	acres.		acres.
Alienated, grazing	470,260	Cultivable... ..	135,000
Unalienated, grazing	455,893	„	10,701
Reserves available, grazing	5,000	„	600
	931,153		146,301
			1,077,454
Reserves not available for sale ... ..	...	...	173,535
Total of trafficable area ... ..	...	...	1,250,989

331—

It

Country unserved.

Manilla to Barraba railway sufficient.

Connection with Moree-Inverell line not necessary.

Alternative line to Queensland. Extension *via* Bundarra to Inverell.

Manilla to Barraba railway. Area served.

Character of country.

Percentage of cultivable land.

Enhancement of land served by railway.	It must, I think, be conceded that a railway enhances the value of the country it serves, but to what extent, and how this increment is to be arrived at, is a matter open to much difference of opinion, and is a question difficult to solve.
Advantages of railway.	First of all, there is the lessened cost of rail as against road haulage; increased facilities for transmission of goods, stock, &c.; greater comfort and quicker travelling for passengers; brings the district served into closer contact with the large centres of population and the markets for their produce, whilst the cheapened rates for freight induce larger areas to be cultivated, and fresh industries to be brought into existence. To reduce these benefits to a monetary value is by no means easy, but that an increment to land is given by the advent of a railway through or near to it is certain. The Acting District Surveyor of Tamworth puts the enhancement on the arable land alone, whilst the officer at Moree thinks it is doubtful if any increase in value would arise in his part of the district served by a line to Barraba, but the existence of the latter might lead to an increased demand for Crown lands that otherwise might not be occupied. Personally, I think some increment would occur to nearly all the lands to be served, and it will not be outside the mark to assess the amount at £38,630, although it must not be forgotten the low price now ruling for wheat, the principal product of the district, with the high rates for wool, militate against increased land values, as with half sheep to the acre the saving in wool carriage amounts to little.
Increment value difficult to be assessed.	
Bingara northern boundary of area served.	It will be noticed on the attached plan that I have made Bingara the northern boundary, and have taken its traffic as belonging to the line to Barraba, although it might be thought the former town would prefer to use the Moree to Inverell railway. I find, however, this will not be so, as to reach the nearest point on the latter line, viz., Kelly's Gully, means going north 21 miles by road, and then 466 by rail to Sydney, as against 38 by road to Barraba, and 340 by rail. The trade interests, too, of the residents of the Bingara district are largely with Tamworth, and as both passenger and goods rates should favour the Barraba, or shorter, route, it is, I think, reasonable to assume it will get this traffic; indeed, I understand even with the railway at Gravesend but 26 miles away, much of the supplies, &c., for Bingara comes 68 miles by road <i>via</i> Manilla.
Population.	The population within the trafficable sphere of proposed railway is 5,049, of which the Barraba patrol district contains 1,849.
Stock.	On the land served by a line to Barraba I find the stock depastured, as per latest returns from Tamworth, Warialda, and Moree Inspectors, were 3,839 horses, 14,559 cattle, and 485,409 sheep. Reckoning the usual average for cattle and horses, the whole stock equal half a sheep per acre.
Cultivation and crops.	Regarding crops, there are 425 farms within the trafficable sphere, with, last year, 20,213 acres under cultivation, of which 15,091 under wheat for grain produced 273,517 bushels, whilst 2,618 acres were cut for 4,283 tons of hay. Maize did not do well, 1,086 acres giving but 14,239 bushels. Fruit and other crops occupied the balance of 1,418 acres.
Description of route.	I need not dilate on a description of the route which the line will take; suffice it to state, it leaves the existing railway at Manilla township, crosses the Namoi near its confluence with the Manilla River, then follows the west bank of the latter to near Mr. Barling's, where the Upper Manilla station is proposed. The residents here suggest a deviation to bring the line nearer the post-office, &c., a matter, however, outside my province to deal with. Line then continues to Tarporley and Black Springs, generally following the main road. Crosses Barraba Creek $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the terminus, which is at $240\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Newcastle, on the east side of the main road and south end of Barraba township. Length of line, $30\frac{3}{4}$ miles.
Deviation wanted at Upper Manilla.	
Works.	Earthwork and gradients are heavy, the country passed through being for much of the distance of a broken character. An expensive bridge will be needed over the Namoi at Manilla. Ballast is fairly plentiful along the route, but sleepers will have to be brought by rail from other localities, as there is little, if any, suitable ironbark within a reasonable distance of the line.
Post-offices.	The number of post-offices within the trafficable sphere is 9, having a revenue in 1898 of £2,140; there are also 8 receiving offices.
Schools.	Schools number 18, of which 4 are half-time. Scholars on roll at time of my inspection, 669.
Mining.	Gold-mining exists at many places throughout the district, notably Crow Mountain, Woods' Reef, Ironbarks, Top Bingara, &c., whilst at the Gulf, near Cobbedah, an English company has an extensive copper-mine, with 81 men at work at time of my visit, which number, I understood, would be probably much increased. The output is about 100 tons copper per month. At Bingara, 236 miners' rights were issued, of which 127 were for the Barraba district. Sixty-six leases were applied for, including 3 for dredging on the Big River and Ironbarks Creek. The total number of miners employed on the fields was, in March last, 411. It is stated 250 oz. of gold were forwarded from Barraba bank in 1899, whilst from Bingara a far larger quantity was sent, although not approaching what was won a few years back, when several of the gold-fields mentioned were in a very flourishing condition. At present little of the precious metal is obtained. I think, however, the Gulf and other copper-mines are likely to provide employment for many hands for some years to come.
Gulf Copper-mine.	
Dredging.	
Gold obtained.	
Other industries.	There are no other industries beyond pastoral and farming, latter chiefly wheat-growing, for which the district is eminently suitable. It is stated that, with railway communication, dairying will develop and become an industry of some importance, although I am inclined to doubt this; fruit-growing also may somewhat increase.
Townships served—Upper Manilla.	The townships passed through are Upper Manilla, which, although scattered, contains hotel, 2 stores, church, school (28), hall, blacksmith, post and telephone office, the receipts of which, in 1890, were £45, as against £77 in 1898, and still increasing.
Barraba.	Barraba is an unincorporated township on the Manilla River, and has a very improving appearance, with several good buildings. It contains 4 hotels, 6 stores, bank, doctor, solicitor, 3 auctioneers, hospital, 3 churches, court-house, wool-scouring works, police barracks, school of arts, 2 halls, usual tradespeople, &c.; also has local newspaper. Post and telegraph office receipts for 1898 amounted to £778; 1899 return, when published, will, I am sure, show a fair increase, as the letters sent, compared with 1898, were 21 per cent. more, with an increase of 35 per cent. in telegrams. In 1890 the receipts were £607. With regard to the public school, there are now 137 scholars on roll, whilst in 1892 there were but 89.
Cobbedah.	Cobbedah is situated 11 miles from Barraba; possesses post-office, hotel, store, and it is the nearest township to the Gulf Copper-mine, 10 miles distant, where there is a school (40), stores, &c.
Gulf Copper-mine.	
Bingara.	Bingara is situated on the Gwydir or Big River, 38 miles from Barraba, with a fairly good road, although hilly, especially south of Cobbedah. Is a municipality containing about 800 people, with usual Government

Government buildings, 5 large and several small stores, school of arts, council chambers, 3 churches, hall, 4 hotels, bank, doctor, solicitor, 2 steam flour-mills, saw-mill, usual tradespeople, convent and school (12), public school (188); publishes a newspaper. Is a well-kept town, and beautifully situate. As showing the progress of this place, I find in 1890 post-office receipts were £851, whilst in 1898 they reached £1,082; in fact, Bingara has a prosperous appearance.

Other small townships served are Horton, Eulourie, and Top Bingara.

Other townships.

The mean rainfall at Barraba for the last eighteen years was 28.70, and for Bingara it averaged, for twenty years, 31.39; 1898 was a dry year, with low records at both places, Barraba having 18.03, Bingara 15.93, as against 22.60 and 25.52, respectively, for 1899.

Rainfall.

Barraba has, except on Sunday, a daily mail from and to Manilla and Bingara; once a week to Bundarra, Burindi, &c.; twice to Woods' Reef; and tri-weekly to Rockmoor, Glenridding, &c. From Cobbedah mails go to Moree once *via* Pallal, and to Gulf three times a week.

Mails.

The road from Manilla to Barraba is constructed for three-quarters of its length, and may be considered a fairly easy track. A low-level bridge is now being erected over the river at Upper Manilla, whilst the Namoi is spanned by a most expensive iron structure at Manilla. From Barraba the roads are by no means bad to Burindi, Horton River, Bundarra, Long Arm, &c. All but the last are classified and receive annual grants. The total yearly votes for roads between Manilla and Bingara amount to not less than £3,300.

Roads.

Road votes.

The estimate for a light line from Manilla to Barraba, 30½ miles, furnished me this week by the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway Construction, is £136,000, or £4,422 per mile. The interest at 3 per cent. per annum amounts to £4,080.

Estimate of railway.

Annual interest

Having for guidance an almost similar extension in another part of the Colony, I am able to estimate the cost of working and maintaining the proposed railway to Barraba at £3,500 per year; so that before the undertaking can be considered a commercial success the annual receipts must realise the sum of £7,580.

Cost of working.

Total annual cost.

I have endeavoured with the best means at my disposal to get an idea of the probable revenue of the suggested railway, and in dealing with the various items of traffic, have made allowances from 10 to 30 per cent. for expected increases. I have, however, taken "local" or "special," and not through, rates for all classes of freight, Barraba wool being put at 6s. per ton, and its wheat, maize, &c., at 4s. 6d., as all the residents I saw stated they would be prepared to pay special charges. I have assumed that a small portion only of the Bingara wheat or flour would come to Barraba; but with regard to the goods and other items of traffic from and to the former place, have been credited to the line under review, although the Railway Commissioners may state we can get the benefit of this loading *via* Gravesend at a merely nominal expense, and, therefore, for such traffic the Manilla-Barraba line will be in hurtful competition. As to this, I am assured by the Bingara residents that, with almost similar truck rates to Gravesend and Manilla, very little of their traffic uses the former route. Also that this will be the case when the Inverell line reaches the point nearest Bingara, *viz.*, Kelly's Gully.

Revenue.

Barraba line competing with Moree-Inverell line for Bingara traffic.

From a commercial point of view I am bound to put forward this question of constructing an apparently competing line; but apart from this is the district around Barraba, and which admittedly is not served by the Moree-Inverell route, to be left without railway communication in consequence of the circuitous access given to the town of Bingara by the northern cross-line?

Barraba district entitled to railway.

For the railway to Barraba I consider the direct revenue will amount to £5,594 per annum, which exceeds the cost of working by £2,091, but leaves a deficiency of £1,986 on whole annual charges. That seems to me to be the position of matters so far as regards the Railway Commissioners; but there are other factors which should, I think, be taken into consideration, amongst them being the enhanced value of land served, which I assess as follows:—Alienated, £28,361, which will give an increased land tax of £118 3s. 5d. per annum, whilst the increment on Crown lands can be put at £10,259, which, at 4 per cent., equals £410 7s. 2d., and I think this latter amount might be increased by £70 9s. 5d. for unalienated lands that otherwise would not be occupied. Some credit should also be given for increased traffic on the main or parent line owing to the opening of the extension to Barraba, and although it is seldom that any saving can be shown in road maintenance, owing to works being required on new roads to the railway at different points, in this case I think the abnormally large vote for the Manilla to Barraba road can be reduced by a greater sum than will be required for the new tracks to the railways.

Direct revenue.

Deficiency.

Indirect revenue.

Saving on road maintenance.

Net deficiency

Altogether it may be taken that the deficiency of £1,986 can be reduced to £1,100.

It is possible the opening up of this rich district may lead to the development of the dairying, fruit, and mining industries to a considerable extent; but these are matters of speculation, and credit cannot be given for such hypothetical revenue. Seeing, however, the probable State loss will be so small, I have come to the conclusion that a reasonable case has been made out for favourable consideration of a light line of railway from Manilla to Barraba.

Recommendation.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT E. JONES,

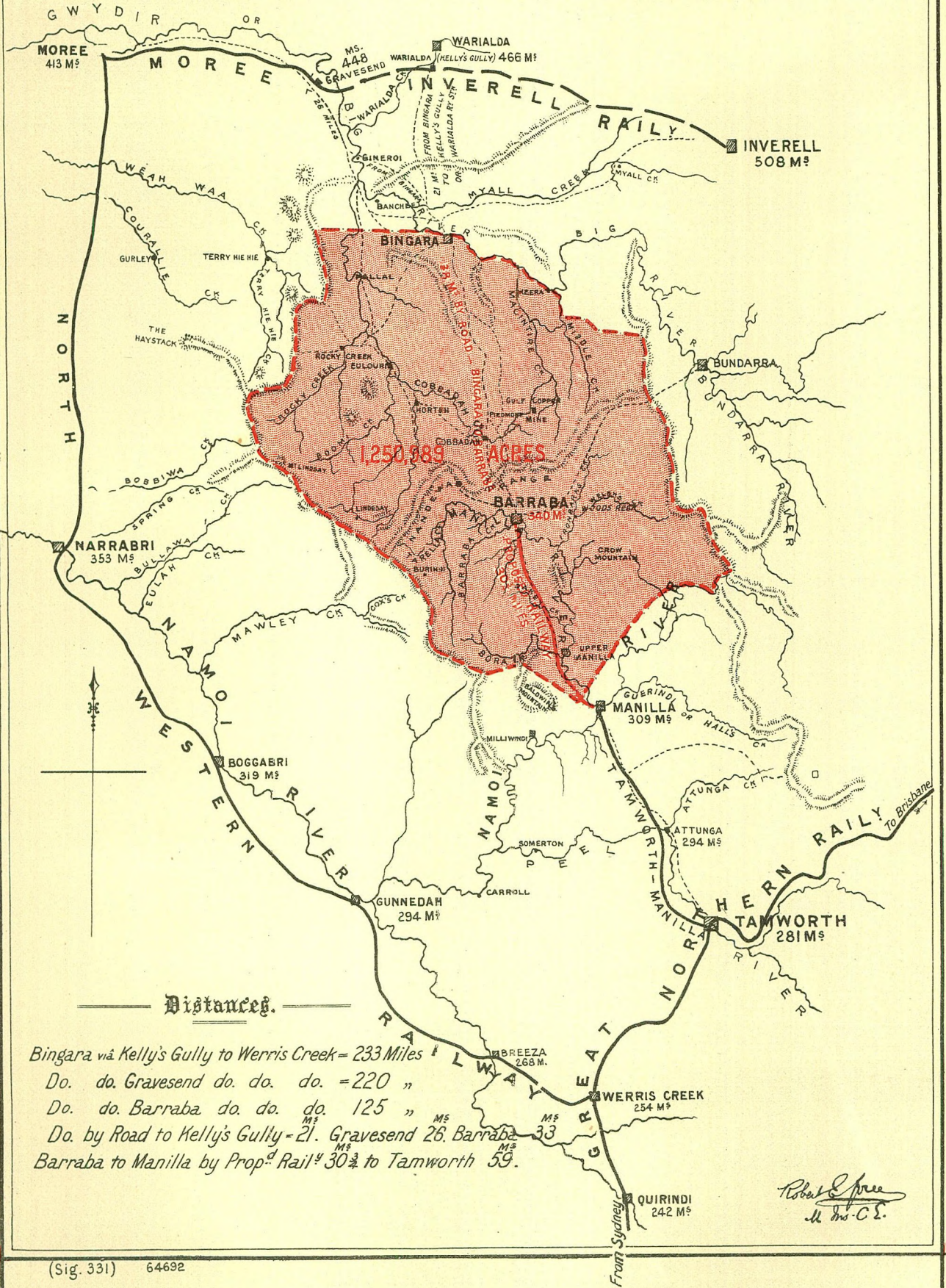
M. Inst. C.E.

The Under Secretary and Commissioner for Roads, Sydney.

Submitted.—R.R.H., Under Secretary, Public Works, and Commissioner for Roads, 28/5/00.
Seen.—E.W.O'S., 28/5/1900. Mr. Deane.—Jno. P., 29/5/00. Mr. Burge.—H.D., per I.P., 30/5/00. Seen.—W. BURGE, Principal Assistant Engineer, Railway Construction, 14/6/00.

[One plan.]

MAP SHOWING AREA SERVED BY A RAILWAY FROM MANILLA TO BARRABA.



(Sig. 331) 64692

Photo-lithographed by
 W. A. Gullich, Government Printer,
 Sydney, N.S.W.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

ACCIDENT TO ALBERT BURBANK ON RAILWAY
PREMISES, TAMWORTH;

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND

APPENDIX.

ORDERED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO BE PRINTED,
25 October, 1900.

SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPLGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER,

254—A

1900.
[1s. 9d.]

1900.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

VOTES No. 10. TUESDAY, 3 JULY, 1900.

20. ACCIDENT TO ALBERT BURBANK ON RAILWAY PREMISES, TAMWORTH:—Mr. Gillies moved, pursuant to Notice,—
- (1.) That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon all the circumstances attending the accident to one Albert Burbank, on the railway premises at Tamworth, on the 2nd day of July, 1897.
- (2.) That such Committee consist of Mr. Bennett, Mr. Edden, Mr. Dight, Mr. Meagher, Mr. Wilks, Mr. Spence, Mr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Nicholson, and the Mover.
- Question put and passed.

VOTES No. 63. THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER, 1900.

2. ACCIDENT TO ALBERT BURBANK ON RAILWAY PREMISES, TAMWORTH:—Mr. Gillics, as Chairman, brought up the Report from, and laid upon the Table the Minutes of Proceedings of, and Evidence taken before, the Select Committee for whose consideration and report this subject was referred on 3rd July, 1900; together with Appendix.
- Ordered to be printed.

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1900.

ACCIDENT TO ALBERT BURBANK ON RAILWAY PREMISES, TAMWORTH.

REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE of the Legislative Assembly, appointed on 3rd July, 1900, "to inquire into and report upon all the circumstances attending the accident to one Albert Burbank, on the railway premises at Tamworth, on the 2nd day of July, 1897,"—have agreed to the following Report:—

Your Committee, having examined the witnesses named in the List* (whose *See p. 5. evidence will be found appended hereto), find as follows:—

1. That on the morning of 2nd July, 1897, Mr. Albert Burbank, a dentist, carrying on business in the Northern and North-Western Districts, met with a serious accident on the platform of Tamworth Railway Station, whilst travelling in fulfilment of his business engagements.
2. That, from evidence adduced at the inquiry before your Committee, they are of opinion that the defective lighting of the Tamworth Railway Station, and the negligence of the Railway employees, contributed in no small degree to the accident in question, whereby Mr. Burbank has been rendered permanently unfitted to practise his profession; and as a consequence his wife and family, together with himself, have endured great hardship.
3. That notwithstanding frequent overtures being made to the Railway Commissioners by Mr. Burbank and his friends, with a view to affecting an amicable settlement, all such efforts failed, the Railway Commissioners denying all responsibility.
4. That the injuries sustained by Mr. Burbank, who was forty years of age, consisted of a broken leg at the knee-joint, his nervous system received a severe shock, and for a time Mr. Burbank's life was in danger.
5. That Mr. Burbank instituted an action for £2,000 damages against the Railway Commissioners. The trial took place at Tamworth Circuit Court on the 12th and 13th days of April, 1898, before Mr. Justice M. H. Stephen and a jury of four. Mr. Burbank, in evidence before your Committee, has sworn that, although he had eleven principal witnesses, and nine sub-witnesses in support of his case, for some unaccountable reason only three witnesses were called for plaintiff. As a result of the trial the jury found a verdict in favour of defendants.
6. That your Committee have taken exhaustive evidence in this matter, and are of opinion that Mr. Burbank was not fairly represented at the trial at Tamworth, and that the production of evidence now given before your Committee has materially changed the aspect of this case.
7. That, after giving all the circumstances of this subject and its surroundings full consideration, your Committee recommend the case of Albert Burbank to the favourable consideration of the Government.

J. GILLIES,
Chairman.

No. 2 Committee Room,
Legislative Assembly,
25th October, 1900.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

WEDNESDAY, 1 AUGUST, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Thomas Brown,	|	Mr. Dight,
Mr. Gillies,	|	Mr. Meagher,
	Mr. Spence.	

Mr. Gillies called to the Chair.

Entry from Votes and Proceedings appointing the Committee *read* by the Clerk.

Albert Burbank called in, sworn, and examined.

Witness *handed in* newspaper report of the case Burbank v. Railway Commissioners (*Appendix A*).

Witness withdrew.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at 11 o'clock.]

THURSDAY, 2 AUGUST, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.		
Mr. Thomas Brown,	|	Mr. Dight,
Mr. Edden,	|	Mr. Nicholson,
	Mr. Spence.	

Albert Burbank recalled and further examined.

Witness withdrew.

[Adjourned till Wednesday, 15th August, at 2.30 o'clock.]

WEDNESDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.		
Mr. Dight,	|	Mr. Meagher,
	Mr. Spence.	

The Chairman read a letter, dated 6th August, 1900, from the Council Clerk of the Borough of Tamworth, intimating that no formal resolution had been passed as to the imperfect lighting of the Tamworth and West Tamworth Railway Stations, their attention having only been drawn to the fact, and that these matters were referred to at a meeting held on 13th July, 1897.

Hugh McLachlan (*Secretary to the Railway Commissioners*) called in, sworn and examined.

Witness *handed in* return showing the consumption of gas at Tamworth Railway Station for three months prior and subsequent to 1st July, 1897 (*Appendix B1*); Departmental record of James Playford, railway porter (*Appendix B2*).

Witness withdrew.

William Henry Cooke (*Record Clerk, Department of Inspector-General of Police*) called in, sworn, and examined.

Witness *handed in* Departmental record of John Beeby, formerly constable at Tamworth (*Appendix C*).

Witness withdrew.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at 3 o'clock.]

THURSDAY, 16 AUGUST, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Dight,	|	Mr. Edden,
	Mr. Nicholson.	

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Dight called to the Chair *pro tem*.

William Henry Cooke recalled and further examined.

Witness withdrew.

Reassembling of the Committee to be arranged by the Chairman.

[Adjourned.]

WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.		
Mr. Thomas Brown,	|	Mr. Dight,
Mr. Nicholson,	|	Mr. Spence.

Hugh McLachlan recalled and further examined.

Witness

Witness handed in Departmental record of John C. White (*Appendix D.*)

Witness withdrew.

Ordered, that Mr. J. C. Thom, Solicitor to the Railway Commissioners, be summoned to give evidence next meeting.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next, at 2:30 o'clock.]

WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.

Mr. Nicholson, | Mr. Spence.

James Campbell Thom (*Solicitor to the Railway Commissioners*) called in, sworn, and examined.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next, at 2:30 o'clock.]

WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.

Mr. Dight, | Mr. Nicholson.

Committee deliberated.

Ordered, That Mr. J. C. White, Railway Department, be summoned to give evidence next meeting.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next, at 2:30 o'clock.]

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.

Mr. Thomas Brown, | Mr. Dight,
Mr. Spence.

James Campbell Thom recalled and further examined.

Witness withdrew.

John Charles White called in, sworn, and examined.

Witness withdrew.

[Adjourned till Thursday, 4th October, at 2:30 o'clock.]

THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.

Mr. Dight, | Mr. Nicholson.

Committee deliberated as to their Report.

Reassembling of the Committee to be arranged by the Chairman.

[Adjourned.]

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER, 1900.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—

Mr. Gillies in the Chair.

Mr. Dight, | Mr. Spence.

Chairman submitted Draft Report.

Same read, amended, and agreed to.

Chairman to report to the House.

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1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE

THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

ACCIDENT TO ALBERT BURBANK, ON RAILWAY
PREMISES, TAMWORTH.

WEDNESDAY, 1 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—
MR. THOMAS BROWN, | MR. DIGHT,
MR. MEAGHER, | MR. SPENCE.
J. GILLIES, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Albert Burbank called in, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] You are a dentist, practising at West Maitland? Yes.
2. Will you state to the Committee the facts of your case? Yes. I was, with my wife and family, a resident of Tamworth, New South Wales, previous to 2nd July, 1897. I also visited ten towns on the Northern and North-western lines. I built up, by energy and at great expense, a valuable and expanding business. The earnings averaged £74 per month. I was a strong healthy man at 40 years of age, and one month prior to 2nd July, 1897, I was passed by the medical referee (Widows' Assurance Society) as a first-class life. Following my occupation, I went to the Tamworth railway platform to proceed by the (about) 1.45 a.m. Brisbane mail up-train to meet my professional engagements that day at Gunnedah. I did not leave by that train, because on its arrival my right leg was broken at the knee-joint by and through the negligence of the Railway Commissioners' servants, as hereinafter detailed. I had a specially-constructed box, in which to carry my working instruments and materials, which measures about 2 ft. 9 in. high by 18 in. square—strongly made, iron-shod at bottom, with name, "A. E. Burbank, dentist," and a notice, "Keep this end up," painted on the top end. When loaded for outward journeys its weight is about 80 lb., and this weight allowance is carried free on the owner's passenger ticket; and it had often been carried on the line by the same train. The box was always sent up overnight, to convenience the railway officials. This was done on the night of 1st July, 1897, at 9 p.m., by a carter and a young man, as on several previous outward journeys. These persons stood the box on a spot arranged for by the railway officials on the platform between the parcel room and the Armidale end of the station building, so as to be handy for the van. The carter and young man pasted a railway label on the top of the box, and addressed it thus:—

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.	
PASSENGER'S LUGGAGE.	
From	TAMWORTH.
To	GUNNEDAH.

By following this custom, at the request of the railway officials, the box has travelled as required on several previous occasions to its addressed station. During several of the journeys from Tamworth the

A. Burbank. box had sustained gross ill-usage by being roughly handled in turning it over and over like a bale of wool, and also reversing its proper standing position, ignoring the notice, "Keep this end up." At other stations the box has been put out of the van on to the platform on its wrong end, and roughly. I complained to the Tamworth station-master on account of rough handling of the box by Guard David Peterson (inward journey). It was so put out at another station, on to a newly-asphalted platform, and worked along for some distance, so as to nearly obliterate the painted address and notice with tar from the asphalt. When I complained to the guard, he replied, "You are lucky to get off with only that much; we have no time to treat goods as so much gingerbread." I suffered considerable loss by breakages and valuable material spilled during many journeys. On another occasion the van did not draw up to the platform at a certain station, and my box was thrown bodily out of the van on to the railway track, splitting the box up in two places, breaking and spilling goods, and destroying a part of a 12 guinea instrument. This continued gross carelessness by the railway servants forced me to either personally watch the box in the van, or pay an hotel groom to do so. This explanation regarding the box is important in connection with what follows. On the morning of 2nd July, 1897, I arrived on the Tamworth railway platform to proceed by the Brisbane mail up-train, which leaves about 1.45 a.m., intending to proceed to Werris Creek, and thence to Gunnedah. I purchased a ticket for Gunnedah, then went into the telegraph room to remove my small packages—left overnight there by my lad, by special advice of other porters, because they had said, "The parcel room doors are always closed before the train's arrival"—and left these parcels on a seat on the platform. I then went along to the end where my box usually stood to see if the label was correctly addressed—which was the end towards Armidale. The lighting at that (Armidale) end was so bad—there being no post lamp lit outside the verandah, and the parcel room doors close to the box being shut—that I struck a match to enable me to see the label on my box, I was satisfied that the correct address was on the label, and then went back to the Sydney end of the platform. At this time I saw the night officer (White) in the ticket office, while the porter (Playford) was walking along towards the Sydney end of the platform. The train was notified as three-quarters of an hour late. I sat on a seat at the Sydney end, and near the ladies' waiting-room; while there I saw John Milligan sitting on a raised article on the platform, about in line with the outer end of the verandah. I could dimly see the right side of Milligan's face, for beyond Milligan no lamp was alight. I looked in the direction of the post lamp (Sydney end), but there was no light there. Mr. Victor Burbank was on the platform standing with me about 1.35 a.m., and he spoke of the bad lighting on the station, referring also to the difficulty he had experienced on the previous night of his arrival to find his portmanteau. (These remarks were made consequent on his seeing me striking a match to see the label on my box.) Before the train arrived, Mr. Ben. Owen came on the platform and passed me; that time without recognition. When Mr. Owen returned again, and was near enough, I rose up from my seat and spoke to Mr. Owen, who then failed to recognise me on account of the dim light until I turned half round to the centre light under the verandah, at the entrance door. At this time there were only three lights alight, and they were under the verandah, viz., the centre light, the light at ladies' waiting-room, and one near the clock. The station was in semi-darkness. The gas-jets were low, and the globes dirty. The station was thus insufficiently lit. When the train arrived, three-quarters of an hour late, I placed my smaller parcels in one of the carriages on the train which had over-shot the end of the verandah at the Sydney end, while the guard's van was half its length over-shot and under the verandah at the Armidale end, and walked quickly towards the van. I passed the night officer (White) outside the Sydney end of the verandah, and holding out my ticket, said, "I am going down to see my box put safely in the van." In less than a minute I was at the van. The guard (Gregory) was then rapidly putting articles into the van from off a hand-truck immediately in front of it, while another truck alongside held several packages that had been put out for Tamworth. I turned to the porter (Playford), who was standing between the trucks and the parcel room, and asked, "Is my box in—'Burbank'?" The porter turned towards where the box stood, and replied, "Oh, I forgot it; will you give me a hand?" The guard was then closing the van doors. The porter called to the guard, "Don't shut the doors; this box is going on." The guard replied, in surly tones, "Hurry up, I can't wait; I'm late as it is." I said, "I am a passenger to Gunnedah." From the spot where I and the porter had been speaking to the guard, to reach the box where it stood, I passed the doors of the parcel room. I then noticed they were closed, and that there was no light—and I am prepared to swear this distinctly and positively—and the place was in the same state as when I went to look for my box, and had to light a match to see the label. I and the porter went to the box, and each of us took an end. I had the top end and the porter the bottom end. I assume that it was the duty of the guard to relieve a passenger of porter's work instead of ordering him to "hurry up." The train had then been in less than three minutes. The box being thus carried by the porter and myself towards the van, and when abreast of two hand-trucks then on the platform near the van-door—as was afterwards stated by the porter—one of my feet struck against some heavy article lying upon the platform, I was thus tripped and thrown forward on my right knee—partly over the obstacle; I was unable to release my hold upon the box until I fell full length to the ground—following the drop on my right knee. The contact of the box with the platform caused a severe cut to the little finger of the right hand, and the fall on the platform breaking the main thigh-bone at, and obliquely into, the knee-joint. Further injury was caused by a severe strain to the back. I was unable, at the time, to realise the serious nature of the break, and lying face down, although in great pain, I called to the guard, "For God's sake put the box in, and throw me in the van; I must go." I was then about 3 yards from the van door. The guard replied, in surly tones, "I can't wait for you; come on by the next train." The doors of the van were slammed, and the train started, leaving me behind. Some people came around and helped me up; but finding I had no power in the leg, and seeing my foot turned, I said, "My leg is broken; I cannot stand; put me down again," and they helped me to sit down on the platform. A policeman stooped down, and pulling me by the coat, said, "What's the matter, mister? Who are you?" When told "Mr. Burbank," and that the leg was broken, the policeman said to those persons around, "It is Mr. Burbank, the dentist; he has broken his leg." I knew Constable Beeby very well by sight; but when he spoke I could not distinguish him, as the light was so bad, until some one named him. They called for a light, and the night officer (White) went for his lamp, brought it, and turned the light upon my face. Constable Beeby remained at my back supporting me. John Milligan came to a wicket-gate at the end of the station-house, in a fence guarding the railway station, which is almost opposite where I was sitting on the ground, and some 10 yards away. When Milligan spoke I recognised his voice, and asked Milligan not to leave

me,

me, or let them take me to the Hospital, as some one present suggested. A little later on I asked Milligan to go and wake up my brother, who had left about half-an-hour, and also to tell my wife of the accident. My brother was a few hundred yards away at a boarding-house, and came down to the house where I was living shortly after. Before going away, Milligan got the ambulance stretcher down from where it was hanging on the station wall. I saw him bring it and place it alongside of me. The stretcher was without the simplest accessories for ambulance work; there were no shoulder straps for carrying, and no substitute for a pillow; but by sitting up in the stretcher, with a sack taken from the 'bus horse, a pad was made to steady the broken bones. In this manner, Constable Beeby, White (night officer), and Playford (porter) helped to carry the stretcher towards my home. Mr. George Howlett met the party, and relieved one of them in the carrying. Mr. Howlett asked Constable Beeby how the accident happened, and Beeby replied, "Mr. Burbank fell over some bacon on the station while helping to carry his box to the van, and has broken his leg." John Ryan (a contractor carrying mails from the railway to the post office) was sent to call Dr. Wilson to attend to me just after the accident. Ryan came back to my house—in front of which both Mrs. Burbank and Mrs. George Howlett were standing. Ryan asked if the doctor had come yet. Mrs. Howlett knew Ryan well. She went over to Ryan—on to the footpath next the road—and asked him, "How much is Mr. Burbank injured?" (The 'bus-driver had previously brought warning of the accident.) Ryan replied, "I don't know; I didn't see the accident, but they said he fell over something on the station in the dark." Mrs. Burbank also asked Ryan, "Did Mr. Burbank fall between the train and the platform?" Ryan replied, "I don't know, Mrs.; I didn't see it; but I think he had a buster and hurt his ankle." Frank Grant (my stepson, aged 16) asked Ryan how the accident happened, and Ryan replied, "I didn't see it, but I think he tumbled over something in the dark up at the station." Dr. John S. Wilson attended at my house, and placed me under chloroform, while the broken leg was being set. Constable Beeby remained with other persons in the room to assist Dr. Wilson. Dr. Wilson asked Beeby, in the presence of about six persons, "How did the accident happen?" Beeby replied, "Mr. Burbank was helping the porter to carry his box to the van, and fell over some bacon, in the dark, on the station; and it's a wonder they haven't more accidents there." Beeby repeated this statement to Mrs. Burbank whilst he was standing in the dining-room having some whiskey before leaving the house. Beeby made the same statement to Mr. J. Whitehead, hairdresser, of Tamworth, when having a shave in the morning. (See Whitehead's court evidence.) Beeby also made the same statement to Mrs. George Howlett, alone. The leg was broken at and above the knee-joint, obliquely—a compound fracture of the thighbone. The knee-cap was displaced, tearing the contiguous muscles and ligatures. I suffered serious shock to the system, and for some weeks my life was despaired of. I endured extreme agony while lying on boards and a thin mattress for two months in the one position, and this pain and suffering continued with more or less severity from 2nd July, 1897, until March, 1898. The boards were then removed from the bed. During this period I was alternately moved from my bed to a bath-chair, and was in a condition that necessitated constant nursing night and day. My hair turned colour from dark brown to grey during the first month of my illness. I began to pass gallstones, which the doctor ascribed to the shock, as I had never before had similar experience. The little finger of my right hand was cut and bruised at the time of the accident, by contact between the box and the ground, when I fell forward over the obstacle lying there. I was paralysed in the right hand and arm (consequent upon the injury when I fell) for four months. My eyesight has been affected injuriously, and I am now unable to read for any length of time. I was unable to discard the crutches until January, 1899 (nineteen months after the accident). In walking, it is necessary now (September, 1899) to use two sticks, and I am permanently lame. Although the bone and muscles have become attached again, the injury has left the joint ankylosed, so that the knee will only bend half way. The excessive osseous and muscular growths have enlarged the knee-joint, and above it, so much that the knee is always in a bent-forward position, and so weak and flaccid that little weight for standing can be put upon it. The fracture gives excessive pain with every wet change of the weather. I am continually subject to cramp in the leg-muscles. The foot on the same side is always swollen and painful, due to the drawn-up ligatures and muscles, and the length of the leg has decreased 1 inch, requiring a built-up boot to equalise the height. Both right leg and knee are essential factors in working the treadle-lathe in a dentist's business; but it is now impossible to use the injured leg with any strength, from the continued pain, weakness, and stiffness. I am gaining unnaturally in weight, and suffer in health through the want of exercise and inability to take it. One month prior to the accident, on 2nd July, 1897, I was passed as a first-class life by the Widows' Assurance Society medical referee in Tamworth. Shortly after the accident I dictated a letter to my brother, Victor, who wrote to the Railway Commissioners in Sydney, informing them of the accident, describing the manner of its occurring, with a reference to the bad lighting, and also proffering an invitation to the Government Medical Officer to consult with Dr. Wilson regarding the injuries. The Railway Department returned an answer by post-card to the effect "that they were satisfied with the inquiries made, and refused to accept any responsibility." The Tamworth Town Council, on or about the second week in July, 1897, discussed certain complaints regarding the bad lighting on the local railway stations, East and West Tamworth, made by persons having business at them, and the aldermen drew attention to the recent serious accident, in which a man's leg was broken. A resolution was passed authorising the Mayor to see the stationmaster, and request him, in consequence of many complaints regarding the bad lighting at both stations, "to arrange for a better condition of lighting." I consulted a local solicitor, who obtained an opinion from a barrister. The barrister's opinion was "that Mr. Burbank had a very strong cause of action against the Railway Commissioners." The solicitor received a complete list of witnesses' names whom I considered would know sufficient of the facts regarding the accident, and the condition of the lighting on the station on the morning of 2nd July, 1897, and of other matters relative, to ensure a successful result in my action for damages against the Railway Commissioners. The evidence of the witnesses, I believe, could easily have been obtained by the solicitor, either by commission *de bene esse* to examine one witness, then ill, and since dead, and to examine two other possible absentees, and the remainder by voluntary attendance and subpoenas—in all, twenty-two witnesses—fourteen main witnesses and eight sub-witnesses. Between 2nd July, 1897, and the appointed date of the trial, 9th April, 1898, I was too ill to see witnesses personally, and my solicitor continuously assured me that he (the solicitor) was working hard and making every effort to secure the attendance and evidence of all those persons named to him as possible witnesses. At the same time the solicitor expressed an opinion that, as the case was such a clear and good one, it was more than probable the Railway Commissioners would make advances to settle the

A. Burbank.
1 Aug., 1900.

A. Burbank. the case without law. About Christmas time, 1897, the solicitor had made arrangements to go to Sydney, and it was decided between myself and him that he would see Mr. Oliver and explain the desire for an amicable settlement. On the solicitor's return from Sydney he delayed a week before seeing me and then explained that he had seen Mr. Oliver at the Test Match (cricket) then being played, but was referred by him to Mr. Thom (Solicitor to Railways). He then afterwards saw Mr. Thom, and said that Mr. Thom's instructions from the Commissioners were to "fight" the case. The trial, "*Burbank v. Railway Commissioners*," took place at Tamworth on 9th and 10th April, 1898, before Judge Stephen and a jury of four. From fourteen main witnesses for the plaintiff, only one was called and gave evidence; and from eight sub-witnesses, only three were called and gave evidence; two others were called, but "objected to."

1 Aug., 1900.

3. *Mr. Meagher.*] Who was your counsel on the occasion of your trial? Mr. Garland.

4. *Chairman.*] Who was your attorney? Mr. F. W. Tribe. I have a report of the proceedings which appeared in a local newspaper which I will now hand in. [*Vide Appendix A.*]

5. Did you apply for a new trial? The solicitor told me I could not apply when I wished to do so; but I am sure that at the time I could have applied.

6. Could you have found the necessary funds had you wished to proceed? No; that was the difficulty I was in. I had to borrow money from my brother and others, and to raise money on my life insurance policy. I was unable at that time to do anything at all, and I asked my solicitor if possible to apply for a new trial. That was about a fortnight after the case was heard when he came to see me. He then said, "You cannot; the notice of appeal must be given at the time of the verdict in the Court." I said, "It seems a very peculiar thing, because other evidence might be discovered afterwards." The solicitor replied, "That may be so; but you cannot do anything now."

7. Do you think that if all your witnesses had been in attendance at the trial a different verdict would have been recorded? I am sure it would have been. I should like the Committee to draw their inference from what is said as to why witnesses were not there. I have obtained affidavits from the missing witnesses, and they are prepared to say what their reasons were for not appearing, willing as they were.

8. Do you think they were influenced not to attend? There was an under-current at work somewhere. Of course, Tamworth is only a small town, where almost everyone is a friend of some other person there.

9. You were doing a good business prior to this accident at Tamworth? My returns showed that I was doing a business equal to £74 a month.

10. Your medical expenses, incidental to the accident, were very great? The doctor's account was £84.

11. Did you also lose your business? I lost everything, absolutely.

12. What have you since been doing;—how have your family been living? On the bounty of a great number of persons. I have had to raise money by various ways. My brother lent me sufficient money with which to get along for the time being, but for a great number of months we were almost starving. I made every effort to see the Commissioners and to ascertain if they would do anything for me. I got so low down that we were on the point of being turned out of the house because we could not pay the rent. I could not work, and had to get about with the assistance of crutches. My wife endeavoured to earn something by sewing work, but she succeeded in earning only a few shillings. I will mention to the Committee certain facts which came to light after the trial. I know now that my solicitor purposely prevented my witnesses from coming near the Court. I have had evidence to prove that willing witnesses could have been brought to the Court. The solicitor told me, in two instances, that the witnesses were absolutely hostile. I was sick and could not get out—except in a Bath chair—and I had to trust to my solicitor during the whole time. I gave him the names of all the witnesses, and referring to one of them he said: "If you have this man he will do you more damage than enough. I have questioned him and can get nothing sensible out of him. He seems so opposed to you that I am afraid that if you put him in the box what he would say would lead to your losing the case." Referring to the same witness, I said: "But he was on the platform, and if there is any justice in the case at all he would speak the truth." He said: "What I intend doing is to subpoena the man in order to prevent the other side from getting him; because, you see, he is a friend of White, the night officer." I said: "That is very cruel." With regard to another witness, a commercial traveller, whose name I gave to the solicitor, he said "Commercial travellers do not like being brought away from their business. He did not actually see the accident, and therefore he would be useless to us. If we take an unwilling witness into the box it is more than likely you would not get any good out of him." And he added: "We have so many witnesses that there is no fear of our losing the case."

13. It was owing to the serious condition of your wife and your children, and your own condition, that some one in West Maitland advised you to apply for a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry? Yes. I may say also that a majority of the people in Tamworth were incensed at the verdict given. There were a number of witnesses prepared to testify to the habitually bad lighting of the railway station, and I relied greatly on a resolution passed by the Tamworth Borough Council, which was to my mind strong evidence that at a previous time the station had been a badly lighted station. The witness, John Beeby, the constable of whom I have already spoken, swore that he went through the parcel-room doors to get the ambulance stretcher; but that fact does not appear upon the Judge's notes. I can prove that he said, "I know the parcel-room door was open, because I went in to get the ambulance stretcher." Then the witness John Milligan says that Beeby was holding me up at the back, and that he, Milligan, got the stretcher from off the two hooks on the platform. The stretchers, as the Committee are, perhaps, aware, are never kept in the parcel-room. The same man (Beeby) spoke to the doctor and to several persons in my bedroom, and distinctly said, in my hearing, and in that of others, that I fell over a side of bacon in the dark on the station, and he added, "They will have a lot more accidents there." He also made a similar statement to Mr. George Howlett, who was living next door to us at the time, and who assisted to carry me down to the house. He asked how the accident had occurred, and Beeby said, "Mr. Burbank fell over some bacon on the station." At that time I had not the remotest idea what I had fallen over. If any one had said that I had fallen over a log of wood it would have been just the same to me. This man, Beeby, however, persistently said that I had fallen over a fitch of bacon, and it turned out in the court that it was so. The man made the statement to all the people in my bedroom, and to my wife outside in the dining-room. He made the same statement to Mrs. Howlett and to Frank Grant. He said, "There was a bad accident at the station; Mr. Burbank has broken his leg." He was asked how it "occurred," when he said that I had "fallen over some bacon in the dark," using exactly the same words which

he

he had used to Dr. Wilson. It was to be presumed, therefore, that Beeby would have been a favourable witness. Then there was John Ryan, the mail contractor, who took his bags from the station to the post-office, and who went for the doctor. He came back to my house, and Mrs. Howlett, who was standing on the footpath outside, and who knew him well as a long resident of the place, asked him how it was that I had been injured. He said he did not know, but that I had fallen over something at the station. My wife then said, "Cannot you tell me how he was injured; did he fall between the train and the platform?" He said that he did not see the accident, but that he had been up to the station for his bags. He had left the platform within only one minute of the train going. Ryan lost his contract for carrying the mails for some reason I am not sure about, but at the time of the trial he was put into the box and asked in whose employ he then was, and he said that he was in the employ of the Railway Commissioners. With regard to the witness Beeby, I should like to say that three weeks or more before the court case came on he was in the horrors with drink. He shot a dog belonging to one of the residents of the place, and went out into the bush armed. He was captured 10 miles out in the bush by the police, was brought into the lockup, and was sent down to the receiving house in Sydney. On the second day of the trial he was wired for, and in the witness box he said that he had had a sunstroke, that the station was a well-lit station, and that he saw me trip over my toes; also that he had not told Dr. Wilson, Whitehead, Mrs. Burbank, Mrs. Howlett, Mr. Howlett, Victor Burbank, and Frank Grant, anything about the case at all. The Judge said that Beeby seemed to be a straightforward honest man, and that it was more than probable he was telling the truth to the court. The only witnesses called to prove what Beeby had said were Dr. Wilson and the hairdresser; the others were left out. John Ryan in the court denied having said anything to Mrs. Burbank, or seeing her at all that morning. He said that he had not spoken to her about the case in any way. He also denied seeing Mrs. Howlett, or speaking to her about the case in any way. John Milligan, the hotel porter of whom I have already spoken, was at the wicket gate, and the station was so imperfectly lit that I could not distinguish who he was until I heard his voice. He had done a good deal of work for me, and I knew his voice. That is how I recognised him. He left Tamworth to work in Sydney, and he said beforehand that he would be willing to give evidence for me. He could have been subpoenaed; but my solicitor told me he could not find him anywhere. I found him afterwards. Then Mr. Ben Owen, a commercial traveller, could have given valuable evidence for me; but the solicitor prevented me from seeing him and finding out why it was he would not give evidence. Then Mr. George Tribe, the hairdresser at Tamworth, was subpoenaed by my solicitor, and was for two days attending the court without being called, as the solicitor had said that he was adverse to me. My wife and I could have addressed him at the court; but did not do so, because we felt that if he were adverse, as the solicitor had said, he would be likely to be an enemy. Mrs. George Tribe was not called, and was not spoken of as a likely witness by the solicitor; but has since said that at that time she was willing to attend at the court. Mr. Victor Burbank, my brother, was on the station on the night of the accident. I had not seen him for a long time. He wished to tell me something of a private nature, and he said he would run up to see me away as he was to go away himself on the following day. He stood for twenty minutes on the platform, and saw me light a match to ascertain if the label was on my box. The box had been taken to the platform at 9 o'clock on the previous night by the carter and my stepson, and the custom has been to put it in a spot indicated by the porters so as to be convenient for the train. They would then get a railway label, address it correctly and stick it on the box. The box has been placed there a full dozen times under similar circumstances, and has always gone away to its destination. On this particular night of the 1st July, my stepson placed a label as usual on the box. He had some small parcels for me, and asked the porter if he could leave them in the cloakroom. The porter said, "No, do not leave them in the parcel-room, because the parcel-room doors are always locked when the train comes in; but put them inside the telegraph room door, and tell him where you have put them. He will then be able to get them when the train comes in at 2 o'clock." I have always adopted that custom, and have taken my parcels from there in order to save me from taking them from the house. To see that the label was strictly addressed when I came on to the platform at a quarter to 2 o'clock in the morning, it being a dark and foggy night, I walked to the end of the platform and lit a match. This was before the train arrived, and the fact of my striking a match shows that I knew the place was badly lit; otherwise there would be no necessity for me to light a match. I saw that the label was correctly addressed. It had the words, "Tamworth" and "Gunnedah" written on it in pencil; yet the night officer and the porter both swore that there was no label on the box, and that there was no address to it. I took the trouble afterwards to tell them at the house to look when the box came back in order to see that the label was there, and they told me that the label was there; but some one had been rubbing the names out. I have the label with me; it still has marks of the pencil-written names, "Tamworth" and "Gunnedah." It can be seen from what remains that the two words were written upon the label. I got the lad to write roughly upon a piece of paper the words "Tamworth" and "Gunnedah" as he usually writes them, and I now produce the words so written, together with the label. It will be seen that the label has been rubbed. I have travelled a great deal with the box, and I looked at it, as I say, to see that the label was properly written. I satisfied myself that everything was correct. That was at a quarter to 2 o'clock. The train was delayed three-quarters of an hour; but the men to whom I refer say that in the interval they looked at the box, and that there was no label upon it. Mr. Victor Burbank, my brother, was in the room with the doctor, and heard Beeby say what he had to say. I gave his name to the solicitor; but he said, "We shall not want him." My brother, I may say, was going to America. Then there was Mr. Fox, a commercial traveller. We have written to him, and he says that at no time has he known the station to be a brilliantly-lit station. Then there is Mr. A. J. Morris, an employee at Lewis Brothers, at Tamworth, who voluntarily went to the Court, and remained there for two days, neglecting his business, in order that he might be called as a witness. I repeatedly told my solicitor to call him; but he neglected to do so. Mr. Morris has since given me an affidavit supporting what I say. He says that he went to the station to meet a friend, about three days before my accident, and that the station was so badly lit towards the end of the platform that he missed his friend, and could not see him. Then there is Arthur Pittman, an hotel-porter, who also promised to give evidence for me, and who was coming to the Court to do so. Previous to the case coming on, however, he was taken ill with typhoid fever, and was sent to the hospital. I begged my solicitor to get an affidavit from him; but he put me off from time to time, and said that the man was unable to speak, and so forth, until the man died, and I could not get him.

14. What would he have proved? That the station was dark, and was very badly lit.

15.

A. Burbank.
1 Aug., 1900.

A. Burbank. 15. *Mr. Meagher.*] Did he know of the condition of the station, as regards lighting, on the night of the accident? No; but he said that he could show that the station had always been a badly-lit station. With regard to Mr. A. J. Cooke, commercial traveller, he gave me an affidavit to say that on that particular morning the station was very badly lit. He remarked upon the fact on the morning on which the accident had occurred. I have affidavits from Mrs. George Tribe, Mr. George Tribe, Mr. Ben. Owen, Mr. J. Milligan, and Mr. A. J. Cooke, all serving to show that the lighting was very bad at the time of the accident. Had these witnesses been called—that is to say, the principal witnesses of whom I have spoken—their evidence would have put quite a different complexion on the case. I think that the jury were swayed in this way: in order to show them that the station was a very well lit station, the judge allowed them to go on to it on the first night of the trial. The station was magnificently lit up that night—the globes were all freshly cleaned, and new burners were put in, all the available lamps being lit.

16. *Chairman.*] Did you accompany the jury? No; they did not say that I was to go up. I said afterwards that I thought, for the sake of fairness, I should have been allowed to go, and to show the jury how the lighting was at the time of the accident. Of course, any jury is affected by what they see; and had the jury seen the station as I saw it, and as certain witnesses saw it, it would have made a material difference in their minds. I wrote to my brother Victor, in America, and I told him that I had lost my case, and I will read to the Committee what he says in reply.

17. *Mr. Meagher.*] He was not there at the time of the accident? No; but he was there half an hour before the accident took place. He wrote to me as follows:—

Your news about the absolute breakdown of your action against the railway people astounds me. I thought the case was as clear as daylight, and you had so many witnesses on your side, too. You do not give me full particulars, more than that it was proved that the station was well lighted, and it was your own fault. That fact might have been sworn to, but never proved; that I will take my oath on. But you had that policeman (Beeby) on your side, for he saw the whole accident, or was he not called? I should have thought that his evidence would be most conclusive and valuable. I remember well his describing how the accident occurred. It was through him that I knew the cause of the accident. Dr. Wilson asked him when he was in the room with us all, how the accident occurred, and he said that you had fallen over a fitch of bacon while helping the porter to carry your box to the van, and he did not suppose you could see the bacon, as it was so dark there. I was surprised, for I thought it had been an accident with the train itself. Now, I should have thought that no further evidence would be necessary on that point, because there were yourself, Dr. Wilson, Connie and Frank, and myself, present, when he explained it, and he said at the same time that there would be more accidents yet if they were not careful. And I would not wonder at it if there were, for the night I arrived—the night before your accident—there were no lights, except those under the verandah of the station, and they were miserable and dull enough. I did not know which end of the train the van was, it was so dark and misty-looking. I walked up to one end, and it was only by the noise of the engine and the reflection from the fire I knew where I was, because there was no light there. Then I went back to the other end, and could see a pile of goods heaped on the platform; but could not distinguish my portmanteau until I had lit a match and found it, and it was only as I was going up the platform that any light came, and it was from the guard's lantern, as he was coming back from the van. It must have been pretty dark, for he passed me without seeing me, until he heard me walking, and turned his lantern on me, and I said, "I am taking my portmanteau," and went on. I do wish I could have been there to give evidence, for I saw the station three nights without lights—that is, outside the verandah. I am sure that night I speak of, any one would be liable to fall over such a thing as half-a-dozen fitches of bacon, for I only saw the luggage at the van, because it was heaped up. I thought when I got out of the train what a dismal, miserable-looking station this is; it seemed like going into a dead place, for even where there were lamps they looked swamped in dirt and scarce able to emit any light. Why, the whole town could have been able to testify to that. Well, that is one night I can swear there were no lights beyond the verandah, and the other was the night of the accident, when you and I stood talking on the platform. I told you then what a miserably-lighted place it was, and pointed out to you how there were no lights on the preceding night, for it recalled it to my mind when I saw you go to look if there was a ticket on your box, and struck a match to make sure they had put it on. Even you, where we stood near the entrance, could not see past the dull patch of light. When I left you, and was going home, I could not help thinking that the station seemed to be completely dead. The third time I saw that there were no outside lamps was on the night after the accident. When Connie came and took my place with you, I had a mouthful of supper and went home; but on my way I thought, "Now, I will just go and see definitely to-night if those lamps are lit," for it was just about time for the train to come from Brisbane end. I got there about ten minutes before it arrived; the time was about ten or fifteen minutes before 2 a.m. (I was thinking of Sydney at the moment, and waited until it left), and no more light was shown than those of the previous nights, viz., under the verandah. I think if I were you I should mention this to your solicitor, and see if my evidence taken here, or a statement made before a local J.P., would be accepted, for these are facts I can swear to. But if they would not hear Beeby, the policeman, as a witness, perhaps they would not hear me. It seems that he and I are the most important witnesses, for he described the accident to us in your bedroom—to Dr. Wilson and us all—and I can swear that on three consecutive nights as to their being no lights beyond the verandah. And from what I remember of the position of the station and your box when I saw you looking at it with a match, you must have been in a very dull light, because it would be about half way, I should judge, between the dull verandah light and the unlighted lamp on the platform, and therefore Beeby's explanation that he did not suppose you could see the bacon as it was so dark seemed so reasonable. I remember, further, that there was a sort of mist or dullness in the nights at that time, making it all the more necessary for good lighting. I have good cause to remember it, for I caught a cold in the damp air that I have not completely got over even yet. Now, Al., I do not know that there is more that I can say, only that if you find that my evidence would count, if the case be not absolutely past, I will do all in my power to get it to you as soon as you should notify me. I do so heartily regret that I should be away, for I am sure that they could not refuse to hear me; or else, where would the justice be?

I will now read to the Committee some of the affidavits to which I have referred. The first is the affidavit of John Milligan, and is as follows:—

New South Wales, }
to wit.

I, JOHN MILLIGAN, of Tamworth, in the Colony of New South Wales, waiter and night porter, do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that: I have been living for some months in Sydney, but for eighteen years before I was living in and about Tamworth; I was there at the time that Mr. Burbank met with his accident; I believe it was the 2nd July, 1897; I knew him well; I know the railway station there well; I was at that time night porter at Pugh's "Royal Hotel," and it was part of my business to attend at the trains coming in and going out at the station; I went up there on the night of the accident on the 'bus; I used to travel backwards and forwards on the 'bus; I saw the condition of the station that night as to lighting; I can swear most positively that it was not lit up, and that lamps were not well alight so that people could see readily all over the station; I know that the side lamps in the side yards were not alight; I say positively that the front doors of the parcels room facing the platform were not open and throwing a light on to the platform; I say that the platform was comparatively dark, and was not well lighted; I had to be on the platform that night more than once in my business; I had to meet the passengers at the quarter to 2 train that morning; the train was late about half or three-quarters of an hour, and I sat on a box at the Sydney end, waiting for the train to come in, and I could then see that the outside lamp at that end of the platform was not lighted without moving, and that the platform was not well lighted, and when I rose from my seat I saw that the parcels room doors were not open but closed; the telegraph room door was open, but did not give much light; there were no passengers for me that morning, so that I had nothing to distract my attention from what was going on; I went up and down the platform in front of the train, as it was my custom, asking for passengers; there were none, and I saw then that the whole platform was in total darkness; I had seen Mr. White, the night officer before this; I saw Mr. Burbank on the station making ready to go away before the train came in; I saw him go across the platform, and light a match to look for his luggage apparently; I and the 'busman waited till the train had gone,

gone, and then started to go home, and as the 'bus was passing the little gate at the end of the station-house, someone called out to bring the 'bus to take a man that had broken his leg; Frank Wakely was driving the 'bus; he turned round and drove close against the fence in which the gate was, and I could not see the fence, as the lamp at the end of the platform was not alight, till we were close against it; it was slightly foggy, and I then saw someone lying on the ground near the Armidale end, under the verandah, and the Policeman Beeby holding someone up; although I knew Mr. Burbank so well, I could not recognise him for want of light, even when I was pretty close to him; someone said, "Bring a light," and Mr. White, the night-officer, went away and got a lantern and turned it on to Mr. Burbank's face; I had previously said, "Who is it?" and some person replied, "It's Mr. Burbank; I think he has broken his leg"; when he heard me speak he said, "Is that you, John?" I said, "Yes; what's the matter, Mr. Burbank?" I have read in a newspaper report of the case that Mr. White said he never had his lamp out of his hand; I say, if he said so, that is not a correct statement; I saw him go with his tablet and his lamp towards the ticket-office; he put his lamp down on the stool outside, went into the ticket-office, left his tablet there, and came out, leaving his lamp on the form, and did not pick it up till he went to get it, when someone called for the light; it was proposed to put Mr. Burbank on a door and take him to the 'bus, but I said "There's the ambulance," and I went to where it was hanging, and got it down; it was not in good order, and, after a little trouble, I got it right, and Mr. Burbank was put on it; at Mr. Burbank's request I went to the "Imperial Hotel," at the opposite corner, to wake up his brother, and then came back; Mr. Burbank then requested me to go down and break the news as gently as I could to his wife, and as time was going on, and we had to catch the next train, we started, and on the way we stopped, and I told Mrs. Burbank what had happened; I have read in the before-mentioned report that Constable Beeby swore that he went into the parcels room and got the ambulance; I say this statement if made is untrue, for the ambulance was not kept in the parcels' room, and he did not get it, but I did, and the constable was still standing behind Mr. Burbank, holding him up by the shoulders; on that same morning I saw Ryan, the mail-man, go hurriedly across the platform with his mail-bags; I was for a whole twelvemonth going to and from the train, most often twice every night, and I left last January; the platform was not well lighted, and frequently at the back of the platform the lamp was not lighted at all, and I have lit it from the step of the 'bus, and have climbed up and lit it when the 'bus has gone a little too far; it was a well-known fact how badly the place was lighted; I have seen passengers who were strangers frequently stumbling at the steps through there not being sufficient light; for a little while after the accident the place was lit up better, and then it all died down again; if the night-officer, or anyone else, swore the place was well lighted on the night of the accident, and for some time before, I say positively it is not the truth. And I make this solemn declaration as to the matters aforesaid, according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at Tamworth, this 21st day }
of November, A.D., 1898, before me,—

JOHN MILLIGAN.

W. E. TEXTY, J.P.

18. Who prepared that affidavit? Mr. R. W. Thompson. I have also received the following letter from Mr. George Howlett:—

Mr. A. E. Burbank.

Dear Sir,

Pitzroy-street, Tamworth, 18 July, 1899.

Yours of yesterday's date, re stretcher, to hand. In reply I beg to state that I went to the railway station this morning, and the stretcher was there, hung on two iron brackets just outside the parcel-room door. The brackets are fixed on the Sydney side of the doorway, and the stretcher occupies about two-thirds of the wall space between the parcel-room doors and the weighing machine.

Yours faithfully,

GEO. HOWLETT.

19. You can show that that is Mr. Howlett's handwriting? Yes; the following also is Mr. Howlett's declaration:—

New South Wales, }
to wit.

I, GEORGE HOWLETT, of Tamworth, in the Colony of New South Wales, teacher of shorthand, do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that: I know Mr. Albert E. Burbank, formerly of Tamworth, dentist, and I remember his being hurt on the Tamworth railway station on the morning of the 2nd of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven; at that time he and Mrs. Burbank occupied one-half of the house in which I was living in Tamworth; I heard of the accident to Mr. Burbank through one John Milligan, and I being then in bed, got up, dressed myself, and hurried out to see what was the matter; I met the party who were carrying Mr. Burbank on a stretcher, and I then assisted to carry him; one of the party was a man named Beeby, who was then a constable, but who has since resigned from the Force for some reason; I asked Beeby how the accident happened, and he said Mr. Burbank was helping to carry his box to the van, when he tripped over a side of bacon, and hurt his leg, and I believe it is broken; I noticed that the morning was dark and foggy. And I make this solemn declaration as to the matter aforesaid, according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at Tamworth, this 4th day }
of July, A.D., 1899, before me,—

GEO. HOWLETT.

C. HEWITT, J.P.

20. Where was Mr. Howlett when the case was being tried at Tamworth? He was at his business at Tamworth, and could have been easily called as a witness. The other affidavits are as follows:—

New South Wales, }
to wit.

I, ARTHUR J. MORRIS, of Brisbane, in the Colony of Queensland, draper, do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that: In the middle of the year 1897, I was residing in Tamworth, being then in the employ of Messrs. Lewis Brothers there; I knew Mr. A. E. Burbank, who was then also residing in Tamworth, and practising as a dentist; I heard that he met with a severe accident on the railway station at Tamworth on the morning of the 2nd of July in that year; I was on the platform of the station at Tamworth on a morning a few days before that date to meet a friend who was going to Sydney by the morning train, but I found that the station was so badly lighted, from the fact that there was no lamp lit from under the platform verandah, that I could not see whether my friend had arrived or not; to my knowledge, the Tamworth station was generally very badly lit; I attended at the Court on Mr. Burbank's case for two days, but I was not called as a witness. And I make this solemn declaration as to the matter aforesaid, according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at Brisbane, in the Colony of Queensland, }
this 7th day of August, A.D., 1899, before me,—

ARTHUR JAMES MORRIS.

J. B. HALL, a Commissioner for Affidavits for New South Wales, residing in Queensland.

STATUTORY DECLARATION.

I, FRANK GRANT, moulder, of Elgin-street, West Maitland, late of Tamworth, in the Colony of New South Wales, aged 17, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—I am step-son to Mr. Burbank, dentist; I know that he was injured in Tamworth, 2nd July, 1897; I assisted a carter on previous occasions to 1st July, 1897, to deliver Mr. Burbank's dental box at the Tamworth railway platform; I did assist the carter on the night of 1st July, 1897, about 9 p.m., and I saw the box placed at a spot near the parcel-room, as instructed to so place the box by a porter; I procured a railway label, and wrote on it in distinct letters the words "Tamworth, Gunnedah," and I pasted the label firmly and in a conspicuous place on the top end of the box; I have on many previous occasions written Mr. Burbank's destination of journeys on similar labels, and on all other occasions the box has arrived at its addressed town; if, as I am informed, that the porter and night-officer both stated in Court that there was no addressed label on Mr. Burbank's box—if they stated it, I say that they spoke untruths, because I have removed the label that I put on from off the box since the accident, and it still bears my writing, although an attempt has been made by some person to rub the label and writing, and so partly destroy its legibility; I knew Constable Beeby; he said to me on the morning of 2nd July, 1897, these words, "Mr. Burbank fell

over

A. Burbank. over a side of bacon in the dark up at the railway station"; I knew a man named John Ryan; he spoke to me on the morning of 2nd July, 1897; he was standing in front of Mr. Burbank's house, and I asked him if he knew how the accident happened; Ryan replied, "I do not know, I did not see it; but I think he tumbled over something in the dark up at the station"; at the same hour on 1st July, 1897, about 9 p.m., I placed some parcels of Mr. Burbank's inside the entrance doors to the telegraph office at the railway station (after delivering the dental-box) instead of in the parcel-room; I was so advised by a porter, because he said that at the early morning train, and on its arrival, the parcel doors were always closed. And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the ninth year of the reign of her present Majesty, intituled "an Act for the more effectual Abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various Departments of the Government of New South Wales, and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the suppression of voluntary and extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits."

Declared at West Maitland, this 31st day }
of July, 1900, before me,— }
N. BLACK, J.P.

F. GRANT.

STATUTORY DECLARATION.

I, CONSTANCE BURBANK, of West Maitland (late of Tamworth), wife of Albert Burbank (dentist), in the Colony of New South Wales, dentist, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—I was informed of the accident to my husband on the morning of 2nd July, 1897, and was standing in front of my house in company with Mrs. Geo. Howlett; I there saw a man named John Ryan, mail contractor, who was then returning from warning Dr. Wilson of the accident; Ryan asked if the doctor had arrived, and Mrs. Howlett spoke to him; I also spoke to Ryan, and addressing him, said, "Did Mr. Burbank fall between the train and the platform?" and he replied to me in the following words:—"I do not know, Missus; I did not see it (meaning the accident); but I think he has had a 'buster' and hurt his ankle"; I also know a man named Beeby, who was then a constable of the New South Wales police; on 2nd July, 1897, I saw him in the bedroom whilst Dr. Wilson was attending to my husband; I there heard Dr. Wilson ask Constable Beeby how the accident occurred, and I heard Beeby reply in the following words, as nearly as I can remember:—"Mr. Burbank was helping the porter to carry his box to the van, and fell over a side of bacon in the dark on the station, and it is a wonder they have not had more accidents there, it is so dark"; after Beeby had finished assisting Dr. Wilson, I gave him a drink of whisky in my dining-room, and Beeby then voluntarily repeated his previous statement made to Dr. Wilson as to how the accident occurred; and Beeby further told me that he saw Mr. Burbank light a match, and go up to where his dental-box stood on the platform, and he said that he then noticed how dark and badly lit the station was. And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the ninth year of the reign of her present Majesty, intituled "An Act for the more effectual Abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various Departments of the Government of New South Wales, and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the suppression of voluntary and extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits."

Declared at West Maitland, this 31st day }
day of July, 1900, before me,— }
C. W. HOLMES, J.P.

CONSTANCE BURBANK.

New South Wales, }
to wit. }

I, EMILY HOWLETT, of Tamworth, in the Colony of New South Wales, married woman, do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that:—I know Mr. Albert Merdine Burbank, formerly of Tamworth; I knew him at the time he met with an accident on the railway station at Tamworth, and broke his leg; I knew Constable Beeby at that time; he was in my house the morning of the accident; I spoke to him there; I addressed him, and asked him how the accident happened, and he replied to me in the following words, as nearly as I can remember:—"He fell over some bacon on the platform"; I am informed, and verily believe, that the said Constable Beeby was asked in Court, at Tamworth, when giving his evidence in Mr. Burbank's case, whether he told me that the accident happened by Mr. Burbank falling over some bacon on the platform, and he then denied that he had told me so; I say that if he gave that evidence he told an untruth. And I make this solemn declaration as to the matter aforesaid according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at West Maitland, this 6th day }
of January, A.D. 1899, before me,— }
THOS. HUGHES, J.P.

EMILY HOWLETT.

New South Wales, }
to wit. }

I, GEORGE TRIBE, of Tamworth, in the Colony of New South Wales, hairdresser, do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that:—I know Mr. Albert E. Burbank, formerly of Tamworth aforesaid, dentist; I heard of his being hurt on the railway station at Tamworth on the morning of the 2nd day of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven; I was on the platform of that station with my wife on that morning; I was seeing her off to Sydney by the train which should leave there about 2 o'clock in the morning; I saw the said Mr. Burbank that morning, but I did not see the accident; he was coming on to the station when I first saw him, where there was light enough in the hall of the station to see him; I then saw him sitting on a seat, and pointed him out to my wife; I could not distinguish his features, and my wife asked me how I knew him in the dark, and I explained that I had seen him before that morning in the light of the hall; the platform was very badly lighted, and towards the Armidale end it looked to me quite dark; it was, in my opinion, disgracefully lighted, and was made worse by the lamps being dirty. And I make this solemn declaration as to the matter aforesaid according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at Tamworth, this 6th day }
of July, A.D. 1899, before me,— }
L. HYMAN, J.P.

GEORGE JAMES TRIBE.

In the Supreme Court of }
New South Wales. }

Albert Edwardine Burbank, Plaintiff, and the Commissioners for Railways, Defendants.

I, MARY TRIBE, the wife of George Tribe, of Tamworth, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—I was on the railway station at Tamworth early in the morning of the second day of July, in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven; I intended to go to Sydney by the train which should leave Tamworth at ten minutes to 2 that morning; my husband accompanied me to the train, which was late that morning; in consequence of the delay, my husband and myself were kept at the station about three-quarters of an hour; we went to a carriage as soon as the train came in, and my husband saw me into the carriage; before I got in I had observed how dark the station was, and how badly it was lighted; I observed that the lamp at the Sydney end of the station, beyond the platform, was not lighted at all; I know that the platform itself was badly lighted, and whilst I was waiting for the train I observed this: I saw some one sitting on a seat on the platform, and my husband pointed him out to me as Mr. Burbank (who was afterwards hurt); I could not distinguish his features as it was too dark, and I asked my husband how he could tell him in the dark, and he replied that he had seen him come in through the hall of the station, which was lighted; I saw my husband talking to the night officer just before the train came in; I said to my husband, "How dreadfully dark the station is; what a shame it is not lighted better"; it was quite dark to me beyond the clock on the station from where I was sitting, which was at the Sydney end of the platform, and I got into a carriage outside the awning or verandah of the platform, and then saw that the lamp outside was not alight on the Sydney end; I saw there was a light in the waiting-room and under the clock when we came on to the station, and the centre lamp was lit just before the train came in, but these lights did not give sufficient light, in my opinion. And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true as to the matters aforesaid according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at Tamworth, this 4th day }
of July, A.D. 1899, before me,— }
W. E. SIXTY, J.P.

MARY TRIBE.

I,

STATUTORY DECLARATION.

I, BENJAMIN JAMES OWEN, of 288, Sussex-street, Sydney, in the Colony of New South Wales, manufacturer, do solemnly and sincerely declare:—I very well know Mr. A. E. Burbank, formerly of Tamworth, dentist, who, as I am informed, and verily believe, met with an accident on the railway platform at Tamworth on the morning of the second day of July, 1897: I was on that railway platform early on the morning of that day, as I intended to be a passenger by the Brisbane mail train, which was about to arrive from Sydney, and which was timed to leave Tamworth at 2 o'clock a.m.; I was at the Sydney end of the platform, where my carriage was, and I declare positively that that end of the platform was not properly or sufficiently lighted that morning, but very indistinctly lighted, the light being very low and dim—too dim altogether; the lights are ever so much better now; I do not believe that the first lamp at the Sydney end was lit at all—at any rate, the far end was in total darkness; I saw the said Mr. Burbank on the platform that morning, and though I passed him pretty close, I could scarcely recognise him on account of the dim light, indeed the fact is I passed him without recognising him until he spoke to me, and he was then standing between the main door of entrance and the Sydney end of the platform. And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the ninth year of the reign of her present Majesty, intituled "An Act for the more effectual Abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various Departments of the Government of New South Wales, and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the suppression of voluntary and extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits."

Declared at Sydney, this 3rd day of }
August, 1899, before me,— }
GEORGE WATT, J.P.

BENJAMIN JAMES OWEN.

New South Wales }
to wit. }

I, A. J. COOK, commercial traveller, representing Biddell Bros, wholesale confectioners, of Darling Harbour, Sydney, in the Colony of New South Wales, do hereby solemnly declare and affirm that:—

1. I arrived at the Tamworth railway station by the Brisbane mail, on the morning of the 2nd day of July, 1897, from Walcha-road; I heard that Mr. Burbank, dentist, had met with an accident that morning; on arrival I noticed the lighting of the station, and it was very poor.
2. I have always looked upon the Tamworth railway station as an imperfectly lighted one.

And I make this solemn declaration as to the matter aforesaid according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Subscribed and declared at Sydney, this 3rd day }
of August, A.D. 1899, before me,— }
F. H. BURTON, J.P.

ALEX. J. COOK.

With regard to Mr. George Tribe, I should like to say that he is willing to make an affidavit to this effect: That on the night when the jury went out to see the lighting of the station he stood on the platform, and made this remark to the station-master, Mr. Wise:—"Come, Wise, this is too bad; you are lighting the place up brilliantly. It is nothing like what it was when I saw it on the morning of the accident." The station-master shrugged his shoulders, and said, "I have to do it, you know." If I had been able to produce this witness he would have given this evidence for me, and other evidence which would have been valuable. There is a discrepancy between the evidence of White (the night officer) and the evidence of Playford (the porter). White said, "I lit the gas on the platform for the passenger train. I lit three under the awning, and one on each side of the awning, outside post-lamps. Playford came on duty at 1 o'clock. I was still on duty. I lit the five in the earlier part of the night. After the passenger train left I turned out the post-lamps and the middle lamp of the three. I saw Playford light the ones on the posts and the middle one."

THURSDAY, 2 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

MR. DIGHT,		MR. EDDEN,
MR. THOMAS BROWN,	|	MR. NICHOLSON,
	MR. SPENCE.	

J. GILLIES, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Albert Burbank recalled and further examined:—

21. *Chairman.*] You were referring at the close of the sitting of the Committee yesterday to some discrepancy between the evidence of White and Playford? Yes; I read an extract from the Judge's notes showing what White had said. According to the report of the local newspaper Playford said,— "I went on duty at 1 a.m. on the 2nd July. All the lamps on the station were alight. The night officer would light some of the lamps, and it was my duty to light any that I did not find lighted. When I came on duty on the 2nd I lighted the two post-lamps outside the covered way, and the lamp in front of the ladies' waiting-room. The others I found alight." Those that he found alight were two under the awning. When he came on duty he says that he lit the outer post-lamps and the one over the ladies' waiting-room. White says that when the 9 o'clock train went out he turned out the two post-lamps and the one under the centre of the awning. He was cross-examined by Mr. Garland, and he said, "I did not see Playford light the lamps. I saw him go to do so." I should be glad if the Committee would obtain a copy of the resolution passed by the Tamworth Borough Council referring to the bad lighting of the station. I saw it in print, but I have not a copy. The resolution was carried in July, 1897, and it is important, because the evidence in my case hinged upon the good or the bad lighting of the station. I should also like to get an exact record of the gas consumed on the Tamworth railway station for the three months prior to July, 1897, and for the three months after that date, in order that it may be seen whether or not there was an increase during the latter period. I do not know what the proceedings of the Committee will be, or whether when the other side put their case I shall have a reply, but, in case I have not, I should like to make my wishes known now. There is another matter I should like to find out. I have every reason to believe that the station-masters are paid a bonus—whether they get it directly or not I do not know—to run the stations as cheaply as they possibly can, and for that reason the station at Tamworth has been notoriously badly lit. I have affidavits going to support my contention that the station was very badly lit on the morning of the accident.

22. *Mr. Edden.*] Can you prove that the station-masters do receive bonuses of the nature you describe? It is known in the Railway Department. I have heard it from railway men themselves. It is a difficult matter for me to produce them. It occurred to me that there might be a record in the Department, because if the practice were followed it would be done under cover of something or would be done

A. Burbank. openly. I am told by commercial travellers and by railway men that it is a recognised thing that station-masters are paid bonuses for running the stations as cheaply as possible. When I left Tamworth, after being ill there and impoverished for nearly twelve months, I was out of business, I was not earning anything, and I was under very great expense. I felt that there was something amiss, and that my witnesses had not been called correctly. I was sure that, if I had received better advice, I could bring the whole matter to a more definite conclusion. I therefore asked the Railway Commissioners to give me a pass for myself and family to West Maitland. They sent me a pass, and when it was presented to the station-master (Wise) on the railway station he made this remark, "Damn the fellow and his pass." I should be glad if the Committee would obtain for me the departmental record of John White, who was night officer on 2nd July, 1897, and the same record of Playford, the porter, at that date. From the Police Department I should like to have the record of Constable Beeby, late of the force. It would include the report from the police at Tamworth, and the medical report in reference to Beeby in the month of May, 1898, covering, of course, the period up to his resignation.

2 Aug., 1900.

23. *Chairman.*] What is your object in trying to get these records? To show that these men were so unreliable that they were willing to swear anything. They committed absolute perjury. I should like also the report from the railway people as to Wise's statement that no complaint had ever been made of the bad lighting on the Tamworth station. To qualify that, I quote the fact that a man named Morrison had his leg broken through falling off a portion of the Tamworth platform, about the year 1890. If this matter comes before the Railway Commissioners they may read this, and take it upon themselves to hold an inquiry into Wise's conduct; and it is only in that connection that I make the statement that Wise has left his work during business hours to show intending tenants over his houses.

24. You want to show that he frequently neglected his duty? Yes. I desire also to make this statement: That Harry Cousens, the foreman of the jury, was drunk during two days after the case, and was seen arm-in-arm with Wise, the station-master. I have a witness who saw him. Whether my solicitor will produce him now or not, I do not know. My solicitor is against me now. He tried to show his friendship to me in many ways to hide his deficiencies. He told me of this occurrence after the case; but I have another witness who saw Cousens.

25. *Mr. Dight.*] Who is Cousens? A stock and station agent. Wise, the station-master, is a personal friend of Mr. Tribe, the solicitor. Cousens, who was foreman of the jury, is also a personal friend of Tribe's.

26. *Chairman.*] This being a civil case, had you any opportunity of fixing the jury—of seeing that it was composed of men who would be likely to go straight? I was only able to speak with my solicitor when I was brought down in a cab to the Court. I saw among the eight jurymen on the panel Cousens. They balloted for four, and Cousens was one of the number chosen.

27. *Mr. Edden.*] Did you challenge or object to any of the jurymen? No; I left that to my solicitor. He told me that Cousens had business with the Commissioners, and I said, "We had better cross him off." Tribe said, "No; do not cross him off; he is bound to be with us." I should like to refer to some remarks of the Judge in quoting excerpts from some other judgments, because it had some influence probably upon the jury. He said, addressing the jury, "If you give a verdict for the plaintiff you must remember that our experience is that where professional men claim substantial damages, and get them, it is not long before they have their surgeries and waiting-rooms full of patients, and have more business than they were doing previously; and on account of this, when a medical man gained a large sum of money from the Railway Commissioners after the Redfern railway accident, a special Act was passed by which the amount was limited to £2,000." Looking towards the barristers, Judge Stephens said, "Some of the legal gentlemen will remember the case I refer to." Mr. Scholes said, "Yes, your Honor—Dr. Maher." The Judge replied, "I am not mentioning names; but that is the case I refer to." Again he said, "You must also remember this, gentlemen of the jury, in considering your verdict: The plaintiff may be injured; but it is a question as to how much he is injured, and how far his injury will affect his chance of renewing his business, because, gentlemen of the jury, a man may have an accident which has the appearance of being of a permanent character, and yet it is not so; but I will cite you the case of a very serious accident, more serious than this one, that happened to a gentleman, a Member of Parliament, who had both his arms and his legs cut off, and yet was able to mount his horse and ride; and he could shoot, and a very good shot he was, too. So, gentlemen of the jury, you will be guided by this case when considering your verdict."

28. *Chairman.*] I presume he was referring to the House of Commons case? Yes.

29. But the member, I thought, was born in that way? Yes; I merely mention the matter, because I wished to point out that cases of that sort going to a jury must have a very strong effect upon them. It seemed to me, from hearing the Judge cite such a case for the information of the jury, that he favoured the defendant. It must be taken in conjunction with the fact that he allowed the jury to attend the railway station at night, when the station authorities lit every lamp—there being newly-cleaned globes with fresh burners, making a really brilliantly-lit station, and his not having the sense of justice to insist upon me, the plaintiff, going to the station also, and showing the jury how I saw it on the morning of the accident. I consider that that was not a just way in which to treat a plaintiff. What I say may seem irrelevant, but when I come to the end of the case, I think the Committee will see that it has every bearing upon the final position in which I find myself at this moment. It is known, of course, that the verdict was for the defendants. Before leaving the Court, a message was sent to me through my solicitor that the Commissioners could be approached by friends of mine—that if they would make representations to the Commissioners it was possible that they might make a grant of money to me. They quoted the case of a reverend gentleman—a Catholic priest—who was injured, and to whom the Commissioners gave a sum of money upon such representations. Two of my friends were in communication with the solicitor, Mr. Tribe, and they met together with the intention of sending a joint letter to the Commissioners. Tribe was to write it. He came to my house and told me that the letter had been written and sent to the Commissioners. At that time, knowing how unjust the verdict was, I asked Tribe if it were not possible to appeal against it. He said, "No, we are too late; the notice had to be given on the termination of the case." On the occasion of another visit, Tribe said that he had received a private message from his agents in Sydney, Messrs. Curtiss and Barry, to the effect that his letter had been received by the Commissioners, and was being favourably considered. He said his agents had special means of knowing what took place in the Commissioners' office. I wrote a letter to one of the local newspapers, the *Tamworth News*, the original of which I now produce. It is as follows:—

To

To the Editor,—
Sir,

Hill-street, Tamworth, 15 April, 1898. A. Burbank.

Will you kindly grant me space in your next issue to express my heartfelt and grateful thanks to those fellow townsmen—both witnesses and friendly supporters—who so loyally stood by me in my recent Court trials. It is not politic for me to vent any personal animus or reiterate publicly my own convictions regarding the case, but it may be granted that I am appalled at the serious financial results the verdict has thrown upon me, and, added to my physical disablement, the outlook may truly be a dark one. I acted throughout as the spirit of truth dictated to me, but the uncertainty of law results is amply indicated in this case.

I shall be favoured if my friends and sympathisers will accept an open invitation to at any time call and see me for an exchange of opinion, as I am unable to leave the house.

Very faithfully,
A. BURBANK.

30. That letter did not appear in the newspaper? No. It was returned to me, with an intimation from the editor, Mr. Joseph, who is since dead, that Mr. Tribe thought it best not to publish it, as it would spoil my chances with the Commissioners, and Tribe's efforts, with other friends, to induce them to assist me financially. Joseph afterwards told me that the Commissioners were sending up for copies of the local newspapers to see the report of the case. I could not get a correct opinion as to the appeal. I was in this position at that time: I was unable to afford any money to pay lawyers fees further than the men I had employed; but I felt that there was something amiss. I did not wish to show my feeling of resentment towards Tribe; but I was at the same time afraid to consult other solicitors, for fear they might communicate with him. I asked Mr. Joseph, the editor, how long an appeal would lie after a case had been decided. He did not know. He said also, "I think you would be wise to let the business stand as it is, and put up with the verdict, because the Railway Department would fight you with all their power to beat you." I again saw Tribe, and he said everything was going favourably in connection with the matter, and that the Commissioners had sent up for copies of the local newspapers.

31. *Mr. Edden.*] Before you proceed further with your explanation I should like to ask you a few questions. On the morning of the accident, you had a box on the platform. What became of that box after the accident;—was it taken straight away from the station on that morning? No; on the next morning, at about 11 o'clock.

32. In whose charge was the box up to that time? In charge of the railway authorities.

33. Did you book the box? There was no necessity to do so.

34. Was it not overweight? No. I am allowed to carry 85 lb., and the box was only 80 lb.

35. Was it labelled? Yes. That is sworn to in affidavits.

36. Was it the box falling upon your leg that caused it to be broken? That is what one man says was the cause; but I have an affidavit to prove that he has committed perjury.

37. *Chairman.*] Did Tribe submit to you a copy of the letter which he says he sent to the Railway Commissioners? No. Briefly stated the case is this: Mr. Harry Stoddart called upon me at my house, and said, "Some friends of yours with myself are having a letter sent to the Commissioners, asking them to consider the case, and see if they can give you a grant of money. Tribe is acting for us, and will write the letter. I want you not to place too much reliance upon what may be done as the outcome of that letter. So you may put the matter entirely from your mind now, and see by and by what will come of it." His object was to dissuade me in my then state of health from dwelling too much upon the possibilities of the recommendation. I never again mentioned the matter to Stoddart, trusting implicitly in Tribe. The reason I continued to trust in Tribe at that special time was that he came to my house on one occasion, and expressed regret at losing the case, and said he had done his best. That is the point at which Tribe commenced to give me information about the letter having been sent. I saw Tribe again about the matter, and he said that Cousens, the foreman of the jury, was going down to see the Commissioners on business, and that whilst there he would speak to them, and support the letter which had been sent on my behalf. I told Tribe that Cousens had lost his chance of doing me justice, and that I did not want his interference now. Tribe replied, "You are foolish to object to Cousens, because he has influence with the Commissioners. If any man can help to get a grant for you, he can." I saw Tribe afterwards, and he said, "I have just received an account from my agents, Curtiss and Barry, and they mention your fees." He added, "Of course, Curtiss and Barry would expect fees for keeping me informed on your behalf." He said, however, that, as he knew I had no money, he would pay Curtiss and Barry himself. I again saw him, and he said he could not understand the delay regarding the favourable consideration of my case by the Commissioners, but that his agents had written to say that, after careful consideration, the matter had been passed on to another Department—he thought the Treasury. I again saw him, but he began to get impatient, and he said he was doing his best in my interests, and could not understand the delay. He advised me to watch the list appearing in the daily newspapers, showing the amounts granted in the monthly supply bills. I determined to leave Tamworth and sift the enigma myself, and I asked Tribe to raise a loan on our furniture. He was weeks preventing my raising any money to get away, although there were three men in the town who would have lent some money to me on the furniture. I should mention that Tribe came up to see me about June, 1898, and said that he was going down to the city to defend a case against the Debt Collecting Company, and that while down he would inquire the reason why no answer had come to our letter. On his return he said he was strongly advised by Mr. Harris, in the solicitor's office of the Commissioners, not to see Mr. Oliver and explain matters, because everything was going favourably, and an interview would look as though Tribe was only asking for me so that he might get extra fees for himself. I suspected Tribe's *bona fides*, and sold what furniture we had, and came to Maitland. I had then been ill a year—a helpless cripple, on crutches. That ends my connection with Tamworth up to that date. With reference to the statement of the Commissioners that I should have made an advance to them with the object of arriving at an amicable settlement, after the case, with the object of their making a grant to me, I find that, notwithstanding the representations Tribe had made to me on the subject, no letter had been written. As soon as I left Tamworth I intended going down to see the Commissioners, and at that time I did not want Tribe to understand what my feelings were towards him. I wanted to finally test him, to see whether he had been playing a game to suit himself. In that connection I wrote this letter to him:—

Dear Mr. Tribe,

Elgin-street, West Maitland, 22 July, 1898.

You will be pleased to hear that we arrived safely, and are located at the above address. Whilst I had a little cash at command I thought it best to run down to Sydney and see really how things were going, and endeavour to interview Mr. Oliver. Mr. Harris received me kindly, and spoke most sympathetically, but Mr. Oliver was away at some country inspection. He seemed to know little, if anything, of any joint letter from you and other Tamworth friends; but he informed me that Mr. Cousens had received a letter from the Commissioners shortly after his return to Tamworth, in which they

A. Burbank. they informed him (Cousens) that they refused absolutely to entertain any request on my behalf. The Commissioners regarded the claim as a business matter, and having chosen to settle it by going to Court, I must abide by the result.
 2 Aug., 1900. That Cousens has taken upon himself to withhold the receipt of a letter from the Commissioners bearing such momentous news away from you and me—for all those long days of heart-breaking anxiety—is, to say the least of it, uncalled for.

I will concede that his anxiety to repair his cruel verdict by a conciliatory appeal to the Commissioners was a natural one, but my own judgment and suggestions should have been consulted before such an extreme step was taken by him.

I can see now, dear old friend, how keenly and more hopeless you were in feeling for me as time after time I came for even a scintilla of hope of good news—and all that time Cousens held the key to my fate in his pocket.

Oh, the cruelty of it! May God deal even-handed justice out to those who have so cruelly wronged me. Will you get from Cousens a copy of the letter sent to him, and a verbatim statement of his interview with Mr. Fehon? Would you, as an alternative, advise me to write to Cousens myself and ask him how far he pressed my cause with Fehon, and any other matter he chooses to give? You must forgive any vivid expressions of personal feeling in this letter, but I know myself to be the victim of an iniquitous injustice, and my heart revolts.

I forgot to tell you that I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Garland—he was kindness itself, and he gave me some friendly advice, which I will act upon. I only wish my prospects in business had not been so rudely upset, and so cut short my life amongst you all in Tamworth; but time will never efface from the memories of my wife and myself the genuine friendship and sterling worth that was shown us by so many of its residents. Be assured, dear friend, of the valued help and advice from you being appreciated, and may I ask a future loyal co-operation should I find it necessary to appeal to you?
 Believe me, very sincerely,
 ALBERT BURBANK.

I received no reply, no communication, from him from that date to this. I wrote to Mr. Stoddart, one of the friendly committee who were supposed to have sent the letter to the Commissioners, and I asked him what was the purport of the letter which had been written. He replied that no letter had ever been written, and that after he had seen me Mr. Tribe advised that no letter should be sent, but that as Cousens was going down he would do better than any letter. I decided to go and see the Commissioners and request a hearing, so as to place certain facts before them in support of the letter supposed to have been sent by Tribe on my behalf by my friends at Tamworth asking for a grant of money.

38. *Mr. T. Brown.*] When you waited upon the Commissioners, you were under the impression that your friends had sent the letter? Yes; I saw Mr. Harris, the managing clerk of the railway solicitor, and who is responsible for the whole of the legal work done then and during the trial. At this date, about 3rd August, 1898, the Commissioners were away on tour, and I told Mr. Harris that I wanted to see Mr. Oliver and explain to him how justified I felt in bringing the action, and that although I was defeated in the Court I thought that I could show a good case for a grant of money. Mr. Harris said, "I feel sure that Mr. Oliver will not see you." He also said, "Do you know the strongest witness against you in the Court?" I said, "Who?" and he answered, "Your box; partly on account of size, and the jury believing that it contained a great weight." I said, "The jury had no evidence leading them to believe that, because my evidence was that it contained only 80 lb."

39. *Chairman.*] If it had contained more than that weight, you would have been charged for it? Yes.

40. *Mr. T. Brown.*] Was any evidence submitted to indicate that it contained a greater weight? The other side said that it contained over a hundredweight; but they never weighed it, and the same box has gone out on twelve or more different occasions in the same way in connection with my business. The box was in Court, and they never tested its weight. My evidence gave the weight of the box at under the ticket allowance of 85 lb. I was asked by Harris whether there were not many entries at the different stations showing that I had paid excess upon the box. I replied, "Yes; I always paid when I carried excess weight during my journeys. That was caused through an accumulation of plaster models at each of the ten towns I visited; but I always went away light from Tamworth." I asked Mr. Harris why no reply had been sent in answer to the letter from my friends, supposed to have been sent through Mr. Tribe. He went in to see Mr. McLachlan; but when he returned he said, "Mr. McLachlan does not know anything about any letter; but Mr. Cousens came in to see the Commissioners, and Mr. Fehon saw him. Mr. McLachlan also saw Cousens when he was here, and a letter was sent to him informing him that the Commissioners would not do anything for you. You had brought an action against them, and, being defeated, you must put up with the consequences." It was at that time that I wrote the final letter to Tribe, and got no reply. I came again to Sydney in August, 1898, when I could ill-afford the expense, and I again saw Mr. Harris.

41. As a matter of fact, you had to borrow money for your expenses? Yes; when I saw Mr. Harris he said, "Mr. Oliver will not see you." I said I would not go back to Maitland without a hearing. I was then taken into Mr. Kirkcaldie. That was on 9th August, 1898. I asked him for consideration of a money gratuity, in regard to which an application had already been sent in by my friends at Tamworth to the Commissioners. I did not know that at that particular time that no letter had been sent. I did not make the discovery until after that date. I pointed out the serious nature of the accident, the destruction of my business, and my inability to properly renew it. I also pointed out that the porter had led me over the obstruction. Mr. Kirkcaldie replied that I had brought an action against the Commissioners and had been defeated, and now asked for a gratuity. He said, "Why did you not approach the Commissioners before taking action?" I said, "I did on two separate occasions." The first was by letter, two days after the accident, written by my brother; and the second occasion was when Tribe came down at Christmas, in 1897, when I instructed him to see the Commissioners and ask for a consultation, and then he was told that the Commissioners preferred to fight the case. In answer to the first letter the Commissioners had said that they would not recognise any responsibility. Mr. Kirkcaldie expressed surprise that I had made any attempt to approach them, and he asked me if I would close the interview and allow him to make inquiries, and that he would communicate with me again. On that same evening I received a private letter delivered from Mr. Harris, to this effect:—

Dear Sir,
 Mr. T. W. Harris wishes me to write you asking that you will kindly see him some time after 7 o'clock this evening. He may be detained a little after 7; but will you kindly remain in so that he may have an opportunity of seeing you.
 Yours truly,
 RAILWAY SOLICITOR'S OFFICE.
 WALTER S. FULLWOOD.

Mr. Harris called at the Coffee Palace, in Pitt-street, at 9 p.m. He said that the object of his visit was to convey a message from Mr. Kirkcaldie. He was to say that if I would write a letter denying the sentence in a letter written at my dictation by Mr. Victor Burbank, in which I held the Commissioners responsible for my accident, and would also express my regret for bringing the action, he was told to say that the letter would be favourably considered at a meeting at 10:30 the next morning by the Commissioners. During the conversation I pointed out that I had an object in view in seeing the Commissioners on this special

special visit, and that I desired to place certain facts before them showing that I felt justified in all that I had done. While not saying "Yes" or "No" to him I was anticipating that night hearing from Mr. Kirkcaldie in continuation of our interview. Mr. Harris strongly advised me, "as between you and I and the gatepost," that it would be best for me to write the letter and let him take it straight away, because he said, "You know you have no show of reopening the case, and this offer is the only means you have of getting anything out of the Commissioners. The Commissioners have heard the facts from start to finish, and all you may say will not alter their opinion." I replied that the Commissioners had heard only one side, and that my story would put a different complexion upon the whole affair. He said "You will be foolish to attempt any explanation, as it will spoil your chances now." I declined to write any letter then, and returned a message that I was gratified at being met with Mr. Kirkcaldie's courteous words, but I desired to carry out my resolve to continue our conversation of yesterday with him. Mr. Harris made an appointment for 9:30 on Thursday.

42. *Chairman.*] Was there no definite offer made to you by the Commissioners? Yes. As you will see, Mr. Kirkcaldie referred at once to the letter written two days after the accident, saying that I held the Commissioners responsible, and said that it was not holding out the olive branch. I replied that it was written by my brother, who was a layman, and was a *bona fide* statement of my condition and knowledge at that time. Mr. Kirkcaldie doubted the letter being written by a layman, and at my dictation, but I assured him it was so. I then explained to him that my solicitor had told me that he had come down at Christmas time, and had seen the Commissioners, but that his answer was that they would fight the case. Mr. Kirkcaldie said, "How can you come and ask for any consideration after the court action." I replied that what I did was not without justification, having regard to the condition of the station, and I then gave him a general outline of the cause of the accident, but he checked me from going into particulars of the case, and said, "If you will withdraw your objectionable sentence in that letter, and express regret for having taken the case to court, I will place your letter before the Commissioners for favourable consideration." I said I would not commit myself to such a lie. Mr. Kirkcaldie said, "But I presume that now that you have lost your action you do regret what you have done." I said, "I regret losing the action, and my money, and being crippled for life. A different verdict would have been given if I could have had the case heard, as in Equity." Mr. Kirkcaldie replied, "Is it plain, Burbank, that you want more law; but you have no earthly chance of having the case reopened, unless, as Mr. Harris says, you take it to the Privy Council." I said, "Supposing I have new and definite witnesses, can I bring the case on again?" He replied, "No: I will give you my assurance that after the jury decided against you you had no chance in the world, not with fifty witnesses." I said, "Well, Mr. Kirkcaldie, I cannot doubt you, and as I am so poor, and my family are in want, if I write a letter expressing regret, and stating that I did not desire to take action from the first—will that do?" I meant by that that I relied upon the solicitor's interview with the Commissioners showing that I was anxious for a private settlement. "Yes," he replied, "You must say that you were ill-advised in taking proceedings by your solicitor and barrister. Then let us have your letter as soon as possible, and I will represent the matter as favourably as I know how to the Commissioners." I then wrote the following letter:—

The Railway Commissioners,—
Gentlemen,

Elgin-street South, West Maitland, 11 August, 1898.

Since my interview with you, and after calm reflection, I beg to ask your favourable consideration for the gratuity to help me to lighten the dreadful distress which, through the unfortunate accident, has befallen myself, wife, and children, and enable me to re-establish my business as a dentist which was broken up through my inability to continue it.

I can only assure you, gentlemen, that it was originally my intention to leave the justice of any decision in your hands; but during my physical and mental suffering I was induced by a solicitor and barrister to take legal proceedings, which I now see were ill-advised. Whilst regretting the course that was taken, may I crave your sympathy and practical help in view of my crippled condition and the long effort it will be to recoup, by working, the expenditure to date of £544. Trusting for a favourable reply.

I am, &c.,

A. E. BURBANK.

I purposely put in the amount of £544, because I wanted to show to the Commissioners that if they gave me any help at all it must be an amount which would assist me to pay the debts which were consequent upon the accident, and also assist me to pull my business together again. The reply received was as follows:—

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 13 August, 1898.

I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to acknowledge receipt of yours of the 11th instant, and to express regret that you should have suffered such heavy expense endeavouring to maintain an action in which you never had any prospect of success. I am further to point out that by your course of proceeding you have forced them, in the exercise of a public duty, to expend large sums of money in carrying on their defence, which, although justified by the anticipated result, cannot be viewed with unmixed satisfaction.

Had you originally approached the Commissioners in the spirit displayed by your letter now under reply, you would no doubt have been treated with exceptional consideration.

Even now, and although you have without success invoked the aid of the Supreme Court against them, the Commissioners, reviewing the lamentable circumstances which you describe, are prepared to express their practical sympathy by a grant of £100.

I am, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,

Secretary.

Mr. A. E. Burbank, Elgin-street South, West Maitland.

This letter was in contradiction, firstly, of what I state was the condition of my case, and secondly, on the action that I took,—that is to say, the Commissioners say "An action in which you never had any prospects of success." I know the prospects of success I had had my witnesses been all available, and had the case been tried under those circumstances. They also said, "Had you originally approached the Commissioners in the spirit displayed by your letter now under reply, you would, no doubt, have been treated with exceptional consideration." I made the only attempt I could to approach them through my legal advisers.

43. And you are satisfied that he did not approach them? Yes. Being in that position, and being so poor at the time, and being so very ill and on crutches, I was compelled under the circumstances, believing myself deserted by men who should have supported me—indeed, I had no alternative but to accept the amount. This is the letter I wrote to the Railway Commissioners in reply to their offer:—

The Railway Commissioners,—
Gentlemen,

Elgin-street South, West Maitland, 15 August, 1898.

Your communication dated 13th August, to hand, and in reply I shall avail myself of your offer to present me with a grant of £100, and hereby accept it. My financial necessities are abnormally pressing, and may I ask for a realisation of your favour at the earliest moment.

I am, &c.,

ALBERT BURBANK.

The

A. Burbank. The Solicitor for the Railway Commissioners replied as follows :—

2 Aug., 1900.

Sir,
arranged.

I beg to inform you that on Monday next I shall be in West Maitland when I will hand you cheque for £100 as arranged.

Solicitor for Railways' Office, Sydney, 24 August, 1898.

I have, &c.,

JAMES C. THOM,

Solicitor for Railways.

As a matter of fact he disappointed me, and it was over a week before he came up and paid me the money. 44. Mr. Dight.] But you did get it eventually? Yes. I accepted the money from Mr. Thom under protest. I gave the following receipt to him :—

"To amount agreed to be paid to above-named Albert Burbank as an act of grace, and in full satisfaction and discharge of all claims and damages whatsoever in respect of injuries sustained by him at Tamworth on the date, 2nd July, 1897."

In receiving the cheque I protested to Mr. Thom that I had been treated unfairly in being given only £100, and that that would pay only a little more than the medical expenses. I said that I thought I might have been granted a more substantial amount, considering my great injury. I said I thought another "nought" should be added to the cheque. I told him that the doctor's account came to £84, and he remarked, "Is the doctor's account so much as that?" At that time, as I say, I believed that I was deserted by all the witnesses who could have appeared, and I was influenced to come to that decision by what my solicitor had told me regarding them. When I found that the Commissioners charged me with bringing an action in which I never had any prospect of success, I went to Mr. Thompson, the solicitor at West Maitland, and asked him whether he could advise me in the case, and from that time he and I worked to obtain interviews with the missing witnesses, with the result that everyone whom I have mentioned as a favourable witness for me at the trial, and who could have been called, has given me a sworn affidavit, which I have already produced. Having obtained these affidavits, Mr. Thompson advised me that it was only right that I should address my case again to the Commissioners, pointing out the witnesses I now had, and that had their evidence been given, the verdict would probably have been altered. I then saw the Member for the district, Mr. Gillies, and asked him if he would look into the merits of the case, telling him that I had been advised to approach the Commissioners, and Mr. Gillies verified my version by seeing the Commissioners, and he said he would endeavour to get me an interview with them. Mr. Thompson took it upon himself to write a letter to Mr. Thom, of which this is a copy :—

Burbank v. Commissioners.

Dear Sir,

You will remember this case, tried at Tamworth, in which you got a verdict for the Commissioners, and you know that they afterwards made him a concession of £100, being satisfied themselves, I believe, that he had sustained very severe injuries, and had been injudiciously advised in not approaching them in the first instance in a conciliatory manner.

Some time since he saw me on the matter, and he so satisfied me that he had a good case that I determined, as a matter of kindness, and without charge, to do what I could to get the matter reconsidered; for I felt quite certain that the Commissioners, individually and collectively, would be willing to do him absolute justice, even although they had already made the concession, if they were satisfied—firstly, that he had a good case; and, secondly, that the concession did not meet its merits.

I heard in various ways that there were a great number of witnesses who might have been called to prove and support the case that he wished to make, but who were not called, and amongst them were Mr. Benjamin Owen, Mr. Cooke, Mr. Howlett, Mrs. Howlett, Mr. George Tribe, Mrs. Tribe, John Milligan, and others; but it appears his then solicitor was so confident of success that he did not consider it worth while to lengthen the case by calling them.

The result of my inquiries has been to show me, as a man of some experience in our profession, that his confidence was misplaced, and that every available witness should have been called; and the strong probability is, if they had been called, that Mr. Burbank would have had a verdict for a large amount.

I say a large amount, for he was crippled for life, with the further result that he cannot follow his business as a dentist, as he cannot get about without a pair of sticks, and is permanently disabled from using the treadle, which is an absolute necessity in his business, as his working leg is shortened, and he is now, therefore, on the verge of pauperism.

The amount which the Commissioners were good enough to allow him, covered by a few pounds only what he paid his doctor and his chemist, while his actual expenses up to that time were upwards of £500, and no part of it went to his former solicitor, or his counsel, or to myself.

Quite a number of the witnesses who might have been called have volunteered to make declarations, some of which go to show that Ryan (since dismissed by the Commissioners), Beeby, the policeman (since retired from the force), and other witnesses for the Commissioners, whose living depended on their evidence, were wrong in that evidence, and that the account given by Mr. Burbank, as to the character and cause of his accident, was absolutely correct.

These declarations Mr. Burbank purposes to place before the Commissioners, if they will kindly grant him an interview, and, on the strength of the evidence contained in them, to ask them to make an extraordinary precedent in his case, and, although they have already made the concession referred to (for which he is very grateful), that they will reconsider the whole of the circumstances; and, as the result has been so serious to him, that they will grant him such a sum as will recoup him in some measure for the pain and misery which he has suffered so long, and for the attendant pecuniary loss.

I do hope that in thus addressing you, you will not consider I am going out of my way when I further ask you to lend your weight on the side of mercy, for I am very sure from what I have seen of you that you would be one of the last to press for strict legal rights as far as the Commissioners are concerned, if you are satisfied that Mr. Burbank in this matter, whilst kindly and, in their view, liberally treated already by the Commissioners after they had beaten him, was brought to his present miserable condition, bodily and financially, by the carelessness and negligence of their servants; or that such carelessness and negligence in any degree contributed to it.

I, of course, anticipate that you will be consulted in the matter, or otherwise I should not have troubled you with my views; but in any case I can ask you to excuse me for addressing you at such length, for I know of no sadder case than to see a strong able man, who was making a good living in a proper and decent way, struck down so as to be almost helpless and unable to support himself and his wife and young children.

Mr. Gillies obtained an interview with the Commissioners for me after some difficulty. I saw Mr. Commissioner Fehon and Mr. Commissioner Kirkcaldie on 3rd August, 1899, in the presence of Mr. J. Gillies, M.P. for West Maitland, at 2.30 p.m., in Mr. Fehon's room. Mr. Fehon reviewed my case, and said in effect:—"You have come, Mr. Burbank, as I understand from Mr. Gillies, to ask the Commissioners further consideration of your case. We are custodians of the public purse regarding the railways, and unless you can show very great reasons for our doing so, we cannot give your case further consideration. We have already tested your claim against us in a Court of Law, when you were defeated. Even after that decision you came to us, and we gave you £100, so that we fail to see how we can further listen to an appeal from you. Mr. Gillies tells us you have come with some documents to show us, and has asked us if we will hear what you have to say." I then gave a *resumé* of the case, with clear details, regarding each of my witnesses, and how the accident was caused. I produced a number of affidavits from several independent persons who were present on the morning of the accident, and whose evidence would have altered the complexion of the case had they been present. I gave the reasons why I believed these witnesses were not allowed to be present at the trial, and I said that I had obtained their affidavits,

because

because they had not been called upon to give evidence through the neglect or connivance of my solicitor, A. Burbank. Tribe, who could have obtained their several statements by ordinary legal procedure. The Commissioners combatted all the statements and information I gave them, and doggedly refused to admit that I had brought anything before them strong enough to alter their view, or to induce them to reconsider my request for an increased gratuity, or to induce them to doubt their servant's honesty. Mr. Fehon repeatedly said, "You see, Mr. Gillies, he has not given any new material to warrant us in interfering again in the matter." Mr. Gillies answered, "I think, Mr. Fehon, that Mr. Burbank has shown you by his affidavits and statements that your servants have either committed perjury, or that there has been very grave injustice done throughout the whole case." I further said, "My reason for seeing you is, that if I can show you where an injustice has been done me through your servants, you would acknowledge the seriousness of my statements supported by these affidavits, and thus give me a chance to prove to you that your servants deceived you by their statements regarding the cause of the accident, and the extent of your responsibilities. Upon those false statements you built up your defence to the action." Mr. Fehon eventually said, "I will tell you what you can do. Write out a letter detailing all you wish to say about the accident, and what you desire done, and let me have it as soon as convenient. I will lay the matter before the Commissioners, and let you have an answer. My reply was the following letter:—

The Railway Commissioners,—
Gentlemen,

Victoria Coffee Palace, 3 August, 1899.

I have the honor to approach the Commissioners relative to my position and health, following upon a broken leg which occurred in July, 1897, at Tamworth railway station. As is known, I brought an action against the Railway Department for damages, with the result that a verdict was given against me. In writing now I beg to appeal to the generosity of the Commissioners to assist me with a monetary grant in my almost helpless condition, consequent upon the peculiar and serious nature of the injury. The break occurred across the main thigh bone, obliquely, and into the knee-joint—a compound fracture, wholly displacing the knee-cap and tearing the contiguous sinews and muscles. Although now the bone and muscles have become attached again it has left the joint ankylosed so that the knee will only bend half way, and the excessive osseous growth has enlarged the knee-joint and above it so much that it is always in a bent position, and so weak and flaccid that little weight or standing can be put upon it. The same side foot is always swollen and painful, due to the drawn up ligatures and muscles, and the length of the leg has decreased 1 inch, requiring a built up boot to equalise the height. I have explained the injuries so fully, because both right leg and knee are the essentials to work the treadle lathe in my business as a dentist; and, although I have tried to use the leg, I find it impossible to do so from pain and weakness. Owing to my long-continued illness I am now unfitted to resume dental work and am reduced to the verge of starvation. I have a delicate wife and small family dependent on me, and, in my helpless state, they share my poverty. I have existed during the long interval of two years upon the bounty of my friends, from whom I have borrowed money, and also obtained credit for food from many tradespeople in Tamworth and Maitland, who have hoped with me that the time would come when I could get back to work and pick up a neglected personal business connection again; but the wish is hopeless. I know my dental career is ended. I must begin life again in a different sphere. In this earnest appeal to the Commissioners to help me—if they will do so, may I explain how keenly, mentally, I feel my downfall, when, had I been in my usual health during the past two years I would have earned £800 per year, but on the reverse, that amount is lost with all future dental business, and I have contracted debts of honor to £500. Under all these distressful circumstances may I hope for the Commissioners' monetary help in order to give me a business footing again and enable me soon to earn my freedom from these obligations. I must apologise that my letter is long and earnest, but I feel that the lives of myself, wife, and children rest upon your decision. May I ask, as an exceptional favour, that I know your wishes as early as convenient. I attach a copy of Owen's affidavit, which was not available at my interview.

ALBERT BURBANK.

A letter was written in reply to Mr. Thompson's letter by Mr. Thom, in these terms:—

Railway Commissioners' Ats: Burbank.

Dear Sir,

Solicitor for Railways' Office, Bridge-street, Sydney, 20 July, 1899.

I am in receipt of your letter of 17th instant, written on behalf of the above-named plaintiff, in which you seek to have his claim reconsidered by the Railway Commissioners.

I have brought all the circumstances attending the trial, and the subsequent payment to Mr. Burbank again under the notice of the Commissioners, and am instructed to inform you that the case cannot be reopened.

Yours truly,

JAMES C. THOM,
Solicitor for Railways.

R. W. Thompson, Esq., Solicitor, West Maitland.

Here is the reply which they sent to my letter of the 3rd August, 1899:—

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 8 August, 1899.

With reference to your letter of 3rd instant, relative to accident to you at Tamworth in July, 1897, and asking the Commissioners to grant you further assistance, I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to inform you that the matter has had their further consideration, and I am to express their regret that the circumstances of the case are such that they do not feel justified in reopening it, unless you can establish the statement made by you that some of the principal witnesses at the trial committed perjury in the interests of the Railway Commissioners when the action taken by you was defended.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

Mr. Albert Burbank, Victoria Coffee Palace, 208, Pitt-street, Sydney.

Subsequent to that, I consulted with my friends, and they thought that the only way to have the matter investigated, and show that an injustice had been done to me was to ask the Member for the district to bring the matter before the House and ask for a Select Committee, which has been done. I think my case is one in which the Commissioners have shown an absolute callousness as to whether I lived or died. They never communicated to me one word of sympathy, or inquired by writing one line whether I was alive or dead. I lay for a full week between life and death, and they sent me no message of condolence or inquiry as to my condition. I might have died like a dog for all they cared. My wife and children, more especially my wife, have suffered with me. My wife has been very much broken in health, and the accident has made me comparatively an old man, and has ruined my business, so that at the present time I cannot earn more than an average of from 25s. to 30s. a week. I can only live now through my wife assisting me by taking boarders.

45. Are you liable at any time to fall down on account of your accident? I can never go out at night-time, because I slip so easily. It is only on very favourable occasions that I can use one stick; as a rule I have to use two sticks. I have fallen completely down on the ground by simply trying to take a step a little longer than usual.

46. I believe that within the past fortnight you had a serious fall? Yes, within the past three weeks; I am liable at any time to fall. From earning a full competence to a condition of penury is a big drop. I would ask now if it lies in the power of the Committee that they will deal as between the Commissioners and myself in an equitable way. I will explain what I mean. I have had to appear here totally unprepared, as far as legal knowledge is concerned, and I should not like the Commissioners to have the advantage of a legal man present to argue their case before the Committee.

WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

MR. DIGHT,

MR. MEAGHER,

MR. SPENCE.

J. GILLIES, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Hugh McLachlan called in, sworn, and examined:—

H.
McLachlan.
15 Aug., 1900.

47. *Chairman.*] You are Secretary to the Railway Commissioners? Yes.
48. You are cognisant with the circumstances of the case of Albert Burbank against the Railway Commissioners at Tamworth? Yes.
49. Have you brought a report showing the consumption of gas at the Tamworth Railway Station during the three months prior to 1st July, 1897, and three months subsequent to the 1st July, 1897? Yes.
50. Do you produce it? Yes. [*Report produced. Vide Appendix B1.*]
51. Do you also produce the departmental record of Jas. Playford, a porter at the Tamworth Railway Station? Yes. [*Report produced. Vide Appendix B2.*]
52. Mr. Wise, the Station-master at Tamworth, made a statement regarding this matter, and said that no complaint had ever been made with regard to the lighting of the station. Do you know anything of the statement? I have no record of any such report having been made. He may have made a statement at the inquiry which was held at the Tamworth Court. I have no official report to that effect. I cannot trace one.
53. Do you wish to say anything about the matter of your own accord? I do not know that it is necessary for me to say anything about the matter. I dare say the members of the Committee are fully cognisant with all that has occurred. This man met with an accident on the Tamworth Railway Station, and sued us for damages. The case went into Court, and was tried by a perfectly impartial tribunal, a thoroughly independent jury. The jury was composed of local townspeople and had no interest in the Railway Department. The case lasted two days. The jury inspected the premises, and saw the station lit up, and then found that Burbank had no claim against the Department. That was a little better than three years ago. Burbank, a year after, wrote a letter to us admitting that he had been ill-advised in taking an action against the Department, and asking that the Commissioners would, as an act of grace, give him something to lighten the distress in which he was placed. I believe the foreman of the jury also saw the Commissioners, stating that he knew Burbank was hard-up, and suggesting that as an act of sympathy the Commissioners might do something for him. He said he knew the man had no claim, but said it would be a graceful act on the part of the Commissioners to take such action in consideration of all the circumstances of the case. The Commissioners, purely as an act of grace and out of sympathy with the man, made a grant of £100. Since then Burbank had been endeavouring to get more; but the Commissioners were quite satisfied that the occurrence was quite accidental, and due to no fault or negligence of the officers of the Department. Burbank had taken the case into Court, and it was tried quite impartially by people who had no interest in us, and they found their verdict for the Commissioners. If Burbank had a claim, he had every opportunity of establishing it. We had no feeling or prejudice against him. He was quite unknown to us, and, if the Commissioners could have leaned to the side of mercy, I am sure they would have done so. This is shown by their action in making the grant they did after he had admitted that he was ill-advised in taking the action.
54. Are you aware that it was at the instance of the Railway Commissioners that he wrote those words, that he had been ill-advised? He may have done so. I do not know of my own knowledge. He did write it and he did take the action which was tried in a court of law.
55. Have you ever heard any complaints with regard to the defective lighting of the Tamworth railway station? Not that I remember.
56. Did not the Tamworth Borough Council communicate with the Railway Commissioners in July of 1897 drawing attention to the Tamworth and West Tamworth Railway Stations and stating that they were deficiently lighted? They might have done so; but not to my knowledge.
57. But they may have done so? Yes. They may have done so, and I may have dealt with the communication; but I have no recollection of it.
58. With regard to Station-master Wise, or the actions of the Railway Commissioners generally with regard to station-masters—do the station-masters receive a reward for services rendered in keeping down expenses at the different railway-stations, in saving lights, and so on? No.
59. Is there no understanding with regard to bonuses? No.
60. With regard to Porter Playford. Is his reputation good according to the record of the department? His reputation is said to be very good. That is according to the record of the department. I do not know him personally.
61. Are you aware whether the solicitor for the Railway Commissioners endeavoured to prevent witnesses from attending at the court at Tamworth when Mr. Burbank's case was proceeding against the Commissioners? No. I would suggest you call the solicitor.
62. Can you swear that they did not try to prevent witnesses from attending? No. I would know absolutely nothing about that. Mr. Thom would act, and we also had a Counsel, and their action would be determined by themselves.
63. Was there a case on all fours with this one in which a man named Belisario, a dentist, was injured? I recollect something of the case; it was a very long time ago.
64. Did the Railway Commissioners give £5,000 to settle the case? My recollection is that Mr. Belisario got a verdict against us. It was a long time ago, and my memory of the case is not perfect; but I think he got a heavy verdict against us, and £3,000 was paid.*
65. Was the case a similar one to this? Yes.
66. *Mr. Spence.*] Is it not a fact that the officers of the Railway Department are expected to keep the platforms clear when passenger trains are departing? Yes, as far as it can reasonably be done; but it cannot always be absolutely clear.
67. *The Chairman.*] Was there not a claim allowed recently of a similar nature? Yes; luggage was being wheeled up on to the platform and being put into the train, and a person ran into the barrow.

68.

NOTE (on revision):—I do not recollect the circumstances.

68. But did not the Commissioners recognise the claim? No; they declined to recognise it, and thought the verdict against us a most unjust one. We are sure there was no negligence. The people in this Colony are not spoon-fed, and are always expected to exercise a certain amount of care.
69. *Mr. Spence.*] In the case of leaving goods on the platform, would not that be carelessness? Everything would depend on the circumstances. The train is only a limited time at the platform, and some goods must necessarily be left on the platform if it is to be put aboard or delivered by the guard.
70. But is it not the duty of the Commissioners to provide men to receive the goods? Yes; we have men on the platform, not only the guard, but porters. This evidence was thoroughly sifted and settled by the jury of townspeople who tried the case at Tamworth, at the time when the incidents were fresh in the memory of witnesses.
71. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Burbank does not hold that? I can understand that a man who has lost his case may not be satisfied with the trial.
72. Is there no case within your knowledge where a jury could be mistaken or got at? It does not make any difference to us, personally, and we had no interest in preventing a fair trial. We understood the men on the jury to be thoroughly reliable people. Mr. Cousins, the foreman of the jury, appears to have a very high reputation.
73. *Mr. Spence.*] Perhaps evidence was not put forward at the time, which would have altered the appearance of the case? You might have expected to get fresher evidence when the case was new and the accident a recent occurrence. The Commissioners did not seek to exclude facts. They always desire to incline to the side of liberality and generous treatment, so far as their duty to the public will allow them.
74. If the station were defectively lit on the occasion of the accident, would the station-master be blameable?—If there were any neglect we would blame the station-master.
75. *The Chairman.*] Do you know if the station-master and the foreman of the jury and the solicitor who appeared for Mr Burbank were very intimate friends? No. I know none of them except by repute, and they are spoken of as being men of standing and character.
76. Perhaps you will remember it was sworn that there was no label on the box? No. I do not recollect it. I did not read the depositions.
77. I think you will admit that the Railway Commissioners try to shirk responsibility in these matters? No. If it is considered there is a case against the Department we will try and settle it. But if there is no case of negligence against us we must safeguard the public interest and prevent unjust claims being made. We are not spending our own money, but the money of the public, and therefore must be careful to protect the public.
78. Your solicitor would naturally try to win the case? When the Commissioners told him it was not a case they could meet, he would naturally do his best to get evidence to support the view.
79. If a dentist doing a good business was permanently injured and unable to follow his calling for three years, and it were proved that the injury was caused by the neglect of the Railway Commissioners' servants, do you think £100 would be a sufficient sum to vote him? No.

H.
McLachlan.
15 Aug., 1900.

William Henry Cooke called in, sworn, and examined:—

80. *Chairman*] You are a clerk in the office of the Inspector-General of Police? Yes.
81. You are here on his behalf? Yes.
82. Do you appear at inquiries like this frequently on his behalf? Yes; I generally appear when papers are to be produced, as I am the Record Clerk of the Department.
83. You were asked to produce a record of Constable John Beeby, formerly a constable of police at Tamworth? Yes.
84. Have you brought the record? Yes; I produce it, signed and certified by the Inspector-General of Police. (*Vide Appendix C.*)
85. Personally, do you know anything about this man? Not beyond what I learned in the records.
86. Was he employed in the Police Department in July, 1897? He joined the force in 1865 and was discharged on 6th February, 1899.
87. Then he was in the employ of the Department in 1897? Yes; he was then stationed at Tamworth.
88. Was he a reliable man as far as the Department knew? Yes, fairly. In the charges against him on the defaulters' sheet are four charges of drunkenness, for which he was discharged.
89. Would you say, in spite of those four charges of drunkenness, that he was fairly reliable? Would you think a man addicted to drink reliable? He might perform his duties to the public very well.
90. And yet be a drunkard? Yes.
91. Do you want this Committee to believe, Mr. Cooke, that a policeman who is a drunkard can perform his duties well towards the public? No, I should not say that, but I should not like to say that he was not a reliable man. Eventually, after the four charges on the sheet, his Superintendent considered that he was not fit for police services, and he was discharged.
92. How comes it that this man was allowed to get drunk four times in the force; why was he allowed four chances;—was there any favouritism? I cannot say. The Inspector-General dealt with each charge.
93. Is it a usual thing to allow a policeman to be charged four times? I could not say.
94. Are there not cases where men have been discharged for one offence? I would not like to say that.
95. It might be said that Beeby was favoured by the Inspector-General of Police? I do not know that. I cannot question the Inspector-General of Police. I simply produce the record. It shows the details. The second charge was for assault, and there are two charges after that before the man was discharged. Why he was given these chances is a matter solely for the Inspector-General of Police, who goes through the papers. I can speak of nothing except what is on the charge sheet.
96. *Mr. Dight.*] Was there a charge against Constable Beeby shortly after the date of Mr. Burbank's case against the Railway Commissioners? There was no charge between 1895 and 1898.
97. Is there nothing in the record there about his having gone out into the bush and been brought back in delirium tremens? No.
98. Nothing about having shot somebody's dog? No.
99. Nothing about his having the horrors and running wild in the bush? No.
100. *Chairman.*] That shows what the Inspector-General knows.
101. *Mr. Dight.*] Is there no record in March or April of any charge of drunkenness? Yes. On March, 1898, being drunk and fighting in the police barracks at 1 a.m., to be reduced one grade in rank and if again reported the papers to be submitted to the Inspector-General.

W. H. Cooke.
15 Aug., 1900.

- W. H. Cooke. 102. Could you say from your own knowledge, or from any documentary evidence in your possession, whether about the time Beeby was in the horrors with drink, he shot a dog belonging to one of the residents of the place, whether he went out into the bush armed, and was captured 10 miles out in the bush by the police and then brought in to the lock-up and sent down to the Receiving House in Sydney? I could not say that.
- 15 Aug., 1900.
103. *Chairman.*] Do you mean to say there are no records in the department about this man having been sent to the Receiving House in Sydney? There may be some, but they do not appear in this sheet.
104. You produce the sheet? Yes.
105. Are you prepared to say it is a full and correct record of Beeby's conduct while he was a policeman? No; I am not.
106. Is it possible there may be some omissions? I could not say.
107. *Mr. Spence.*] Would this not be just the official record, and would there not be other documents and papers on which these decisions would be based? Yes; it may comprise voluminous papers. The charge would perhaps be drunkenness, and it might include a variety of offences. It might be reported by many officers in the district and comprise many details, but there is nothing to show on this Superintendent's record. It is simply a summary, a record of charges against Constable Beeby by the Superintendent of Police at Tamworth. Every man in the force has a similar sheet in which charges against him (if any) are recorded.
108. It would be inquired into fully and dealt with before the record was made up? Yes; in each case the Inspector-General gives his decision after considering the report of the police and the Superintendent and the man's own defence. In this case the Inspector-General reduced the accused man twice.
109. *Mr. Dight.*] When was he discharged? On 6th February, 1899. He was not permitted to resign, but discharged. I presume he was incorrigible. There may be other charges against this man in the district, but the only thing I am instructed to do is to produce a copy of the official defaulters' sheet.
110. *Chairman.*] Was not the Inspector-General summoned to appear? Yes; but when documents are required I generally appear, as I am the records clerk. The papers can all be produced, if required.
111. I think, if this were another court, Mr. Fosbery would be found guilty of contempt of court, and I have a very good mind to compel him to come.
112. Could you give the Committee any reason why Mr. Fosbery did not attend here this afternoon? No.
113. Is it not because he is attending a meeting of the Public Health Board? No, I think that met yesterday.
114. *Mr. Dight.*] Would there not be papers in the department to show if this man were sent to the Receiving House at Darlinghurst or not? Most decidedly, yes. I can produce any papers you want in detail.

THURSDAY, 16 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

MR. EDEN,

MR. NICHOLSON.

C. H. DIGHT, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

William Henry Cooke recalled and further examined:—

- W. H. Cooke. 115. *Chairman.*] We adjourned yesterday for the purpose of enabling you to furnish us with certain papers with regard to Constable Beeby. Have you those papers? Yes; I have the papers. "Constable Beeby, Tamworth, on sick leave in Sydney; returned to district, and asks for transfer from Tamworth."
- 16 Aug., 1900.
116. What are those papers? The first is from the Superintendent at Tamworth. It is respecting the drunkenness of Constable Beeby, at Tamworth. The Committee asked for certain papers. Perhaps I had better read them. The first is a telegram from the Superintendent at Tamworth, and is dated 26th March: "Constable Beeby, after coming off duty, 4 a.m., this day, appears to have put on plain clothes and left barracks. Not missed till being called for dinner. Ascertained he was seen about 8 miles out, on Nundle-road. Police in search of him.—THOMAS KENDALL." That was at 3 in the morning. This statement refers to another report by Sergeant Gamble to the Superintendent at Tamworth. Sergeant Gamble "Begs to report, for the information of his Superintendent, that Constable Beeby went on night duty on 25th instant, at 8 p.m. The Sergeant saw him several times up to 10 p.m. He was, apparently, all right then. Constable Caldwell, who went on night duty at 10 p.m., saw Beeby at 3 o'clock next morning. He also saw him (Beeby) coming off duty at 4.15 a.m. He appeared all right then. Beeby returned to barracks, and put on plain clothes. He was seen by Mr. Sutherland, Public School teacher, 8 miles from Tamworth, about 8 a.m., travelling on foot towards Dungowan. Two constables were sent in search, and found him at "Dungowan Hotel," 14 miles from Tamworth, apparently out of his mind. A buggy was obtained and Beeby was driven to Tamworth police station. He is now under restraint. When at Dungowan Court, Beeby asked Constable M'Fie to lend him his revolver. Constable M'Fie said 'What do you want it for?' Beeby replied, 'You know!' The Sergeant has been informed that on Friday night last Constable Beeby threatened that he would shoot him (the Sergeant) and then shoot himself." The next in order of date is a certificate obtained by Beeby from Dr. Harris, the Government Medical Officer at Tamworth—"I hereby certify that I have twice examined Constable John Beeby, and find him in a state of great mental depression, in fact on the verge of insanity. I certainly consider that he is not at present fit for police duty, and might do himself or others an injury. I, therefore, recommend that he be sent to the Police Dépôt for the purpose of further observance.—H. L. HARRIS, M.B., Ch.B., Government Medical Officer, Tamworth, 27/3/98." There is also a telegram from Superintendent Casey, at Tamworth, to the Inspector-General, at Sydney. "Constable Beeby found 15 miles away yesterday. Government Medical Officer twice examined, and certificates state great mental depression on verge of insanity; likely to injure self or others. Recommends should be sent Police Dépôt. I am sending him mail-train to-night. * * * * * The remainder is about the opening of the show, and the police arrangements. Then there is a memorandum, "Sergeant Gamble's report"—
117. That is from the Superintendent? Yes.

118.

118. *Mr. Edden.*] At Tamworth? They are all from Tamworth. "Sergeant Gamble's report and Dr. Harris's certificate, forwarded for the information of the Inspector-General. Constable Beeby has, I am informed, been peculiar in his manner for some days. As far as I can learn, he has not been drinking. WALTER C. CASEY, Superintendent. The Inspector-General of Police, Sydney." That was on 27th March. On the same date "Constable Beeby, No. 6,797, respectfully begs to make application to Superintendent Casey for a transfer from Tamworth to some town in the district where he will not be subjected to the insulting remarks thrown at him on every hand by the public of Tamworth. The constable does not refer in any way to his comrades. The constable has no choice, and asks for none, as to where he might be stationed. JOHN BEEBY, constable." Constable Beeby was down in Sydney after the report. He asked for a report as to himself. Superintendent Brennan, by arrangement, sent Beeby to the Police Surgeon, Dr. Paton. This is the memo.: "Will Dr. Paton please examine the bearer, Constable Beeby, and report as to his mental and bodily state, and advise as to the best course to adopt under the circumstances, for the information of the Inspector-General of Police? MARTIN BRENNAN, Superintendent of Police, Eastern District." All these papers went to the Police Surgeon, so that he should have the chance of seeing them. On 1st April Constable Beeby makes an application "for seven days' leave of absence owing to ill-health. The Constable's nerves are unstrung, and he feels that a few days' rest will recruit his health. The Constable had two days' leave last November while on escort duty from Tamworth to Sydney." This was submitted by Superintendent Brennan for the consideration of the Inspector-General of Police. Mr. Fosbery approved. Dr. Paton reported on 1st April (this is the first time that the Police Surgeon had seen him): "Constable Beeby has been an inmate of the Reception House for the past five days, during which time he has shown no indication of insanity." This is signed, and to it is added, "I recommend that he be granted sick leave." A few days after that he goes back to the Police Surgeon. "Constable Beeby appears to be mentally and physically well"—this was on 9th April. "I should like to see him again in seven days' time.—R. T. PATON. Approved, E.P." Then Beeby on 10th April makes application "for extension of sick leave from the 10th instant to the 16th instant." This was submitted by the Superintendent for the consideration of the Inspector-General; the Inspector-General approved. After the expiration of six days he is sent by Superintendent Brennan, who has charge of all the men who come to Sydney, for further report. The report is made by Dr. Taylor, acting Police Surgeon. Dr. Taylor says, "Dr. Paton will resume duty on Wednesday next; as he had Constable Beeby under observation in the Reception House and knows more of his case than I do, I advise that the Constable return here for examination on Monday, next.—G. W. TAYLOR, acting Police Surgeon, 16th April." On the same date, Beeby writes, "Constable John Beeby, No. 6,797, respectfully begs to make application to Mr. Inspector-General Fosbery for a removal from the Tamworth district. The Constable begs to state that owing to his recent illness, Tamworth or any other hot climate would not agree with him, and if he is sent back to the country the Constable fears it would result in a general break down of his constitution. The Constable humbly begs for a trial as probationary constable in one of the suburban divisions so that he might have home comforts for a time. The Constable has always been under double expense while stationed in the country, as it has been his duty to assist in maintaining a home for his mother and one sister in Stanmore. The Constable's residence at present is in Douglas-street, Stanmore. If Inspector-General Fosbery would consider the Constable's application, he will try and prove himself worthy of any consideration.—JOHN BEEBY, Constable." No action appears to have been taken on that—no approval one way or the other. The Superintendent at the depôt considers it necessary to send him again before the Police Surgeon. This is on 18th April, so that the time is not long between the date of his coming to Sydney and the date of this final examination.

119. *Chairman.*] Would this be the Monday following Dr. Taylor's memo.? Yes, the 16th.

120. He recommends him to come on Monday? Yes. That is two days afterwards. Following is Dr. Paton's report:—"I have the honor to report that on 28th March I examined Constable Beeby. He then appeared to be mentally well; but as he complained that he suffered from severe headache and had no knowledge of what took place on the 24th, 25th, and 26th—that is the action at Tamworth—and as he had been certified to be on the verge of insanity by a medical man on the 27th, I recommended his removal for observation to the Reception House. He remained in the Reception House for five days, during which time he exhibited no sign of insanity. I have seen him twice since his discharge from the Reception House, and on each occasion he has been mentally and physically well. He states that just previous to illness at Tamworth he had exposed himself to the sun whilst fishing. This may have been the cause of his illness. Considering all the circumstances, I recommended that Beeby should not be sent back to Tamworth, that he should be sent to some other station, preferably in a cool climate, and that his commanding officer should see his medical history. In my opinion his former condition is not likely to recur." This is signed by Dr. Paton. Mr. Fosbery put a minute on that: "Referred to Mr. Casey for observation. I cannot transfer an ill-conducted man to another district, but have no objection to his transfer to Nundle, Bingara, Murrurundi or some cooler climate than Tamworth." Beeby at this time is still attached to the Tamworth district. Superintendent Casey further reports on the 24th April: "I beg to report that there is no cool station in this district where I could send Constable Beeby. There is no foot constable at Nundle. At Murrurundi there is only an acting-gaoler (recently transferred from Brewarrina), and at Bingara there is a married constable with a large family, transferred from Sydney on account of his wife's health. Constable Beeby must, I think, remain at Tamworth, which is, I am certain, as cool as any station in the north-western district, and where there are an officer and two sergeants to look after him. I regret to say I have now no confidence in Constable Beeby, and fear he will give trouble. His defaulter-sheet was sent to Sydney with papers on 16th March last and not returned." Inspector-General Fosbery wrote on the report this minute:—"Very well. P. C. Beeby should be cautioned and reported upon specially in a month or two, when, if his conduct is not entirely satisfactory, his services will be dispensed with." This is on 26th April, and is addressed to Superintendent Casey. On 3rd May Superintendent Casey writes at the foot of the paper—"The Inspector-General's minute noticed and now returned. WALTER C. CASEY, Superintendent, Tamworth, 3/5/98." That finishes up the batch of papers.

121. *Mr. Edden.*] That is all the papers that you have in the case? Yes. We have others. But the next relate to when he was discharged.

122. What was the idea that suggested that he should be removed because of "the insults of the people"; what did they insult him about? I cannot say. That is not shown in the papers. Beyond what is shown there, I do not know anything about Constable Beeby.

W. H. Cooke. 123. It seems a very funny thing? It indicates no doubt that something is wrong. He says that he received a sunstroke while he was fishing; that might have affected his mind. It might have made him fancy things—might have made him think that someone was watching him or insulting him. It might have been an hallucination.

16 Aug., 1900.

124. *Chairman.*] Have you produced all the papers bearing on the case? The next lot of papers is dated 1899, when he was discharged from the service.

125. *Mr. Edden.*] Oh! he was discharged? Yes, for continued drunkenness. It was shortly after that.

126. *Chairman.*] We have already evidence that he was discharged. Burbank in his evidence said that he had resigned? No; he was discharged. He was not given the option of resigning.

127. It was stated in the last day's evidence that he was discharged: "He joined the force in 1895, and was discharged on 6th February, 1899"? Yes.

128. The charge against him on the defaulter-sheet was drunkenness, for which he was discharged. I do not think we need go into any evidence about that. Burbank stated in his evidence that he knew or had ascertained that he had resigned. But we have evidence now that he was discharged. It may not be material, but if it should be we can call the witness afterwards? He put in an application to resign in February, 1899, when the next offence took place, but the Inspector-General discharged him; he did not give him the option. Possibly Burbank is not quite up in the difference between discharge and resignation.

129. In the sheet it says he was discharged—"6/2/99. Discharged this day." Beyond these papers, you do not know anything personal about the case? Nothing whatever.

130. You have no further evidence to offer? No.

WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

MR. DIGHT,

MR. SPENCE,

MR. NICHOLSON.

J. GILLIES, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Hugh McLachlan recalled and further examined:—

H.
McLachlan,
Esq.
5 Sept., 1900.

131. *Chairman.*] You were requested by the Committee to furnish the career of John C. White, the night-officer at Tamworth Railway-station on the night of the accident to Mr. Albert Burbank? I hand in the history of White in the Railway Department. [*Vide Appendix D.*]

132. You know what evidence has been adduced before the Committee;—do the Commissioners intend to rest on the evidence, or do they intend to call any witnesses in rebuttal of any evidence? We know nothing of what evidence has been given, but I would suggest that the Committee should call the solicitor who conducted the case for us. I do not know whether you might not call the foreman of the jury. I do not know him personally, but they say he is a very good man. The matter was out of our hands. It was tried and decided by a jury. We do not intend to move further in the matter; but as the case was conducted for us by our solicitor, I think it would be just as well if you called him. Personally, he is not prejudiced one way or the other.

133. Do you forget that he is the man who induced Mr. Burbank to sign a clearance for £100? Perhaps he can explain that. He has no personal interest in the matter.

134. The solicitor to the Commissioners has to look after his billet? The Commissioners are influenced only by considerations for the public interests. They never heard of Mr. Burbank before the accident happened. It happened three years ago, and the case was tried on the spot by a jury who, I take it, were wholly unbiassed. It is, perhaps, a little difficult now to adduce evidence. It does not reflect on the Commissioners in any way, and they have no feeling in the matter.

135. I suppose you will admit that many times a jury give a verdict which, on a retrial, or before the Full Court, is reversed? Yes, and it was quite open to Mr. Burbank to move for a retrial.

136. In view of the evidence on the record of White's career, would you take it that he is a man on whose word you can rely? Certainly; I do not see that that evidence would implicate his honor. They are mostly minor offences of which he was guilty, such as the not checking of tickets. Personally, I do not know him. I asked one or two of the traffic officers what sort of a character he had, and they said he was a man of good character.

137. *Mr. Spence.*] Did you not take it from the record that he is somewhat careless? He was a bit lax in carrying out his duties.

138. I notice that in 1897 there were a dozen cases? They were minor offences, such as not checking tickets and leaving lamps unlighted, not reflecting on his word.

139. As night officer, would it not be part of his work to see the lamps were lighted? He would be in charge of the station practically. There would be a number of others about.

140. It was his place to see that they were lighted? Yes; I do not think there is a shadow of doubt that the lamps were alight.

141. *Chairman.*] You have not read the affidavits of all the witnesses who say it was not lighted? Our solicitor, who conducted the case and heard all the evidence, would certainly be a better witness than I am.

142. Is the very strictest economy enjoined on station-masters and persons in charge of stations by the Commissioners as to the lighting of stations? Naturally, they are told to be economical in everything; but there are no special instructions from the Commissioners, that I recollect, to save money in lighting, except the general instruction that they have to save everywhere; economy in small things is the secret of the success of any concern.

143. You take it that strict economy is insisted on throughout the whole Service? Certainly; in fact, we would be bankrupt, and so would the Colony, if we did not carry it out.

144. You do not think that is detrimental to the interests of the public who are travelling? No, because no economy is to be carried out which entails risk; that would be certainly a qualification consistent to the direction.

WEDNESDAY,

WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

MR. NICHOLSON,

MR. SPENCE.

J. GILLIES, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

James Campbell Thom, Solicitor for Railways, sworn and examined:—

145. *Chairman.*] Are you the Solicitor for Railways? Yes.

146. Have you brought a letter which Mr. R. W. Thompson wrote to you on this matter of Mr. Burbank? Yes.

147. Will you be good enough to read the letter? It is as follows:—

Burbank v. Commissioners.

West Maitland, 17 July, 1899.

Dear Sir,

You will remember this case tried at Tamworth, in which you got a verdict for the Commissioners, and you know that they afterwards made him a concession of £100, being satisfied themselves, I believe, that he had sustained very severe injuries and had been injudiciously advised in not approaching them in the first instance in a conciliatory manner.

Some time since he saw me on the matter, and he so satisfied me that he had a good case that I determined, as a matter of kindness and without charge, to do what I could to get the matter reconsidered; for I felt quite certain that the Commissioners individually and collectively would be willing to do him absolute justice, even although they had already made the concession, if they were satisfied, firstly, that he had a good case; and, secondly, that the concession did not meet its merits.

I heard in various ways that there were a great number of witnesses who might have been called to prove and support the case that he wished to make, but who were not called, and amongst them were Mr. Benjamin Owen, Mr. Cooke, Mr. Howlett, Mrs. Howlett, Mr. George Tribe, Mrs. Tribe, John Milligan, Mr. Fox, Mr. E. Davis, and others; but it appears his then solicitor was so confident of success that he did not consider it worth while to lengthen the case by calling them.

The result of my inquiries has been to show me, as a man of some experience in our profession, that his confidence was misplaced, and that every available witness should have been called; and the strong probability is, if they had been called, that Mr. Burbank would have had a verdict for a large amount.

I say a large amount, for he was crippled for life, with the further result that he cannot follow his business as a dentist, as he cannot get about without a pair of sticks, and is permanently disabled from using the treadle, which is an absolute necessity in his business, as his working leg is shortened, and he is now therefore on the verge of pauperism.

The amount which the Commissioners were good enough to allow him covered by a few pounds only what he paid his doctor and his chemist, while his actual expenses up to that time were upwards of £500, and no part of it went to his former solicitor, or his counsel, or to myself.

Quite a number of the witnesses who might have been called have volunteered to make declarations, some of which go to show that Ryan (since dismissed by the Commissioners), Beeby, the policeman (since retired from the Force), and other witnesses for the Commissioners whose living depended on their evidence were wrong in that evidence, and that the account given by Mr. Burbank as to the character and cause of his accident was absolutely correct.

These declarations Mr. Burbank proposes to place before the Commissioners if they will kindly grant him an interview, and, on the strength of the evidence contained in them, to ask them to make an extraordinary precedent in his case; and although they have already made the concession referred to, for which he is very grateful, that they will reconsider the whole of the circumstances, and, as the result has been so serious to him, that they will grant him such a sum as will recompense him in some measure for the pain and misery which he has suffered so long, and for the attendant pecuniary loss.

I do hope that in thus addressing you you will not consider I am going out of my way when I further ask you to lend your weight on the side of mercy, for I feel very sure from what I have seen of you that you would be one of the last to press for strict legal rights as far as the Commissioners are concerned, if you are satisfied that Mr. Burbank in this matter, whilst kindly, and, in their view, liberally treated already by the Commissioners after they had beaten him, was brought to his present miserable condition bodily and financially by the carelessness and negligence of their servants, or that such carelessness and negligence in any degree contributed to it.

I, of course, anticipate that you will be consulted in the matter, or otherwise I should not have troubled you with my views; but in any case I can ask you to excuse me for addressing you at such length, for I know of no sadder case than to see a strong able man who was making a good living in a proper and decent way struck down so as to be almost helpless and unable to support himself and his wife and young children.

Yours faithfully,

R. W. THOMPSON.

148. Are you responsible for the legal business of the Commissioners in this case? I am, and I conducted the whole case.

149. Do you wish to make a statement regarding your knowledge of the case? I was not present at the trial at Tamworth. As soon as the action was reported the Commissioners placed the facts before me for an opinion as to whether they showed any liability on their part. I obtained from the Chief Traffic Manager a statement of all the available evidence, and having considered this statement I advised the Commissioners that they were not responsible. Thereafter a letter of demand was written by Mr. Burbank's solicitor. He was formally told that the Commissioners regretted that they could not accept any liability. Then in due course a writ was issued, and the trial of the issue came on on the 12th April, 1898, at the Tamworth Circuit Court, before Mr. Justice M. H. Stephen and a jury of four persons. The trial lasted most of the 12th and part of the 13th April, and the Commissioners were represented by Mr. Scholes, of counsel who was instructed by my chief clerk, and the plaintiff, Mr. Burbank, was represented by Mr. Garland, instructed by Mr. Tribe. From what I can learn of the case the evidence was gone into exhaustively, and the jury viewed the place of the accident in the day-time, and again at night with the lights in such a condition as they wished for the purpose of their observation. His Honor summed up in the usual way, and the jury after some considerable retirement found a verdict for the defendants, the Commissioners. The next I heard of this case was—I do not know what the preliminaries were—that the Commissioners had decided, notwithstanding the result of the trial, to pay Mr. Burbank the sum of £100. I wrote him on the 24th August that I should meet him at West Maitland—I had some legal business there,—and pay him the cheque. I was prevented by some means from being there on that date; but on the 31st August I wrote him again to meet me at West Maitland Police Court on the 1st September. I met him on the 1st September at the Police Court at Maitland, and then paid him a sum of £100, and he signed a usual voucher which is in these terms:—

2 July.

To amount agreed to be paid to the above named Albert Burbank as an act of grace, and in full satisfaction and discharge of all claims and demands whatsoever, in respect of injuries sustained by him at Tamworth on 2nd July, 1897.

I

J. C. Thom.

12 Sept., 1900.

J. C. Thom. I paid the cheque to Mr. Burbank, and obtained a receipt, and that is the last I know personally of the matter. On receiving the letter from Mr. R. W. Thompson, I wrote a statement of the position of the matter for the consideration of the Railway Commissioners in these terms:—

12Sept., 1900.

Solicitor for Railways Office, Sydney, 18 July, 1899.

Memo. to the Secretary.

Railway Commissioners ats. Burbank.

HEREWITH I hand you letter received to-day from Mr. R. W. Thompson, West Maitland, with reference to this action.

It will be remembered that the plaintiff brought his action in respect of personal injuries received through falling over a bag of bacon on the railway platform at Tamworth on 2nd July, 1897.

The case was heard at Tamworth before His Honor Mr. Justice Stephen and a jury of four on the 12th and 13th of April, 1898, when a verdict was returned for the Commissioners.

The Commissioners subsequently gave the plaintiff £100 as a gratuity.

As I pointed out in my opinion of 14th July, 1897, before proceedings were commenced, there was ample evidence to show that the Commissioners were in no way responsible for the injuries sustained, and the statement made by Mr. R. W. Thompson that he had been satisfied that the plaintiff had a good case, indicates either that he has been deceived as to the true facts, or does not appreciate their relation to the law of negligence.

All available evidence was called at the trial, at which plaintiff was represented with exceptional skill by Mr. J. Garland, of counsel instructed by Mr. Tribe.

With regard to the suggestion that the verdict was the result of the plaintiff's misplaced confidence in his legal advisers, I can only say that the issue was tried before His Honor Mr. Justice Stephen, and a local jury, who heard evidence at great length, inspected the lighting of the station premises, and listened to every appeal which forensic skill could make to their natural sympathies, with the result shown.

I do not consider it necessary to discuss the proposal to submit declarations challenging the accuracy of witnesses who were sworn and gave their evidence under the strictest cross-examination, further than to express the view that such a course, after a full and fair trial, of an issue of fact, is not only valueless, but highly improper.

I have never spoken to Mr. R. W. Thompson on this subject, and, therefore, cannot account for the singular confusion of ideas which leads him to make a personal appeal to myself in the cause of mercy, but submit the letter, as, I presume, is intended for the Commissioners' consideration.

I may add, in conclusion, that Mr. Scholes, who held the Commissioners' retainer, quite agrees with me in the view above expressed, that the case was exhaustively tried, and that no other verdict could have been properly given.

JAMES C. THOM,

Solicitor for Railways.

After submitting that statement to the Commissioners, I had their instructions to write to Mr. Thompson a letter, of which this is a copy:—

Railway Commissioners ats. Burbank.

R. W. Thompson, Esq., Solicitor, West Maitland,—

20 July, 1899.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of 17th instant, written on behalf of the above-named plaintiff, in which you seek to have his claim reconsidered by the Railway Commissioners.

I have brought all the circumstances attending the trial, and the subsequent payment to Mr. Burbank again under the notice of the Commissioners, and am instructed to inform you that the case cannot be reopened.

Yours truly,

JAMES C. THOM,

Solicitor for Railways.

150. After the accident to Mr. Burbank, did you call upon the officers of the Railway Department in Tamworth to supply you with any reports? Yes.

151. Have you got the reports? I have not got the reports here; they are part of the Secretary's papers.

152. You stated that the case was gone into exhaustively at the trial;—how many witnesses were examined on the part of the plaintiff? Speaking from memory, seven or eight.

153. If you knew that there were five or six witnesses who ought to have been called, who it was understood would be called, but who were not called, would you then say that the case had been gone into exhaustively? I could not think that, knowing the man who represented the plaintiff.

154. If there are witnesses who have now signed declarations saying that they were prepared to be called, and were not called, and those declarations are at variance with what your witnesses stated, then would you state the case was gone into exhaustively? I should say yes, for this reason: That the persons who were charged with the trial of the case would be much better judges at the time—seeing the jury and the inclination of the Court—as to whether a witness should be called, than anybody could be now. I should say that even then the case was exhaustively tried; but these gentlemen who were connected with the case knew of these witnesses—that is stated—and there may be reasons which they could not remember themselves for not calling them. Their manner of telling their story might decide counsel not to call them, although on paper it may appear to be a good story.

155. You said a letter was written by the plaintiff's solicitor just after the accident? I said in the ordinary course a letter of demand was written.

156. Do you remember what solicitor wrote it? My impression is that it was Mr. Tribe.

157. Was it Mr. Burbank's brother who wrote the letter? It is difficult for me to say. What I meant to convey in my evidence was that the preliminary warning was given of intention to sue.

158. Did Mr. Burbank himself write the letter through his brother, or did his brother write it? I could not say. I was under the impression that a solicitor wrote the letter. It would appear as a letter of demand. I have not got it here; but if it should appear to be material I will produce it.

159. Was not it Mr. Burbank's letter through his brother? He may have written it. I am under the impression that the solicitor wrote a letter of demand. I am assisted in the impression by knowing that it is not the custom for any solicitor to issue a writ against anyone without giving some intimation. By the term "letter of demand" I meant a letter written by a solicitor before action.

160. You received one? I am under the impression that I did.

161. From the solicitor? To the Commissioners. It would strike me as very peculiar if they did not.

162. Is it not possible that these two communications went? Very likely. I do remember a long letter sent by Mr. Burbank.

163. Did you receive notice within a week of the accident from Mr. Victor Burbank, plaintiff's brother, and place it before the Railway Commissioners? I should not like to swear. I think it is very likely that we did. Notice was received immediately.

164. Did Mr. Burbank's brother write to the Commissioners, and ask them to send the Railway Medical Officer up to see the condition of the plaintiff, and to consult Dr. Wilson with a view to eliciting the facts? I could not say.

165. *Mr. Spence.*] I suppose this matter really would not come under your notice? Not at that stage. J. C. Thom.
166. *Chairman.*] You say that the jury viewed the station;—did they see it in the day-time? At 12:40 p.m., by a note on the brief, and then again in the evening. 12 Sept., 1900.
167. Did the plaintiff accompany the jury? I could not say, as I was not there.
168. Did your counsel accompany the jury on the occasion? No. In the daylight everybody was there. I do not know when the inspection took place as night. The jury expressed a wish that they should see the place, and they gave certain orders to some sheriff's officers, in whose charge they were, to have certain lights disposed of in such a way as to bring the state of the lighting of the station into the same state as had been presented to their minds by the evidence which had been given.
169. On the evidence of your own side? The whole of the evidence had not been given. The whole of the plaintiff's evidence had been given, and the case was reopened by the consent of the defendant to allow the plaintiff to call fresh evidence on the question of lighting the station on the following day.
170. Then the railway station-master, I presume, was notified that the jury were going to view the station on the night they did? I have no doubt but that he would be.
171. Supposing the lights were defective, would the station-master be to blame for the station not being sufficiently lighted? Undoubtedly he would be to blame.
172. And would it be to the interest of the Railway authorities to light the station more perfectly at the time it was viewed by the jury than it had been at the time of the accident? I should think not. I remember that objection was taken to the view.
173. *Mr. Spence.*] Who was to say as to what condition it was in at the time of the trial if the evidence had not been heard? The plaintiff's evidence had been given as to how the station had been lit, as to whether the light was in a certain parcel room, and as to what lights were lighted, and the jury, on the evening, reduced the light of the station to the condition it was in, or was said to have been in, on the night of the accident by the plaintiff.
174. *Chairman.*] Have you any record to prove that the jury were allowed to see the station in the day-time? I have only a note on Mr. Schole's brief that the Court adjourned at 12:40 p.m. to enable the jury to see the station.
175. Did your Department deny all responsibility with regard to that accident when they were appealed to in their defence of the action? Yes, undoubtedly.
176. How would the jury be able to know the condition of the station on the night of the accident as compared with the condition of the light at the time when they viewed it? Only by the evidence which described the lighting on the occasion of the accident.
177. Then if a lot of additional evidence has been produced in the form of statutory declaration, denying the statements which were made by your witnesses, would you think that the jury were in a position to judge at the time without the evidence having been called? I would like to understand what the additional evidence means. The question, I take it, is that if a balance of testimony could be got against what was placed before that jury, would that not probably alter their minds.
178. Yes? Undoubtedly it would.
179. If by some accident or oversight evidence which would have been favourable to the plaintiff was omitted, if afterwards the evidence was committed to statutory declaration, and if the balance of it was opposed to the view of the Railway Commissioners as to the lighting, would you think that Mr. Burbank had a fair trial? Yes, I would, because the evidence was all known before the trial.
180. *Mr. Spence.*] Is it not fair to assume that the case was one in which it was not altogether too clear that there was no liability, and that very little evidence either way might possibly have turned the scale? I think not, the case being so abundantly clear. In the last opinion I gave of it I said that the plaintiff could not possibly succeed at a fair trial. The amount of testimony, and the directness of it, was so overwhelming, that a local jury, whose sympathies must have been the other way, gave a verdict for the Commissioners.
181. In the first instance, your own recommendation would be naturally based on the report you received from the railway officers? Yes. I am advised by counsel that there never was the slightest hope for the case throughout the trial, and any evidence which contradicted what the conditions would be must necessarily, by probabilities, be incorrect.
182. *Chairman.*] When accidents occur on railways or railway premises, is it the custom for the Commissioners to endeavour if possible to have a satisfactory settlement without going to law? They invariably do, and in the great majority of cases they succeed.
183. Did you, or did anyone for you, communicate with Mr. Burbank between the date of the accident, which occurred on the 2nd July, 1897, and the date of the trial, which began on the 12th April, 1898, with a view to bringing about a satisfactory settlement? I knew that the case was absolutely clear. The Commissioners never attempt to make a settlement where the evidence is so strongly in their favour that they would be giving away public money for nothing if they tried it. This was such a case as that, as the result has shown.
184. If you were not present at the trial, and heard all the evidence, how would you know anything about the evidence laid before the jury? Simply from the notes taken by counsel at the trial. I began my evidence by saying I was not present at the trial. I cannot speak of my own knowledge. I prepared the brief in the case, and I saw after it came back the evidence which had been given on oath.
185. Did you base your defence on the evidence supplied to you by the employees of the Railway Commissioners? Yes; and on other evidence collected. There was other evidence called besides that of the employees in the railway service.
186. Could you produce the reports of the officers which were handed in to you? I could, undoubtedly. I could have produced every paper from the writ of summons up to the present moment if I had thought that they would be gone into. I only had notice to produce this particular letter. I can produce every paper, and, of course, the Supreme Court records contain the official papers.
187. Would you expect railway employees to give evidence which would be likely to militate against themselves? I would. I invariably impress on railway employees that their first duty is to speak the truth and take the consequences, and I believe very many of them do so. It is only human nature to believe that there are some who do not. In this case there is no inducement for these men to say anything which is not correct, as far as I can see.
188. Can you tell the Committee of any case where railway employees have given evidence in Court against the interests of the Commissioners? Certainly not. I should never have allowed it to go into Court if they would.

- J. C. Thom. 189. You say that if their evidence was going to be against the Commissioners you would not allow them to go into Court? Yes.
- 12Sept., 1900. 190. You said you produced the evidence of the railway employees and others just now;—did you at the trial produce evidence from any witness who was likely to be unbiassed or disinterested? Yes; I think there were one or two. The postmaster, I believe, was one. I am at a disadvantage in speaking from memory.
191. Say from business men of Tamworth or people who are reliable and entirely disinterested, did you have any evidence to offer? I do not think so, and I would not expect to have them on the station at the time.
192. As a matter of fact, you would not expect a witness for the defence to give evidence in support of the plaintiff's case, would you? I should expect him to speak the truth. A witness has nothing to do with the particular case he is appearing for; but I should not expect the defendant to call a witness who was likely to give evidence on the plaintiff's side.
193. You are conversant, I presume, with all the circumstances leading up to the accident? I have a recollection of them as they appeared on the papers.
194. You know Mr. Burbank was a dentist who travelled from town to town in the Northern and North-western districts? So I have been instructed.
195. In order to follow his calling he had to carry what is called a dental-box—that is a box containing machinery for carrying on his profession? Yes.
196. Of course a passenger is allowed to carry a certain weight? Of personal luggage.
197. Would you think it was reasonable for a passenger to be called upon by a railway porter to give him a hand to lift his luggage—on that occasion a dental-box—into the luggage-van? In this case, yes. The luggage was not spoken of till the train was actually in. It was not personal luggage; it was luggage which should have been paid for and booked. It was not deposited on the platform till the train was actually there.
198. Are you aware that that luggage had a ticket on it? I do not know.
199. If it was properly ticketed, as from station to station, would you not think that it was in charge of the railway employees when it was on the premises? Not necessarily.
200. If it had been sent down on the previous afternoon, and put in charge of the railway authorities, and had not yet been delivered to the owner? Certainly, in charge of the Railway Commissioners.
201. You are aware that evidence was given at the trial that there was some obstacle on the platform? That evidence was given.
202. You are aware that Mr. Burbank fell over that obstacle, which was a side of bacon? I am not aware of that.
203. Your own witnesses have said so, have not they? They have said that he said so. There is no evidence that Mr. Burbank fell over an obstacle. It was not found, as a fact, by the jury, that he fell over a side of bacon. Evidence was given, but there was no decision on it.
204. If evidence was given that one of the railway employees had hold of one end of the dental-box and Mr. Burbank had hold of the other end, and that that railway employee was taking or guiding Mr. Burbank with the other end of the box to the luggage-van, and that Mr. Burbank fell in the course of proceeding to the luggage-van, would the railway employee be responsible do you think for taking him over that obstacle? As you stated the case he did not take him over an obstacle. Taking the case you put, I should prefer to allow a jury who heard the evidence given to decide the question of responsibility.
205. In cross-examination at the trial, if I remember aright, the railway employee who had the end of the box, when asked whether he did not fall over the bacon, said, "I suppose I must have stepped over it," would not that be so? I could not say.
206. If a railway employee conducted Mr. Burbank, as the evidence shows in this case, over a fitch of bacon which was on the platform, would you not think that the railway authorities were responsible for that? I do not think so.
207. *Mr. Spence.*] Have there not been more than one case where the Commissioners have recognised their liability? Yes.
208. Was not there one at Redfern not long ago? Yes.
209. Would it not depend on the question of proof? Not necessarily. I do not know whether the bacon was on the platform or not. But assuming that it was on the platform the passenger, if it could be viewed, was responsible for what occurred. The gravamen of the case at Redfern, was that the platform was so crowded that nobody could see the obstruction, being only a few inches above the ground.
210. *Chairman.*] If it were proved that the platform at Tamworth was so dark that nobody could see the fitch of bacon, would you admit then the responsibility of the Commissioners? Undoubtedly.
211. The box that Mr. Burbank had travelling with him was under 80 lb. weight—80 lb. is the weight allowed? I do not know the weight of the box.
212. At any rate it was under 80 lb. weight;—you would not dispute the right of Mr. Burbank to take the box with him on the journey? I do; he is not entitled to carry anything but his personal luggage, and a dental-box is not personal luggage.
213. Seeing that the box had accompanied Mr. Burbank for a year or two on every trip he took up country, then would you think that he had a right to carry it? That would not alter the law; I should say that he had no right to carry it.
214. Would not the law become a matter of usage? It cannot become a matter of usage, because it is decided by an Act of Parliament. We never took any exception in this case to this box being carried in this way. That was said merely in answer to the question as to legal liability.
215. Do you mean to say that personal luggage does not include tools of trade? It might under certain circumstances.
216. Are you aware that it is permissible and recognised that jockeys can carry their saddles and gear with them in the carriage, because it is part of their tools of trade? It may be; I am not aware. I believe there are special rates for jockeys attending races, and special conditions for travelling.
217. Are there special conditions? I do not know yes or no. I could not say from memory. The question of the right to carry this particular box was never raised in this case.

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218. What are the circumstances under which a man can carry his tools of trade? If a man were to carry a 2-foot rule in his pocket, no exception would be taken to that, but if a woman brought in a sewing-machine as a tool of trade, that would not be permissible, or if a man carried a lathe of a certain size, that would not be permissible.
219. Do you mean permissible in the passenger-carriage or in the luggage-van? As passenger's luggage, free of charge. The English law by a great number of cases decided what is and what is not passenger's luggage, which the companies are compelled to carry to a certain weight, without additional charge.
220. Is the law applicable here? It is, and it would not cover such a box as Mr. Burbank had with him on that occasion.
221. If a person had to strike matches to look for the box on the platform, would you then say that the station was sufficiently lighted? It depends on where the box was. I should say that if a person had to strike a match in the open part of the railway station to see a box 4 feet high, the station could not be sufficiently lighted.
222. It was at the end of the station; there were two witnesses in the case named White and Playford;—do you remember them? I do not remember them.
223. They swore positively that there was not any label on the box? I do not call that to mind at all.
224. The label has been produced, and it has been sworn positively that it was on the box;—do you think that the evidence given by these two men might have weighed with the jury in their decision when they said that there was no label on the box? I do not think that fact would have anything to do with the result of the case at all. As I have said more than once here the question of the right to carry the box was never raised in the case.
225. Because it was the practice, and always had been so? It may have been; I really do not know.
226. I suppose the reason why that question was never raised was because it was understood that it was perfectly right for a passenger to carry a box;—all dentists carry their tools of trade with them in the same way? I could not say that; I do not know really.
227. Do you not think it is possible that they do so? I really do not know. I never saw a dentist's box in my life. I never saw one in travelling.
228. *Mr. Spence.*] Would it not be the duty of the railway officers to put the box into the van if it was booked as luggage and not as passenger's luggage? It would be. The railway servants, as far as I understand their duty, should put goods and luggage into the proper place.
229. *Chairman.*] The fact of a ticket being put on the box at the instance of the railway employees, and the ticket indicating that it was passenger's luggage from so-and-so to so-and-so, would not that get over anything you had to say in regard to it not being legal to carry that box? I should say after that they could not be heard to say it was not passenger's luggage. I quite admit that that would silence the person who did it.
230. Are you aware that the book of by-laws of the Railway Department makes it imperative that passengers should see their luggage placed in the van? I do not think it is a by-law; I think it is an instruction published in the ordinary circulated time-table.
231. Presumably it would be a by-law if it is an instruction printed in the railway time-table? I never heard of any by-law which made it imperative for passengers to see their luggage put in the van.
232. At any rate it enjoins on them the necessity to see their luggage put in the van? I do not recollect such a by-law.
233. Are you aware of any instances where the Railway Commissioners disputed their responsibility in regard to passenger's luggage because the passenger had not adhered to that by-law or regulation? No; I do not know of a case in my seven and a half years as Solicitor for Railways.
234. Where they tried to get out of paying by that means? I do not remember a case. No case ever came before me for an opinion on that ground during the seven and a half years I have been Solicitor for Railways.
235. But it is possible that such a case has arisen between the Railway Commissioners and passengers, and that you would not know of it? It is possible, but very unlikely. I do not think anything of that kind happens without being sent to me for advice by the Chief Traffic Manager.
236. I suppose you will admit that a passenger carrying tools of trade, such as valuable instruments and so on, would be interested in seeing that they were not thrown about the platform, as sometimes the porters do throw luggage about, in order not to have any broken? Surely—
237. You are aware that it is a habit with railway porters to injure passengers' luggage, and even goods that are paid for as excess? I am not aware that it is a habit.
238. Have you never had any claims made to you over injured luggage? Never in my life in this way.
239. Do you think the Commissioners would have such claims made without your knowing of them? I do not think it is likely. I am referring now to the habit you mentioned of their handling goods on platforms—I never heard of such being the case.
240. I have had three tin boxes utterly and entirely destroyed in four years, because of the way in which they were thrown about—on one occasion two lots being broken? I can only speak of what I have heard. These claims were not made.
241. Mr. Burbank, in his evidence, said he helped Playford, who is a railway employee, to carry the box to the van;—would this not make Playford an active agent in whatever took place while the box was being carried? I do not understand the term.
242. An accessory to the accident? In my opinion not necessarily.
243. If Playford says that he led the way whilst carrying the box with Mr. Burbank to the van in his evidence, and then says that he must have stepped over the bacon, would that implicate the Commissioners through one of their employees? I do not think so. A person carrying such a cumbersome parcel as that would be expected to look out for his safety on a well-lighted platform.
244. Seeing that Playford knew that the bacon was there, and that he went directly and stepped over it, and did not warn Mr. Burbank to look out for himself, would you admit then that there was no responsibility? He says he must have stepped over it; he does not say it was there.
245. The evidence shows that it was there? I am asked for my opinion as to whether it was negligence.
246. Seeing that he admits that he must have stepped over the bacon himself while holding one end of the box, and Mr. Burbank the other, and that, although he was aware of the fact that it was there, he did not warn Mr. Burbank to look out for himself, would you think then that the railway employees were responsible? I should say that that is not evidence of negligence.

247.

- J. C. Thom. 247. What do you want to prove evidence of negligence? It depends on the case. I should want sufficient to convince the jury which tried the case that there was negligence, and there was not sufficient.
- 12Sept., 1900. 248. *Mr. Spence.* Do you remember whether, in the reports you received, that evidence was given about the bacon and the falling over it? There was some reference to it; I could not say exactly what it was. I think it originated in Mr. Burbank's letter.
249. Not from the officers? I think not, from memory.
250. *Chairman.* The train was some time late. If the guard, when closing the door of the luggage-van, was told by Playford not to close the door because he was going to put the box in, and if the guard calls out in a surly and hurried manner, "Hurry up, I cannot wait, I'm late as it is," do you not think that would be a means to excite a person who was trying to put his luggage in in order to go by that train? I do not think it would excite a grown-up person—I do not think a man of the world used to travelling would take the least notice of a surly remark like that.
251. You travel a lot? A great deal.
252. Have you seen grown-up men and women who did not know hardly where they were or what they were doing when they were trying to catch a train? I have, indeed, frequently.
253. Do not you think it was the duty of the guard, under the circumstances, to have come to the assistance of the porter and helped him to put that box in the van, instead of allowing the passenger to do so? I could not express an opinion. I do not know whether there was.
254. You will not express an opinion? I would rather not express an opinion. I have no knowledge of the details of their work.
255. There was a J. C. White who was night officer at the time. You saw his evidence, I presume;—he gave material evidence in favour of the Commissioners? Yes, he did.
256. Would you think he was a very straightforward man? I do not know him at all. I should not know him if I saw him.
257. Should you think he was a man who would give reliable evidence? I should expect that of him. I have no means of judging the man's character.
258. If you thought that that man had been dealt with on thirty or thirty-two occasions by the Railway Commissioners for carelessness, for neglect of duty, and so forth, would you then think that he was a man who would be likely to give reliable evidence? That history of the man would certainly discount his value to me, undoubtedly.
259. Will you be good enough to look at his record, which I now hand to you, and let me know then if you think he is a reliable witness? I should not think he was a careful man by any means.
260. Would you think he was a reliable witness? I do not see anything here to prevent his being a truthful man.
261. If, in his evidence, he would be able to swear as to the proper lighting of the platform, and give a description of the lamps which were lit on the occasion, in view of his negligence and carelessness, proved by the sheet in your hand, do you think it is likely that he, on that particular occasion, showed himself to be what he had never shown himself to be before? I think it is very probable, as on this occasion he had a good reason for remembering the facts.
262. Would he not have been, perhaps, dismissed or something else? He had just been promoted.
263. Is it usual for railway employees to have so many opportunities as that man appears to have had? Yes; in seventeen years. Reprimand is not a serious term for a man.
264. There was one time when he got a truck off the rails;—that is not serious? In 1897 a truck was derailed.
265. He is not cautioned for that? I can only judge the gravity of these misdeeds by the gravity of the penalty attached. I see that he ceased to be fined recently. He seems to have been improving since about 1890.
266. He got a rise of about £20 for his good conduct, I suppose? I have no idea.
267. Referring to some of these charges for which he was punished, he denied the accusations made against him;—in view of that fact, would you think he was a reliable witness? Undoubtedly. A man may deny want of care. He may deny many of these offences there.
268. And yet the Railway Commissioners would punish him? Yes. Many of these offences are matters of opinion. The man himself might fairly think that he was not guilty of negligence or want of caution, and still his superiors might think he was and he might be punished. I do not see that it affects the truthfulness of the man.
269. In many of these cases he admits having been negligent and careless? That simply emphasises his honesty in that particular case.
270. Many of the charges he denied, and yet he was punished for it;—that makes him more honest, I suppose? I do not know that it affects the matter at all. I do not think that record affects a man's credibility on his oath.
271. No matter how often a man proves that he is unfit to be in the Railway Service or neglects his duty, you consider that he is still a reliable and trustworthy man as a witness? I did not make any such admission.
272. It was equivalent to that? No; and I hope that those words will not be put into my mouth.
273. Do you know a man named Beeby, who was an important witness for the Railway Commissioners? Yes.
274. He gave very important evidence for the defendants, did he not? I have no doubt he did. He would not have been called otherwise. He was called, and I have no doubt he gave important evidence.
275. The judge in summing up referred particularly to the importance of the evidence given by that straightforward man—by that intelligent witness, I think he said? I do not know that he said so.
276. If Beeby, in order to be a witness on that case, was brought up from a lunatic asylum, would you consider that he was a good witness;—would you consider that he was fit to be put in the witness-box? Direct from the asylum?
277. Within a day? Certainly not; for a man to be brought direct from a lunatic asylum to be put direct into a witness-box. I assume he was a lunatic, and not a warder?
278. No; he was running about the bush there wild before he was sent down? It is absurd to put such a man in the box.
279. That is one of the witnesses whom you had in your case;—you summoned him from a lunatic asylum? I do not know that.
280. You would not place any weight at all on his evidence, would you? If he were a lunatic, certainly not.

281. If he were just brought from a lunatic asylum where he had been detained? I should not; I would not allow him to give evidence at all. J. C. Thom.
282. And he was discharged from the Police Force subsequently over it? I should certainly not regard any man's evidence as reliable who was in that unfortunate condition of mental health. 12Sept., 1900.
283. There was a man named Ryan who was a witness for the Railway Commissioners; he was then a carter about the town? I think I remember the name.
284. Very shortly after the accident happened and before the trial Ryan was given employment by the Railway Commissioners? I do not know that.
285. After the accident he was employed by the Railway Commissioners, and at the trial he was an important witness? He was a witness at the trial; as to his employment, I do not know.
286. At the time of the trial he was an employee, but at the time of the accident he was a rousc-about about the town, carrying mails, and so on;—it is pretty difficult to obtain employment under the Railway Commissioners? I should say it is. I do not know anything of the details. I know there are hundreds of men employed there.
287. It is very difficult, as a rule, for a man to get employment from the Railway Commissioners? I do not know. I have never recommended anybody, and have never had anything to do with the appointment of anyone. I know there must be 100 a year appointed. It depends on the capacity, of course. I do not know what this man was appointed as.
288. Have you seen the affidavits which have been put before this Committee? I have seen nothing of the evidence.
289. If there are other witnesses who have sworn directly opposite to the evidence produced at the trial by the Railway Commissioners, do you not think if they had been called at the trial the verdict would have been different? If they had been believed it might have been different.
290. Seeing that of your two chief witnesses one was a madman? I do not know that. I do not know what evidence there is of it.
291. We have his record? I assume that he was a lunatic.
292. You are fair and unbiassed, I presume? I endeavour to be.
293. If there were three witnesses who swore favourably for the defence of the Railway Commissioners, and these three men are railway employees, or are concerned in this matter if a verdict were given against the Railway Commissioners, and if there are five or seven respectable trustworthy townspeople who swear directly opposite to their two witnesses, which side would you give the benefit to? It would depend on whether the fact was material to the issue to be tried.
294. As regards the lighting of the platform, even two of the Commissioners' railway employees differ as to their description of the lights which were on the platform at the time, and there are five or seven respectable townspeople who swore quite differently from what the railway employees have sworn, would you not be inclined to believe the five disinterested townspeople? I should not now, because they knew of the trial, and should have volunteered their valuable evidence then. They were known to the solicitor for the plaintiff.
295. *Mr. Spence.*] Mr. Burbank charges that they did, but that his counsel did not call them? His counsel would give you evidence on that point more directly than I could. It appears to me something unusual for a distinguished man like Mr. Garland to do.
296. *Chairman.*] If the Judge in summing up told the jury that the man might meet with a serious accident like this, and yet be not incapacitated for business, and if he referred to the case of a member of the British House of Commons, who had, by accident, both arms and legs taken off, and yet was able to do his business, and to write, and to ride on horseback, do you think that would have any influence on the men on the jury? On the question of the amount of damages; but they found there was no damage, so that they did not get to that part of the case.
297. The Judge said that both his arms and legs had been cut off, and yet he was able to follow his business? I do not know what his object was. I should like to have heard the context of that.
298. It implied that Mr. Burbank, no matter how he might have been disabled, might be able to follow his profession? That would be the inference. I could imagine a Judge saying that in order to direct a jury as to the measure of damages if the jury had arrived at the question of damages; but in this case they never got as far as that, because they found for the defendant.
299. He was summing up then? You know that a Judge must direct a jury as to what they will do in both cases.
300. Can you imagine a Judge being so ignorant as to refer to a member of the British House of Commons having both arms and legs cut off, seeing that every schoolboy knows that Caveugh is the man he refers to, and that he was born without arms and legs;—did not it strike you as being peculiar for a Judge to make that statement from the Bench? I would like to be excused from saying anything. I do not know the facts.
301. You have had the case before you, and you have had the newspaper reports? I do not remember the feature. I know that sometimes Judges do say things which perhaps are not direct to the matter at issue.
302. Still you admit that juries are frequently governed to a great extent by the summing up of the Judge? Influenced they must be, I have no doubt.
303. Are you aware that Mr. Burbank made a request to the Commissioners for a money grant subsequent to the trial? I am not aware whether he did or not. I know he was paid £100. I do not know how it came to be done.
304. You do not know how it came to be done? I do not know how he came to apply for it.
305. Have you seen all the correspondence in reference to the grant of that £100? I have not seen any other than the note with my own instructions to prepare a voucher for the money, and communicate with Mr. Burbank, and pay him.
306. Did you authorise Mr. Harris, on the 9th August, 1898, to interview Mr. Burbank? I may have—that would be a fortnight before I wrote my letter.
307. Did you instruct Mr. Harris from your office to, as it were, intimidate Mr. Burbank into writing a letter denying his previous action in the case? I did not.
308. Do you remember the letter which the Commissioners wrote to Mr. Burbank when granting the £100? I have my rough draft of the letter of the 13th August.

- J. C. Thom. 309. In that letter which you drafted there is a paragraph saying that he (Burbank) brought an action in which he never had any prospect of success? That is so.
- 12 Sept., 1900. 310. Are these usual terms to put in a letter? After a jury has given a verdict.
311. But Mr. Burbank took action before they gave a verdict, and yet you say that he never had any prospect of success? I say so now—from my knowledge of all the facts of the case he never had any prospect of success.
312. From the facts of the case as far as they appeared at the trial? Yes; I know nothing of the evidence which has been obtained since.
313. Can you tell me on what grounds you or the Commissioners came to that conclusion? On the report submitted, on the facts of the case as submitted, and then on the extreme improbability of anything else being proved.
314. In another paragraph in that letter the Commissioners say to Mr. Burbank, "had you originally approached the Commissioners in the spirit displayed by your letter now under reply, you would no doubt have been treated with exceptional consideration." Does that paragraph appear in that draft? Yes.
315. Are you aware that Mr. Burbank approached them twice previously, that is before the trial, in order to get an amicable settlement? I am not aware of it.
316. If you had thought that he had previously approached the Railway Commissioners with a view to have an amicable settlement, you would not have put that paragraph in the letter? It would depend on what took place. I do not know what we would call an amicable settlement. If I knew the facts of the case I might.
317. But there is only one way of asking for an amicable settlement? If he asks for it with a writ for £5,000 damages that is not considered so.
318. You have not seen Mr. Burbank's evidence? No.
319. When he looks back at his former prosperous condition, his good business, wife, children, and himself well provided for, and when he looks at himself now completely crippled for life, and the consequent ruin and havoc it has played with his home and family, putting yourself in his place, can you blame him in his endeavours to have the case investigated? No, I do not.
320. And seeing that the time had elapsed when he could have had an appeal against the verdict, do you think Mr. Burbank is justified in appealing to Parliament for an investigation? I do not. You are putting me in his place, and, I say, I should not think myself justified.
321. I suppose you will pardon me for saying you are an extraordinary man if you would not use every endeavour in that direction? I am asked the question, and, I say, I should not consider myself justified in taking the steps you described.
322. Will you after this inquiry is concluded require to have a copy of the whole of the evidence which has been taken during this investigation? No, I have no occasion for it. I suppose the Secretary will get a copy as a matter of record.
323. If the weight of evidence that has been brought forward conclusively proves that the accident to Mr. Burbank was caused by the carelessness of the railway employees that the evidence of two of the principal witnesses for the defence at the trial in Tamworth was valueless, and they were unreliable, and if Mr. Burbank brings forward by affidavit, which he has done, seven or eight witnesses, who are contrary in their evidence to that given by the railway employees, do you not think the Railway Commissioners should compensate Mr. Burbank in a suitable manner? I can only say, I think not.
324. No matter what befalls a passenger travelling by train, no matter who is responsible for the accident, you think he has no right to ask for remuneration? I did not express any such opinion.
325. That is what I took it to be? If your question has been taken down as it was put, I will adhere to my answer. I do not think the Commissioners have any right to supersede the Supreme Court of the Colony in its decision. A decision has been given, and a mode of appeal is provided for, and they as Commissioners have no power to deal with public money voluntarily after such a decision has been given. That is the reason for my answer; but that does not apply to every form of appeal. In your previous question you asked me if I thought an appeal under these circumstances would be justified to Parliament, and I said, by all means.
326. Seeing that Mr. Burbank was in a helpless condition, that he had not got money to fight the Railway Commissioners on an appeal, do you not think he is justified in coming here, where he gets fair play and justice, without money and without price? I do not think he is justified. Here is my former answer—that the Commissioners would not be justified in dealing with the matter.
327. *Mr. Spence.*] But they have admitted the principle? I do not know where the margin of distinction comes in in these matters. £100 is not a large sum.
328. *Chairman.*] Do you remember a case of Belisario against the Railway Commissioners? I have heard of the case.
329. Did he get a substantial verdict against the Commissioners? He did, indeed—and a very substantial one.
330. And if Mr. Burbank's case is worse than his was proved to be at the trial, do you not think the Railway Commissioners should have given him more than £100? If his case was proved to be at all identical with Belisario's, he ought to get nothing.
331. *Mr. Nicholson.*] Where a case has been tried, and other evidence has cropped up, would it not be a matter of courtesy and fair play for the Commissioners to reopen the case? Undoubtedly; it would be a matter of appeal; they would be compellable to do it. If a case were decided, and evidence brought up which could not have been produced at the trial of the case, the law will grant a new trial on this ground within a reasonable time.
332. I take it that that is the position of the case of Mr. Burbank? I am not aware of that.
333. Even criminal cases are reopened by the Crown when fresh evidence can be adduced? Undoubtedly. It is a common ground for reopening a case that evidence has been discovered which was not available at the time the decision was given.
334. *Chairman.*] You agree that Mr. Burbank, being able to produce additional evidence, is quite right in bringing his case before Parliament? Undoubtedly, if it is evidence which was not obtainable at the former trial. That is the whole distinction to my mind.

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

MR. THOMAS BROWN, | MR. DIGHT,
MR. SPENCE.

J. GILLIES, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

James Campbell Thom, Solicitor for Railways, recalled and further examined:—

335. *Mr. Dight.*] With reference to the jockeys, I notice that at the last meeting of the Committee the question came up about passengers being allowed to take tools of trade with them;—the Chairman asked a question about these jockeys, and you answered, “I believe there are special rates for jockeys attending races, and special conditions for travelling”;—then you were asked by the Chairman, “Are there special conditions?” and you replied, “I do not know yes or no; I could not say from memory; the question of the right to carry this particular box was never raised in this case”;—these special conditions for jockeys would not apply, I take it, to another person with different luggage; for instance, to a dentist carrying a dental box? No; they only apply to special trains for special race meetings on special days. J. C. Thom.
26 Sept., 1900.
336. There were several questions put to you about this dental box of Mr. Burbank’s;—this question was asked, “Do you mean permissible in the passenger carriage or in the luggage-van?” and your reply was, “As passenger’s luggage, free of charge; the English law, by a great number of cases, decided what is and what is not passenger’s luggage, which the companies are compelled to carry to a certain weight without additional charge”;—the Chairman then asked, “Is the law applicable here?” and you replied, “It is, and it would not cover such a box as Mr. Burbank had with him on that occasion”;—the present law would not allow Mr. Burbank to take that box as passenger’s luggage free of charge? That is so.
337. Even supposing that it had a luggage label put on it? The presence of the label would not affect the question of the right to carry it.
338. So that, as the law stands, notwithstanding that Mr. Burbank has said that this box had been carried for him frequently free of charge on the train from one place to another, that did not give him the right to have it carried free? It did not. In answering these questions I am only expressing an opinion on the law.
339. As Solicitor for Railways, that is your construction of the law? Exactly; and that is given after reference to a great number of cases I referred to.
340. You can see that the question is a very important one in its bearing on this case;—Mr. Burbank states in his evidence that he was allowed to carry this box, so long as it did not exceed 80 lb., free of charge on the railway by virtue of his passenger ticket? I know that that has been his impression.
341. You say distinctly that, as the law stands, he was not entitled to do so? I say he is not entitled to do so.
342. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know whether the Commissioners have any special regulations for this kind of luggage? I am not aware of any.
343. *Chairman.*] If it is not recognised that passengers have a right to carry their tools of trade as passengers’ luggage, why is it done every day in the year nearly with regard to dentists? I do not know whether it is or not. It may be that, unknown to me, he may have had some arrangement with the traffic authorities. They have perfect power to make arrangements with him to carry distinguishable property as passenger’s luggage. I do not know of it in this case, though. I am speaking as to the general law, which is that the passenger is entitled to carry up to the weight allowed all property suitable to his condition in life for his comfort on the journey, or at the other end of it. That is a short statement of what the law is.
344. *Mr. Brown.*] Although that may be the law, supposing the traffic recognise the principle in practice of allowing this kind of luggage to be carried, that would hold the traffic responsible for any damage arising? To the luggage—I should say so, undoubtedly. They would be estopped from setting up any other state of things.
345. *Chairman.*] If that is the law as you state, why is it that commercial travellers are allowed to carry 4 cwt of samples? Because there is a special regulation made for commercial travellers’ luggage up to something like 5 cwt. It is carried at a certain rate one way, and free the other.
346. It is carried for nothing as passengers’ luggage? I do not remember these things by heart; but I know there is such a regulation made under the 53rd section of the Act.

John Charles White, Railway Officer, sworn and examined:—

347. *Chairman.*] In 1897 you were employed as night officer at Tamworth Railway Station? I was. J. C. White.
26 Sept., 1900.
348. You remember an accident happening to a dentist named Albert Burbank? I do.
349. You were in charge of the station that night, I presume? I was.
350. The lighting of the platform was under your supervision on that night? It was.
351. Do you remember how it was lit that night? Yes, it was lit the same as always.
352. What do you mean by the same as always? The same lights as were lit for the mail.
353. How many lights were there? I have not seen the place for some time now. I believe there were five.
354. How long were you night officer? About twelve months.
355. You ought to be able to know how many there were? I believe there were three lights under the awning, and one post-lamp on either side.
356. How far from the awning would that be? Ten yards, probably.
357. How far would the platform extend beyond those limits? To the far end, perhaps 15 yards. I am not quite sure about the distance.
358. That accident happened on the 1st July, 1887? I know it happened in July. I could not tell you the exact date.
359. Did you turn out any lamps that night on the platform? What time do you mean—before the mail?
360. Any time during the night? There are two passenger trains there. There is one that comes in at 9.5, and, of course, they are lit for that train. Then they would be turned down until the people started to come for the mail. They would not be kept up all the time when there are no trains, 361.

- J. C. White. 361. The custom is to turn out the lamps when the train is not at the station? When there is no one there we turn them down. We do not have them going.
- 26 Sept., 1900. 362. You do not turn the lamps out? No, not right out.
363. In your evidence in the Court at Tamworth did you say that you turned out all the post-lamps and the middle lamp under the awning? I might have said that I turned them down.
364. Your evidence says that you turned them out? I probably turned them down.
365. Are you sure whether you turned them out, or whether you simply turned them down? I would not like to say for sure whether I turned them right out. I know I would reduce the light for the sake of saving the gas. We have to do that.
366. Have you to be very economical? We are not supposed to leave the place dark; we are supposed to be economical and not to waste it unnecessarily when there is no traffic there. We are supposed to use the gas as traffic demands. If there are no trains or anything about, of course we do not want the same flare up as when there are trains about; it is not necessary.
367. Was there a man named Playford working on the platform that night? Yes; he was the porter.
368. What did he do when he came on duty at 1 a.m.;—had he anything to do with the lamps? Suppose I was busy at the time, and the lamps wanted attending to, he would do it. I would see to it myself as a rule, sometimes he would. It was an understood thing that I was responsible for them. If other duties prevented him from doing it I would do it. I cannot say on what particular night who did it. I am not quite sure at present.
369. Did he light any lamps after 1 a.m., do you think, on that morning? Probably he did. There are lamps to light outside the station. He would light that lamp, and then there would be the one in the hall of the waiting-room to light.
370. If you turned out any lights on the platform, would Playford have to light them when he came on? Yes; or I would if he had not the time.
371. And Playford did light some of the lamps on that occasion? Probably he did; he must have lit some of them. I cannot particularise now the lamps he lit.
372. If you simply turned them down, and he turned them on, you would not say that was lighting the lamps? It is lighting them to a certain extent. They are of no use as they are, when they are turned down.
373. You say you turned them out in your evidence, and now you do not know whether you did or not? I say I turned them down.
374. No; you said you did not know whether you turned them out, or whether you turned them down? If the lamps were down, they were of no use as lamps; it is just the same as turning them out.
375. *Mr. Brown.*] When the lamps are down they are practically out, as far as light is concerned? Yes; that is what I meant. I might turn them right down to perhaps a glimmer, so that when they are wanted again, all a man has to do is to turn the tap, and there would be a full blaze again.
376. During the time you were in charge of that station, was it customary on the part of several of the officers to turn the lights down, or turn them out altogether—which practice obtained? Suppose the moon was to rise, they would be turned right out, because we would not want them again, say, outside.
377. But on the platform? There was a lamp near the lower end—that is, towards Sydney. That lamp would be turned down.
378. It would not be turned out altogether? Not that lamp.
379. *Chairman.*] Do you remember seeing anything on the platform that night—anything lying about? Yes.
380. What was there, do you remember? I know I saw Burbank's case there.
381. Did you see anything which anyone would be likely to tumble over there? No, I did not.
382. Do you think there was anything there which anyone would tumble over? No.
383. You do not think there was? Not without they went right up against the wall.
384. If Playford says there were two sides of bacon sewn up in canvas on the platform he is not telling the truth? That is after the mail came in. You are speaking of the time when I went on duty, I presume?
385. I am speaking of the time prior to the accident to Burbank? I am talking of the time before the mail. A case which comes out of the mail is a different matter. There must necessarily be goods on the platform when the mail comes in. We have to put them out.
386. *Mr. Brown.*] That is, goods that come with the mail for the station are put out on the platform? Yes.
387. You say that previous to the coming of the mail there was nothing on the platform? That is right.
388. *Mr. Spence.*] When did you see Mr. Burbank's box on the platform? When I came on duty.
389. What time was that? I came on at 6 o'clock. It was sometime during the evening I saw it. Long before the mail came I saw the box.
390. Whereabouts was it located? It was up near the parcels office against the wall.
391. Against the wall? Yes.
392. Did you notice if it was labelled? I noticed that it was not labelled.
393. What time was it when you noticed that it was not labelled? Some time before the mail came I noticed the box. I believe I referred to Playford about it. I asked him if he knew anything about the box. I was looking to see where it was to go.
394. You do not know how it came there? No.
395. *Mr. Spence.*] You examined it to see if there was a label on it? I did.
396. Can you account for the fact that a label has been produced to the Committee with an address on, sworn to as having been on the box? If the label is produced it was not on the box when I saw it, and I do not believe it was ever on the box, because that is what I looked at.
397. Was there enough light there to see? Any amount of light.
398. Can you remember at what time you looked for it on the box? I could not tell you exactly the time I looked for it; but when a man has his parcels to get ready for the mail, of course he looks over these things.
399. The presumption is, then, that at the time you would be looking for it it would be just when you were expecting the mail, and after the lights had been turned up? Not necessarily just before the mail. I would start my work before that.

400. It would not be during the period when the lights were turned down? Oh, no. Even if it was, the light would not be down so far that I would not be able to see, and I had my hand-lamp. J. C. White.
401. Would any of your officers help Mr. Burbank to put a box on a train which was not addressed? It appears they did in this case. 26 Sept., 1900.
402. Is it not the rule to see that it is labelled before it is put on? That is the recognised rule.
403. I believe it is an admitted fact that some one was helping him to put this box on when the accident occurred? Yes.
404. Is not that an assumption then, that it must have been labelled? Not at all.
405. Would it not be fair to assume that? If we had known to whom the box belonged it would have been a different thing. We would have seen the man and asked him. I did not know the man, to tell you the truth. When he came up and said it was his box, and he wished it to go on, of course we would not leave it behind then. We could explain to the guard that we really did not know. I was not there at that time. When he came up I was away.
406. It is allowable for a guard to break what may be called a regulation in a case like that? It is not allowable; but if a man is travelling on business like Mr. Burbank was, and carried, as it were, his business with him, it would be useless to go without that box. If he said to the guard, "I forgot to get my box labelled. Will you take it for me?" Certainly it is not right to do so; but I am not saying that he would not do it.
407. Burbank states that he did have it labelled, and as far as you know there was no label on it? I know perfectly well there was not.
408. *Mr. Brown.*] Whose duty was it to label it? It was his duty to come and tell us where he wanted the box to go to, and it was our duty then to label it in his presence.
409. *Mr. Spence.*] Did he come to you at all when he came to get his box put on? He never came near me at all.
410. *Mr. Brown.*] When a box of this description is brought over by Mr. Burbank, or his agent, as stated in this case, to your office, whose duty was it to see to the labelling of the box;—was it your duty, or was it the duty of some other officer? Of course, if he came to me, it was my duty. If I was doing anything else, perhaps taking a telegram, I would tell the porter to do it. I had not him on at that time; he would not come on until 12:30 or 1.
411. Were you solely in charge at that particular time? I was solely in charge.
412. *Mr. Dight.*] Was it possible for this box to be lodged on the station early in the evening, and for the ticket to be put on before you came there, or must it have come under your notice at any time it came during that afternoon? If it came before 6 o'clock I was not there. It may have been put on then. I am speaking about the time from 6 o'clock. I did not notice that it was labelled then.
413. When you first took up your duties that night was this box there, or did it come on to the position where you saw it some time during the time you were on duty? I did not notice it come there. When I noticed it it was on the platform. I did not see it brought there.
414. Was that any considerable time after you had taken up the duties of the platform? I suppose it might have been 8 o'clock; I could not say exactly when. A lot of goods, what they call outwards, to go by the goods train, would be up near the wall.
415. Was it possible for that box to have been on the platform before you took up duty for the night? It would be possible to put it on the platform. It may have come on at 5 o'clock.
416. *Mr. Spence.*] Had you seen the box often before? I do not think I had.
417. Was not Mr. Burbank in the habit of travelling? I believe he was. I believe I had seen the box there; but there was such a number of boxes that I would not take any particular notice.
418. There are not a number of dentists travelling, and I thought you might have been acquainted with him? I do not know the box that way.
419. Is there anything you had to depend on regarding the light, other than your own memory;—is it not possible, for instance, that one of these lamps might not have been turned up? No; I was always very particular about the mail train.
420. Was it the custom to turn them all up regularly for every train at night? Yes; for the passenger, and for the mail, they were always alight.
421. None of them left out at any time? Not that I know of, unless, as I said before, on a bright moonlight night, when the side-lights might be out.
422. And the lights under the awning were always lit? Yes.
423. Those on each side were sometimes left out on light nights? On a moonlight night I have seen them out, although, as a rule, I always like to have them going.
424. *Chairman.*] Was the night of the accident a clear night? It was not a very clear morning.
425. It was moonlight? No; it was not moonlight. I believe it was a bit of a misty night, as far as I can remember. I know it was a very cold night.
426. Mr. Burbank was a regular traveller on his business? I do not know; I could not say that.
427. Had you not seen Mr. Burbank on many occasions travelling? I had seen him; but I assure you that I did not know him.
428. *Mr. Brown.*] Prior to this accident, you did not know him? No; I did not know Mr. Burbank when I saw him on the platform—he was lying down at the time. I asked what his name was, so that I did not know him.
429. *Chairman.*] Did not Mr. Burbank travel regularly on his professional tours from that station? He might. There are plenty of men travelling whom we do not know. We might know a Member of Parliament, because he has a pass, and that is all we would take notice of in that way.
430. *Mr. Brown.*] Supposing a man was travelling regularly from the station at which you were stationed, you might not know him for the first few trips, but you would get to know him after a while? There are plenty of men I do not know there. I did not go about much, and I can assure you I did not know Mr. Burbank.
431. *Mr. Dight.*] How long had you been night officer previous to this accident? I think I went there on the 23rd January of the same year.
432. As night officer you would be in full charge of the station? Yes.
433. And it would be your duty to see to any luggage, if there was any luggage, on the platform not labelled? To see to it, and if I did not know myself to ascertain if those under me did.

J. C. White. 434. Did you do that when you saw this box there? I am not sure now that I did not speak to Playford, asking him if he knew anything of it—if any one had said anything to him. I believe I did, and he did not know.

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435. You have already stated that you did not know Mr. Burbank;—previous to this occasion, can you remember him as having travelled, or as bringing this particular box, even although you did not know him personally? I would not like to say that I did not know the box, but it never impressed me so that I would remember it. No doubt I had seen it before, but there was nothing attached to it that I would remember it by. I cannot say that I had. For one thing, I did not know Mr. Burbank. If I had, the thing would have been different.

436. As a traveller, he would be allowed to carry a certain weight of luggage with him free as passenger's luggage, would he not? If he came under the heading of a commercial traveller he would, or he might have a special permit; I am not quite sure about that. A commercial traveller is allowed to carry a certain amount of weight as personal luggage. He probably came under that head.

437. If Mr. Burbank or anybody else came to you as the officer in charge of the station, and wanted to send an article of luggage free of charge that he was not entitled to send free, I suppose it would be your duty to see that it did not go—to see that he paid for it? Yes, if it was not personal luggage; but if he came under that head, or had a special permit to have this box carried—a case, I believe, has existed of that kind—I would not question it.

438. This is an important matter with reference to this case, and that is why I want to get from you whether he was entitled to take this box as passenger's luggage, free of charge, or whether he was not? The only answer I can give to that question is this: That if he came under the head of commercial travellers he is allowed a certain weight, or if he has a permit from the Commissioners to carry in certain boxes he would then be allowed to take it. It occurred so long ago that I cannot remember whether he had a permit or whether he came under that head. It is a point I am not quite clear on. I know that would be the question which would arise in my mind.

439. *Mr. Spence.*] Would not the fact of a porter helping him with the box be an argument that he did have a permit, and that the officers recognised his right to take the box? I would not say that. For instance, if you were going away by train, and ran up to the porter and said, "There is my luggage there, and I want it to go," he would not know what was in your luggage; he would help you in with it; he would not stop to question when the mail is about to leave whether it was a legal thing to carry. That would be found out at the other end, and then they would charge him.

440. *Chairman.*] If the porter knew that Mr. Burbank was a travelling dentist, and that that was a box containing his tools of trade, would he not help him to carry it? He would help him.

441. If requested? It is his duty to assist when he is asked. But the question Mr. Spence put to me was whether if he ran up at the time and asked him, if he would put it in. I can only say that in the excitement of the moment he would help. He is not to know what was in the box.]

442. *Mr. Spence.*] Do you not think that Playford knew Mr. Burbank, and knew what was in the box? I am sure he did not. I did not know the man, and Playford was more a stranger than I was.

443. Have you any ground for saying that he did not know Burbank? I am pretty sure he did not know him without he knew more of the people than I did, and I do not think he did know.

444. You had no personal knowledge of what took place between Burbank and Playford? No, I had not seen.

445. Then you cannot swear to what you did not know? I am only saying that I do not know whether Playford knew him or not. I do not think he did, because he was not as long in the place as I was, and I did not know him.

446. A man might be there a day and know him? He might. I have my suspicions whether he did know him or not.

447. *Mr. Brown.*] Supposing this box had been put on the platform in time, properly labelled, was it any part of Mr. Burbank's duty to assist or to see that it was put in the van it was intended to go by? He has no right to touch it when he hands it over.

448. When it is handed over to your possession it then becomes the duty of yourself or of your officers to see that it is put in the carriage it is intended for? Yes. He is supposed to see that it is properly labelled, and then we put it in.

449. *Mr. Dight.*] But supposing the box were brought on to the platform, and just put down there and labelled by other people not connected with the railway station at all—that is, labelled to go to this place—and supposing it was a box that ought not to go as passenger's luggage, would it then be the duty of a porter to put it in the van? He has a right to question it then. If he did not think it was personal luggage, and he knew nothing of the labelling, the question would naturally arise: "Where did this come from; how was it labelled?" but that could not very well occur.

450. Mr. Burbank has stated that he sent the box down to the station by a lad and a cart, and that they put it on the station and labelled it, at about 9 p.m.;—you stated, I think, that you noticed it on the station some time after you came on duty? Yes.

451. Did you see that it was not labelled? It was not labelled.

452. If they did put it down in that way, and put a label on it, that would not devolve upon you or the porter the obligation to see that it went into the van? If I knew nothing about the box I would naturally question it; but if he says he brought it on to the station and labelled it, how would it be labelled without we knew something about it?

453. They say they labelled it? How would they get into the office? It is not likely that they would go foraging round the office.

454. *Chairman.*] Are passengers not in the habit of asking some one for a label and putting it on themselves frequently? No doubt in a rush they may ask for a label.

455. And they get it? Yes; if he had asked me I would have been sure to know about the box, would I not?

456. You were fourteen months on Tamworth Railway Station, and you did not know Burbank? I can assure you that I did not know Mr. Burbank.

457. And you were there fourteen months before this accident occurred? No; since the 23rd of January of the same year.

458. Then why did you swear at Tamworth that you were fourteen months at Tamworth Railway Station? I suppose that is the whole time I was there. The trial took place three weeks after I left there.

459. Do you admit that Mr. Burbank was entitled to carry that box with him as passenger's luggage? *J. C. White.*
Under the condition I stated in answer to Mr. Dight.
460. If you were not aware that he came under the category of commercial travellers, or had a special permit, why was he allowed always to carry his box? I suppose he must have come under that heading if he carried it before, and he apparently did. *26 Sept., 1900.*
461. You believe he must have come under the heading? I have already stated that I cannot say now whether he came under that head or whether he had a special permit, and I judge if it was carried before it would have been carried under the existing circumstances—either as a commercial traveller or with a permit.
462. Consequently he was entitled to carry it? He would be entitled to carry it if those conditions existed, but I cannot say that they did.
463. If you know a man is travelling backwards and forwards and carrying on his business, would you not, as a night officer, or as an officer in the Railway Department, recognise him as a commercial traveller, when he had tools of trade like that? I would no doubt recognise it with the authority of my superior. I would not take it on my own. I am only to do as I am told. The law is laid down to me, and I am supposed to use my own discretion; and if I think anything wants further advice on the subject I know where to go to. It would not do for every man to carry what he wants on the railways.
464. How do you account for Mr. Burbank carrying this box always with him without paying for it;—why was he allowed to do it? For the very reason which I stated a while ago.
465. That you believed he came under the head of commercial traveller? Yes; I stated that before.
466. *Mr. Spence.*] Do you think there was any one in the Department who had the slightest knowledge of Burbank, or knew who he was? I am not in a position to say. I know that I did not know him.
467. *Chairman.*] Did you see that box on the platform in the early part of the evening? I saw the box before the mail came.
468. Was it labelled then;—did you look for a label, or see it labelled? I looked to see if there was anything on it which would guide me.
469. And what was the result? That there were labels of old standing on it. I cannot tell you now what they were. They were not legible, and there was nothing for a railway man to go by.
470. *Mr. Spence.*] No name on the box? I am not quite sure about that. I believe it was printed on; I am not quite sure about it now.
471. Do you think it is likely that a dentist would carry a box of costly and valuable tools about without having his name on it? It is not a very likely thing to do. I believe there was a name; I am not quite sure about it.
472. Would it not seem likely that, not finding a label, you would look for a name to see whom it belonged to? Yes. I would not like to say for sure that there was a name on it. I have an idea that there was a printed name on it, but I am not quite sure about it. I fancy there was; but even that would be no guide to him.
473. *Mr. Brown.*] As the officer in charge it was your duty to see whether there was a label on? Yes; it was my duty. It would not matter if there were a dozen names on it, the label was the guide; we do not go by the names.
474. *Chairman.*] The name "A. E. Burbank, dentist," was branded on the box in large letters, and the words "keep this end up" were painted on it;—you examined that box? Yes.
475. Do you not think you ought to have seen whether it had a label or not before the train was starting? I am just saying that there was not a label on it.
476. Was it not your place to inquire and see that there was one put on before it went away? How could I put a label on when I did not know where it was going to, and how could I tell whom it belonged to when I did not know the name. I did not know Mr. Burbank. If I did not know the man, the name would be no guide to me.
477. You are a very careful officer, are you not? I do not say that I am very careless.
478. Are you exact in carrying out your duties? I endeavour to do my duty.
479. You are a careful cautious officer? I am a careful officer.
480. Then you could not make any mistake as to whether there was a label on or not? No.
481. You are not in the habit of making mistakes? In what way do you mean?
482. You are so careful that it is almost an impossibility? I do not say that I am infallible.
483. You are so careful that it is almost an impossibility for you to make a mistake? I would not like to say that I am that careful, but I say I am careful as regards doing my duty.
484. Have there ever been any faults found with you in the discharge of your duty by the Department? Yes.
485. Not many, I suppose? Departmental errors, that is, irregularities in railway working—perhaps misjudging the time of running of a train, or something of that description.
486. You were never found fault with, I suppose? Yes. A man who has been fourteen or fifteen years in the railway service cannot go through without a scratch. I suppose there are little slips I have made.
487. You have never been fined? I have been fined.
488. Often? I could not tell you how often; but I have been fined for the things I have done.
489. You have been promoted lately? No.
490. Did your removal to Newtown involve any increase in salary? No.
491. It did not? It did not. It might be a better position; but there has been no increase in my salary since I came to Sydney.
492. I suppose you applied to come down here? I did, because my home was here. I have been keeping two homes.
493. I suppose there would be no reason to think that you could be mistaken as regards the lights that were on the platform that night? No.
494. You could not make a mistake as regards the station being well lit when the accident occurred? The station, as I said before, was lit as provided for by the Department—all the lights I could get.
495. You are told to be very economical as regards the use of the gas? I am told not to waste it.
496. If you show your vigilance, or your care, in the conduct of your station, do you receive any commendation or reward from the Commissioners? No.
497. Not you specially, but railway employees? I do not know.

- J. C. White.
26 Sept., 1900.
498. You get nothing extra from them? I never did, and I do not think there is any provision made for that. If you do your duty, although you might have a bit of bad luck sometimes, still if you do your work they recognise it, I am happy to say.
499. *Mr. Dight.*] Were you there when the jury went to see the station lighted up? Yes; on the night of the second day of the trial, I think it was.
500. Can you say whether the station was lighted in anything like the same state when the jury viewed it as it was in on the night Mr. Burbank met with the accident? It was lit the same at the time the jury viewed it.
501. I think you said that there were several old labels on the box when you saw it? Yes.
502. More than one? Yes.
503. *Chairman.*] You look upon yourself as being rather out of the common as regards care as a night officer—attention to business as a night officer? Not out of the common. We are all careful.
504. You are all careful? That is our duty. I endeavour to do my duty. I do not hold myself as being better than other men.
505. Have you been fined at all? I told you that I have.
506. Often? I cannot tell you how often I have been fined. As I said before there were irregularities in railway working, such as misjudging the crossing of a train or something like it.
507. But that is nothing;—you would not look upon allowing trains to cross, and being likely to cause a collision, as anything serious? I should think you would. What would become of us if we did not. We are taught to use the utmost caution. I may say that all through my career I have never once been charged with insobriety, and I have never once had an accident with the exception of one night. The unfortunate fellow Ryan is dead, and perhaps I should not speak of him. The wind caught the sheeting of the truck and brought the truck back. It fouled another road as I was coming in, and two wheels left the road. That is the only derailment I have had.
508. Did you ever pull the signal off when the line was not clear? No, sir. Do you mean in a crossing?
509. "Signal pulled off when line not clear";—you were charged with that, were you not? Not to my knowledge—not when it was not clear.
510. You were severely reprimanded for it? Not that I remember.
511. You swear that? So far as my remembrance serves me, I was not guilty of pulling the signal off when the line was not clear.
512. If you were reprimanded for anything, surely you would know what it was for? Yes; we have been through a lot in the space of fourteen years, and I cannot remember every detail.
513. If it has been said that you were once reprimanded for pulling the signal off when the line was not clear, would that be true or not? I would question it.
514. That means to say it is not true if I have been told that by anybody? I would question the matter very strongly, too. I have already said that I never caused an accident.
515. You never had gates broken? Yes; but not I. I unfortunately was in charge.
516. Were you reprimanded? I was reprimanded for not looking after Connell. I remember the circumstance, and that was when the gates were broken on some road at Tamworth. I was fined or reprimanded, with Connell, for not seeing that he did his duty. I was inside issuing tickets and looking after the packing of parcels while the mail was coming. It lost a minute. Connell failed in his duty, and I suffered.
517. *Mr. Brown.*] You were held responsible? I was held responsible; but I could not be in two places at once. He certainly put the gates right for the mail; but somebody must have crossed and left one of them foul.
518. *Mr. Dight.*] Might it not be the same as to the charge of pulling the signal off—that you, being in charge, would be responsible when somebody else might have erred? Yes; I do not remember the case. What the Chairman referred to was the crossing of a train. He used the expression, "Pulling off the signal when the line was not clear." I judge from that that he means that the line was foul—that is, an engine fouling a truck or part of a train.
519. It is in your Departmental record that you were reprimanded for pulling off the signal when the station was not clear, and you say you do not remember it? I can tell you one instance.
520. My question was, "Might it not have been the same in that instance as when the gates were broken—that although you were not actually the one to pull the signal off, you were responsible for the one under you who did"? No; and I will tell you why. For me to pull off a signal for a train, when another train was foul, and perhaps just avert a collision, I would not be here to-day. That is the way the Department would look at that. It is an enormity. A thing like that would be impressed on my mind, and I do not remember it. I have an idea what the Chairman does mean. I think he means in regard to a train being foul from the way he puts it. When railwaymen say the line is not clear, they mean that the line is not clear for traffic—that is, that some part of the train or trains are blocking the main line.
521. *Mr. Brown.*] In this particular instance which has been referred to here, can you give us any information relating to that case from memory;—will your memory call that to mind now? I remember an instance where there were gates situated a good distance away from the station—down in the cutting. On one occasion these gates were controlled or stood just near the home signal. Of course, there was a gatekeeper there, who was supposed to look after them. One night the boy went to sleep; the passenger challenged them, and as she challenged I saw the light go flash across the line. There are two red lights when the gate is going across like that. It shows white inside the lamp. When I saw that light go across I thought gates were passing, although it was not a very good light at any time, and I pulled off. It appears that young Ryan did not get them quite clear, and the passenger touched them, breaking the handle or something of that sort. I think that is what the Chairman referred to. I do not know how they put it down. That does not say the yard was not clear. My yard was clear. They are supposed to look after the gates; but still they are under the control of the home signal.
522. So that in this particular case which you remember, the trouble you got into over it was really the outcome of somebody else's neglect? Yes, and I was responsible for it; you are in charge, and you cannot watch everybody. If those under us do not do what we think proper, we have the option to go to our superior officers about them; but a man does not often feel inclined to do that.

523. *Chairman.*] Were you fined six times, do you think, in your career? Taking the fourteen years, I suppose I was. J. C. White.
26 Sept, 1900.
524. *Mr. Brown.*] Were you fined for what would be called any serious neglect of duty or offence during the time of your service? No; the worst case is with reference to the gates. I was reprimanded or fined—I am not sure which now—for not seeing that Connell did his duty. Those were the words used. I have never been charged with insobriety, nor have I ever had a serious accident.
525. *Chairman.*] You do not think it is anything serious to pull off the signal when the line is not clear? I never pulled off the signal when the line was not clear.
526. Yet you got severely reprimanded for it? You put it the other way about. I have explained what that refers to.
527. *Mr. Brown.*] In this departmental record there are two entries relating to gates? Yes.
528. Then the instance you relate to did not refer to one set of gates? No; they are two distinct things.
529. *Mr. Dight.*] They were not the same gates? No.
530. *Chairman.*] If you had a man under your charge for a few years, and he had been fined, reprimanded, and threatened thirty-two or thirty-three times, what would you think of that man? It all depends on how it came about.
531. Would you think that he was an officer who would be very observant on a night like that on which the accident occurred, and would know all about the surroundings? There are often circumstances connected with a man's career that are not most pleasant, and it all depends what code of honour you get. Some men can work well, and if a man has one over him that treats him in a proper way he will be a success, otherwise he will be a failure. I am not making any charge. I am only saying that you must not judge a man by length of service. From what I can see, the charge levelled against me is carelessness.
532. Of what? From the way you are speaking, you seem to think that I am a very indifferent officer. I cannot help that. I know I have always endeavoured to do my duty, because I have thoughts of promotion, and others to look after besides myself; but I still maintain that if the Railway Commissioners did not think me a careful man, or a man with an ordinary amount of brains, they would not have put me to the places they did when I left Tamworth. You know the country, I suppose, as well as, if not better, than I do. I was put on the side of a mountain at the mouth of that tunnel, where the grade is 1 in 40, where all the engines come to be detached and attached, and so on, where the late Mr. Eddy said the utmost care must be exercised in the working of that place, because one slip would mean a loss of life and a loss of property and rolling stock.
533. *Mr. Dight.*] Where was this? At Ardglan, a very dangerous place. On one occasion an engine failed down towards Murrurundi. I had the mail train mixed up with these trains to marshal her through. On another occasion a wheel came off a goods train. I had the same performance to go through, and I am proud to say I met with the approbation of my superiors. I am only stating that matter, as you seem to think me such an indifferent man. I have not much to stand on. I do not think it is fair to judge me by past history in everything. There are so many mistakes a man can make, that it really looks an enormity when there is nothing in them. If they did not treat every little detail in that way they could not work the railways. If a man delays a telegram five minutes he is fined, because it might mean a stock waggon missing its train and putting the stock out of the market. A man with errors like that creeping in would get a history in no time.
534. Would you call errors in train-book nothing? I can explain that to you if you will allow me.
535. *Chairman.*] You consider yourself a more than ordinary careful and reliable officer do you? I consider myself an ordinary careful officer. I am not saying that I am better than my fellow officers.
536. *Mr. Spence.*] And you quote as proof of that the positions you have held? Yes.
537. Have you ever known a man promoted in the railway service who had a working sheet as bad as yours? Yes.
538. You have;—do they get on by influence? No, they do not; because they look at these offences, as I am trying in a humble way to point out to you.
539. I suppose if a man is reprimanded and suspended for three days with loss of pay it is nothing—only a harmless offence? It is not a harmless offence.

ACCIDENT TO ALBERT BURBANK, ON RAILWAY PREMISES, TAMWORTH.

APPENDIX.

A.

[To Evidence of Albert Burbank, Esq.]

[The Tamworth News, Tuesday, 12th April, 1898.]

TAMWORTH CIRCUIT COURT—CIVIL JURISDICTION.

Burbank v. Railway Commissioners.

Tuesday, 12th April.

THIS was a case in which Albert E. Burbank, surgeon dentist, of Tamworth, sued the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales on account of their alleged negligence in their management of the Tamworth railway station, and the insufficient lighting of the same, whereby in the month of July last he met with a serious accident, resulting in injuries which had rendered him unable to practice his profession, and had put him to expense for medical and surgical attendance, besides causing him great pain of body and mind.

Damages were laid at £2,000.

Defendants entered a general plea of not guilty.

Mr. J. Garland, instructed by Mr. W. F. Tribe, appeared for the plaintiff; and Mr. E. Scholes, instructed by Mr. D. W. Harris (for Mr. J. C. Thom, solicitor to the Railway Commissioners), for the defendants.

Jury: H. L. Cousens, W. Johnston, H. J. Watts, and J. Dixon.

Mr. Garland, having explained the facts of the case to the jury, called the following evidence:—

Albert Burbank Burbank, surgeon dentist, stated:—I have been carrying on my profession for twenty years; I came to Tamworth in January, 1897, and made it my headquarters, visiting ten other towns periodically; my income was about £70 per month; for the purpose of my business I used to carry my dental apparatus in a box, which would weigh about 70 or 80 lb.; on the evening of the 1st July I sent the box to the Tamworth railway station; arrived there myself about 1.30 a.m. on the 2nd; it was a dark winter night, and there was no moon; at the ends of the station it was very dark; think there are five lamps on the platform, the two on the outside—the end lamps—were not lighted. [A plan of the platform was put in.] My dental box was at the door of the parcels office, and the accident took place at a spot close by; went to look at the box before the arrival of the train, to see that it was properly labelled; it was so dark that I had to light a match to identify the box; there was no lamp lighted beyond me at the Armidale end of the platform; the train was about an hour late; when it arrived I placed my small parcels in a carriage standing at the Sydney end of the platform; walked smartly on, and meeting the night-officer showed him my ticket, and told him I was going to see my box put in all right; have only seen two officers at the station at night—the night officer and a boy about 16 or 17; went on to the guard's van, the tail of which was directly opposite the parcels room door; saw the boy standing there, and said to him, "Is my box there—Burbank?" he jumped back to where the box was, saying, "Oh! I have forgotten it; will you help me with it?" he took one end of the box and I the other, and he called to the guard, "Don't shut the door; this box must go on;" the guard said, "Hurry up, I have no time, I can't wait for you"; I said, "I have my ticket, I am a passenger"; the boy backed towards the van, and I went forward, holding my end of the box; there was a heap of goods about 2 feet 6 inches high, which the boy avoided by going on the outer side; as I got abreast of the goods my foot struck something hard which was lying separate from the heap; my right foot struck it, and in trying to recover myself my left foot also struck it, and I fell forward on my right knee; could not see what I stumbled over; was anxious to get into the guard's van, but the guard would not wait for me; after the train had gone I sat on the platform in great pain; some people came, but I could not distinguish their faces, it was too dark; Constable Beeby pulled me by the coat, but he did not recognise me, though he should have done, neither did I know him until the night officer came with a lantern; some of those present carried me home on a litter, and Dr. Wilson attended to my injuries; I was in bed two and a half months; during that time and up to now receiving medical treatment; Dr. Wilson's bill up to now is £86; my leg was broken obliquely and into the knee-joint; I am not able now to use my leg; I cannot put weight on it—if I try to do so it bends forward; my right hand and arm were paralysed for four months; am quite unable to practice my profession; the right leg is the principal factor in mechanical dentistry, owing to the necessity for the use of the lathe and the dental engine, which are worked with a treadle.

[A letter, written by plaintiff's brother, two days after the accident, notifying the Railway Commissioners of the accident, and informing them that they would be held responsible for it, was put in.]

Witness (continuing): I could not see what was on the platform, as it was too dark; have often been to the Tamworth station to catch the same train; so far as the number of lamps lit was concerned, the state of the station was on this occasion the same as on every previous occasion when I was there; there was no other light than that from the lamps.

To Mr. Scholes: The accident happened opposite the parcels office; would not swear whether the door of the office was open or shut, but it was dark there; I did not touch them to test it; noticed both before and after the accident that the two outer lamps of the platform were unlighted; never saw a dentist use a lathe in a sitting position; it is an unreasonable position, as there would be no purchase; a dentist's lathe requires full pressure of the leg and body; my travelling expenses and hotel expenses are about £20 a week.

Frank Weekly, bus-driver, stated:—I have been in the habit of going to the Tamworth railway station in the night; was there on the morning of the 2nd July; it was a dark, foggy night; was inside the station when the train arrived; there were only two lamps outside, those under the covered way; there was no other light on the station when the train was in; two men are employed at the station during the night; when the train was in on the night of the accident the door of the parcels office was closed; had no passengers, and was on the point of going away, when I was called back; drove to the small gate of the station, so that I was pretty close to where plaintiff was; looked along the platform in the direction of where plaintiff was lying, but could see nothing, owing to the darkness; he would be about 10 or 15 feet away from where I was; saw White, the night officer, come up with a light.

To Mr. Scholes: I arrived at the station about 1.20 a.m.; the train is due at 1.45 a.m., and on the morning in question it was about thirty or thirty-five minutes late; do not know exactly when I was first spoken to about giving evidence in this case; could not see any people outside the parcels office; the two lights that were alight were the last two on the Sydney end under the platform; there was a good deal of luggage packed up by the wall of the parcels office.

John Smith Wilson stated:—I am a duly qualified medical practitioner, and practice my profession in Tamworth; I was called in to attend plaintiff on the morning of the 2nd July; he was suffering from a fracture of the thigh at the knee-joint; the attachments about the knee-joint were very much torn, the whole structure being injured; saw plaintiff within three-quarters of an hour of his accident; he also complained of pain about the right shoulder and side, and was in a state of collapse; administered an anæsthetic and set the leg, the operation taking about three and a half hours; a fracture affecting the knee-joint is much more serious than one affecting the bone, owing to danger of stiffening of the joint; plaintiff was in bed for six weeks before I removed the splints, and for some time afterwards; the bone had united well, but there was a shortening of the leg; the right leg is now three-quarters of an inch shorter than the left; plaintiff has made very little progress in the use of the leg during the last three months; it is now for purposes of work practically useless; the leg may improve slowly, and I think it will, but plaintiff will never have as full and free use of it as he had before; after being on crutches for a short while plaintiff became partially paralysed in the right arm and side, and remained so for about ten days; I have been in constant attendance on plaintiff since the accident, and am so still; a few weeks before the accident plaintiff was accepted as a first-class life by the Australian Widows' Life Office.

To the Jury: Plaintiff will never be able to use his leg so well as formerly for his profession, owing to the shortening of the limb and the stiffening of the knee-joint.

To Mr. Scholes: In time plaintiff may be able to rise his leg to turn his dentist's lathe in a minor degree.

David

David Carter, dental surgeon, stated that it would be impossible for a man with a shortened leg and stiffened knee-joint to drive a dental lathe.

In cross-examination by *Mr. Scholes*, witness said it was possible for hydraulic pressure to be used for the driving of a lathe, but it was not practicable for work in the country.

This was the plaintiff's case-in-chief.

The following evidence was called for the defence:—

James Thomas Playford, porter at the Tamworth railway station, stated:—I went on duty at 1 a.m. on the 2nd July; all the lamps on the station were alight; the night officer would light some of the lamps, and it was my duty to light any that I did not find lighted; when I came on duty on the 2nd, I lighted the two post-lamps outside the covered way and the lamp in front of the ladies' waiting-room; the others I found alight; did not see *Mr. Burbank* before the train came in; when the train arrived the brake-van pulled up nearly opposite the parcels office door, which was then wide open; the office is lighted by two gas jets, and these were alight; there was a light in the brake-van, and also a sidelight outside; took some luggage out of the van—a tin trunk and some parcels—which I placed alongside the Sydney side of the post; there were also a couple of sides of bacon sewn up in canvas, which I placed on the opposite side of the post; then placed some luggage which I had on two barrows into the van; just as the guard was closing his doors, plaintiff came up and inquired if his box had been put in; he pointed out the box to me, which was on the Armidale side of the parcels room door; we got hold of it and started to carry it to the van; backed towards the van, and *Mr. Burbank* followed me; just as I was going to put my end of the box on the floor of the van, plaintiff's end dropped, and I saw *Mr. Burbank* lying on the floor of the platform; did not see him fall, and I cannot say how he was lying; did not tell *Mr. Burbank* I had forgotten his box; it was not labelled nor addressed in any way; could see the parcels and the bacon on the platform; do not think plaintiff tumbled over the bacon; should think the box weighed about 2 cwt.

To Mr. Garland: I examined the box very carefully with the night officer when I came on duty that night, and there was no label on it; my duty is to look after the lamps; if they are not all right I get the blame for it; always lit the outside lamps; was relieving at the time of accident; the outside lamps were alight for the mail train every night during the last week in June; when the train comes in I look after the luggage, and the night officer goes up and down the train; our whole attention is taken up with our duty; the station is sometimes very crowded; there is often valuable property in the parcels office; on most occasions the doors of the office are locked whilst the train is in the station; on the night of the accident the doors were wide open; it is my duty or the duty of the night officer to see that the doors are locked.

To Mr. Scholes: There were not usually many people on the platform at the time of the arrival of the mail train.

John Charles White, night officer, formerly employed at the Tamworth station, stated:—I went on duty at 6 p.m. on the 1st July; lit the gas on the platform for the passenger train, three lamps under the awning, and the two post-lamps outside; after this train was out of the way I turned out the two post-lamps and the middle lamp under the awning; *Playford* came on duty at 1 a.m.; saw him light those that I had previously turned out; when the mail train arrived I was at the Sydney end of the platform, and then walked to the rear of the train; the brake-van drew up almost opposite the parcels room door; there was a light in the van, and a tail light on the train; the parcels office doors were open and two gas jets were alight; it is my duty to lock the doors or leave them open, as I think fit; I could see plainly what was going on outside the parcels office; always carry a hand-lamp at night; did not have to hold my lamp to *Mr. Burbank's* face to see who he was; a box, some small parcels, and a package of bacon was all that was taken from the van and placed near a post; after I had finished at the van I went to the front of the train and signalled to the guard to start; not receiving the response I expected, I went back to see what was wrong, and I then found plaintiff sitting on the platform; at that time all the lamps I have mentioned were burning.

To Mr. Garland: I have been thirteen years in the service of the Department, and I was fourteen months in Tamworth; *Playford* was here longer than a fortnight before the 2nd July; did not see *Playford* light the lamps; saw him go to do so; saw him light them during the last week in June; will swear that the whole of the lamps were lit during the whole of that week; the doors of the parcels office were always open also; the station is now lighted the same as it always was; saw *Mr. Burbank's* box in the early part of the evening; could not find any railway labels on it excepting some old ones; there was not a complete railway label at all; saw a label that I could not make out, and I took it to be one affixed when the trunk was coming here; the night was a bit misty; the parcels room doors are left open to give more light; it is not part of my instructions to have the parcels office doors shut and locked when the trains come in; I am responsible for the lighting of the station when I am on duty.

Wednesday, 13th April.

Mr. Scholes informed his Honor that the jury had, at his (his Honor's) suggestion, visited the station the previous evening, and inspected the lighting arrangements; he could now continue the taking of evidence in support of the case for the defence.

Frederick Gregory, railway guard, stated:—I was the guard of the up-mail train on the 2nd July; on arrival at Tamworth on that day the big doors of the brake-van were opposite the doors of the parcels office; there were three lights burning in the van, and my doors were open; the lights on the station were all alight; the doors of the parcels office were both open, and the lights in the office were burning; saw persons, boxes, and parcels on the platform clearly; I put out some parcels and a package of bacon; the latter I remember particularly, as it had been over-carried; did not see *Mr. Burbank* fall; had received the signal to proceed from the front of the train, when someone called out, "Hold on, guard, my box has to go in"; had given the driver the signal to go before the gentleman spoke; then signalled the driver to stop, and I saw *Mr. Burbank* going towards his box; I was on the platform, and could see the box; asked plaintiff if the box was booked, and he replied, "No, but I am going to Gunnedah with it"; opened the van doors to take in the box, and then looking round I saw plaintiff lying down and the box on his leg; he was lying on his side on the bag of bacon, and the box on his legs; his feet were lying out from the bacon; stepped across and helped *Playford* to lift the box off; plaintiff then commenced to scream; I could see he was hurt, and said he had better see a doctor.

To Mr. Garland: I never told anyone I would see plaintiff did not get a farthing out of the Commissioners; may have spoken to people about the case; know *Mr. Whitehead*, hairdresser, by sight; was in his shop the other day; said I was in Tamworth on this case, but I do not remember saying in *Mr. Whitehead's* presence that plaintiff was suing for £2,000, but he would not get a penny; when the train is in the station my post is near the luggage van; cannot swear the two outside lamps were alight on the night of the accident.

To His Honor: When I said that the station lights were all alight, I meant the three under the covered way.

Frederick Howe, mail guard, stated:—I was on the up-mail train on the 2nd July in the travelling post office; did not see the accident; was on the platform, and I noticed that the three lights under the verandah were burning; the lights in the brake-van were alight; the doors of the parcels office were open; know this because I went in there through the doors opening from the platform; could see parcels and boxes on the platform clearly.

To Mr. Garland: I have always been of the opinion that I could see things clearly on the platform; spoke to *Dr. Wilson* two days after the accident; did not tell him that plaintiff tripped and fell, because it was too dark to see things on the station; did not say, "There has been another accident owing to the darkness of the station"; did not say anything to *Dr. Wilson* about the station being dark; cannot swear that I went into the parcels office on the 30th June, but I am often in there; you can get into the parcels office through the telegraph office.

John Ryan, formerly mail contractor, stated:—I used to carry the mails from the station to the post office; was at the station on the morning of the accident; was standing between the wicket-gate and the parcels room door; was on the platform when the train came in; believe the three lights under the platform were burning; the parcels room doors were open as well as those of the brake-van; cannot say if the post-lamps were alight; saw the accident happen; saw plaintiff and the porter come for the box; they took hold of it, and as they were carrying it to the van plaintiff slipped and the edge of the box caught him above the knee; saw a piece of bacon on the platform, but I cannot say if plaintiff fell over it or not; am almost sure the box came down on plaintiff's leg; could see everything clearly on the platform.

To Mr. Garland: I am now in the employ of the Railway Commissioners; know *Mr. Aisbett*, and he saw me about the case about three weeks ago; don't know if I told him that plaintiff slipped over a piece of bacon; did not tell *Mr. Aisbett* that the outside lamps of the station were not alight; *Mr. Aisbett* was writing whilst I made my statement, but I don't remember if he read it over to me; never spoke to *Mrs. Burbank* that I am aware of; did not say to her on the night of the accident that I did not see the accident and did not know how it happened; know *Mrs. Howlett*, but I never spoke to her about the accident.

Constable

Constable John Beeby stated :—I was on duty on the platform of the station on the morning of the 2nd July : when the train came in I was in front of the ladies' waiting-room ; was on the platform about ten minutes before the train arrived ; walked along the train and stood opposite the booking office door : saw plaintiff jump out of a car and run along the platform ; he called out to the porter something about a box ; walked to the door of the parcels office, and just then I noticed the "right away" was given for the train ; saw Playford and plaintiff catch hold of the box, one at each end, plaintiff carrying his end lower than the porter ; they were hurrying to the van when I saw plaintiff fall ; could not say positively how he fell, but I believe he tripped in walking ; he was carrying the box in a stooping position ; when I got up to him the box was on the ground ; examined a parcel after, and found it was two sides of bacon in canvas ; at the time of the accident it was leaning against a post on the left-hand side of the parcels room door, and it was leaning there after the accident ; was looking at plaintiff when he fell ; am sure he did not fall over the bacon ; the parcels office doors were open and the gas was alight in the office and burning brightly : the lamps under the verandah were burning brightly, but I cannot say if the post-lamps were alight ; could see parcels and things on the platform distinctly ; immediately after the accident, and I found Mr. Burbank was hurt, I went into the parcels office to look for the stretcher, the doors being wide open.

To Mr. Garland : I was often on duty on the station ; it is well lighted ; have seen a light out when a train came in ; never stumbled against anything on the station or knew anyone else to do so ; know Mr. Whitehead, the hairdresser ; did not tell him the day after the occurrence that plaintiff had met with an accident owing to the bad lighting of the station ; did not tell Dr. Wilson or Mr. Burbank that the accident occurred through the bad lighting of the station.

[This was the defendant's case-in-chief.]

Mr. Garland called the following evidence in reply :—

Henry Stoddart, partner in the firm of T. J. Treloar & Co., merchants, stated :—I frequently go to the station after it is lighted at night ; was at the station to meet the 9.15 train a few nights before the accident ; was up there last night ; it was then lighted very much better than it was just previous to the accident.

To Mr. Scholes : The pressure of gas is generally turned off slightly after 11 p.m.

George Morrison, manager of the Bank of New South Wales, stated :—I went up to the station last night, and I was also there at the end of June last ; the lighting now is infinitely superior to what it was then.

Michael Edward Moran, contractor, stated :—I am an alderman of the municipality ; have been on the railway platform several times, and I was there last night ; it was then better lighted than ever I saw it.

William Frederick Tribe, solicitor, stated :—I was at the railway station with Mr. Morrison during the last week in June ; the outside lamps were not then lit ; went to the station last night ; the lighting then was very much better than in June last.

Dr. Wilson (recalled) stated :—I went to the station last night ; it was much better lighted than on previous occasions ; saw Constable Beeby on the morning of the accident ; asked him how it happened, and he said, "Mr. Burbank tumbled over something in the dark," or words to that effect ; know the witness Howe ; don't recollect having any conversation with him about the accident.

James Frederick Whitehead, hairdresser, stated :—Know Constable Beeby ; he came into the shop for a shave on the morning of the accident ; asked him the particulars of it, and he said, "Burbank, the dentist, was running along the platform with a box, and he tripped over a bag of bacon" ; he added, "It is a badly-lighted station at any time, and where he fell it was in complete darkness."

To Mr. Scholes : I have known Mr. Burbank about three or four months ; went to his place to cut his hair ; was asked about the case about a fortnight or three weeks ago.

To Mr. Garland : When I went to see plaintiff I told him what I knew about the case through Constable Beeby.

Emily Howlett, married woman, stated :—Mr. and Mrs. Burbank were living with me at the time of the accident ; know the witness Ryan ; he came to the house on the night of the accident ; asked him how it took place, and he said, "I don't know ; I did not see it."

To Mr. Scholes : I have no clear recollection of how long Mr. and Mrs. Burbank lived with me after the accident.

Constance Burbank, wife of the plaintiff, stated :—At the time of the accident I was renting rooms from Mrs. Howlett ; I moved to my present residence in Hill-street on the 18th September, and have lived there ever since ; I know the witness Ryan ; I saw him on the night of the accident ; he told me he did not see the accident.

To Mr. Scholes : I knew an accident had happened before my husband was brought home ; I was naturally very anxious, but was very calm.

Arthur Aisbett, managing clerk for Mr. Tribe, stated :—The witness Ryan came to Mr. Tribe's office ; he made a statement which I wrote down and read over to him ; Ryan told me that Mr. Burbank tripped over a piece of bacon ; he also said that two of the station lamps were not lit.

The following additional evidence was called for the defence :—

George Wise, station-master at Tamworth, stated :—I have been station-master here for about thirteen years ; I was not on the station at the time of the accident ; I am often on the station at night ; was there last night doing what was required by the jury ; the class of burners in use last night was the same as we always had ; the light last night was the same as usual ; no improvement has been effected in the lighting since the accident ; at times we replace the burners—as one has been required we have put in a new one—but the whole of them have never been replaced at once ; nothing has been done to increase the power of the lights.

To Mr. Garland : One new burner was put in a week ago ; I cannot say if the whole of the burners have been replaced since July last ; witness White is now employed as night officer at Ardglen.

Constable Hammond stated :—I was on duty in June last on the railway station ; there is an additional light now as compared with then, but the rest of the lights are the same in brightness as before.

To Mr. Garland : Before the arrival of a train the lamps are turned up ; I do not remember the witness Playford ; I call the station well lighted, and it was well lighted last June.

Constable Caldwell also stated he noticed no difference in the lighting of the station now as compared with last June ; he considered it was a well-lighted station.

This concluded the evidence.

Counsel addressed the jury at length, his Honor summed up, and the jury, after a short retirement, returned into Court with a verdict for defendants.

B 1.

[To Evidence of *Hugh McLachlan, Esq., Secretary to the Railway Commissioners.*]

CONSUMPTION of Gas at Tamworth Station during three months prior to 1st July, 1897, and three months subsequent to the 1st July, 1897 :—

Three months prior to 1st July, 1897	34,400 feet.
Three months subsequent to 1st July, 1897.....	33,700 "

There has been no increase in the number of lamps at Tamworth Station since 1st July, 1897.

APPENDIX.

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B2.

[To Evidence of Hugh McLachlan, Esq.]

JAS. PLAYFORD.

13/10/96	Junior porter	Aberdeen	5s. per day.
20/11/96	"	Werris Creek	5s. "
19/12/96	"	D.S. Office	5s. "
9/ 3/97	"	Aberdeen	5s. "
16/ 6/97	Porter	Tamworth	6s. "
29/ 7/97	"	Werris Creek	6s. "
28/ 8/97	"	W. Narrabri	6s. "
18/ 9/97	"	"	6s. "
22/11/97	"	"	6s. "
13/ 1/98	"	Glen Innes	6s. "
15/ 3/98	"	Aberdeen	6s. "
27/ 3/98	"	Werris Creek	6s. "
5/ 9/98	"	"	6s. "
21/10/98	"	D.S. Office	6s. "
21/11/98	"	Werris Creek	6s. "
11/12/98	"	Armidale	6s. "
24/12/98	"	Murrurundi	6s. "
7/ 2/99	"	W. Narrabri	6s. "
16/ 3/99	"	Werris Creek	6s. "
28/ 6/99	"	W. Tamworth	6s. "
16/ 7/99	"	W. Narrabri	6s. "
31/ 8/99	"	Werris Creek	6s. "
21/11/99	"	D.S. Office	6s. "
1/ 1/00	"	Werris Creek	6s. "
2/ 3/00	Night porter	Gunnedah	6s. 6d. "

C.

[To Evidence of W. H. Cooke, Esq.]

NEW SOUTH WALES POLICE.

Defaulters' Sheet.

Register No.	Name.	Mounted or Foot.	Year of Birth.	Height.	Weight.	Eyes.	Hair.	Complexion.	A Native of—	Married or Single.	Previous Calling.	Religion.	Dates of Appointment.	
													Pro. Con.	Ord. Con.
6797	Beeby John	Foot	1869	ft. 5 9½	st. 13 2	Brown	Black	Sallow	Redfern, N.S.W.	Single.	Carpenter and joiner.	Protestant	14/1/95	14/1/96
Date.	Offence.	By whom reported.	Plea.	Evidence.	Decision.	By whom (signature).	Remarks.							
24 July, 1895.	Being 1 hour and 10 minutes late coming off duty and admitting having taken drink.	Senior-sergeant Kendall.	Guilty .....	.....	Fined 5s.	Walter C. Casey, Superintendent, 26, 7/95.								
30 Sept., 1895.	Being absent from barracks after 10 p.m. without leave, also for being drunk and assaulting Constable Fleming.	Senior-sergeant Kendall.	Guilty to first charge, and not guilty to two latter.	Constable McFie, Constable O'Brien, and I-C. C. Fleming, and Constable Beeby's statement.	Fined £2 and ordered to pay Dr. Cooper's account for attendance on C. Fleming, and warned that any further misconduct will be followed by dismissal.	W. C. Casey, Superintendent.	I very reluctantly leave this matter in Mr. Casey's hands to deal with. Should P. C. Beeby again misconduct himself the case must be remitted to me.—E F, I.-G.P., 3/10/96.							
1 March, 1895.	Being drunk and fighting in the Police Barracks at Tamworth at 1 a.m.	Senior-sergeant Kendall.	Not guilty	Senior-sergeant Kendall, Sergeant Gamble, S.C. Fleming, and Constables McFie, O'Brien, Hammond, and Dunphy.	To be reduced one grade in rank, and if again reported papers to be submitted to me.	The Inspector-General of Police, 7/3/95.								
31 Jan., 1899.	Being drunk when on duty at 11 30 p.m.	Sergeant Gamble.	Guilty	Sergeant Gamble and Senior-sergeant Kendall.	To be discharged from the Service.	The Inspector-General of Police, 2/2/99.								

Reduced to P.C., 8/3/98; reinstated, 1/1/99. Discharged this day.—WALTER C. CASEY, 6/2/99.

Certified to be a true copy.—EDMUND FOSBERY, Inspector-General of Police.

D.

D.

[To Evidence of Hugh McLachlan, Esq.]

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS—TRAMWAY TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT.

Name in full:—White, John C. ; date of birth, 25th May, 1867.

Date.			Position.	Station.	Salary or Wage.		Particulars of Offences and Remarks.
Day.	Month.	Year.			Amount.	Per	
5	6	83	Probationer	Bathurst	£	Week.	
1	1	84	Operator	George's Plains	206	annum.	
25	4	84	"	"	60	"	Fined 5s. ; error in train-book.
28	4	84	"	Kelso	60	"	"
1	1	85	"	"	80	"	Fined 2s. 6d. ; message delayed.
1	1	86	"	"	96	"	Fined 2s. 6d. ; error in transmission of message.
8	4	86	"	"	96	"	Fined 5s. ; error in train-book.
25	4	87	"	"	96	"	Fined 5s. ; error in train-book.
25	6	87	"	"	96	"	Supplied with rule-book.
9	2	88	"	Nyngan	96	"	"
5	4	88	"	"	96	"	Fined 5s. ; out of call.
2	5	88	Night Officer	Rydal	96	"	"
15	6	88	"	"	96	"	Cautioned ; error, train staff.
1	7	88	"	"	110	"	"
27	7	88	"	"	110	"	Fined 2s. 6d. ; out of call.
1	1	90	"	"	120	"	"
30	1	89	"	"	120	"	Cautioned ; train delayed.
23	8	90	"	Kelso	130	"	"
7	10	90	"	"	130	"	Fined 2s. 6d. ; message not sent.
1	1	91	"	"	140	"	"
15	12	92	Clerk	Darling Harbour	140	"	"
5	7	93	Night Officer	Granville	140	"	"
...	10	93	"	"	140	"	Reprimanded and suspended three days, with loss of pay ; refusing to assist shunting.
11	4	94	"	Lewisham	140	"	"
11	6	94	"	Croydon	140	"	"
25	6	95	Clerk	G. Supt.'s Office	140	"	"
3	4	96	Operating Clerk	Singleton	140	"	"
3	7	96	"	Nyngan	130	"	"
20	7	96	"	"	130	"	Cautioned ; telegram mutilated.
19	1	97	Night Officer	Tamworth	130	"	"
4	2	97	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; goods arriving by 23, not checked.
5	3	97	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; box delayed.
...	...	97	"	"	130	"	Various dates, 1897 ; tapes not dated and timed.
15	5	97	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; failing to check goods received by No. 63 Goods.
24	6	97	"	"	130	"	Cautioned ; truck derailed ; truck not secured when kicked into siding.
21	8	97	"	"	130	"	Severely reprimanded ; signal pulled off when line not clear.
20	8	97	"	"	130	"	Cautioned ; circuit open.
6	10	97	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; passenger travelling in 1st class compartment on 2nd class ticket, not excessed.
16	11	97	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; failing to use new code.
14	12	97	"	"	130	"	Fined 5s. ; gates broken.
24	12	97	"	"	130	"	Fined 10s. ; irregularity parcels.
13	1	98	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; Kg. & Kg. not ordered for Mr. Thomas, causing complaint to Commissioners.
21	1	98	"	"	130	"	Cautioned ; tickets not dated, December.
22	2	98	"	"	130	"	Irregularity parcels ; cautioned, and informed if no improvement removal from position of Night Officer to follow.
2	2	98	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; tickets uncollected.
7	2	98	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; C.W. not supplied.
23	2	98	"	"	130	"	Reprimanded ; B.C. ticket not dated.
23	3	98	"	"	130	"	Cautioned ; tricycle broken.
5	3	98	"	"	130	"	Fined 2s. 6d. ; B.C. ticket not dated.
19	3	98	"	Ardglen	130	"	"
19	2	99	"	"	130	"	"
1	3	00	Clerk	Tram. Department, Newtown.	4	"	Declined position P. in C., Curlewis, 45s. week. Re Dulwich Hill conversion ; confirmed March, 1900, S.C.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

STEEL RAILS CONTRACT.

(CORRESPONDENCE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED.)

Printed under No. 19 Report from Printing Committee, 4 December, 1900.

Messrs. William Jamieson and H. F. G. Keats to The Premier and
Colonial Treasurer.

Dear Sir,

Sydney, 23 May, 1900.

Referring to our conversation *re* the erection of Iron-smelting and Rolling Mills in New South Wales, we have the honor to make the following proposition:—

That on the Government guaranteeing to take 100,000 tons of rails extending over a period of about four years, and not less than 25,000 tons in any one year (the price to be paid for such rails being the price quoted in Great Britain, plus steamer freight and all other expenses incidental to exporting such material from Great Britain), we are prepared to erect the necessary smelting and rolling mills within a period of two years from the date of signing the contract, and at the same time deposit a reasonable amount, say up to £10,000 (ten thousand pounds), to show our *bona-fides*.

Within the two years above-mentioned we expect to be in a position to not only supply the above-mentioned 100,000 tons of rails, but to supply all the colonies with iron and steel of every description. The ore used will chiefly come from Tasmania; but as it is often advantageous to blend different ores, we expect to be able to use a very considerable quantity of New South Wales ore, probably 25 per cent.

At the same time we beg to point out that the number of men employed about the reduction works will be very much greater than at the mine or mines from which the ore is got, irrespective of those employed winning the necessary coal and manufacturing the necessary coke for such an undertaking. As we are anxious to proceed with this business as quickly as possible, we would be obliged if you would answer this letter as soon as you conveniently can.

We have, &c.,

WILLIAM JAMIESON.

H. F. G. KEATS.

P.S.—The reason why Tasmanian ores will have chiefly to be used is simply because, after exhaustive investigation, we find that the ores there are of such high quality, and so free from impurities, that the only use at present we can make of any known New South Wales ores will be as a blend.—W.J.

Ack. please.—F.K., 24/5/1900. Ack.—C.E.F.R., 29/5/1900. Submitted.—F.K., 31/5/1900.

The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade to Messrs. William Jamieson and
H. F. G. Keats.

Gentlemen,

The Treasury, New South Wales, Sydney, 29 May, 1900.

I am directed by the Honorable the Premier and Colonial Treasurer to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, relative to the subject of the erection of Iron-smelting and Rolling Mills in New South Wales.

I have, &c.,

F. KIRKPATRICK,

Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

William Jamieson, Esq., to The Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

Dear Sir,

Prell's Buildings, 58, Queen-street, Melbourne, 30 May, 1900.

We wrote you the letter *re* erection of smelting and rolling mills, and posted it in Sydney before we left there, and hope you duly received it.

Enclosed is a printed report of the iron mine we have by the Government Geologist of Tasmania, also by Dr. Robertson, of New South Wales, with whom I dare say you are acquainted.

We would be glad to know if you have received the letter we posted to you in Sydney.

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM JAMIESON.

Ack. please.—F.K., 7/6/00. Mr. Robberds. Acknd.—C.E.F.R., 7/6/00. Submitted.—
F.K., 19/6/00. For Cabinet. Advise that this proposal will be agreed to.—W.J.L., 31/7/00.
Mr. Robberds.—F.K., 31/7/00. Done.—C.E.F.R., 3/8/00. Records.

[Enclosure.]

TASMANIAN IRON.
BLYTHE RIVER HEMATITE.

Dear Sirs,

This creek, or inlet of the sea, is situated on the north coast of Tasmania (Bass' Straits), about 4 miles east of the deep-water harbour of Emu Bay. Here a concrete breakwater has been built and connected to the Van Diemen's Land railway to Mount Bischoff. Vessels of large tonnage can at all states of the tide discharge or load here. It is intended to extend the Government railway from Ulverstone to this port, and to extend the breakwater to admit any size of steamer, in which case this would probably be the port of call and departure of fast passenger and other steamers to Victoria. From recent discoveries (silver-lead) adjoining the extensive tin-mine of Mount Bischoff, and the certainty of the Van Diemen's Land railway being extended to the silverfields of Mount Zeelan and Mount Dundas, the Whyte River and Headlewood, and White Cliffs, there is every likelihood of Emu Bay becoming the great shipping and commercial port of the island, and being fixed upon as the site for extensive smelting works. Negotiations with this in view are at present being conducted. A range of hills, about 500 feet in height, separates Emu Bay from the Blythe River.

The Blythe River runs for several miles through a narrow gorge, between tilted quartziferous schists. The river appears to have cut its way through these schists for a depth of 500 feet. The apex of the high land is in parts covered by a rich red basaltic soil, and masses of fine-grained clinkstone are to be found amongst the dense virgin forests of myrtle, stringy-bark, sassafras. The undergrowth is well-nigh impenetrable.

The river banks are steep, and along the eastern slope a bridle-track has been cut for a distance of 7 miles to the first ironstone outcrop. This, however, could be reached by a track branching off the public road on the top of the eastern range, and crossing Elchell's selection.

The whole of the known iron outcrops are contained (with one exception) in a leasehold of 640 acres, taken up along the gorge. On the top of the spur, east of the gorge, and probably 600 feet above the river (which is here a torrent), large masses of iron appear among the rich soil and dense forest. This can be traced for several chains, and is apparently 3 chains wide; but thus, from the density of the jungle, must only be considered as an estimate. Following this to the eastward, masses of conglomerate, enclosing splintered pieces of hematite, are seen. I consider this rock has been formed subsequent to the deposition of the iron, and not likely to prove the country rock.

In Mr. O'Keefe's 50-acre selection adjoining, the mass of ironstone is also seen out-cropping from under the basalt.

Under the basalt, across the west boundary of O'Keefe's, a huge mass of solid ironstone forms a cliff on the steep bank of the gorge. This enormous mass is continuous to the bottom of the gorge, through a fall of possibly 550 feet. The river gushes past masses of ironstone, and the huge wall rises in similar cliffs on the western slope, and for a similar height. Apparently the mass is not less than 3 chains wide, but this has not in any way been clearly defined.

I think there can be no doubt as to the identity of this deposit with the solid masses of ironstone described at B., and in O'Keefe's selection.

The quantity of ironstone is incalculable. Large veins occur at intervals for 2 miles up the gorge (which, however, is well-nigh untravelable), and I have no doubt but that they are a continuation of the Upper Penguin deposits.

The ironstone is remarkably hard, dense, and solid. In appearance it is identical with the Penguin deposits, but contains rather more specular ore.

I know of no deposits of iron ore so pure, and consequently so admirably fitted for producing the highest and best brands of iron and steel, or from surface indications give so much promise of extent.

Messrs. Henry Law & Co., Bank Chambers, Launceston.

TASMANIAN IRON.

Dear Sirs,

When on a recent visit to Tasmania on colliery business, I had the opportunity afforded me of inspecting a portion of the extensive peroxide of iron deposits that have but recently been brought to light on the North Coast of the Island.

I personally examined one of the deposits that outcropped on Government land and on small adjoining selections. These occur within a mile of the line of railway at present being built by Government, and say 1½ miles from a tidal harbour that readily admits vessels drawing 12 feet of water. The deposit I saw is in the midst of a partially-cleared forest, as well as on land cleared by a selector. It is easily accessible to either rail or harbour.

No exploring or prospecting work of any description has been done.

Large masses of ironstone, or as detached boulders, can be seen strewn among the undergrowth or roots of trees, and these are bounded or enclosed among slate rock, and are contiguous to many of basalt. I have no doubt that the origin of the enormous mass of ore appearing on the surface may be referred to the stupendous volcanic forces of which the intrusive rocks of the vicinity bear evidence.

A selector's road crosses the mass of ironstone, and judging from the physical appearance seen on this highway, the deposit appears to have a trend to the north-west, and to be about 350 yards in width. Whether other veins or masses exist, or whether slate rocks are associated with the ferruginous deposits, is as yet unascertained.

Following this trend, the deposit can for some time be traced at intervals both east and west. Towards the west several very strong deposits have been exposed. Four miles west, at the spot referred to, about 3 miles from the sea, on the bank of a tidal river, and at a spot where the stream pierces the mountain range, in a deep gorge surrounded by a primeval and dense forest of large and valuable timber, enormous masses of solid ore are seen. The principal masses are seen on some free selectors' ground as well as on Government land. In the bottom of the gorge, and on both sides of the steep banks, enormous masses of the finest ore appear.

The quantity of the ore is incalculable. No specific data as to extent or quantity exists; yet the general appearance convinces me that one of the most extensive deposits of the finest ore exists, and in easily accessible positions for transmission by rail or by sea. All that one is warranted in saying is that a prolific zone of rich iron ore exists, that extends over several miles of country, in parts easily accessible, and in a condition that will permit of its being mined at a very low cost—at less money than any other deposit yet discovered in Australia.

These deposits are within 15 miles of a harbour where the largest class of intercolonial steamers can enter, and to this harbour the Government line of railway is being completed. At this place there will be exceptional facilities for the cheap production of iron.

Contiguous to some of the outcrops are extensive deposits of excellent limestone.

The virgin forests would supply charcoal for reduction purposes.

The quality of the iron ore was obviously exceptionally fine, and its similarity to the E. L. Mcnektion ironstone of Algeria, now so very largely exported to America for steel-making purposes, is striking. It is superior to the iron mined in the Biscay and provinces of Spain, from whence millions of tons are annually sent to Britain and Northern Europe.

As, however, it is impossible to distinguish by a physical examination whether deleterious elements might not exist in chemical combination, and knowing that the Beaconsfield deposit, 55 miles east, contains chromium that rendered it unfit for metallurgical purposes, I picked up two specimens taken from situations, say 3 miles apart, numbering them Nos. 1 and 2. I advised you to hand these to Mr. W. A. Dixon, of this city, who has had a large experience in assaying Colonial iron ores. The following are Mr. W. A. Dixon's assays—

	No. 1.	No. 2.
Silica	0.50	0.22
Oxide of iron.....	99.05	99.41
Sulphur	0.05	0.37
Phosphorus	Traces.	Traces.
Metallic iron.....	60.33	60.58

Continuing Mr. Dixon's remarks:—"These are wonderfully fine ores, and neither contains any alumina. There is no chromium present, and they are both quite dry."

The importance of the above will be apparent to those who possess a knowledge of the metallurgy of iron and steel. The great defect of Australian iron ores is the high percentage of silica and, worse than that, of alumina, that they contain.

On Mr. Dixon's original assay I have adhibited my certificate of the locality from whence the ore he assayed was obtained.

As

As the result of an accidental conversation with yourself on the subject of this extraordinary fine ironstone, he addressed to you the following letter :—

[Copy.]

“Sydney, 3 April, 1891.

“With regard to our conversation yesterday on your ironstone, and the quantity of limestone it will require to flux it, I have looked over the analysis of both samples, and find that if you had good limestone it would require 7 cwt. as a flux for 100 tons of ore. As your ore is of exceptional purity a thorough examination of the limestone, coal, &c., should be made, as, if these are equally fine, you should be able to produce iron of great value, quite equal to the best Swedish or Russian.”

Of the excellence of the iron from such a pure stone there can be no question. The cheapness of the stone, and the facilities existing for delivering the same at a deep water and safe harbour, and the proximity of lime will enable coke to be imported from New South Wales at a low cost, and iron in the form of pig and merchant bars of steel produced at a less cost and of a better quality than is possible on the Australian Continent.

The value of these deposits on the future of Tasmania cannot readily be over-estimated.

Yours, &c.,

JAMES R. M. ROBERTSON, M.E.F.G.S., &c.

Messrs. Henry Law & Co., Bank Chambers, Launceston.

Dear Sir,

Technical College, 301 Pitt-street, Sydney, 30 April, 1891.

With reference to our conversation the other day on the subject of working your Tasmanian iron ore, my impression is that, as you have large supplies of timber near at hand, you should go for the production of charcoal iron. Your ore is of such exceptionally good quality that, with charcoal, it would produce iron equal to the very best Russian or Swedish brands; such iron as is used for the production of steel for tools and cutlery. From what I know of the growth of timber in Tasmania there would be very little expense incurred in keeping up a supply of wood for charcoal from generation to generation; indeed, it would only require the prevention of the destruction of saplings and young trees. The demand for such iron is, of course, not unlimited, but the price is so high; and coals such as you have could be used for heating the blast, &c.

Under ordinary blast furnace work a very superior iron for steel-making could be made with coke, the ore being free from phosphorus—the steel in this case being for rails, boiler-plates, &c. With the supply of Tasmanian tin close at hand there should be, for the better class of steel, the making of a large business in tin plates, the demand for which in Australia is now great and yearly increasing. There is also a likely market in California, and all along the West Coast of North America, where the canning industry for fruits, vegetables, fish, &c., is growing yearly.

I remain, &c.,

WILL. A. DIXON, F.I.C., F.C.S.

H. Law, Esq., Bank Chambers, Launceston.

Dear Sir,

Technical College, 301, Pitt-street, Sydney, 11 May, 1891.

Referring to our conversation last Friday on the use of your iron ore for fluxing purposes in the smelting of silver ores, I have no doubt but that it would suit admirably for that purpose.

Your ore contains 99 per cent. of oxide of iron, so that the ore would only require to supply 1 per cent. or thereabouts of its contents to flux the impurities it contains. Of the iron ores of New South Wales but few contain less than 20 per cent. of impurities for which flux has to be provided, which shows at once the superior quality of your deposits.

I remain, &c.,

W. A. DIXON, F.I.C., F.C.S.

H. Law, Esq.

TASMANIAN IRON ORES.

(From the *Australian Mining Standard*, No. 81, 20 July, 1891.)

REFERRING to the article which appeared in our last issue under the above heading, we have since learned that a sample of the iron ore from the property of Messrs. Henry Law & Co., near the Blythe River (Tasmania), weighing about 4 cwt., was forwarded to Messrs. Parke and Lacy Co., of Sydney, and that they took this raw ore, and employing an ordinary blast furnace produced first-class castings, samples of which are now in our office, and can be examined by those interested. This production of merchantable castings direct from the raw ore is certainly a step in the right direction towards the development of our iron-mining districts. Messrs. Parke and Lacy Co. show samples of puddle bar-iron, wrought-iron, pig-iron, and castings, all produced out of this 4 cwt. of raw ore.

The experiment was conducted at Halliday's Engine Works, 20, Erskine-street, Sydney, by Mr. W. Brazenall, who holds a certificate of merit from the Commissioners of the London Exhibition, 1889. Mr. Brazenall informs us that he charged an ordinary foundry furnace with $\frac{3}{4}$ cwt. of the Tasmanian iron ore and about 14 lb. of limestone, and ran the iron smelted into pigs. He afterwards made castings of various descriptions from the pigs thus produced, and had a cast mandril put into the lathe to show that the iron was not too hard for machining. The iron proved of the very highest quality, of exceedingly fine and close grain, and very tough. In addition to the cast-iron, a small quantity of puddle-bar iron was secured, owing to the furnace not being entirely adapted for producing cast-iron, and wrought-iron has been worked up with the most satisfactory results. Mr. Brazenall, who has had large experience in the manufacture of iron, and Mr. Halliday, both speak in enthusiastic terms of the quality of the ore.

Gentlemen,

301, Pitt-street, Sydney, 16 March, 1891.

The samples of ironstone Mr. Law left with me for analysis contained—

	No. 1.	No. 2.
Silica	0.50	0.22
*Oxide of iron	99.05	99.41
Sulphur	0.50	0.37
Phosphorus	Traces	Traces
	100.05	100.00
* Containing metallic iron.....	69.33	69.58

These are wonderfully fine ores, and neither contain any alumina. There is no chromic iron present, and the ores were both quite dry.

Messrs. Henry Law & Co., Bank Chambers, Launceston.

I remain, &c.,

WILL. A. DIXON, F.I.C., F.C.S.

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From

From Mr. Montgomery's Report.

On 5th March, 1894, Mr. R. Quiggin, the present proprietor, had Mr. A. Montgomery, the Tasmanian Geological Surveyor, to report on the mine, who says: "The samples taken were forwarded to Mr. W. F. Ward, Government Analyst in Hobart, with instructions to have them carefully examined for all impurities likely to interfere with the quality of the iron to be made from the ore. He reports the analysis as follows:—

Iron peroxide (= iron 66.4).....	95.2 per cent.
Silica.....	4.8 "
Phosphoric acid.....	Traces "

This ore is of excellent quality, being practically free from all impurities with the exception of the silica. It resembles the well-known Cumberland Red Hematite, so long used for the production of steel by the Bessemer process."

According to this analysis, the Blythe River hematite is one of the finest and purest in the world, ranking with the famous Spanish, Algerian, and Cuban ores, which are now exported in very large quantities to the United Kingdom, United States, France, and Germany, for the manufacture of Bessemer steel. The deposit must be one of the largest also, containing many millions of tons. The data for calculating its size are very insufficient, but taking them such as they are, a rough calculation may be made which will serve to give some idea of it. On the south side of the river the ore is seen for a horizontal distance of about 8½ chains, and rises to a height of 250 feet above the stream; on the north side it rises to 500 feet above the river, in about 50 chains horizontal distance, and then falls a little, say, to 400 feet, for another 16 chains. Taking the width of the ore-body at 66 yards, these measurements give the cubic contents of the deposit under the visible outcrop down to the level of the Blythe River as slightly over 10,000,000 cubic yards, or at 3 tons to the cubic yard, 30,000,000 tons. It is not to be supposed that the ore terminates where the outcrop disappears under the superficial basalt, or that it only goes down to the level of the Blythe River, while the width also is probably underestimated, so that the deposit is clearly of enormous extent.

It is, too, most favourably situated for economical working, the steep sides of the river gorge giving exceptional opportunities for mining by open quarrying. Working faces could be opened at different levels on both sides of the river, so that an army of men could be at work at one time quarrying in ore steps, and it could be lowered to the river by self-acting tramways, and in some places even by shoots, by gravitation, at very small expense. The cost of mining ought to be very low.

The Blythe River is at all times a considerable stream, and would be able to supply power for working air-compressors, electric lighting appliances, and concentrating machinery. The latter would sooner or later be required as the best way of getting rid of the piles of second-class ore that would rapidly accumulate in working. The possession of this good water-power would be a large factor in the economical working of the mine.

The gorge of the Blythe is pretty steep and rough, but I do not think any serious difficulty would be found in making a railway down it from the mine, a distance of between 6 and 7 miles. The present track on the eastern side of the river is 6½ miles from the mine to the main road, and to the surveyed line of the Ulverstone to Burnie railway. It seems highly probable, however, that the western side of the river would be the better one for the line to the mine. It has also been proposed to take a railway direct to Emu Bay, but I understand there are serious difficulties in the way of doing so. Going down the Blythe River, and then along the Ulverstone Burnie railway the ore would have to be carried about 12 miles to reach the Emu Bay Breakwater for shipment, and the grades would be easy ones, so the item of carriage of ore to the port of shipment ought to cost but little.

The iron mine, therefore, possesses the advantages of enormous quantities of ore easily mined, of great purity of the mineral, and of proximity to a deep-water port, also of ample water-power; and if any mine of iron will pay in the Australian colonies this one should.

REPORT ON A DEPOSIT OF IRON ORE AT THE BLYTHE RIVER.

Sir,

Geological Surveyor's Office, Launceston, 5 March, 1894.

I have the honor to report upon a deposit of hematite iron ore on land held under mineral lease from the Crown by Mr. R. Quiggin on the Blythe River, some 7 miles from its mouth. On the 16th January last I made a superficial examination of the deposit, but, as it is still quite in a state of nature, and in no way opened up by cuttings or mining works of any sort, I was not able to make such a minute study of it as its importance undoubtedly deserves. Before it can be properly examined, and its extent and value accurately estimated, a considerable amount of time, money, and labour will require to be expended in clearing, trenching, and sinking upon it. From what is even now visible, however, it is quite clear that the ore is present in enormous quantity, and in a position affording splendid facilities for cheap mining, and there is every inducement to open quarries upon it, and try it in a practical manner, provided it can be shown that there is any reasonable probability that iron-smelting can be made to pay in the Australian Colonies under existing conditions of the labour market, prices of fuel, and demand for the metal. As to this I shall have something to say later on, but first it is necessary to describe the mining property itself. The accompanying map, copied with slight alterations from one by Mr. Peart, authorised surveyor, kindly lent to me by Mr. Norton-Smith, of Burnie, will illustrate the description.

The iron deposit may be reached by either of two routes from the main road connecting Ulverstone and Burnie, the easier one being along the road through the parish of Stowport, lying between the Blythe River and the Heybridge Rivulet to Ellis's, O'Keefe's, and Etchell's selections. The ore is met with on O'Keefe's western section, and on the adjacent Crown land, on which Mr. R. Quiggin holds under mineral lease the following sections:—1,061-91M, of 40 acres; 1,009-91M, of 73 acres; 851-91M, of 78 acres; and 856-91M, of 80 acres. As shown on the map, the outcrop of the deposit traverses the first three of these sections and the western part of O'Keefe's purchased block. The second route to the mine is along a track which runs up the eastern side of the Blythe River to it; but this is now in bad order, and not practicable for horses. Going over these two routes, the structure of the country is fairly visible, the sections afforded by the deep gorge of the Blythe River, and along the coast line, showing it very plainly. The main country rock is of sedimentary origin, consisting of sandstones, slates, and occasionally limestones of probably Silurian age, or even older. No fossils were seen during my visit, and I could not hear of any having ever been got in this vicinity, so there were no data for determining the age of the formation. The strata dip at high angles, and are very much metamorphosed, at times approaching schists and quartzites. Their general strike is north-east and south-west, conforming closely in this to the strike of the iron ore deposit. These older strata are seen all the way up the Blythe River gorge to the mine. The valley of this stream is a deep one, the bottom being 500 feet below the agricultural selections on each side of it at the place where the hematite crosses. This farming land is fairly flat on the whole, though a good deal undulating, and is composed of basalt of Tertiary age which covers the older rocks first mentioned. It is found on both sides of the Blythe River valley, and decomposes to a fertile agricultural soil.

The deposit of iron ore has been cut through by the Blythe River, and is found on each side of its valley rising up the slopes until it disappears under the basaltic capping. The outcrop is about 5 chains in width, and even allowing for loose stones from it gravitating down hill, and making it appear wider than it really is, I do not think that there can be less than about 200 feet in width of ore on an average; along its length it has been traced, and is easily visible for 74 chains, or close on a mile. The ore crops out in large lumps, and the surface soil is full of it, and at several points, some of which are marked on the map, it stands up in large rocks and cliffs; these afford the best sections of the ore-body yet available, and a careful inspection of them shows it to be a massive hematite with a large proportion of very pure high-grade ore. In some parts there is a good deal of quartz mixed with the hematite, sometimes in strings and veins, and sometimes in angular fragments; I also noticed a good many pieces of jasper and of siliceous hematite. The north end of the ore mass seemed rather more siliceous and impure than the parts close to the river. The whole deposit is, therefore, by no means a pure high-grade hematite, but there can be no doubt that very large quantities of very pure ore with little silica could be obtained without much picking. Till the mass, however, is actually cut into and tried there are no data for estimating what proportion the pure ore bears to the entire mass, or how much lean ore would have to be quarried and rejected in obtaining each ton of first-class stuff. This is a factor of the greatest importance in calculating the cost of mining the hematite, and will require to be attentively studied during the progress of preliminary exploratory work. In the bed of the Blythe River there is a large amount of very good ore, representing no doubt the hardest portions of the stuff which has fallen into it, the softer and more friable matter being washed away by the water. Waterworn ore is found in the bed of the stream for some distance down, and nearly a mile below the mine I noticed rounded boulders of it in an alluvial

alluvial terrace, probably quite 20 feet above the water's level. It would probably be worth while ascertaining if the bed of the stream could not be worked profitably for the fine hard ore which has been concentrated in it by natural sluicing operations. As it was quite impossible for me, in the undeveloped state of the mine, to obtain a sample of the ore which would at all fairly represent its average bulk value, and as such a sample would indeed be of no particular use, inasmuch as in actual working a lot of lean ore would be necessarily rejected, I only took a few samples of the best-looking boulders in the river for analysis. They may be looked upon as fairly representing the best ore, but from inspection I should judge that many thousands of tons of equally good stuff could be readily obtained. What the average yield of such first-class ore from the bulk of the deposit would be is, as already remarked, only to be ascertained after it has been opened out by trenches and cuttings. The samples taken were forwarded to Mr. W. F. Ward, Government Analyst in Hobart, with instructions to have them carefully examined for all impurities likely to interfere with the quality of the iron to be made from the ore. He reports the analysis as follows:—

Iron peroxide (=iron 66·4)	95·2 per cent.
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This iron mine, therefore, possesses the advantages of enormous quantities of ore easily mined, of great purity of the mineral, and of proximity to a deep-water port, also of ample water-power; and if any mine of iron will pay in the Australian Colonies this one should.

I have not been able satisfactorily to convince myself whether this deposit is a true lode or an ore-bed, but incline to the latter opinion. The strike of the ore-body coincides as nearly as possible with that of the enclosing country rocks, and in one or two places I thought traces of stratification in the ore itself could be detected. The purity of the mineral, too, rather favours the ore-bed explanation. On the other hand, the occasional strings, veins, and angular enclosures of quartz rather point to its being a lode. Similar strings, and veins, however, occur in the surrounding country rock, and it seems possible enough that those in the ore are similarly formed by infiltration of silica into cracks and crevices of its mass long after it was formed. It seems most probable that the ore-bed was originally a mass of brown iron ore deposited along with the sandstone and slate strata when the latter were laid down as horizontal layers; in the course of time the strata have become tilted on edge, and the brown iron ore has become changed to the red hematite. From a mining point of view it matters little whether the ore is in a lode or in a nearly vertically-dipping bed, as the method of working is the same in either case; but if it could be proved to be a bed or sedimentary deposit greater confidence would be felt as to its remaining of fairly uniform quality over long distances in length and depth. When some mining work has been done it will probably be easy to definitely settle the question of the classification of this deposit.

It is not the only one in this part of the country, for not many miles away, near the Penguin River, there is another large iron-ore deposit, which is described as quite similar to the Blythe River one, but which I have not myself seen, and possibly many others lie concealed beneath the superficial basaltic covering.

There can be little doubt, when the time comes for making iron in the Australian colonies, these iron mines will be of immense value to their owners and to the country. The important question now to be considered is: Can they be profitably worked at the present time? It should be the work of a specialist in the manufacture of iron, thoroughly conversant with the European and colonial iron markets, and with the conditions under which the metal is made elsewhere and would have to be made here, to give an answer to this; and only such a one can speak with authority on the subject. Having only a general knowledge of the problem, I cannot claim any such authority, and any opinion now expressed by me would require to be verified by a specialist before being acted upon; but I have endeavoured to gather together some reliable facts and figures, which may serve to throw light upon the question. By the kind assistance of the Government Statistician I have been able to obtain returns from all the Australian colonies, except Queensland and Western Australia and from New Zealand, of the value of iron and iron goods imported into them, which will give some idea of the demand for iron that already exists. As the classification adopted by the various colonies is not uniform, I have not found it possible to combine all the returns in one table, and therefore present them as revised for the five years ending with 1892.

IMPORTS of Iron and Steel into Tasmania.

	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
* Manufactured goods of iron and steel	164,621	171,240	190,537	220,624	163,016	910,038
Galvanised iron		2,855	4,400	4,870	3,932	16,066
Galvanised and corrugated iron					1,437	1,437
Iron—Rod, bar, hoop, &c.	21,935	17,966	19,482	19,074	14,015	92,472
Iron pipes		7,258	11,488	4,741	12,865	36,352
Railway material	25,142	22,051	59,038	35,537	6,211	147,979
Steel, unmanufactured.....		1,335	1,964	2,581	1,902	7,782
Tim-plates, unmanufactured		3,745	4,215	5,651	4,435	18,046
Total	£ 211,698	226,450	291,124	293,087	207,813	1,230,172

* Including cutlery, hardware, and goods of all sorts mainly composed of iron and steel.

IMPORTS of Iron and Steel into South Australia.

	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Steel and iron rails	814	615	4,459	36,725	35,391	77,994
Rod and bar iron	32,178	23,948	55,607	43,421	42,179	197,333
Pig-iron	14,548	23,378	22,246	18,482	14,436	93,090
*Manufactured iron goods	41,691	56,950	95,448	88,661	76,241	358,991
Total	£ 89,231	104,891	177,760	187,289	168,237	727,408

* Including drain pipes, columns and girders, pipes and tubes, fencing, plate and sheet, hoop, fencing wire.

IMPORTS of Iron and Steel into New Zealand.

	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
*Steel and iron rails	22,844	35,367	50,319	24,810	17,072	150,412
Rod and bar iron	33,890	39,225	36,066	41,195	62,694	212,570
Pig-iron	9,556	13,684	16,728	15,531	13,177	68,676
†Manufactured iron goods, pipes, &c.	215,315	346,723	319,303	302,996	389,635	1,573,972
Total	£ 281,105	434,999	422,416	384,532	482,578	2,005,630

* Rails only, exclusive of railway bolts and fastenings. † Exclusive of cutlery, hardware, hollowware, and ironmongery, nails, railway plant, implements, tools, and machinery.

IMPORTS of Iron and Steel into New South Wales.

	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
*Railway material	87,033	98,257	297,666	826,256	346,755	1,655,967
Rod and bar iron (including plate and sheet)	125,393	141,297	181,576	214,009	150,872	813,147
Pig-iron	30,690	29,454	25,124	35,214	25,772	146,254
Manufactured iron goods (including drain pipes)	1,794,771	2,155,227	2,363,998	2,924,982	2,259,516	11,498,494
Total	£ 2,037,887	2,424,235	2,868,364	4,000,461	2,782,915	14,113,862

* The value of rails only cannot be stated.

IMPORTS of Iron and Steel into Victoria.

	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Steel and iron rails	237,334	436,184	162,548	10,589	4,192	850,847
Rod and bar iron	122,548	197,870	159,572	103,135	64,415	649,540
Pig-iron	89,174	99,895	83,950	73,532	31,015	377,566
Steel	43,854	53,179	53,740	35,446	25,433	214,652
Manufactured iron goods, pipes, &c.	1,558,170	1,747,073	1,572,217	1,514,088	1,000,887	7,392,435
Total	£ 2,051,080	2,534,201	2,032,027	1,738,790	1,125,942	9,482,040

* Including steel cordage.

As will be seen, the item "Manufactured iron goods" in the above tables includes a great deal more in the returns of some of the colonies than in those of others. Taking the grand totals for the five years as they stand, however, their sum amounts to £27,559,112, and if we include Queensland and Western Australia, whose returns I have not been able to get in time for this report, we may safely estimate the grand total for all the colonies at £30,000,000, or at the rate of £6,000,000 worth of iron goods per annum. To get greater accuracy it would be necessary to deduct the exports of iron from each colony to ascertain the amount used; but against this we may place the large value of iron goods of all sorts not shown in the tables, and probably this would quite compensate for the exports. It is, therefore, clear that a very considerable market exists, which would be able to absorb the produce of a fairly large smelting-works.

Should iron-smelting be begun in Australia it is probable that for some years the production would be confined to pig-iron, iron and steel rails, iron and steel rods, bars, girders, columns, and other simple shapes, and foundry material, though in course of time no doubt it would be found possible to compete with Europe in manufactured goods of all sorts. Turning again to the tables, it will be seen that the imports of pig-iron, rod and bar iron, unmanufactured steel, and steel and iron rails and railway material amount to the grand total of £5,753,281, which may, however, include locomotive engines in the cases of New South Wales and Tasmania. However, counting in Queensland and Western Australia, it should not be far from correct to assume the colonial consumption of the above sorts of iron as averaging about £1,000,000 in value annually for the period quoted. It is not to be supposed that one smelting establishment would be able to supply all the different brands of iron required for manufacturing purposes, or could beat all foreign competitors so thoroughly out of the field as to be able to hold a monopoly of it; still the figures show a market large enough to encourage us to believe that our own iron-smelters would not have any surplus metal requiring to be exported for sale. It is not probable that for many years to come Australia will be able to compete with Europe and America in the open markets of the world; but if we can hold our own within our own domain, and consume all the iron we can produce, the iron-manufacturing industry would soon need no special fostering.

Now let us try to arrive at some estimate of what it would cost to make iron locally. To get at this we must first see what it costs elsewhere. I am indebted to "The Mineral Industry, 1892," by Mr. R. P. Rothwell, for most of the facts and figures on this head now to be quoted.

From tables prepared by the United States Labour Bureau, under the Honorable Carroll D. Wright, Commissioner, covering the period between 1887 and 1890, it appears that the total cost of one ton of run-of-furnace pig-iron, as reported by twenty-six establishments in the Northern District of the United States, averaged \$13.94 (= £2 18s. 1d.), and in twenty-four establishments in the Southern District, \$10.75 (= £2 4s. 9½d.); one establishment on the Continent of Europe gave the average cost per ton as \$11.03 (= £2 5s. 11½d.). The details of cost at the above fifty United States establish-

ments

ments are of interest as showing the main items of expense and their relative importance, and are therefore quoted, the average costs being taken :—

	Northern.	Southern.
Ore	\$6.96	\$3.47
Cinder, scrap, &c. ....	.58	.01
Limestone .....	.50	.47
Coke	3.33	4.46
Coal .....	.37	.00
Total minerals	\$11.74	\$8.41
Labour	1.47	1.53
Officials and clerks .....	.18	.16
Supplies and repairs .....	.51	.61
Taxes .....	.04	.04
Grand total	\$13.94	\$10.75

In the same tables the cost of charcoal iron is given from seven establishments in the Northern States, and from one in the Southern, ranging in the former from \$14.45 to \$25.24 (average \$19.46) per ton, and in the latter being given as \$10.27. The writer of the article on iron in "The Mineral Industry," however, says :—"It is not at all likely that the average cost of hot-blast charcoal iron anywhere in the country is below \$14."

The average cost per ton of Gray forge iron in the Northern District of the United States is given as \$13.50, in Great Britain as \$8.03, and on the Continent of Europe as \$9.06. No. 1 foundry iron in the Northern United States is given as costing on an average \$13.86 a ton, and on the Continent of Europe \$7.74, excluding taxes. Spiegeleisen on the Continent cost \$15.07, only one establishment's figures being quoted, however. Basic or Thomas iron on the Continent cost \$9.63, and in Great Britain \$10.89 a ton. The average cost of Bessemer iron in the Northern United States was \$15.37, in Great Britain, \$10.33; and on the Continent of Europe, \$11.74.

The average figures for Bessemer iron and Gray forge iron respectively made in Great Britain, quoted in Mr. Wright's Report, are in detail made up as follows :—

	Bessemer iron.	Gray forge iron.
Cost of ore per ton, of pig	\$6.09	\$3.63
" cinder and scrap	0.23	0.10
" limestone	0.20	0.32
" coke	2.64	2.74
" coal* .....	.0075	.02
" labour .....	.6625	.67
" officials, clerks, &c. ....	.055	.04
" supplied repairs.....	.43	.33
" taxes .....	.015	.02
" items not detailed.....	.....	.06
Total cost of pig	\$10.33	\$7.93
Number of establishments reporting	4	3
Number of furnaces	4	6
Average output per day per furnace	76 tons	78 tons
Tons of ore used per ton of pig.....	1.8	2.45
" cinder and scrap .....	.07	.22
" limestone .....	.345	.45
" coke	1.175	1.08
" coal .....	.0025	.007
Average cost of ore per ton	\$3.39	\$1.48
" cinder and scrap per ton	0.32	0.45
" limestone per ton	0.58	0.71
" coke per ton	2.25	2.53
" coal per ton.....	3.00	3.00

* In one Bessemer and two Gray forge establishments about 1 ton of coal is used along with every hundred tons of coke.

It is not explained why the coal should cost more than the coke per ton, but it is probably not the same as that from which the coke is made, and may, perhaps, be anthracite brought from some distance. The smelting, however, is substantially all done with coke.

It is seen from the above that the most important items of cost of making Bessemer iron, which is what we have at present to consider, as the Blythe River iron-mine yields an excellent Bessemer ore, are the cost of the ore and the cost of the coke used for smelting it, these two amounting to 84½ per cent. of the total cost of production. Most of the Bessemer ore used in Great Britain is now imported from Spain, the deposits of West Cumberland and North-west Lancashire only supplying about 2,500,000 tons a year, against about 4,000,000 tons imported. According to the contributor of the article on the "Mineral Industries of the United Kingdom," in Rothwell's "Mineral Industry," 1892,—"About 20 per cent. of the total make of pig-iron in the United Kingdom is now, and has for some years past, been produced from imported ore, a large part of which is delivered to the furnaces at 11s. per ton, the average content of iron being 50 per cent." The proportion quoted is stated to have risen to 25.2 per cent. in 1892. (Engineering and Mining Journal, 1893, page 494.) From the above tabular statement it appears that during the period of Mr. Wright's investigation, the average Bessemer ore used at four British establishments cost per ton \$3.39 (=14s. 1½d.), and yielded 55½ per cent. of pig-iron, which we may take as equal to, say, 53½ per cent. of pure iron. Allowing for losses in smelting, we may estimate that the ore would assay about 57 per cent. iron. According to the return of imports into the United Kingdom during the same period (1887 to 1890), the average value of the imported ore (which is mostly Bessemer ore) was 15s. a ton. It is probable that the recent heavy fall in the value of silver will have lowered the price of Spanish ore, as Spain is monofarally a silver standard country. In estimating the relative prices at which the British and Australian smelters respectively would purchase their Bessemer ore, I do not think, there ore, that we should put down the cost to the former at more than 11s. a ton, the price quoted by "The Mineral Industry's Contributor."

At what price, now, could we deliver the Blythe River ore to a smelting establishment? Taking into consideration that coke is a bulky, and therefore expensive cargo to carry, and that, as shown above, nearly as much weight of coke as of ore is used in the first smelting, without counting the coal and coke used afterwards in converting the pig-iron into merchantable rails, rods, sheets, and so on, it is pretty clear that it would be cheaper to send the ore to Newcastle to be smelted than to try to reduce it in Tasmania. This would have the further advantage that the metal would be at once available for distribution throughout New South Wales and Queensland, without the expense of freight from Tasmania. Smelting at Newcastle seems to me the only hope of success with the Blythe River and Penguin ore.

The mine being admirably situated for mining the ore cheaply, it seems a quite safe estimate, even after allowing that a good deal of second-class ore unfit for smelting had to be moved and rejected while picking out the pure mineral, if we put the cost of winning it at 3s. a ton. The distance to Burnie Breakwater being 12 miles, another shilling should cover the freight to the port. The freight from Burnie to Newcastle will be a very important factor in the calculation, and I have been at some pains to get reliable figures on this head. Seeing that vessels taking coal and coke from Newcastle to Melbourne, Adelaide, and Port Pirie can call at Burnie on their return trip and load with iron ore, it is pretty certain that if shipments of 300 or 1,000 tons of ore a week (enough to keep one large furnace in work) or over could be guaranteed to the shipping companies, contracts could be made to carry it at 5s. a ton. Allowing 2s. a ton for contingent and profit, the ore could then be delivered at Newcastle for about 11s. a ton, or about the same price as the British smelter pays for his Spanish hematite.

As

As regards the price of coke, however, the position is much less satisfactory. While the British smelter pays, as shown above, from 9s. 4d. to 10s. 6d. a ton for his coke, the best coke delivered at Newcastle cost 25s. a ton. As the best coal is now sold in Newcastle in the trucks at 7s. 9d., and small coal at 4s., it seems likely that coke could be supplied considerably cheaper, probably at not more than 20s. a ton at the outside, if a local furnace were in a position to make large contracts for it. The quality of the New South Wales coke is not, perhaps, quite as good as the English, but is susceptible of improvement with the use of coal-washing appliances and greater care in manufacture. In a report, dated 22nd December, 1892, by the Government Geologist of New South Wales, Mr. E. F. Pitman, it is pointed out that there is not so much difference between the English and German cokes and the best New South Wales makes, as is generally supposed. After comparing the analyses of nine samples of foreign coke supplied to the Broken Hill and Port Pirie smelting works with those of fourteen samples made in different parts of New South Wales, he says:—"It will be observed that some of the Welsh coke used at Broken Hill contains a higher percentage of ash than the colonial coke made by either the Purified Coal and Coke Company, Wallsend, or the Singleton Colliery Companies; also that the average percentage of ash, calculated from the nine samples of foreign cokes in use at or in transport to Broken Hill, amounts to 7.26, which is only 0.6 per cent. lower than is contained by the coke made at the Purified Coal and Coke Company's ovens, Wallsend." Mr. Pittman summarises his conclusions as to the relative quality of the New South Wales and foreign cokes as follows:—"Some of the cokes at present manufactured in New South Wales are nearly equal, as regards ash, to the average of the imported cokes in use at the Broken Hill smelting works. Several of the cokes at present manufactured in New South Wales are superior, as regards percentage of ash, to some of the imported cokes in use at Broken Hill. That in regard to strength, or capacity for resisting pressure, the cokes manufactured in New South Wales are superior to some of the imported cokes at present in use at Broken Hill."

The ash of the New South Wales cokes is admitted to be somewhat more siliceous, and consequently more refractory to smelt than that of the average English ones; but, as a set-off to this, it contains less sulphur and phosphorus. In the Records of the Geological Survey of New South Wales, Vol II, Part III, 1891, page 110, it is stated in a paper by Mr. J. C. H. Mingaye, F.C.S., (Government Analyst, that "as regards the presence of sulphur, the coals of New South Wales are exceptionally free from that element, and, I think, will, without doubt, compare in this respect with coal in any part of the world." At page 114 of the same paper Mr. Mingaye again says:—"The ashes of the coals of New South Wales yield much less phosphoric acid than the English, which is greatly in their favour when the coals or cokes are required to be used for iron-smelting purposes," and he quotes the mean percentage of phosphoric acid in five samples from the Northern District of New South Wales as 7.26 per cent., and in six from Great Britain as 1.843 per cent. The purity of the coke from sulphur and phosphorus will allow of the production of very fine iron from the pure Tasmanian ore, and is an advantage which few but iron-smelters will adequately realise.

As a set-off against the siliceous ash of the Colonial coke, the great purity of the ore might be urged, but it would be premature to do so until actual shipments have been sampled. If the ore can be kept of the same average grade as the Spanish ore (say) from 59 per cent. to 61 per cent. iron, it is as good as we have any right at present to expect it to be, though there is much reason to hope that a higher average value could be maintained.

Taking the English figures above given for Bessemer pig-iron as a basis, we may now attempt a rough estimate of the cost producing a ton of pig at Newcastle:—

1.8 tons ore, at 11s.	£ 0 19 9½
0.7 ,, cinders, &c., at (say) 2s.	0 0 1½
0.345 ,, limestone, at 4s.	0 1 4½
1.2 ,, coke, at 20s.	1 4 0
Total materials	£2 5 3½
Labour, officials, supplies, &c. (say)	0 10 0
Total cost of pig	£2 15 3½

As against \$10.33 or £2 3s. 0½d. in England, the extra cost being about 12s. 3d.

The handicap which the Colonial smelter would have as against his English competitor is the freight on the latter's goods out from England. This is very variable, according to the exigencies of the shipping trade, ranging from occasionally a nominal sum up to as much as 25s. a ton. After a good many inquiries, it seems to me to be pretty safe to take 12s. 6d. a ton as about the lowest average freight on iron from London to these Colonies. As regards New South Wales and part of Queensland, the local smelter would have the whole of this in his favour; but when he had to ship from Newcastle to Melbourne, Adelaide, New Zealand, and Tasmania, it is doubtful whether the freight on his goods, owing to the high intercolonial rates prevailing, would not be almost as much as if they were sent from London. The Newcastle manufacturer would then have a slight advantage in New South Wales and Queensland, but could hardly meet English competition elsewhere in the Colonies. It must be remembered that the case of pig-iron is the one most favourable to the Colonial smelter, as the higher rates of wages and coal here will make the further working up of the metal into merchantable shapes relatively more costly than in Great Britain.

It is possible that a powerful company acquiring the iron-mines, and also coal mines of its own, and making its own coke, might be able to reduce the cost of producing iron to a figure approaching the British cost, the facilities for bringing the ore and coke together at Newcastle, and for distributing the product afterwards, being really unusually good. The case in favour of a trial at making iron in these Colonies seems good enough to warrant its being investigated in all its details by a skilled specialist in the manufacture. The attempts hitherto made at iron-smelting have been failures, or very partial successes, but it seems to me that the proposal to reduce sea-borne ore at Newcastle has points in its favour which were wanting in other instances.

As showing the value of a deposit of high-grade Bessemer ore, the following notes on the iron deposits of Cuba, taken from "Rothwell's Mineral Industry, 1892," will be of interest:—"The Cuban iron-ore deposits, one of the most important groups of Bessemer iron mines in the world, are found on the range of mountains called the Sierra Maestra, which skirts the southern coast of the province of Santiago de Cuba. The ore can be mined with great facility by means of side-hill cuts. The average analyses of the cargoes have been between 58 per cent. and 65 per cent. of metallic iron, and about 0.02 per cent. of phosphorus." A syndicate of Pennsylvania capitalists obtained a concession to build a narrow-gauge railroad from the mines to the port of Santiago de Cuba, a distance of 17 miles. "The line was laid through a very mountainous country, and the first car-load of ore was shipped late in 1884. Since then the output has been increasing year by year, and in 1891 it amounted to 330,000 tons. To haul the ore from the mines to the port there are at present in use about twenty locomotives, and over 2,000 cars, while the total number of men employed averages about 1,500. The company has built an iron pier at the harbour of Santiago de Cuba high enough to allow the railroad cars to dump directly into the steamers. There are no ore-docks; so the company must have sufficient cars to allow the loaded ones to be sidetracked until the arrival of the steamers, every two or three days. The company controls a regular line of iron steamers plying between their pier at Santiago de Cuba and Philadelphia or Baltimore. Most of the ore is consumed by the Pennsylvania Steel Company and the Bethlehem Iron Company. It is estimated that over \$3,000,000 has been spent in this enterprise, with gratifying financial results. In 1890 the Sigma Iron Company, composed of Philadelphia capitalists, was organised, and purchased another group of mines in the same mountain range, about 30 miles from Santiago de Cuba. It has constructed 5 miles of standard-gauge railroad. An ore dock of 5,000 tons capacity was built in the open sea, and will be protected from the prevailing south-east winds by a breakwater now in process of construction. The first shipment of ore from this group of mines arrived in Philadelphia a few weeks ago in the American whale-back steamship "Joseph L. Colby." A portion of the cargo went to the Midvale Steel Company, whose analysis gave:—Metallic iron, 67.576 per cent.; phosphorus, 0.014 per cent.; sulphur, 0.026 per cent.; silica, 1.460 per cent."

The importance to all the Australian colonies of the establishment of an iron-smelting industry in their midst can hardly be over-estimated, seeing that there is, perhaps, no other that gives a greater stimulus to national progress. If it can be successfully established it will go far before long to render us less dependent upon the outside world for markets for our foodstuffs and raw materials and for manufactured goods, by encouraging a manufacturing population who will consume the former and supply the latter, for the development of coal and iron industries always carries with it progress in other branches as well. The question of fostering it by the removal of restrictions on intercolonial trade and by other means is, therefore, well worth the consideration of colonial statesmen.

In conclusion, I would urge the owners of the Blythe River Mine to have the deposit opened out by mining works far enough to allow accurate estimates to be formed of the quantity and value of the ore available, and to make sure that neither

neither the quantity, quality, nor cost of winning it has been miscalculated, and to have the whole question of smelting it and disposing of the iron thoroughly looked into by an experienced iron manufacturer. In my opinion, the time has come for such a thorough investigation of both mine and market, and the magnitude of the issues at stake demands that care and expense should not be spared in these most necessary preliminaries. I have to thank Mr. Wm. Jones, of Burnie, Mr. J. W. Norton-Smith, Mr. J. T. McDonald, of Salisbury's Foundry Company, Launceston, and Messrs. Huddart Parker & Co.'s and the Union S.S. Co.'s, of New Zealand, Managers, for much information as to freights, &c.; the Government Statistician, Mr. R. M. Johnston, for tables of iron imports into the Colonies, and the Under Secretary of Mines, Sydney, for information as to prices of coal and coke at Newcastle, and for Reports on the Coals and Cokes of New South Wales.

I have, &c.,

A. MONTGOMERY,

Geological Surveyor.

The Secretary for Mines, Hobart.

The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade to Messrs. William Jamieson and
H. F. G. Keats.

Gentlemen,

The Treasury, New South Wales, Sydney, 3 August, 1900.

With reference to your letter of 23rd May, I have the honor, by direction of the Honorable the Premier and Colonial Treasurer, to inform you that the terms proposed therein for the erection in this Colony, within two years, of Iron-smelting and Rolling Mills, viz.: That this Government guarantees to take 100,000 tons of rails extending over a period of about four years, and not less than 25,000 tons in any one year, at a price equal to that quoted in Great Britain, plus steamer freight and expenses incidental to exporting such materials from Great Britain, are accepted.

I have, &c.,

F. KIRKPATRICK,

Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade to Messrs. William Jamieson and
H. F. G. Keats.

Gentleman,

The Treasury, New South Wales, Sydney, 7 September, 1900,

With reference to my letter of 3rd ultimo, intimating that the terms proposed in your communication of 23rd May last for the erection in this Colony of Iron-smelting and Rolling Mills, had been accepted, I am now directed by the Honorable the Premier and Colonial Treasurer to inform you that a deposit of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) must be made with the Treasury as a guarantee that your share in the undertaking will be faithfully carried out.

I have, &c.,

F. KIRKPATRICK,

Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

The Secretary, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), to The Under Secretary for
Finance and Trade.

Sir,

Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), Bank-place, Melbourne, 10 September, 1900.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, to Messrs. Jamieson and Keats.

The expert who has been imported from England is now visiting the mine, and on his return, he, with the directors, should, within a fortnight, go to Sydney, where they, no doubt, will be able to fix up everything satisfactorily.

I have, &c.,

H. L. CUMMING,

Secretary.

The Under Secretary for Finance and Trade to The Secretary, Blythe River
Iron-mines (Limited).

Sir,

The Treasury, New South Wales, Sydney, 24 September, 1900.

With reference to correspondence which has passed relative to the proposal of the Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), to establish Iron-smelting and Rolling Mills in New South Wales, I have the honor, by direction of the Honorable the Premier and Colonial Treasurer, to inform you that the deposit of £10,000 stipulated for by this Government must be made forthwith or other arrangements will probably be entered into. The offer cannot be kept open longer.

I have, &c.,

F. KIRKPATRICK,

Under Secretary for Finance and Trade.

The Secretary, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), to The Under Secretary for
Finance and Trade.

Sir,

Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), Bank-place, Melbourne, 25 September, 1900.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant.

Mr. Jamieson, one of the directors of this company, is now in Sydney, and I have written asking him to call and arrange the matter with you.

I have, &c.,

H. L. CUMMING,

Secretary.

William Jamieson, Esq., to The Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

Dear Sir,

"The Australia Hotel," Sydney, 26 September, 1900.

I have just received a copy of a letter sent to H. L. Cumming, Secretary of the Blythe River Iron-mines, from F. Kirkpatrick, Under Secretary for Finance and Trade, in which he states "that the deposit of £10,000 stipulated by this Government must be made forthwith, or other arrangements will probably be entered into. The offer cannot be kept open longer."

Mr. Keats is now in Tasmania with Mr. Darby, our expert from Great Britain, and I expect Mr. Darby here early next week, when I hope to have the pleasure of introducing him to you.

I may say we have no intention of not carrying out our proposal, and would be glad if you would kindly grant me an interview, so that I could explain to you what steps we are taking to further the business in question.

I arrived here a few days ago on other business, and was on the point of requesting an interview with you, when I got the letter above referred to. I am cabling Mr. Keats on the subject.

Please kindly telephone or write me when I can have an interview with you. I would be glad if you could make one on Friday or later, as I, at present, have arranged to go out of town to-morrow.

Yours, &c.,

WM. JAMIESON.

Messrs. William Jamieson and H. F. G. Keats to The Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

Sir,

"The Australia," Sydney, 4 October, 1900.

Herewith we have the honor to hand you draft for £10,000 to be held in Suspense Account, pending the signing of contract between the Government and our company, as arranged with Sir William Lyne.

We have, &c.,

WILLIAM JAMIESON,

H. F. G. KEATS,

Directors, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited).

£10,000 credited to Trust Fund on 4th instant.—S.R.C., Revenue Branch, 5/10/00. The Under Secretary.

Messrs. William Jamieson and H. F. G. Keats to The Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

Sir,

"The Australia," Sydney, 4 October, 1900.

We understand the arrangement arrived at last night to be ~~asunder~~, and we shall be glad to hear that you agree.

A deposit of £10,000 to be forthwith placed by us in the Treasury to Suspense Account until the contract be signed. (This will be done this morning).

That you undertake to give us orders at the market price of the day in Great Britain, plus steamer freight, duty and all charges incidental to importation for 100,000 tons of rails over a period of four years, and at least half of your other requirements that we manufacture, and for a further period of four years you agree to give us half of your total requirements, if any other works are making steel in New South Wales, and in the event of ours being the only works, then the whole of your requirements will be placed with us on the same terms.

Delivery to commence when our works are completed; but in any event, within two and a half years from the signing of the agreement to carry out the above. On reasonable grounds, however, this time may be extended, with your permission.

The deposit of £10,000, plus interest, to be returned to the company on the carrying out of the agreement.

We have, &c.,

WILLIAM JAMIESON,

H. F. G. KEATS,

Directors, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited).

Acknowledge please.—F.K., 4/10/00. Submitted.—F.K., 5/10/00. My reply was that I would not agree to anything beyond the first or previous letter. Mr. MARTIN.—What would a duty of 10 per cent. on cost of rails referred to amount to?—F.K., 8/10/00.

I shall have to inquire what is the present market value of steel rails in Sydney before I can say what a duty of 10 per cent. would represent per ton. The papers might be submitted to the Honorable the Premier for the purpose of ascertaining whether the agreement outlined in Messrs. Jamieson and Keat's letter of 4th October meets with his approval; thereafter, the contract might, perhaps, be drawn up. I suppose that it is desired that the negotiations with the Australian Iron Syndicate (Limited) shall go no further.—J.R.M., 11/10/00. The Under Secretary.

The Premier and Colonial Treasurer to Messrs. William Jamieson and H. F. G. Keats.

Gentlemen,

The Treasury, New South Wales, Sydney, 24 October, 1900.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and in reply thereto to say that the terms proposed and accepted by the Government for the erection in this Colony, within two years, of Iron Smelting and Rolling Mills were: that the Government guarantees to take 100,000 tons of rails, extending over a period of about four years, and not less than 25,000 tons in any one year, at a price equal to that quoted in Great Britain, plus steamer freight and expenses incidental to importing such materials from Great Britain. These are the terms set forth in your letter of the 23rd May, and agreed to as per Treasury letter to you of 3rd August.

There was no condition in original letter with respect to half of the other requirements of the Government that you might manufacture, nor to any agreement in regard to a further period of four years. Should, however, there be no other iron works in New South Wales then, the Government would feel disposed to give orders for further requirements on the same conditions, pending the erection of such works or other arrangements being made.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM JOHN LYNE.

Statement.

Statement.

Public Works Department, Railway Construction Branch, 27 November, 1900.

STATEMENT of steel rails (60 lb.) purchased by the Public Works Department since 1893:—

Year.	Contractor.	Price, f.o.b., London.	Price, f.o.b., New York.	Freight.	Insurance.	Cost, c.i.f., Sydney.	Quantity.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	tons.
1893.....	Bolckow Vaughan	3 17 3	.....	7 9	0 6	4 5 6	14,150
1895.....	Dowlais Company	5 0 9	.....	7 9	0 6	5 0 0	5,000
1897.....	Ebbwvale Company	4 7 6	.....	7 9	0 6	4 15 9	15,000
1897.....	Peabody & Co.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5 0 0	*2,000
1898.....	Cammell & Co.....	4 5 3	.....	5 3	0 6	4 11 0	10,000
1900.....	Barrow & Co.	6 11 6	.....	16 0	0 6	7 8 0	19,000

* Tendered at c.i.f., Sydney.

The cost of 80 lb. rails has been practically the same.

H. D.,
Engineer-in-Chief.

J. Stirling, Esq., to William Jamieson, Esq.

Blythe Iron-mine.

Sir,

Burnie, 15 November, 1899.

As requested, I visited the above property this day, in company with Mr. William Jones, who stated that in addition to an estimate of cost for mining and placing the ore f.o.b. steamer at Burnie, you wished an estimate of the quantity available. In reply I have the honor to forward you the following report:—

Situation.—The ore, which, in my opinion, is a lode running S.S.W. to N.N.E., crosses the valley of the Blythe River, almost at right angles some 6 miles from its mouth, and offers special facilities for cheap extraction, as the cliffs rise from the river at a slope of about 2 to 1 to 400 feet in height on the west, and 500 feet on the east side.

Extent.—The western slope has been cleared and burnt off for some 10 chains from the river; but the lode can be traced further. At the river the width appears to be from 150 to 200 feet. About 5 chains from the river, and some 200 feet above it, a trench has been run about 400 feet across the lode ore all the way. About 10 chains from the river and 400 feet above it several small trenches on the west side of the lode have been cut, all exposing solid ore, while on the east side a huge mass is exposed rising 60 feet sheer above the surface as one place. This appears a magnificent body of iron.

On the east side no work has been done except felling and scrubbing, consequently no very reliable data can be obtained; but the lode stands out boldly. About 15 chains from the river and 500 feet above it the width appears about 200 to 250 feet. A little further on the basalt covers the lode which appears again on the surface some 35 chains further east, and 650 feet above the river level, from this point I followed it some 10 or 15 chains further east. The width apparently from 150 to 200 feet; but the level falling to 570 feet above the river. The country here being very scrubby I did not go further; but the indications were that the lode continued.

From the above, and taking river level as the bottom, I estimate the quantity as 14,000,000 cubic yards, and allowing 30 per cent. for faults, poor stone, &c., gives 9,750,000 cubic yards. Taking the specific gravity at 5, we get $3\frac{3}{4}$ tons per cubic yard—equal to 36,750,000 of tons. Even allowing the figures to be large owing to no opening up on the east side, it appears to me that 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 of tons is a conservative estimate. In addition to the lode above described there is a large amount of good ore outside the above limits, which may be shed; but may just as likely be a portion of the main body, &c.

I have, &c.,

J. STIRLING.

P.S.—I should have mentioned that from 8,000,000 to 9,000,000 tons of ore can be iron before it will be necessary to remove the overburden above mentioned.—J.S.

The Secretary, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), to The Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

Sir, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), Bank-place, Melbourne, 17 November, 1900.

By request of my directors, I have the honor, for your information, to hand you herewith reports of the Blythe River iron deposits, by Mr. A. Montgomerie, M.A., and Mr. J. Stewart, C.E.

The available ore you will observe by these reports is estimated to considerably exceed 20,000,000 tons of ore.

The iron deposits were recently visited by Mr. John H. Darby, an English ironmaster of wide known repute and experience, who was chosen and sent out from England by the investors concerned to inspect and report on the deposit with a view to the establishment of iron and steel works in Australia. Mr. Darby's report will not be available until it has first been submitted to his principals; but he informed my directors his measurements substantially support the estimates of Messrs. Montgomerie and Stirling in respect of tonnage of ore.

Mr. Darby informed my directors that the ore is unusually pure and good, and was in the highest degree suitable for the production of iron and steel of the finest quality; in fact he could not speak more highly than he did of the extent of the ore, and its suitability for the production of high class iron and steel.

Mr. Darby also inspected several more or less suitable sites for the proposed works. He estimated the capital cost of the works at £750,000, and the probable yearly wages expenditure in connection with the works at £250,000.

In

In giving you this information my directors instruct me to add that (presuming that a satisfactory arrangement had been arrived at with your Government for the erection of the works in New South Wales) the site most favoured by Mr. Darby is at Sydney. In view of this matter my directors would point out and emphasise to you the enormous advantages to New South Wales, and especially to Sydney, certain to follow if the works are erected there.

Quite beyond the benefits to be anticipated from the heavy initial expenditure involved in erecting the works, and the annual distribution of so large a sum as I have indicated amongst the wage-earners of Sydney, there would also be amongst various other advantages a very considerable direct gain to your railways from the haulage of fuel, fluxes, and other material, and in addition of still greater importance would be the centralisation at Sydney of the numerous important subordinate iron and steel trades of Australasia.

I have, &c.,

H. L. CUMMING,

Secretary, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited).

The Secretary, Blythe River Iron-mines (Limited), to The Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

Sir,

19 November, 1900.

I have the honor to inform you that in the hurry to catch the mail I omitted from my letter of 17th inst. Mr. Stirling's report, which I now enclose.

Since these reports the iron deposits have been much opened up and exposed to show, without doubt, that there are tens of millions of tons of first-class ore available.

The deposits were comparatively a small part of the undertaking upon which Mr. Darby had to report. His instructions embraced reports on—

1. The deposit of hematite iron ore on the Blythe River, near Burnie, Tasmania.
2. The site of the proposed iron and steel works, having regard to assembly of the iron and steel making materials, application of surplus power from the blast furnace gases, and the distribution of the finished—rolled—steel. The source of the fuel—coal and coke—and limestone.
4. The output and extent of the proposed works, estimate of outlay, and cost of producing steel.
5. The finished articles to be produced.

When he left he had made a rough draft of his report to the extent of 1 and 2, and I may inform you that in the part relating to the mine he states:

"In my estimate of the probable quantity I have taken the river bed as the bottom of the ore, though it is nearly certain to extend downwards much further. The width of the deposit, measured by myself where the sides are well defined; the weight of ore at 3 tons per cubic yard; the cubical contents of the deposit arrived at in this way has been divided by two, yet the tonnage amounts to 24,500,000 (twenty-four millions five hundred thousand) tons of selected ore.

"My general impression is that there is sufficient ore near the Blythe River to supply iron and steel works capable of making 3,000 (three thousand) tons of finished steel per week for many years to come. That the quality of the ore is excellent and not surpassed by any in Europe or America."

The actual production of the ore, although the groundwork, is a very small part of the undertaking of this company, the whole of which will undoubtedly be by far the largest industrial concern in the Australian Colonies. It will involve the raising, transporting, and converting into iron and steel 250,000 tons of iron ore per annum, which will further involve the raising, or purchasing and transporting, of 300,000 tons of coal per annum. All this coal will no doubt come from New South Wales mines, and as the whole production of New South Wales is under 5,000,000 tons per annum you will see what an increase and impetus this will give to the coal-mining industry. Considerable quantities of limestone will be required—about 60,000 tons per annum.

The ore, coal, and limestone must all be conveyed to the neighbourhood of Sydney, if the works be established there, and even then only the initial part of the undertaking will be accomplished.

The next step will be to convert the coal into coke and the ore into iron and steel. Then the greatest part of the work commences, namely, the conversion of the raw material into commercial articles, such as rails, plates, sheets, bars, rods, angles, &c., &c. You will see the enormous amount of work to be done and labour involved and money expended in erecting the necessary works, &c., before the undertaking can become a going concern, also the great annual expenditure and number of people that will be employed from the start.

The undertaking will also necessarily create many secondary industries—we are advised that manufacturers of finished goods, such as tin plates, galvanised iron, &c., in England are only waiting for us to be able to supply them to put up works close to our works on a large scale to turn out finished products from our steel, which will involve the expenditure of large capital and annual sums in wages, &c. A great manufacturing centre will be created and established, turning out finished articles that will go to all parts of this continent and probably India, the East, and New Zealand.

New South Wales will be the Colony to reap, as a Colony, the whole benefit.

The wages and capital will be spent there; the goods will be distributed over her railways, and she will get the benefit of the shipping.

Work and good wages will be provided for engineers and skilled artisans of every class, as well as for miners, sailors, and all sorts of workmen.

You will, no doubt, readily perceive from the foregoing outline of what is proposed the establishment of these works will rank as the most important commercial industry as yet contemplated in Australia.

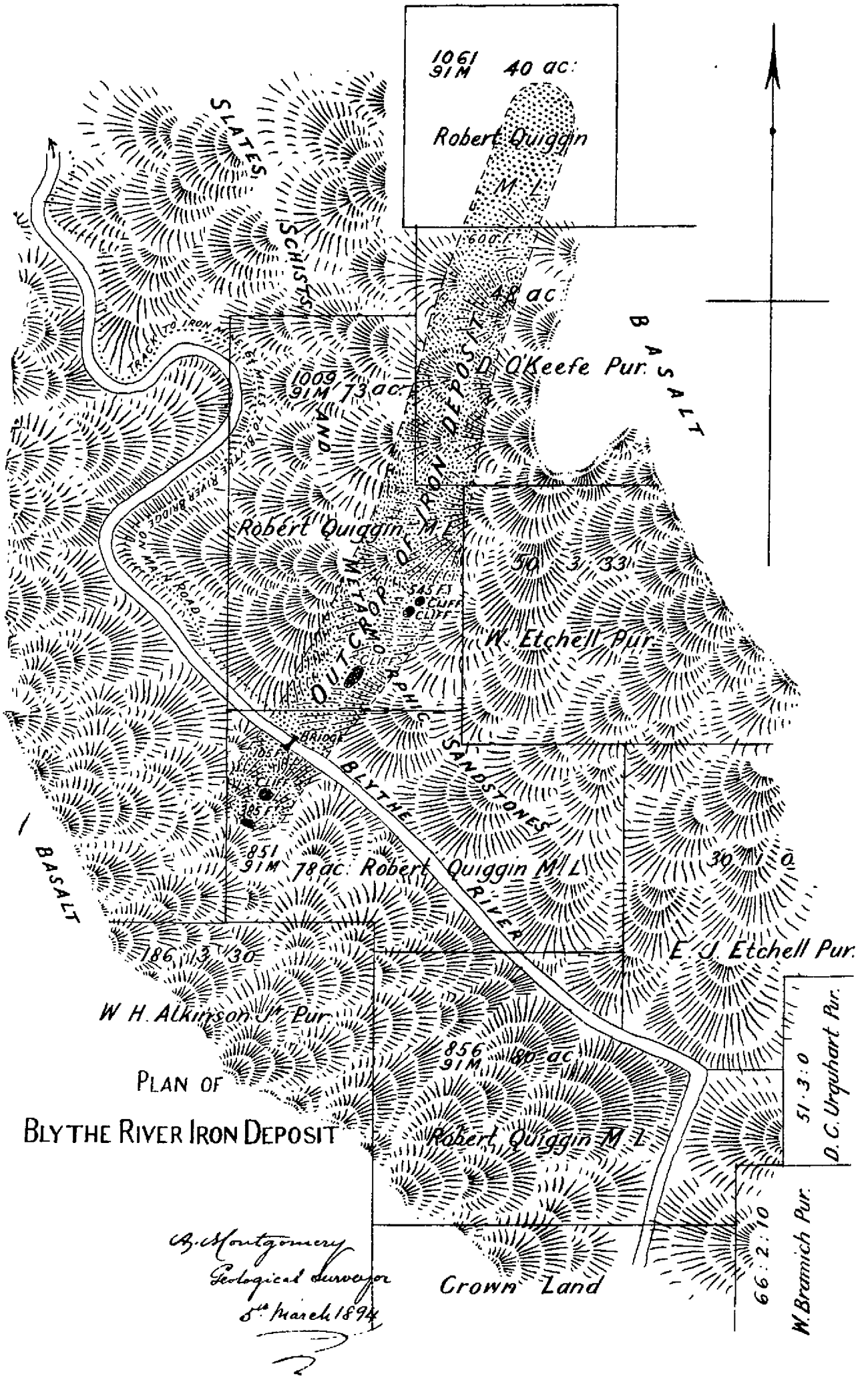
This present time, when Australia is about to be federated, seems most opportune for the commencement of such a business that in itself will mark an epoch in Australian history, and I am sure you will agree with my directors that the establishment of such an enterprise should be encouraged in every possible way, and people who engage their capital and energies therein are deserving of every consideration, particularly by the Colony most likely, as the centre of the industry, to benefit from it.

I have, &c.,

H. L. CUMMING.

The Hon. Sir Wm. Lyne, Premier, New South Wales.

[One plan.]



1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

CAST SCRAP IRON AT NEWCASTLE.

(RETURN SHOWING THE QUANTITIES SOLD BY THE RAILWAY DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEARS 1897, 1898, AND 1899.)

Printed under No. 10 Report from Printing Committee, 30 August, 1900.

[Laid upon the Table of the House in accordance with promise made by the Honorable the Minister for Railways in answer to Question No. 23 in Votes and Proceedings No. 26 of the 8th August, 1900.]

Question 1.

The number of tons of scrap iron that have left the Locomotive Department, Newcastle, during years 1897, 1898, and 1899?

Answer.

1897 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	108 tons 9 cwt.
1898 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
1899 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10 tons.

Question 2.

The number of tons of cast-iron scraps or old chairs that have left the Permanent-way Department, Newcastle, during the years 1897, 1898, and 1899?

Answer.

1897 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	75 tons 3 cwt.
1898 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	122 "
1899 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	120 "

Question 3.

Who were the purchasers, and at what price per ton?

Answer.

Messrs. J. B. Barclay, R. Gibson, Mr. Marsh, A. Head, and Morison and Bearby, at £3 per ton. The Department, as a rule, utilises its own cast scrap, or disposes of it, to assist the contractor for the supply of iron castings to the Department. The weight sold to each of the purchasers for the three years is as follows:—

J. B. Barclay ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	411 tons.
R. Gibson ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11 "
Morison and Bearby ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11 "
Mr. Marsh...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2 "
F. A. Head ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12 cwt.

Question 4.

Was a docket or ticket issued from the Department to the purchaser with each ton or load?

Answer.

The scrap is weighed by the Department, either on a cart or a truck weighbridge, and account is rendered for the weight, payment preceding delivery.

Question 5.

Question 5.

Was any preference given to any manufacturer?

Answer.

The scrap has been sold principally to the contractor to the Department for supplying iron castings. This has been done to ensure the prompt delivery of castings, and care is taken to see that the scrap supplied to the contractor is in proper proportion to the weight of castings he supplies. The minute from the late Comptroller of Stores covering the matter, and approved by the Commissioners, is as follows:—

“Referring to my conversation with the Acting Chief Commissioner yesterday, I have to state that Mr. Barclay called to see me yesterday as to the terms on which he would be allowed to obtain cast scrap iron during the currency of the contract referred to; the price he is at present, and has for some years past been paying, being £3 per ton.

“At the same time Mr. Barclay drew my attention to a representation he had made to the Commissioners asking for an allowance on the exceptional quantity of small and intricate castings which he had for some months past been called upon to supply in connection with electrical work, and gave me to understand that he was expecting the Commissioners to make some allowance in connection with the present contract.

“As I have before reported, there is no doubt that there has been a considerable increase in the number of small castings he is and has been called upon to supply, and his contract price, even the increased one for next year, is very low indeed for such castings.

“The market price for cast scrap iron is about £4 per ton at the present time; but in view of the facts just stated, and also that Mr. Barclay was paying his present price of £3 for cast scrap iron when that was the very full market price, I recommend that he be allowed, during the currency of his next year's contract, to receive the cast scrap iron at the same price—£3 per ton—as he is at present paying.”

Question 6.

Were tenders called for these materials by the Locomotive and Permanent-way Departments Newcastle?

Answer.

No; but consideration has been given to any application from local manufacturers whenever scrap was available.

Question 7.

If not, will he see that tenders are called for in future?

Answer.

The question will have consideration if at any time there is any large quantity of surplus scrap, but it is probable the Department's requirements will absorb that which is available.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURNS OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS, NOVEMBER, 1899, TO APRIL, 1900)

Printed under No 2 Report from Printing Committee, 28 June, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an Order made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof,—(a) upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) on wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on “railways.”

(Mr. Samuel Smith.)

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of November, 1899.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1899.				
2 Nov.	Bathurst	McEwan, W.	Passenger	Slightly injured. Fell from carriage.
5 "	Waverley	East, Claude	"	Killed whilst travelling in tram. Struck by shaft of a sulky. Verdict, Coroner's inquest, "Accidental death."
7 "	North Shore	Kennedy, —	"	Foot bruised. Alighting from tram in motion.
9 "	Paddington	Smith, Mrs. H. C.	"	Fractured collar bone and scalp wound. Knocked down by motor.
9 "	Waterloo	Clarke, H.	Passenger	Ankle broken. Attempting to board tram while in motion.
11 "	Redfern	Langham, S.	"	Injured. Stepped in front of motor and was knocked down.
14 "	Forest Lodge	Simpson, H.	"	Head injured. Thrown out of sulky through colliding with tram.
14 "	Newtown Road	Jennings, —	Passenger	Fatally injured. Fell from tram car and run over. Verdict, Coroner's inquest, "Accidental death."
16 "	Campsie	Prosser, H.	"	Slightly injured. Alighting from train in motion.
22 "	Newtown Road	Mcade, Jno.	"	Left leg injured, necessitating amputation. Alighting from tram in motion.
23 "	Newtown	Cartwright, R.	"	Fractured leg and arm and scalp wound. Thrown out of cart through collision with tram.
23 "	Croydon	Bardsley, Mrs.	Passenger	Slight injury to face when alighting from train in motion.
28 "	Normanhurst	Hayden, —	"	Head injured. Fell from passenger train.
30 "	Lilyvale	Sewell H.	"	Foot crushed by wheel of truck when jumping on brake-lever of truck.

130—A

[600 copies—Approximate Cost of Printing (labour and material) £15 10s. 0d.]

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of November, 1899.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1899. 1 Nov.	Randwick	Jackson, William..	Boilermaker ..	Slipped into an engine pit, and motor apron fell on his hand.
2 "	Nyngan	Lindburg, L.	Shunter	Slipped, and run over by trucks during shunting operations, resulting in abrasions and slight cuts on body.
3 "	Redfern... ..	Graham, W.....	Acting Fireman..	Finger injured when uncoupling two engines.
5 "	North Sydney	Morrison, R.....	Labourer	Tendons of right leg ruptured whilst wheeling a barrow of concrete up a plank.
6 "	Harden	Carroll, P.	Porter	Fatally injured. Fell when applying side truck-brakes, and run over by trucks. Coroner's inquest verdict, "Accidental death."
8 "	Abercrombie-street	Lawler, Thos.	Tram Conductor	Struck on leg by shaft of sulky, and knee injured.
10 "	Bondi Junction ...	Crawford, Alf.	Tramway Fireman.	Foot bruised by lid of water hydrant falling on it.
10 "	Goulburn	Blackshaw, C.	Fuelman	Foot injured by coal falling on it.
11 "	Minare	Cosgrove, R.....	Guard	Fatally injured. Run over by train during shunting operations. Coroner's inquest verdict, "Accidental death."
11 "	North Sydney	Ivers, James.....	Labourer	Whilst engaged excavating, quantity of earth fell on him, resulting in fracture of left shoulder.
12 "	Clyde	Watsford, G.	Cleaner	Finger bruised through pieces of coal rolling down from bunker.
13 "	Eveleigh	Padley, T.	Labourer	Right foot injured by axle box falling on it.
13 "	Eveleigh Waggon-shop.	King, J.....	Labourer	Hand injured. Thumb became jammed when releasing capstan-rope off a waggon.
13 "	Eveleigh Waggon-shop.	Duffy, R.	Labourer	Hand injured. Fingers jammed against buffer of waggon when releasing capstan tow-rope.
14 "	Emu Plains	Agland, John	Porter	Thigh fractured. Slipped off coping of platform and fell between engine and platform.
16 "	Eveleigh	Hennessy, R.	Labourer	Leg injured. Jammed between buffer and sheet of iron through latter slipping off stack.
16 "	Clyde	Cavanough, A.....	Shunter	Finger crushed. Jammed in draw-hooks when removing couplings.
17 "	Epping	Donnelly, J.....	Flagman	Fatally injured. Run over by train. Coroner's inquest verdict, "Accidental death."
18 "	Redfern	Edney, G.....	Shunter.....	Arm injured coupling up engine and carriage
19 "	Maitland	Whitely, G.	Gatekeeper	Fatally injured. Run over by train. Coroner's inquest verdict, "Accidental death."
20 "	Albion Park	Barford, Jas.	Porter	Arm injured. Caught between buffers of trucks.
21 "	Eveleigh	Bagley, S.....	Driver	Back injured. Slipped and fell against engine foot-plate.
22 "	Bulli	Davis, J. R.	Guard	Hand bruised. Jammed when removing a coupling.
24 "	Nevertire	Aanensen, J.....	Guard	Fingers crushed. Brake-van door accidentally closed on his hand.
25 "	Penrith (Ash-pit) ..	Toms, R.	Fuelman	Right hand crushed. Had his hand on rail which was caught by flange of engine wheel.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of December, 1899.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1899. 2 Dec.	Gunnedah.....	J. Benning	Stationmaster ...	Head injured through being struck by door of van whilst holding points.
5 "	Junce	G. Chapman.....	Fuelman	Face and hands scalded by steam rising from ashes in ash-pan whilst watering same.
5 "	Hamilton	W. Bourke	Driver	Fatally injured. Crushed between two engines whilst assisting to re-rail same. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
6 "	Boggabri	H. McCauley	Porter	Left foot bruised owing to barrow falling on it.
6 "	Between Toongabie and Wentworthville.	J. Jenkins	Fireman	Right hand injured by gauge-glass on engine bursting.
11 "	Eveleigh	A. Bellingham	Labourer	Rupture in right side. Occurred whilst preventing steam-chest cover from falling.
12 "	Eveleigh	A. Cooper	Shop-boy	Mouth cut by spring flying out of hydraulic press.
13 "	Eveleigh	J. Hewett.....	Fitter... ..	Hand injured by link of eccentric rod falling upon it whilst coupling up the fore gear.
13 "	Bridge-street	G. H. Clark	Tram fireman ...	Left hand injured. Jammed between draw-bar and socket whilst coupling motor to car.
15 "	Armidale	F. W. Wilson	Fireman	Head injured through falling from tender into engine-pit.
16 "	Redfern	J. D. Bingham	Porter	Head injured. Whilst crossing line with signal-lamps was struck by sleeping-car which was being shunted.
16 "	Glebe Road	— Salkeld.....	Tram conductor.	Foot bruised. Struck by wheel of a passing van.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1899. 20 Dec.	Darling Harbour ...	Turner, A. H.	Porter	Ruptured through slipping between platform and truck whilst unloading wool.
21 "	Between Wyce and Wyong.	Stewart, J.	Guard	Wounded on leg through box falling on it whilst train was rounding a curve.
23 "	Between Ashfield (and Croydon.)	Flanagan, J. ... } Kirwan, M. }	Fettlers	Fatally injured. Run over by passenger train. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
23 "	Junee	Smith, T.	Shunter.....	Forefinger crushed in draw-hook whilst uncoupling trucks.
25 "	Penrith	Davidson, R.	Fireman	Side injured through slipping off engine into turntable pit.
26 "	Flemington	Green, W.	Officer-in-charge	Fatally injured. Struck by train when about to cross line. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
29 "	Lochinvar	Markham, Mrs. ..	Gatekeeper	Fatally injured. Struck by train whilst trying to remove her child from the line. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
29 "	Homebush	Steele, J.	Porter	Slight injuries and shock through falling from ladder of signal-post when lighting signals.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of December, 1899.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1899. 2 Dec...	George-street, West.	Johnston, J. ....	.....	Scalp wound and shock. Thrown out of cab which collided with tram.
5 " "	Liverpool-street ...	Gormly, F.	Passenger	Shoulder injured whilst attempting to alight from tram in motion.
" "	Normanhurst ...	Hayden, J.	"	Face and hands injured whilst attempting to alight from train in motion.
6 Dec...	Botany	Williams, T.	"	Leg injured. Ran between two tram cars.
8 " "	Cleveland-street ...	Graham, E.	Passenger	Concussion of brain. Was walking along footboard of tram and knocked off by passing tram.
8 " "	Circular Quay	Cortese, Rosalind (child)	.....	Fatally injured through walking in front of motor. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
9 " "	Botany	Goodwin, F.	Passenger	Fatally injured. Fell between cars whilst walking from one car to another. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
" "	Liverpool-street ...	Shaw, Ada .....	.....	Scalp wounds. Walked in front of tram and was knocked down by motor.
11 Dec...	Oxford-street	Saunders, A.	Passenger	Leg injured through falling whilst attempting to board tram in motion.
11 " "	Wentworth Falls...	Small, Hilda (child)	"	Shock to system through falling whilst jumping from train in motion.
15 " "	Rveleigh	Cunningham, Mrs.	"	Slight shock through alighting from tram in motion.
" "	Pitt-street	Evans, —	"	Foot injured through buggy colliding with tram.
17 Dec...	Bathurst-street.	Jarvis, Ada	"	Concussion of brain. Jumped from tram in motion and fell.
18 " "	Narandera	Bowditch, Mrs.	"	Arm injured through falling in car.
19 " "	Circular Quay	Ab Lun	"	Head injured through jumping from tram in motion.
20 " "	Redfern	Fraser, Mrs.	"	Foot injured through being struck by platform barrow.
20 " "	Pymont	Clasin, A.	"	Wrist injured. Caught between buffers whilst removing sheets from trucks.
22 " "	Circular Quay	Cumbers, Mrs. L. ...	"	Head injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
23 " "	Esbank	Conroy, Florrie (child)	"	Slightly injured through being struck by brake-van whilst trespassing.
" "	Bayswater Road ...	Bostock, Mrs. ...	"	Head injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
" "	Hawarra Junction..	Gaillagher, M.	"	Injured through falling off car platform when train was passing over points.
24 Dec...	Crown-street	Humphreys, Mrs. ...	"	Injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
25 " "	Manning Road	Clark, J.	"	Leg injured whilst attempting to board electric tram in motion.
26 " "	Waterloo	Barry, J.	"	Head injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
" "	Harris-street	Grey, W.	"	Head and arm injured whilst jumping from tram in motion.
27 Dec...	Wentworth Falls...	Donovan, J.	"	Fatally injured whilst alighting from train in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
" "	Carrathool	Burton, J.	"	Slightly bruised through collision between train and wagonette at level crossing.
28 Dec...	George-street	Nelson, D.	"	Eye and neck injured. Walked in front of and was struck by motor.
29 " "	Essex-street	Frame, T.	"	Head injured through falling whilst alighting from tram in motion.
30 " "	Hay-street	Spero, Mary	"	Fatally injured. Walked in front of tram and was struck by motor. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
" "	Ocean-street	Willis, Miss	"	Head injured through alighting from tram in motion.
31 Dec...	King-street	Dunn, J.	"	Head injured. Walked in front of tram and was struck by car.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of January, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
1 Jan.	Bundanoon	Jones, S. ....	.....	Arm cut off. He was pushed by a companion off station platform in front of an approaching train.
1 "	Mittagong	Farrow, Mrs. ....	.....	Foot crushed through being run over by platform barrow.
2 "	George-street	Dodd, J.	Passenger.....	Head injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
3 "	Strathfield	Barnes, W. ....	.....	Finger crushed. Jammed in carriage door.
3 "	George-street	Warburton, E. C. ....	.....	Head and leg injured. Collided with centre pole whilst attempting to enter tram in motion.
6 "	Boomerang-street	Scholoback, Mrs.	Passenger	Arm injured. Fell from tram in motion.
6 "	Belmore Park	Franklin, A. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Ran in front of tram in motion, and was run over. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
6 "	Devonshire-street	Mamell, W. E. ....	.....	Leg injured. Cab collided with tram, and struck his leg.
7 "	George-street	Trehear, Capt.	Passenger.....	Hip injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
8 "	Molong	Chew, H. ....	.....	Arm struck by door of brake-van and injured.
10 "	225 miles 60 chns., North-western Linc.	Quinn, G.	Passenger.....	Leg injured through falling from train.
14 "	King-street	McSoiley, Mrs.	Passenger.....	Shoulder injured through falling from train in motion.
16 "	Grosvenor-street	Leonard, T. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Knocked down by tram. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
17 "	King-street	O'Neill, A. ....	.....	Face injured. Fell against grip-car of a passing tram.
18 "	"	Morningham, A. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Walked in front of a tram in motion and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
20 "	Sydenham	Singleton, Mrs.	Passenger	Hand cut off whilst alighting from train in motion.
20 "	Harris-street	McMillan, A. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Walked in front of tram in motion, and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
22 "	Newcastle	Coant, E. ....	.....	Hip injured whilst attempting to enter a train in motion.
23 "	George-street	Thompson, R.	Bus-driver	Head injured through collision between bus and tram.
23 "	Newcastle	Bailey, J.	Crane employec.	Leg crushed. Run over by truck.
23 "	West Tamworth	Schofield, S.	Passenger	Leg injured whilst alighting from train.
23 "	Darling Harbour.....	Wallis, P. ....	.....	Fell off platform, and injured his shoulder.
25 "	George-street	Malcolm, A. ....	.....	Foot crushed whilst attempting to enter tram in motion.
26 "	Crown-street	Smith, Miss	Passenger	Shock to system through alighting from tram in motion.
28 "	Near Seven Hills..	Yung, J.	"	Fatally injured. Fell between cars when endeavouring to pass from one car to another. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
30 "	Macquarie-street...	Valentine, Mrs.	"	Face cut whilst alighting from tram in motion.
7	King-street	Wearne, M. ....	.....	Foot injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of January, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
2 Jan.	Johnston-street ..	Charker, A.	Conductor	Wrist sprained through falling from tram in motion.
3 "	North Shore	Kemp, C.	Labourer	Leg injured through being run over by truck.
4 "	Railway Station ...	Bishop, W.	Line-repairer ...	Fatally injured. Fell to ground through receiving shock whilst attending to wire. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
8 "	North Shore	O'Neil, M.	Fettler	Foot injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
9 "	George-street	Wilson, A.	Conductor	Bus came into collision with tram, the pole striking Wilson and injuring his person.
10 "	Glebe Point	Bradley, R.	"	Ankle sprained whilst alighting from car.
15 "	Waverley	Strachan, W.	"	Shoulder injured. Jammed between cars whilst shunting.
15 "	Bridge-street	Brogan, E.	"	Back sprained whilst wheeling a barrow containing kerosene.
15 "	Clyde	Harrison, W. P.	Shunter	Person injured. Struck by hose-pipe whilst uncoupling Westinghouse brake.
15 "	Nevertire	Muir, W.	Porter	Arm crushed between buffers.
16 "	Oxford-street	Bedford, E.	Fireman	Back and hip injured through a runaway horse colliding with motor.
17 "	Gipps-street.....	Mongan, M.	Conductor	Head injured whilst attempting to board tram in motion when on duty.
17 "	Granville	Wainwright, D. ..	Cleaner.....	Hand injured. Jammed between lump of coal and side of coal-bunker.
18 "	Eveleigh	Parker, W.	Striker	Right hand injured whilst putting bolster under steam-hammer.
18 "	George-street	Paine, E.	Conductor	Arm broken through sailor on bicycle colliding with tram.
18 "	George-street	Jesse, G.	"	Shock to system. Fell whilst attempting to board tram in motion.
19 "	Illabo	Williamson, D.	Guard	Knee sprained whilst stepping from brake-van.
20 "	Dubbo	Fogarty, M.	Fettler	Shoulder and third rib fractured. Crushed between buffers whilst hand-shunting waggons.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
22 Jan.	Darling Harbour ..	Mansfield, G.	Porter	Thigh and leg injured through hole in floor of truck.
23 "	Randwick	Insull, Wm.	Labourer	Foot injured through rail falling on it.
25 "	Darling Harbour...	Potter, G.	Porter	Head injured. Struck against door-slide when entering brake-van.
26 "	Eveleigh	Breen, W.	Cleaner.....	Hand burnt. Slipped on coal-bunker and fell with hand on hot fire-iron.
27 "	"	Galloway, J.	Shunter	Hip dislocated. Slipped on water-grating whilst shunting.
28 "	Pitt-street	Sheehan, D.....	Driver	Arm and leg injured. Slipped and fell into pit whilst examining motor.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of February, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
8 Feb.	252 miles 50 chains West.	McMillan, A.	Fettler	Run over by train. Fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
8 "	Sydney	Webb, Squire	Tram Fireman ..	Foot injured through lid of hydrant falling on it.
6 "	Darling Harbour...	Graham, A.	Porter	Foot injured whilst unloading machinery.
7 "	St. Peters	Croker, J.	Night Officer ..	Shoulder injured whilst stepping from platform.
8 "	Granville	Colless, H.	Guard	Fingers crushed whilst coupling up engine.
9 "	Eveleigh	Robb, J.	Fitter	Head injured. Over-balanced and fell into engine-pit.
10 "	Katoomba	Millen, J.	Fireman	Hip injured. Fell from engine into turntable pit.
13 "	Bullock Island.....	Farry, P.	Guard	Head and leg injured. Struck by brake lever whilst shunting.
13 "	Eveleigh	Farrell, J.	Labourer	Thigh injured through being crushed by tender-wheels against packing.
15 "	"	Scott, W.	Boilermaker.....	Foot injured through splash of engine falling on it.
19 "	Albury	Layton, W. J.....	Porter	Back injured. Fell from truck whilst unloading goods.
21 "	Eveleigh	Mansfield, T.	Messenger	Leg injured whilst attempting to cross over trucks being shunted.
22 "	"	Watson, T.	Fitter	Foot injured. Bracket of brake slipped and fell on it.
27 "	Sydney	McDonald, R.....	Tram Fireman...	Hand injured. Jammed between cars whilst coupling up same.
27 "	Cootamundra	Duke, E.	Shunter	Head injured. Crushed against door-frame of brake-van.
28 "	Redfern	Skirrington, T. ...	Gasfitter	Hand injured through being placed on a broken bottle.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of February, 1900.

Date	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
1 Feb.	Market-street	Fielder, Mrs. ....	.....	Scalp wound through falling from tram in motion whilst attempting to close car-door.
3 "	Pymont	Harris, Hy. ....	.....	Leg injured through falling whilst attempting to enter tram in motion.
5 "	Bathurst-street ..	Shenfield, A. ....	.....	Shock to system through jumping from tram in motion.
7 "	Waterloo	Munro, J. E. A. ...	.....	Bruse over eye through falling whilst alighting from tram in motion.
8 "	Kembla Grange ...	Matlow, J. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Knocked down by train whilst walking across bridge. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
8 "	252 miles 50 chains West.	McMillan, Miss K.	.....	Fatally injured whilst assisting her father to get clear of line. Run over by train. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
9 "	Devonshire-street	Kerr, John .....	.....	Wounds on leg, elbow, and scalp. Walked in front of tram in motion, and was knocked down.
12 "	Circular Quay	Walker, Mrs. ....	.....	Arm broken whilst alighting from tram in motion.
13 "	Parramatta	Pike, Mrs. ....	.....	Face injured whilst alighting from tram in motion.
14 "	George-street	Brown, W. T. ....	.....	Head injured (concussion of brain) through sulky colliding with kerbing round street centre-pole.
16 "	Moss Vale	O'Connor, Mrs. ...	.....	Ankle injured whilst alighting from train.
17 "	George-street	Noble, D. ....	.....	Head and back injured. Ran in front of tram in motion, and was knocked down.
22 "	Bay-street	McCormack, W. ....	.....	Head injured. Knocked down by tram. Walked in front of motor.
23 "	George-street	Lieper, Lieut. C. ...	.....	Came into collision with tram, was knocked down and slightly injured. Ran against motor.
24 "	Eveleigh	Donovan, J. ....	.....	Face injured through falling from tram in motion. Department exonerated.
25 "	Dulwich Hill	Bowers, Norman...	.....	Fatally injured. Slipped and fell whilst attempting to enter a tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
26 "	George-street	Flood, Mrs. ....	.....	Skull fractured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
28 "	George-street	Carmody, M. ....	.....	Head injured (concussion of brain). Knocked down by tram. Walked in front of motor.
28 "	Near Victoria Road	Griffin, Mrs. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of March, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 1 Mar.	Randwick	Rendall, Miss .....	.....	Fatally injured. Jumped from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
3 "	Bullock Island.....	Jack, John .....	.....	Found dead under waggons. Supposed to have been crawling under train. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
5 "	Balmain	Ellis, J. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion to obtain his hat, which had blown off.
6 "	Hunter-street	Florence, J. ....	.....	Fell whilst attempting to join tram in motion, and injured his jaw.
10 "	St. Leonards	Connor (child).....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
13 "	Walla Walla	Simpfendceper, J. (lad). .....	.....	Leg injured through being struck by coil of wire which rolled down ramp whilst unloading.
17 "	George-street W...	Brian, Rose .....	.....	Face injured through her bicycle colliding with rear car of tram in motion.
17 "	Moore Park	Waldon, Lily .....	.....	Shock to system through alighting from tram in motion and falling.
18 "	George-street	Johnson, W. R. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
19 "	Circular Quay	Murray, W. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell from tramcar as it rounded curve.
22 "	Arncliffe	McLennon, L. ....	.....	Face and knee injured. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
24 "	Park-street	Dwyer, Lily .....	.....	Head injured. Walked in front of tram in motion, and was knocked down.
24 "	Bent-street	Paradice, J. ....	.....	Arm broken. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
24 "	King-street	Dalton, Mrs. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
24 "	Wollongong.....	Vidler, J. ....	.....	Shoulder injured. Slipped and fell whilst alighting from railway carriage away from platform.
27 "	King-street	Griffiths, Miss. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tramcar in motion.
27 "	Near Roseville ...	Young, Mrs. ....	.....	Rib fractured through falling down bank near turntable.
28 "	Circular Quay	On Yie Lee .....	.....	Thigh fractured through falling out of car in motion.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of March, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 1 Mar.	Ultimo	Thornleigh, C.	Cleaner	Head injured. Overbalanced and fell from step of motor-car in motion.
4 "	Sydney	Hartley, C.	Shunter	Hand crushed between draw-hooks during shunting operations.
5 "	Penrith.....	Breeze, J.	Driver	Back injured. Slipped and fell into pit while examining engine.
9 "	Eveleigh	Stevens, J.	Boilermaker's helper.	Eye injured through piece of iron flying off "flatter."
11 "	Bridge-street	Anderson, N.	Conductor	Collar-bone broken. Crushed between cars whilst coupling-up.
12 "	Bethungra	Walton, C.	Guard	Knee injured through slipping between brake-van and platform.
12 "	Eveleigh	Quinn, J.	Driver	Hips slightly crushed between waggons.
13 "	"	Rodgers, J.	Labourer	Hand injured. Caught between wheel and motion-plate whilst running wheels from under engine.
13 "	Newcastle	Harvey, R. T.	Shunter	Foot injured through falling over points.
13 "	Dubbo	Grubb, R.	Porter	Side and arm injured through horses bolting while crate was being loaded on to lorry.
14 "	Sydney	Stewart, E.	Shunter	Leg injured through slipping whilst getting on car in motion.
14 "	133 miles 65 chains West.	Hartigan, Mrs.	Gatekeeper	Fatally injured. Knocked down by train. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
17 "	Dulwich Hill	Allen, Thomas	Tram fireman	Thigh injured. Coupling-chain was pulled off motor and struck his leg.
17 "	Junee	Corron, J.	Fuelman	Toe fractured through fire-bars falling from damper of engine on to his foot.
19 "	Eveleigh	Berry, F.	Blacksmith	Hand injured through piece of steel flying off tool.
20 "	Darling Harbour..	Donovan, W.	Point-cleaner	Leg scalded by steam from engine.
22 "	Eveleigh	Crowe, J.	Apprentice	Knee burnt through kneeling on hot scale which had fallen on rivet.
22 "	"	Cameron, A.	"	Hand injured through being caught between a tool he was picking up and work in turning-machine.
25 "	"	Allan, A.	Tool-collector	Leg injured through slipping whilst jumping across engine-pit.
27 "	Hornsby	Cook, J. T.	Cleaner	Hand injured; struck by spragg, owing to waggon moving after putting spragg in it.
30 "	Darling Harbour..	Cooper, P.	Shunter	Hand injured; crushed between spragg and truck.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of April, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
31 Mar.	Bathurst-street	Dobson, Miss .....	.....	Injury to head and shock. Failure of controller of tram-motor caused passengers to leave tram hurriedly.
		Ayres, Miss .....	.....	Injury to arm and shock. Failure of controller of tram-motor caused passengers to leave tram hurriedly.
1 April	Park-street	White, May .....	.....	Hip and head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
1 "	Oxford-street	Allison, H. ....	.....	Thigh injured by pole of omnibus, which entered car and struck him.
3 "	Darling Harbour	Cronin, P. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell from lorry while unloading tanks. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
4 "	Marrickville	Connor, J. ....	.....	Abdomen injured. Timber-cart collided with tram.
		Barber, J. ....	.....	Leg injured. Timber-cart collided with tram.
		Morrison, Mrs. ....	.....	Foot injured. Timber-cart collided with tram.
5 "	Railway	Ellis, S. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Thrown from seat when cart collided with tram. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
5 "	Ultimo	Holland, Mrs. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
5 "	George-street	Ah Mew .....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
5 "	Rozelle	Jones, Saml. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst attempting to board tram in motion.
8 "	Bathurst-street ..	Redman, A. ....	.....	Forehead bruised. Walked in front of tram in motion.
9 "	Campbell-street ..	Morris, C. T. ....	.....	Knee injured. Fell from tram in motion.
		Everingham, A. ....	.....	Kneecap fractured through collision between two trams.
10 "	Goulburn-street	Dean, E. ....	.....	Slight injury to eye through collision between two trams.
10 "	Oxford-street	Washington, Mrs..	.....	Two toes cut off. Walked in front of tram-motor in motion, and was knocked down.
11 "	Darling Harbour...	Preddy, W. S. ...	.....	Leg injured. Slipped into drain through cover giving way.
11 "	Enmore	Brennan, P. ....	.....	Head injured. Thrown out of cart, which collided with tram.
14 "	Bridge-street	Stuart, F. W. ....	.....	Foot crushed. While alighting from tram in motion the wheel of car passed over his foot.
15 "	George-street	Town, Charles.....	.....	Leg fractured. Thrown out of cart which collided with tram.
16 "	Eveleigh	Cooper, S. ....	.....	Hands, face, and knees injured. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
17 "	Moore Park	Mosely, Barbara...	.....	Fatally injured. Ran in front of tram-motor in motion, and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
18 "	Liverpool-street ..	Watts, Leslie .....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
18 "	Bay Road.....	Dunsha, C. ....	.....	Shock to system. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
21 "	Granville	Gerald, C. A. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
21 "	North Sydney	Craig, Miss N. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst attempting to board train in motion.
21 "	Cleveland-street ..	Houston, R. ....	.....	Leg broken and head injured. Fell from tram in motion.
21 "	Park-street	Russell, Mrs. C. N.	.....	Forehead and arm injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
21 "	Bathurst-street ..	Callan, Jas. ....	.....	Foot injured. Fell whilst passing from one tramcar to another.
23 "	Station-street	Machan, Mrs. ....	.....	Face and arm injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram.
23 "	Sydney	Hopkins .....	.....	Head injured. Fell from platform of car.
24 "	Wattle-street ...	Burge, P. ....	.....	Head injured and shock. } Lorry collided with tram.
		O'Keefe, W. ....	.....	Shock. }
24 "	Cleveland-street ...	McMahon, — .....	.....	Arm slightly injured. }
		Cochran, M. ....	.....	Bruised. Walked in front of tram-motor in motion, and was knocked down. }
26 "	Bullock Island.....	Cave, W. ....	.....	Chest and back injured. Crushed in cattle-race.
27 "	Newcastle	Mathieson, Miss...	.....	Shock to system. Thrown from buggy whilst attempting to drive over the railway-line crossing during shunting operations.
27 "	Nelson-street	Burdett, Mrs. ....	.....	Shock to system. Stepped from tram in motion, and was run over by cart.
27 "	Coogee	Ives, Joseph .....	.....	Foot injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
28 "	Junee	Ah Ling, J. ....	.....	Hand injured. Knocked down by horse-box while attempting to cross line during shunting operations.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1908, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of April, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
2 April	Campbelltown.....	Barratt, T.	Porter	Arms and hands burnt through explosion of gas which escaped from cylinder and ignited at hand-lamp.
3 "	Newcastle	Dick, J. E.	Conductor	Hip and arm injured. Knocked off tram by passing cart.
4 "	Campbell-street ..	Morris, W.	"	Head injured. Fell whilst passing from one tramcar to another.
6 "	Kiama	Bakerville, J.	Guard	Thigh bruised. Fell from truck whilst shunting.
7 "	Sydney	Rutter, J.	"	Ankle sprained. Fell whilst joining train in motion.
8 "	Helensburgh	Grant, S.	Fireman (acting)	Slipped and fell from engine, injuring left hand.
9 "	Eveleigh	March, W.	Labourer	Eyes injured by lime ejected from pipe of paint-machine.
11 "	"	Lodge, J.	Boilermaker	Left leg and foot injured. Plate slipped and fell whilst being removed from rolls.
12 "	Sydney	Pollard, T.	Fireman (acting)	Right hand crushed whilst uncoupling motor from water-tank.
15 "	Strathfield	Mercier, N.	Porter	Ankle sprained and artery ruptured through slipping and falling when getting off platform.
17 "	Quirindi	Furby, E.	"	Back injured. Caught between sheep-van and race.
17 "	Bourke-street	Strachan, W.	Conductor	Shock, with abrasions on body and arms. Knocked off tram in collision with 'bus.
17 "	Nyngun	Stimpson, C.	Call-boy	Hand crushed by buffers. Tripped whilst getting between trucks during shunting operations.
20 "	Bondi Junction ..	Fraser, Geo.	Conductor	Right foot injured. Jammed by wheel of cart.
21 "	Darling Harbour..	Day, W.	Shunter	Hand crushed between coupling and hook whilst shunting.
23 "	Sydney Goods.	Cosgrove, J.	Porter	Leg and shoulder injured. Fell from table whilst whitewashing Mess-room.
23 "	106 miles South ..	Clanton, —	Carpenter.....	Crushed by earth falling on him whilst working at bridge.
23 "	Tenterfield	Donoghue, P.	Guard	Hand injured. Fell when opening door of brake-van.
23 "	Randwick.....	Gaston, P. M.	Conductor	Shoulder injured. Fell from tram in motion.
24 "	Albury	Heardy, G.	Porter	Hand injured. Jammed between barrow and post.
24 "	Eveleigh	Maxwell, R.	Apprentice	Finger crushed through iron in shearing-machine slipping.
24 "	Enmore.....	Moore, H.	Conductor	Contusion of chest. Crushed between tramcars whilst shunting.
25 "	Clyde	Hughes, G.	Shunter	Thumb bruised. Crushed between draw-hooks.
25 "	Broadmeadow	Stewart, E. H.	Gatekeeper	Fatally injured. Struck by engine when attempting to close gates. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
30 "	Eveleigh	Abbott, W.	Boilermaker's helper.	Knee and hand injured. Struck by boilermaker's hammer after colliding with another hammer.
30 "	Sydney	Brophy, John	Driver	Left hand injured by bursting of gauge-glass of motor.

Sydney: William Applegate Gullick, Government Printer.—1900.

[G.]

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURNS OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS, MAY, 1900.)

Printed under No. 6 Report from Printing Committee, 26 July, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an Order made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof,—(a) upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) on wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on railways.”

(Mr. Smith.)

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of May, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 1 May.	Pymont	McMahon, O. P.	Conductor.....	Collar-bone fractured during shunting operations.
1 "	Byron Bay	Sayer, C.	Guard	Fatally injured. Crushed between vehicles whilst shunting. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
1 "	Bullock Island.....	Clarke, P.....	Fitter	Collar-bone broken and head cut. Fell from crane whilst fixing heavy chain.
2 "	Mileage 320 North-west.	Wood, W.....	Driver	Left arm broken through reversing gear of engine striking his arm.
3,,	Singleton	Bruderlin, P.	Fuelman	Fatally injured. Jammed between chain and truck whilst shunting. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
4 "	Elizabeth-street ...	O'Keefe, G.	Conductor.....	Arm fractured and head wounded. Knocked from foot-board of tram in motion by passing meat-van.
4 "	Eskbank	Barclay, S.	Shunter.....	Back, loins, and head injured. Slipped off buffer of truck during shunting operations.
10 "	Ardglen.....	Charlton, W.	Fireman	Face injured. Struck by an open door of carriage on a passing train.
12 "	Yass	Thorburn, W. S....	Fireman	Arm and head injured. Fell from tender of engine through chain of water-crane breaking whilst pulling crane round.
12 "	Redfern.....	O'Loughlin, D.....	Labourer	Hand injured by saw through block slipping, throwing his hand on to saw.
15 "	Wallsend	Newton, W.	Officer-in-charge	Chest injured. Jammed between truck and door of goods-shed whilst pinning down brakes on trucks.
19 "	Darling Harbour...	Smith, G.	Porter	Back strained whilst lifting sheets from floor of truck.
20 "	Waverley	Lynch, D.....	Conductor.....	Head injured through falling from tram in motion.
24 "	Pearith	Beckitt, H.	Turner	Forehead cut and shoulder injured. Slipped off ladder when facing up regulator valve of engine.
25 "	Eveleigh	Lock, J.....	Driver	Scalp wounded and leg injured. Knocked off engine by brake-van of passing train when leaning over side of engine.
29 "	Hamilton	Watts, J. W.	Porter	Foot injured, toes fractured, through falling from and being run over by waggons whilst shunting.
29 "	Randwick	Hegerty, M.....	Cleaner	Ribs fractured. Fell whilst stepping across engine-pit.
30 "	Bridge-street yard..	Watkins, R.	Car-lifter	Legs and body bruised. Crushed between two tram-cars owing to derailment of one of them.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of May, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
1 May	Liverpool-street ...	Florette, J. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
2 "	Bcxhill	Rickards, — Ellis, — .....	..... .....	Hip bruised } whilst trying to drive cart over level- Arm injured } crossing in front of train approaching; cart was struck by train and overturned, throwing occupants out.
9 "	Oxford-street	Bolton, Geo.....	.....	Struck by passing tram whilst leaning out of tram to look at destination board.
11 "	Newtown	Mudham, Miss .....	.....	Overbalanced and fell from tram in motion.
11 "	Forest Lodge	Wylie, J. B. ....	.....	Shoulder dislocated. Thrown out of cart, which collided with tram.
12 "	Rose Bay	Slattry, James ...	.....	Head wounded. Fell from platform of car.
12 "	George-street	Irwin, James .....	.....	Fatally injured. Walked in front of motor and was run over.
12 "	Darling Harbour ...	Charlesworth, C. ...	.....	Ribs fractured. Crushed between buffers of two trucks whilst crossing line on way to wharf.
15 "	Albury	Cook, — .....	.....	Chest injured. Struck by luggage-barrow, which was being wheeled along platform by a cabman.
16 "	Harris-street	Allen, Wm. ....	.....	Ribs fractured. Ran in front of tram and was knocked down.
17 "	Eveleigh	White, T. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Crushed between plank of engine in motion and case of machinery at which he was working. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
18 "	Hunter-street	Paton, Wm. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Walked in front of motor and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
18 "	Leichhardt	Spruce, J. ....	.....	Fell between cars whilst jumping off tram in motion. Fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
18 "	Dowling-street	McDonald, Mrs. ...	.....	Head injured. Jumped from tram in motion and fell.
19 "	Near Waters-road	Dare, — .....	.....	Chest crushed by coal-cart, which collided with tram.
19 "	Park-street	Harris, Miss .....	.....	Shock to system. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
19 "	Elizabeth-street ...	Wiseman, A. H. ...	.....	Fatally injured. Fell from footboard of car and was run over. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
20 "	St. Leonards.....	Smith, W.....	.....	Fatally injured. Struck by engine of train whilst walking along line. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
21 "	Marrickville	Pasfield, G. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell from tram as it was rounding curve.
22 "	Newtown	Watson, Miss .....	.....	Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion. Head injured.
23 "	Circular Quay	Kimerling, W.....	.....	Walked in front of tram in motion and was fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
25 "	Ardglen.....	Martin L. (child)...	.....	Fatally injured. Walked in front of waggons in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
26 "	Lewisham	Mack, J. ....	.....	Foot and hand injured. Fell whilst attempting to join train in motion.
26 "	Redfern	Little, J. ....	.....	Skull and foot fractured. Knocked from footboard of car by a passing tram.
30 "	Darlinghurst	Moore, Rita (child)	.....	Foot crushed; afterwards amputated. The mother, who was carrying child, walked in front of tram-motor and was knocked down.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURNS OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS—JUNE, 1900.)

Printed under No. 9 Report from Printing Committee, 16 August, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an Order made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“ Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof,—(a) upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) on wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on railways.”

(Mr. Smith.)

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of June, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 1 June	Sydney	King, Edwin	Motor-driver	Head injured. Side rod of motor broke, causing King to be thrown from his seat, striking his head on window frame.
1 „	Wattle-street	Croaker, C.	Conductor	Legs injured in collision between lorry and tram.
2 „	Waterfall	Watson, E. G. A.	Shunter	Fatally injured. Fell under trucks whilst shunting. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
3 „	Wallsend Line Junction.	Harding, H.	Fireman	Ankle injured through over-balancing and falling whilst exchanging staff.
5 „	Darling Harbour...	Stahl, J.	Ganger	Forehead wounded. Struck by head of spike, which flew off whilst being knocked out.
6 „	„	Ludlow, R.	Porter	Ankle sprained and chest injured. Slipped on platform whilst loading goods in trucks.
7 „	Sydney	Crowe, Thos. P.	Motor-fireman	Head injured. Jammed between postal-box and tram-car whilst uncoupling cars.
10 „	Darling Harbour...	Clark, Jas.	Porter	Knees bruised. Kicked by horse whilst removing another from truck.
12 „	Waterfall	Holland, F.	Shunter	Hand injured. Jammed between couplings whilst detaching trucks.
15 „	„	Cradlock, G.	Guard	Fingers crushed. Caught in turntable whilst assisting to turn engine.
15 „	Eveleigh	Bourke, T. E.	Labourer	Leg bruised. Fell across underframe whilst assisting to remove top of sheep-van.
19 „	Darling Harbour...	Ludlow, R.	Porter	Head injured. Struck by rebound of truck door whilst trying to close it.
19 „	Riley-street	Murray, C.	Conductor	Groin injured. Knocked off tram by collision of cart and horse with same.
19 „	Goulburn-street	Keelman, C.	„	Head injured. Knocked off tram through striking centre-post whilst collecting fares.
20 „	Gipps-street	Phillip, C.	„	Head injured. Struck centre-post whilst boarding tram in motion.
24 „	Campbelltown....	Wright, C.	Porter	Shoulder and head bruised. Fell into turntable pit when alighting from engine to assist in turning same.
27 „	Newcastle	Bruderlin, F.	Fireman	Foot crushed. Caught between ends of rails when turning engine on turntable.
30 „	Eveleigh	Neville, T.	Labourer	Head cut and back injured. Whilst hauling down iron shutter portion broke off and struck Neville.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of June, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
1 June	Wattle-street	Brooks, R.		Legs injured..... } in collision between lorry and Right leg fractured } tram.
1 "	"	Peelgrave, E.		Head injured in collision between cab and tram.
2 "	Martin-place	Sharman, M.	Cab-driver	Fatally injured. Walked in front of tram in motion and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
2 "	Gipps-street	Starkey, T.		Fatally injured. Walked in front of tram in motion and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
2 "	Burton-street	Transue, J.		Foot crushed by wheel of car whilst alighting from tram in motion.
3 "	Circular Quay	Johnson, P.		Head injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
6 "	Rookwood	Lynch, J.		Fatally injured whilst attempting to enter train in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
6 "	Essex-street	Chandos, F.		Fatally injured. Walked in front of tram in motion and was knocked down. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
9 "	Margaret-street	Massey, —		Head injured through striking centre-post whilst alighting from tram in motion.
9 "	Petersham	Mansfield, C.		Hip injured. Fell between cars and platform whilst alighting from tram in motion.
11 "	Sydney	Turner, C.		Fatally injured. Fell between cars and platform whilst alighting from train in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
11 "	Mitchell-street	Kinsella, D.	Cab-driver	Stunned. Thrown from cab which was in collision with tram.
15 "	Circular Quay	Gray, W.		Head, back, and ribs injured. Struck centre-pole whilst leaning out of tram-car.
16 "	Liverpool-street	Laing, D.		Fatally injured. Knocked down by tram. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
16 "	Darlinghurst	Williamson, W.		Wound over eye. Fell whilst boarding tram in motion.
16 "	Lithgow	Keeley, W.		Fatally injured. Fell into deep cutting and was suffocated in water-table. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death whilst trespassing."
19 "	Circular Quay	Farling, S.		Concussion of brain. Fell from tram in motion on curve.
20 "	Macdonaldtown	Moore, Mrs.		Shock to system. Fell between cars and platform whilst alighting from train in motion.
21 "	Petersham	Smith, Mary		Face injured. Fell on platform whilst alighting from train in motion.
21 "	Wattle-street	Hennessy, Mrs.		Cut over eye. Walked in front of tram in motion and was knocked down.
22 "	Lake Bathurst	Bowen, — (boy)		Scalp wound. Fell off truck in siding whilst tres- passing.
22 "	Bathurst-street	Mooce, W.		Scalp lacerated. Fell whilst boarding tram in motion.
25 "	356 miles North	Cragie, John		Thigh and arm broken. Fell through open bridge whilst walking along line (trespassing).
27 "	George-street West	Carroll, P.		Ran in front of tram in motion; was knocked down and bruised.
30 "	George-street	Hartley, Mrs.		Concussion of brain and injury to scalp. Walked in front of tram in motion and fell as driver was pushing her clear of the train.
30 "	Burwood	McKenzie, —		Right arm fractured. Fell on platform whilst alight- ing from train which was passing through station.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURNS OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS—JULY, 1900.)

Printed under No. 12 Report from Printing Committee, 20 September, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an *Order* made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“ Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof,—(a) upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) on wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on railways.”

(Mr. Smith.)

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of July, 1900.

Date.	Locality	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900.				
3 July	Fassifern	Nightingale, H.	Officer-in-charge	Thigh injured through falling on platform.
10 „	Ultimo	Howison, C.	Pitman	Left hand injured by brass bearing falling on it whilst lowering armature under car.
11 „	Granville	Field, Thos.	Guard	Hand injured. Crushed by door of brake-van, which closed suddenly when brake was sharply applied.
16 „	Tamworth	Connell, J.	Porter	Fatally injured. Crushed between truck and dock whilst shunting. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
17 „	Randwick	Fletcher, T.	Labourer	Head injured and rib broken through shear-legs falling on him when a guy broke.
17 „	Eveleigh	Lindley, H.	Shop-boy	Hand injured through spanner slipping whilst setting knives on machine.
17 „	Hamilton	Burnett, J.	Guard	Arm sprained through tripping over signal-wire whilst shunting.
20 „	Bathurst	Kennedy, M.	Shunter	Hand crushed between couplings whilst shunting.
23 „	Ultimo	Kenway, Geo.	Shop-boy	Top of finger cut off by guillotine whilst cutting up metal.
26 „	Waverley	Fletcher, E.	Conductor	Head and hands cut by falling when passing from one tram-car to another.
26 „	Junee	Garratt, J.	Boilermaker's Assistant.	Fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Deceased met his death by being crushed between tender and engine."
26 „	Granville	Brown, E.	Guard	Nose injured and back bruised through falling from brake-van whilst putting out portmanteau from train in motion.
27 „	Bathurst	Woolmer, G.	Examiner	Chest bruised. Slipped on stage and fell.
28 „	Bridge-street	Teehan, D.	Car-cleaner	Legs injured. Fell whilst stepping from one tram-car to another.
28 „	Rosohill	Wade, P.	Junior Porter	Hand crushed. Caught between doors of horse-box while closing same.
31 „	Petersham	Barracough, L.	Driver	Hands scalded through gauge-glass of engine bursting.
31 „	Johnson-street	McNamee, P.	Conductor	Head injured. Fell whilst jumping from one tram-car to another.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of July, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 5 July	Sydney	O'Sullivan, P. ....	.....	Run over by tram and fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
7 "	Gordon	Ah Foo .....	.....	Fatally injured. Run over whilst crossing line in front of train. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
9 "	Haymarket	Ashbury, M. ....	.....	Leg bruised through falling whilst alighting from tram in motion.
13 "	Waverley	Fotheringham, R. W. ....	.....	Arms, head, and face injured. Fell under tram-motor from bus travelling alongside.
13 "	Enmore	Bidell, E. J. ....	.....	Crushed in collision between trams, and fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Manslaughter against Driver Millington."
13 "	George-street West	Farrell, Mrs. ....	.....	Run over and fatally injured whilst crossing line in front of tram. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
13 "	Enmore	Crowshaw, G. ....	.....	Crushed in collision between trams, and bruised.
13 "	Crown-street	Jordan, W.	Cyclist	Skull fractured. Rode in front of tram-motor in motion, and collided with same.
13 "	Campbell-street ...	You Yan .....	.....	Bruised. Walked in front of tram in motion, and was knocked down.
15 "	Newtown	— Nesbitt and his two children.	.....	Nesbitt and one child slightly injured; other child sustained concussion of brain. Fell on platform whilst alighting from train in motion.
16 "	Nelson-street	Ragnette, E. ....	.....	Scalp wound through cart which he was driving coming into collision with tram.
17 "	Near Hamilton .	Chesterfield, J. .	.....	Fell over culvert whilst walking along line. Fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
21 "	Pitt-street	Watts, R. ....	.....	Foot injured through alighting from tram in motion.
21 "	Goulburn	Thomas, E. ....	.....	Leg fractured. Fell from cart whilst unloading samples, through horse starting.
23 "	Forbes-street	Hobbs, E. ....	.....	Shock to system. Ran against tram whilst crossing street.
26 "	George-street	Beaumont, W. ....	.....	Shock to system through falling whilst attempting to board a tram in motion.
30 "	Sydenham	Lutton, Mrs. ....	.....	Foot crushed. Fell between car and platform while train was in motion.
30 "	Newtown	Lance, Mrs. ....	.....	Fell when alighting from train in motion, and fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURNS OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS—AUGUST, 1900.)

Printed under No. 15 Report from Printing Committee, 1 November, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an Order made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“ Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof,—(a) upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) on wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on railways.”

(*Mr. Smith.*)

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of August, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 28 June	Newtown Road	Nelson, Mrs. ... Rice, Mr. Usher, Mr. Peter, E. Slattery, Father	.....	Shock caused by collision between two electric trams.
1 July	Rose Bay	Randall, C. W.) Carnell, F. G.) Irwin, Mrs. J. ....	.....	Head injured. Fell whilst entering tram.
3 ,,	Ersleville Road	.....	.....	Shoulder injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
30 ,,	Paddington .....	.....	.....	Slight scalp wound. Walked into and knocked down by tram in motion.
4 Aug.	Catherine-street ...	.....	.....	Foot injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
6 ,,	Goulburn-street ...	Ruby, G. ....	.....	Slightly injured. Fell from platform of car whilst train was in motion.
6 ,,	Quarry-street	Hart, Mrs. C. ....	.....	Leg broken. Struck by lid of station rubbish-box, into which he was climbing.
6 ,,	Illawarra Junction	Hughes, E. C. ....	.....	Concussion of brain. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion in Miller-street.
7 ,,	Newcastle	Burris, E. (lad) ...	.....	Arm injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion in Fitzroy-street.
7 ,,	North Sydney	Fanning, Mr. ....	.....	Thigh broken. Fell whilst moving from one seat to another, whilst tram was in motion.
9 ,,	„ „	McFarlane, Miss...	.....	Head injured. Fell from train in motion.
11 ,,	George-street	Sparks, J. ....	.....	Stunned, walked in front of tram in motion and was struck by motor.
13 ,,	Summer Hill	Payne, C. ....	.....	Knee injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
15 ,,	Queen's Place	Dalton, G. ....	.....	Head injured. Walked in front of tram in motion, and was struck by motor.
16 ,,	Newtown	Hicks, Mrs. ....	.....
17 ,,	Bathurst-street ...	Clarke, T. ....	.....

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 18 Aug.	Ultimo	Coghlan, F.....	.....	Skull fractured; fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
18 "	Newtown-road	Power, Mrs. J. J..... Edwards, J..... May, Mrs. ....	.....	Shock, caused by collision between two electric trams.
18 "	Gunnedah	Wettensten, Miss. Dillon, John .....	.....	Head injured; struck by train whilst riding along line on horseback.
21 "	Carlton	Hilliard, G.....	.....	Hands injured; fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
23 "	Eveleigh	Connington, P. ....	.....	Hands injured; fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
"	John-street	Resleure, J.....	.....	Leg crushed; fell whilst attempting to enter tram in motion.
24 "	Market-street.....	Laker, W .....	.....	Leg crushed; fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
25 "	Newcastle	Chansavor, A.....	.....	Leg broken and head cut; knocked down during shunting operations, while trespassing on line.
25 "	Market-street.....	Pearson, F. O.....	.....	Foot injured in brake gear whilst alighting from tram in motion.
28 "	George-st. North..	Kasake, T. O.....	.....	Fatally injured; skull fractured whilst alighting from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
29 "	Market-street.....	Norton, Ch.....	.....	Foot crushed; fell whilst attempting to enter tram in motion.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of August, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1900. 4 Aug.	Albury	Buckley, —	Porter	Head injured. Fell from engine whilst assisting in shunting operations.
4 "	261½ miles West ...	Betts, F.	Fireman	Head and hip injured, and rib fractured. Fell through culvert in alighting from engine to examine hot axle-box. It being dark at the time enginemen were not aware train was stopped on culvert.
6 "	Werris Creek	Carroll, J.	Shunter	Ankle sprained through foot twisting. Jumped from truck whilst shunting.
7 "	Darling Harbour...	Dalton, W.	Fireman	Severe cut on left leg. Fell from engine whilst walking round foot-plate.
7 "	Eveleigh	Ashburner, H. ...	Labourer	Shoulder injured. Jammed between trucks and shop door whilst applying hand-brake to truck.
7 "	Randwick	Martin, F.	Car-lifter	Wrist injured whilst trying to grasp screw-jack which fell off car.
7 "	Bridge-street	De Tores, A. J. ...	Conductor	Back and legs injured. Struck the staging whilst leaving yard on tram.
8 "	Randwick	Ellis, G. E.	Labourer	Hand injured whilst assisting with repairs to motor.
9 "	Milson's Point.....	Sommers, G.	Assistant guard	Hand crushed through timber shifting on truck during shunting operations.
13 "	Bullock Island	Fugan, G.....	Junior porter ...	Finger crushed. Caught between buffers of colliery wagons whilst climbing over same.
13 "	Penrith	Hughes, J.	Labourer	Arm broken. Struck by winch handle whilst lowering an engine tender.
16 "	Randwick.....	South, H.....	Fireman	Thumb crushed. Jammed between coupling-bar and socket when coupling up tram cars.
18 "	Forbes	Cleary, P. J.	Fuelman	Ankle injured by rod, which slipped down from engine and struck same, whilst Cleary was assisting to fit big end.
20 "	Darling Island.....	Scott, W. O.	Porter	Finger crushed whilst moving portable platform for loading wheat.
21 "	Bethungra Quarry	Schultz, J.	Labourer	Hip injured. Jammed between hopper waggons.
23 "	Eveleigh	Blackwell, H.	Carriage finisher	Finger dislocated. Tripped and fell whilst stepping from carriage.
23 "	William-street ..	Prevost, C.	Conductor	Leg injured. Slipped off car.
25 "	Newtown Road ...	Gould, James	"	Back and arms injured. Struck by passing motor and knocked off tram.
27 "	Campbelltown.....	McGrath, —	Fettler	Arm injured. Fell from truck whilst unloading ballast.
29 "	Orange	Burns, J.	Shunter	Top of finger cut off. Caught by centre chain when uncoupling trucks.
30 "	Bridge-street	Keefe, P.	Conductor	Arm broken and back injured. Struck by cars entering yard.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURNS OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS, SEPTEMBER, 1900.)

Printed under No. 16 Report from Printing Committee, 15 November, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an Order made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof,—(a) upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) on wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on railways.”

(Mr. Smith.)

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of September, 1900.

Date	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1 Sept.	Eveleigh	Anderson, Mrs. ....	.....	Face injured. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.
3 "	Newcastle	Smith, N. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Run over whilst trespassing. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
4 "	Redfern Station ...	O'Grady, E. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
8 "	Pymont	O'Connor, Mrs. ....	.....	Shock to system. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
8 "	Newcastle	O'Donnell, D. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
8 "	Bullock Island. ...	Garside, J. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Run over whilst trespassing. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
10 "	Goulburn-street ...	Lehane, M. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell whilst attempting to board tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
11 "	Addison-road	Emmerson, Miss ...	.....	Head injured. Said to have fallen from tram.
12 "	Campbell-street ...	McGlead, Mrs. ....	.....	Shock to system. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
14 "	Bridge-street	Boyd, Mrs. ....	.....	Ankle sprained whilst alighting from train in motion.
14 "	Glebe	Sandiland, J. ....	.....	Fell from tram in motion in a fit. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Died from natural causes."
16 "	Near Roseville	McMahon, H. H. ....	.....	Fell through opening in overbridge whilst trespassing. Fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
18 "	Asylum Curve	Waters, Mrs. ....	.....	Shock to system. Caused by derailment of tram.
19 "	Forbes-street ...	Price, Miss .....	.....	Shock to system. Caused by rear collision between two electric trams.
19 "	Hunter-street ...	Perry, Miss .....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
20 "	Sydney	Rolfe, Mrs. E. A. ....	.....	Abrasion on elbow. Struck against handle of wheelbarrow on platform.
23 "	Narrandera	Downes, S. ....	.....	Fatally injured. Run over whilst trespassing. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
28 "	Nubba	McCarthy, J. ....	.....	Thigh bruised. Slipped and fell when alighting from train.
28 "	Mary-street	Henies, W. ....	.....	Rib fractured in collision between cart and tram.
30 "	Circular Quay ...	Sheldenhague, —... Flaherty, J. ....	.....	Concussion of brain. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of September, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
Aug. 31	Ultimo	Waterhouse, J. ...	Labourer	Foot injured. Caught between frame and truck.
Sept. 1	Pitt-street	O'Connor, M. I. ...	Fireman	Ankle sprained. Foot twisted when stepping from motor.
" 1	Darling Harbour ...	Bogal, T.	Labourer	Shoulder bruised. Caught between trucks.
" 1	"	West, S.	Shunter	Fingers crushed by wheel of truck. Fell whilst shunting.
" 1	Bon Accord	Ogden, W.	Guard	Leg crushed. Slipped under truck whilst shunting.
" 5	Wallsend	Robertson, A.	Fireman	Head cut. Fell from foot-plate of engine whilst changing discs.
" 6	Rock	Egan, D.	Porter	Fingers crushed. Whilst pushing cattle-waggon from race, Egan fell under the waggon.
" 7	Bathurst	Cleary, J.	Labourer	Leg injured. Slipped and fell whilst wheeling a hand-trolley.
" 12	S. Clifton	Ray, H.	Cleaner	Hip jammed and bruised through door of waggon, which he was trying to close, falling.
" 12	Junee	Houston, G.	Labourer	Side injured. Slipped and fell whilst carrying spring on top of tender.
" 13	Murrurundi	Thurlow, T.	Cleaner	Thigh injured. Struck against lever when jumping off engine to hold the points.
" 15	Eskbank	Osborne, W.	Fuelman	Hand injured. Caught in pawl of turntable whilst turning engine.
" 17	Singleton	Stewart, J.	Guard	Rib splintered and back hurt. Fell on stove, owing to sudden stoppage of train.
" 17	Curlewis	Bagnall, F.	Fireman	Fatally injured. Crushed between engine and sheep-race. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
" 18	Bridge-street	Forster, T.	"	Right hip and thigh injured. Caught between coke-stage and car whilst placing coke on a motor.
" 19	Eveleigh	Beran, J.	"	Heavy piece of wood slipped from his hands and fell on his foot, injuring same.
" 19	Sydney	Matthews, R. M. ...	Porter	Leg and head injured. Fell between truck and platform.
" 21	Hornsby	Almond, John	Shunter	Ankle sprained. Fell when alighting from car.
" 22	Eskbank	Jeffery, Peter	"	Finger caught between drawhook and coupling and crushed.
" 26	Penrith	Francis, W.	Porter	Collar-bone broken. Caught between waggon and platform of stockyard.
" 26	"	Cochrane, J.	Fuelman	Arm strained by tip-chain of coal-skip slipping off.
" 27	Darling Harbour ...	Featherstone, R. ...	Junior porter ...	Hip and back bruised. Fell between platform and van.
" 27	"	Laney, J.	"	Toe crushed whilst drawing portable engine on to weighbridge.
" 27	"	Wright, P.	Porter	Head wounded. Struck by handle of crane while unloading boiler.
" 27	Redfern	York, W.	Driller	Right foot injured owing to breaking of sling carrying part of a crossing which York was drilling.
" 27	Ultimo	Ewart, A.	Turner	Small bone of wrist broken. Hand caught and squeezed in belt of machine.

[8d.]

Sydney : William Applegate Gullick, Government Printer.—1901.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

MONTHLY RETURN OF ACCIDENTS.

(RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS—OCTOBER, 1900.)

Printed under No. 19 Report from Printing Committee, 4 December, 1900.

RETURN (*in part*) to an *Order* made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 21st September, 1898, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“Monthly returns showing the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, and the cause thereof:—(a) Upon vessels belonging to New South Wales; (b) Upon vessels belonging to other countries whilst within the jurisdiction of New South Wales; (c) On wharfs, wool stores, factories, workshops, mines, quarries, buildings in course of erection, and on railways.”

(Mr. Smith.)

RETURN to an *Order* of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of October, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1 Oct.	Narrandera	McGuiness, W.	Labourer	Shoulder injured. Struck by engine when pushing trucks.
1 "	Picton	Gray, E.	Shunter.....	Hand injured by coupling, which slipped whilst coupling engine to carriage.
2 "	Eveleigh	Harris, T.	Labourer	Pelvis bruised. Whilst roping waggons across traverser, Harris went between some waggons being shunted and was jammed between the buffers.
3 "	108 miles south ..	Murray, C. ....	.....	Knocked down by train while walking across bridge and fatally injured. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
3 "	Rushcutter's Bay .	Pyne, J. ....	.....	Pelvis fractured and right thumb dislocated through striking plank when jumping in order to avoid a falling derrick.
4 "	Wallerawang	Lovett, C. F.	Shunter	Hand caught by coupling and crushed whilst attaching vehicles.
6 "	Redfern.....	Ryder, W. J.	Attendant	Back injured. Fell on couplings whilst crossing between carriages.
6 "	Eveleigh	March, W.	Labourer	Toe fractured by piston rod of mill-engine slipping from his hand on to his foot.
7 "	Homebush	Schofield, J.	Porter	Fatally injured. Fell under trucks whilst alighting from train in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Servants of Department.	Nature of Injuries.
8 Oct.	149-48 miles west...	Hanna, J. J.....	Ganger	Fatally injured. Run over by train whilst traversing line on tricycle. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
8 "	Randwick	Holland, F. J.	Shop boy	Toe fractured by draw-bar falling on it whilst Holland was lifting the bar from trolley on to platform.
11 "	Newcastle	Willis, C.	Signaller.....	Muscles of leg ruptured whilst alighting from train in motion.
11 "	Randwick	Curnow, H. G.....	Blacksmith	Arm wounded by fragment of a rod (with which he was working) striking same.
12 "	Botany	Bark, J.....	Labourer	Toe crushed by sleeper falling upon it.
15 "	Young	Hardman, J. A. ...	Porter	Knee sprained. Struck by bale of wool falling from truck.
15 "	Old Junee.....	Conroy, P.	"	Knee injured. Struck by wool hook while loading wool.
15 "	Eveleigh	Black, H.	Fitter.....	Right arm injured. Jammed by end of boring bar, which slipped and fell.
16 "	"	Harmey, J.	Waggon builder.	Wrist sprained. Foot slipped off sheep-van and Harmey fell.
18 "	Narrabri West.....	McPherson, J.	Porter	Rib fractured. Struck by bale of wool, which fell from wool bank.
20 "	North Sydney	Collins, F.....	Lineman	Shock to system. Collins caught hold of live feeder cable and fell to ground.
22 "	Sydney	Stewart, J.	Guard	Nose injured through falling from platform.
22 "	Eveleigh	Fernley, G.	Apprentice	Foot injured by sharp edge of plate, which slipped from machine and fell thereon.
23 "	Harden	Bushell, W.	Fuelman	Leg broken through prop beneath truck door giving way, precipitating him to ground.
24 "	Darling Harbour ...	Young, J.	Brake-van cleaner	Hip bruised. Fell from buffer stops whilst cleaning window of van.
25 "	Nowra	Vial, G.....	Porter	Arm sprained. Crushed between cart and truck whilst loading cream.
25 "	Eveleigh	Parker, A.....	Fitter	Top of finger cut off by link when coupling up suspension link.
27 "	Croydon	Gottley, G. H.	Porter	Finger crushed by fender falling when cleaning up office.
28 "	Morce	Tanner, E.	"	Hand crushed between draw-looks of carriages whilst shunting.
28 "	Junee	Grant, — .....	.....	Tooth knocked out. Fell on platform whilst alighting from train in motion.

RETURN to an Order of the Legislative Assembly, dated 21st September, 1898, showing fatal and non-fatal Accidents which have occurred in the New South Wales Government Railways and Tramways during the month of October, 1900.

Date.	Locality.	Names of Persons Injured.	Persons outside Department.	Nature of Injuries.
1 Oct.	Park-street	Turner, J.....	.....	Fatally injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion. Verdict of Coroner's jury, "Accidental death."
3 "	Edinburgh-road ...	Bryce, Mrs. ....	.....	Slipped and fell whilst alighting from tram in motion, fracturing her thigh.
3 "	Railway.....	Armstrong, Mrs. ...	.....	Shock to system owing to collision between two trams.
4 "	Tuggerah	Mead, H. ....	.....	Arm broken. Struck by handle of crane whilst lowering log into truck.
10 "	Tempe	Bourko — (3 years of age).	.....	Head injured and body bruised. Run over whilst trespassing on line.
12 "	Balmain	Benson, G. ....	.....	Concussion of brain and shock. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
13 "	Railway	Ford, J.....	.....	Knee and wrist injured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
14 "	Sans Souci	Hill — (6 years of age).	.....	Head injured. Jumped from tram in motion and fell.
19 "	Darling Harbour ...	Wilcox, E. ....	.....	Elbow dislocated. Fell from lorry whilst unloading wool.
22 "	Railway.....	Puxley, Mrs.....	.....	Arm fractured. Fell whilst alighting from tram in motion.
24 "	Darling Harbour ...	Pitt, G.....	.....	Leg injured. Fell between truck and platform whilst unloading goods.
26 "	High-street	Pert, Miss M. ....	.....	Leg bruised. Struck by rail of gate which had been run into by train.
27 "	Newtown	Campbell, M. ....	.....	Concussion of brain and lower jaw injured. Walked in front of tram in motion, and was knocked down.
30 "	Railway	Kennedy, J. ....	.....	Hip, thigh, and foot injured whilst attempting to board tram in motion.
31 "	Sans Souci	Parry, — (infant)...	.....	Head injured. Struck by car lamp, which fell from hanger.
5 "	Eveleigh	Kelly, Mrs. ....	.....	Hands cut. Fell whilst alighting from train in motion.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

REPORTS FROM RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS
ON TRAMWAY PROPOSALS.

(RETURN RESPECTING.)

Printed under No. 12 Report from Printing Committee, 20 September, 1900.

RETURN to an *Order* made by the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated the 4th September, 1900, That there be laid upon the Table of this House,—

“The most recent Reports from the Railway Commissioners on the following tramway proposals:—The Spit Road Tramway; the Kensington Tramway; the Rose Bay and Dover Point Tramway; the Dawes Point Extension; the Enfield to Mortlake Tramway; the Adamstown Tramway; and the Waratah Tramway.”

(Hon. J. H. Young.)

REPORTS, &c.

1. Spit Road Tramway.
2. Kensington Tramway.
3. Rose Bay and Dover Road Tramway.
4. Dawes Point Tramway (extension to Miller's Point).
5. Enfield to Burwood and Mortlake Tramway.
6. Broadmeadow to Adamstown Tramway. (Two papers.)
7. Tighe's Hill to Mayfield (Waratah).
8. Letter *re* Tramways—
Tighe's Hill to Mayfield (Waratah).
Broadmeadow to Adamstown.

No. 1.

Proposed Tramway Extension from Spit Road Junction to the Spit.

New South Wales Government Railways, Office of the Railway Commissioners,
Sydney, 16 March, 1899.

HITHERTO the Commissioners have reported unfavourably upon the proposed extension of the North Shore line to the Spit, and there are even now no strong grounds for concluding that it would be remunerative.

The Commissioners, however, recognise the importance of the extension, to the large residential area around North Shore, as affording direct communication with Middle Harbour, which should prove an attractive pleasure resort. They have, therefore, considered the proposal more as an extension which may be justified on the ground that it will bring additional traffic to the existing line.

376—

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The

The Commissioners think that there is a reasonable probability of additional traffic being developed on the existing lines which, with the traffic over the extension, will avert any considerable loss. Under all the circumstances they are now of opinion that the construction of the additional length of line is worthy of favourable consideration.

It would, however, not be wise to proceed with the extension until some experience has been had of the North Shore trams after conversion into a purely electrical system worked from the central powerhouse at Ultimo.

16/3/99.

C.O.
W.M.F.
D.K.

Under Secretary for Public Works.—H.McL., 11/3/99.

No. 2.

Branch Tramway Line to Kensington and the Rifle Range.

New South Wales Government Railways,
Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,

Sir.

Sydney, 13 January, 1898.

With reference to your memorandum of the 22nd ultimo, forwarding a request from the Minister for Public Works that the Railway Commissioners would state whether there are any reasons for modifying their report, dated the 12th April last, in connection with the construction of the branch tramline from the main Randwick line to Kensington and the Rifle Range, I am directed by the Commissioners to state that the matter has had careful consideration, and while, owing to altered arrangements which have since been made in connection with the working of traffic it might be possible, without much inconvenience, to make provision for the additional service from the present yard at Bridge-street, the construction of the tramline cannot for other reasons be recommended, primarily on the ground that there would be a very considerable yearly loss on the working, irrespective of the payment of the annual interest charge on the capital expenditure. Even if it were not so, it would be most undesirable while the system of traction is undergoing a change to make an extension in any direction where the future motive power cannot be availed of from the outset.

The Commissioners, therefore, recommend that the further consideration of this matter be deferred until the conversion of the present steam system into that of an electric system.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,

Secretary.

The Under Secretary for Public Works, Sydney.

No. 3.

Proposed Tramway Extension, Rose Bay to South Head.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,

Sydney, 22 July, 1899.

IN accordance with the request of the Minister for Public Works, that we should furnish him with our opinion in regard to the working expenses and probable traffic there would be upon this line, we beg to report as follows:—

The capital cost is estimated by the Engineer-in-Chief for Construction to be	£35,243
The working expenses would be, approximately, per annum ...	£2,519
Interest on capital, calculated at 3 per cent.	1,057
	£3,576

To obtain this amount it would be necessary that the extension should carry, at 2d. each, 214,560 passengers each way per annum. As far as the residential population between the present terminus and South Head or Watson's Bay is concerned, we are of opinion that the prospective traffic would not justify the construction of the line, particularly in view of the regular steamer service between the City and Watson's Bay. The line would have for years to rely on a purely pleasure and excursions traffic.

The experience, so far as regards the Rose Bay line, has been favourable, but the novelty may wear off unless some attractions more than at present exist are offered, such as the provision of a park on the eastern side where there is land more suitable for the purpose than anything else. This land is privately owned, and a suitable area should be conveyed free to the Government before any extension of the Rose Bay line is undertaken.

The surroundings of South Head have attractions to the sight-seer not possessed by Rose Bay, but as a place of resort for excursionists of the picnic class it is perhaps less attractive.

There is an absence of suitable recreation area to any extent at South Head. This should be provided by the landowners, who would be benefited by the extension, before the line is made.

Subject to these reservations and to all other land required being conveyed free to the Government the line is worthy of favourable consideration.

The position of the terminus may require some further consideration, but it is unnecessary to delay the report in this connection.

CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

3

No. 4.

Tramway Extension to Miller's Point.

New South Wales Government Railways, Office of the Railway Commissioners,
Sydney, 16 March, 1899.

Sir,

With reference to your B.C. communication of the 24th ultimo, relative to the opinion of the Railway Commissioners as to the paying results of a tramway extension to Miller's Point, I am directed to inform you that the Railway Commissioners have carefully considered the proposal, and entertain no doubt that the extension would ultimately prove a profitable one, but they strongly urge that it should not be undertaken until after some experience has been gained in connection with the working of the George-street line, together with the conversion of some portion of the western suburban trams.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Under Secretary, Department of Public Works.

No. 5.

Proposed Tramway Extension—Enfield to Burwood and Mortlake.

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales,
Sydney, 3 August, 1899.

THE Honorable the Minister for Works having asked for the opinion of the Railway Commissioners in this matter, we beg to report as follows:—

The estimated cost of the line is	£16,322
The interest on this sum, at 3 per cent. per annum, is	£490
Estimated working expenses, viz. :—	
Traffic department	£262
Locomotive department	1,597
Permanent-way department	800
	£2,659
	£3,149

From a careful estimate of probable traffic which has been made, the gross annual income cannot be estimated at more than (per annum)	£1,700
This, as will be seen, would leave a deficiency on the annual liability for interest and working expenses of	£1,449

It is therefore impossible to recommend the construction of the extension until there is a better prospect of it being worked without such a considerable loss.

Should this extension again come up for consideration it would be desirable to consider the route from Enfield to Liverpool-road and on the Mortlake side of Burwood, *via* Crane-street, into Brewer-street.

CHARLES OLIVER,
Chief Commissioner.

W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.

DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

No. 6.

Sir,

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 25 April, 1899.

With reference to your B.C. communication of 19th instant, asking that the Commissioners might favour the Honorable the Minister with their views on the proposal to extend the tramline from Broadmeadow to Adamstown, I am directed to inform you that the matter has had consideration, and in the opinion of the Commissioners the position has not changed since the letter to you of the 21st October last. The Commissioners, therefore, beg to suggest that the matter be further deferred.

I have, &c.,
H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Under Secretary, Department of Public Works.

Proposed Extension of Tramway—Broadmeadow to Adamstown.

New South Wales Government Railways, Office of the Railway Commissioners,
Sydney, 18 August, 1897.

WITH reference to the minute of the Honorable the Minister for Public Works of the 11th instant, requesting that the Railway Commissioners would say whether certain information recently laid before him furnished grounds for varying the opinion they had previously expressed in regard to the proposed extension of the tramway from Broadmeadow to Adamstown, we beg to state that the revenue from the estimated traffic has always been calculated at a slightly higher figure than the sum of £1,140 per annum, recently represented to the Minister as being the probable revenue; and the estimated result of the

the working would show a loss, after payment of interest and working expenses—without making any provision for the additional rolling stock—of something over £500 per annum. Moreover, the additional trams that would have to be placed on the lines would render it necessary to either duplicate portion of the existing main line or provide crossing loops, which would represent a further expenditure.

The Newcastle lines, as a whole, at the present time—although there is a considerable improvement within the last year—do not yet approach the net return necessary to pay interest on capital; and it is not deemed desirable to burden the tramway capital by further expenditure in Newcastle and suburbs at present.

CHARLES OLIVER,
Commissioner.
W. M. FEHON,
Commissioner.

No. 7.

Sir, Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 7 September, 1898.

Referring to your letter of the 30th ultimo, in which you intimated that the Minister desired the Railway Commissioners to say whether the conditions had now sufficiently changed to warrant the extension of the tramway from Tighe's Hill to Mayfield, I am directed by the Commissioners to say that they have caused further inquiry to be made into this question, with the result that they find the circumstances have not altered since they last reported upon the matter, and they cannot therefore recommend the extension.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Under Secretary for Public Works, Sydney.

No. 8.

Sir, Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 4 November, 1899.

The Commissioners notice, by the Press, that the Minister for Works has stated that tramway extensions are to be undertaken—

1. From Tighe's Hill to Mayfield (Waratah).
2. From Broadmeadow to Adamstown.

Further, that the Railway Commissioners had expressed themselves in favour of both lines, and the works will be gone on with at once.

I am directed to say that the Commissioners have not reported in favour of the extensions being made, but have advocated that consideration of the extensions should be deferred.

While the Commissioners would be prepared to recommend the favourable consideration of the proposals when rolling stock was available, on the conversion of the steam to electric trams, they urge that they should be deferred for the present, as, if carried out, the lines could not be properly equipped without adding fresh cars, which would be unprofitable, in view of the early conversion of the steam system of trams in the metropolis.

I have, &c.,

H. McLACHLAN,
Secretary.

The Under Secretary, Department of Public Works, Sydney.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT
(No. 2)

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND PLAN,

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY FROM BELMORE PARK TO
FORT MACQUARIE.

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

Printed under No. 14 Report from Printing Committee, 11 October, 1900.

SYDNEY: WILLIAM APPLIGATE GULLICK, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Honorable ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D., Vice-Chairman.
 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Honorable SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Chairman.
 JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esquire.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

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PLAN.

Electric Tramway along Castlereagh and Pitt streets.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY FROM BELMORE PARK TO FORT MACQUARIE.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a double line for an electric tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed tramway should be constructed; but they recommend that the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, by which a single line would be constructed from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets to Fort Macquarie, returning by single line through Pitt-street, be adopted; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL.

1. The proposed tramway is submitted as a means of relieving the congested traffic on the George-street trams. The volume of traffic at present in George-street, considered in conjunction with what it will be when the steam trams of the Western Suburbs have been converted to the electrical system, has convinced the Railway Commissioners that some means of relief must speedily be found, and the best method offering is to divert some of the traffic into another street or streets. Two ways of meeting the difficulty presented themselves—by laying a double line in Pitt-street to Circular Quay, or by laying a double line in Castlereagh-street and Bligh-street to Circular Quay. Both schemes, it is believed, may ultimately be required; but as Castlereagh-street affords more facilities for traffic than Pitt-street, it was decided to adopt the Castlereagh-street proposal as a first instalment, and the work was referred to the Public Works Committee on 12th July last. Subsequently the Commissioners modified their views so far as to recommend an alteration in the proposal by constructing a single line from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, with a return single line through Pitt-street. They make this recommendation, they explain in a minute dated 25th July, 1900, because the experience gained since the George-street line was opened strongly indicates that the amended proposal will best meet the public convenience.

THREE SCHEMES BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

2. Since the Castlereagh-street scheme was submitted, another has been referred to the Committee, by which it is proposed to construct a double line of electric tramway from Belmore Park along Pitt-street to the Circular Quay. The Committee have, therefore, had before them three schemes—two referred to them, and one suggested, as follow:—

1. A double line for an electric tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

2. The suggestion of the Railway Commissioners that there should be a single line from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets, to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, and return by single line through Pitt-street.
3. A double line of electric tramway from Belmore Park along Pitt-street to the Circular Quay.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CASTLEREAGH-STREET AND THE CASTLEREAGH-PITT
STREETS TRAMWAYS.

3. As first proposed, the tramway would branch off the existing steam tramway in Belmore Park at a point opposite Castlereagh-street, and would traverse that street to its intersection with Hunter-street, and thence proceed along Bligh-street to Bent-street, the whole of this length being a double track. From Bent-street a single line would be taken along Loftus-street to Circular Quay, and thence by the front of the Custom House into Young-street, and back to Bent-street, where it would rejoin the double track. This would provide a service between Belmore Park and Circular Quay in the vicinity of the Custom House. To convey passengers to Fort Macquarie, and to provide for shunting and storing the cars there, lines would be carried across Circular Quay and along the back of the wharfs. The permanent-way would consist of 83-lb. rails, laid on sleepers between Belmore Park and Liverpool-street, in macadamised road; from Liverpool-street to Hunter-street the road would be wood-blocked; thence to Circular Quay the track would be on macadamised roadway; and on Circular Quay it would be wood-blocked. A car-house, extensive enough to accommodate seventy-two cars of the largest type now in use, but of a design in keeping with the site, would be built, and the necessary shunting yards and offices provided, at Fort Macquarie.

The alteration suggested by the Railway Commissioners would vary the original scheme by laying a single line in Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets, and thence carrying it round Circular Quay into Pitt-street, branch lines being extended to Fort Macquarie.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PITT-STREET PROPOSAL.

4. The scheme by which a double line would be laid in Pitt-street would branch off the existing steam tramway in Pitt-street, at a point near Gipps-street, and traverse Pitt-street to its intersection with Circular Quay, the whole of the length from Gipps-street being a double track. The main lines would be extended along the Quay until they joined the double track extension of the existing tramway to Fort Macquarie.

The permanent-way would consist of 83-lb. rails, which would be laid on sleepers between Gipps-street and Bathurst-street, in macadamised-road; from Bathurst-street to the Circular Quay they would be laid on concrete, the permanent-way being wood-blocked. The poles would be erected on each side of the street—a plan which, in the case of a single track, would allow of the rails being placed so far from the kerb as to give plenty of room for ordinary vehicles, but would decrease the width required for a double track.

ESTIMATED COST OF THE CASTLEREAGH-STREET AND OF THE CASTLEREAGH-PITT-STREET TRAMWAYS.

5. The total cost of the original scheme is estimated at £70,150 as far as Circular Quay, and £110,000 including the extension to Fort Macquarie and the car-shed. The alteration, providing for a single line in Castlereagh and Pitt streets, would entail, the Committee are informed, an additional expenditure of about £9,000.

ESTIMATED COST OF THE PITT-STREET PROPOSAL.

6. The total cost, exclusive of land and compensation, of the double line in Pitt-street is estimated, approximately, at £76,672, comprising road construction £31,835, outside electric work £7,087, power plant £12,750, and rolling stock £25,000. Land resumption, at the corner of Pitt and Alfred streets, near Change Alley, would increase this estimate by between £5,000 and £6,000. To this should be added the cost of the extension to Fort Macquarie and of the car-shed.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

7. The Railway Commissioners' report is very favourable to the construction of the proposed Castlereagh-Pitt street tramway, but it does not give an estimate of either working expenses or revenue. The construction of the tramway is rendered necessary, the Commissioners say, by the conversion of the steam trams to electric traction, and the consequent inability of George and Elizabeth streets to carry the traffic; and they, therefore, cordially support the proposal. The only additional revenue that will be derived will be due, they state, to increased traffic, and, although it is not possible to foretell with any degree of accuracy what this will amount to, they have no hesitation in saying that it will fully justify the construction of the line.

With respect to the statutory report of the Commissioners on the Pitt-street double line proposal, their report upon the Castlereagh-street scheme, and their minute suggesting a single line along Castlereagh and Pitt streets are taken as complying with the requirements of the Public Works Act.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

8. The Committee have carefully inquired into the proposals before them, but have not examined many witnesses. Several matters associated with the question of electric tramways, necessary to be investigated if one or other of the proposals under consideration were the introduction of the system into the city, did not call for inquiry, as they were fully investigated when the George and Harris streets tramway was being considered. It appeared to be sufficient to clearly understand the details of the proposals, and the reasons for them, ascertain, as far as possible, what objections might fairly be advanced against them, and be in the position to judge whether one or other of the schemes was the best that could be put forward to secure the object in view, or whether it might, with advantage, be varied. Advertisements and paragraphs in the newspapers inviting evidence from anyone desirous of expressing his views on the matter, failed to bring forward more than a few witnesses; and it is noticeable that—with one exception—no business firm in Pitt or Castlereagh streets made any protest against the carrying out of any one of the proposed schemes, or expressed any desire to be heard in the inquiry.

THE TRAM TRAFFIC IN GEORGE-STREET.

9. The evidence of the Traffic Superintendent of the Department of Tramways is to the effect that George-street has now nearly as many trams as can be accommodated there, and there are still the Glebe Point, Leichhardt, and Balmain lines to be provided for when converted to the electric tram system. At the present time there are running into George-street daily, during the busy hours, sixty-three trams with seventy-three cars from the Dulwich Hill-Newton line, and thirty-seven trams and seventy-four cars from the Railway and Pymont lines. Of that number, at least fifty-four trams are in George-street at the one time, and, evenly spaced, they would be at intervals of 150 yards, or forty seconds headway. But this even spacing is not always possible, owing to the cross cable and vehicular traffic in the street. During the busy hours, over ninety trams run each way in George-street in an hour, or 180 trams in the hour, and the total number running backwards and forwards daily is 2,300.

METHOD OF RELIEVING THE GEORGE-STREET TRAMS.

10. The first step towards relieving George-street, after the construction of the proposed new tramway, would be to take the railway traffic from the George-street trams, which would be done by putting an end to the practice of running those trams into the Redfern railway station, and by running the Castlereagh and Pitt street trams into the station instead. At present a large proportion of the passengers who travel in the George-street trams do so from and to the Redfern station; with the new lines in operation all passengers wishing to travel from or to the station would require to do so by the Castlereagh or Pitt street trams.

The

The George-street trams would stop in George-street opposite the station, as the trams from the Western Suburbs do now, to take up or set down passengers; but, in view of the advantages offered by the Castlereagh and Pitt street trams, it is thought very few railway passengers would travel by way of George-street. The diversion of the railway traffic, the tramway authorities say, will give immediate relief, and further relief will be afforded by diverting a portion of the Western Suburbs tram traffic into Castlereagh and Pitt streets. The existing tramway lines and points from George-street into the railway station will fit in with the Castlereagh and Pitt street lines, and additional expenditure in that direction will therefore be unnecessary.

OBJECTIONS TO THE TRAMWAY.

11. The objections to the proposed tramway, as they appear in the evidence, were chiefly urged by several master carriers whose horse teams use Castlereagh-street, and by the Registrar of the Metropolitan Transit Commission, who explained to the Committee that Castlereagh-street was needed for traffic driven out of George-street, and that Pitt-street, from its narrowness and the number of vehicles passing through it, is the most congested street in Sydney. In the inquiry relating specially to an electric tramway in Pitt-street, the proprietor of the Hargrave-street and Point Piper road omnibuses protested against the Pitt-street proposal on the ground of its interference with omnibus and other vehicular traffic, and the risk to life and limb which a greater congestion of traffic than at present exists in the street would cause.

The complaint of the master carriers will be met to some extent by a rearrangement about to be made of the goods business in connection with the railways. At the present time, the general goods business in truck loads is conducted at the Sydney goods shed, adjoining the produce shed, at the Redfern Railway station, and the railway authorities are about to call for tenders for additional accommodation at Darling Harbour for the purpose of dealing with it there. By this change, Redfern station will be relieved to the extent of 1,000 tons of goods per week, and the team traffic in Castlereagh and Pitt streets should thereby be materially lessened.

The objection mentioned by the Transit Commission Registrar is based on what he considers to be consistent with good traffic regulation, but at the same time he admits that if George street is to be relieved there is no alternative but to use either Castlereagh or Pitt street for the purpose. As for the present vehicular traffic in Pitt-street, which consists largely of omnibuses plying to the Eastern Suburbs, it appears inevitable that it must give way and find a route somewhere else, as vehicles of the kind have had to do in relation to George-street. In any case the omnibus traffic to the Eastern Suburbs has only a short life before it, for, with the conversion of the steam trams now running through Oxford-street to the electric system, omnibuses to the suburbs of Paddington, Woollahra, Waverley, &c., must be greatly reduced in number.

It is admitted that this omnibus traffic exists because the steam trams now running to the Eastern Suburbs do not sufficiently meet public requirements, and that if these trams were frequent enough to deal with the traffic the omnibuses could not successfully compete with them. The conversion of the Eastern Suburban trams to the electric system would supply what the travelling public want, and, by doing away with the necessity for an omnibus system, very quickly lessen the vehicular traffic in Pitt-street. Recognizing this, the Committee endeavoured to ascertain whether the Railway Commissioners could undertake to have these trams converted by the time the Castlereagh and Pitt street electric tramway was constructed and ready for use. They were informed that this was not practicable; but it appears to be certain that electric trams will be running to the Eastern Suburbs before any necessity arises for laying two lines of tramway in Pitt-street, and with one line only in the street, and that on one side, the interference with vehicles should not be very great. In any case, the Committee are assured, no more traffic will be transferred to Pitt-street than is absolutely necessary to relieve George-street. As things are at present, the conversion of the Western Suburbs tram service to the electric system cannot be further proceeded with until relief in George-street is obtained. When the Western Suburbs steam trams have been replaced by electric trams they can be added to those dealing with the Eastern Suburbs traffic, and in that way assist in relieving the traffic in Pitt-street.

A representative of a large wholesale firm in Pitt-street informed the Committee that a tramway in the street would greatly inconvenience their business by obstructing the movements of their drays and carts, but this appears to be a difficulty that must be expected to occur at times in any street, and cannot be avoided. The risk of accident to street traffic under the single-line scheme, it is pointed out in the evidence, would be minimised by the trams travelling only one way.

THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION.

12. As the evidence very forcibly shows the necessity for relieving the tram traffic in George-street, and the suggested single line along Castlereagh-street with a return line through Pitt-street appears to be the best of the three schemes submitted, the Committee are of opinion that the Castlereagh-Pitt-street proposal should be carried out. The Castlereagh-street scheme would interfere least with vehicular traffic, but it is very doubtful whether it would effect the object which it is absolutely necessary should be secured, that of relieving the George-street trams of railway passengers. The destination of most travellers by the railway, coming into the city, is in the vicinity of George or Pitt streets, and west of those streets, and electric trams in George or Pitt streets meet their convenience. But it is very improbable that they would travel by trams running in Castlereagh-street only, especially to the railway station, seeing that those trams would involve to many a long walk uphill through King, Hunter, or Bridge street. They would still take the George-street trams, and the present highly inconvenient and dangerous congestion of traffic in connection with those trams would continue. With trams running from the railway station along Castlereagh-street, and returning through Pitt-street, railway travellers, the Railway Commissioners and the Tramway authorities are of opinion, would find no difficulty in using the new routes, for by coming through Castlereagh-street, direct from the station, the walk into the city, from any point, would either be on the level or downhill, and Pitt-street being so close to George-street, the tramway in the former street having the special advantage of being connected with the railway station platforms, the inducement to take the Pitt-street trams in preference to those in George-street would be quite sufficient to make the former popular.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

13. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings :—

Mr. Watson moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed double line for an electric tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets, should be constructed, but they recommend that the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, by which a single line would be constructed from Belmore Park, through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets to Fort Macquarie, returning by single line through Pitt-street, be adopted.”

Mr. Hyam seconded the motion.

Mr. Shepherd moved,—“That the motion be amended by the omission of the word ‘not’ between the words ‘is’ and ‘expedient.’”

The amendment was negatived on the following division, upon the question “that the word proposed to be omitted stand part of the motion” :—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Shepherd,
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Levien.
Mr. Hyam,	
Mr. Watson,	
Mr. McFarlane.	

The motion was passed on the following division :—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 2.
Mr. Dick,	Mr. Shepherd,
Dr. Garran,	Mr. Levien.
Mr. Hyam,	
Mr. Watson,	
Mr. McFarlane.	

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 27 September, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY FROM BELMORE PARK TO FORT MACQUARIE.

TUESDAY, 7 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDSAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works,
sworn, and examined:—

I. *Chairman.*] I understand that you have a statement you desire to read in respect to this inquiry? Yes; the statement of the Under Secretary for Public Works. It is as follows:—

H. Deane.
7 Aug., 1900.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY FROM BELMORE PARK TO FORT MACQUARIE BY WAY OF CASTLEREAGH AND BЛИGH STREETS.

The proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration on 12th July, 1900, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh Streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets."

This proposed tramway, which is intended to provide a means of relief to the congested traffic on the George-street trams, originated in the representations made by the Railway Commissioners to the Premier and Minister for Railways in the beginning of the present year. Their experience of the volume of traffic then existing in George-street, considered in conjunction with what it will be when the steam tramways of the western suburbs have been converted into the electrical system, convinced them that it would be quite impracticable to bring all the traffic into George-street, and that some means of relief must speedily be found.

Two ways of meeting the difficulty presented themselves, viz., by laying a tramway (1) in Pitt-street to Circular Quay, or (2) in Castlereagh-street and Bligh-street to Circular Quay. Both schemes, it is believed, will be ultimately required, but as Castlereagh-street affords more facilities for traffic than Pitt-street, the Minister decided to submit the Castlereagh-street route as the first instalment.

The following is the official description of the line:—

Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie Electric Tramway.—Report on Route.

This tramway branches off the existing steam tramway in Belmore Park at a point opposite Castlereagh-street, traversing Castlereagh-street to its intersection with Hunter-street, thence along Bligh-street to Bent-street, the whole of the length from Belmore Park being double track.

After leaving Bent-street a single track is taken along Loftus-street to the Circular Quay, and thence along Young-street, joining the double track again at Bent-street.

The main lines are carried across the Circular Quay, and traverse the back of the wharfs on the eastern side to Fort Macquarie, where an extensive car-house with necessary shunting yards and office accommodation will be provided.

The permanent-way will consist of 83-lb. rails, which will be laid on sleepers between Belmore Park and Liverpool-street in macadamised road: from Liverpool-street to Hunter-street the road will be wood-blocked, thence to the Circular Quay macadamised roadway, and the whole of the portion laid on the Circular Quay will be wood-blocked.

The turnouts to the car-house being of 60-lb. rails laid on sleepers and ballasted.

The car-house will be of brick, and will accommodate seventy-two cars of the largest type now in use; it will be so designed as to be in keeping with the site upon which it is to be built.

The total cost is estimated approximately at £110,000.

The statutory report of the Railway Commissioners on the proposal, is as follows:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 10 July, 1900.

Proposed line of Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets (double track), and Loftus and Young Streets (single track).

Complying with the request made by letter, dated the 2nd instant, at the instance of the Honorable the Secretary for Public Works, and in accordance with the provisions of the "Public Works Act of 1888," section 13, we beg to report as follows:—

Estimated cost of construction.....	£110,000
Interest at 3 per cent.	3,300

The construction of this line is rendered necessary by the conversion of the steam trams to electric traction, and the consequent inability of George and Elizabeth streets to carry the traffic, and we therefore cordially support the proposal.

H. Deane.
7 Aug., 1900.

The only additional revenue that will be derived from the line will be due to increased traffic, and although it is not possible to foretell, with any degree of accuracy, what this will amount to, we have no hesitation in stating that it will fully justify the construction of the line.

The Common Seal of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales was hereunto affixed this tenth day of July, one thousand nine hundred, in the presence of,—
H. McLACHLAN.

W. M. FEHON,
Deputy Chief Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

I put in the plans on a 40-foot scale, also a section of the line and the book of reference. I also hand in a detailed estimate of cost. The estimate is as follows:—

Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.

Castlereagh-street—		
Road construction	£26,212	
Outside electric work.....	6,038	
Power	12,750	
Rolling-stock	25,000	
		70,050
Circular Quay—		
Road construction	5,363	
Outside electric work.....	1,337	
Power	2,875	
Rolling-stock	5,000	
		14,575
Car-house.....	17,000	
Traffic offices	1,000	
Track construction.....	7,375	
		25,375
		£110,000

2. Can you give us any details of the interference with private property which the construction of this line will involve? The only interference with private property will be at the corner of Bent-street and Bligh-street. I have already called the attention of the Minister to the necessity of taking steps towards resuming that piece of property, and the Land Valuer has the matter in hand. It seemed to be necessary to take some prompt steps, because an advertisement appeared in the papers calling for tenders for the rebuilding of that hotel. As regards other property, it will be necessary to cut into the corner of the land used by the Education Department, at the corner of Loftus-street and Bent-street; and at Fort Macquarie it will be necessary to resume the land occupied by the drill-shed, and to pull down the remaining portion of the fort and do some levelling there.

3. Will the interference with the Education Office site be sufficiently large to interfere with its value as a building site for a large Government building later on? I do not think so. It only just rounds off a very acute angle. The portion to be resumed is not occupied by any building at present.

4. In that statement of estimated quantities and cost I find the item of "Power" under both headings—Castlereagh-street and Circular Quay? Yes.

5. Will you inform the Committee why you have that item under each of those two heads? It will be necessary eventually to provide power to run the trams on each section of this new line.

6. It will come from the one source? Yes; but the Railway Commissioners are now taking steps to obtain further power at Ultimo. The power-house and plant at Ultimo were intended only for the existing trams, and, if the traffic had stood still, they probably would have been enough; but the traffic has increased by leaps and bounds since the George-street line was laid and opened and the Enmore line converted, and there is no doubt that a very large increase of power will be necessary; so it would seem to be only fair, when a new line is projected, to provide in the estimate for the power that will be required to run the traffic of that line.

7. *Mr. Watson.*] You said that the power-house at Ultimo was designed to serve only the George-street line? No, the existing system of trams at the time it was projected.

8. Attention has been drawn to the fact that the amount expended on the Ultimo power-house has exceeded by a very large amount that which it was estimated it would cost; I think that the estimate for the power-house and the George-street scheme was £130,000:—the cost ran up, eventually, to considerably more than that, did it not? No. If I may be allowed, I would correct that statement. The cost of the George-street line and the power required to work the estimated traffic will not exceed the estimate that was made at the time that scheme was projected—that is, £130,500. I think that when all the details are worked out and every item separated—everything charged to its own proper head—it will be found that the cost of the George-street scheme and the power provided for it comes out pretty well. But there is this to be borne in mind all the same: Mr. Elwell, who was the adviser in electrical and traffic matters to the Railway Commissioners, and also the late Chief Railway Commissioner himself, thought that forty small cars would be sufficient to work the traffic on George-street. However, it turned out, almost from the commencement, that forty cars were not enough, and they had to run seventy or eighty cars. That means, of course, that a good deal more power was used than that at first estimated. Then, again, for George-street, the power was to be derived by a small addition at the Rushcutters' Bay power-house, but before any steps were taken to add to the power at Rushcutters' Bay, it was decided that a central power station at Ultimo should be commenced, from which power for all the electric trams in Sydney and the neighbourhood could be supplied. That has been carried out, and a plant providing about 5,000 horse-power is there. Of course, the estimate for that large power-house was consequent upon an estimate made of the power required for working the whole of the tramway system at that time with an unincreased traffic. I am not responsible for any estimate that was made at that time, and I do not propose to say anything about it, but it looks as if that power might have been sufficient if the traffic had not given such proof of increasing as it has done already.

9. Irrespective of this proposed line down Castlereagh-street, by how much is it proposed to extend the capacity in horse-power of the Ultimo station; I understood that 5,000 horse-power was in the first instance laid down;—do you know how much it is proposed to extend that, irrespective of the present proposal? I cannot tell you officially, but probably the Railway Commissioners will be prepared to give you that information. I understand that the power will be doubled. I know that the Chief Commissioner has been making inquiries in America, with the view of getting proposals for a very large increase of power which will practically double the power now available.

H. Deane.
7 Aug., 1900.

10. What horse-power will these two items, in connection with the present proposal, £12,000 odd and £2,000 odd—or a total of about £15,000—represent? About 625 horse-power.
11. *Chairman.*] In paragraph No. 3 of the main report you handed in there is a suggestion that Pitt-street might have been taken for this kind of traffic;—would you care to offer any opinion as to the present respective merits of those two streets to cope with the increased traffic of George-street? Pitt-street would have many advantages on account of its position, but it was thought to be more advisable to lay down a tramway in Castlereagh-street first, seeing that it was very much clearer of traffic. Later on, there is no doubt, Pitt-street will be required, but it was thought inadvisable at the present time to bring forward a proposal to lay down a tramway there.
12. Taking a general view of the matter, would it not seem that the nearer you got to the present congested line with a parallel line, the more chance there would be of relieving the congestion? Yes; I do not think that the Minister would have any objection to my saying that I strongly urged him to put in both Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street, so that the Public Works Committee would have both matters to deal with, and could recommend either one or both of them.
13. I suppose that all sorts of trams, such as railway, Newtown, and Botany trams, will be sent down the proposed line—that some of each of them will be sent down Castlereagh-street? I do not know how the Railway Commissioners will divide the traffic, but the present idea is to have a separate line for the railway traffic. So, I think that the principal idea is to take the railway traffic down Castlereagh-street.
14. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose the Castlereagh-street line could be more easily laid down than the Pitt-street line, there being less traffic and fewer obstructions? Yes. There is no doubt that it is clearer of traffic—very much so.
15. *Chairman.*] In regard to interference with property, will the area taken in Belmore Park be large? No; only just the little piece shown on the plan—a piece about 120 feet long, and 30 feet wide.
16. Of course the piece between that and the existing tram-line will be practically of no use? Yes.
17. At that corner, will it be necessary to provide any special safety appliances, seeing that there will be two tramways issuing from the park so close to one another at that corner? It will have to be fenced off.
18. I am referring to the street;—the construction of this tram will add a new danger at that corner, and I was wondering if you would require any special safety appliances there? I do not think so. There is a good distance between the two.
19. What distance is there on the street between the two? It is about 130 feet or 140 feet clear.
20. *Dr. Garran.*] Is Castlereagh-street wider than Pitt-street? It is about the same width.
21. Do you remember the double tram-line that used to be in Pitt-street? I never saw it.
22. If you employ the present power at Ultimo to work this Castlereagh-street line, you put an additional task on that power—a task that was not originally intended? Yes.
23. Then, will you delay converting the eastern lines, because you will not have enough power to convert the western and the eastern lines, and take this Castlereagh-street line in addition? Not until we get new power.
24. Then something must be postponed? Yes.
25. Which is it going to be? The Railway Commissioners, I believe, feel that the western suburban trams must be dealt with first, they having already started with that side; it is absolutely necessary to complete that side first.
26. Then the eastern trams, going off at the Liverpool-street corner and up Oxford-street, will be steam trams as at present? Yes; for some time to come.
27. Until you are ready? Yes.
28. Will you run this Castlereagh-street tram right into the present station yard? I think so.
29. Then do you mean to cut off the access of the George-street line into the station yard? Access would not be cut off; there would still be those roads leading into it.
30. For a week or so we had the old steam trams running into the station yard after the construction of the George-street line, and the electric trams stopped at the gates? Yes.
31. That gave the steam line a pull? Yes.
32. When they altered that by turning the steam line out of the yard and putting the electric in, that gave the electric line a pull? Yes.
33. And the consequence was that the steam line was knocked sky-high;—if you want to get some of the railway traffic off the George-street line, will not the best plan to do it be to keep the George-street line out of the station yard? I think so.
34. And make the people who want to go to the railway get into the Castlereagh-street tram? I think that is what would have to be done in order to avoid that very inconvenient crossing of the trams which is taking place at the present time.
35. You would get rid of that danger altogether? Yes.
36. And you would lighten the traffic on the George-street line? Yes.
37. But so long as you allow the George-street electric line to go into the station yard you will have people who live in George-street, or to the west of it, getting into those cars? Yes. There is no doubt that the most convenient way will be to reserve George-street for the western lines and Castlereagh-street for the railway traffic. What the Commissioners may finally decide to do, of course, I cannot say, but that is the idea that I know they have at the present time in order to ease the traffic, and avoid the crossing of trams, which at present is so productive of delay.
38. Perhaps you may have had some experience of this—that it is very easy to give the people a privilege, but very hard to take it away from them? Yes, I know that.
39. Are you prepared to be offered up as a sacrifice? I think they ought to have had Castlereagh-street first. It is very difficult to go back and take away a privilege.
40. Is Mr. Kneeshaw an officer under you? No; he is under the Railway Commissioners.
41. You are not responsible for how the lines are used after they are made? No.
42. Supposing it should be found when this Castlereagh-street line has been made that, with the mere share of the railway traffic it will get, there is not quite enough business for it, could you not then take on part of the eastern suburban traffic? I think it is possible. Perhaps the Botany line traffic would come in very conveniently.
43. As you come off towards the Circular Quay you split your double line into two pieces at one place? Yes.

- H. Deane. 44. Is that because neither street is wide enough for a double line? It is more convenient to do it in that way. There are generally a good many drays standing in the lower part of Young-street.
 7 Aug., 1900. 45. Is there any specific advantage in splitting, if you are not obliged to do it? It is proposed in this scheme to make a loop in front of the Custom-house, so that some portion of the traffic can be run round the Custom-house, without going right out to Fort Macquarie. That is a very great advantage.
46. *Mr. Watson.*] You will have the cars running continuously? Yes.
 47. *Dr. Garran.*] You practically make a loop of Young and Loftus streets? Yes.
 48. At Fort Macquarie, have you ample ground for all you want to do there? Yes. The upper plan shows how the traffic will be worked. There is a large car-shed, and there is a double line running to the left of the car-shed with various cross-overs. They unite at the end of the car-shed, and the cars go round on a single line and enter the return line to the Circular Quay, and from one of those lines there are diverging roads into the car-shed.
 49. Will you have enough standage room for the cars there? Yes.
 50. There is no necessity to reclaim any ground from the harbour? No; there is no necessity to reclaim any ground.
 51. If you adopt this loop at the end, will you give up the existing loop on Circular Quay? I think that will come about as a matter of course.
 52. Of course, this will involve running the George-street trams 200 or 300 yards further? Yes.
 53. But you will get all the passenger traffic at the Man-o'-War Stairs, and from some of the large steamers at Circular Quay. Yes.
 54. There is a little passenger traffic there to be picked up? There is a good deal. At times there is an enormous traffic there. All day long, if you go down there, you may see people going backwards and forwards to the boats, the Man-o'-War Steps, and the Gardens.
 55. You would take people to the Gardens, and they would enter them on the level, instead of going up or down hill? Yes; it will be a very convenient way of access to the Gardens.
 56. *Mr. Watson.*] Should any part of this expenditure be debited to the general working of the tramway system;—for instance, the car-house will be available for use by the cars that belong to the George-street system as well as by those belonging to this proposed Castlereagh-street section? Yes, it will.
 57. Therefore, the expenditure, so far as the last £25,000 shown in the estimate, or perhaps £40,000, is concerned, seems to be for the convenience of the general tramway system, and not confined alone to the Castlereagh-street section? The last £25,000, because the other has its own particular traffic to carry. That is of no particular convenience, except for the purpose of running cars in the morning and in the evening to the car-house. But the last item, £25,375, may be said to be for a convenience that will be shared by all the trams coming down to the Circular Quay.
 58. In view of that, do you think that your car-house will be large enough to accommodate the cars from the George-street line, as well as those from the Castlereagh-street line? Yes; because there will be, eventually, car-houses all round the outside of the city. There is a large one at Newtown; it is proposed to have a large one at Kensington; and there will be, eventually, others situated outside the city. In this estimate I have provided thirty new cars—that is, long cars, double bogey—whilst the car-house itself is intended to accommodate seventy-two.
 59. Which car seems to be the most popular and generally satisfactory? I think that the St. Louis cars are liked the best.
 60. Are they satisfactory in their working, as well as popular with the public? I think so, but the traffic officers could best say. I know that the new cars are all to be of that longer type. The Railway Commissioners have decided that.
 61. *Chairman.*] Has the experience of the George-street electric tram modified the views of the Railway Commissioners with respect to which car is best suited to the Sydney traffic? Yes. The original view was that single-truck cars should be used. Those were the first provided for George-street; but now the feeling is very strongly in favour of the double-truck cars—the long cars—they being more capacious and more equal to requirements.

THURSDAY, 9 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

- H. McLachlan. 62. *Mr. Watson.*] The Railway Commissioners seem to favour the construction of the proposed line? Yes; they recommend its construction.
 9 Aug., 1900. 63. Is it their idea that this line will afford relief to the western traffic, or is it proposed mainly as a pick-up line? Largely to afford relief. Of course there will be a certain amount of pick-up traffic, but in the opinion of the Railway Commissioners two streets will not carry the tramway traffic—that is, George-street and Elizabeth-street—and they think it is absolutely indispensable that we should have some of the trams going through another street.
 64. In what way has it been suggested that they may arrange the traffic so as to relieve George-street? The proposal is that the railway traffic should be taken *via* Castlereagh-street—that is their present idea. At the present time we have the railway traffic and the Newtown traffic in George-street, and during the busy times of the day those two services seem to take up the accommodation very largely; for instance, between 5 and 6 o'clock, I think we have as many as eighty-seven trams running up George-street for those two services alone. Of course, we have to convert the whole of the western suburban lines. We have the Leichhardt, the Glebe Point, and the Balmain lines to convert in addition to what has already been

been done, and it would be impossible to bring these three other routes into George-street; and Elizabeth-street will certainly require all the accommodation we can give it for the eastern suburban traffic. I am to add that the Railway Commissioners want to vary this proposal in regard to the question of route. I am not sure whether a subsequent minute they submitted to the Minister—a minute of the 25th July—is before the Committee.

65. Perhaps you might read it; what we have is dated 10th July? This is a subsequent minute, dated 25th July:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners, Sydney, 25 July, 1900.

Proposed line of tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets (double track), and Loftus and Young streets (single track).

SINCE writing our report of the 10th instant on this subject, we have looked further into the matter, and now desire to submit, for the favourable consideration of the Honorable the Minister for Public Works, the desirability of varying the proposal originally submitted by constructing a single line from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus Streets to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, and returning by single line through Pitt-street.

We are constrained to recommend this alteration in the original proposal, because the experience gained since the George-street line was opened strongly indicates that it will best meet the public convenience.

The congestion which is now taking place in George-street impels us to point out to the Honorable the Minister that the work is of great urgency.

W. M. FEHON,
Deputy Chief Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

66. Have the Railway Commissioners formed any idea of the additional cost of carrying out that suggestion as compared with the cost of the proposal before us? They understand it means an additional cost of from 20 to 25 per cent. So far as I recollect, the estimated cost of the proposal before the Committee is £110,000. The permanent-way for a single line will cost about £50,000, and the car-shed and rolling stock, I think, £60,000. The additional cost of the permanent-way for a line in Pitt-street, I think, would be about £20,000 or £25,000. That is what the Commissioners understand would be the additional cost, over and above the estimate for the proposal now before the Committee.

67. Would the Railway Commissioners suggest the construction of those single lines in such a way as would permit of each of the streets being served by double lines at a later period, if that were thought desirable? Yes.

68. That is, by putting the track sufficiently on one side to obviate the necessity of removing it? Yes; on the left-hand side.

69. On the east side of Pitt-street, and on the west side of Castlereagh-street? Yes.

70. That would be practically going with the course of the traffic? Yes. The Railway Commissioners' idea is to have the lines, though single, laid in such a way as to permit of their duplication if found necessary at a later date.

71. Do you think that that arrangement would be likely to attract the railway traffic away from George-street, with the station on the site it occupies now? I do not think it would make very much difference to us. If we get the railway traffic now where it is, we would get it just the same practically under this proposal, because we would start these trams from the railway station; people would go straight from the trains into the trams.

72. That would be in going away from the railway station; but, would there not be a tendency on the part of the people in business west of George-street to take the George-street tram with the view of reaching the railway station in the evening? Pitt-street is very close to George-street. It is only a few steps from George-street into Pitt-street.

73. That would be an additional reason for making the return journey *via* Pitt-street, instead of *via* Castlereagh-street? Yes; that is what I have suggested.

74. When you had that new arrangement working, you would cease running any of the George-street trams into the railway yard? Yes; and that would afford very great relief in connection with the crossing near the old watch-house. You would be able to get a straight run for the Newtown and the western suburban trams.

75. And that would probably permit of a greater number being run? It would certainly facilitate the working very considerably, because at the present time the trams have to cross there, and if you travel by a tram you generally find that you have to wait there a little time, owing to the junction arrangements.

76. Where will the Pitt-street line join the tramway system going to the railway station? It will come in near Hordern's refreshment-room—at the junction of Pitt-street and Garden-road.

77. The Railway Commissioners mention Loftus-street as part of the route of the suggested single line? Yes.

78. Would they prefer that street to Young-street for a single line? That is a matter of detail that would be dealt with if the proposal be approved. They would have practically an independent loop, so as not to interfere with the George-street line, and going into Pitt-street.

79. That would be in front of the Custom-house, and past the "Ship Inn," or behind it? That is a matter of detail that the Commissioners have not absolutely determined, but which they could arrange.

80. There is rather an awkward turn near the "Ship Inn," and unless you were to resume that hotel, or the vacant land behind it, there might be an awkward entrance? It might be found more convenient to cut the corner in front of the Custom-house, and go *via* Macquarie-place into Pitt-street; but that is a matter of detail the Railway Commissioners have not absolutely decided upon, and which would have to remain in abeyance until after a consultation with the engineers.

81. Still, that is a matter that will have to be looked into, for it would seem that if you want to get into Pitt-street, from the Circular Quay end of it, you will need to make some resumption, either where the "Ship Inn" is, or immediately behind it, where there is a lane that runs near some vacant allotments? You would go behind the "Ship Inn," I think.

82. The lane behind the "Ship Inn" is very narrow, but I understand that there is some vacant ground there, or ground with some paltry buildings upon it? Yes; that is, Change-alley. Personally, I think it is a question whether it would not be wise for the Government to resume Change-alley, because it is an obstruction of that square, and is, I take it, not a valuable property. Its removal would certainly improve the appearance of the Quay very considerably.

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83. It is more than probable, I should imagine, that you would pick up some traffic by going *via* Macquarie-place? That is a detail the Railway Commissioners have not tied themselves too; they simply submit this as a principle, and leave the details to be arranged.

84. So they do not commit themselves to Loftus-street in preference to Young-street for that branch? No; they would not say absolutely at the present time.

85. The grade of Loftus-street is a little better than that of Young-street, is it not? I am not sure.

86. But whether it is or not would not matter if you were going towards the Quay? No; you would be going down in either case.

87. Have the Railway Commissioners thought out the possibility of extending the eastern suburban system to the Quay? Yes.

88. What is their proposal in that regard? Their proposal is to branch off in front of the "Métropole Hôtel," and thence to run down practically so as to join on about the Manly Beach steamer jetty.

89. Would it join on with the line that is before us now, because that goes down Young-street? It might join on with that. You would have to have a certain number of crossings where traffic converges at certain points. The Railway Commissioners' idea is to branch off in front of the "Métropole Hôtel," and then run down in front of the Custom-house. The question of the junction arrangements would have to be carefully thought out; but roughly speaking, that would be their proposal.

90. It has occurred to me that, if the Railway Commissioners were to run the eastern suburban trams down to the Quay, they would get a lot of traffic that now encourages buses to run up Pitt-street? Yes.

91. The eastern suburban buses rather monopolise Pitt-street, and largely, I think, because there is at present no chance of people taking a tram up Pitt-street from the Quay? As a matter of fact, the Railway Commissioners have had a plan drawn out, many months ago, for the bringing of the eastern suburban trams in to the Circular Quay, and that is part of the conversion scheme.

92. That would not be attempted probably before the electric system is applied to the western suburban traffic? No; the proposal is to convert the western suburban lines first.

93. As I understand, then, the suggestion is, not that you should utilise the whole of Castlereagh-street for the eastern suburban trams, but should merely junction with the proposed Castlereagh-street line at Bent-street, and go down Young-street? The idea was to use Castlereagh-street practically along the greater part of its length for the railway traffic.

94. But the suggested extension of the eastern suburban lines would junction with the scheme before us at Bent-street? Somewhere about there. The proposal is to run off in front of the "Métropole Hôtel" at Bent-street. We should turn off from the present steam road near the "Métropole Hôtel," and run in front of the "Métropole" to the Quay—going between that hotel and the Union Club.

95. *Dr. Garran.*] Are you going to abandon Elizabeth-street altogether? No; we shall want it for the eastern suburban traffic.

96. Will the eastern suburbs have to be content with Elizabeth-street still? Yes.

97. *Mr. Watson.*] Are the Railway Commissioners satisfied with the result of the electrical working of the trams so far? Yes.

98. That is, the result in business, of course? Yes.

99. Will it be possible to give any details of the returns, say, from the Newtown line under the electrical system as compared with the returns from that line under the steam system? Roughly, we are earning £100 a day more on the Newtown line since we converted it into an electric line. A good deal of that is due, no doubt, to going into George-street, and taking traffic formerly carried by the buses. But that is the result—practically we are earning £100 a day more. We were earning on an average £166 a day by the steam, and now we are earning on an average £256 a day by the electric.

100. But this return of £256 a day includes that which is received from the steam trams also running on the same line? There are only a few in the afternoon, and, as a matter of fact, they are not much patronised. Though they practically pick up passengers at the same point as the electric trams do—opposite the railway station—the people crowd on to the electric, and let the steam trams run practically empty.

101. Is the additional expense involved by the electrical system great? The result so far is satisfactory. Perhaps our experience is hardly lengthy enough to give us the best idea, because everything is new, and renewals are consequently not so heavy; but, so far, the result of the electrical working of the city trams is most satisfactory.

102. You have no doubt as to the electrical system ultimately paying very well? No; the Railway Commissioners have no doubt as to the success of the system. It has been found to succeed in every other part of the world, where other systems have been discarded in favour of the electric, and our experience so far shows us that that is the proper thing to do.

103. There seems to have been a number of accidents—of a minor character, certainly, but still to some extent alarming—in connection with the working of the electrical system lately; do you think that that will be avoided in the future? Sydney, I suppose, will always have a certain number of accidents, in view of the crowded traffic and the narrowness of its streets. Most of the accidents that have happened have been due largely to want of care on the part of the people injured. The carrying out of this proposal ought very considerably to minimise the liability to accidents.

104. I was not referring to that class of accidents; but I meant accidents in the working of the motors, irrespective of the danger to people walking in the streets? I think we have had very few, considering we have introduced a new system. We have really not had a serious accident from what you may call electrical or mechanical defects, and the accidents, I think, have been remarkably few for a new system.

105. As regards the accident reported in yesterday's paper, where a safety appliance in connection with a motor fused and exploded with some little force;—is it not possible to devise something that will permit of the extra power being carried away without a chance of exploding? That is an electrical matter. The engineer has the whole matter in hand, and I understand that he has taken every reasonable precaution to do away with any risk of danger from that kind of thing. He will be able to give you technical details of the matter. From what we have heard of what did happen, I should say that the report was grossly exaggerated.

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106. It is not very encouraging to people to think that at any time the machine may go off? But we have carried millions of passengers without any accident to them. Passengers, on hearing the noise coming from the safety appliance, might jump out of the tram and hurt themselves; but their injury has not been through any leakage of the electricity. Personally, I think that the accidents due to mechanical defects have been remarkably few, especially considering that we are introducing a large and new system.

107. Have the Railway Commissioners attempted to compare their returns under the penny section with those received formerly? A comparison in regard to some of the lines is rather difficult. For instance, the railway and the Newtown trams take a new and more direct route; but on other lines where the sections have been altered, the results on the whole have been unfavourable from an earning standpoint. We have had considerably more expense, and have earned less money; but, at the same time, it has been of great public convenience.

108. I was trying to find out what the result has been from an earning point of view? The result has been unfavourable.

109. It has not led to any great increase of returns? No. On some of the lines there has been a great falling off. Take the Coogee line for instance.

110. But in the case of the Coogee line there was a reduction of fares in addition to the rearrangement of sections? Yes; but of course they all came together. On the Coogee line in four months we lost £1,500, and that in the face of a better business to the race-course and the Agricultural Society's grounds—that is to say, the loss was due to the regular business on that line. We compared the receipts in those four months with the receipts in the corresponding four months of the previous year. Taking the penny sections altogether, I do not think that there has been much loss. We have picked up additional business. But owing to the rearrangement of sections, and the increased expenditure due to the cash fare system being introduced coincidentally, there has been a big difference in the net return. There is no doubt as to the success of the Newtown and the George-street electrical lines.

111. Do you anticipate that, when you have the electrical system applied to the remaining lines, there will be a corresponding increase there? I would not like to say that; but it will certainly be far better for us to have only one system at work.

112. I thought it possible that, in that event, you might get as passengers people who do not care to travel in the steam trams; but who would take advantage of the cleaner and more comfortable travelling which the electrical system affords? I think we could get the bus traffic. That has happened particularly at Newtown. But comparing the cost of steam tram working with the cost of the electrical car working, if you can get the same amount of business, then, on account of the larger number that you can carry in a steam car, I daresay that the steam car would compare more than favourably.

113. But you would have to get them all at the same time? Yes. But, as I say, the Railway Commissioners are quite satisfied with the success of the electrical system, which is proved very conclusively by the two lines we are now working.

114. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I suppose it is anticipated that relief will at once come to the George-street tram when this line is constructed? Naturally. We have at the present time seventy-four cars in the railway-Ultimo service in George-street, and, if you could turn those cars into another street, you can see what room would be afforded for other services to come into George-street.

115. It would be likely to draw the Pitt-street traffic, and, in fact, all the traffic east of Pitt-street that now goes to George-street? I think so. I think that the nearness of the two streets would be found to be quite convenient; that is, the man who now travels in George-street would find it equally convenient to walk comparatively a few yards further to Pitt-street.

116. How would you connect with the present tram-line at Belmore Park? We should run off at Belmore Park, in coming into Castlereagh-street, just the other side of that over-bridge in Belmore Park, and in going up Pitt-street we should connect with the present steam road nearly opposite Hordern's refreshment room.

117. There would be no difficulty whatever about that? No. As a matter of fact, the junctions here are child's-play. In America they are running their trams almost in every street in some cities. We have a book showing the way in which some of the American cities are covered with tramways, and ours looks like one or two lines against the great number they have in the American cities.

118. Did you notice a paragraph in yesterday's paper referring to an explosion on one of the trams? Yes. Mr. Watson has already referred to that.

119. *Mr. Levien.*] Is there any danger in those explosions? No. The electrical engineer can tell you the whole result.

120. It is merely a flash? It is a report.

121. There is no danger in it? No.

122. *Mr. Shepherd.*] It is not likely that anything serious could happen from that? No. The electrical engineer will give you a technical description of it.

123. *Mr. Hyam.*] When the eastern suburban service is converted, is it the intention to abolish the present line from the corner of Liverpool-street to the railway? No. We would, I think, keep that, though we might not immediately run a regular service upon it.

124. People coming from the eastern suburbs then would have to get off the tram at the corner of Elizabeth-street and walk down to the Pitt-street tram;—that would be rather an inconvenient way of getting to the railway? They would be better off than they are now. A man coming from the eastern suburbs to-day has to walk to George-street in order to get a railway tram.

125. No; he takes a steam tram at the corner of Liverpool-street and Elizabeth-street, and if he has the luck to catch a Botany tram he is taken right to the railway steps? Yes; in the case you mentioned the passengers would have to walk to Pitt-street.

126. I suppose that the whole of the western suburban traffic will be carried on the George-street line? That is the proposal to a large extent, if you take the railway traffic out of George-street.

127. Balmain, Leichhardt, and Glebe Point? Yes.

128. Would not that congest the traffic in George-street quite as much as at present? It would be impossible to carry all that traffic and the railway traffic in George-street; but you could carry that traffic in George-street if you were to take the railway traffic out of that street.

129. Do you think that the traffic in George-street is congested at the present time? I think there is room for more traffic there at the present time. We do not run the cars as thickly as is done in America.

- McLachlan. 130. You think that you could run the same number of cars as you are running now, even if you were to bring the western traffic in? Yes; and more. The Railway Commissioners have another idea, the carrying out of which will give relief. Some time ago we ordered material for coupling what we call the "combination" cars. If two of those cars were coupled, that would lessen the number of individual trams running.
- 9 Aug., 1900. 131. I wonder that has not been done before? The American practice is to run single cars immediately following each other; but with our congested street traffic it would probably be wiser to run them together, and have fewer individual trams.
132. *Mr. Watson.*] You are running the St. Louis cars together now? Yes; they are built to be coupled.
133. *Mr. Hyam.*] In running trailers you would have to shunt when you got to the Circular Quay, and bring the motor in front of the trailer again? With a run-round, of course, there is no shunting.
134. *Dr. Garran.*] I understand that you want this new tramway to relieve the traffic during the crush-hours morning and evening? Yes.
135. Do you think the Castlereagh-street line will have enough traffic to make it pay during portions of the day other than the crush-hours? I think so; but in this case, of course, it is not so much a question of paying as a question of absolute necessity to give relief.
136. You must take your railway traffic away from George-street? We must, in order to give accommodation there for other lines. At the present time, between 5 and 6 o'clock, on the Newtown and railway lines we are running eighty-seven trams in the hour, and if you were to throw Leichhardt—which, under the steam system, earned two-thirds of the amount earned by Newtown—Balmain, and Glebe Point upon it, I am afraid that the street would be too congested, and, of course, the traffic is growing all the time.
137. Looking at the narrowness of our Sydney streets—unfortunately for us—is it not fair to say that every street we tram we spoil very largely for vehicular traffic? It does certainly make the street less effective for vehicular traffic.
138. Well, your new plan would spoil two streets instead of one? I would not say "spoil"; but at the same time it would render the streets less comfortable for vehicular traffic.
139. On the western side of Sydney we will have George-street, Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street, all with tram-lines in them? Yes.
140. There will not be a single street in that portion of the city, for a vehicle to go down, clear of a tram? No.
141. Is that not rather a serious thing? It is not serious in this way. It is required to meet a public demand. Now, on the Newtown and the railway lines, on a busy day, we carry 100,000 people. There is a public demand, and other vehicles, I take it, must give way to popular requirements.
142. *Mr. Watson.*] The traffic must be picked up either by tram vehicles or by horse vehicles? Yes; the people have to be removed. You can understand what the public requirements are, when I say that on those two lines alone we are carrying 100,000 passengers on a busy day.
143. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think that those railway passengers for whom George-street is really more convenient than Pitt-street will grumble at being shunted into Pitt-street? It is not quite so convenient, but I do not think they will feel the difference particularly. Pitt-street is a central street.
144. You think there is a public necessity for it, and that private convenience must give way? Yes. In addition to that, there is very little difference between the two centres.
145. Can you tell me whether Pitt-street is narrower than Castlereagh-street? No.
146. You have no idea of bringing the eastern suburban traffic into either Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, or George-street at present? No.
147. The residents of those suburbs will have to be content with Elizabeth-street? That is the present idea.
148. If they want to get to George-street I suppose they will have to get out of the trams at the Elizabeth-street corner and walk down to George-street? At present it seems to me that would happen.
149. Do you know whether that happens now at all? I have not noticed that.
150. People keep in the Elizabeth-street cars, and get out at whatever cross street they want to get out at? Yes.
151. Supposing that a lady coming from one of the eastern suburbs wanted to go to David Jones', would she get out at the corner of Elizabeth-street and Liverpool-street, and go down to the George-street tram, or would she come along to King-street;—I suppose she would come along to King-street? Yes; that is what they do now.
152. And if it were a wet day, she would, perhaps, take the tram down King-street to George-street? If it were a wet day she might possibly go to the Circular Quay, spend another penny, and travel by the George-street tram.
153. King-street is the only cross connection you have? Yes.
154. You do not mean to have any other? Not at present; but, no doubt, as years go on, there will be very big developments.
155. You do not see any necessity for tramways in streets to the west of George-street? They may come in connection with the Miller's Point scheme.
156. Down Kent-street? Down Kent-street or York-street. It is very difficult to forecast what may happen.
157. You have no plans for that yet? No; it has been thought of.
158. We are to understand that this new scheme is not so much for the accommodation of the city as for the relieving of George-street of the railway traffic? Yes; and to give accommodation for other roads to come into George-street.
159. So as to be able to hook on the western traffic? Yes.
160. So long as this relief is not given you cannot carry out your entire scheme? No.
161. Will you have enough power to do this and to convert the whole of the western service besides? The Electrical Engineer's idea is that, on the basis of the present traffic, it can be done.
162. And the extra power will then be wanted for the eastern suburban traffic? Yes; for extensions in connection with the eastern suburbs. As a matter of fact, we are in negotiations now for the extra power that is absolutely necessary.
163. You will not be able to touch the eastern system unless you get extra power? That is so.
164. You will be able to do the whole of the western with the power you have now? Yes, we think so, unless there is some development.
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165. *Mr. Levien.*] Do you not think that, in the public interest, Castlereagh-street, Pitt-street, Elizabeth-street, George-street, and York-street ought to be served by trams? I think that we shall probably have to have trams in more streets than at present, as the city grows and business increases.
166. You will admit that the proprietors of the 'buses consult the convenience of the public by driving into every street they can get into, in order to convey their passengers? Yes.
167. Do you not think that it is most advisable, in the interests of the Government, they having every facility, and the right to the road more than others have, that that should be done with the trams? That is a matter to be considered with a certain amount of reservation, because the more streets you go into the greater the expense you incur. If you can limit your traffic to one, two, or three streets, you necessarily save money in construction. If you put down tram lines in other streets you, of course, have to pay the extra cost of construction and maintenance.
168. Are not York-street, Castlereagh-street, Pitt-street, Elizabeth-street, and Clarence-street great feeders of traffic? Yes.
169. Would you propose to put down tramways along those different streets? That is a matter of expense.
170. Is it not a matter of convenience of traffic, after all is said and done? It would depend on whether the traffic would justify the expense.
171. Do you think that the traffic would do that—not looking to the present, but ahead of us? I think so. I am guided by the experience of other cities, where they find electric tramways can be worked from one central station, and a number of sub-stations, economically, and where they have divided the traffic through a number of streets. That has been the experience, so far as I can gather, in America.
172. Considering the enormous traffic that goes down George-street by the electric trams—persons who go to Kent-street, Sussex-street, and Market-street, and other streets in that direction, do you not think that it is advisable to have an extension of the tramway system? I think that sooner or later you will want to have a tramway right along York-street. That may come in connection with a tramway to Miller's Point, or there might be a tram through Kent-street and into York-street, to junction with the George-street line near the Town Hall. The Commissioners would prefer to proceed tentatively rather than to go in for very expensive schemes all at once.
173. When we know that the population is growing, do you not think it is far better to look ahead of us than to take a contracted view, merely looking forward to to-morrow? Yes; you are quite right.
174. What do you think is necessary? The way in which the Railway Commissioners look at the matter is this: In considering any proposal they always take into consideration how that proposal will be affected by further extensions which they think will be necessary some day; and any scheme they propose is always considered to be part of a comprehensive scheme. They say, in effect, "This scheme will fit in with a more comprehensive scheme which will be required later on." They work out an idea, to-day, with a view to the future. For instance, if they were putting in a railway-station building, they would erect it in such a way that, afterwards, when the traffic grew, they could in the easiest and most economical manner, add to it. Those are practically the lines on which they are proceeding in regard to the tramway extensions; but, at the same time, I do not think that it would be wise to lay down a comprehensive scheme, and spend a large sum of money in anticipation of traffic that has yet to come.
175. Do you think that the traffic in the streets I have mentioned is likely to decrease, or to increase? To increase.
176. In the opinion of the Railway Commissioners, is there any probability of the city of Sydney going back, or of its advancing, both commercially and otherwise? Every prospect of advancement.
177. Is there not, then, a greater necessity for the construction of tramways along the streets I have mentioned? I would not say that there is at the present moment.
178. I am not talking about the present moment, but in view of the advancement of the city itself and of its surroundings? The scheme that the Railway Commissioners are now submitting to the Committee is part of a scheme to meet the advancement of the city. The Railway Commissioners are actually proposing to take up two additional streets.
179. But do you not think that we ought to have more? I do not think so at the present moment. The opening up of each street must entail the expenditure of a large sum of money.
180. But, considering the advancement of the Colony generally, and especially of the city of Sydney, do you not think that, whilst we have so much surplus labour, and a chance of getting cheap labour, it is advisable to do all this work when there is such a good opportunity to do it? No, I would not; and I do not think that the Railway Commissioners would recommend anything further than they are recommending at the present time.
181. Do you think that property will advance in value? I am not an authority.
182. Well, do you think so? I take it that, as the city expands, property will advance in value.
183. In view of that expression of opinion, do you not think that it is far better now, while property is almost at a standstill in value, to do this work which we anticipate, with the increased prosperity of the Colony, will be absolutely necessary? I would agree with you to this extent: I would not say that it is desirable to do the work now; but it would be perhaps wise to get a comprehensive scheme thought out, and to proceed with the work as necessity may arise. I think it would be wise to get a scheme thought out, but not to spend the money immediately—that is, not in order to relieve any unemployed difficulty.
184. I do not care about the unemployed difficulty? I thought that was your reason.
185. I am thinking of the cheapness of labour? But the cost of labour has been considerably increased during the last twelve months.
186. Is the tramway and the railway passenger traffic increasing? Yes. In regard to the railway traffic, I might give you a little indication of what that traffic is. On a busy day 50,000 people come in and go out of Sydney by railway. A great number of these people, of course, do not travel by tram; but, as I have said, we carry on the George-street and Newtown electric lines about 100,000 passengers a day, including many of that 50,000. That shows the large volume of traffic that has to be dealt with. The opinion of the Railway Commissioners is that the trams are not a proper substitute for the railway for that business, and that the railway ought to be extended into the city to-morrow. If we had our way we would run the city railway into Hyde Park to-morrow.
187. As you have said that you would run the railway right in, do you admit that Mr. Parry is correct about the enormous number of people that go down George-street? A great number go down George-street.

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188. Do you think that those persons who walk in in the morning would come into the city by railway? Many of them would. The increased railway fare that workmen, who form a considerable portion of the traffic, would pay is $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a day each; and any man who could get to Hyde Park for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a day extra, I do not think would waste that much in shoe leather. Besides, there is what is of importance in connection with the advancement of the country, namely, economy of time. No transfer system can be a success where you can get a direct route. That has been the experience of the world, with the exception of Sydney.

189. Then you assert that the Railway Commissioners totally disagree with our recommendation? Quite.

190. Then—on the assumption, of course, that the Committee were wrong in their recommendation—if the city railway were extended to Hyde Park all these trams would be utterly useless? I would not say that.

191. I should like you to explain;—if the Committee were wrong in their conclusion, as you say, and if the railway were to be extended to Hyde Park, what would be the use of all these tramways? Well, first of all, George-street is occupied only partly by the railway traffic. There are more cars running to Newtown and Ultimo than to the railway, and a great portion of that traffic is pick-up traffic. If you were to give the necessary relief in George-street, which would be afforded by taking the railway tram traffic out of it, you would still have as much business as you could conduct by tram in George-street.

192. That would be a chance, would it not? That is a fact, in my opinion.

193. But the people who would come in by train would not want the tramway? A great number of them would not. But we want the trams to be relieved of the railway passengers. There is any quantity of tram business to be done outside of the railway traffic. You must meet public requirements. As I say, we would run the railway into Hyde Park to-morrow if he could; but as we cannot get that, we suggest the idea of running the railway trams through Castlereagh-street. However, if you were to make the city railway to-morrow, the Railway Commissioners would still recommend the opening of Castlereagh-street for tramway purposes.

194. But, supposing that the railway were to come right into Hyde Park, what would be the use of the Castlereagh-street or the York-street tram—that is, if the railway passengers do not want to change at all? You speak as though the railway traffic constituted the whole and sole traffic of the city of Sydney; but, as a matter of fact, the pick-up traffic constitutes a very large portion of the business.

195. Of course, there is a difference between the railway traffic and the pick-up traffic; the Committee are as much aware of that fact as the Railway Commissioners are. The railway traffic is the traffic that comes right from the suburbs directly to the railway, and the pick-up traffic is the traffic that is picked up in George-street; but I am talking about the railway traffic;—of what benefit would the trams be to those persons who get into the trains, say, at Newtown? There are a certain number of people who would get out of the train at the present railway station in any case. But the great majority of the people, I believe, would go by train to King-street for the sake of getting to their destination quickly. You have only to stand at the corner of King-street or Market-street to see that the trams going to the railway are crowded when they get that far. I think a return that was compiled showed that three-fourths of the passengers left the trams at Market-street and King-street in coming into the city. As a matter of fact, I suppose that the railway traffic constitutes only a fifth of the total tramway traffic. But we should be very glad to have the trams relieved of it.

196. Then, if you had the railway right into the city, even if the city did advance, you would not want the number of tramways I have already asked you about? No, not immediately; but, of course, you have to look at what is going to happen in Sydney in twenty years. You are going to build a terminal station at Devonshire-street for all time—or, apparently, that is the idea—which we think is a mistake.

197. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Is it your opinion that the tramways cannot successfully deal with the traffic? Practically. For instance, if you had been at the Sydney railway station at 9 o'clock this morning, you would have seen 300 or 400 people jump out of single trains and rush pell-mell from the trains into the trams at the station-yard. It would be far better for us and for the people—a saving of time and money—if they could all get to their destination without changing. That has happened in all parts of the world, except in Sydney. Look at what they have done in London; and Sydney, I suppose, is going to be a smaller London some day.

198. Before the electric trams were put on, was it not found that 40 per cent. of the people arriving by train at Redfern walked into the city? That may be; but 60 per cent. is a large number to cater for.

199. Have you any reason to think that all that 60 per cent. would go by railway to King-street? Every reason to think a great number would, because King-street is a central position, and if they can do so people will go to the end of their journey without a break. From King-street, and below King-street to Market-street, a number of people travel by trams in George-street to go to the railway.

200. *Chairman.*] Can you give us the average daily number of passengers carried along George-street by trams now? We had a return taken out not many days ago. Wednesday is generally a good day, and 25th July was a Wednesday. On that day, on the Newtown-Dulwich Hill trams, we carried 56,575 passengers, and on the George-street electric we carried 40,000 passengers, making altogether 96,000 odd. On a busy day that number would practically run up to 100,000.

201. During the city railway inquiry, Mr. Kneeshaw gave us some figures, and from them I find that the average number travelling by the electric trams in George-street from the Redfern station is 13,000 each way per diem, or 26,000 in all;—would that be the full measure of the relief—26,000, say, out of 100,000— which this proposed tramway would afford? I should say that that would be full measure.

202. I thought it might be larger than that, inasmuch as the railway traffic, I suppose, occurs chiefly during two periods of the day, and is not spread generally over the whole day? In considering a day's traffic, you must not consider it as spread over twenty-four hours. There is a great rush of traffic sometimes. People are coming into town during several hours of the morning, and since the Early Closing Act came into operation a greater number of people leave work between 5 and 6 o'clock in the evening, and therefore the traffic between those hours bears a very abnormal proportion to the traffic during any other portion of the day.

203. Have you any figures giving the number of cars running each hour during the working day? Between 5 and 6 o'clock in the evening we are running along George-street eighty-seven trams from the Circular Quay and back—I mean eighty-seven in and eighty-seven out. During the whole day we run

2,292 trams along George-street, so you can see what a big proportion of trams are running during that hour. You have also to recollect that during that time every tram has its full complement; in fact, people find it difficult to get on. They will not wait to get room, but rush and crowd.

H.
McLachlan.
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204. It is during the busy hours that the maximum amount of relief will be afforded? Yes.

Orlando William Brain, Acting Electrical Engineer, Department of Railways, sworn, and examined:—

205. *Chairman.*] You know the proposal before the Committee? I know its general features.

O. W. Brain.

206. What increase of power in the power-house will be necessary to cope with the increased traffic that the carrying out of this proposal will bring about? By that question I take it you mean the increased traffic that will be due to the fact of having a line down Castlereagh-street.

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207. What increase of power will you require to carry the new set of trams on the new lines? Of course, there is a certain amount of traffic to the western suburbs which has already been reckoned upon, and which it would, in this case, be proposed to take through Castlereagh-street. That would be the bulk of the traffic that would be carried through Castlereagh-street; and then there would be additional traffic due to the fact of the tramway being in Castlereagh-street, and I take it that it is this you refer to.

208. I thought you had already made your calculations for the conversion of the western suburban system, and that the carrying out of this proposal would necessitate a still further increase in the power? That is so; but I wanted to be quite clear as to whether you meant that or the entire traffic that there would be in Castlereagh-street.

209. With respect to the increased traffic that the fact of placing a tramway in Castlereagh-street would bring about, what increase of power would you require for that line, leaving out of consideration the western suburbs idea? Accepting the opinion of the Traffic Officer, Mr. Kneeshaw, on that matter, it would take about 400 kilowatts, or about 540 horse-power.

210. I suppose your attention was directed to the statement in the paper yesterday, that in reference to an explosion that occurred in connection with a safety appliance on one of the trams? Yes.

211. Can you give the Committee any idea of what the explosion consists in, and whether there is any real danger to the public from it? The circuit-breaker that opened on that occasion is really an ordinary electric switch with a special attachment to it, which causes it to open when the current exceeds a certain limit. Every tram-car equipment now is fitted with this. If the machinery should break down, an excess current may result; or, if the man should handle his controller improperly, an excess current would result, and in either case, in order to obviate the damage that might result from an excess current—that is to say, either that the motors or the cables would be burnt up—this circuit-breaker is so adjusted that when the current becomes more than the equipment is suitable for, the circuit-breaker opens, and thus disconnects the current. The opening of a circuit-breaker of 500 volts is always accompanied by a certain amount of flash and a loud report.

212. It is simply, I suppose, that the current passes through a short distance of air? That is it.

213. Would that current, operating in that way, be likely to affect any passengers standing near on the tram, or would it be covered? In extreme cases—that is, under conditions that may occur exceptionally—a small quantity of the metal of the contact pieces of the switch may be fused and blown out. But beyond the eyes, there is practically no danger. If any one should happen, in an exceptional case, to get that in his eyes it might injure them.

214. But, practically, there is no danger to life? None whatever.

215. Is it possible for a man to intercept the current with his hands? No. It is quite an accidental danger, and it has been quite usual to fix the switches everywhere just in the same way as they are fixed here. I am proposing to make some experiments with a view of seeing whether we cannot arrange for that discharge to blow out through the roof; but that is a provision that has never been considered necessary up to the present.

216. *Mr. Levin.*] It is a great shock to anybody travelling on the tram? Yes, it is a loud noise. Of course, it depends entirely upon the current disconnecting at the time. Similarly, when the circuit-breakers at the power-house, which protect the various circuits, go, there are very loud reports. It is due to the fact that we have very heavy grades, and have to have fairly powerful equipments, and have to fix these switches in such a way that they will carry a fairly heavy current, and consequently when they open, they open with a fairly loud report.

217. When these things take place, are they reported to you? They are reported now in all cases.

218. Can you minimise them at all? The only way in which you can minimise them is by instructing the men to be very careful. In the ordinary course of things it is a matter of no importance; but it was thought that it would lead to the men being more careful in the matter as they were held to blame to some extent if they caused their circuit-breakers to blow, and they were instructed always to report it as a check on themselves, and in that way the occurrence of circuit-breaker blowing has been very much minimised since the line was opened. In the case that happened the other day it was quite an exceptional occurrence, and there was consequently rather a louder explosion than usually occurs. The man evidently forgot what he was doing, and started the tram with his hand-brake hard on, and he turned on the current more and more until there was an explosion.

219. It may be averted often in going up hill? Yes. But if the load is very heavy it may happen that the circuit-breaker will blow, no matter how careful the man may be, and also in the event of the equipment breaking down, as it does once in a while. That very seldom happens; but when it occurs in the ordinary course of climbing up hill, it is not generally attended with such a loud explosion, because it merely reaches the maximum current which it will carry, and then blows. But in the case the other day, when the man clamped the brakes on hard, and turned on the current, he no doubt turned on a tremendous current, and it was attended with a louder explosion than would occur under legitimate circumstances.

220. Still there is no danger attached to it? No.

221. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think you could so place the circuit-breaker that there would not be any possibility of singeing people, or injuring their eyes, or troubling them at all? The switch opens on the bottom of the box, and there is a plate just underneath it, and the flash shoots out between the end of the plate and the bottom of the switch-box; and I propose to carry some suitable tube through the top of the roof, so that whatever air and metal are ejected shall simply blow out through the top.

- O. W. Brain. 222. There will be no possible risk of people being injured then? No; but it involves other considerations. It is not generally done, and consequently one has to find out what it involves altogether. The checking of the flame that would result from any closing of the passage in any way might prove to be undesirable, in that it would not allow the flash to open sufficiently quickly.
- 9 Aug., 1900. 223. But it would seem as though some device is necessary to continue or to help the confidence of the public in the electrical system, because women folk cannot be expected to run risks of that sort in travelling, if they can be avoided? Of course, the blowing of a circuit-breaker under those very exceptional circumstances—that is, a very heavy discharge—is about on a level with the blowing of the gauge-glass on the steam motors, which, of course, occurs, and has resulted in serious accidents on the steam motors in one or two cases, merely owing to passengers taking fright.
224. *Mr. Levien.*] Did you see the man who it was said was so much singed that his relatives did not know him? There is no doubt that that article was entirely exaggerated. I got the official reports of the occurrence at once after it happened, and the driver was held to be blameable for having wrongly manipulated his controller; but the report merely stated that a passenger named Bell said that his whiskers were singed. The official reports generally state with great care and accuracy what is to be seen. If a man gets any mark, the conductors and the drivers always report it; and the evidence in this case merely was that the man said his whiskers were singed.
225. He did not apply to the Department for compensation? I believe he did. Of course, the point of importance was simply this: That the driver could not say that the man's whiskers were singed; there was nothing to show the conductor or the driver that the man was in any way injured.
226. Who is this man—Mr. Bell? I believe that he is a ticket man on the North Shore Ferry Company's staff. There is no doubt that the details, as they appeared in the *Star*, were quite absurd, and quite contrary to the official reports we got at the time.
227. *Chairman.*] Has your experience of the working of the electric trams modified the original views the electrical department held concerning the best means of dealing with vehicular traffic? No, not generally. But, of course, the views of the department as to what would be most suitable in the supply and distribution of current have kept pace with the progress in the industry.
228. In those cases where you have cars coupled, is there a motor in each car? There are two motors to each car.
229. Does not that seem to involve a certain loss of power and increase of annual expense? No. In the United States it has been found that there is considerable economy by rather increasing the number of motors—so much so that some of the most up-to-date managers at the present time put four motors to each car, and find that has made a considerable reduction, over two motors in each car, in working expenses.
230. Would it be cheaper to have a trailer without motor? It is cheaper in the first cost, but experience has shown that the extra cost of wear and tear due to the heavy loading of the motor very much more than compensates for the saving in the first cost, and also for the increased weight involved in putting motors on every car. That is to say, that two motors doing the work of propelling one motor car and one trailer involves a greater expenditure for wear and tear than four motors propelling the same cars.
231. *Mr. Watson.*] Is it not the practice now—take, for instance, the coupled St. Louis cars—to have the forward car of the two with the motors working, and the trailer with the motors not working? No.
232. Do they have both trolley poles on the line? No; they have only the one trolley pole on the line, but it is supplying current to all four motors.
233. So the motors in both cars are working? Yes.
234. *Mr. Hyam.*] How is the connection made? It is made through, underneath the car. There is a special coupling on those cars.
235. *Mr. Watson.*] Having your power distributed over a greater number of motors gives the power a better chance of creating a connection? It does. You get, of course, the adhesion of both cars.
236. *Mr. Hyam.*] Mr. McLachlan stated that it is probable that in a very short time the eastern suburban lines will be converted to the electric system;—would you recommend the putting in of another power-house, or the supplying of power from the present power-house with additional machinery? An extension of the present power-house.
237. Have you room enough there to work sufficient machinery to give you enough power for the eastern suburban, as well as the western and North Shore lines? There is sufficient room for a great deal more than that power.
238. In the place where you are now? Yes.
239. You are supplying the North Shore line at the present time, are you not? Yes; but not entirely from Ultimo at present.
240. *Mr. Watson.*] What horse-power do you anticipate it will be necessary to provide at Ultimo for something like a completed system of tram-lines;—have you made any approximate estimate of that? Yes; 6,000 horse-power of electrical output.
241. For the lot? Yes; that is in addition to what we have now.
242. At present you have 5,000 horse-power? Yes.
243. You think that 11,000 horse-power will run all the lines at present in contemplation? Yes.*
244. *Mr. Levien.*] Are you in charge of all the power-houses? I have charge of the electrical portion.
245. How many of them are there? Three—North Shore, Ultimo, and Rushcutters' Bay.
246. Is anybody under you or over you? I have charge of the electrical staff, and I have only the Railway Commissioners over me in that respect.
247. *Mr. Hyam.*] You are the head of the electrical department? Yes; but in saying the whole of them you may have misunderstood me. As regards the Rushcutters' Bay plant, I have charge only of the electrical part of that plant. That is, primarily, a cable station. Similarly, at Ultimo, Mr. Thow has charge of the steam plant.
248. Is there not a separate power-house to serve the Rose Bay line? That is supplied from Rushcutters' Bay.

249.

* NOTE (on revision):—It is necessary to point out that I misunderstood question No. 243. What I meant to say was, that 11,000 horse-power would be sufficient to run all the anticipated traffic within the next few years upon all the present lines. I am not in a position to deal with all the lines at present in contemplation, as I have only a hearsay knowledge of many, and I have not received from the Traffic Superintendent any data whatever as to the estimated traffic upon them.

249. Whatever electricity you want for the Rose Bay extension that is supplied from Rushcutters' Bay? O. W. Brain. It is at present.
250. *Dr. Garran.*] I suppose it is much more economical to generate all the power at one place than at half a dozen scattered places? Much more.
251. Is the site you have at Ultimo a convenient one? I think it is exceptionally convenient.
252. You look upon that as the best centre for all you want? Yes.
253. You are quite content with it, any way? Yes. I think there are very few towns of the size of Sydney that have the opportunity to place a power-station in so good a location, both as regards ultimate loading and the advantages for steam generation.
254. Have you land enough to build upon? There is ample land for considerably more power than we have in view.
255. *Mr. Watson.*] In the transmission of the current, do you not lose a certain amount the greater the distance it is sent over? Yes.
256. Is that loss of sufficient moment to militate against the employment of a central station for Sydney and suburbs? Well, after the power reaches a certain magnitude, and the distance is greater than a certain length, it becomes necessary to use suitable means for that power and distance.
257. That means that you would have to erect another station if you were to get too far? No; but that you would alter your method of supplying. What would be a suitable method for a certain power and certain distances would not be a suitable method for increased power and increased distances.
258. What I mean is this: Is there any method you can employ under which you would have no loss in transmission of power? No, there is not.
259. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you lose any power by going to North Shore under the water? Yes; you lose power wherever you transmit power.
260. But I mean especially in going under the water? No; there is nothing especial in that.
261. *Mr. Watson.*] When the George-street line was being laid, I notice that you seemed to have a number of supply cables connected with the line from the power-house direct—that is, instead of having only one line, you have a number switched in and assisting the supply;—will it be necessary to connect all the lines in an elaborate fashion with these supply cables? All the lines have to have feeders out to them.

WEDNESDAY, 22 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

John Kneeshaw, Traffic Superintendent, Tramway Department, sworn, and examined:—

262. *Chairman.*] Have you any information to give the Committee regarding the proposal to construct a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh-street and Bligh-street? I may state, in the first place, that George-street has now nearly as many trams as can be accommodated there. Then there are still the Glebe Point, Leichhardt, and the Balmain lines to be considered, when they are converted to the electric tram system. At the present time we are running sixty-three trams (seventy-three cars) from the Dulwich Hill-Newton line, and thirty-seven trams (seventy-four cars) from the Railway and Pymont line into George-street daily during the busy hours. Of that number at least fifty-four trams would be in George-street at the one time. Evenly spaced, these trams would be at intervals of 130 yards, or forty seconds headway. But this even spacing is not always possible owing to the cross cable traffic and the vehicular traffic in George-street. Over 2,300 electric trams run backwards and forwards in George-street daily. During the busy hours over ninety trams run each way in an hour, or in other words 180 trams in the hour. Since the Dulwich Hill-Newton line has been converted to the electrical system, the revenue has increased by about £100 per day, or equal to about 15,000 passengers per diem.
263. Is that on account of the Dulwich Hill-Newton traffic only, or the George-street traffic only? That includes a portion of George-street. Of late the revenue on all tram lines has increased.
264. *Mr. Watson.*] Without any decrease in the passenger traffic on the George-street line proper? There has been a falling off in the passenger traffic on the George-street line; but I attribute that more to the season of the year than to anything else.
265. Is it a heavy falling off, or a slight falling off? Only a slight falling off. As the Dulwich Hill-Newton line has increased the traffic by 60 per cent., we may reasonably expect a corresponding increase on the Glebe Point, Leichhardt, and Balmain lines when they are converted. It would then be quite impossible to run all the traffic from those lines into George-street, so that we cannot convert them unless some other outlet is provided. I have some interesting information with regard to the practice in other cities. I have here a map of the Melbourne tramways, and I would like to point out that Melbourne has practically six tramway arteries in addition to three metropolitan railway stations. Within the last few days I obtained a copy of the annual report of the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company, from which I find that the total number of passengers carried on the tramways in Melbourne last year was 41,036,689, as compared with 66,244,344 carried on our lines last year, and probably from 70,000,000 to 75,000,000 will be carried this year. At the present time the number of passengers carried in George-street, between the Railway Station and the Circular Quay, inclusive of through passengers from Dulwich Hill and Newtown, is nearly 70,000 per diem. That is over half the total number of passengers carried in Melbourne, where there are six main arteries. I have a document showing examples of street tramways in the United States. From that I find that St. Louis shows 350 miles of tramways. They generally quote single track. Taking it the same way in Sydney, we have only 100 miles; but their population is only half as large again as that of Sydney. Philadelphia shows 500 miles of single track. In the case of New York the example is also striking.

- J. Kneeshaw. 266. It would appear from the document you place before the Committee, that the Melbourne system is more extensive than ours? I do not think they have quite so much mileage.
- 22 Aug., 1900. 267. In the city proper? It is more extensive; but they have these six main arterics.
268. Seeing they do not carry nearly so many passengers in the aggregate, can you inform us as to the manner in which they make good the revenue as compared to the capital expended? Within the city boundaries the fares are 1½d., but only for short distances, otherwise their fares are uniformly 3d.
269. So that, speaking generally, their fares are much higher than those in Sydney? Yes, much higher. With the exception of a few workmen's trams which they run early in the mornings, and on one or two lines competing with the railways, where the charge is 1d., they charge nothing less than 1½d. By the workmen's trams in Sydney passengers can come from Leichhardt and other suburbs practically into Sydney for 1d. in the morning.
270. *Mr. Hyam.*] What distance would that be? About 3½ miles.
271. But if they came to the Circular Quay? They would have to pay 2d.
272. Then where do you bring them to for 1d.? To the Railway Station.
273. There is a system in Melbourne by which they can check off from one line to another? Yes; there is a transfer system in Melbourne.
274. You can ride on two sections for one fare? Yes; but the sections are not nearly so long as they are in Sydney. For instance, you can go from Sydney to Botany for 4d. I do not think you can get anything like that in Melbourne, except on a line that may possibly be competing with a railway.
275. If you came in by an eastern line you could get a check-off for the railway or Newtown for a single fare? It might be rendered necessary with 3d. fares, but not whilst we have 1d. sections.
276. *Mr. Watson.*] You only count a passenger so often as he takes out a ticket? Yes. In connection with the scheme under consideration what I would like to point out is that we want additional routes. I consider that it would be better if a single line of tramway came *via* Castlereagh-street to Circular Quay and returned by way of Pitt-street. The new route would be used then primarily for railway traffic, and thus prevent the crossing of trams at the George-street junction signal box, which I have no hesitation in saying is very risky. Railway passengers who wanted to use the electric tram in George-street would not mind very much if they were landed in Castlereagh-street on the up journey into the city provided they could join on the down to the railway journey in Pitt-street. But I think they would strongly object if they had to journey to Castlereagh-street and join the trams there for the railway, and afterwards have to tranship into the train.
277. *Dr. Garran.*] They have had to do it in Elizabeth-street for years? We did not get the number then; they took the 'busses or walked from the station. I think there would be a large pick-up traffic in Pitt-street from section to section, which would help to make the line remunerative.
278. *Mr. Watson.*] A good deal of the pick-up traffic now obtainable in George-street really belongs to Pitt-street? Yes.
279. *Chairman.*] Have you considered how you propose to divide the traffic after the construction of these two lines—one down Castlereagh-street and one down Pitt-street? We should have to put a portion of the western suburban traffic into Castlereagh-street, because George-street might not be able to carry the whole of the traffic. That might possibly be arranged by running a few trams on each of the lines, or by diverting the whole of the traffic by one principal line into Castlereagh-street.
280. Would not the effect of these additional lines in the city be to make the working of the crossings more difficult and dangerous during the busy hours of the day? No; I think that what is proposed would lessen the difficulty and risk.
281. Would there be any serious interference with the cable traffic on the crossings? No.
282. After viewing the documents you have handed in, showing the St. Louis, Philadelphia, and New York systems, does it not appear to you that Sydney is greatly under-trammed? Yes.
283. Do you consider that Sydney is greatly under-trammed at present? Sydney is greatly deficient in regard to its facilities for bringing people into the city. I think it would be better if we could deal with the railway traffic by bringing it into Sydney by train, leaving the tramways to deal with the legitimate tramway traffic alone. We are short of facilities for bringing people into the city.
284. How would the tramway rates, charged in Sydney, compare with those in the United States, which are shown in the documents handed into the Committee? There is invariably a 5 cent fare in those cities. If a person only travels a block he has to pay 5 cents as compared with 1d. sections in Sydney.
285. Do you know how the average fares would work out in each case? They do not give us sufficient data to check them. But the average fare in Sydney is less than 1½d.
286. *Mr. Watson.*] Is that under the new system? Yes.
287. *Dr. Garran.*] Is there any place where the fares are lower than in Sydney? No; they have ½d. fares in Glasgow, but the sections are not so long as here.
288. *Chairman.*] When you stated that you thought the tramway passengers would not mind being put off at Castlereagh-street on the up journey, so long as they could take the tramway in Pitt-street on the down journey, did you state that in view of the fact that by far the larger portion of the traffic which the trams are likely to take comes west of Castlereagh-street? Yes.
289. I suppose you have very little means of estimating the probable increase in returns there would be on these two lines—that is to say, whether they would be profitable or not? I have really no means of ascertaining; but it is impossible to carry the whole of the traffic in George-street and we must have some fresh outlet.
290. Have you estimated what amount of relief would be given in George-street by the construction of these proposed lines? I think it would immediately relieve it of about half the traffic.
291. *Mr. Watson.*] On the present basis? Yes; after we have converted the trams to the western suburbs we should fill up in George-street again, but probably a large amount of 'bus traffic would fall out.
292. *Chairman.*] The general result of these proposals would be to relieve George-street? Yes.
293. *Dr. Garran.*] As Superintendent of the Tramway Department, is this plan for constructing tram lines along Castlereagh and Pitt streets your plan, or is it someone else's plan submitted to you for approval? I am under the impression that it was designed by the Railway Commissioners and submitted to the Works Department.
294. Has it been formally submitted to you? No.
295. You have not officially given your approval or disapproval? I have not been called upon to give an expression of opinion, but I know the Railway Commissioners are favourable to the proposal. 296.

296. Do you come here to express distinctly your approval of the proposed system of a line down Castle-reagh-street and up Pitt-street in preference to a double line in Castlereagh-street? Yes. J. Kneeshaw.
22 Aug., 1900.
297. Your main object is to get the railway traffic out of George-street? Yes.
298. Will you detail a little more fully than you have done how you propose to do that? At the present time we run trams into the station yard from George-street. We should take them off, and run *via* Pitt-street.
299. You would have no connection between the George-street tram-line and the station yard? The connection would be there, but we should not use it.
300. So that if a person in Sydney wants to be carried into the station yard he will have to take the Pitt-street line? Yes.
301. And then, if a person takes the George-street tram, wanting to go into the Railway Station yard, he will have to walk from the George-street junction to the yard? Yes.
302. For a short time after the electric trams were opened you run the steam trams into the station yard as of old, or did people get down at the gates? They got down at the gates.
303. So that people would not be worse off than they were then? No.
304. Do you recollect whether, during that short time—a week, I think it was—that a large amount of traffic was taken on the George-street tram? Yes; a very large amount of it.
305. Under the new system, those who insist on taking a George-street car will have to walk from George-street into the station yard? Yes.
306. Have you any idea as to whether people would rather go to Pitt-street and take a car that would take them right into the station yard than take a George-street car and get out at the railway gates? I think they would rather go into Pitt-street and get a tram that would take them right into the Railway Station.
307. Take ladies with children, for instance—they are very frightened of the trams and vehicular traffic opposite the Railway Station—you think they would rather walk into Pitt-street to get a tram that would take them right into the station yard? Yes. At the same time we should not get anything like the same quantity of traffic from the Castlereagh-street line.
308. My reason for putting the question, is this—you are wanting to get the railway tram traffic out of George-street, and I want to know whether the mere shifting of the traffic to the railway gates will deter so many people from taking the George-street line as will give you the relief you want? It will give us immediate relief; but it will not be long before George-street will not hold the whole of the western suburban traffic, and we shall require to put a portion of it into Castlereagh and Pitt streets.
309. When you get the Glebe, the Forest Lodge, and Annandale lines all converted, you will have more traffic than you can manage in George-street? Yes.
310. Then you will have the same trouble of crossings that you complain of now? Yes; if you put all into Castlereagh-street, but we shall divide the traffic between George-street and Castlereagh and Pitt streets.
311. All these trams will have to cross? Yes.
312. You will have the same danger then as now? Yes.
313. From what you say of the George-street traffic, it will be absolutely impossible to divert all the western trams into George-street? It would be impossible to put the whole of the western suburban traffic into George-street.
314. Would it be much of a relief to put the line down Kent-street? It would afford some relief, but it would be necessary for portions of the city to be remodelled before anything of that kind can be done. There have been schemes for running trams by way of Kent-street, but nothing very definite has come out of them.
315. Suppose in connection with the remodelling of the wharf frontages it were possible to put a tram-line into Sussex-street to take some of the traffic from the Railway Station, would that relieve George-street to any extent? It might relieve George-street, but it would intensify another evil by adding to the traffic of that very congested junction opposite the Railway Station.
316. That is you cannot get into Sussex-street without going down as far as Hay-street? Not as it at present stands.
317. So that if a line were put down Kent-street, the traffic would all have to go past the junction you speak of? Yes; unless the city was remodelled.
318. Will you give the Committee some idea of how you are going to manage the traffic going into the Railway Station,—you will not have the George-street lines going into the yard, but you will have the Pitt-street line running in;—will it go in just where it is now? Yes. The points are there. There will be the same amount of traffic, but we should be able to deal with it more satisfactorily, until such times as we shall be absolutely forced to take some portion of the western suburban traffic into Castlereagh-street.
319. Suppose the Government should adopt the scheme of putting a railway station at Belmore-road, you can divert this tram traffic to that station just as you can do to the present station? I daresay they would have better terminal arrangements at the new station; but what I wish to see is a diversion of the railway portion of the George-street traffic.
320. You do not think there will be satisfaction till you move the whole of that traffic from George-street? No. The configuration of Sydney is so totally different to that of Melbourne. As I have stated, they have six tramway arteries in addition to three metropolitan stations, whereas we have only three main tramway arteries, inclusive of the cable tram.
321. You think, so far as you have studied the habits of the people here, that those who want to go to the Railway Station from Sydney will in the main make up their minds to go into Pitt-street to get the tram? I think they will be quite satisfied to go into Pitt-street. It is only a few steps from George-street, and they will save a walk from the railway gates to the Railway Station. I think the distance from the gates to the platforms would be further than from George-street to Pitt-street.
322. How many trams are going by the junction at George-street in front of the Railway Station at the present time,—not one a minute, is it? Much quicker than that. Including the railway trams, they are running past there in busy times of the day at an average of less than twenty seconds in either direction.
323. *Mr. Watson.*] That includes the steam trams and all? Yes.
324. *Dr. Garran.*] You are trying to multiply trams from King-street to Ocean-street? Yes.
325. If you go one every half minute down George-street, and one every minute down King-street, do you not think you are overdoing the junctions? No; all trams stop a little before they reach the street intersections

- J. Kneeshaw. intersections for the purpose of picking up and setting down passengers, and whilst they are so engaged the cross trams can be taken over the street.
- 22 Aug., 1900. 326. What I want to know is this,—does your experience show you that half a minute is enough to enable them to cross with safety? Yes; thirty seconds is more than sufficient.
327. On your system, you are going to have difficult crossings four times—in Pitt-street, in George-street, in Castlereagh-street, and in Elizabeth-street—now do you think the trams will be able to keep up minute services, and cross all those lines safely? I see no difficulty.
328. Do they have such line crossings in New York or Philadelphia? I cannot say.
329. You are going by experience so far? Yes.
330. You have two crossings at present? Yes; and we have very heavy traffic on them.
331. And you add to them two more? We do not apprehend any difficulty.
332. Then you are of opinion that the proposed method of relieving the George-street traffic will in reality succeed? It will, undoubtedly, be a relief.
333. A sufficient relief for your purposes? Sufficient for the present; but I am satisfied that we shall want more relief by-and-by.
334. Suppose a new railway station is built at Belmore-road, and a tram system is carried to the railway, it would still be possible to carry a new line into Sydney? Yes.
335. The construction of a station at Belmore-road would not necessarily foreclose the construction of a railway station in the city? No.
336. Coming down to Pitt-street, do you remember the old Pitt-street tramiine? I know that there was such a line, but I do not remember it.
337. That was a double line, and it blocked the street; but you do not think a single line would block the street? No, I think it would be an improvement.
338. Do you know if any of the American streets are as narrow as ours? In New York they are quite as narrow, and have a double line of tramways.
339. Is Castlereagh-street wider than Pitt-street? I cannot say, but I fancy it may be a little wider.
340. Going down to the Circular Quay, do you approve of the plan suggested of running one tram-line down one street and back by another? That is the best arrangement that can be made, and will interfere least with the traffic at the Circular Quay.
341. Do you approve of leaving your present loops at Circular Quay, and going on to Fort Macquarie? Yes; it is very desirable that the trams should go to Fort Macquarie to enable people to have ready means of access to the Gardens; and, secondly, and a very important item, to give us increased shunting facilities; and, thirdly, to provide storage accommodation at the terminal point, in order that we may remove from the traffic what are termed the broken shift trams—that is, trams that are brought in in the mornings and evenings to meet the heavy traffic at certain hours, and are returned to the sheds during the day; further than that, additional car-shed accommodation is absolutely necessary.
342. Have you examined the plan of the car-shed? Yes.
343. Is it large enough for your purposes? Yes; so far as we can see it will be until the conversion of the eastern system.
344. Would the site allow for further extension if you wanted it? I think not; the land closer to the sea has been taken as a reserve, and fenced in; it was not thought desirable to go further.
345. Looking to the future, you will not want to enlarge that shed? It will be better to take the cars elsewhere.
346. You will have more trams than are running now? Yes, as there is an additional length of 30 chains of line, additional cars will be necessary.
347. There will be a certain amount of passenger traffic right down to that terminus? Yes, but I should not propose to take them all down there. We should still retain the existing loop at Circular Quay.
348. Can your electric cars move backward and forwards, or must they go in one direction? They can be moved in any direction.
349. So that you can shunt at a siding? Yes; shunt at any intermediate crossing-loop.
350. The motor itself can be driven at either end? From either end, and in either direction.
351. In the course of time, when you get more power, you propose converting the Elizabeth-street line also into the electric system? Yes.
352. Would all the trams run into the terminus at Fort Macquarie? No; a number of them would not run to Fort Macquarie; some would circle round in front of the Custom House buildings and go back again.
353. And going down to the Quay, you would have to keep to the "Métropole"? Yes; you would have to run *via* the "Métropole" in going down to the Quay.
354. *Mr. Watson.*] You want to go down where all the ferry boats come in? Yes.
355. And you see the necessity of connecting the ferry boats with the electrical tram services? Certainly; it is very necessary we should connect with the ferry boats.
356. But the whole, or most, of the ferry passengers are not going to the western suburbs, but into town? That is so; at the same time on holidays a very great proportion want to go to the other suburbs.
357. But the ordinary daily traffic from North Shore is of people merely wanting to come into the city? Yes.
358. And you can accommodate them now, as far as George-street is concerned? Yes.
359. And you want to give them the opportunity of running up Elizabeth-street and Pitt-street as well? Yes.
360. That is why you want to go down by the "Métropole" to the Circular Quay? Yes; that is the only way we can get down owing to the gradients.
361. Of course, to get to the Circular Quay is not merely to serve people who have come from North Shore, but rather to serve the numbers of people who go down the harbour and back again? Yes.
362. Will you not have all the traffic congested at Circular Quay? We can keep the circle round the Custom House free from existing lines.
363. Then, the loop round the Custom House will rather be a relief, and without that relief you could not manage it at all? I think it will do for the present.
364. Leaving the future to take care of itself? Yes; I hope that by-and-by the city railway will be constructed, and then relieve the trams of traffic they should not be expected to deal with.

365. In respect to the extension to Fort Macquarie, what proportion of the expenditure should be charged J. Kneeshaw. against the new line down Castlereagh-street and up Pitt-street, and what proportion to the existing service of George-street to Circular Quay? In efficiency the car-shed is expected to hold sixty cars; the additional cars that might be fairly charged to the Castlereagh-street route, bearing in mind the extra distance they have to work from the present terminus at Circular Quay to Fort Macquarie is thirty cars. Therefore we might fairly say that one-half the cost of that shed would be chargeable to their work. That would not include the sidings. 22 Aug., 1900.

366. Well, assuming that the Castlereagh-street line were not constructed, do you think it would still be necessary to have that extension, or one slightly less costly, to Fort Macquarie? I think it very desirable to run on there.

367. At present how do you arrange for additional cars during the busy part of the day in George-street? We bring them from the car-sheds at Ultimo and Newtown, and when we are finished with them we take them back again.

368. Then, many cars make extra trips for nothing? Practically that is so.

369. Otherwise you have to bring them a trip in which they earn nothing? Yes.

370. That is done by a portion of the cars in the mornings and evenings? What we term the broken shifts.

371. Can you say what proportion of the cars that includes? That includes about a third of the total number of the cars. Of course, it would be very desirable to have some of these broken shifts "stabled" at their own end of the yard, otherwise you would be undoing all the good you did.

372. By having two storage ends? Having two or three storage ends, you can economise your work.

373. Mr. Hyam.] Is there not some intention of continuing the tram to Dawes' Point or Miller's Point? I understand the Minister for Works intended to carry out the work.

374. Would that be a continuation of the George-street tram? Yes; the junction would be at the Fire Brigade Station in George-street North. But I fancy the scheme is being held in abeyance, pending the wharf resumptions. It is only a small extension, costing possibly some £15,000 or £16,000.

375. Mr. Watson.] It has been suggested that to relieve George-street on the westerly side some of the western traffic might be taken down George-street in its widest part and then along through Kent-street, branching from Liverpool-street to the back of the Town Hall? That scheme has been considered. I think it might be possible to do something of that sort later on, after the city has been remodelled on the Darling Harbour side.

376. Then if you had, in connection with this remodelling of the city, an opening towards George-street, west of Kent-street, without going into Kent-street proper, that would be of assistance in dealing with the western traffic? It would afford considerable relief.

377. Mr. Hyam.] You have not said whether you advocate any other line, in preference to the line by way of Castlereagh and Pitt streets;—do you think if you had that tram down Castlereagh-street and up Pitt-street you would discontinue the tram from the corner of Liverpool-street to the railway? No. We should still have to run some trams there afterwards. That would be a matter for further consideration. Of course, Elizabeth-street will have to be used in connection with the eastern conversion scheme. We should, in all probability, arrange some means for transferring passengers from Liverpool-street towards the western suburbs.

378. The passengers from the eastern suburbs would have to be transferred to the railway line? We should have to arrange for that.

THURSDAY, 23 AUGUST, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

THE HON. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

THE HON. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

THE HON. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

Alfred Edward, Registrar, Metropolitan Transit Commission, sworn and examined:—

379. Chairman.] You understand the nature of the inquiry before this Committee? Yes.

380. Mr. Hyam.] Have you any statement you desire to make in reference to this matter? Yes. When I had notice to attend this Committee I prepared a short statement, which I will read. It is as follows:—

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THE placing of a tramway upon any other street running between Circular Quay and the Railway would be a distinct disadvantage to the regulation of traffic. The tramway in George-street resulted in a considerable increase in the number of vehicles using Pitt and Castlereagh Streets, especially in the former. It is now under consideration to prohibit the passage of all heavy and slow traffic along George and Pitt Streets during busy hours. If this course is adopted these vehicles will necessarily have to use Castlereagh-street, as it is the only other convenient roadway leading to the Circular Quay, which is the usual terminus. No omnibuses run along Castlereagh-street; but along Pitt-street ninety-two omnibuses run 952 trips each way, and keep up a continuous stream all day long. These omnibuses all turn to the east at Park-street, and go by way of William or Oxford Streets. Pitt-street is undoubtedly the most congested street in Sydney, and it is already a difficult matter to properly regulate the traffic upon it. It is only 36 feet wide; and as I understand it is proposed to lay a single line on one side of the street to admit of the double line being laid at any future time, the space from line to near-side kerb would be 9 feet 6 inches, and as the width of an ordinary omnibus is 7 feet 3 inches, there is not much room for trams to pass. It is evident, however, that unless George-street is to be given over entirely to the trams, and every other description of vehicle removed, that no appreciable addition can be made to the number of cars now running; and already there are far too few to accommodate the passengers on existing lines, to say nothing of those proposed to be opened to electric traction. The width of a double line of tramway would be 17 feet between the two outside rails; the width of an omnibus, as I have already stated, is 7 feet 3 inches; and the space from the tram-line to the kerb on the nearest side would be 9 feet 6 inches, so that there would be hardly room for an omnibus to pass if a double line of rails were laid.

381. You say that Pitt-street is 36 feet wide;—is that from kerb to kerb? Yes; I obtained the measurements from the City Surveyor.

382. Then it is not what they call a chain street? No; it is not.

383.

- A. Edward. 383. Is it narrower than Castlereagh-street? I did not ascertain the width of Castlereagh-street, but I should presume that it would be a little narrower.
- 23 Aug., 1900. 384. You think it undesirable to have a tramway in Pitt-street? I think it would be undesirable from a traffic point of view.
385. I suppose you are aware that it is impossible to increase the number of trams in George-street at the present time? Unless we take all the other traffic off the street.
386. The new electric trams in the end must supersede the omnibus traffic, and if the Commissioners cannot take their lines into some other street, it is the greatest certainty in the world that we must cease to construct tram-lines altogether? If more electric trams are to run from the western suburbs it is inevitable that either Pitt or Castlereagh Streets will have to be used for tram purposes.
387. What influence do you think the George-street tram-lines have had on the omnibus traffic? Wherever the electric tram runs the omnibus traffic has practically ceased to exist.
388. Supposing the proposed tramway is constructed? It will have no effect upon the omnibuses which now run up Pitt-street, for the reason that those omnibuses ply to the eastern suburbs, and the proposed lines are intended for the western suburbs.
389. From the railway? They come from a westerly direction.
390. The railway and possibly the western suburbs? It does not affect the eastern suburbs where the omnibuses ply.
391. When the whole of the steam tramways have been converted to the electric system, what effect do you think that will have upon the omnibuses running to the eastern suburbs? As soon as the trams run up Oxford-street nearly all the omnibuses running down Pitt-street will be discontinued.
392. You mean those running from the Circular Quay? I do.
393. And radiating up to the eastern suburbs? Yes; practically the whole of them will cease to ply when the electric service is extended to the eastern suburbs—that is, to Waverley, Woollahra, and Paddington principally.
394. Then whatever inconvenience these proposed trams might cause it would not be very lasting? It would not continue, perhaps, for more than twelve months. The running of the electric trams to the eastern suburbs will remove most of the omnibuses from those routes. Independently of the omnibuses, there is a large amount of vehicular traffic in Pitt-street which will not be affected by the proposed trams.
395. You state that there is only about 9 feet 6 inches clear between the kerb and the tram line? Yes, on the near side.
396. The space on the wider side of the street would have to be sufficiently wide to allow two vehicles to pass? Yes, to allow them to pass safely.
397. Then it would be better to put one line in Castlereagh-street? Yes; it would be better to have a single line in Castlereagh-street and a single line in Pitt-street.
398. Could not the greater part of the heavy traffic in Sydney be taken into York-street or Clarence-street? No; the greater part of the heavy traffic of Sydney is a direct service from the Darling Harbour to the railway and the Circular Quay.
399. Could not some of the traffic be diverted down Kent-street? To get into Kent-street it would have to go as far as Liverpool-street. Kent-street is very unsuitable for heavy traffic, as there are very heavy gradients in it.
400. The regulation of the street traffic rests a good deal with you? Yes.
401. The question is, how are you going to divert the traffic from Pitt-street in the event of the construction of the proposed tram-line? Whether the tramway is constructed or not, it is proposed to prohibit the heavy traffic from going into George or Pitt Street between, say, Bridge-street and Goulburn-street. The localities are not absolutely decided on yet, but drivers will have to take the traffic into any street they like other than George or Pitt Street. The drift of that regulation is that they would be thrown on to Castlereagh-street; a tram running down the street would not prohibit it, as there would still be a space on the side of the line.
402. Unless it was a double line? Yes.
403. If all the heavy traffic were diverted into Castlereagh-street the congestion there would be as great as it is now in George-street? No, not nearly so great. In my opinion I do not think you could prohibit the heavy traffic from going into Castlereagh-street, if you exclude it from going into Pitt-street or George-street.
404. It is not proposed to prohibit it from going into those streets, but it might occasion a great deal of inconvenience? I think you would have to rely on regulations to prevent the inconvenience. It would be impracticable to prohibit it from going into Castlereagh-street if you prohibit it from going into Pitt or George Streets.
405. From what you have stated to the Committee, I gather that you are opposed to these proposed two lines altogether? I say they would be against good traffic regulations; but I see no alternative to using either one or other of those streets to relieve the congestion of George-street. I think the necessity absolute.
406. Do you think running a single line down Castlereagh-street and up Pitt-street would be better than running a double line along Castlereagh-street? From a traffic point of view, I do not think it would be better; that is, it would be better from a passenger point of view.
407. It is a difficult problem to solve—these means of conveying people in trams? I am sure, from the travelling-public point of view, those who ride in trams, that a single line down Castlereagh and up Pitt-street, is the best; but from a traffic point of view, it is not the best.
408. *Dr. Garran.*] You spoke just now of traffic from Darling Harbour to stores in Sydney;—do you mean the goods station in Darling Harbour or the private wharves? Principally from the goods station.
409. What is the character of the traffic from the goods station to the warehouses in Sydney? The largest amount of traffic is wool and heavy goods coming from Circular Quay.
410. What kind of goods other than wool? Heavy merchandise, timber, and things of that sort.
411. As regards the wool, have not two or three warehouses been lately erected at Pyrmont, and does not the wool go direct from the railway to them? Yes.
412. And none of the wool intended for those warehouses would go up George-street? No.
413. Unless it is going to the warehouses in the city, that traffic does not cumber Castlereagh-street, Pitt-street, or George-street? No.

414. If the tendency be to multiply warehouses in Pyrmont, that would relieve the streets in Sydney of much of the heavy traffic? Independently of wool there is a large amount of traffic from the Circular Quay, and Woolloomooloo, and Miller's Point, where so much shipping goes. There is for instance a large traffic in salt, cement, and other merchandise, which requires the use of heavy vehicles to carry it. A. Edward.
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415. But the produce brought down by the railway is principally wool and timber, and if we take the wool into the stores at Pyrmont to that extent, we diminish the wool traffic in the streets named? Yes.
416. And if we develop a timber export trade by building a wharf at Darling Island we shall not have so much timber going through the streets? Quite so.
417. So also with grain—if we make a good grain wharf there we shall get that out of the streets? That would help to relieve the main streets of Sydney.
418. Coming round to the east side of Darling Harbour, the wharfs and places about Sussex-street do not send much stuff into George-street? Yes, a great deal, and there is a great deal that goes to the wharfs and other places.
419. But that is principally intercolonial and coastal produce? Quite so.
420. The stores ordered from the country have to go down Sussex-street towards Darling Harbour? Yes.
421. And you would rather trouble those streets than George-street? The traffic causes great inconvenience in Sussex-street.
422. If we had a good broad street like Sussex-street, but twice its width, and with good gradients, you would have no trouble? The whole of the traffic might then be kept out of George-street by being sent round that way.
423. If we made a wide Sussex-street, do you think we should take the traffic more on the level, by a better gradient? If a wide street were made in place of Sussex-street, and some means adopted for getting rid of the steep gradients into George-street, the difficulty would be greatly reduced.
424. Can you do it in any other way than by coming into Goulburn-street to avoid the gradients? Suppose a load of goods was at Darling Harbour, and you wanted it to go to Circular Quay, you might take it along Sussex-street by easy gradients as far as Margaret-street, but from there to George-street North, somewhere about Dawes Point, the gradient would be too high. But if a tunnel or something of that kind were introduced, the difficulty would be obviated.
425. Then you would propose to make another tunnel, something like the Argyle Cut, leading from Sussex-street into George-street? Yes.
426. You think that would be preferable to taking a longer detour? No; if you make them take a longer detour you could not keep the traffic out of George, Pitt, and Castlereagh Streets.
427. But, as the city is laid out at present, we cannot continue Sussex-street northwards with any great width? Not further than Margaret-street, unless you take the Gas Company's property.
428. Then your scheme for the city improvement would be to commence at the gas works and turn to the right in a tunnel? Practically, near Margaret-street, if a tunnel could be made from there towards the Queen's wharf.
429. That is your idea of removing the difficulty? That would remove the risk of these heavy goods going down George, Pitt, and Castlereagh Streets.
430. The traffic from the upper part of Darling Harbour;—is that circulated amongst different stores, or does it nearly all go to the Circular Quay? It nearly all goes to the Circular Quay.
431. What for? I do not know what for. But if you see the vehicles going from Darling Harbour, you invariably see them go out at Liverpool or Goulburn Street down to Circular Quay.
432. Why should produce taken from Darling Harbour go to the Circular Quay;—does it go there to be shipped? I think most of it comes by rail.
433. That would be true with regard to produce coming by the railway terminus, but not as regards produce coming by coastal and intercolonial boats? No; that is divided into all the streets. The probability is that the produce, when landed, goes along Sussex-street until it reaches George-street.
434. By turning up Hay-street? Yes.
435. Take the York-street traffic. Does most of it climb up these streets with steep gradients? Yes; they pull it up through Erskine, King, or Market Streets.
436. And then it goes in various ways? Yes, everywhere.
437. Does much of it go to the Railway Station? I am not aware; I fancy much of it is taken to the city stores.
438. All this country produce sold at Redfern is exclusively what comes down by railway? I think so.
439. So that practically we have two markets in Sydney—one for produce brought down by railway, and one for produce brought down by way of Darling Harbour? Yes.
440. Since the wharfs were built in Woolloomooloo Bay a very large quantity of cargo from there, I notice, comes by way of Boomerang-street? Yes.
441. The wool mostly goes up Macquarie-street? Yes, except that which is intended for the stores at Darling Harbour.
442. Does that travel by way of George-street or Pitt-street? They prefer, as a rule, to go by way of George-street.
443. Most of the wool is destined for warehouses at the Circular Quay? Yes; some of it goes direct from Darling Harbour to Woolloomooloo Bay.
444. Could not that carriage be more cheaply done by lighterage? Practical experience points the other way.
445. Now let us come to that part of Darling Harbour between the gas-works and Dawes Point;—some of the best wharfs are there? Yes. The Chinese boats for instance lie there.
446. When the cargo is unshipped there, do they struggle up the hill with it? The cargo from the Chinese boats, for instance, is taken through a narrow little lane in which two vehicles can scarcely pass each other.
447. About as bad a transit arrangement as could be made? Could not be worse; many a horse has been killed going down that lane.
448. In regard to the widening of Sussex-street, could we get any deviation about the Gas Company's property? You would have to go through the Gas Company's property.
449. Not even by tunnel? Back to the wharfs again.

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450. Yes? There is a steep decline from Kent-street to the water all the way round to Dawes Point.
451. A piece of that land belongs to the City Council? Yes; that shows the slope—the original slope of the ground.
452. Originally it was very rocky all the way to Gas-lane? Yes.
453. Could Sussex-street be improved from there round as far as Dawes Point towards the Circular Quay? I do not see how a roadway could be made from the northern side of the Gas Company's property round to Dawes Point, near the water's edge, except at very great expense.
454. Is there space for it between Kent-street and the shore? More than enough space for any roadway.
455. Your new street would almost lead back to Kent-street? The street would be about 100 feet wide, and I think that would leave another 100 feet.
456. With regard to the present, how far does the traffic which comes from that part of the harbour hamper George-street or Pitt-street, or Castlereagh-street? The traffic coming from Miller's Point practically does not hamper George-street very much at all, it goes along to the junction of Kent-street and Fort-street, but the gradients in Kent-street are so bad that the carts very frequently come along York-street and Clarence-street, and enter George-street near the Town Hall; then they are a nuisance.
457. Going along Kent-street many of the warehouses in York-street would have their goods landed at them? They could do so, but they are few; that would not represent much of the traffic.
458. A good deal of hardware would be delivered? Yes; there are a good few warehouses like McArthur's and Lassetter's which would be west of George-street. The vehicles going there would not occupy any portion of George-street.
459. There is a good deal of traffic in Sydney that does not bother George-street at all? Yes; but if you go into George-street during any portion of the day you will see a large number of these heavy vehicles in the street.
460. With regard to those vehicles carrying sawn timber—I see a number of those occasionally about in the busy street in the middle of the day? Yes; and many carts with iron too.
461. Is there no regulation in regard to that? A regulation is being framed now; it has not been passed yet, but the effect of it will be that no heavy or slow vehicle, which, from its construction or loading proceeds at a walking pace, shall go into George or Pitt Streets, between Bridge and Goulburn Streets. Their chief obstruction does not arise so much from what they carry as from the pace they travel at. That traffic will be prohibited from going into those streets. The regulation will also provide that no loading beyond a certain height shall be allowed. For instance, some of the wool loads extend 20 feet from the top of the drays or waggons, and that is a dangerous load.
462. Looked at from your point of view, which is that of the inconvenience of those who walk or drive in the streets, the effect of making these two tram-lines will be distinctly to increase the discomfort of that class of people? It will be a distinct disadvantage from a traffic-regulation point of view.
463. The effect of putting a tram down a street is to spoil it for vehicles? Quite so. They absolutely spoil it for comfort and for vehicular traffic.
464. So that the fewer the streets occupied by trams the better for the public, excepting those who ride in the trams;—so that any advantage we gain in one way we lose in another? There is constant danger in putting trams in congested streets, such as George-street or Pitt-street.
465. Can you see any other remedy for it? I do not. I see no alternative but to run trams down some other streets, unless you continue the steam trams as at present.
466. But they will be continued on the electrical system? But they will want another street or two; the steam trams could be continued in Elizabeth-street, but with the introduction of electric trams the use of other streets is necessary.
467. I would like to point out to you that Mr. Kneeshaw, in giving evidence before the Committee yesterday, told us that they were running one-minute trams down George-street, and also one-minute trams along William-street; if these two tram-lines are constructed in Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street, the tram along King-street will have to cross tram-lines at George-street, Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street;—would that create any difficulty to the rest of the traffic? The trams up King-street would be running at one-minute intervals, and that would, undoubtedly, interfere with the other traffic. Naturally, the more streets you occupy with trams, and the more intersections there are to cross, the more congested will the traffic become, because the other traffic must give way to the trams.
468. There are still a good many omnibuses going up King-street? The minute tram service will soon stop them.
469. Some of these omnibuses go as far as the Edgecliffe-road;—will they be stopped? I think so; there will be no 'buses on the Edgecliffe-road after this week.
470. There are still some 'buses going to St. Vincent's Hospital, Potts Point, and Elizabeth Bay? It will have the same effect on them.
471. Then if branch omnibuses are not introduced to those places, the people living there will be worse served than they are now? That is a difficulty to be considered. I do not think it will pay to run 'buses. It would not pay to run a branch 'bus from William-street to Potts Point. It certainly would not pay at penny fares. The experiment was tried of running a penny 'bus along the Darling Point Road, where it met the tram. At first the fare was 2d.; but the revenue only amounted to about 6s. per day, and it cost £1 per day to run the 'bus. Then they tried it with penny fares. Then the revenue was only about 5s. per day; and, of course, the 'buses ceased running.
472. Then the effect of this new system of tram service will be to increase the convenience of those living exactly on the lines of the trams, but it will decrease the convenience of those who live at a distance from the tram-lines? Yes; they will have to walk to the trams.
473. It is a long way from Elizabeth Bay to the tram? Yes; I dare say they will try to run a 'bus from Elizabeth Bay into the city, but I do not think it will pay.
474. With regard to the difficulty I pointed out about those four streets having cross lines, will it be got over by the elimination of the omnibuses altogether? Yes, so far as the 'bus traffic is concerned; but all the other vehicular traffic must be inconvenienced.
475. Do you think these four crossings will materially interfere with the ordinary traffic? I think it will have the effect of compelling people to drive up Market-street.
476. A tram down a street is a benefit to the shopkeepers of that street? They think so.
477. It is a good advertisement for them? Yes; people can get to the shops at a cheap rate.

478. Before we had the trams in George-street to take the people, do you think as many people went down Elizabeth-street every day as went down George-street? Yes; in vehicles and trams.

479. Did the trams down Elizabeth-street take as many people who wanted to go to the business houses as went down George-street? Not if you include the walkers. Those who rode in 'buses or trams in Elizabeth-street were twice as many as those who rode in 'buses along George-street.

480. We need expect no opposition from the Pitt-street shopkeepers? No; the only way it would militate against the shopkeepers is at such places as the Co-operative Stores, Hordern Brothers, and other places to which a large amount of what we may call carriage purchasing people are brought. They are sure to fight shy of the trams as much as possible. It would not affect Farmer's, because carriages could pull up in Market-street. Once you put a tramway in Pitt-street it would never do to allow vehicles to stand there.

481. Do you recollect the double tram line that ran down Pitt-street many years ago? Yes.

482. There were great complaints then? Yes; I think from the shopkeepers' point of view they would prefer a tram down Pitt-street, because for every person who comes in a private vehicle there would be 500 come in the tram. In respect to George-street, the shopkeepers there were exceedingly anxious for the tram to be laid along that street.

483. Do you think the traffic in George-street has increased since the tramway in George-street was opened there? I think it has.

484. And other streets have been correspondingly affected? I think so.

485. So that the people in other streets who have shops would like to get that traffic back again? I dare say they would.

486. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What effect has the electric trams in George-street had in regard to the other traffic? They have had the effect of running off a large number of 'buses, and they have proved a nuisance to drivers and pedestrians; the tram bells are constantly ringing to warn people out of the way, and everybody who can goes out of George-street into Pitt-street to get out of the way.

487. Then it has had the effect of removing a portion of the traffic from George-street? Yes; part of the vehicular traffic has gone into Castlereagh-street and part into Pitt-street.

488. The traffic in those streets will therefore be more congested? Yes; Pitt-street is ever so much more congested.

489. How many lines of 'buses removed from George-street? No lines of 'buses have removed from George-street to Pitt-street, but a large number of omnibuses that used to run down George-street have been discontinued altogether.

490. The discontinuation of the omnibuses is owing to the trams? Yes; wherever a tram runs the omnibuses cease to ply. They cannot make a living.

491. What is your opinion concerning another line of tram down Pitt-street and down Castlereagh-street? To put any tram in either of those streets is a distinct disadvantage from a traffic regulation point of view. But I think it is inevitable that one or other of those streets should be taken for the convenience of tram passengers.

492. Where would the traffic in Castlereagh-street be likely to go? It must stay in the same street. There does not seem to me to be any street running in the same direction where it could go to.

493. Would not the trams have the effect of lessening the traffic generally, in addition to causing a discontinuance of a number of lines of omnibuses? It would only affect the omnibuses. This proposal would not have an immediate effect upon the omnibuses in Pitt-street, which ply to the eastern suburbs. It is not proposed to make these new tram-lines serve the eastern suburbs. Directly the whole tramway system is converted into an electric system and electric trams are run to the eastern suburbs, the whole of the omnibuses will cease to run in Pitt-street.

494. Is it at all likely that there will be a large pick-up traffic in Castlereagh-street? Very little; but there will be a large pick-up traffic in Pitt-street, going back towards the railway; but coming into Sydney there would be scarcely any pick-up traffic in Castlereagh-street.

495. In view of that do you think it more desirable to have the two lines of trams in Pitt-street, instead of one in Pitt-street and one in Castlereagh-street? I think it would be highly dangerous to put a double line of trams in Pitt-street.

496. But there are two lines of trams in George-street? But that is a wider street. Pitt-street is only 36 ft. wide. The number of vehicles traversing Pitt-street is equal to the number in George-street, and Pitt-street is much narrower.

497. *Mr. Watson.*] In the statement you made at first to the Committee, I think you said that if two lines were constructed in Pitt-street the space between the outer rail to the kerb would be 9 ft. 6 in.? Yes.

498. So that would leave room for an omnibus to pass? There would be barely room for an omnibus to stand. The space would be too narrow for an omnibus to travel.

499. Have you allowed for the tram-car over hanging the rail? No, I have only taken the width of the line.

500. The car goes over another foot? It goes over a good deal; but I do not know whether it is a foot. The distance between the two outer rails is 17 feet, leaving 9 feet 6 inches on either side, between the rail and the kerb. In my calculation, I did not allow for the overhanging portion of the car.

501. What you say is, that the result of running trams on what were formerly 'bus routes, always injured the business of the 'buses? Yes; wherever an electric tram-line runs the 'buses have ceased to run.

502. We should like to have your opinion as to the preferable method of dealing with the passenger traffic with tram and 'bus—which is the casier, leaving out for the moment the convenience of passengers,—what is the best mode of transit from a traffic point of view? I would sooner regulate the 'buses than the trams.

503. Do you think you could allow ordinary vehicles, private vehicles, say, better facilities, if you had to carry the same number of passengers by omnibus as are now carried by tram in George-street? I think it was casier to regulate the vehicular traffic in George-street, when the 'buses carried the passengers than it is now when the trams carry them.

504. But the circumstances are slightly altered: I understand there is much more danger to people travelling in George-street now than there was formerly—assuming you had to find a number of omnibuses to carry the same number of people that are now carried by tram; do you think you could deal with the general

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- general traffic as effectually as is now done? The street would be more congested, but there would be less danger attached to the traffic.
505. That means that though people would travel more slowly they would be safer? Yes.
506. *Mr. Shepherd.*] I think I gather from your evidence that you are not favourable to the proposal to put a line down Castlereagh-street, and up Pitt-street? I think it is inevitable that trams should be run in one or both of those streets; but if you look at it from a regulation traffic point of view, it is very objectionable to have any more streets taken up with trams. But I look upon it as inevitable for the convenience of passengers coming to and from Sydney, that one or both of those streets should be taken up for tramway purposes.
507. Do you think a single line down Castlereagh-street and another down Pitt-street will answer? I think if a line were laid in the centre of the roadway in both streets it would be less inconvenience to traffic.
508. You think a double line along Pitt-street would leave too small a space on each side for the general traffic? Yes, I think so. I understand the Commissioners wish to lay one line on one side of the road so that at any time they wish they can duplicate it. That would be almost as bad as to put down a double line at once, for a second line would be bound to come.
509. Do you not think it indispensable that George-street should be relieved of some of its traffic? I think it essentially necessary.
510. It is overdone at present? I think so.
511. Do you not think the construction of a line down Castlereagh-street would relieve George-street? Yes; I think so from a tramway point of view.
512. Have you any idea of any other proposal that could be made in lieu of this? Not unless it be the one that is so often referred to, that is the bringing of the railway into the City. I do not think the present proposal would be necessary if a railway were brought into the City for passenger traffic as far as King-street; there would be no necessity for either of these lines then.
513. Do you think it would be possible to also utilise one of the western streets for tram traffic—that is, a street west of George-street? There is no street west of George-street that opens up as far as the railway.
514. You might branch off at some street? The nearest street that you could branch off is Kent-street.
515. Not at the Haymarket? No; unless you resume private property, Kent-street ends at Liverpool-street. I think if you ran a double line of trams along Castlereagh-street, and did not use Pitt-street for the return traffic, most of the people would go to George-street to get home; they would not walk to Castlereagh-street; you generally have to bring them up to their doors, especially when the transit service is under Government.
516. Do you think it desirable to take this proposed tramway all the way to Fort Macquarie? I do. I think that should have been done long ago.
517. Would that not be a considerable distance, and would there not be very little traffic? There would be no necessity to run all the trams there; they need only run certain of the trams, but the laying of the line is a necessity.
518. On the whole, you are favourable to the proposed scheme on the supposition that it is inevitable? Yes, I see no alternative. The only alternative I see is to run a double line down Castlereagh-street; but to run a double line down Pitt-street, I think, would be a highly dangerous thing to do.
519. *Chairman.*] Could you give a rough idea of the percentage of traffic in Pitt-street now, which is purely 'bus traffic—that is, the number of omnibuses compared with the number of other vehicles? I think it represents about one-third of the vehicular traffic in George-street.
520. So that even after the conversion of the present steam-trams to the electrical system, and after the traffic was removed from Pitt-street, the placing there of trams would make the street more congested than it is now? I think so, particularly whilst the 'buses remain there. But even if all the 'buses were off, I think the laying of a single line of trams along Pitt-street will congest the traffic quite as much as all the 'buses that are there now do.
521. Do you think it practicable to place the line in the position the Commissioners propose? It would be very risky; it might cause great delay to the trams, if the drivers of vehicles liked to be at all obstinate. To allow a tram to pass any big vehicle such as an omnibus, that vehicle would have to go practically quite close alongside the kerb—a dead parallel with the kerb. If you look at Pitt-street you will not find 30 yards of it at any given place, between Hunter-street and Bathurst-street, that has not got one or two vehicles standing alongside the kerb. Every passing vehicle has to go outside of them, and necessarily would have to pass on the tram-line.
522. Do you think, then, that the placing of the line in that position is so serious that it should not be considered for a moment? I think it would be a good idea to stop the Commissioners from thinking of putting down a double line in Pitt-street. I think they should put down only one line, and that should be put in the middle of the street.
523. Would the construction of a single line in the middle of the street be a serious detriment to the traffic? Far less detriment than putting two lines.
524. It would be less serious? I do not like the idea of a tram in Pitt-street at all, but it seems to be inevitable. If you put both lines down in Castlereagh-street, the people would stick to George-street.
525. Do you know of any city in the world that has streets so narrow as Pitt-street? I am not much acquainted with other places.
526. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You spoke of heavy drays being an obstacle to traffic—would it not be possible to restrict that heavy traffic to certain hours of the day? A regulation is now being framed which will prohibit heavy vehicles from proceeding at a walking pace in George or Pitt streets, between Bridge-street and Goulburn-street, between the hours of 8 o'clock in the morning and 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening.
527. That would relieve the traffic of a certain amount of danger? Yes, but the difficulty is that when you put that traffic out of Pitt and George streets, it will go into Castlereagh-street.
528. I suppose these heavy drays must run in some street? Provision will be made for that.
529. Could you not restrict them to certain hours when the trams are not used? Make them deliver everything before 8 o'clock in the morning? Most of the Bonds are not open till 9 o'clock in the morning.
530. It is during two or three hours in the morning and two or three hours in the afternoon when there is an excess of traffic in George and Pitt streets? Yes.
- 531.

531. If these heavy drays were allowed to ply outside those hours, would not that be a relief to the traffic? I think they will be prohibited in Pitt-street and George-street between the hours of 8 in the morning and 7 at night, except when they want to deliver goods at any place within certain boundaries, then they will be allowed to do so from the nearest intersecting street.

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532. *Dr. Garran.*] With regard to the Circular Quay—all these trams are intended to debouch into Circular Quay? Everyone of them.

533. With minute trams down George-street and down King-street, and one every three minutes down Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street, and the pretty heavy traffic down Elizabeth-street, will all that be able to circle round at Fort Macquarie without stopping your heavy traffic to the steamers' wharfs? I do not think it would have any serious effect; nearly all the cartages on this side of the Quay do not cross the tramline.

534. Once they get on the Quay side of the trams, they are all right? Yes. There would be exceeding great difficulty in regulating all the trams on the Circular Quay. Those running there now take up a large portion of it; and when the traffic from the western and eastern suburbs is brought down there, it cannot be regulated without some of it going up to Fort Macquarie.

535. All this traffic will have to cross this line once? Yes.

536. There will be trams coming every minute almost? Yes. Supposing they came from George-street down to Queen's Wharf, they would have to cross the line twice, because they would have to cross it at the Quay proper as well.

537. I want you to consider all these trams at work;—will there be no difficulty to those drays which are coming and going to the ships in having to cross? Yes, there would be more difficulty than there is now, because the trams are now comparatively few compared to what they will be when the eastern and western suburbs are added.

538. You cannot spare any more space at the Circular Quay for another two lines of tram rails? You could on the Quay proper, I think, because the 'buses would be taken away from there; but I do not think you could spare enough space if the continuation of the line to Fort Macquarie was not made.

539. From the foot of Phillip-street to Fort Macquarie? I do not think there would be room for four lines there.

540. But there will be great risk and difficulty with the traffic? There will be great risk of congestion when all the trams run there, they will be so frequent. The difficulty would be increased when there is a large steamer coming in and discharging a large number of passengers who want to go everywhere at once. Take, for instance, a holiday steamer returning from Manly—it has been the custom for vehicles to wait for the people, and then they will all start at one moment. Of course that is so now on the arrival of any crowded North Shore steamer, at the busy time of the day. The passengers by it want to go to almost everywhere. If the trams started at one minute intervals, and they went to twelve different destinations, some of the people would have to wait twelve minutes before they could get a start. You must have some means of sending them away quickly.

541. So far as the ferry passengers are concerned they have been greatly inconvenienced by the construction of the tramlines on Circular Quay? I think it has proved a great convenience to people coming from the North Shore.

542. Has it perceptibly diminished the omnibus traffic in George-street? As I have said, wherever the tram runs the omnibuses cease to run.

543. Ladies prefer to take the tram when going to David Jones's, or Farmer's, or Hordern's? Yes.

544. They used to take the omnibus? They used to take the omnibus up George-street or Pitt-street. There was a line of 'buses on each street, running from the Circular Quay to the Railway. There was also a line of 'buses running from the Circular Quay to Toohey's brewery, in Elizabeth-street, to Foveaux-street; but people seem to prefer the trams to the 'buses, even though they might be landed nearer to their destination by 'bus.

William Greenwood, A.M.I.C.E., sworn and examined:—

545. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have you given much consideration to the proposals now before the committee? Yes. It was originally proposed to run a double line of tramway down Castlereagh-street, with the view of relieving the George-street tramway of the railway traffic. But since the evidence given by Mr. Deane, Engineer-in-Chief of the Railway Construction Branch, Works Department, and Mr. Hugh M'Lachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, it has been proposed to lay a single line along Pitt-street and another along Castlereagh-street, with the view of putting a double line down each street at some future time. In my opinion the Castlereagh-street line would not take 10 per cent. of the railway traffic.

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546. Would the line be insufficient to carry the traffic? No. But human beings cannot be made to go like a lot of sheep. The people want to go down George-street, not along Castlereagh-street. Therefore you would not get more than 10 per cent. of the passengers to go down Castlereagh-street, even if you got as much.

547. Do you think they would object to walk the short distance from Pitt-street to Castlereagh-street? I think they will prefer to walk from the railway bridge in George-street into the station.

548. You think they would not take the tram down Castlereagh-street? No, not 10 per cent. of them.

549. *Mr. Watson.*] You think they would prefer to walk from the bridge to the station? Yes. Even now if a person wants to go to Leichhardt or Forest Lodge he walks to the bridge; and people will do the same when you have put trams down Castlereagh-street.

550. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you not think that, if the George-street trams are as overcrowded as they are now, people will not prefer to walk a short distance from Castlereagh-street? No, you have practical experience of that. The steam trams ran in Elizabeth-street from Newtown, but when the electric trams were put down George-street no one patronised the steam trams in Elizabeth-street. People took the George-street tram because it was to George-street they chiefly wanted to go.

551. People prefer to travel by the electric tram rather than by the steam tram? Not necessarily. Whilst they were running the steam trams from Newtown, many people paid their fare on the section as far as the railway bridge, and then left the steam tram and got on the electric tram, paying another 1d. for the George-street section.

552. I suppose you are aware that the traffic in George-street is very congested? Yes.

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553. What remedy would you suggest? The obvious one is to construct a railway into the city. At the present time tramways are being, and are proposed to be, extended to the extremities, thus bringing more traffic on the trunk lines, and causing congestion, not relief as needed.

554. Do you think, if there was a city railway with a terminal station at the top of King-street, that people would walk from George-street to that station in preference to taking the tram? No.

555. For the same reason they would not walk from George-street to Castlereagh-street to reach the tram? Most assuredly not. You will see that the Railway Commissioners, in their report recently issued, state that formerly 3,000,000 railway passengers travelled by the steam trams every year; but now 9,000,000 railway passengers travel by the electric trams, simply because they want to get to George-street, or to the west of it.

556. What would you suggest in lieu of the present proposal? First of all, a railway on the western side of the city. It should start from Devonshire-street and cross George-street at Bathurst-street. There should be a station at Bathurst-street and another at Wynyard-square, and another at the Circular Quay, making three stations in the City instead of one at King-street. That would relieve the George-street traffic immediately. Still that would only be a portion of a complete scheme of a railway that would eventually run to the eastern and southern suburbs, which would still further relieve the tram traffic.

557. In regard to the City tramway extension, could you suggest a better scheme than the one that has been proposed? Use your present Elizabeth-street line as far as Bent-street, and then from Bent-street go down to the corner of the Hôtel Métropole.

558. Are you aware that the Railway Commissioners propose to have the whole of the tramways converted to the electric system? Yes.

559. Would not that cause a greater number of cars to be run than are running now? Yes.

560. In view of that, do you consider that what you now suggest would prove to be the best? You have now trams in George-street to carry part of the traffic that was formerly carried in Elizabeth-street.

561. You consider, then, the present proposal to be unnecessary? Absolutely a waste of money. There would not be any revenue from it.

562. Do you not think there would be an increase of passenger traffic as the Railway Commissioners anticipate? A railway would carry ten times as many passengers as a tramway could. Even when a railway is constructed, there would always be a large number of people to be carried by the tramways.

563. The last witness examined by this committee stated that wherever a tram was extended, the omnibus traffic was done away with? No doubt it does away with a large portion of it; but there is such a thing as live and let live; and I think there is plenty of traffic for both buses and trams. The terminations of the bus journeys are generally wide apart from the trams, and numbers of people would travel by omnibus to reach their homes. The Railway Commissioners reduced the tram fares to starve the omnibuses, with the result that the charges on the railways are double as much as they are on the trams.

564. But does not the reduction of fares mean an increase in the passenger traffic by the trams? Yes, but you take it from your railway, which is not overcrowded!

565. Not in every case? At present I can go from the railway bridge in George-street, by tram, to the Newtown Railway Station for a penny; but if I went by train to Newtown I should have to pay twopence.

566. *Mr. Watson.*] A season ticket holder would travel much cheaper? Yes, but the bulk of the passengers who travel between the railway bridge and St. Peters are not season ticket holders.

567. Would it not be cheaper to take out a season ticket from St. Peters to Sydney? A workman's ticket is the cheapest thing you can get. A workman's ticket from Newtown to Sydney costs a penny, but an ordinary person has to pay twopence, and threepence first class. The return journey, second class, costs fourpence. Whereas the ordinary fare by train from Redfern to Newtown Bridge is twopence, a person can travel by an electric tram to a point a mile beyond Newtown Bridge, *i.e.*, Enmore terminus, for one penny. They are simply starving the railways to benefit the tramways. The railway traffic is carried at about fifty per cent. of working expenses, the tramway traffic is carried at ninety per cent. of working expenses. So that the profitable traffic is diverted from the railways to the tramways.

568. That is in cases where the tramways run near the railways? Not always.

569. Do you think, from the enormous amount of traffic on the George-street trams—which is greatly in excess of the estimate of the Railway Commissioners,—that the Commissioners would be justified in making additional provision for meeting the increased traffic? The Railway Commissioners have not properly gauged the traffic in advance.

570. If the present proposal be carried out, do you think the result would be similar to what has taken place in George-street? No, it would not take 10 per cent. of the passengers from George-street.

571. Is there any local traffic in Castlereagh-street? No, none. There are a hundred people in George-street for every one in Castlereagh-street. The amount of traffic in George-street is a hundred times greater than that in Castlereagh-street.

572. In the event of the present proposal being carried out, do you think it would largely interfere with the traffic? Most assuredly. In Pitt-street it would be simply impossible.

573. Do you think the street is not sufficiently wide? Castlereagh-street is sufficiently wide to lay down a line.

574. Do you think it would be better to have two lines in Castlereagh-street than to have one line in each street? You cannot have a line in Pitt-street in any case, not even a single line, whilst a double line would be absolutely unsafe.

575. In the event of the Elizabeth-street line being found insufficient for the passenger traffic, what other proposal do you think would be most desirable? Certainly; extend your railway into the city first.

576. But apart from the railway? As a matter of fact, you must have some streets for your vehicular traffic, and Castlereagh-street is not suitable for it. You have steep grades from all wharfs. The only two streets suitable for vehicular traffic are George and Pitt streets.

577. You think, then, it will be found necessary—if the present proposal is found to be the best—to lay the lines down in Castlereagh-street? If absolutely necessary, Castlereagh-street is preferable to Pitt-street.

578. Do you think it desirable to go west of George-street? The only suitable street west of George-street is Kent-street, and that is only suitable for a single line. But there is not sufficient traffic to warrant the construction of a line there at the present time.

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579. Would it not be distributing the passenger traffic better to have a line west of George-street, seeing that Elizabeth-street will soon have to carry the additional passenger traffic from the eastern suburbs? In that case what I would do would be to continue the Elizabeth-street line down Young-street, then turn on to the Circular Quay; go along George-street North, then along Port-street to Kent-street, along that street to Liverpool-street, and then double back to Elizabeth and Oxford streets, by way of Liverpool-street, so forming a complete circle. I would only put a single line in Kent-street, not a double line. By that means people from the eastern suburbs could be taken to Kent-street, and they could be picked up there on their return.

580. *Mr. Hyam.*] Would you have a single line in the centre of the street? Yes.

581. *Chairman.*] I understood you to say that we could not force the people to leave George-street? They are accustomed to it, and desire to go there.

582. The object of the present proposal is to relieve George-street of the railway traffic? Yes.

583. And you propose to shunt it down Elizabeth-street? I do not say send the railway traffic down Elizabeth-street.

584. What traffic do you propose to take down Elizabeth-street? At the present time the bulk of the railway passengers do not go along Elizabeth-street. I do not think more than 10 per cent. of the passengers go that way.

585. In what way would your proposal to send electric trams down Elizabeth-street ease the George-street trams? The only way to relieve the George-street traffic is to extend the railway into the city.

586. You do not attach much importance to your proposal to send electric trams down Elizabeth-street? The Commissioners admit there will not be any revenue from it except from the growth of traffic.

587. Presuming that the railway electric trams, instead of going down George-street, were sent down Castlereagh-street, do you think the railway passengers would prefer to walk the distance from the railway-station to the bridge rather than jump into a tram and walk to George-street from the other end? Most assuredly.

588. I think you said it was not possible to put a tram down Pitt-street from a practical point of view? I think so.

589. Can you give your reasons? Mr. McLachlan stated the line would be laid down one side of the street, and that it would be duplicated when found necessary. As a matter of fact there would be no room for an omnibus to drive there. The exact space between the tram and the kerb might be enough to allow an omnibus to stand, but there would not be enough space to allow a bus to travel with safety.

590. *Dr. Garran.*] Your scheme for going down Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street would satisfy people living or having business between Bent-street and Circular Quay—but suppose people want to get down at the cross streets, going towards Pitt-street, it would not accommodate any of those? No, as a matter of fact 90 per cent. of those people would walk from the Railway Station to the bridge. At the present moment passengers coming by railway and wishing to go along Elizabeth-street have either to walk to the bridge or down the stairs and under the subway to Devonshire-street to get a Waterloo tram.

591. You mean to say the people who by preference would want to go down Castlereagh-street are a negligible quantity? Quite so.

592. But it is only proposed to go down Castlereagh-street to get out of a difficulty? Yes.

593. It is not a question of where they want to go? No, but I say that what is proposed will not remove the difficulty.

594. Do you think that 10 per cent. of the passengers who want to go down Castlereagh-street would be content to be taken down Elizabeth-street? Yes; they do so now.

595. Taking the railway traffic going back, it has been pointed out to us that people would readily go from George-street to Pitt-street to get a tram to the Railway, but they would not walk up the hill to Castlereagh-street—do you agree with that? No; what I say is that the bulk of the general public is in George-street, and west of that street. Of course there is a portion on the eastern side of George-street; but the bulk of the passengers would go to the George-street trams. You could not force them to go to Pitt-street or Castlereagh-street. The distance they would have to walk from the bridge to the station would be shorter than the distance from George-street to Pitt-street. Hence they would take the first tram they came to.

596. You remember that under the proposed system, the connecting wire between George-street and the Railway Station could not be made use of? That is so.

597. And the people going to the railway would have to cross George-street at a very congested part? Yes.

598. Do you not think that ladies would prefer to go into Pitt-street and get a tram that will take them direct into the station, rather than take a tram that will cause them to walk from the railway bridge into the station? I do not think so.

599. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you think the distance from George-street to Pitt-street, at the northern end of the town, is greater than from the railway bridge into the station? The shorter distance is from the bridge to the station.

600. *Dr. Garran.*] Coming to the Circular Quay, where all these tram-lines are to run, do you think there would be a congestion of traffic on the Quay which would interfere with the dray and general vehicular traffic? I think it would damage the whole of the wharf property to extend the tramways on the eastern side of the Quay; it would depreciate both the wharfs and the storage property to from one-third to one-half its value.

601. At present the trams do go a part of the distance? Only in one corner, and that is for the purpose of facilitating shunting operations. My suggestion is that there should be a complete circle.

602. What I want to get at is, whether, with minute trams running there all day long, we shall be able to safely conduct the vehicular traffic to and from the wharfs and ferries? No; it is frequently the case that the street on the eastern side of the Quay is covered one-half its width with goods of one kind or another.

603. Have you watched the traffic since the electric trams were taken there? Yes.

604. Have they thrown any difficulty in the way of loading or unloading steamships? No.

605. But if increased, and the lines were carried to Fort Macquarie? Most assuredly; the proposal to extend the line to Fort Macquarie is wrong. The sheds should be put on land that is cheap.

606. But it is Government land? Whether or not it is of value.

W.
Greenwood,
A.M.I.C.E.
23 Aug., 1900.

607. You still adhere to the idea you expressed that the proper way to deal with the railway traffic coming into the city is by a railway? By a railway we should have stations *en route*.

608. Suppose the proposal to establish a railway station at Belmore-road is carried out, and that we find, after experience, that the trams cannot accommodate the railway passenger traffic in addition to their own, we should be just as well off in regard to making an extension into the city as we are now? Before you place your station at Devonshire-street you should first of all settle the point as to whether or not it is to be a through station or a terminal station, and unless you settle that point and determine where the city railway is to be extended to, you cannot decide the position of your station or settle the matter finally.

609. Could we not make a station with a frontage to Belmore-road, so arched and arranged as to allow of trains going through to the city afterwards if necessary? In designing a station you try to keep your roads in a straight line. And all your platforms and roads should be in a straight line. If the station is to be a very long one, a very slight deviation in the direction you are going—whether to King-street or Hyde Park—makes all the difference in regard to the design of the station. Apart from that, you make totally different arrangements for your platforms. Before designing a station you should determine whether it is to be a through station or a terminal station.

610. You would have no difficulty in coming down a grade of 1 in 60. Suppose we start in Belmore-road on a level with the present line; Mr. Deane objected that your line had to go 1 in 60, starting from Devonshire-street—but suppose we did not start at that going to Belmore-road—would that affect your proposal? The 1 in 60 grade is only from Wynyard-square to Circular Quay. The reason is that at Wynyard Square you want to keep as high as possible, in order to meet a projected North Shore line, and to keep low at the Quay, so as to go beneath the roads, in order to obstruct them as little as possible. I do not think the 1 in 60 grade an objectionable grade at all.

611. Could you descend from Belmore-road to Bathurst-street by a grade of 1 in 100 on your plan? I do not think so. The question of grades is this: in my line I did not disturb the surface of any streets except Pitt-street and Circular Quay—I exclude Devonshire-street because that may be blocked or lowered. If it were desired, we might, perhaps, get a better grade by lowering a street like Goulburn-street a foot or two.

612. By your route, could you get from Belmore-road down to your first station at Bathurst-street with a grade of 1 in 100? Yes, it might necessitate varying a street level a foot or two.

613. I am only asking this question in the possible view of a tramway service from Belmore-road. I want to know whether your scheme could still be carried out? But that station, plus this tramway, brings in no revenue, and would cost as much as a city railway. It would not attain the object aimed at; that is, liberating the traffic in George-street.

614. I am only anxious to find out whether in case we find this extension of the terminus insufficient, the placing of this station in Belmore-road would be a hindrance to us or not, if any future extension of the line into the city either by your route or anybody else's became necessary? The general direction of the Redfern Station now is more or less between Hyde Park and George-street—that is the general line of the station.

615. *Chairman.*] Have you anything further to say to the Committee? Only this, that I think the extension to Fort Macquarie would be a waste of money. There is no traffic down to Fort Macquarie. All the traffic that there might be is obtained now. You will get no more money out of the passengers if you take them there.

616. Is it not highly convenient to have at each end of your tram lines suitable shed accommodation? It is not at all necessary. It was not provided for steam trams at Bridge-street.

617. But is it not convenient? No, you should have your cars constantly at work. They have no right to be standing at all. Stable them in the suburbs, but not in the town.

618. *Dr. Garran.*] The traffic in the early mornings is all coming into Sydney? Yes, mainly. The tramway would be damaging to the whole of these wharfs and warehouses so far as the traffic is concerned.

MONDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVYEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

Albert Henry Nathan (Hoffnung & Co., Ltd.) sworn, and examined:—

A. H. Nathan.
3 Sept., 1900.

619. *Chairman.*] The original proposal referred to the Committee was the construction of a double line of electric tramway from Belmore Park along Castlereagh-street to Bent-street; but it has now been suggested that, in place of a double line in Castlereagh-street, a single line should be taken down Castlereagh-street and a return line up Pitt-street, these single lines being so laid as to permit of duplication should that at any time be deemed necessary;—how do you regard that proposal? We think that a tramway in Pitt-street would prove very inconvenient to our business, because of the congestion which it would cause in the street. We employ a large number of drays and carts, which come in from and go out into Pitt-street, and the street is very narrow for even the present traffic.

620. What is the width of the street in front of your premises? I believe about 36 feet from kerb to kerb. Carts when heavily loaded cannot make a sharp turn; but frequently to swerve right across the street.

621. How many trips in and out of your yard are made by the carts which go there during an average working day? I daresay between 100 and 200 carts (*i.e.*, double such number in and out).

622. Between what hours? Between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

623. Are a large number of carts sent out with goods daily between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.? I think the traffic is rather heavier than at other times; but it is fairly uniform. On the average there are always half a dozen, and probably more, carts in the yard. A. H. Nathan.
3 Sept., 1900.

624. Would a single line in Pitt-street, on the side of the road furthest from your premises, greatly interfere with the working of the business? Yes, because it would bring about a greater congestion of traffic than there is now.

625. Do you know of any business as large as yours, and doing a similar cartage traffic, which is situated in George-street? No; I do not think there is one. We are, of course, indirectly affected by the George-street tramway, because the working of that tramway has driven more vehicular traffic into Pitt-street. Our carters tell us that they have to take Pitt-street in preference to George-street, in order to get through. A carter told me the other day that he had to leave his cart at the Strand, in George-street, to deliver a parcel at Farmer and Company's.

626. Do you think that to increase the number of tramways will create a special difficulty in the way of carrying on, not only your own business, but all such businesses in the city? Yes. It is now proposed to take the four chief traffic arteries of the city—Elizabeth, Castlereagh, Pitt, and George Streets—for tramways. If that is done, it will make the carrying on of business such as ours very difficult.

627. The proposal now by the Committee has been put forward with a view to relieving George-street of traffic;—do you think that a tramway in Pitt-street would considerably interfere with your carting operations? Yes. No doubt the tramway traffic will be heavier in some parts of the day than in others, and those times would be also the times of our busiest traffic.

628. Would a tram every ten minutes interfere with your business to any considerable extent? Yes; but not so much as if the cars ran so frequently as they do in George-street, and, as the city grows, the traffic will increase. I saw Mr. McLachlan on the subject lately, and he explained that it was necessary to bring the tramways to those parts of the city where there is most business to be conducted. The traffic of a city, however, concentrates in particular thoroughfares, and if you bring tramways into streets where there is very heavy traffic, you must drive some of that traffic out, and ultimately some of the business done in those streets will go into other streets, and then you must chase the traffic there by constructing trams into those streets.

629. When the George-street line was proposed, it met with considerable opposition from the business people in that street, who feared that it would injure their business; but they have found that their fears have not been realised;—do you think that your business is of such a character that it is sure to be prejudiced by the construction of a tramway into Pitt-street? The construction of a tramway in Pitt-street would cause us great inconvenience, and that would indirectly diminish our business.

630. If the construction of a tramway down Pitt-street brought a larger number of pedestrians into the street, would that be of advantage to your business? Not in the slightest degree. Ours is a wholesale business.

631. Are there many other large firms like your own in Pitt-street? There are Dalton's and Hunter's, a little lower down the street, and several others down towards the Quay. Going towards the railway station, the business houses are generally retail houses. There is a considerable congestion of traffic close to us at the intersection of King and Pitt Streets, where the vehicular traffic is delayed by the crossing of the cable trams.

632. From King-street towards the Quay, most of the business done on the western side of Pitt-street is wholesale business? There are a good many wholesale places in Pitt-street, between King-street and the Circular Quay.

633. *Dr. Garran.*] Have you only one entrance to your yard? Yes. I might point out that the postal authorities had to find another entrance to the Post Office because of the crowded state of Pitt-street, even under present conditions.

634. You cannot find another entrance? No.

635. Do you think that the George-street shopkeepers have gained, on the whole, by the immense quantity of traffic which the tramways have brought into George-street? I do not know; I am not in a position to judge.

636. Do you think that the retail business people in Pitt-street have lost business through traffic being taken into George-street? I do not think they have.

637. Have you heard any of them say that they would like a tramway down Pitt-street, to bring traffic to Pitt-street? No.

638. Have you heard anyone speak in favour of the construction of a tramway in Pitt-street? No.

639. If the tramway were constructed, and the cars ran once every five or ten minutes, your carts would have plenty of time to cross the road in the intervals? Yes; I might say, however, that if the electric tramway were now in Pitt-street, and we had not erected a warehouse there, we should not go there if we could get premises elsewhere.

640. But now there is nowhere for you to go to avoid the trams, unless you go west of George-street? Yes.

641. Do you think that if tramways are constructed down Elizabeth, Castlereagh, Pitt, and George Streets, they will tend to diminish the sites available for large wholesale houses in those streets, and throw them more to the west of George-street? Yes.

642. Is it of any advantage to a warehouse to be situated on the western side of George-street, because of the proximity of the wharfs to that part of the city? I do not think it makes much difference. When your goods are on a cart, a few yards more or less do not matter.

643. And the buying public have to go wherever the warehouses are? To a certain extent. But you must not go too far from the business centre.

644. You do not depend upon chance traffic? No.

645. And, I suppose, a great many of your orders come by post? Yes.

646. If you are within reach of the retail businesses in the town, that answers your purpose? Yes. We must be within a reasonable distance of them.

647. The trams will not run so frequently in Pitt-street as in George-street? No doubt as traffic increases the number of tramcars in the street would increase, as it has increased in George-street.

648. But the George-street lines carry a large suburban traffic as well as a pick-up traffic, whereas the Pitt-street line is only intended to carry the railway traffic for the present, though, possibly, some of the suburban traffic may come into it? Even if the cars did not run frequently, there would be great danger of serious accidents occurring in front of our premises.

- A. H. Nathan. 649. Do you never have accidents now? I do not remember any; but where there is heavy traffic in a street collisions may always occur. At times we have had as many as ten carts in our yards at once.
- 3 Sept., 1900. 650. Can they turn round in the yard and come out when it is as full as that? It is a little awkward for them, but they can do it.
651. In your opinion Pitt-street is not suited to even a single line of tramway? That is my opinion.
652. You would rather see the whole of the tram traffic carried in Castlereagh-street? Certainly.
653. If the railway trams ran up and down Castlereagh-street, would people walk from George-street to Castlereagh-street to make use of them, supposing the George-street trams did not run into the railway yard? I imagine that people in George-street would take the George-street trams to reach the railway.
654. Do you think that ladies would? I do not know. Of course, the Castlereagh-street tram would take a great deal of traffic; but I do not think the people in George-street would go to Castlereagh-street to make use of them. I have always been accustomed, when going to the railway station, to take the first steam-tram that came along.
655. You see no objection to the construction of a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street? From a general or a personal point of view.
656. From a general point of view? Comparatively little. There are not many business places there. The street is wider than Pitt-street, and it is occupied chiefly with offices.
657. Do you think it would be a serious inconvenience to the traffic of the city if tramways were constructed in Elizabeth, Castlereagh, Pitt, and George Streets? Yes.
658. Do you see any way of getting out of the difficulty? I think that the construction of the railway into the centre of the city would avoid the difficulty.
659. That is the view taken by the Railway Commissioners;—you agree with them? Yes; I have been asked to express that opinion. I go so far as to say that the extension of the railway into the city is bound to come sooner or later, even if all these tramways are made.
660. You think that, even if a big central station at Devonshire-street is made, we shall have to continue the line into the city sooner or later? Yes.
661. Quite apart from any intention to connect with the North Shore? Yes.
662. *Mr. Hyam.*] There are not a great many business places other than offices in Pitt-street, between your warehouse and the Circular Quay? There are none so large as ours; but there are a good many warehouses and wholesale business places between Hunter-street and the Quay.
663. But between King-street and Hunter-street there are not many? There are ours, Hunter's, and Dalton's.
664. The other places in the street are chiefly auction marts and offices? Yes.
665. Then the tramway in Pitt-street would only interfere with three business places between Hunter and King Streets? Yes.
666. From King-street to Park-street there are a good many business places? Yes; and the traffic is very heavy. There is a very great deal of mercantile traffic through Pitt-street, even though there are not so many large wholesale houses in the street.
667. You say that you do not see any serious objection to the construction of a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street? I think that such a line would be of less inconvenience than a single line in Castlereagh-street and a single line in Pitt-street.
668. Have you heard any serious objections to the construction of such a line? Yes.
669. From many people? I have only spoken to two or three people about it.
670. The question we have to consider is whether it is not better to accommodate the great number of suburban and city people who wish to travel through the streets than to regard the convenience of business places such as yours? Well, I came only to put my view of the situation before the Committee.
671. *Mr. Levien.*] If your business premises were in Castlereagh-street, would you not oppose the construction of a tramway down Castlereagh-street? Certainly.
672. You have a good knowledge of the whole city? A fair knowledge. I have known the city for seventeen years.
673. Do you think that the tramway ought to go down Pitt-street at all? No.
674. You are absolutely opposed to a line in Pitt-street? Yes.
675. Are there more business places in Pitt-street than in Castlereagh-street? I think so.
676. There is a greater length of business premises, both wholesale and retail, on both sides of Pitt-street than there is in Castlereagh-street? Yes.
677. Do you think that Pitt-street should be reserved for vehicular traffic? I think so.
678. If all these streets are occupied with tramways it would almost stop the vehicular traffic? It would seriously interfere with it.
679. The lower end of Castlereagh-street is given up to Chinamen and small dwelling-places? Yes.
680. *Mr. Watson.*] Have you considered the possibility of a reduction in the number of omnibuses by the construction of the proposed line? The tramway might reduce the number of omnibuses for a time; but, as the city increases, its vehicular traffic must increase. The effect of the recent multiplication of trams has been to knock off the 'buses on certain routes and to create new routes.
681. Do any of the 'buses which run on these new routes come right down to the Quay? I believe so. The only new 'bus that I actually know of, is a 'bus from Woolloomooloo, past Hyde Park, to the Quay.
682. If the eastern suburbs tramways were brought down to the Quay, would not that bring about a reduction in the number of 'buses? It seems probable that it would; but, so far, there does not appear to have been a reduction in the number of 'buses in the city.
683. The late Registrar to the Transit Commission told us that there had been a falling off in the number of 'buses plying in George-street since the tramway was taken down that street;—if a tramway down Pitt-street had the effect of materially reducing the 'bus traffic in that street, would not that be some compensation? If it largely decreased the 'bus traffic, it would be some compensation; but I cannot say what that compensation would amount to.
684. Are the 'buses the chief element in the vehicular traffic of Pitt-street at the present time? I do not think so.
685. What is the width of King-street, near Darling Harbour? It is about as wide as Pitt-street.
686. There is a very heavy vehicular traffic there and two lines of tramway, while shunting operations have also to be carried on in the street;—if the tramway in King-street does not interfere with the vehicular

vehicular traffic there, why should a tramway in Pitt-street do so? If the traffic in King-street is the same as in Pitt-street, and the two streets are about the same width, the conditions are similar; but if I were driving a cart, I should be less afraid of cable trams than of electric trams, because the electric trams are bigger, and move faster than the cable trams. I would sooner have an unlimited number of buses than an electric tram.

687. *Mr. Shepherd.*] At what hour of the day is most of your carting done? Probably in the later part of the afternoon; but the difference is hardly worth mentioning, because the traffic is fairly uniform all day.

688. Would it be possible to do the carting at times when the trams were not so numerous? I do not think so. We have to clear the ships as quickly as we can. We are always urging the carters for quicker delivery, and they are always telling us that they cannot give it. Then the goods in the warehouse have to be sent out as soon as they can be packed and made ready.

689. It would not be possible for you to arrange to do most of your carting when the tram business was slack? I do not think so.

690. Have you heard any complaints from any large firms in George-street about any inconvenience from the trams? No; but I have not discussed the matter with any of the George-street people.

691. *Mr. Levien.*] A tremendous number of mail-carts go into and out of Pitt-street to and from the Post Office all day long? Yes; but those are light carts, and much more easily manœuvred in the street than ours are.

692. All the heavy carts going into places like yours and Dalton's would have to cross the tram-lines? Yes, probably.

693. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What class of vehicles are employed in your carting? Drays mostly; but there are a great many lorries and vehicles of all sorts.

694. Do the carters experience difficulty in getting in and out now? Yes; there is a certain amount of congestion in the traffic. Sometimes they have to wait.

695. The construction of a single line of tramway down Pitt-street would intensify the difficulty? Yes.

696. Have you made any protest to the Railway Commissioners against the construction of a tramway in Pitt-street? Yes. Together with Mr. Dalton and Mr. Macintosh, I called upon the Commissioners.

697. Are Messrs. Dalton and Macintosh opposed to the construction of a line down Pitt-street? Yes.

698. When is your busiest time;—immediately after the arrival of a ship? Ships are always arriving, and the landing of goods is a constant thing with us.

699. If a tramway were taken down Pitt-street, would it get rid of a great deal of dray traffic in that street? Where could the dray traffic go to then.

700. If there were only a single line in Castlereagh-street, it could use that street? Yes; but drays having business in Pitt-street would have to use Pitt-street.

701. Do you think it would be more convenient to the travelling public to have a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street than to have a single line in Castlereagh-street and a single line in Pitt-street? I think that there is more to be said for the proposal to construct a double line of tramway in Pitt-street than for the other proposal.

702. Is there much pedestrian traffic in Pitt-street? Yes, a great deal.

703. Would not a tramway in Pitt-street be of great convenience to the pedestrian traffic that now uses the street? No doubt trams are a public convenience wherever they run.

WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.

The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

John James Gillham, master carrier, Circular Quay, sworn, and examined:—

704. *Mr. McFarlane.*] You have been residing in Sydney for some considerable time? All my life.

705. Have you given any consideration to the proposal to construct a double line of tramway down Castlereagh-street? Yes.

706. How do you view that proposal? I consider it a very bad proposal. Castlereagh-street is the only street in which the city on the eastern side of George-street, along which vehicular traffic can move now in safety, and, if a tram is taken down that street, there will be no convenience for vehicular traffic. I think that we have enough streets occupied by trams now. If the trams could be run underground they would be well enough; but the streets should not be taken away from the general public to accommodate tramways. A tramway should not be laid down in either Castlereagh-street or Pitt-street.

707. You are aware that the tram traffic in George-street is very congested? Yes.

708. Do you think that George-street is overcrowded with trams at the present time? Yes.

709. Then provision must be made for taking these trams down some of the other streets? I do not think that the Government should take any more streets for tramways. Some streets should be left for the people who use the roads. The Government are doing a great deal of harm to the carriers of the city, and are hampering their business very much, by driving them from one street to another by the laying down of tramways.

710. Has the tramway in George-street materially interfered with the traffic of that street? Yes; a great deal—more than the omnibuses ever did.

711. Has it not reduced the number of omnibuses? Yes, greatly.

712. And has it not in that way given more accommodation for other vehicles? No, because of the room taken up by the trams themselves. The trams run almost one on top of each other, so that it is very difficult to pass between them in order to cross the road, or to pass another vehicle.

713.

A. H. Nathan.
3 Sept., 1900.

J. J. Gillham.
5 Sept., 1900.

- J. J. Gilham.** 713. Have the trams caused traffic which previously used George-street to go to other streets? Yes.
- 5 Sept., 1900. 714. To what streets has that traffic gone? All the people who can, use Castlereagh-street. Pitt-street is generally blocked with traffic.
715. Do you think that, if Castlereagh-street had a double line of tramway in it, there would not be sufficient room in Pitt-street for the vehicular traffic? I do not think there would be sufficient room in Pitt-street if all the traffic were driven out of Castlereagh-street.
716. A tramway would not necessarily send all the traffic out of Castlereagh-street? We very often go out of our way in order to avoid heavy traffic, so that we can travel more quickly; but to go from Castlereagh-street to Pitt-street would be to go from the frying pan into the fire, because the traffic in Pitt-street is always heavy.
717. Is the traffic continuously heavy throughout the whole day? Yes.
718. Between what hours? Between a quarter to 9 in the morning and 6 o'clock in the evening, with occasional short lulls. From a quarter past 9 to about 10 o'clock there is sometimes a bit of a lull.
719. Would it create as much interference with the traffic if, instead of a double line down Castlereagh-street, there were a single line down Castlereagh-street and a single line up Pitt-street? I think that where tramways are laid down they must block the traffic. The traffic in Pitt-street would have to go at a walking pace if there were trams there.
720. Would it be better to have a single line in Castlereagh-street and a single line in Pitt-street than to have a double line in Castlereagh-street? I cannot say that I am in favour of either proposal, but I think that it would make the streets more available to other vehicles to have only a single line in Pitt and Castlereagh Streets.
721. If a single line were laid down it would not be placed in the middle of the streets, it would be placed on one side, so that in the future it could be duplicated if necessary? If that were done, the trams would block one side of the road.
722. But the rest of the street would be available? It would be available if you could cross the tram-line.
723. With a single line there would not be so many trams in the street as with a double line? There would be almost a continual stream of trams on the single line.
724. *Mr. Hyam.*] But they would all be going the one way? Yes; but you could not take up the whole of one side of the street with trams, because, if you did, people whose business premises were on that side would not be able to get vehicles to their doors.
725. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have the trams in George-street caused any inconvenience? Yes; they cause inconvenience every day in the week.
726. Have you suffered any inconvenience of the kind you are speaking of? No; because I have no constituent in George-street who has not a back entrance.
727. Have you heard many complaints about the trams interfering with the traffic in George-street? I hear many complaints about them—people are always complaining about them. I have lived all my life in the city, and I never knew it to be so difficult to get along George-street in a sulky as it is now.
728. Is it not a fact that there are very few wholesale houses in Castlereagh-street, so that there is not much need for heavy dray traffic there? The buildings follow the traffic. In a short time there will be as much business done in Castlereagh-street as is now done in George-street.
729. The trams must be put in some street? I do not know that they should. I think that if the Government want trams to bring the suburban people into the city they should not make them at the expense of the farmers of the country. They should give the trams a new road altogether, or put them underneath the present roads.
730. Would it not be just as easy to put the dray traffic underneath the present roads? No, because it is not so easy to regulate the loads of a lorry to provide for the clearing of bridges, as it is to regulate the height of a tram-car.
731. Would it not be possible to divert part of the dray traffic to the streets west of George-street? Yes; if a new street were cut through.
732. Could not York-street and Clarence-street be used? Yes; but to get down to Circular Quay with heavy traffic you would want a new street. You cannot get down beyond Charlotte-place without going right on to the Argyle Cut, if you have any sort of a load. We use Clarence-street a great deal in the wool season to take wool to the back wharfs, such as Smith's wharf, Dalgety's wharf, and Parbury's wharf.
733. Does not a lot of the heavy traffic go down Sussex-street? Not a great deal of it—only wool that is being transhipped to Melbourne.
734. Where does the traffic mostly come from—from the wharfs to the warehouses? Most of the traffic would come from the deep-sea ships to the warehouses, but there is also a great deal of traffic from the railway, and we expect to see that traffic become much greater before many years have passed. The traffic does not come from one or two points, but from a number of points—from Woolloomooloo Bay, from Circular Quay, and from the back wharfs that I have spoken of.
735. In which direction does the traffic from Woolloomooloo Bay go? It depends upon whose the goods are. Sometimes goods are taken from Woolloomooloo Bay to Miller's Point, down King-street and along York-street.
736. That traffic would not go along Castlereagh-street or Pitt-street? No; it would cross Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street at either Park-street, Market-street, or King-street. Anything going to the railway would cross Castlereagh-street at Park-street.
737. Is there much direct traffic between the ships and the railway? Very little.
738. The traffic is from the shipping to the warehouses, and from the warehouses to the railway? Mostly. There is not a great deal of direct carting to the railway.
739. The busiest hours for the tram traffic are from 8 to 10 o'clock in the morning, and from half-past 4 to 6 o'clock in the evening;—could not provision be made for the carting of goods in the slack interval between those times? No. You cannot do as you like in regard to other people's goods; you have to deliver them when they want them delivered, not when you want them delivered. If you were a man in business, you would not like to have to withhold goods from sale because the carts had not brought them up from the wharfs.
740. Do you commence to cart the goods directly you get an order for their delivery? Yes; directly they are out of the ship.

741. Do the rest of the carriers hold similar views to those which you have expressed in regard to this proposal? They are against the Government taking the streets for tramways, and thus preventing vehicular traffic from getting along. J. J. Gillham.
5 Sept., 1900.
742. Is it in travelling along the streets, or in getting into and out of alley-ways with your loads, that you find the trams most in your way? The trams are most in our way when we are going along the streets.
743. You hold the opinion that, from a carrier's point of view, it would be better to have a single line in Castlereagh-street, and a single line in Pitt-street, than to have a double line in Castlereagh-street? Yes; because I think it would give more room to the traffic. If there had been only one line down George-street, the traffic would not have been interfered with so much. The posts down George-street take up as much room as a vehicle would take up.
744. I suppose you would have a still stronger objection to a double line down both Castlereagh and Pitt Streets? Yes.
745. *Dr. Garrahan.*] A large part of your business consists in taking goods from the ships' sides to the warehouses? Yes.
746. In what streets do you deliver most? I deliver most in York-street.
747. There you are not troubled with the trams? If I am coming from the Quay, I have to come up Pitt-street as far as Moore-street in order to get to York-street. Of course, there is no trouble in getting from the back wharfs.
748. Do you find it more difficult to cross George-street now than it was before the electric trams were running? Yes.
749. You have to wait longer? Yes; we often have to pull up and wait. Before there were any trams in the street the vehicles there would wind about and make room for one another.
750. Do you find that you lose time through the presence of trams in the street? Yes.
751. Do you lose ten minutes? Yes, fully.
752. It takes you ten minutes longer now to get a load from the Circular Quay to a store in York-street than it did before the trams were running? Yes; and if I was taking wheat down to the Quay, and I had to go along George-street, I would lose twenty minutes.
753. Where do you pick up the wheat? At the railway station.
754. What street could you take to avoid loss of time? Castlereagh-street is the only street open to me.
755. Going from Darling Harbour to the Quay, could you go round by Kent-street? Not with any load, and some days you could not go round that way at all, because the gradients are so steep. If a sudden shower falls, you may see twenty or thirty wool-teams unable to move until the street has dried again, or until the sand-carts have come round.
756. It is in contemplation to make Darling Island the place for shipping wheat from? Yes; but I have shipped more wheat from the Circular Quay than will be shipped from Darling Island for some time to come. We must always expect to have to ship wheat from the wharfs at which the ships lie now.
757. Is the wheat taken away by steamers or by sailing vessels? By steamers.
758. Do the great mail steamers take away much wheat? Yes. The French boats take away wheat every time. We have sent wheat to Woolloomooloo Bay for shipment to London, and also to Smith's wharf.
759. You have no trouble in getting to Woolloomooloo Bay? No; we have only to cross the tram-line once, at Liverpool-street; but very often we are stopped there.
760. Wherever you cross the electric tram line you have trouble? Yes.
761. Would it not be a great gain to put a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street, and thus save Pitt-street from a tramway altogether? I do not think it would be much advantage to have only Pitt-street left for vehicular traffic.
762. It is proposed to have tramways in George-street, Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street—only two of these lines concern you very much, the George-street and the Pitt-street lines? They all concern me, because my carts go through all the streets. There is not a street through which I have not carted, and at all hours.
763. Do you think it would be a serious matter to have all the streets I have named occupied by the tramways? I think so. I think the tramways should be done without.
764. Your suggestion is to have either an overhead or an underground railway? Yes. It might be necessary to buy a little land, but it would benefit the country to do that rather than to construct more tramways through the streets. I am not an engineer, but I think the railway could be brought into the city without much of the surface ground being required, because a great part of the line could be kept underground.
765. Is it your opinion that whenever a tramway goes through a street that street is spoilt for vehicular traffic? Yes.
766. You deliver goods in George-street? Yes.
767. Do you find it more difficult to get into the lanes and gateways off George-street now than it was before? Yes, a great deal more difficult, because there is not enough room to turn in. If you want to go into a gateway on your own side of the road you must cross to the other side in order to turn.
768. Is the difficulty greater where there are four horses than where there are two? Yes; because four horses take up more room than two. A man can turn a two-horse waggon in its own length.
769. If, instead of being a carrier you were a warehouseman, would you choose a site for your premises in a street in which there was no tram, or in a street in which there was a tram? In a street in which there was no tram.
770. Then, on the whole, you are inclined to say to the Government, "Do not put down any more tramways in the city of Sydney"? Just so.
771. *Mr. Levien.*] You do not want any trams at all;—you would like the whole city to be given up to vehicular traffic? Unless the trams can be put under the streets.
772. How do you favour the proposal to construct a railway along to the Circular Quay? I favour it very much; that is where the railway should go.
773. Such a line would be for goods traffic; what about the passenger traffic;—do you favour a city railway? If it can be put under the streets.
774. Everything must go under the streets? Yes.

- J. J. Gilham. 775. You do not want any trams or railways in the city at all? I have no objection to the trams if they are kept in their proper place.
- 5 Sept., 1900. 776. Where is their proper place? A street made for them; they should not run in amongst the vehicular traffic.
777. Where would you make a street for them? Let the Government purchase it.
778. Would you have the Government buy a whole row of houses in order to make a street? Not necessarily. It is not necessary to purchase the whole of the surface along the route of the line. A tramway might come from Belmore Park, in between Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street, going under the cross streets.
779. Do you not think it would be better for the convenience of the public if the carrying business was done in the early hours of the morning, or late in the evening? I do not know what part of the public you refer to.
780. If the heavy merchandise traffic were carried on between 7 o'clock in the morning and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, in order to give the ordinary vehicular traffic a chance in the busy hours of the day, how would that suit? I do not think it would suit at all. I do not think any merchant should be debarred from using the streets at any time.
781. *Mr. Hyam.*] You are altogether against using the streets for tram traffic? Yes.
782. How would you carry the people who come from the suburbs—in 'buses? Yes. The Government could have left the 'buses to look after that traffic until they had made a street for it.
783. Would you be surprised to learn that 250,000 fares are collected daily upon the Sydney tramways, each fare representing a passenger? No.
784. Should we be able to get along at all if all those passengers had to be carried in the omnibuses? If all the tram passengers had to be carried in omnibuses it would increase the number of 'buses very greatly.
785. A 'bus will always get out of the way of a four-wheeled waggon? Yes; but all vehicles keep their own side of the street, and those who are in the habit of using the streets try to get on themselves, and to make room for others; but the trams do not consider the ordinary traffic.
786. Do you not think that 250,000 people should have some consideration? Yes; but not at the expense of others.
787. If the proposed tramway be constructed it will relieve the traffic in George-street? I am aware that if some of the trams are run down Castlereagh-street you will not require to run so many trams down George-street, but I think that all the tram traffic could be accommodated in Elizabeth-street or George-street.
788. The trouble is, that the traffic in George-street is congested, and the Railway Commissioners wish to remove some of it to other streets? It could be removed to Elizabeth-street.
789. You would not object to underground tramways? No.
790. Have you any idea of the cost of underground tramways and railways? No.
791. Would you be surprised to hear that it costs £1,000,000 to construct a mile of underground tramway? The expenditure of £1,000,000 in making a mile of tramway underneath the city would be much more beneficial than the spending of £1,000,000 in the country.
792. Do you not believe in spending money in the country? Yes; but by putting trams through the streets of Sydney we are cutting the ground from under the feet of the producers, in making it impossible to move their produce through the city.
793. If a tramway ran round the Circular Quay, how would the vehicular traffic get across it;—would you be able to get alongside the ships in that case? We go alongside the ships at Darling Harbour, although there is a railway there, and I suppose we would do the same at the Quay. Since the outbreak of the plague a great quantity of goods has been landed at Darling Island and at Pyrmont.
794. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You think there would be some difficulty in doing the carting of the city early in the morning? Yes; the ships generally do not start to load till 8 o'clock. If we could not start in the morning, it would be impossible for the warehouses to take their goods in in the time that would be available.
795. Have you any proposal for coping with the traffic difficulty? No; except that I think the railway ought to be taken along between Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street, underground for the most part, with occasional stopping places. The Government would have to buy sufficient land to give an approach to these stopping places; but all that would be necessary would be about 30 feet in each street.
796. What is the width of Castlereagh-street as compared with that of George-street? Castlereagh-street is a better street all through than George-street for its length; it is straighter, and it is wider. Parts of George-street are very narrow.
797. There is not so much traffic in Castlereagh-street? No; it is the only street that people can use to get quickly to any given point. Traffic comes along Castlereagh-street from Redfern, Surry Hills, and Paddington.
798. About what time of the day do you have the greatest amount of carting to do? We are kept going from 6 o'clock in the morning.
799. In carting from a vessel to a store you are obliged to take the goods away as they are landed on the wharf? Yes.
800. It would not do to leave them on the wharf for any length of time? No. When we accept a bill of lading we become responsible for the goods, should they be damaged on the wharf.
801. Would it be a great inconvenience to the carting business to stop it during the two hours in the morning and the two hours in the afternoon when the tram traffic is heaviest? Certainly; it would be an inconvenience to the merchants. A merchant might lose a sale by the delaying of the delivery of his goods for even a short period.
802. So far, very few accidents have occurred through the congestion of traffic in George-street? Yes; but I think there have been more accidents there since the trams have been running than there were during the whole of the time that the 'buses were running.
803. If another street were opened for tram traffic, it would greatly relieve the traffic in George-street? Yes.
804. That would lessen the danger of accidents? Yes, greatly.
805. It is thought that ultimately the trams will run down pretty well each of the streets east of George-street? In that case they will take those highways from the public, and the public will lose the benefits they expect to gain from the tramways by having to pay more for cartage.

806. If tramways were made down each of these streets, would they be as great an inconvenience to traffic as the George-street tramway is now? Yes; a much greater inconvenience. People will not drive down George-street now, if they can avoid doing so. J. J. Gilham.
5 Sept., 1900.

807. It is possible that one of the streets to the west of George-street may be taken for the tram traffic;—if another street be taken, the inconvenience must become less, because the traffic will cease to be congested in George-street? If we only had one-fourth of the trams now in George-street there, the tramway would not be so great an inconvenience to traffic, but in that case every other street would be carrying tramways, which would inconvenience the traffic in them. There are not enough people to be carried to make it profitable to run a tram down every street.

808. Is the cargo which is landed from a vessel generally taken to a warehouse, or to the railway station? We do not take a great deal of cargo to the railway station. There may be one load going to the railway station for every ten loads sent to the warehouses.

809. Do you think that we should do better without a tramway in Castlereagh-street? I think that the Government ought to consider the business people of the city, and not upset their arrangements by monopolising the roads. As a carrier, I have a right to protest against the proposal, because it takes away the facilities for vehicular traffic to which I have been accustomed from childhood.

810. But you have no suggestion to make for the carrying of passengers into the city? Only the opening up of a new street between Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street, or the taking of Elizabeth-street wholly for tram traffic. There is very little vehicular traffic in Elizabeth-street now, and no business houses will ever be built there. I think that it would be better to run more trams down Elizabeth-street than to lay a tramway in Castlereagh-street.

Edwin Frederick Sutton (Sutton & Co.), master-carrier, York and Market streets, sworn, and examined.—

811. *Mr. Levien.*] You have had a great deal of experience as a carrier in this city: what is your opinion of the proposal to run trams down Castlereagh and Pitt streets? I strongly object to the proposal to construct a tramway down Castlereagh-street. E. F. Sutton.
5 Sept., 1900.

812. Why? For the simple reason that, if you make a tramway in Castlereagh-street, the vehicular traffic there will be as much inconvenienced as it is now in George-street and Elizabeth-street.

813. Are you inconvenienced in your business by the tramways in Elizabeth-street and George-street? Yes. Elizabeth-street is virtually blocked to vehicular traffic. We do not use Elizabeth-street at all; but we have to use George-street to deliver goods to the business houses of a number of the firms there, and, during the last week, our vehicles were twice bumped by the trams. The distance between the kerb and the tram-line is so little that if the horses swerve when goods are being unloaded in George-street the dray either bumps against the kerbstone or against the tram. Most of the business houses in George-street have no back entrance. There are back entrances between Margaret-street and Wynyard-street, but on the other side of the road, from Bridge-street right down to the Haymarket, there are, practically, no back entrances, and all the goods must be taken in at the front from George-street. The same thing may be said of Castlereagh-street.

814. Castlereagh-street is a more convenient street for vehicular traffic? Yes. We have to use Castlereagh-street because of the tram traffic in Elizabeth-street and George-street, and the 'bus and other vehicular traffic in Pitt-street.

815. Are you delayed much by the trams in taking goods down George-street? Certainly. Sometimes a carter has to wait until a string of four or five trams pass before he can pull up opposite the warehouse at which he has to deliver his goods. So it is in Elizabeth-street, and so it would be in Castlereagh-street.

816. What about Pitt-street? I do not think it would be wise to have a tramway in Pitt-street—the street is too narrow for even a single line.

817. On the broad grounds of public convenience, putting on one side your business interests, are you opposed to the construction of a tramway down either Castlereagh-street or Pitt-street? I think it will be a mistake for the Government to put a tramway down either street. Our streets are too narrow for trams and for other vehicles as well. Tramways are right enough in streets like the Melbourne streets, where you have plenty of room. If George-street, Pitt-street, and Castlereagh-street were all occupied by tramways a carrier taking goods from the Circular Quay to the railway station would have to climb up into Macquarie-street, and take a round-about route, which will make his journey a matter of an hour and a half, instead of about half an hour, as at present.

818. An enormous number of people travel in the trams? Yes; but I do not think the number of fares collected indicates the number of persons travelling, because many people travel two or three times, and perhaps oftener, in the day.

819. But in any case, do you think the 'buses could deal with that traffic? No. The railway should bring the people into the city. We want either an underground or an above-ground railway.

820. Were you at the meeting at Burwood the other night? Yes. It sometimes takes me a quarter of an hour to drive from the Circular Quay to my office, because of the delay due to the great number of trams running in George-street.

821. Could not the carrying business be confined to certain hours of the day when other traffic is slack? No; a ship may start unloading at 7 o'clock in the morning, and her cargo must be taken away as soon as possible after it has been landed. There is no protection for goods that are left lying on the wharfs. The merchants require delivery of their goods as soon as possible, and there is no reason why they should not get it, just as a man is able to get a pound of sugar from his grocer as soon as he asks for it.

822. Do you think that a railway into the city is the only means of doing away with the inconvenience created by street tramways? That is my opinion. Elizabeth-street has been taken away from us by the running of steam trams there, and why should it not be used for railway traffic as well. Four lines of rail could be laid there, and that ought to give every facility for dealing with the traffic.

823. How would you deal with the traffic from places like Marrickville, the Glebe, and Leichhardt? They might be dealt with by a continuation of the proposed eastern suburban railway. Could not both a tramway and a railway be taken along Elizabeth-street? Four lines of railway deal with all the traffic between Redfern and the interior.

824. But people might not want to go along Elizabeth-street? Then they could take a cab to wherever they wanted to go.

- E. F. Sutton. 825. *Mr. Hyam.*] If you had four sets of rails in Elizabeth-street, how could you pick up and set down passengers from vehicles travelling on the middle line? You might have platforms.
- 6 Sept., 1900. 826. If you had island platforms, would it not be necessary to widen the street in order to give room for subways of approach, and for the spreading out of the rails to go round these platforms? Perhaps so; but at any rate Elizabeth-street is practically dead for business purposes.
827. How would pedestrians and vehicles cross these lines? It would not be worse than the present position near the railway station.
828. With the traffic in George-street as it is, it is impossible to do anything else than to make another tramway elsewhere? I think it would be a mistake to spoil more streets for vehicular traffic. Why not confine the trams to George-street and Elizabeth-street.
829. The Railway Commissioners say that the traffic in George-street is so congested that it is impossible to increase the number of trams there, and yet the number of trams must be increased in order to carry the passengers? I understand that that is so; but as the trams are working now there will be no vehicular traffic at all in George-street within a couple of years.
830. An electric tramway to a suburb practically gets rid of all the 'bus traffic to that suburb;—do you not find the 'buses an inconvenience? They are sometimes; but there is more give and take with a 'bus than with a tram. A tram-driver does not take notice of anything that is behind him. He pulls up without signalling to the traffic at all.
831. But everyone knows where the trams stop? It is hard to say sometimes where a tram will stop. Sometimes they run right across a street without stopping.
832. It was thought that the cable trams in King-street would materially inconvenience the cross traffic in Sussex-street? They do inconvenience that traffic to some extent. I have seen ten or twenty vehicles standing on each side of King-street.
833. Trams are always a serious inconvenience to the vehicular traffic of a street? Yes.
834. *Mr. Watson.*] Is King-street at its foot as wide as Castlereagh-street? I do not think it is.
835. There is a great deal of traffic to and from the wharfs at the foot of King-street? Latterly there has not been so much, because of the plague.
836. I noticed a long string of waggons there only a week ago. Before the plague a large quantity of goods was brought from or taken to there? Yes.
837. The drays did a big business there without being materially interfered with by the trams? The trams do inconvenience the traffic there; but it is to be remembered that at the foot of King-street there are only one or two wharfs, and all the drays are going to the same wharf. They form up into a line, and take their turn. If, however, there were four or five business premises at the foot of King-street, the trams would very considerably interfere with the delivery of goods to those premises. The other day a tram ran into one of our vehicles when standing outside of Sanders & Co's., in King-street.
838. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Which would interfere less with the traffic—a double line of tramway down Castlereagh-street, or a single line down Castlereagh-street, and a single line in Pitt-street? It is hard to say. I strongly object to the laying down of a tramway in either streets. If you drove all the vehicular traffic into Pitt-street, it would block Pitt-street. At the present time the vehicular traffic is divided between Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street. Even a single line of tramway would take up 8 feet of the roadway. The best thing to do is to bring the railway into the city. I strongly object to either of these tramway proposals. One is as bad as the other, and either would greatly inconvenience the mercantile community.

Thomas Hamilton, master-carrier, Engine-street, sworn, and examined:—

- T. Hamilton. 839. *Mr. Shepherd.*] How long have you been engaged in business in Sydney? For nearly seventeen years.
- 5 Sept., 1900. 840. Has your business been inconvenienced by the running of electric trams in George-street? Yes; a great deal.
841. In what way? A great deal of delay is caused by the trams.
842. You have not been able to deliver your goods as freely as before? No.
843. Do you not think that the inconvenience from which you suffer would be considerably modified if some of the tram traffic were taken down Castlereagh-street? I do not think so. Castlereagh-street is now the only clear street we have on the east side of George-street.
844. It has been suggested that, instead of a double line down Castlereagh-street, a single line might be made down Castlereagh-street, with a single return line along Pitt-street; do you think that the single line arrangement would be less inconvenient than a double line in Castlereagh-street? I think so; but I do not see that there is any room in Pitt-street for even a single line. In Pitt-street, between Market and King streets, there are a great many shops and a great deal of pedestrian traffic, so that now it is difficult to drive a vehicle along that part of the street.
845. Are the goods which are landed from the ships taken, for the most part, to the warehouses, or are they taken to the railway? They are generally taken first to the warehouses, and distributed from there to the railway, to various steamers, wharfs, and to the different merchants in town.
846. What is your opinion about the proposal to confine the carting operations of the city to certain hours of the day? That could not be done. The merchants do not open their premises until 8 o'clock in the morning, and the bonds do not open till 9 o'clock, and there is a great deal of work to be done in the time which is now available.
847. If the bonds were open at times to suit the carting, could the arrangement be made? I do not think so. We cannot get rid of the goods quickly enough now.
848. There are about four hours in the day when the tram traffic is busier than at any other time; would it not be possible to stop the carting during those four hours and do it at some other time? I do not think that it would work at all.
849. Have you thought of any way of getting rid of the present inconvenience? I think that Elizabeth-street and George-street ought to be enough for the trams.
850. Do you think that those streets would carry all the passenger traffic? Yes.
851. What is your opinion about using Sussex-street, or one of the other streets west of George-street, for tram traffic? It would not do at all.
852. The traffic there is too great now? Yes; and the streets are too narrow.

853. What sort of traffic is York-street given up to? There is a great deal of traffic in York-street. York-street is used as a means for avoiding George-street in getting to Miller's Point and Dawes' Point. T. Hamilton.
 854. Your recommendation is to confine the trams to George-street and Elizabeth-street? Sometimes we have a 15-ton boiler to carry, and that requires a clear street. 5 Sept., 1900.

THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

William Edward Budd (Budd & Ferns), master carrier, Sussex-street, sworn, and examined:—

855. *Chairman.*] What difference has the construction of an electric tramway in George-street made to your carrying business? The George-street tramway has put us to a lot of inconvenience. We cannot get along the street now as well as we used to. It takes us a quarter of an hour longer to get from the railway station to Circular Quay now than it used to take before the tramway was constructed. W. E. Budd.
 6 Sept., 1900.

856. Do you use the whole length of George-street for your carting operations? No; we can only use George-street between Liverpool and Park streets. We go along Park-street to Castlereagh-street, and then along Castlereagh-street, though sometimes we use Pitt-street.

857. If a double line of tramway was laid down Castlereagh-street, would that be a further interference with your business? Yes; because then Pitt-street would be the only street in which there was no tramway.

858. Would the construction of a single line down Castlereagh-street and up Pitt-street hamper your business? If that suggestion were carried out it would mean that George-street, Pitt-street, Castlereagh-street, and Elizabeth-street would all four be taken from us.

859. Would a single line of tramway be anything like as serious an interference with the traffic of the street as a double line? It would in Pitt-street, because there is not sufficient room there even for a single line.

860. You do not think it advisable to put a tramway in Pitt-street at all? No. I think the best arrangement would be to run half the trams in George-street and the other half in Elizabeth-street.

861. We have had evidence which shows that Elizabeth-street lies a little too far to the east of the city to make it a convenient tramway route for the great bulk of the passengers, and that it is necessary to take the tram traffic as near to George-street as possible? If the trams branched off at the intersection of Pitt and George streets, and half ran down George-street and the other half down Pitt-street, people coming from the suburbs could change there, and get into whichever tram would take them nearer to the place where they wished to go.

862. In which direction is most of your carting done? Most of it is done from the railway to the Circular Quay, Woolloomooloo Bay, and Miller's Point. To get to Miller's Point we have to go up George-street, branch off at the Town Hall, and then follow along York-street. We cannot use Kent-street because of its steepness. If a man has a heavy load to take down Kent-street, and a shower comes on, he must either wait until the road has dried again, or until the sand-carts have come round. It would relieve George-street a great deal to run half the tram traffic down Elizabeth-street.

863. If the construction of a tramway down Pitt-street did away with a great deal of the 'bus traffic in that street, would it not leave sufficient room for the other street traffic? It would be a great convenience to get rid of some of the present traffic in the street; but I do not see that that is possible. The 'bus traffic is not nearly so great now as it used to be; but, after half-past 4, it is almost impossible to get along Pitt-street, because of the number of carriages and other light vehicles there.

864. Do you anticipate that the resumption of the wharfs by the Government will alter the trend of heavy traffic very much? No, because the wharf business will be done pretty well in the same places as now.

865. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Which would you prefer—a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street, or a single line down Castlereagh-street and a single line up Pitt-street? If one or the other had to come, in spite of our objection, I should say, "Put a single line in each street," because that would not be quite so inconvenient to the street traffic as to have a double line in Castlereagh-street; but, in my opinion, neither the double line nor the single line should be put down. I contend that George-street and Elizabeth-street are sufficient for the whole of the tramway traffic. What they should have is a railway from Redfern to the Circular Quay. The tramways are a great inconvenience to the rest of the street traffic, because the conductors will not give opportunities for the traffic to cross the lines, and for this reason a heavy vehicle often blocks a large number of light vehicles that are behind it.

866. If a double line of tramway were laid down in Castlereagh-street, you would still have Pitt-street for vehicular traffic? Pitt-street, between Park-street and Hunter-street, is the most useless street in the city for our purposes. It is always full of light vehicles, and there are very few entrances there for the delivery of goods to the business houses and warehouses. I have to take a great deal of stuff every day from Darling Harbour to the Circular Quay.

867. Have the carriers of the city had a meeting to discuss this matter? Yes.

868. Have they formulated any proposal for dealing with the present difficulty which would be more convenient than that before the Committee? Our proposal is that the trams should branch off at the railway station, and half should run down Elizabeth-street while the other half ran down George-street. We are quite willing that those streets should be taken for the tram traffic. We have been nearly hunted out of George-street.

869. Is there much traffic in Castlereagh-street now? There is not so much at the present time, but there will be a great deal when the wool season commences, about three weeks hence. The wool traffic lasts until the end of November or the beginning of December.

- W. E. Budd. 870. Is not Elizabeth-street a convenient street for heavy traffic? Not a very convenient street, because the trams there run very frequently, and it is not a business street.
- 6 Sept., 1900. 871. Would it be possible to limit the heavy traffic of the city to certain hours of the day? I do not think so. Wool is brought down by the trains during the night, and is all ready to be taken away in the morning. Then, about 10 o'clock, more wool is brought down, and more again about 12 o'clock, and at about half-past 2. We must clear the trucks as fast as we can, to enable the Railway Commissioners to use their rolling-stock economically. I have seen as many as 300 or 400 trucks of wool waiting to be unloaded. It takes a good deal of carting to get rid of so much wool as that.
872. What is your opinion about the advisability of constructing a tramway along some street west of George-street? That would not do at all. York and Clarence streets are not long enough to make a tramway in them convenient.
873. Could not a tramway be taken to Sussex-street from the Haymarket? Yes; but that would be worse than taking a tramway down Pitt-street. Sussex-street is too narrow for the traffic there now. We have often been carried on to the footpath with our vehicles in Sussex-street when the traffic has been rather heavy and the roads a bit slippery.
874. I suppose you use nearly all the street between the Circular Quay and the railway? Yes; between Darling Harbour and Castlereagh-street every day, from 7 o'clock in the morning until half-past 5 o'clock in the afternoon. We do a great deal of carting to the Quay.
875. *Dr. Garrahan.*] When you say that you have a great deal of carting from the railway, do you mean from Pymont? From Darling Harbour. It is only now and again that we bring anything from Pymont.
876. What sort of produce do you take from the railway? Flour, wheat, bran, pollard, copper, and wool.
877. Is the agricultural produce sent on board the steamers? Yes; and to various stores.
878. Is any of it taken away by the large passenger steamers? Yes; the Japanese steamers take 200 or 300 tons every time from us alone.
879. In what shape do you carry the copper? In small ingots. It goes to the P. and O. Company's steamer one week, and to the Orient Company's steamer the next week.
880. Although we have a good export wharf at Darling Island, you still have to take this stuff to the Circular Quay? Yes. The Darling Island wharf is used only to ship away large quantities of stuff direct from the country; but that arrangement is not a very satisfactory one, because the agents have to sample the stuff first, and some times, after a consignment has been sent to Darling Island, it has had to be carted away again to different stores, because it has not been good enough to send away.
881. Then your customers are likely to continue to want you to take their stuff to the Circular Quay? Yes.
882. What route do you follow in going from the railway to the Circular Quay? We come up Harbour-street, round Dixon-street, and into Goulburn-street; and then up George-street as far as Park-street, and sometimes as far as Market-street; and then along Park-street to Castlereagh-street, and down Castlereagh-street. We used to go down George-street as far as Hunter-street, and there turn into Hunter-street.
883. And that is the best grade now? Yes.
884. If you went up Liverpool-street, you would have a steep gradient to meet? Yes. We go up Liverpool-street at times, but not often. The roads have been so bad lately that we have had to take the very best route we could get.
885. Is most of the wool taken along Castlereagh-street? Yes.
886. A great deal of wool used to come along Macquarie-street; does it still? We use Macquarie-street when it is mizzling, in order to avoid the wood-blocks. To get to Miller's Point we use York-street.
887. Do you not go down Macquarie-street to deliver to the wool stores? We deliver most of the wool on the Circular Quay side.
888. Do you deliver more wool on the western side than on the eastern side? Yes.
889. That is the wool going to French and to German ports? Yes.
890. Does not that wool go into a store in Sydney to be sampled? A good deal of it does. The first clip from the station may go into store and be sold, but what follows may go straight to the boats.
891. Do the wool stores in Pymont take a large quantity of wool? Yes.
892. You do not have to drag that wool into the city? Yes; we take it from those stores along George-street.
893. And you have to take it to those stores from the railway first? Yes. Sometimes we cross the Pymont Bridge, and come up Market-street, but then we have to keep an extra horse for the Market-street hill? If we come up Market-street we go down Castlereagh-street.
894. Then all the wool which is sold in the Colony has a double handling, and a double carting, while that which goes direct from the railway to the ships is only handled once? Yes.
895. Is it cheaper to cart the wool to the Circular Quay than to lighter it there? Yes.
896. Could you not more cheaply put the wool that comes by railway on to a lighter? No, that is the difficulty. Wool often arrives at Darling Harbour consigned in the name of some of the banks, and there is no order saying where to take it. The trucks containing that wool are therefore cut out until orders come for it, and while it is waiting the trucks get so mixed up that it would be impossible to run them alongside a lighter.
897. If the wool is discharged from the trucks on to a wharf it would be cheaper to lighter it down to the Circular Quay? Yes; but it is not discharged conveniently for lightering.
898. You compete with the lighters? We use lighters at times.
899. It is sometimes cheaper to lighter than to cart? It is sometimes cheaper to lighter than to pay wharfage. You pay no wharfage for cargo which is put over a ship's side into a lighter.
900. Then there is no prospect of reducing the heavy traffic between the railway and the Circular Quay? Not by using lighters.
901. Notwithstanding that the wool is discharged at the water side in Darling Harbour, and is conveyed to the water side at the Circular Quay? Yes; but all the wool that comes down by railway is not ready to go into a store alongside the water.
902. If the wool stores were alongside the water, you could lighter the wool, and the traffic off the streets? Yes.
- 903.

903. But there is not a single wool warehouse which is really alongside a wharf? The only one that I know of is that at North Shore. We cart wool consigned there down to the lighters. The best wool stores we have are at Pyrmont, and they are likely to remain there. W. E. Budd.
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904. Do you think that the passenger traffic from the eastern suburbs would be content to come down Elizabeth-street? I think so. The people coming from the eastern suburbs would not have very far to walk to get to George-street if they wished to use any of the George-street trams.
905. But Elizabeth-street is not the street in which people want to be dropped? But it is necessary to study the interests of those connected with the vehicular traffic of the city as well as the interests of those who travel by trams. It is not the tram travellers who keep the country going, neither do they keep the railways going. There has not been nearly as much tram traffic in Elizabeth-street since the George-street line has been open.
906. Would you bring all the railway traffic down Elizabeth-street? No; I would bring only those who wanted to come down Elizabeth-street that way.
907. Would you take the Elizabeth-street tram into the station-yard? I would bring both the Elizabeth-street tram and the George-street tram into the station-yard.
908. There would be no room for two lines of tramway there? I think it would be an easy matter to run trams from the railway station alternately down George-street and Elizabeth-street.

Ernest Clement Vernon Broughton, Auctioneer and Valuator, sworn, and examined:—

909. *Mr. McFarlane.*] What is your opinion concerning the proposal to construct a double line of tramway down Castlereagh-street from the proposed new railway station at Belmore Park? I take it that a line of tramway in Castlereagh-street has been proposed in order to relieve the congestion of traffic now prevailing in George-street; but, as one who has resided in Ashfield for the past fifteen years, and who has had a large experience of the suburban railway system, it seems to me that the construction of such a tramway will defer the extension of a railway into the city, and it is questionable if it will afford satisfactory relief to the traffic. The increase of population in the various suburbs, combined with the popularity of the electric trams, has made the traffic so great that before very long the tramways will be unable to cope with it, and, without a railway, it must come to a dead stop. If every street in the city is to be used for tramways, it will be impossible to drive a vehicle through the city in safety. At the present time George-street is not only dangerous to pedestrians, it is also dangerous to those who drive vehicles along it. E. C. V.
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910. Part of the vehicular traffic—the 'bus traffic—will be got rid of by the construction of the tramways? Yes; but there is also a very heavy carrying traffic, and if you prohibit drays, waggons, and other vehicles from using the streets except during certain hours, you will have an outcry from the carriers and merchants, because the merchants and shopkeepers must have their goods delivered to them during the busy parts of the day.
911. Until twelve months ago, Elizabeth-street carried the whole of the tram traffic from the western suburbs? Yes; but there were no penny sections then, and the population of the suburbs was not so great as it is now. The growth of the suburbs during the last twelve months has been marvellous. Twelve months ago there were plenty of empty houses round about Waverley, Randwick, and Woollahra, but now there are practically none, and vacant lots are being built upon. There has been a great boom in building everywhere. In the western suburbs, as at Ashfield, there is not an empty house. A great number of those who used to live in the city, or in the vicinity of Darlinghurst, and out Moore Park way, were driven out into the suburbs by the plague. That in itself accounts in part for the increase of the tram traffic.
912. Is not a great deal of the traffic in George-street pick-up traffic? Yes; no doubt a large number of people from the North Sydney suburbs use the George-street tram in order to get to the Haymarket.
913. On the Castlereagh-street line, there would not be that pick-up traffic? The Castlereagh-street line, I understand, is to be a feeder to the proposed new central railway station at Belmore Park, and I am opposed to its construction, because I think it will defer the extension of the railway into the city. The people of the western suburbs are, however, thoroughly aroused to the fact that the extension of the railway into the city must be made a political question, upon which the existence of a Government will depend, and we intend to create an organisation which will bring about a finality. For years we have been promised the extension of the railway into the city. That has been one of the planks in the platform of every candidate for Parliament; but, after the election, there has always been a singular silence and apathy in regard to it. It seems strange to the residents of the western suburbs that their claims should have been overridden by gentlemen representing country constituencies.
914. But the country constituencies are just as much in favour of railway communication as the city people? There is not a strong suburban representation upon the Committee, though, of course, that may be simply an accident. I think myself that the gentlemen forming the Committee have acted conscientiously; but we who live in the western suburbs feel very sore about this matter, more especially since the proposal has appeared within measurable distance of fruition.
915. Coming back to the subject before the Committee, do you think the construction of a tramway down Castlereagh-street would interfere much with the street traffic of the city? No doubt it would relieve George-street considerably, but Castlereagh-street is a very fine street.
916. Is it overcrowded with traffic now? The traffic in Castlereagh-street has gradually increased since the George-street tramway was made. People who drive vehicles are beginning to use Castlereagh-street in preference to George-street, because they find it safer.
917. Do you think it would prejudice the interests of the business people in Castlereagh-street if a tramway were constructed down that street? I think that the construction of a tramway in Castlereagh-street would increase the value of property there.
918. Do you think that those who occupy business premises in Castlereagh-street would raise any serious objection to the construction of a tramway there? I do not see how they could make out a valid case in support of the statement that it would interfere with their business. I think that it would have a tendency to improve business in the street. Castlereagh-street has hitherto been a quiet, retired street. I suppose it is the last residential street in the city.
919. Have you noticed that the electric trams invariably do away with the 'bus traffic? Yes; the 'buses are driven off by them. 920.

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920. To that extent they relieve the streets of traffic? Yes; and no one can ignore the fact that our 'buses are very unhealthy, dirty, and out of date; so that no one cares to ride in them.

921. Do you think that if the proposed tramway is constructed there will be enough room for the heavy traffic in the other streets of the city? I can hardly speak with authority upon that subject; but if Sydney becomes the commercial capital which it is hoped she will become, the heavy traffic in the streets must increase every year. The number of warehouses in the city is being increased, and the rents of warehouses have gone up, so that the dray traffic must increase.

922. When additional wharfs are constructed in other parts of the harbour, and shipping is taken away from the Circular Quay, will not the heavy traffic go in other directions? Yes. It may be possible in that way to remove the whole of the dray traffic to the western parts of the city, leaving George-street entirely free for passenger traffic.

923. And if the railway is extended to the proposed new wharfs, that will have an additional effect in reducing the heavy traffic? Yes.

924. It has been suggested that, instead of making a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street, a single line might be taken down Castlereagh-street, and a return single line up Pitt-street;—how do you view that proposal? No doubt such an arrangement would simplify the working of the tram system.

925. Would it be a convenient arrangement for the public? I think it would be a distinct convenience to the public, though, unfortunately, Pitt-street is very narrow.

926. It is proposed not to lay the track along the middle of the street, but to lay it on one side? At first glance there appear many favourable features in that proposal. No doubt on the score of convenience and safety it is preferable to the Castlereagh-street proposal.

927. How would such an arrangement affect the vehicular traffic? I take it that the tramway would be laid along the eastern side of Pitt-street, in which case it would leave the western side of the street free, and above Martin-place there are a great many retail shops, where a great deal of shopping is done, largely by ladies and children, so that that would be a distinct convenience. It would lessen the risks of accidents very much.

928. Do you think it would give as great facilities to vehicular traffic as the Castlereagh-street proposal? I think so. No doubt it would drive the wool traffic out of Pitt-street into Castlereagh-street, and there would be more room for it in Castlereagh-street with a single line of tramway there than with a double line.

929. Do you think that it would interfere with the business of the large warehouses to have a tramway in Pitt-street? I do not see how it could interfere with them to any extent. Hoffnung's and Dalton's warehouses are both on the western side of the street, so that they would not be interfered with by the tramway. I think that the tramway would be a great gain to those engaged in the retail trade. The wholesale people depend more largely upon country constituents than upon town buyers.

930. *Mr. Hyam.*] But you are against the construction of the proposed tramway because you favour the extension of the railway into the city? I would unquestionably prefer the extension of the railway into the city. I am afraid that the proposed tramway would give only a temporary relief.

931. How would a city railway serve the passenger traffic from suburbs like Leichhardt, Annandale, Balmain, and the Glebe? That traffic would continue to be served by the George-street tramway.

932. What about the eastern suburban traffic? Provision has already been made for dealing with it in Elizabeth-street.

933. Do you think that an extension of the railway into the city would carry the greater part of the traffic from the western suburbs? Yes. Now is a favourable time for the extension of the railway into the city, because the value of real estate is not so high as it was fifteen years ago, and, therefore, any resump-tions would not cost so much; values, however, are on the increase. There is a hardening tendency in the real estate market, and in ten years' time you might have to pay a great deal more than you would have to pay now.

934. Would it surprise you to hear that it would cost over £1,500,000 to bring the railway from its present terminus into Hyde Park? I am not sure what it would cost.

935. You say that the city railway should be made a political question? Yes.

936. But people in the country are already crying out about the enormous expenditure in the city? It is a pity that in our political life people should take these parochial views. The extension of the railway into Sydney would serve the country people, inasmuch as it would make it unnecessary for them to leave the train at Redfern.

937. If the railway were extended into the city, would not many people get out at Redfern and take the George-street tramway, in order to get to places in George-street, or to places west of George-street? A fair proportion of them might do so.

938. How do you view the proposal to take a portion of Hyde Park from the people? The St. James' road scheme would not interfere very materially with Hyde Park.

939. Do you think any scheme of railway extension will be complete unless the railway is brought down to the water's edge? No; because that is the natural terminus. If the railway were brought down to the water's edge you would have railway communication right from the interior to the seaboard.

940. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you had conversations with many people in regard to the proposed tramway? I have discussed it generally with constituents and others.

941. Is it thought well of? It seems to be thought that the Commissioners are desirous of acting for the public good by relieving George-street of some of its traffic. The congestion of traffic in George-street is becoming greater every day.

942. Is it your opinion that the construction of the proposed line would effectually relieve the congestion of traffic in George-street? I think that to have a single line down Castlereagh-street and up Pitt-street would be more effectual.

943. Do you not think that people rather than face the inconveniences of George-street would come into Castlereagh-street to take a tram? Yes. I always use the steam trams when going to the railway station about 6 o'clock in the evening, because it is impossible to get a seat in the George-street trams at that time. From half-past 5 to a quarter-past 6 it is dangerous for women and children to attempt to use the George-street trams. The Early Closing Act has created a very large exodus from the city at 6 o'clock.

944. Do you think that the public would be as well served if the tramway were confined to Elizabeth and George streets? No.

945. Do you think that it would be better to take the tram down Castlereagh-street? I think so, in view of the possibility of confining the heavy commercial traffic to the western part of the city. The great objection to the proposal is that it would spoil Castlereagh-street for heavy traffic.

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946. Would not a single line interfere less with the traffic than a double one, because all the trams would be going the one way? Undoubtedly. There would be no blocking and no delay if you had a continuous service.

947. Do you think that the tram system, when extended, is likely to prove a convenient one for the whole city? Yes. In Sydney we have much greater difficulties to contend with in providing for our tram traffic than they have in any of the other capitals. In Western Australia, which I visited some time ago, the streets in the cities are more level than are our streets, while in Melbourne they can have a perfect tram system because their streets are so wide.

948. *Dr. Garran.*] Is the immense traffic up and down George-street of benefit to the shopkeepers there? I think so.

949. Would they like the tramway removed from George-street? I think not.

950. Do you think that a tramway adds to the value of the shop property in the streets through which it runs? Yes, in the city; but, in a street like William-street, I think it depreciates the value of shop property, because people are inclined to say, "Let us go straight into town, to shops where they have everything up to date." In dealing with property in William-street, during the last year or two, I have valued it on a lower basis than I would have taken some years ago. As a matter of fact, the value of property in William-street has gone down, and business people there say that the tramway has considerably affected their businesses. Before the tramway was constructed people walking up and down the street might often be attracted into the shops by some article displayed in the windows, whereas now those people are carried through the street in the trams. I have been told by a gentleman who has a large draper's shop in William-street that there is nothing doing there now in the daytime—that all the business is done at night.

951. Do you think that the Pitt-street shopkeepers suffer by the tramway taking their customers down George-street? No; but Pitt-street is so narrow that a tram there might prevent people who can afford to drive there in carriages from continuing to do so, in which case the shopkeepers might lose their customers.

952. When there was a horse tramway in Pitt-street the shopkeepers objected to it. Thousands of people who deal with shopkeepers in Pitt-street now travel up George-street? Yes.

953. Have the George-street trams diminished the retail business in Pitt-street? No.

954. There is no desire on the part of the Pitt-street shopkeepers for a tramway in Pitt-street? I do not know what their views are.

955. Is it not a great advertisement to a shop to have an incessant line of people passing it all day long? Yes; and I think that a single line of tramway would be a distinct gain to Pitt-street.

956. Would the value of property in Pitt-street rise or fall if a tramway were made there? I think it would increase.

957. Because the trams would bring more people into the street? Yes.

958. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Property has gone down in value everywhere during the last few years? There was a great fall in the value of property owing to the bank crisis, but values are going up again now.

MONDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a double line for an Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.

John Spencer Brunton, merchant, and ex-President of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce, sworn, and examined:—

959. *Dr. Garran.*] Are your business interests largely concerned with the facilities afforded for vehicular traffic in the streets of Sydney? Yes. I saw that Mr. Budd, of the firm of Budd and Ferns, the principal part of whose business consists in the carting done for my firm, was giving evidence a few days ago, against the proposed Castlereagh and Pitt Streets tramway, and I have felt it to be my duty, as a citizen, to come forward to support that evidence, and to show the Committee the danger and harm which would result from the making of the proposed tramway.

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960. Your carting is not done by carts of your own? No; Messrs. Budd and Ferns have done our work for the last twelve years. They began with a single dray, and now they are amongst the largest contractors in Sydney.

961. The evidence of the carriers has been to the effect that the George-street tramway has caused delay rather than danger? My opinion is that the proposed tramway will cause both delay and danger, and that the delay will be but a small thing in comparison with the danger to the general public. I maintain—as you will see by referring to the evidence given by me in the inquiry into the city railway scheme—that the time has arrived for the extension of the railway into the city. It was argued, when that extension was first made the subject of inquiry, that the making of a tramway down George-street would render the extension of the railway into the city unnecessary; but the condition of the traffic in George-street during the past few months has shown beyond doubt that the extension of the railway into the city is more needed now than it ever was before. Now it can be argued that the extension of the railway into the city is required in order to relieve George-street of traffic, and in order to carry passengers with that expedition and despatch which is necessary in these days. I would impress upon the Committee the need for

J. S. Brunton. an extension of the railway into the city from the point of view of the saving of time which it would bring about. Since the tramway has been running down George-street, the congestion of traffic has been so great that in the busy parts of the day it takes half an hour to reach the Redfern station by tram from the heart of the city, whereas formerly the journey could be made in an omnibus in fifteen minutes, while there is not sufficient accommodation on the trams for the people who desire to use them. The Elizabeth-street tramway, which used to be a great convenience to people going to the railway station, does not now give us a service which is convenient for railway travellers, if we leave out of account the occasional trips of the Waterloo and Botany trams, which stops in Devonshire-street, opposite the subway. I am the owner of private vehicles, and I understand horses, being a very fair whip, and having the command of a squadron of Lancers, so that I know what I am speaking of when I say that the running of a tramway in Pitt-street would be dangerous to the rest of the traffic in the street. At the present time my coachman objects to go into George-street if he can avoid doing so, because of the risk of collision when driving fresh, well-fed horses through such a crowded thoroughfare. Pitt-street, however, is only 36 feet wide, and is already a crowded thoroughfare. There are, too, no fewer than three theatres in Pitt-street, all within a short distance of each other; and at night, when they are discharging, if there were a line of tramway running up the eastern side of the street, and rows of cabs and vehicles in waiting on the other side of the street, the traffic would be completely blocked. A tramway in Pitt-street is no new thing. In 1865, £175,000 were spent in constructing a horse tramway down Pitt-street, and I have it on the authority of three of the oldest and best reputed citizens of Sydney that it was the unanimous opinion that that tramway was unsafe and interfered too much with the other street traffic, so that in the end it was removed with very little difficulty. It is admitted that between 50,000 and 60,000 people use the Redfern Railway Station daily, and if the whole of the railway traffic were taken from the George-street tramway and carried into the city by train the construction of a tramway in Pitt and Castlereagh Streets would be rendered unnecessary. What should be done is to construct the railway into the city, and then, if the railway is found not to sufficiently relieve George-street of its traffic, to consider some other means for relieving it. The situation of Sydney is very similar to that of New York, and it seems to me that ultimately we shall have to carry much of our city traffic underground or overhead. The hope of the western suburbs people, for many years, has been to have the railway extended into the city. Although the electric tramway has been made from the Redfern station down George-street, the residents of the western suburbs find travelling more inconvenient now than it was before. George-street is so crowded a thoroughfare that it is dangerous for women and children to cross it in order to use the trams.

962. Do you say that the western suburbs people think themselves worse off now than they were before the George-street tramway was running? I believe they do. They lose more time now than they used to lose. The trams are so overcrowded that the drivers have hardly enough room to work in. Then the crossing of George-street, near the Benevolent Asylum, is an absolutely dangerous one, because of the tram-lines coming in there from all directions. Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street are now almost the only main arteries in the city for goods traffic. My firm handles every week at the Darling Harbour railway station between 300 and 500 tons of produce, and we ship a lot of stuff to Woolloomooloo Bay and other parts of the harbour. The stuff has to be brought to the city, and I can quite understand reputable men like Mr. Budd and Mr. Gillham, who have had great experience in carting, objecting to the blocking of more of the city streets by the construction of trams in them. My main objection to the proposal before the Committee is that the tramway would not be required if the railway were brought into the city; that it would be dangerous to traffic, and would entail great delay; and that it would do great injury to shopkeepers and property-owners in Pitt-street. If people are dropped within 200 or 300 yards of the place to which they want to go, they can very easily walk that distance, and the George-street tramway drops its passengers very close to the Pitt-street shops. I have no interest in property in Pitt-street. I have come forward to give evidence simply because I regard the proposal before the Committee as a dangerous one, and one which should not be carried out.

963. The shopkeepers in George-street do not dislike the trams there, because they bring customers to them, and the Pitt-street shopkeepers would probably not complain if a tramway in Pitt-street brought more traffic into that thoroughfare, though the carters and people who drive vehicles through the streets would complain? I think that a shop like that of David Jones & Co., or any of the shops in Pitt-street, owe more to their central position than they owe to the tramway; and, as I have already said, it is not necessary to drop people immediately in front of the shops to which they wish to go. If they are dropped within a block of a shop they can easily walk that distance. Pitt-street is altogether too narrow for a tramway.

964. The Railway Commissioners are pressing the construction of the proposed tramway upon the Government quite apart from the city railway; they find that they have overloaded George-street with traffic, and that that street must be relieved before they can add any more traffic to it? Why do they not run some of the electric cars down Elizabeth-street.

965. They are of opinion that people would not now use the Elizabeth-street line; but that they might use a tramway running down Pitt-street? There is no room in Pitt-street for a tramway, and the construction of a line there would only create delay, danger, and difficulty.

966. Formerly the traffic used to go down Pitt-street, because there was no other line open, but when the George-street line was opened the traffic deserted Elizabeth-street? If all the railway trams were taken down Elizabeth-street, the railway passengers would have to go that way, and that would greatly relieve George-street.

967. The Railway Commissioners seem to think that, even if the railway trams ran down Elizabeth-street, most of the passengers would prefer to walk to George-street, and to take the George-street tram? Well, in my opinion the scheme before the Committee is a very crude one, and I think that the inquiry into it will bring about the reopening of the city railway proposal.

968. The Railway Commissioners say that they think the Public Works Committee made a mistake in regard to the city railway, but they say at the same time that, apart from the city railway, they must as soon as possible take the railway traffic from George-street? To take the railway traffic from George-street would mean to take away about 60 per cent. of the traffic from George-street. To do that would make the street much safer for vehicular traffic. The city traffic going west goes out through a narrow neck at George-street, much as the railway traffic goes through a narrow neck at Cleveland-street. The working of the George-street tramway has proved that that line does not satisfy the railway passengers, and

and the only way to meet their wants is to extend the railway into the city. I object altogether to the construction of a tramway in Pitt-street. J. S. Branton.

969. The Commissioners could restore the old state of things in a week by turning the electric trams out of the station yards, and running the old steam trams down Elizabeth-street;—to do that would relieve George-street? It would to a great extent, and it would be a great convenience to the people who wanted to connect with the eastern suburban tram system. 10 Sept., 1900.

970. *Mr. Watson.*] The evidence given before the Committee in February last by Mr. Kneeshaw, of the Railway Department, was to the effect that only 13,000 railway passengers travelled by the electric trams; at that time about half of the passengers carried by the George-street tram came from the railway, while the balance were picked up in the street;—since then, however, the Newtown and Dulwich Hill traffic has been brought into George-street, and, later on, it is intended to bring the Leichhardt, Annandale, Glebe, Balmain, and other western suburban tram traffic into George-street;—if that is done, the railway traffic will form only an inconsiderable portion of the whole traffic, and to divert it will not sufficiently relieve the George-street line? I think that if the railway traffic were diverted from George-street the trouble would be very considerably got rid of. At the present time, people living at Dulwich Hill are often unable to get seats in the George-street trams, because of the overcrowded state of those trams, and the blocking of the trams through the congestion of traffic in the streets makes their progress a very slow matter. It seems to me that if some of the traffic were brought down Elizabeth-street it would greatly improve things. I feel inclined to challenge Mr. Kneeshaw's figures about the railway traffic.

971. He gave those figures after a very careful counting of the traffic for a considerable period. Just how much traffic would be taken away from George-street by the extension of the railway into the city would depend largely upon the point to which the railway was taken? Yes; but I think that the extension of the railway into the city would relieve George-street of fully one-third of its present traffic.

972. Mr. Oliver informed the Committee, when the city railway proposal was under inquiry, that it would be necessary to construct these relieving lines in Pitt and Castlereagh streets even if the railway were brought into the city? I think we should give the extension of the railway into the city a trial before going any further with the construction of tramways. If, afterwards, it were found necessary to construct more tramways, the advisability of constructing underground or overhead lines might be inquired into. Pitt-street is so narrow, and is so crowded at the present time, that it would be almost impossible for the trams to make their way through it.

973. Has the number of 'buses running in George-street been materially reduced since the tramway there was opened? Yes; but I am surprised that so many 'buses have been kept on. I thought that the effect of the tram in George-street would have been the same as in Melbourne, where the 'buses were all taken off the street almost in a night, and the streets there are much wider, and give more facilities for vehicular traffic than George-street gives.

974. If the eastern suburban lines are brought down to the Circular Quay, as is proposed, do you not think that it will give the trams a better opportunity to compete with the 'buses, and that the 'buses will disappear? No doubt the number of 'buses will be reduced. I see that the Edgecliffe-road 'buses are about to be sold.

975. Do you think that a reduction in the number of the 'buses would compensate for the space taken up by a single line of tramway in Pitt-street? No. Even if the 'buses were driven out of Pitt-street, that thoroughfare would still be crowded, because it is the main vehicular thoroughfare of the city.

976. Does not the 'bus traffic form a very large proportion of the vehicular traffic in Pitt-street now? Yes, a good proportion.

977. Which would be more economical of street space—a tramway system or a 'bus system? A four-horse 'bus would take up about the same superficial area of roadway as a tramcar.

978. But, for each passenger carried, a tramcar would occupy less space than a 'bus? Yes, that is so.

979. Then, would there not be a saving in street space if we had trams instead of 'buses? I do not think so, because the trams run at regular intervals, whereas the 'buses accommodate themselves to the other traffic in the streets.

980. With regard to your suggestion that the trams should be underground, would it be necessary to put them underground for the whole distance, or only in the more crowded parts of the city? I think that in years to come it will be necessary to have underground trams in the city itself, though the trams need not run underground all the way. At places like Belmore Park, for instance, they might run overhead, and, if there were an extension to the North Shore, no doubt they would run overhead. Our street traffic is very difficult to deal with, because the city lies on such a narrow peninsula.

981. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do you think that the extension of the railway as far as the Supreme Court would serve the suburban traffic? I do; but ultimately there must be an extension to the North Shore. I advocated the giving up of one side of Hyde Park for railway purposes, having the entrance to what would be the main suburban station opposite the Queen's Statue.

982. Where would you run the country trains from? From the central station at Devonshire-street. People going into the country have always a lot of luggage, and have to use cabs, so that it would be as easy for them to go to a station at Devonshire-street as to go to a station at King-street.

983. You would have the city railway for suburban traffic only? Yes.

984. An extension of the railway into the city would not serve the passengers from suburbs like Leichhardt and Annandale? It would not serve the passengers from suburbs which are served by the tramways, but it would relieve the city trams of a very great deal of traffic.

985. You do not think that a railway station on the site of the old Devonshire-street burial ground will meet the purpose? No. No doubt that is a good site for a grand central station, and will give accommodation for the shunting and making up of trains, which could not be obtained elsewhere, because of the objection the public have to the taking away of the whole of Hyde Park. The suburban traffic, however, should be brought into the city, and, to my mind, the Hyde Park scheme will yet have to be carried out.

986. Do you think that it will be necessary to have a central station at Devonshire-street, and to extend the railway from that station into the city? Yes.

987. Do you think that the suburban traffic should be diverted into Elizabeth-street? Yes, if we cannot get the city railway.

- J. S. Brunton. 988. Are you aware that the Railway Commissioners propose to convert the eastern suburbs tramways to the electric system? Yes.
- 10 Sept., 1900. 989. They are of opinion that they will require Elizabeth-street wholly for the eastern suburban traffic? Well, if Elizabeth-street cannot be used for the railway traffic, you must carry out the city railway.
990. I suppose you know that there is a great objection to the taking of any part of Hyde Park for railway purposes? Yes, I am aware that there is.
991. The cost of bringing the railway into the city would be enormous? I do not remember the figures, but I favour the Hyde Park scheme, and if I could not get that I would take the Park-street scheme.
992. The bringing of the railway into the city would also entail a considerable annual loss in working expenses and interest? I understood that the undertaking would be a profitable one. The Railway Commissioners advocated the extension mainly on account of the dangerous condition of the present Redfern arrangements. No doubt the Devonshire-street scheme will get rid of that danger, but the extension of the railway into the city is necessary to relieve George-street.
993. *Mr. Levien.*] You want the railway to come right into the city? Yes.
994. For suburban passenger traffic only? Yes. The railway travelling public are not benefited to any extent by the present George-street tramway. There is a great loss of time in moving from the train to the trams, and the trams travel very slowly in George-street.
995. In America do the trains run right into the heart of the cities? They do at Chicago, they do at New York, and they do in a lot of big cities there. In San Francisco the trains run through the streets, at the rate of 8 miles an hour, ringing a big bell, and I have often wondered why they could not do that here. In London the trains come right into the middle of the city at various points—such as St. Pancras and Paddington. I think that to carry a tram down Pitt-street would be highly dangerous, and that it would be a cruel thing for the Committee to recommend it when they can see another way out of the difficulty.
996. You do not think there should be a tramway down Pitt or Castlereagh streets? The tramway should not be taken down Pitt-street.
997. Or Castlereagh-street? If it were impossible to divert the George-street traffic into Elizabeth-street, I might agree to the construction of a tramway down Castlereagh-street, but I think that it would be unnecessary.
998. If the railway were brought down to King-street, would you object to the construction of a tramway in Pitt-street? Yes.
999. *Mr. Shepherd.*] You do not believe in making any addition to the present tramway system of the city? I decidedly object to the construction of a tramway in Pitt-street, but I should not be surprised to see trams taken in other directions. A tram might be taken out across the new Pymont Bridge towards Pymont and Ultimo, for instance.
1000. The proposal referred to the Committee was the construction of a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street;—would you object to that? Yes.
1001. What would you recommend? I would make use of George-street and Elizabeth-street for the tramway traffic. Elizabeth-street and Castlereagh-street are very close together.
1002. *Mr. McFarlane.*] How would you deal with the traffic so as to relieve George-street? One-third of the present traffic would be taken away from George-street by the extension of the railway into the city, and part of what was left might be diverted into Elizabeth-street.
1003. You could not run trams in Elizabeth-street if the city railway were made? Yes, I think so; because the railway would run through Hyde Park.
1004. Do you think that a city railway and tramways down George-street and Elizabeth-street would deal with the whole of the western suburban traffic? Yes.
1005. The Railway Commissioners do not appear to be of that opinion. Mr. Oliver, when under examination in regard to the extension of the railway into the city, informed the Committee that the Commissioners had—
- Already recommended that tramways should be constructed down Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street. That is considered to be necessary for the ordinary tram traffic, which must always be carried by trams, and the increasing pick-up traffic which will follow on the introduction of the system of penny sections.
- ? I do not know why the Commissioners should want to put tramways in Pitt and Castlereagh streets, and thus block the only arteries now open for vehicular traffic.
1006. The Railway Commissioners were, until recently, running steam trams to relieve some of the western suburban tram-lines; but it was found that hardly anybody would use the steam trams, and that the traffic continued to be carried by the electric trams? No doubt George-street is more central than Elizabeth-street; but if all the traffic from a suburb were diverted into Elizabeth-street, the passengers would have to use that street.
1007. Do you not think that the construction of new wharfs on the eastern side of Darling Harbour, and the extension of the railway to those wharfs, will greatly relieve the vehicular traffic of the city? It may relieve it somewhat; but the construction of such a railway will not have as much effect upon the traffic as some people imagine. The goods which are brought by over-sea ships must nearly always be taken from the wharfs to bonded stores for delivery to the importers; very little will ever be unloaded directly from the ships into the railway trucks, unless they are heavy goods, such as galvanized iron and wire. The railway, of course, will be a great convenience in taking goods alongside out-going vessels. A line such as you speak of would be a great convenience in bringing produce down to the intercolonial steamers.
1008. The railway, too, would be used for bringing down shipments of wheat? Yes, where full cargoes of wheat were being taken; but where part cargoes of wheat were being loaded by steamers lying at the Circular Quay or Woolloomooloo Bay, the wheat must, of course, be carted. Besides the delivery to the ships or from the ships, there is a great deal of carting from place to place in the city and suburbs, and that traffic must be considered.
1009. What streets does the heavy traffic from the wharfs use now? Pitt-street is generally the most convenient street, because it has a better grade than the other streets, and comes out on to the Circular Quay. The Government are spending so much in improving Woolloomooloo Bay that it is becoming a very popular shipping place; and, of course, anything brought down by railway for shipment from Woolloomooloo Bay must be carted from Darling Harbour to Woolloomooloo Bay. The space at Darling

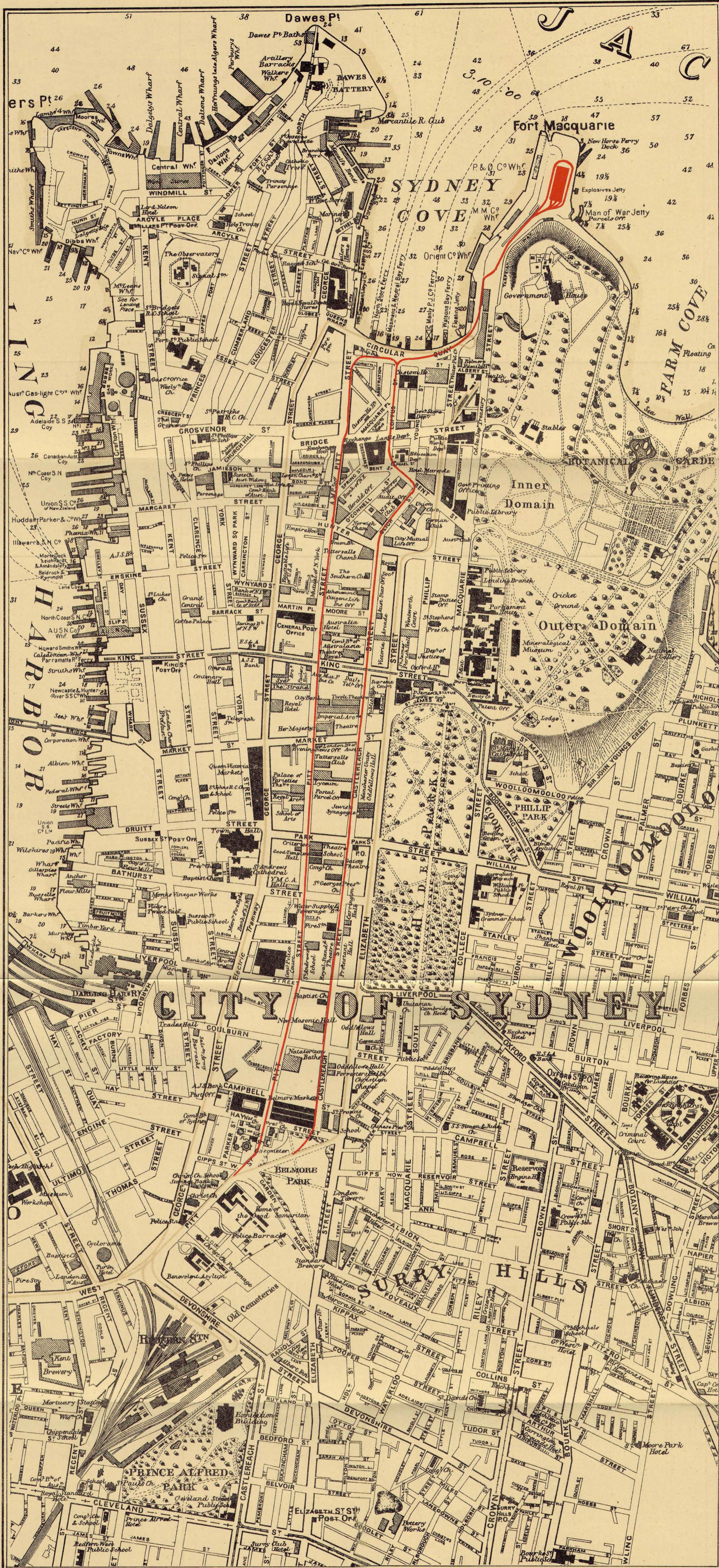
Darling Harbour is pretty well all required for intercolonial boats, and I do not think that the over-sea shipping will go there. In my opinion, the over-sea vessels will keep to the Woolloomooloo Bay, Circular Quay, and Miller's Point wharfs. J. S. Brunton.
10 Sept., 1900.

1010. If it were decided that either a double line of tramway in Castlereagh-street, or a single line in Castlereagh-street and a single line in Pitt-street, must be constructed, which would be the better to construct? If I had to choose between the two I would prefer a double line in Castlereagh-street, because that is the widest street, but as Castlereagh-street is so near to Elizabeth-street I do not think that a tramway in Castlereagh-street would be much more convenient than a tramway in Elizabeth-street, where you have already every facility for conducting tram traffic.

1011. It is said that Elizabeth-street will not carry all the traffic? It carried it all for many years without complaints.

1012. But the tram traffic of the city has largely increased of late? I do not think that the population of the city and suburbs has increased very much, but no doubt the introduction of penny sections has made tram travelling more popular with the public. I should think that fully 40 per cent. of the traffic in George-street is pick-up traffic.

[One plan.]



1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

(No. 2)

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY ALONG PITT-
STREET.

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

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 The Honorable PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
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 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esquire.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esquire.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY ALONG PITT-STREET, SYDNEY.

REPORT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, appointed during the first Session of the present Parliament, under the Public Works Act of 1888, 51 Vic. No. 37, the Public Works Act Amendment Act of 1889, 52 Vic. No. 26, the Public Works (Committees' Remuneration) Act of 1889, 53 Vic. No. 11, and the Public Works Acts Further Amendment Act of 1897, 61 Vic. No. 6, to whom was referred the duty of considering and reporting upon "the expediency of constructing a double line of electric tramway along Pitt-street, city of Sydney," have, after due inquiry, resolved that it is not expedient the proposed tramway should be constructed; but they recommend that the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, by which a single line would be constructed from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets to Fort Macquarie, returning by single line through Pitt-street, be adopted; and, in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (iv), of clause 13, of the Public Works Act, report their resolution to the Legislative Assembly:—

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL BEING SUBMITTED.

1. This proposal, the Committee are informed in the official statement put before them, was referred to them sooner than was originally intended, in consequence of the Railway Commissioners suggesting to the Minister for Public Works that the original proposal to construct a double line for an electric tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets, should be varied to one by which a single line would be laid along Castlereagh-street, with a return line along Pitt-street.

But the reference was also made to remove any doubt which might exist as to the legality of carrying out such a work without further inquiry, should the Committee recommend it in connection with the Castlereagh-street scheme. Under the present reference, the proposal for a new electric tramway is again altered, the Minister having deemed it advisable to ask Parliament to refer a scheme whereby a double line of electric tramway would be constructed along Pitt-street to Circular Quay.

THREE SCHEMES BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

2. The Committee have, therefore, had before them three schemes—two referred to them, and one suggested, as follow:—

- (1.) A double line for an electric tramway, from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets, with single lines down Loftus and Young streets.
- (2.) The suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, that there should be a single line from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, returning by a single line through Pitt-street.
- (3.) A double line of electric tramway along Pitt-street to the Circular Quay.

DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE PITT-STREET PROPOSAL.

3. The double line in Pitt-street would branch off the existing steam tramway in that street, at a point near Gipps-street, and traverse Pitt-street to its intersection with the Circular Quay, the whole of the length from Gipps-street being a double track. Along the Quay the main lines would be extended until they joined the double-track extension of the existing tramway to Fort Macquarie.

The permanent-way would consist of 83-lb. rails, which would be laid on sleepers between Gipps-street and Bathurst-street in macadamised road; from Bathurst-street to the Circular Quay they would be laid on concrete, the permanent-way being wood-blocked. The poles, for supporting the electric wires, would be erected on each side of the street.

ESTIMATED COST OF THE PITT-STREET SCHEME.

4. The total cost, exclusive of land and compensation, is estimated approximately at £76,672, comprising—road construction, £31,835; outside electric work, £7,087; power plant, £12,750; and rolling-stock, £25,000. Land resumption at the corner of Pitt and Alfred streets, near Change-alley, would increase this estimate by between £5,000 and £6,000. To this should be added the cost of the extension to Fort Macquarie and of the car shed, £39,950.

RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

5. With respect to the statutory report of the Railway Commissioners on the proposal, their report upon the Castlereagh-street scheme, and their minute suggesting the single line along Castlereagh and Pitt streets, are taken as complying with the requirements of the Public Works Act. In the former document they say that the construction of the proposed tramway is rendered necessary by the conversion of the steam trams to electric trams, and the consequent inability of George and Elizabeth streets to carry the traffic, and that they, therefore, cordially support the proposal. The only additional revenue derived from the line would be due to increased traffic, and although it is not possible to foretell with any degree of accuracy what this will amount to, they have no hesitation in stating that it will fully justify the construction of the line.

SCHEME FAVOURED BY THE RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

6. The scheme favoured by the Railway Commissioners is that by which a single line would be laid from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, with a return single line through Pitt-street. This they consider to be the most suitable for dealing with the railway traffic, and also for securing in Pitt-street a large proportion of the pick-up traffic which now goes to the George-street trams.

THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY.

7. The inquiry into the proposal for a double line of electric tramway in Pitt-street being really part of that relating to the proposed tramway in Castlereagh-street, the Committee have dealt with the two schemes together, and the evidence taken with reference to one should be read in conjunction with that taken concerning the other. The Committee's Reports upon the two proposals should also be read together, as the Pitt-street scheme, and the evidence relating to it, are very fully dealt with in the Report upon the Castlereagh-street proposal. In the present inquiry the witnesses examined were the Engineer-in-Chief for Railway and Tramway Construction, the Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, the Traffic Superintendent of the Tramway Department, the Town Clerk of Sydney, the proprietor of the Hargrave-street and Point Piper road omnibuses, and one or two other persons.

OBJECTIONS TO THE TRAMWAY.

8. Objections to the proposed tramway, as they appear in the evidence in both inquiries, were chiefly urged by several master carriers whose horse teams use Castlereagh-street; by the Registrar of the Metropolitan Transit Commission, who explained to the Committee that Castlereagh-street was needed for traffic driven out of George-street, and that Pitt-street, from its narrowness and the number of vehicles passing through it, is the most congested street in Sydney, but who admitted that if George-street is to be relieved there is no alternative to using Castlereagh or Pitt street

street for the purpose; by the proprietor of the Hargrave-street and Point Piper road omnibuses, who protested against the Pitt-street proposal on the ground of its interference with omnibus and other vehicular traffic, and the risk to life and limb which a greater congestion of traffic than at present exists in the street would cause; and by the Town Clerk of Sydney, who, appearing on behalf of the City Council, objected to the construction of the proposed or any similar tramway because— (1) the Council is of opinion that any such enterprise as a tramway is essentially a municipal undertaking, and should be constructed and managed by the municipalities concerned; (2) the streets should not be used without payment to the Council, or taken over without compensation; (3) the Railway Department, who have charge of the tramways, will pay no rates to the Council for any properties concerned, nor for the use of the streets over which the trams will run; and (4) because tramways have been constructed in the city without regard to the Council's convenience.

REASON FOR THE PROPOSED TRAMWAY.

9. As stated in the Committee's Report on the Castlereagh-street scheme, the reason for proposing to construct an electric tramway in Pitt-street is the necessity for relieving George-street of some of its present tram traffic, particularly that portion of it passing from and to the Redfern railway station. The first step towards relieving George-street, after the construction of the proposed new tramway, would be to take the railway traffic from the George-street trams, which would be done by putting an end to the practice of running those trams into the Redfern railway station, and by running the Castlereagh and Pitt street trams into the station instead. At present a large proportion of the passengers who travel in the George-street trams do so from and to the Redfern station; with the new lines in operation all passengers wishing to travel from or to the station would require to do so by the Castlereagh and Pitt street trams. The George-street trams would stop in George-street opposite the station, as the trams from the Western Suburbs do now, to take up or set down passengers; but, in view of the advantages offered by the Castlereagh and Pitt street trams, it is thought by the Railway Commissioners and the tramway authorities that very few railway passengers would travel by way of George-street, and that the diversion of the railway traffic will give immediate relief, while further relief will be afforded by diverting a portion of the Western Suburbs tram traffic into Castlereagh and Pitt streets.

PITT-STREET AND ITS TRAFFIC.

10. It is admitted that Pitt-street is a narrow street, with a very considerable vehicular traffic passing through it; but it is contended that, with a single line along the street—which is the scheme favoured by the Railway Commissioners—interference with vehicular traffic would not be great. No more traffic would be taken from the George-street trams into Pitt-street than is absolutely necessary to relieve that service; the poles for supporting the electric wires would be on each side of the street, which would allow of the single tramway track being placed sufficiently far from the kerb to give plenty of room for vehicles; and, as the trams would always be travelling in one direction, the risk of accident would thereby be greatly minimised. The chief difficulty is the omnibus traffic to and from the Eastern Suburbs. As many as sixty-three omnibuses, the Committee are informed, pass through Pitt-street daily, making altogether 600 trips each way. This extensive omnibus service appears to be due principally to the inability of the steam trams plying between Sydney and the Eastern Suburbs to meet public requirements sufficiently. With the conversion of the Oxford-street steam trams to the electric system, it is believed the omnibus traffic would mostly disappear; and the Committee endeavoured to press upon the attention of the Railway Commissioners the necessity for converting these trams as soon as possible, so as to reduce the traffic in Pitt-street. It appears to be impracticable to have electric trams running to the Eastern Suburbs by the time the tramway in Pitt-street would be constructed and in operation; but it is pointed out that as fast as the Western Suburban trams are changed from the steam to the electric system—a work the Commissioners are now engaged upon,—the steam trams released from the Western Suburban lines could be placed in the Eastern Suburban service, and in that manner facilitate vehicular traffic generally. Further relief to Pitt-street in regard to omnibus traffic could be obtained by diverting the omnibuses into Castlereagh-street.

HORSE-TEAM

HORSE-TEAM TRAFFIC IN PITT AND CASTLEREAGH STREETS.

11. The horse-team traffic which passes through Pitt and Castlereagh streets, principally the latter, should be reduced to some extent before long, by an alteration about to be made in connection with the goods traffic at the Redfern Railway Station. At the present time, the general goods business in truck loads is conducted at the Sydney goods shed, adjoining the produce shed, at the Redfern Railway station, and the Railway authorities are about to call for tenders for additional accommodation at Darling Harbour for the purpose of dealing with it there. By this change, Redfern station will be relieved to the extent of 1,000 tons of goods per week, and the team traffic in Castlereagh and Pitt streets correspondingly lessened.

DECISION ARRIVED AT.

12. In view of the evidence before them, and for the reasons stated in their Report upon the proposed Electric Tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, the Committee have decided to recommend the adoption of the scheme suggested by the Railway Commissioners, by which a single line would be constructed from Belmore Park, through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets, to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, returning by single line through Pitt-street.

RESOLUTION PASSED.

13. The resolution passed by the Committee is shown in the following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings:—

Mr. Watson moved,—“That, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not expedient the proposed double line of Electric Tramway along Pitt-street, as referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly, be carried out; but they recommend that the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, by which a single line would be constructed from Belmore Park through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets, to Fort Macquarie, returning by a single line through Pitt-street, be adopted.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Hyam, and passed on the following division:—

Ayes, 5.		Noes, 2.
Mr. Dick,		Mr. Shepherd,
Dr. Garran,		Mr. Levien.
Mr. Hyam,		
Mr. Watson,		
Mr. McFarlane.		

W. T. DICK,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Sydney, 29 September, 1900.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY ALONG PITT-STREET.

TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD. |
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.

The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.
JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee proceeded to consider the expediency of constructing a line of Electric Tramway along Pitt-street, City of Sydney.

Henry Deane, Engineer-in-Chief, Railway Construction Branch, Department of Public Works, sworn, and examined:—

1. *Chairman.*] Have you any statement to make in reference to the proposal before the Committee? I have the Under-Secretary's statement, as follows:—

H. Deane.
18 Sept., 1900.

ELECTRIC TRAMWAY FROM GIPPS-STREET, *via* PITT-STREET, TO CIRCULAR QUAY, CITY OF SYDNEY.

THE proposal before the Committee was referred by the Legislative Assembly for the Committee's consideration on 6th September, 1900, in the following terms:—"That it be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report on the expediency of constructing a line of electric tramway along Pitt-street, City of Sydney."

This proposal has been brought before the Committee sooner than was originally intended, in consequence of a suggestion made to the Minister by the Railway Commissioners.

It will be remembered that when the proposal to construct an electric tramway from Belmore Park, *via* Castlereagh-street, to Fort Macquarie, was submitted to the Committee, it was stated that for the purpose of relieving the congested traffic in George-street, two ways of solving the problem had presented themselves, namely, by laying a tramway (a) along Pitt-street, or (b) along Castlereagh and Bligh streets to Circular Quay. Both schemes, it was stated, would likely be required ultimately; but as Castlereagh-street afforded more facilities for traffic than Pitt-street, that route was referred to the Committee as the first instalment.

The Railway Commissioners in their Statutory Report thereon had cordially approved of the Castlereagh-street scheme; but they have now been led to modify their views, and have suggested a variation from that route in the following terms:—

Office of the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales, Sydney, 25 July, 1900.

Proposed line of tramway from Belmore Park to Fort Macquarie, by way of Castlereagh and Bligh streets (double track) and Loftus and Young streets (single track).

SINCE writing our report of the 10th instant, we have looked further into this subject, and now desire to suggest, for the favourable consideration of the Honorable the Minister for Public Works, the desirability of varying the proposal originally submitted by constructing a single line from Belmore Park, through Castlereagh, Bligh, and Loftus streets, to the proposed terminus at Fort Macquarie, and returning by single line through Pitt-street.

We are constrained to recommend this alteration in the original proposal because the experience gained since the George-street line was opened strongly indicates that it will best meet the public convenience.

The congestion which is now taking place in George-street impels us to point out to the Honorable the Minister that the work is of great urgency.

W. M. FEHON,
Deputy Chief Commissioner.
DAVID KIRKCALDIE,
Commissioner.

In consequence, therefore, of this strong recommendation from the Railway Commissioners, the Minister deemed it advisable to ask Parliament to refer to the Committee the proposal to construct a double line of electric tramway along Pitt-street to Circular Quay, so that the Committee might have fully before it the two schemes originally suggested—that is (a) the Castlereagh and Bligh streets route and (b) the Pitt-street route. The

H. Deane.
18 Sept., 1900.

The official description of the second proposal is as follows :—

Gipps-street, via Pitt-street, to Circular Quay Electric Tramway.

This tramway branches off the existing steam tramway in Pitt-street at a point near Gipps-street, traversing Pitt-street to its intersection with the Circular Quay, the whole of the length from Gipps-street being double track.

The main lines are extended along the Quay until they join up the double track extension of the existing tramway to Fort Macquarie.

The permanent-way will consist of 83-lb. rails, which will be laid on sleepers between Gipps-street and Bathurst-street, in macadamised road; from Bathurst-street to the Circular Quay the rails will be laid on concrete, and the permanent-way wood-blocked.

The total cost is estimated approximately at £76,672.

With respect to the required Statutory Report of the Railway Commissioners on this proposal, their report of 10th July, 1900, relating to the Castlereagh-street route, read in conjunction with their subsequent minute of 25th idem, as quoted above, are intended to be taken as complying with the requirements of the Public Works Act on this point.

I put in the plans—a map of Sydney, showing the route to the S-chain scale; a plan to the 40-foot scale; and a book of reference. I have prepared an estimate for a double track tramway along Pitt-street. I have also, in view of the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, prepared estimates for a single line along Castlereagh-street, and a single line along Pitt-street, so that the Committee will have before them, not only the complete schemes of both tramways, but the proposal of the Railway Commissioners in regard to a single line down each street, before them.

2. What is the estimate for a double line along Pitt-street? I put in the estimate as follows :—

GIPPS-STREET TO CIRCULAR QUAY, via PITT-STREET—Double Track.

Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.—Summary.

Item.	Amount.	Total Amount.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Road construction	31,835 0 0	
Outside electric work	7,087 0 0	
Power plant	12,750 0 0	
Rolling-stock	25,000 0 0	
		£76,672 0 0

GIPPS-STREET TO CIRCULAR QUAY, via PITT-STREET.—Double Track.

Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.

Item.	Quantity.	Rate.	Amount.	Total Amount.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<i>Road Construction—</i>	chains.			
Permanent-way, wood-blocked	173	103 10 0	17,801 0 0	} 21,435 0 0
Macadamised	79	46 0 0	3,634 0 0	
<i>Junctions—</i>				
Gipps-street			1,000 0 0	} 5,900 0 0
Circular Quay			2,000 0 0	
Signals at Circular Quay			500 0 0	
At Loop			1,200 0 0	
Crossing cable line			1,000 0 0	} 1,000 0 0
Signals at cable line			200 0 0	
Cross-over roads			1,000 0 0	} 1,000 0 0
Extra to curves			1,000 0 0	
Alterations to gas, water, and sewerage			1,000 0 0	} 2,500 0 0
Alterations to wood-blocking			1,000 0 0	
Alterations to electric light and telephone wires on Circular Quay			500 0 0	
				£31,835 0 0

GIPPS-STREET TO CIRCULAR QUAY via PITT-STREET.—Double Track.

Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost—Outside Electric Work.

Item.	Quantity.	Rate.	Amount.	Total Amount.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bonding	251 chains	6 12 6	1,661 0 0	} 7,087 0 0
Overhead wiring and poles	"	8 0 0	2,098 0 0	
Feeder cables		13 0 0	3,268 0 0	
Telephones, &c.			150 0 0	} 37,750 0 0
Power plant	510 h-p.	25 0 0	12,750 0 0	
Rolling stock	25 cars	1,000 0 0	25,000 0 0	
				£44,837 0 0

3. *Dr. Garran.*] Where would the line join at Circular Quay? Just before you get to the loop. I may point out that this estimate, compared with the Castlereagh-street tramway, is a little more expensive for that portion of the work which corresponds. The total cost of the Castlereagh-street proposal comes to £70,150. The double line along Pitt-street, comes to £76,672—that is, as far as Circular Quay. The reason of that is that the tramway is slightly longer, and there is more wood-blocked street to go through.

4. Would the Department require to block the whole of Pitt-street? No. We have a macadamised road to deal with at the southern end.

5. Would you require to wood-block for a certain distance from the outside of the rails? I propose to lay that part of the road on sleepers.

6. Would you require the consent of the Corporation to do that? I think not.

7.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE—ELECTRIC TRAMWAY ALONG PITT-STREET.

7. Can you do as you like with the road? I think so. We always inform the Corporation what we are going to do.

8. *Mr. Hyam.*] Are we to understand that you propose to block a certain distance from the rails at the southern end? We do not propose to block it at all there. We shall give the Corporation just as good as we take from them. They have a macadamised road there now. We shall have to excavate for the purpose of laying down the tramway, and we shall put down the best materials, and leave a road-surface at least equal to what a city road ought to be. It will certainly be better than it is now.

9. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you think a macadamised road with rails is as good as one without rails? Quite as good.

10. *Mr. Hyam.*] You would have to keep a great part of the road in repair? Yes. The Commissioners will have to keep it in repair, and they will keep it in far better repair than does the Corporation. If we take over the strip of road, and lay down rails, and make a macadamised road, it will be kept in good repair. It will not be allowed to go into holes similar to those we see in streets about Sydney. I now put in the estimate for a single track along Pitt-street:—

GIPPS-STREET TO CIRCULAR QUAY—TRAMWAY, *via* PITT-STREET—*Single Track.*
Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost—*Summary.*

Item.	Amount.	Total Amount.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Road construction	18,790 0 0	
Outside electrical work	3,397 0 0	
Power plant	6,375 0 0	
Rolling stock	13,000 0 0	
		£41,562 0 0

GIPPS-STREET TO CIRCULAR QUAY—TRAMWAY, *via* PITT-STREET—*Single Track.*
Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.

Item.	Quantity.	Rate.	Amount.	Total Amount.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<i>Road construction—</i>	Chains.			
Permanent way wood-blocked	78	103 10 0	8,073 0 0	} 9,890 0 0
" macadamised	39.5	46 0 0	1,817 0 0	
<i>Junctions—</i>				
Gipps-street			1,500 0 0	} 5,800 0 0
Circular Quay			3,000 0 0	
Signals at Circular Quay			500 0 0	
Crossing cable line			600 0 0	
Signals at cable line			200 0 0	} 600 0 0
Extras to curves			600 0 0	
Alterations to gas, water, and sewerage			1,000 0 0	} 2,500 0 0
Alterations to wood-blocking			1,000 0 0	
Alterations to electric light and telephone wires on Circular Quay.			500 0 0	
				£18,790 0 0

GIPPS-STREET TO CIRCULAR QUAY—TRAMWAY, *via* PITT-STREET.
Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.

Item.	Quantity.	Rate.	Amount.	Total amount.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<i>Outside Electrical Work and Power Plant Proportion—</i>	Chains.			
Bonding	117½	6 12 6	777 0 0	} 3,397 0 0
Overhead wiring and poles	117½	8 0 0	940 0 0	
Feeder cables	117½	13 0 0	1,530 0 0	
Telephones, &c.			150 0 0	
Proportion of power and buildings for twenty cars at 25 h.p. per car	255 h.p.	25 0 0	6,375 0 0	6,375 0 0
<i>Rolling Stock—Cars</i>	13	1,000 0 0	13,000 0 0	13,000 0 0
				£22,772 0 0

11. *Mr. Watson.*] Can you tell us the total cost of a single line down Castlereagh-street and another up Pitt-street combined? I will give you, if convenient, the cost of a single line down Castlereagh-street, and then we will add them up. The details are as follow:—

BELMORE PARK TO CIRCULAR QUAY—TRAMWAY, *via* CASTLEREAGH, Blich, Bent, and Loftus Streets.—*Single track.*
Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.—*Summary.*

Item.	Amount.	Total amount.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Road construction	15,942 0 0	
Outside electric work	3,255 0 0	
Power plant	6,375 0 0	
Rolling stock	12,000 0 0	
		£37,572 0 0

H. Deane. BELMORE PARK TO CIRCULAR QUAY—TRAMWAY, *via* CASTLEREAGH, BLIGH, BENT, AND LOFTUS STREETS.—*Single Track*.
18 Sept., 1900. Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.

Item.	Quantity.	Rate.	Amount.	Total Amount.
<i>Road Construction—</i>	Chains.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Wood-blocked road.....	69	108 10 0	7,141 0 0	} 9,142 0 0
Macadamised road	43·5	46 0 0	2,001 0 0	
<i>Junctions—</i>				
Belmore Park			500 0 0	} 5,300 0 0
Circular Quay			3,500 0 0	
Signals at Circular Quay			500 0 0	
Crossing cable line			600 0 0	
Signals at cable line			200 0 0	
Extras to curves			600 0 0	600 0 0
Alterations to gas, water, and sewerage			400 0 0	} 900 0 0
Alterations to wood-blocking extra.....			500 0 0	
				£15,942 0 0

BELMORE PARK TO CIRCULAR QUAY, *via* CASTLEREAGH, BLIGH, BENT, AND LOFTUS STREETS.
Approximate Bill of Estimated Quantities and Cost.

Item.	Quantity.	Rate.	Amount.	Total Amount.
<i>Outside Electrical Work and Power Plant Proportion—</i>	Chains.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bonding.....	112·5	6 12 6	745 0 0	} 3,255 0 0
Overhead wiring and poles	112·5	8 0 0	900 0 0	
Feeder cables	112·5	13 0 0	1,465 0 0	
Telephones, &c.			145 0 0	
Proportion of power and buildings for 20 cars at 25 h. p. per car.	255 h. p.	25 0 0	6,375 0 0	6,375 0 0
<i>Rolling Stock—</i>				
Cars	12 No.	1,000 0 0	12,000 0 0	12,000 0 0
				£21,630 0 0

If the estimated cost of the single line along Pitt-street, £41,562, and of the single line along Castlereagh-street, £37,572, are added together it will be seen that the total is £79,134, and that has to be compared with the double-line proposal down Castlereagh-street for that portion of the proposal which is concerned, namely, £70,050. In other words, the making of the tramway in the way in which the Railway Commissioners suggest will lead to an increased cost of £9,084.

12. *Chairman.*] To what is that difference mainly due? It is partly due to there being a little longer length of line, to there being more wood-blocked street, and to the cost of certain of the work for a single line being more, in proportion to a double line. The piecing up, for instance, and the joining up with the existing wood-blocking has still to be done. There are two sides to join up whether we have a double or single line. Then we require the poles on each side of the streets. One line of poles will not be suitable.

13. *Mr. Watson.*] Then you have abandoned the idea which you held for some time in regard to the Mosman's Bay line, namely, to have poles on one side of the road only? That would not do in this instance, because we cannot bring the tramway near enough to the kerb. It will have to go in its proper place near the middle of the street.

14. *Chairman.*] Will the construction of a single line down each street bring about any economy in regard to the items of "Outside Electric Work," "Power Plant," and "Rolling Stock"? No; I have assumed that, with the exception of poles, they will be exactly the same.

15. Have the Commissioners definitely decided in which direction, on the single-line system, the trams will go—from the railway station down Castlereagh-street, and from the Quay up Pitt-street? Yes. They would like the left-hand side of the street to be taken in each case. They consider that people coming from the station could be carried with advantage along Castlereagh-street, inasmuch as, to go to the centre of the city, they would have to walk down-hill, and the trams returning to the railway station would pick them up in Pitt-street. If the arrangement were reversed, they would be landed in Pitt-street in the morning, and they would have to walk up to Castlereagh-street in the evening to take the trams to the railway station. There is no doubt that the method suggested is the best—to take the trams from the railway station along Castlereagh-street on the left-hand side of the road and to return *via* Pitt-street.

16. It was suggested when the single-line idea was first placed before the Committee that the work might be so carried out as to admit later on of easy duplication,—has that element entered into the calculations which you have placed before the Committee to-day? Yes, that is embodied. The proposal is so designed that a second track can be laid down later on.

17. Far more cheaply, I suppose, than the first single track? No; there will be very little difference. What will be saved will be chiefly in regard to the poles, and some of the work at Circular Quay.

18. Do you know whether it is considered that the necessity for duplication would speedily arise? I know that the Commissioners look upon the duplication as a necessity in the early future. Therefore, it is most desirable that the line should be laid in such a position that a second track can afterwards be put down.

19. *Dr. Garvan.*] The people who use the streets ought to distinctly understand that, even if we begin with a single line, a second line will follow very soon? That is so.

20. *Mr. Watson.*] I notice from the plan that a resumption is outlined at the corner of Pitt and Alfred Streets;—will it be necessary to resume that land if a single track only is carried out? You might save it to a considerable extent, but the question is whether it is not desirable to make a good job of it whilst

- we are about it. Of course, we could put in a sharp curve and take less of the property, but I think it would be better that a clearance should be effected there. There are only a few temporary buildings there, and it would make a much better job. H. Deane.
18 Sept., 1900.
21. It involves the resumption of a strip, diminishing in width towards Loftus-street? Yes.
22. Would it be necessary, with a single line, to resume that portion near Change Alley, which is shown on the plan as being affected by the loop? No; it would not be necessary to do that. I have marked the loop on the plan to show how, eventually, if there is a double line down Pitt-street, a loop might be placed there for convenient working.
23. You would not interfere with the "Ship Inn" under that proposal? No.
24. Can you say whether the resumption outlined on the plan would be expensive? I have no estimate to submit. The resumption for the greater part of the length—the setting back of the frontage—cannot possibly be expensive, because it will take up a very narrow strip of land. No buildings will be affected. It will simply reduce the depth of the land a little—in fact, we shall really do no more damage to the land than is involved in taking a little bit off the back.
25. At present the frontage in Alfred-street is not of any value? No; not on account of its being used. There would be no interference with business.
26. Is it not a fairly large block of land? Yes; it is in one block, unbuilt upon.
27. So that if any additional value were given to it by the tram running up Pitt-street, it would be taken into account in the resumption? Yes; the value now would only be comparatively small. The value afterwards, when the frontage is set back and a slight curve is given to the street, must necessarily be increased, so that if the betterment principle were applied, there would, indeed, be very little to pay.
28. Do you think it would cost less to resume it now than later on? Yes; I would strongly recommend that it be resumed, because it will be certainly necessary to do it at some time or other. I should strongly recommend for the consideration of the Committee the question of the resumption of the trapezoid block between Alfred-street and 'Change Alley.
29. At present that is occupied mostly by advertising boardings? I do not think there is much upon it. It would be a great improvement to Circular Quay.
30. The block you speak of has a lane between it and the "Ship Inn"? Yes.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and examined:—

31. *Mr. McFarlane.*] The Commissioners have made a slight departure from their previous proposal to construct a double line of tramway along Castlereagh-street;—can you explain what led them to suggest a single line down Castlereagh-street and a single line down Pitt-street? The original proposal was to make a double line along Castlereagh-street. The Commissioners reported that that was desirable; but after further looking over the matter, they thought it would be more convenient, seeing that the streets are so narrow, if one line were laid along Castlereagh-street and the other up Pitt-street. One reason which influenced them was that it would be more convenient for the general public. As I explained on a former occasion, it is found that George-street was getting overcrowded, and it was thought that if we turned additional traffic routes into that street the traffic would become too heavy to conduct satisfactorily. The first idea was to run a double line for the railway business along Castlereagh-street. The Commissioners, however, after again looking at the matter, thought that it would be better to have one line along Castlereagh-street and the other along Pitt-street. To some extent they were guided by this consideration: that the greater part of the traffic would, no doubt, be about George-street and Pitt-street. From George-street to Castlereagh-street is a fair distance to walk, up hill; and many people, no doubt, rather than go from George-street to Castlereagh-street—if the tram were in that street—would utilise the local services going past the railway station, and would get out at the railway gates, in which case George-street would not get that relief which is looked for. It was thought, however, that if a tramway were in Pitt-street, between which and George-street, the ground is level, and the two streets are no great distance apart, they would utilise the railway trams in Pitt-street, so as to get to the railway station. H.
McLachlan.
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32. The object of the alteration, then, has been with a view to meeting the convenience of the public travelling by the trams? Yes; and there is also the consideration that both streets are comparatively narrow—Pitt-street being much the busier. The Commissioners thought there would not be the same hindrance to business if they ran a single line along both streets. The public will also always know how the trams are running, because they will always be moving in one direction. For instance, a man going down Castlereagh-street will know that the trams are behind him, and that he will not have to face one in front of him. Again, in Pitt-street, people travelling in one direction will always be facing the trams. In this way the risk of accident to street traffic would be minimised.
33. Do you think it would be better to have two single lines, as suggested, instead of a double line in Castlereagh-street? The Commissioners think so. The Commissioners have noticed that a number of the team people have given evidence. These people have referred to the fact that the traffic is increasing. To some extent we shall relieve the streets of some of the traffic by an alteration being made in regard to the conduct of our goods business. At the present time, the general goods business in truck loads is conducted at the Sydney goods shed, adjoining the produce shed, at the Redfern Railway Station. The full truck loads go from that place. We shift from there about 53,000 tons of goods per year—that is, taking last year as a basis—or, roughly speaking, 1,000 tons per week. We shall shortly be calling for tenders for additional accommodation at Darling Harbour, and it is proposed to deal with that particular business at that place. Redfern station will thus be relieved to the extent of 1,000 tons of goods per week. Of course, I do not say that the divergence of that traffic will entirely relieve Pitt-street, because, no doubt a good deal of it comes from Sussex-street, along George-street. A certain amount of it, however, comes up Pitt-street.
34. Do you think that arrangement will have a material effect in relieving Castlereagh and Pitt streets? It will have some effect. No doubt the greater portion of the business comes, *via* George-street, from the Sussex-street side of the city. I mention the matter as illustrating what was said by some of those people with respect to the increase of the street traffic. To the extent to which I have referred we are going to relieve the street traffic, and that should make room for a fair extension of business.
35. How long will it be before the alteration is carried out? About twelve months.
36. Would that be before the trams could be running in Pitt and Castlereagh streets? I daresay it would.
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37. With regard to the grain traffic for export, would that principally go to Darling Harbour for shipment? I think so. We do not look upon that as affecting this business. Darling Island, of course, is supposed to be used for the export business.
38. You do not think that much of that traffic would come through the main streets? I think not.
39. Can you say what progress has been made for increased shipping facilities at Darling Island? I think the sheds have been erected, and the wharfs are pretty well finished. The Works Department carried out the works.
40. Do the Commissioners anticipate that a single line, as suggested, will be sufficient to cope with the large traffic of the trams? Of course, it would be equal to a double line in one street, because it is a run round.
41. Mr. Oliver, in giving evidence some time ago, said that the Commissioners thought that a double line in each street would be necessary to cope with the traffic? I cannot speak in regard to Mr. Oliver's evidence.
42. Do you think a single line in each street would carry the traffic for some time to come? Mr. Fehon and Mr. Kirkcaldie—Mr. Oliver being away—considered this matter, and that is their opinion.
43. The Commissioners favour single lines in two streets, rather than a double line in one street? Yes.
44. Do you think there is anything in the contention of the dray contractors as to the stoppage of the street traffic and the obstruction of the tram line? Necessarily there must be something in it. Of course, the question is, whether that is sufficient to outweigh the convenience which we think will be afforded by carrying out the proposal.
45. Do you think that some of the street traffic will leave Pitt and George streets if the tramways are constructed? Yes, I expect that some of the omnibuses would leave.
46. Would there be any considerable decrease in the street traffic if the omnibuses were removed? As a matter of fact omnibuses are not running to the railway station. I would not like to say that, by carrying out this proposal, we are going to reduce the omnibus traffic, because, at present, no omnibuses are running between George-street and the railway.
47. Do you think that the construction of the proposed wharfs on the resumed area of Darling Harbour will cause a lot of the shipping traffic to be carried on there instead of at Circular Quay and Woolloomooloo? I am not aware. Personally, I do not see that it will affect the tram business very much.
48. Is there any likelihood of the railway being extended from Darling Harbour along the wharfs? That is a matter for the Government. The Commissioners have no idea of doing anything of that kind. As a rule, there is no direct business from the city to the country; nearly all goods break bulk. They go into store, and have to be carted. Therefore, I do not see that a railway along Sussex-street would be of immense advantage, considering the great cost which certainly would be incurred.
49. The land resumed would be Government land? I do not know whether the land resumed would enable the line to be constructed. There would certainly be a great deal of work to be done. I should lay it would be an expensive line to construct.
50. *Dr. Garra.*] Are you aware of the nature of the documents Mr. Deane has read to us this afternoon? No.
51. We really have before us three proposals:—One for a single track along Castlereagh and Pitt streets, another for a double track along each of the two streets, and another for a single track in Pitt-street, and a double track in Castlereagh-street. Do you know whether the Commissioners have any preference? Their proposal is for a single line down Castlereagh-street, and a single line up Pitt-street. I am not aware of any other proposal.
52. Do the Commissioners prefer a double track in each street to the present proposal? No. The Commissioners' preference is for a single line in Castlereagh-street, and a single line in Pitt-street.
53. Are we to infer that there is a little difference of opinion between the Department of Works and the Railway Commissioners? So far as I know the Railway Commissioners are not aware that such a proposal has been made by the Works Department. The original idea was to make a double track in Castlereagh-street. The Commissioners, however, thought that that might be improved by making a single line along Castlereagh-street, and a single line along Pitt-street. So far as I am aware those are the only proposals which the Railway Commissioners have had before them.
54. So far as your Department is concerned, your chief anxiety is to dispose of the railway business? Yes.
55. You keep your minds upon that? Yes.
56. And you do not study the general problem of accommodating the Sydney public? As a matter of fact, the railway problem must be associated with the general problem. We desire to relieve the general business by catering for the railway business.
57. You have a water-log, so to speak, in George-street, and you want to relieve it? Yes.
58. And your opinion is that one line down Castlereagh-street, returning by way of Pitt-street, will sufficiently relieve it for your purposes? The Commissioners think it will be a great relief.
59. And you do not want to suggest anything more than that at present? No.
60. Mr. Deane has told us that if we construct a single line in Pitt-street, a double line is sure to follow pretty quickly? Of course the Commissioners would not like to say that a double line might not follow. They would like to see the lines constructed in such a way that, if found necessary later on, a double line could be laid.
61. But you do not wish to impress too distinctly upon the minds of the people the fact that a double line will very likely follow? The Commissioners would not like to say that it will certainly follow, but there will always be that prospect.
62. You think, then, that it will be time enough to talk about that when the necessity arises? Yes; at the same time the Commissioners recognise that it is only right to bear it in mind.
63. The more you contemplate this proposal, do you become the more convinced that the two single lines will meet the crush traffic morning and evening? The Commissioners think such a scheme is necessary, in order to deal with the business.
64. Do you think that it will adequately deal with the business? The Commissioners think that it will, to a large extent, for the present.
65. And they think that, as an expedient, it is right to adopt it? Yes; and as a permanent arrangement, because we know, from the experience of others, that it is unwise to run all the trams in one street. That has been the experience of America.

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66. Have you any idea whether the crush in George-street has originated mostly on account of the frequency of the trams or on account of the cheapness of the fares? I should say that it has originated, to a large extent, on account of the cheapness of the fares, as well as on account of the convenient traffic arrangements.
67. If you had adhered to the old two-penny fare, do you think there would have been such a press of traffic? I think not. At the same time, I think the net result might have been better. For instance, since we reduced the fares on the Ocean-street tram from 2d. to 1d., the loss is very considerable. The working expenses have gone up considerably, and the traffic returns have gone down considerably in net results.
68. I notice that, excepting at the crush times, you have much more accommodation on the William-street line than is wanted? Yes.
69. Therefore, you have over-supplied the needs of the public? Yes.
70. Has that been done to run the omnibuses off, or merely for the sake of the experiment? No. We anticipated that when we reduced the fares we should get considerably increased business. Consequently, we prepared for it by putting on additional trams. The Commissioners did not wish to reduce the fares and then to find that the existing stock was not sufficient to carry the traffic, so arranged to provide additional power, additional rolling stock, and additional men, and then brought the cheap fares into operation.
71. Is it not wise, when you can do it, to experiment gradually? There was no option in that instance. It was either one thing or the other. The fare was 2d. We had made penny sections on all the other lines; and brought the Ocean-street charges practically on a level with the others.
72. I understand that there was an outcry, because you charged 2d. in William-street, and 1d. in George-street? Yes. At the same time the fact had to be borne in mind that the profits from the Ocean-street trams were fairly large, and there was room to give the public a little concession.
73. If, for two or three months, you had multiplied the number of trams, and had kept the prices up, do you think the mere number of trams would have brought you increased custom? Yes, I think we would have got a little more business. We certainly would have got a better net result.
74. If, on the other hand, you had reduced the fares without increasing the number of trams, would the trams have been too crowded to be comfortable? That would have happened, perhaps, in the busy times.
75. Do you mean to keep up the present plan of running more carriages than the traffic requires? I do not think there are more trams than the traffic requires, because we reduced the service when we found we had a little in excess of what was reasonable.
76. You are not running so many trams now as you did at the beginning? Not so many as we ran the first day or two.
77. On the whole your experience goes to show that people think more of saving the penny than of saving the time? It looks like it.
78. If a line is constructed in Pitt-street, you are not likely to get the present George-street traffic along it, unless you give accommodation equal to that which you now give in George-street? That is so.
79. And yet you do not want to run as many trams in Pitt-street as you are now running in George-street? It must be remembered that we require other services in George-street. For instance, we are ready to turn the Glebe Point service into George-street.
80. *Mr. Hyam.*] What about the Leichhardt service? I do not quite know what the Commissioners have decided to do in regard to that service. I cannot say at present whether they will or will not bring it along George-street.
81. *Dr. Garrahan.*] If there is room in the cars, a man can jump into a George-street tram, and reach the railway station once a minute? Yes.
82. And you want him to go to Pitt-street to do that? Yes.
83. But he will not do it unless you give him equal facilities? It will be necessary to run along Pitt-street the same number of cars as we are now running to the railway station, and the Pitt-street trams will run into the railway station, while those in George-street would land passengers at the railway gates.
84. If you give him minute trams along Pitt-street to the railway-station yard, you will give him a better service than he gets now in George-street, he will not be so crowded? I would not say that you would give him a more frequent service than you give now; but you could give a better one to this extent; that it would be subject to less interruption. There would be a clearer road, and the track would be limited to one business.
85. And you would take him to the station yard, whereas you would turn the George-street trams out of the station yard? Yes.
86. Do you think that would be enough to induce a great diversion of the tramway traffic from George-street to Pitt-street? I think so, because George-street and Pitt-street are comparatively close together, and it is a level walk between the two. For the sake of getting to the railway direct, people would walk to Pitt-street rather than take the local tram in George-street, which would land them at the station gates.
87. If the transfer from George-street to Pitt-street does not take place, you will have spent your money in vain? Yes; but still, for the considerations I have mentioned, I think the business would follow. In any case, it would relieve George-street very considerably, and make room for other services.
88. Do you think it will relieve it enough to justify the expenditure? That is the Commissioners' opinion. The expenditure upon a single line in Castlereagh-street and a single line in Pitt-street is not very much greater than a double line in Castlereagh-street, and the Commissioners are strongly of opinion that the latter would not meet the public convenience so well.
89. *Mr. Watson.*] Do you anticipate that there will be any falling off in the eastern suburban 'buses when you get the eastern suburbs connected with the Quay? I should certainly say so.
90. The 'buses to those suburbs now go up Pitt-street? Yes.
91. You do not think the proposal before the Committee will have much influence on those 'buses? I should not think so.
92. It has been admitted by some of those who have been objecting to the proposal to run a line down Pitt-street, that if the number of 'buses was materially reduced the trams would not be so objectionable. How soon do you think the Commissioners would be able to extend the electric system to the eastern suburbs, and so permit of the eastern suburbs trams running to the Quay, thus relieving Pitt-street of a number of 'buses? I am afraid it will be some considerable time.
93. Do you think it is possible for the Railway Commissioners to have the eastern suburban trams extended to the Quay coincidentally with the starting of the proposed tramline up Pitt-street? I think not; if the proposed tramway were approved of at once and put in hand. 94.

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94. If the 'buses were reduced in number about the time the tramway commenced running, the result would be a material difference in the traffic facilities in Pitt-street? Yes. I should like to know whether Mr. Deane has given any idea of the time it would take to complete the work.

95. Judging by the time that was taken over the George-street scheme, it will be over twelve months? In connection with the George-street scheme, a power-house had to be built.

96. The power-house will have to be extended in connection with the Pitt-street scheme? Yes; that is why I say that some considerable time will elapse before the conversion of the eastern suburban tramways will take place.

97. Could not the Commissioners make a special effort to extend the eastern suburban lines to the Quay, in view of the desirability of relieving Pitt-street of some of the 'bus traffic, so as to meet a portion of the objections which are put forward against this line? It will necessarily take a considerable time to get the additional machinery erected.

98. Will it be necessary to put up additional machinery in connection with the scheme into which we are now inquiring? I think that Mr. Brain has stated that the present power-house, unless additional business is thrown upon the existing system, will be sufficient.

99. We have a pretty big estimate for additions in the shape of electric equipment in connection with the line? That is to provide for the eastern suburbs and extensions.

100. I am speaking of the estimate for this particular work, which includes a considerable amount for electrical equipment? I do not know what estimate Mr. Deane has made; it may be for shed accommodation.

101. The power-plant for a single track along Pitt-street is estimated at £6,375? I take it that that will be for the overhead material, wires, and poles.

102. The estimate in regard to outside electric work, which I understand to be the poles, &c., is £3,295; the estimate for "Power-plant" is £6,375; I understood Mr. Brain to say that we would require additional power for this line; on page 11 of his evidence he was asked the following question:—

With respect to the increased traffic that the fact of placing a tramway in Castlereagh-street would bring about, what increase of power would you require for that line, leaving out of consideration the western suburbs idea? Accepting the opinion of the Traffic Officer, Mr. Kneeshaw, on that matter, it would take about 400 kilowatts, or about 540 horse-power.

It is evident, therefore, that for this proposal there will be an increase in the power provided at Ultimo? I would not say that, because at the present time we have 5,000 horse-power at Ultimo. We have four engines of 1,250 horse-power each. We are at present working two engines, and are putting in a number of additional boilers so as to be able to work another engine. It is thought that the boiler power at present can only be safely worked with two engines. They are putting in additional boilers so as to work another engine, and have one to spare. I think Mr. Brain's idea is that, unless there is any new business thrown upon the power-house, the additional boilers, which we hope to have finished about the end of November, will be sufficient for the western suburban business, and I think for the Castlereagh-street line.

103. In any case, we are led to believe, from Mr. Brain's evidence, that additional power will be required at the Ultimo Power-house? I think he considers that there is sufficient power already, unless there is some extension beyond what is at present contemplated in regard to the western suburban system, and the Castlereagh-street system.

104. How do you reconcile that answer with the answer to Question 209, which I have read? At present we are not working anything like the full power we have at Ultimo. As a matter of fact, we are putting in additional boilers at the present moment, so as to enable us to work an additional 1,250 horse-power.

105. Question 240 is as follows:—

What horse-power do you anticipate it will be necessary to provide at Ultimo for something like a completed system of tram-lines;—have you made any approximate estimate of that? Yes; 6,000 horse-power of electrical output.

That is in addition to 5,000 horse-power, as his subsequent answer shows, making a total of 11,000 horse-power altogether. What I want to get at is whether it would not be possible to put in sufficient power, whilst making the alterations, to bring the eastern suburban traffic to the Quay coincidentally with the opening of a line in Pitt-street, so as to meet the objections—which have a good deal of force in them—which some people urge against the line? Mr. Brain's answer to the question referring to the total horse-power shows that additional horse-power is required for the eastern suburban and other tramway extensions. For instance, a number of them are going on at North Shore and other places. Of course it will be some time before we can have that additional electrical power at work.

106. Would it be possible to delay the conversion of some of the western suburban lines, in view of the special need for meeting this objection, so as to transfer that power? I should not think so. The Leichhardt and Glebe Point 'buses carry a good deal of traffic which we could get if we could run in George-street. I do not think the Commissioners would care to depart from the scheme they have laid down of converting the western suburban trams.

107. There is no conversion on that side of the city which will help to reduce the number of 'buses in Pitt-street? No.

108. And whilst those 'buses remain in Pitt-street there seems to be a grave objection to a tramline there? Yes; but the number of 'buses running along there is small.

109. Mr. Hyam.] You say that you have a 5,000-horse-power house at Ultimo? Yes.

110. And you are not using the whole? No.

111. How much are you using? About 3,000 horse-power.

112. And the additional 500 horse-power required for the Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street scheme would be merely a use of the power which is lying dormant? That is, I believe, Mr. Brain's idea. Unless we take in additional extensions there will be sufficient power.

113. Then you have sufficient power at Ultimo to work the existing lines and the lines under consideration? Yes.

114. Chairman.] Two proposals have been specifically referred to the Committee by Parliament; the first is for a double line of tramway down Castlereagh-street;—is it a fact that the Commissioners prefer a single line down Castlereagh-street and a single line up Pitt-street? Yes; the report of Mr. Fehon and Mr. Kirkealdie, which I submitted on the last occasion I was before the Committee, shows that that is their proposal.

115. A second proposal remitted to us was for a double line down Pitt-street;—you think it is more advisable to have a single line down Castlereagh-street, returning by way of Pitt-street, than a double track down Pitt-street? Yes; that is the Commissioners' idea.

THURSDAY,

THURSDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
 The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
 The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.

JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
 ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
 JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Electric Tramway along Pitt-street, City of Sydney.

Robert Murray McCheyne Anderson, Town Clerk, Sydney, sworn, and examined:—

116. *Chairman.*] Will you give the Committee the benefit of your views upon the proposals before the Committee for the construction of electric tram-lines in Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street? I am directed to appear on behalf of the City Council to protest against the construction of tramways in those streets, because, (1) the Council is of opinion that any such enterprise as a tramway is essentially a municipal undertaking, and should be constructed and managed by the municipalities concerned; (2) in no city in the world that the Council can discover is any constructing authority allowed to come in without reference to the municipality concerned to use its streets without payment, and actually to take them over entirely, if considered necessary, without compensation;—that matter, of course, has been fought out between the New South Wales Government and the City Council, and we have been beaten in the Privy Council; (3) the Railway Department, which will have the charge of this tramway, in whom it will be vested, and who will presumably derive profits therefrom, will pay no rates to the Council for any properties concerned, nor do they at present, for any properties they use, nor will they pay rent for the use of the streets over which the trams will run, and which have been constructed and maintained at a very large cost by the Council; (4) the tramways have been constructed in the city without regard to the Council's convenience;—for instance, in George-street the levels of the street were actually altered without reference in any way to the Council, and this will necessitate an expenditure on the part of the Council of £8,000, in addition to £4,000 already spent, to remedy it. Meantime, of course, the Council has been subjected to adverse criticism, because of the disreputable state of George-street, which is admitted, and which they claim, was entirely caused by this alteration of levels.

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117. Can you say where the levels were altered? Right along the street. You can see them every few yards. It is very bad about George-street North, where I understand the level has been altered to the extent of about 6 inches. It was also extremely bad opposite the Markets; but we have remedied that. We have remedied portions as we could afford. £12,000 will have been spent altogether; but £8,000 has yet to be spent. (5) In the opinion of the Council the construction of the tramways in those particular streets will be a serious menace to the public safety, because of the enormous traffic in them, which cannot be diverted. The peculiar configuration of the city throws the bulk of the traffic on the streets running north and south, as by that route the main business of the city must be conducted from the railway to the water. Reports have appeared in the public Press to the effect that the Government are taking the opportunity, under the new traffic regulations, to divert the heavy traffic from George and Pitt Streets; and if it is so diverted, where is it to go, but through Castlereagh-street. Elizabeth-street is already monopolised by the tramways, and only Castlereagh-street remains. It is a fairly open avenue down to Circular Quay. If you put a tramway in Castlereagh street, the Council ask you to ponder the question as to where the traffic is to go, and it is the main traffic, not only of the city, but of the Colony. (6) The streets in which it is proposed to construct these tramways are narrow—36 feet wide from kerb to kerb; and in Pitt-street especially it is necessary—so we find from inquiries from the Police Department—to have a constable at nearly every intersection of that street, and the tramways that are proposed to be constructed will not be of such a nature as to do away with any traffic of that street. True, at present, it is only sought by the Commissioners to have a single line; but they admit that they wish it to be placed in such a position that they can duplicate it when necessary. In Pitt-street nearly 100 'buses run every day, and they pass 1,000 times during the course of each day.

118. Do you mean 1,000 times each way? No, both ways.

119. I take it that the two main objections of the Council are—1st, that they think the tramway construction should be in their hands? No, in the hands of any Council interested. They would not say, for instance that a tram running to Dulwich Hill should be conducted entirely by them; but by the city and suburbs through which it passes.

120. Has the Council ever made any effort in that direction? I do not know.

121. Your second objection is that the streets through which the proposed tramways are to run are too narrow; with respect to Pitt-street, the Railway Commissioners inform us that as soon as the conversion of the eastern suburban trams from steam to electricity takes place the whole of the 'buses will practically be run off Pitt-street;—do you think that with traffic eased to that extent the street will be congested with a single line of tramway down it? I should require to know what they intend to do about Elizabeth-street. Are they going to take all the traffic off Elizabeth-street.

122. When the eastern suburban conversion scheme is carried out, the trams from the eastern Suburbs will be run right to the Quay, from which the 'buses at present start; the Commissioners say that the result of that will be that the 'buses will be run off Pitt-street; they say that the construction of a single line of tramway, under those circumstances, will not be a serious disadvantage? I am afraid that question is too hypothetical for me to answer. There is no assurance that the 'bus traffic will be run off.

123. We also have the evidence of Mr. Edward, the Registrar of Traffic, who is of the same opinion? The traffic will have to be eased somehow. It is necessary that it should be eased, or the result will be serious. In the busy hours of the day you cannot get along Pitt-street now. It will have to be eased apart from putting a tramway in it at all.

124. From the point of view of the Council, which would be the least objectionable—a double line of tramway down Castlereagh-street, or a single line in Castlereagh and Pitt streets? I am not authorised to say. It would be merely my own opinion if I stated that.

125. We also have a statement from the Secretary of the Railway Commissioners to the effect that within twelve months they intend to ease the streets of Sydney of about 1,000 tons of traffic per week, through

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a rearrangement of their goods business? Why not wait until they do that before you construct the tram. Many promises are made before a work is carried out, and after it is carried out there is not the same pressing necessity to fulfil them.

126. The new idea will be brought into operation at about the time the tramways will be constructed—if it is decided to construct them; so that the streets will be relieved of a 1,000 tons per week of heavy traffic, and also of a large amount of 'bus traffic which now goes down Pitt-street? 1,000 tons per week is not a very appreciable amount. I should think its proportion to the whole is very small.

127. *Dr. Garran.*] Do you appear to-day free to express your personal opinion, or are you merely the mouthpiece of the City Council? Merely the mouthpiece of the City Council.

128. Then you express their opinion, and not your own? Yes.

129. Suppose the Government were to adopt your view, and hand you over the tramways, do you think you could run them with the same degree of convenience to the public as do the Railway Commissioners who have the control of both railways and tramways? Certainly we think so, based upon experience elsewhere.

130. Can you mention any large city in which two similar separate powers exist? In the cities of Great Britain the railways are owned by companies apart altogether from the companies which own the trams. Certain persons own the railways, and the municipalities for the most part own the trams.

131. Do you know of any instance in Australia where the railway authorities run the trams, or are we the exception? We are the exception.

132. Looking at the unity of management, does it not strike you that in some respect our plan is the better? I do not think there has been great public satisfaction with the way in which the trams have been run. I do not think there has been such tremendous satisfaction as to make people think that the Commissioners have been entirely successful.

133. Do you think that in the matter of fares our people have anything to complain of, as compared with the Melbourne people? Not now, since the fares have been reduced to 1d.

134. Prior to that, was not the fare to the railway station 2d.? By ticket, 1½d., as in Melbourne.

135. Except in regard to a small section of Melbourne, is not the fare 3d. per journey? The Melbourne Company have to pay large assessments, of which the citizens get the benefit. Again, at the expiration of the lease the whole of the Melbourne trams become the property of the Melbourne Corporation.

136. Do not the municipalities at present contribute towards those trams? That is hardly a fair question. It is all a matter of sinking fund, based on date of redemption.

137. Do not the municipalities around Melbourne at present pay a subsidy towards the trams? No.

138. Do not the people pay it in the shape of extra fares, although there is no direct payment? No; because they get heavy assessments.

139. Then, to a certain extent, the present generation in Melbourne is paying for the benefit of a future generation? I think the lease falls in in about fourteen years.

140. Is not the fare in Melbourne 3d. per journey, except in regard to a short section from one station to another, upon which the fare is 1½d.? I was there last week, and it seemed to me that everywhere I went the fare was 1½d.

141. Do you think that if the Corporation had had the management of our trams we should have had penny fares in George-street? I can hardly tell you that. As Melbourne has been referred to, I may say that the Tramway Company there pay a heavy assessment at the expiry of every year. At the expiry of the lease the trams,—the power-houses, the lines, and everything but the rolling stock—come into the possession of the Corporation absolutely free of all cost. The sinking fund per annum would be a considerable amount, and to that extent our tramways benefit.

142. Under the terms of its lease, the Company has to pay principal and interest, and in order to enable it to do that it keeps up 3d. fares? I should like to know if the fares are really 3d. I do not think they are.

143. They have been 3d., if they are not now? So they were here.

144. But upon the whole of our lines we have now, and have had in the past, penny sections? I may state that I travelled for 5 miles in Melbourne for 3d.

145. But, on the whole, our steam tram-fares are cheaper than those of Melbourne? I do not understand so, but I speak subject to correction.

146. Do you think that, on the whole, the Sydney people have had cheaper tram transit than have the Melbourne people? By robbing Peter to pay Paul, perhaps.

147. Then, in Melbourne, they are robbing the present generation to benefit a generation fourteen years hence; whereas we are allowing the present generation to get the full benefit of our enterprise? I do not think it will pan out in that way.

148. Do you think the public would have been as well served by the Corporation as they have been by the Railway Commissioners? I think so, if the Corporation had had the powers they ought to have. They have had no powers, and that is where the trouble has come in.

149. You think that the Railway Commissioners have done no better than you could have done? No. The municipalities in other parts of the world have shown better results than have been shown here.

150. We had evidence the other day from an engineering witness to the effect that the streets where there are trams are better kept by the Commissioners than are the streets where there are no trams;—is that so? I could not say, but I do not think so.

151. Take Macquarie-street North, from Hunter-street to Bridge-street, do you know of any trammed street which is kept in that condition? A contract has been let to improve that street.

152. But how long has it been in a bone-shaking condition? Only since the beginning of this year. Extremely wet weather followed upon the previous disrepair of the street. People have been let off taxation. They have been charged low rates, and, therefore, they have got low value.

153. That is to say, that the Corporation is controlled in what it can do for the city by the amount of taxation the aldermen will agree to impose? Of course it comes to that.

154-5. The Corporation cannot spend the money if it does not get it; whereas the Commissioners are not so restrained;—the Commissioners say they have kept the streets in better order than the Corporation? Yes; but to them our streets at present are free assets, to the Corporation they are liabilities.

156. Can you tell me of any way by which the traffic can be managed—other than by bringing the railway itself into the city—except by constructing additional tramways in the streets? An expert opinion would be required for that.

157. You are asking, practically, that the whole problem should be handed over to the Corporation; if it is handed over to you, you will have no power to bring the railway into the city, and, short of that, how are you going to deal with the growing passenger traffic? I cannot answer that question at present. What the Corporation say is that until something has been done to obviate the enormous traffic which is congested in the streets it is dangerous to public safety to construct trams in them.

R. M. McC.
Anderson.
20 Sept., 1900.

158. Can you tell me how much expenditure in street-keeping the tramming of Castlereagh and Pitt Streets will take off the shoulders of the Corporation? It would not be a great deal per annum, because the traffic would be thrown upon other streets which would be so much more torn about by it. Since the George-street tram was opened there has been much more traffic in York, Clarence, Castlereagh, and Pitt Streets; so that it comes to about the same thing.

159. Do you mean to say you have spent more on York, Clarence, and Castlereagh Streets since the George-street tram was opened than you did before? The expenditure has been rendered necessary.

160. Have you spent much more? I cannot say that; but those streets are so much the worse by reason of the extra traffic.

161. Then, you do not think you would save very materially by the Commissioners undertaking the maintenance of the larger part of the streets in which they construct tram-lines? Our opinion is that we save nothing.

162. Is that the deliberate opinion of the Corporation? Yes.

163. Then, the Commissioners take no burden from your shoulders, but they undertake a large expenditure themselves? Yes; a very profitable expenditure, which we would like to undertake.

164. Now that you find that it is a very profitable thing, you would like to have the business? Yes.

165. Before the tramways were constructed, did the Corporation ever petition Parliament to let them have the business? I understand that they did. I believe that before the tram-lines were constructed in Elizabeth-street the Corporation wanted to undertake them.

166. The old Omnibus Co. wanted to undertake them, but I never heard of the Corporation wanting to do so? I cannot tell you definitely.

167. *Mr. Watson.*] In view of the request of the Council to be given control of the trams, how long is it since they obtained power from Parliament to initiate lighting on their own account? Some years ago.

168. Do you know whether anything has been done since? Yes; a good deal has been done.

169. We do not see any electric lighting of the city? You must blame the Government for that.

170. Is it not a fact that the Council had full power under the Bill to proceed at once with electric lighting works? Yes.

171. How are the Government to be blamed? We got out the most eminent expert from England, who reported on the subject.

172. But that is only a month or two ago? It is over a year ago—at any rate, it is over a year since we made arrangements for him to come. He came out at a high cost to the Council. He took the levels, and made plans, and advertised in London for the construction, and all that kind of thing. The Government have stepped in and taken the property—the wharf property, upon which he was basing all his estimates and calculations; and when we asked for the use or lease of that or any other property in its place, we are told that the Government do not think it necessary to give it, as they have a scheme in view themselves. That is in spite of the fact that we have gone through all this expenditure.

173. I presume that the Government scheme merely has reference to the resumed properties and wharfs? No; they are going to bring the power from the Grose Valley, according to the letter we have received.

174. Even allowing that the Council may have been hampered by the recent resumptions, a period of some years has elapsed before anything has been done by them in connection with the Bill which passed through Parliament? I do not know the particulars. It occurred before my time.

175. Is it not a fact that for some years, whilst they were ostensibly asking for powers to light the city themselves by electricity, the reason the Bill did not pass was the inclusion in it by the Council of a clause under which they could hand over such powers to a private company? I know nothing of that.

176. Did the Council with regard to electric lighting powers, desire those powers for the purpose of handing them over to a private corporation, or for the purpose of running the business themselves? For the purpose of running the business themselves. There is no reason to think otherwise.

177. *Mr. Hyam.*] You say that you think the City Council should have the power to construct and control the tram? The Council think a tramway is essentially a municipal undertaking. In no other place in the world are the trams run by the Government.

178. Do you consider that you should have the control of the tram inside or beyond the city? The City Council do not think that they should have the control of trams outside their borders. They think the different Councils should be interested in them, as they are in Melbourne.

179. Supposing the outside municipalities did not wish to incur the expense of constructing trams to those municipalities, the City Council's system of tramways would only extend throughout the city? If they did not the City Council should be paid something for the use of their streets. The Council do not think that is arguable. The Council contend that they should be paid for the use of their streets if they do not run the trams themselves. We could make arrangements with the other Councils if the trams went outside the city.

180. Is it not possible that the other Councils might not agree? It is hardly reasonable to suppose that they would not agree; but still, it is possible.

181. Are you aware that the whole of the trams of Brisbane, Melbourne, and Adelaide, are run by public companies? Yes; and they are run at a very profitable rate to the municipalities in each case.

182. What about the profit to the citizens? The tramways there will eventually come into the possession of the citizens.

183. Do you not consider that a municipality gains considerably by trams going through its streets; at present you have not more than one-third of a street through which a tramway runs to keep in repair? But the traffic is thrown upon other streets, which we have to keep in repair.

184. As soon as the electric trams commence to run to the eastern suburbs, will not Pitt-street be relieved of the 'buses which at present make 1,000 trips a day? There is no reason to think so.

185. Have not a large number of 'buses been run off George street? In George-street the tram has been constructed with very little regard to our convenience and comfort. It will cost us £8,000 to put it in proper order.

- R. M. McC. Anderson.
20 Sept., 1900.
186. I suppose that altering the levels of a street is not an unmixed evil? From a municipal point of view, it is.
187. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you noticed whether accidents in George-street have increased in number since the trams have been running? Naturally they would increase, on account of the congestion of traffic.
188. The question has been put to you whether you think a double line in Castlereagh-street or a single line in Castlereagh and Pitt Streets would be the least objectionable? It is quite clear that the Commissioners intend to duplicate the line afterwards. They say they are going to lay the rails in such a way that another set of rails can be constructed when necessary.
189. Will not the fact of these lines being constructed do away with a good deal of vehicular traffic? But that vehicular traffic will go into other streets.
190. Will not a good deal of the 'bus, cab, and carriage traffic be served by the trams? It all depends on how the trams are going to run. The George-street tram has created a demand of its own which it cannot supply, and the new trams may do the same. The George-street tram was to have carried the whole of the west-end traffic: but it has not done so. It takes all its time to deal with the city traffic.
191. At present George-street is completely overburdened with traffic? Yes; with local traffic.
192. The opening of lines in other streets would largely relieve George-street, and if there is not a large increase in the number of accidents on account of the terribly congested state of George-street, it would imply that accidents would not be multiplied to any extent by the construction of other lines? No; the trams have gone along George-street, and the street traffic has gone somewhere else—to Pitt and Castlereagh Streets. Now you propose to construct trams in Pitt and Castlereagh Streets. Where is the traffic to go then.
193. Do you not think that a single line always running in one direction would be much less liable to cause accidents than a double line, in which the trams run in opposite directions? I think an expert opinion is necessary on that point.
194. Does the Municipal Council object to the trams in any of the streets? They object to more, because of the public safety. They do not know where the traffic is to go if it is run off Castlereagh and Pitt Streets.
195. And they are of opinion that the trams ought to be under their control? Yes; or that they should be paid for the use of their streets. They think that is a reasonable request, which does not admit of argument.
196. *Mr. Levien.*] Supposing the streets are broken up, at whose cost are they put in repair? By the railway people in the tramway area—for 4 feet on each side of the outside rails. Our experience has been that it costs no less to repair the streets—say, from north to south of the city—since the tramways have gone into them. Of course, the traffic has been relieved for those streets, and has been thrown upon other streets. The result has been that there has been more wear and tear in the other streets.
197. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Has the George-street tram interfered with business houses along George-street? I suppose it has done good to some and harm to others. The people complain bitterly of the dust they make. The drapers and other people who have perishable goods complain bitterly that there is more dust. We have more sweeping and watering of the streets to carry out, for which we get nothing.
198. Evidence has been given to the effect that if trams are constructed in Pitt and Castlereagh streets they will interfere with the dray traffic of the business houses of those streets? It must be so in narrow streets.
199. Has that occurred in George-street? George-street is much wider than the other streets. George-street is not a street in which the business people require drays very much. Most of the shops are retail shops.
200. In which of the streets are most wholesale houses to be found? York-street, Clarence-street, and certain parts of Pitt-street.
201. Are there more wholesale houses in Pitt-street than in Castlereagh-street? Yes.
202. *Mr. Hyam.*] Where are the wholesale houses in Pitt-street? From King-street to the Quay.
203. Are there not very few wholesale houses in Pitt-street, between King-street and Hunter-street? There are large blocks occupied by Hunter's, Dalton's, Perry's, and Hoffnung's. They have an enormous traffic in and out, and the street is very narrow.

Albert Christopher Brownen, licensed victualler, sworn, and examined:—

- A. C. Brownen.
20 Sept., 1900.
204. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Do you desire to make a general statement with regard to the proposal before the Committee? Yes: I want to show how we can knock the 'bus traffic out of Pitt-street. In the first place, I am opposed to the construction of the tramway in Pitt-street, because the street is too narrow. Again, it is the most aristocratic thoroughfare of the city. Recently an extra outlet has been made from the Post Office for the mail-carts. I have, however, on many occasions been outside the Post Office when I have seen the mail carts, in going in and out, take up the whole of Pitt-street, and if, under those circumstances, there was a tramway in Pitt-street it would be an enormous obstruction.
205. Do you refer to a single or a double line? To either. Of course a single line would not be so much of an obstruction as a double line. I think a double line is impossible, unless you clear the whole of the other traffic out of the street. In the better-class thoroughfares in London and other large cities there are no trams. My opinion is that there should be a double line of tramway from the railway station along Castlereagh-street—that is, if the new station is built on the Benevolent Asylum ground. The street is very wide, and it is straight, and there is plenty of room for a double line of tramway, at any rate as far as the Hôtel Métropole. It seems to me that the eastern and western traffic coming into the city must be divided. I think it would be wrong to bring the western traffic into the city along George-street. We ought to preserve George and Harris Streets solely for the railway traffic. I think we should bring a portion of the western traffic down Kent-street, and the other portion along Castlereagh-street. It could be divided at the railway. You would have, of course, to come down George-street as far as Liverpool-street with a portion of the western traffic, in order to get into Kent-street. That portion of George-street is wide, and there would be plenty of room to carry a portion of the western traffic in addition to the railway traffic as far as Liverpool-street.
206. The portion of the western traffic which you suggest should go along Castlereagh-street would have to cross the railway traffic? Yes, it does that now. The only thing in connection with the crossing is that

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that you would require proper signals, and a man to supervise them. The greater portion of the western traffic would, I presume, go down to Castlereagh-street, because that is the best side of the city. I think that is the only way of relieving the congestion of George-street. Then we come to the eastern, or the Oxford-street, traffic. There is just as much congestion from Darlington to the Hyde Park, as there is now in Pitt-street or George-street. I understand that the Commissioners think of continuing the Elizabeth-street line, and running the eastern traffic to the Quay. That is an easy thing to do; but as long as they take the eastern traffic down Elizabeth-street, they will not be able to wipe out the 'bus traffic, because Elizabeth-street is too far from the centre of the city. People will get in the 'buses at Pitt-street. They will not take the trouble to walk up and down King-street to get into the trams. I cannot see that the continuation of the Elizabeth-street line to Circular Quay will run the 'buses out of Pitt-street. The only time they would do it would be on a Sunday, when there is no one in the city. Most of the people who come into the city from the Eastern Suburbs on a Sunday afternoon go upon the harbour. My suggestion is that we should do away with the Elizabeth-street line altogether, and bring the eastern traffic into Liverpool-street, and thence along Castlereagh-street.

207. Would you bring the whole of the eastern traffic into Castlereagh-street? No; only a portion of it.

208. Where would you take the other portion? I would take it along Liverpool-street to Kent-street.

209. You would then have to cross the George-street tram? Yes; as is done now with the cable at King-street.

210. Would you run along Kent-street? Yes, as far as Miller's Point; and thence to Circular Quay.

211. Do you not think that Kent-street is further from the centre of the city than is Elizabeth-street? No, not so far; some people might grumble, because they could not be brought from the Western Suburbs along George-street, but there is sure to be grumbling whatever is done. Castlereagh-street, on one side, and Kent-street on the other, are quite near enough to George-street. I walked from the Post Office to Kent-street the other day, and the journey only occupied three minutes. From York-street to Kent-street the journey only occupies a minute. A large number of people are employed in Clarence and York streets, and the tram would be close to them. I consider that if the scheme I have outlined were carried out, there would be no congestion of traffic for the next ten years. We require a circular railway line round the city to feed the station which it is proposed to build on the Benevolent Asylum site.

212. Do you think the traffic of George-street is very much congested? It is congested morning and evening—about an hour each day.

213. Would it be able to carry any more traffic than it carries at present? I think it is pretty well occupied now during the busy parts of the day.

214. Do you think it is necessary to relieve the present traffic in George-street? I do not think so. It is of no use constructing tramways in the streets if the cars are to be running empty half the day.

215. In the event of its being considered necessary to construct tramways in other streets, which of the two streets—Castlereagh or Pitt—would be the best? A double line in Castlereagh-street. I have a great objection to a tram-line in Pitt-street.

216. Which street of the two at present carries most local traffic? Pitt-street.

217. Do you think it would be better for the traffic to have one street free than to have a single line in each of the two streets? Certainly. If you have a double line in Castlereagh-street and none in Pitt-street, all the light traffic will get out of the way of the trams. Heavy drays, however, do not care much about the trams. If the trams run into them they do not do much harm. There will be plenty of room in Castlereagh-street for a lot of heavy traffic, even if a double line of tramway is constructed.

218. If a double line of tramway were constructed in Castlereagh-street, would it reduce the omnibus traffic to any considerable extent? No; it cannot do so unless you deal with the eastern trams as I have suggested.

219. But there are plenty of omnibuses which do not come from the eastern Suburbs? The largest number of omnibuses which run down Pitt-street come from the eastern Suburbs, and they are causing all the present congestion.

220. The Railway Commissioners have stated that it would be more convenient to the travelling public if there were a single line down Castlereagh-street and another along Pitt-street to the railway station? Railway trams could run down Castlereagh and Kent Streets as well if necessary. Pitt-street is very much crowded at present. If you construct a tramway along there the people will block the pavements and cause an obstruction. Then there would be the ordinary traffic in the streets, and, in my opinion, a number of accidents would be caused. The street is crowded enough now without a tramway.

221. In the event of a double line being constructed in Castlereagh-street, would it not divert the whole of the local traffic from that street? No. It might do away with the light traffic, because there would be a clear run for it in Pitt-street.

222. Would there be much room in Castlereagh-street if a double line of tramway were constructed? Plenty of room.

223. It is stated that the trams in George-street have diverted a considerable quantity of the local traffic to other streets? There is no doubt that it has driven some of the traffic out, but not a great deal. Three parts of the omnibus traffic have been wiped out of George-street, and that has left room for our vehicular traffic.

224. The evidence of some of the lorry-owners goes to show that a large portion of the heavy traffic has gone into Castlereagh and Pitt Streets? Some has gone into Pitt-street; but I do not think much has gone into Castlereagh-street.

225. How would the business people in Castlereagh-street view a double line in that street? I think they would welcome it.

226. Would they have a stronger objection to a double line than to a single line? I do not see why they should, because it would bring a considerable amount of business into the street. Again, more important buildings would be erected in the streets, and improvements would be made.

227. Do you think there is anything in the contention of the business people in Pitt-street against the construction of the tramway in that street? Everyone I have spoken to seems to object to it. They seem to think it will be entirely out of place.

228. Then what would be good for Castlereagh-street would be bad for Pitt-street? Yes; bad for the traffic, and bad for the tradespeople and everyone else.

Orlando William Brain, Acting Electrical Engineer, Department of Railways and Tramways, sworn, and examined:—

O. W. Brain.

20 Sept., 1900.

229. *Mr. Watson.*] We have before us a proposal to construct a double line of tramway in Pitt-street; we have also before us a proposal to construct a double line in Castlereagh-street, with an additional suggestion from the Railway Commissioners that a single line might be constructed in each street, in lieu of the double line proposal; can you tell the Committee how the electric power question is affected by the suggestion now put forward, with respect to the double line down Pitt-street;—does it increase the difficulty, or in any way affect it? I understand from the traffic officers that it would necessitate about the same additional number of trams as the Castlereagh-street project.

230. Will the amount of power required for single lines in Castlereagh and Pitt Streets be about the same as that required for a double line in either of these streets? Yes; assuming that the extra number of trams due to pick-up traffic is the same in each case.

231. It is probable that the pick-up traffic in Pitt-street will be a little greater than that in Castlereagh-street? Yes; but I understand that it is not estimated to require an additional number of trams.

232. When giving evidence on the Castlereagh-street proposal, you stated, in answer to Question 209, that, after consulting Mr. Kneeshaw, the additional horse-power required would be about 540? Yes.

233. When Mr. McLachlan was giving evidence on Tuesday, he seemed to have a different view from that held by the Committee on account of your reply; the Committee understood that that additional horse-power was to be provided at the Ultimo station on account of the Castlereagh-street proposal; Mr. McLachlan seemed to have the impression that it simply meant utilising a portion of the reserve power now at Ultimo;—can you inform us which is the correct view? I meant that that amount of additional power would be required;—that is to say, that it would take that much more extra power on the line, owing to the fact of running the extra pick-up traffic.

234. What we wish to get at is whether you will require to put in additional machinery to generate that 540 additional horse-power, or have you already sufficient machinery to generate the additional horse-power? We have hardly sufficient power at the present time to deal with that, together with what it is supposed to deal with on the western suburbs within the next twelve months; but within the next twelve months we shall have additional assistance in the form of batteries at sub-stations, which will put us in a position to deal with it. It will not be additional generating machinery, but it will really be by means of storage of the power during the part of the day when the engines are not so heavily loaded.

235. In the estimate put before us, there is a sum of £6,375, which includes the proportion of power for twenty cars of 25 horse-power each;—will that money be devoted to equipping this particular line with power? I had nothing to do with that estimate.

236. Have you been asked, as the electrical expert of the Railway Department, to give any information with respect to what additional expenditure is required to provide sufficient power for this line? Not for this particular line. We have a certain amount of power now, and I have been dealing with the particulars of the extra supply of power to which reference was made in the previous inquiry. So that I dealt with the matter as a whole; but I have not been consulted in any way with reference to the power for this particular line.

237. In regard to the double track down Pitt-street, we have before us an item of £12,750 for a 510 horse-power, at the rate of £25 per horse-power; it does not seem clear, however, from the evidence so far given, whether that amount is going to be credited to the works already in existence, or whether it is going to be expended in the creation of new works or additional power in the Ultimo power-house; can you say in what manner that money will be expended, leaving the estimate, as an estimate, out of account altogether;—we understand that it is proposed that some of the money shall be spent in that way, and I want you to tell us how it will be spent? As the provision for power required for supplying that extra power referred to will really be made out of the new plant which is being erected, it would seem to me that it would follow that it would be charged against that new power.

238. So that it will not mean a utilisation of any of the reserve power which you now have at Ultimo? No; it does not mean that. Perhaps it is a little difficult to make the matter clear to you. It really means utilising the steam plant we have there at the present time; but that plant itself would not be equal to it were it not that we shall be putting in accumulators, and that we shall charge these accumulators with the plant already there. Of course, those accumulators were never by me associated in any way with this line. It only happens that that is a part of the new scheme which will be pushed on, and which can be put into operation within twelve months, and can therefore be utilised for this line.

239. Can you inform the Committee what reserve you have at Ultimo, either in boilers or generating plant, carrying the present traffic; for instance, I understand you have engines there capable of developing 5,000 horse-power;—are you using all those engines? No; we are using two out of three.

240. I thought there were four? You always count on one spare one.

241. Then you are using 2,500 horse-power at present? Yes; that is the nominal horse-power. If you have four engines you can only reckon on working three of them, because you must sometimes have an engine under overhaul.

242. Then, as a practical working reserve, you have one 1,250 horse-power engine? Yes.

243. Does it require all the boilers you have in use now to generate sufficient steam for the two engines you are working, or have you a reserve of boilers also? There is no reserve of boilers at present.

244. Would this work, irrespective of the general extension, be important enough to necessitate the erection of additional boilers at Ultimo? I understand you have been informed that new boilers are being erected now.

245. Mr. McLachlan said something about it, but he preferred to leave the matter to you to explain? It is necessary, in order to avail ourselves of the power which is there now, to erect eight additional boilers, which are now being built.

246. How many boilers have you there now? Fourteen.

247. Will the additional eight boilers be sufficient only to give steam to the set of engines which are not utilised? That will be sufficient, with a fair margin for overhauls.

248. Does the proposed line necessitate, apart from the general scheme, any additional generators and other electrical plant? No; not apart from the general scheme.

249. So that it would seem that you are proposing to debit this scheme with a proportion—according to its power necessities—of the general expenditure which is being made in connection with the conversion? I have had nothing to do with the financial aspect of the matter.

250. Were you consulted with regard to the estimates for the Castlereagh-street proposals? Not as to the cost of the power. O. W. Brain.
20 Sept., 1900.
251. Would you cast the whole of the work of carrying this particular line on the set of accumulators you are providing, or would they be used to relieve the engines occasionally? They would assist in supplying the additional current. That would be the temporary arrangement until the general scheme came into operation.
252. *Mr. Hyam.*] Do I understand that you have four engines of 1,250 horse-power each? Yes.
253. And of those four you are using two? Yes.
254. I suppose there is always one being overhauled? It is not always so, but you must be able to have one under overhaul.
255. I suppose that if the necessity arose you could use the four at one time? You could do it if there was not one under overhaul at the time.
256. One set of engines is always in reserve? Yes.
257. Have you enough power now to cope with the electric trams which are running? Yes.
258. Have you enough power to supply this electric tramway as well? We shall be able to provide for that in the manner I have indicated.
259. But not until you get the new boilers? No.
260. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Have you sufficient power now to work the two additional lines in the event of their being constructed, or would you require to secure more power? When we have the additional boilers we shall be able, by means of the accumulators, to which I have referred, to supply those lines without additional machinery.
261. Would the same power work a single line in each of the streets as it would work a double line in one street? Yes; unless the fact of the line being in two streets necessitated further cars being supplied.
262. *Chairman.*] I believe the power plant was originally provided for the George-street electric tram? The four engines provided for more than the George-street traffic.
263. What was the amount of traffic which was provided for in the first estimate;—was it for the George-street traffic alone, or for future developments of a somewhat uncertain nature? It was for further traffic besides that of George-street.
264. Do you know whether a detailed estimate was made for that further traffic? Yes.
265. Was the whole scheme of conversion considered in making the estimate for the amount of power required? I could not say how the figures for the present plant were made up. They were made up by Mr. Elwell. I have reported to the Commissioners on the general conversion scheme, exclusive of the two proposals before the Committee.
266. Did you provide for any estimate of the amount of power required for the total conversion? Yes.
267. Will that estimate leave you any margin for a single line down Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street? I am informed by the traffic officers that it will. Of course, my estimates are based upon a certain number of trams estimated for by the Traffic Superintendent. He allowed what he considered was a reasonable margin for contingencies, and I understand that this can be considered as one of the contingencies provided for.
268. What total horse-power do you mention as being sufficient for the full scheme? Eleven thousand; that is, 6,000 in addition to the 5,000 at present in use.
269. In that 11,000 horse-power you have a sufficiently wide margin to cover the 550 horse-power required for the scheme under consideration? Yes.
270. Of the 11,000 horse-power, how much would you consider to be reserve power which is not likely to be called up for some time? That has been expressed in the form of trams. I got from the Traffic Superintendent an estimate which will cover all the trams he considers likely to be used for some years to come, and as long as he has allowed the margin I provide the power for that margin.
271. At present you keep one engine out of four in reserve? Yes.
272. Of 11,000 horse-power, what proportion of your power would you keep in reserve? Two out of seven.
273. Would that represent the same proportion of electrical power? It is rather larger.
274. Then, you will practically have any amount of power to cope with the 550 additional horse-power required for the two tram-lines? Yes.

Edward Johnstone Sievers, Government Land Valuer, Department of Public Works, sworn, and
examined:—

275. *Mr. Watson.*] In connection with this proposal, it has been suggested that, in order to provide for the purposes of the line at the foot of Pitt-street, it will be necessary to resume the small piece of land at the corner of Pitt and Alfred Streets, near Change Alley? That is so. E. J. Sievers.
20 Sept., 1900.
276. That is part, at present, of a fairly large block of land, which has not been built upon to any extent? The buildings are of a temporary character, probably worth £500 or £600.
277. Can you offer any opinion as to what the probable cost of resumption would be? The lands will probably cost between £4,000 and £5,000.
278. Would that make an allowance for any increased value which might be given for the remainder of the area by affording it a better frontage? I am inclined to think that there would be no betterment to the balance of the resumption. The mere fact of bringing the tramway down Pitt-street will not better it. It will not cause any increased foot traffic near the property.
279. At present that property has only one good frontage to Pitt-street;—I should imagine that, the street being so narrow, the frontage to Alfred-street is not of any value? It is narrow, and the ground in front of it is Government land. Probably the area required will be less than is shown on the plan.
280. Do you not think that the additional width given to Alfred-street, behind the "Ship Inn," might have some bearing on the value of the remaining block? I do not think it would add materially to it. I scarcely think that the bringing of the tramway close up to the property there would increase the value of it.

FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.
The Hon. ANDREW GARRAN, LL.D.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.
JOHN McFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Electric Tramway along Pitt-street, City of Sydney.

Henry Alexander, proprietor, Hargrave-street and Point Piper road omnibuses, sworn, and examined:—

H. Alexander. 281. *Chairman.* Have you any statement to make to the Committee? Yes. The earnings of the 'buses on the city portions of their route is a very considerable item in their maintenance, and as it is impossible to run 'buses profitably in any of the suburbs to connect with trams, the 'buses must of necessity be withdrawn, and a very large number of the public would be deprived of the conveniences they now have through the 'buses running to places where trams are unable to run. The Government obtain a monopoly of the streets, and interfere with existing rights to a very great extent. Those who own 'buses are very considerable losers, and yet no recompense is made; whereas, if a private company were granted such privileges, there is no doubt but the 'bus-owners would receive reasonable compensation, which, in my opinion, they are fairly entitled to. I am of the opinion that even if all the 'buses ceased running in Pitt-street, the ordinary traffic would be such as to make it extremely dangerous to run trams in that street. There is nothing to prevent the tramway authorities, once they get a single line along the streets, placing a double line there, their only consideration being the conveyance of tram passengers; but the general public using the streets will be the great sufferers. There cannot be any doubt that, no matter what is done in the way of tramway additions, the whole of the suburban traffic cannot be conveyed. I understand it is proposed to run a single line of electric trams down Castlereagh-street on to Circular Quay, and return *via* Pitt-street to the present lines near the Railway Station or Haymarket. I am the owner of the largest number of 'buses now running to and from the Circular Quay; My 'buses ply *via* Pitt, Park, Elizabeth, and Oxford Streets to Paddington and Woollahra. My opinion is, that the running of trams along Pitt-street even by a single line in the centre of the road would be most dangerous and attended with great loss of life; the number of lives lost and serious injuries inflicted by, and caused through the electric trams in a comparatively wide street like George-street, is an index of what may be expected in such a narrow and heavily trafficked thoroughfare as Pitt-street. The space which would be available for vehicles between the tram-line and the kerb would be altogether insufficient for safety, and unless a 'bus or other vehicle pulled close into the kerb, which is often impracticable owing to stationary vehicles, it would be impossible for the trams to make any headway. I do not think it is reasonable to ask the driver of any vehicle, be it 'bus or otherwise, to sacrifice all his rights to the public highways. By taking up Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street for tram purposes, the Government practically take every available thoroughfare running in that direction, and force the people to use the trams whether they like it or not, as 'bus proprietors would be afraid to run their 'buses in what would then be highly dangerous streets in a satisfactory manner to the centre of the city. Our streets are not suitable for tramway purposes on any extensive scale, and in a very short time it will be found absolutely necessary to reconstruct the whole system. The public can only be served in a satisfactory way by a system of city railways.

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282. How many trips per day do your 'buses make up and down Pitt-street? 220 each way. I may add that there are forty-four 'buses besides my own running from Paddington, along Pitt-street, to Circular Quay. The average number of trips they make is about 400. That makes 600 trips per day each way for the lot.

283. Presuming a single line of tramway is constructed in Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street, could you so alter the routes of your 'buses as to run them along the free side down Pitt-street, and along the free side up Castlereagh-street? Yes; if the road were clear, but not otherwise. You could run parallel with the tram provided there was no other traffic on the line.

284. How far from the nearest point of the terminus of the tramway do you run your 'buses? One and half mile—that is, on the Hargrave-street line.

285. Do you find that a fair number of passengers still remain in the 'buses after you leave the nearest point of the tram-line? Yes.

286. Would there be sufficient traffic for your 'buses to act as a feeder to the proposed tramway if it were built? There would not be sufficient. They are really on the line of the tram, and yet away from the tram.

287. Do you maintain that the eastern suburban public would sustain loss and inconvenience if, by the construction of a tramway in Pitt-street, the 'buses were run off? Undoubtedly.

288. Which of the proposals before the Committee would you favour if you had to make a selection? I am not favourable to either; but if I were asked which would be the safer for vehicular traffic I should say a double line in Castlereagh-street.

289. Would a line along Pitt-street mean a serious interference with your business? Yes. In a short time there would not be a 'bus in Pitt-street. It would be dangerous to life and property to run them.

290. *Dr. Garran.* How wide is Oxford-street? About the same width as Pitt-street.

291. Your omnibuses run up Oxford-street on a hill? Yes.

292. Do you find difficulty there? We find it fairly difficult, but the trams do not run so very frequently. We are able to get out of the way, or wait until they pass. With an electric tram you would not be able to do that, as the cars follow each other in such rapid succession.

293. You have the Crown-street, Randwick, Waverley, and Bondi trams coming in? Yes; but there are not so many of them as there are in George-street—not one-third of the number.

294. Nor will there be in Pitt-street? I cannot see that.

295. I want to know how much your difficulty in Pitt-street would be greater than it is already in Oxford-street? One can only assume that the trams will run in Pitt-street in the same way as they run now in George-street. You could not compare the present running in Oxford-street with what it would be in Pitt-street,

Pitt-street, unless you took into consideration the fact that there would not be such a large traffic in Pitt-street. There can be no comparison between the present traffic in Oxford-street and that which will eventually be in Pitt-street. H. Alexander.
21 Sept., 1900.

296. Apart from the 'buses, have you noticed whether the traffic in Pitt-street is increasing? Yes, considerably. No person, if he can possibly avoid it, will drive down George-street. The general traffic has gone, to a large extent, into Pitt and Castlereagh Streets.

297. Is the traffic which is natural to Pitt-street increasing? I am not prepared to say.

298. If you were driven off Pitt-street, could you run branch omnibuses from your terminus to the nearest tram? Yes.

299. Would that accommodate your customers? Yes.

300. Would it give you as much return as you are getting now? I could not say.

301. Your expenses would be less, and you would have a shorter distance to run? Yes.

302. And you would probably charge a penny fare? I presume so.

303. Would the Hargrave-street and Woollahra people get into business 'buses at the nearest point? I should say not, because you ask them to pay 3d. for that which their neighbours are only paying 2d.

304. Where does the traffic which used to be taken by the Woollahra tram go now? Partly in the tram. Some people walk and others go in the omnibuses.

305. Part of it goes to the Ocean-street tramway, and part to the Point Piper Road 'buses? Yes.

306. Do the Point Piper Road 'buses or the Hargrave-street 'buses carry most traffic? There is not much difference. I have more 'buses on the Hargrave-street route than on the Point Piper Road route, but, in proportion to their numbers, they carry about the same amount. I am not the only proprietor of 'buses running to Point Piper Road.

307. Do you run the Edgecliffe-road 'buses? No. Since the 'buses have stopped running I have had requests made to me to run a 'bus there for the convenience of the public. I went into the matter, and found that it would not pay. Thus a considerable number of people are inconvenienced.

308. How long have those 'buses ceased running? Only quite recently—since the cable tram service has been so much quicker.

309. Have any omnibuses been run off William-street? Yes.

310. Have any been run off the penny section from the top of William-street? Yes.

311. Has that service ceased? I think it has. If it has not, I think it will do so next week.

312. Then no omnibuses can compete with the trams? Not if they run at the same fares, and cover the same ground.

313. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Are you aware that George-street cannot carry the whole of the electric tram traffic? Yes.

314. Do you think it would be possible to put any more trams in George-street? I do not think it would be safe.

315. How would you deal with the increased traffic without utilising Castlereagh or Pitt Streets? You could not deal with it. There is no doubt that this is the only way in which you can give some sort of a tramway system; but, in view of the way in which some streets are constructed, you will never be able to carry the passengers in the trams.

316. What is the best way of providing for the passenger traffic? The construction of a city railway.

317. Do you think a city railway, along with the present tram service, will carry the whole of the traffic? Yes.

318. The Railway Commissioners state that, even if there is a city railway, they will have to utilise Pitt-street or Castlereagh-street, and perhaps both, for an electric tram service? It may be so from their point of view. I daresay they want to go along every thoroughfare where there is a chance of picking up a passenger.

319. Do you think that, if Pitt-street or Castlereagh-street were taken for tram purposes, one of those streets would be sufficient to carry the 'bus traffic? Yes; because it is doing so at the present time, and there are likely to be less 'buses there than there are now.

320. Which street, in your opinion, would be the best, in view of the local traffic, to take for tram purposes? Castlereagh-street. You would then leave Pitt-street for vehicular traffic, and would thus have one open street as near the centre of the town as you can get it.

321. Do you think that would be better than a single line in each street? Yes.

322. *Mr. Shepherd.*] Are the whole of your 'buses running to the eastern suburbs? Yes.

323. What streets do you traverse when you get into town? We run from Moncur-street, through Hargrave-street, Glenmore-road, Oxford-street, Liverpool-street, Elizabeth-street, Bathurst-street, and Pitt-street, to the Quay.

324. Do you use Castlereagh-street? No; except to cross it.

325. Have you noticed any falling off in the number of passengers in the omnibuses since the electric trams started? Yes; a very big falling off.

326. Have you been obliged to knock off any omnibuses since then? No; they have not interfered with me. I do not think there will be any difference between the carrying capacity of the present trams and the electric trams. If you extend the electric system to the eastern suburbs, the people will still have to use the 'buses where the electric trams do not serve them any better than does the present system serve them.

327. Could you propose any other plan than that which has been suggested for the relief of George-street? No. You might relieve it for the present, but you will have the same difficulties staring you in the face again immediately.

328. Of all the suggestions which have been made, you prefer a double line down Castlereagh-street? Yes; I think that would be the safest for vehicular traffic.

329. I suppose there is less traffic in Castlereagh-street at present than there is in George-street and Pitt-street? Yes; a great deal of the heavy traffic could be taken along Castlereagh-street, even if there were a double line of trams.

330. *Chairman.*] Do you find that the traffic in and out of the big wholesale stores in Pitt-street interferes with your 'buses? Yes; it makes a lot of difference. You have to creep your way very slowly at times on account of the business houses. There is always a certain amount of traffic standing about such places as Lawson's, Harris and Ackman's, and Inglis' sale-yards.

H. Alexander. 331. Would a space of 9 ft. 6 in. clear between the tramline and the footpath be sufficient for you to work your 'buses? Yes, provided there was nothing else in the road. The chances are, however, that after travelling a short distance you will be blocked by a cart or cab. The intersections would be very dangerous. Traffic would be almost unable to move across George-street. At the present time people are almost afraid to cross the intersections of George and King Streets.

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332. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Would not the traffic be relieved a part of the distance if the 'buses were run along College-street and Park-street, and thence to King-street? Even then you would get into Pitt or Castlereagh Streets.

333. Some of the 'buses from the eastern suburbs go that way and along King-street now? Yes; they go straight down William-street. Others come along William-street, and pass College-street into Park-street.

334. If more 'buses went in that direction, would it not make a difference? It would not minimise the difficulty. It would only relieve that portion of the street between Bathurst-street and Park-street.

335. Suppose a number of the 'buses came down King-street? That would be more dangerous, especially at the intersection of Pitt-street. You would have to cross the tram at Elizabeth-street, Castlereagh-street, and Pitt-street, and King-street is a very awkward street for traffic, as it is hilly from Elizabeth-street to Pitt-street. Besides, the people living in the eastern suburbs do not want to be carried a roundabout way if they can avoid it. That route would take them away from the places to which they want to go. For instance, they might want to go to George-street, and to do that they would have to leave the omnibuses at Liverpool-street and walk.

MONDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	|	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.		ROBERT HENRY LEVIEN, Esq.

JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Electric Tramway along Pitt-street, City of Sydney.

John Kneeshaw, Traffic Superintendent, Tramway Department, sworn, and examined:—

J. Kneeshaw. 336. *Mr. Watson.*] It has been suggested that some objection, urged against the construction of the Pitt-street line, might be removed if it could be assured that the extension of the eastern tramway system to the Quay could be carried out before the line in Pitt-street is opened;—do you think that extension could be carried out before the opening of the Pitt-street line? The Department would scarcely manage to convert the eastern system by the time the Pitt-street line was opened; but it would not be long after that. In any case, we should not put any more traffic into Pitt-street than is absolutely necessary to relieve George-street from congestion. As we stand at present, we really cannot convert any more western lines until we have some other outlet. If the Committee approved of another outlet—say a single line in Castlereagh-street, returning by way of Pitt-street—we should not put more traffic into those streets than was absolutely necessary.

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337. I understand that the Commissioners intend to convert the whole of the western system before they touch the eastern system? That is the present scheme.

338. Would it be possible to convert the Bondi and Waverley sections of the eastern system before completing the western conversion, so as to ensure that the 'bus traffic in Pitt-street would be subtracted? Not very well, because they have already got the Leichhardt and Glebe lines ready for the wire, and in some cases the track is bonded. Similarly, arrangements have been made with the Balmain conversion. It is not good policy to have the steam motors running on any portion of the electric lines, because the sulphur fumes affect the overhead wire and corrode it. It would be a more business-like thing to carry out the whole of one system first; but as soon as the necessary power is available it will not take very long to convert the eastern side.

339. How soon do you anticipate that the eastern conversion can be commenced? I think we ought to be running on the eastern side under eighteen months from date.

340. How soon do you anticipate the Castlereagh-street and Pitt-street single line would be ready to be opened, assuming the work received approval shortly? I could hardly answer the question, but I do not think it could be managed under eight or nine months.

341. So that it would probably be another eight or nine months before the conversion on the eastern side could be made, and before you could look for any great subtraction of 'bus traffic from Pitt-street? About that. Of course, with the conversion of the western system, we should have steam rolling-stock released, which would enable us to give a much better service on the eastern side, even before the conversion. That, in itself, will have a tendency to reduce the 'bus traffic in Pitt-street.

342. Has your department made any attempt to ascertain the number of 'buses going through Oxford-street during a day? Yes; but I have not the information with me. We always get that from Mr. Edward, the Superintendent of Traffic.

343. Approximately, I suppose it will be the same as the number of eastern 'buses which go through Pitt-street? Of course, some of the 'buses from the eastern suburbs run to the railway station direct.

344. Then there will be more 'buses, really, in Oxford-street than in Pitt-street? Yes.

345. The other day Mr. Alexander, omnibus proprietor, estimated that the eastern suburban 'buses made 1,200 trips a day in Pitt-street? It sounds a large number, but it is not so many when you remember that we have 2,300 tram trips in George-street per day.

346. Do you think that the construction of a single line in Pitt-street and Castlereagh-street would mean less blocking of general vehicular traffic than a double line in one or other of those streets? I think it is very clear that it would mean less blocking of traffic. We should keep on one side of the street, and allow the other side for vehicular traffic.

347. Do you think there would be any difficulty in adding your tram service to the present traffic of Pitt-street? I think not. People thought we would not be able to run trams in George-street, but the traffic soon accommodates itself. J. Knoeshaw.
24 Sept., 1900.

348. We have been informed that a great deal of the traffic which previously went along George-street has been diverted to Pitt-street on account of the running of the trams? Probably; and I think there is still room for some of the Pitt-street traffic, particularly the heavy traffic, to be diverted. If we get the heavy traffic out of Pitt-street there will be very little difficulty with the trams and omnibuses. It is the walking-pace traffic which is the trouble. I have had a consultation with Mr. Edward on that point, and I understand that when the regulations are issued they will provide for the walking-pace traffic to go into Castlereagh-street.

349. What room would there be between the body of the tramcar which overhangs the line and the kerb? About 8 feet 4 inches. Of course, with a single track, there would be twice that room on the other side.

350. Would 8 feet 4 inches be sufficient for one line of vehicles? Yes. In giving evidence the other day, Mr. Alexander referred to the danger of centre poles; but there will be no centre poles in Pitt-street. The trolley wires will be carried by span wires running from poles along the side; therefore, we can keep the tracks close together. Instead of having 12-foot centres we shall have 9-foot centres—that is, assuming we have a double track.

351. Assuming that there are two tracks in the centre of the street, what space will they take up? Fourteen feet 6 inches. That will give 10 feet on either side of the street. The overhang of the tram will reduce that about a foot.

352. That will give a greater width than Mr. Edward anticipated would be the case in connection with the Castlereagh-street line;—he put it down as 9 feet 5 inches clear? Yes. He has evidently assumed that we are going to have poles, as we have in George-street; but by using span poles we can have a much narrower centre. I desire to point out that we cannot go on with more conversion until we get some other outlet on the western side.

353. Even with the traffic you are working now in George-street, you think it would be an advantage to have some of it diverted to Pitt-street? It would be an advantage. At the same time we should not think of easing George-street by crowding Pitt-street.

354. It has been suggested that George-street would be sufficiently relieved, and the traffic requirements well enough served, if a double line were constructed down Castlereagh-street, leaving the Pitt-street line out of consideration;—do you think that with that line you would be able to catch the railway traffic? I do not think the railway passengers would be satisfied with Castlereagh-street. Having been in George-street so long, I think, in preference to walking up to Castlereagh-street for the purpose of joining the trams to the railway station, they would crowd the Newtown or the other western suburban trams, and walk up from the railway gates. As risky as it is they would do it. On the other hand, if we had the return line in Pitt-street, I think they would join the trams there. I do not think we should have that measure of relief with a double line in Castlereagh-street which we would have with a single line in each street.

355. I should imagine there would be a better chance of pick-up traffic being obtained in Pitt-street? Yes, to a far greater extent.

356. Do you think that any fair proportion of the pick-up traffic now obtained by the George-street line comes from the vicinity of Pitt-street? Some of it does? On the other hand, there is still a large pick-up traffic to be obtained on its own account.

357. I presume the pick-up traffic is rather a disadvantage to the western suburban passengers in George-street? It is. It has the effect of crowding them out.

TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Present:—

WILLIAM THOMAS DICK, Esq. (CHAIRMAN).

The Hon. PATRICK LINDESAY CRAWFORD SHEPHERD.	JOHN CHRISTIAN WATSON, Esq.
The Hon. SOLOMON HERBERT HYAM.	JOHN MCFARLANE, Esq.

The Committee further considered the expediency of constructing a line of Electric Tramway along Pitt-street, City of Sydney.

Hugh McLachlan, Secretary to the Railway Commissioners, sworn, and further examined:—

358. *Mr. McFarlane.*] Have the Railway Commissioners given consideration to the desirableness of converting the eastern suburban tram traffic before carrying out the proposed electric line in Castlereagh and Pitt Streets? Yes. The Commissioners recognise the importance of having the conversion of the eastern suburban service carried out at the earliest possible date; but they cannot, after full consideration, approve of part of the western suburban conversion being postponed so as to enable the Paddington line to be dealt with. All arrangements have been put in hand, and promises made as to the order of the changes, and the Commissioners cannot see their way to now amend them. It will only be, in any case, a matter of temporary inconvenience. The necessary machinery has already been ordered from America, and although it may take some time to complete after the proposal now under consideration is finished, if approved, it will only be a question of time, and the Commissioners will push on with the work as much as possible. If it were a vital point to get the omnibuses out of Pitt-street, in view of a tram being made in that thoroughfare, it might be considered whether that traffic could not be diverted into Castlereagh-street. In any case, they would have, almost of necessity, to go there if the tramway is approved, and whilst it is being constructed in Pitt-street. H.
McLachlan.
25 Sept., 1900.

359. Could you say how long it will take to carry out the conversion as far as Paddington? Of course, it would not take a great deal of time if you had the power; but the conversion of the western system will absorb the power we have got. Consequently, the Commissioners have had a contract let for much additional machinery, and that will necessarily take some time to get into position and in working order.

360. Can you say how long? I think the contract time is nineteen months.

361. I suppose it will take some considerable time after that for the tram to be got into working order? I do not know that it will; but that is the contract time for the completion of the machinery. 362.

- H. McLachlan.
25 Sept., 1900.
362. It will probably take two years? I suppose so.
363. How could the Commissioners arrange, in the event of a single line being constructed in Castlereagh-street: would they stop the traffic whilst the line was being completed;—would they carry out the construction of single lines in both streets at one time? That is a matter with which we do not deal. The Construction Department carry out the work. I believe that in America they finish one street at a time, and practically close the section of the street upon which they are working. I should imagine that, when working in Pitt-street, the vehicular traffic would have to be diverted. The omnibuses could be diverted into Castlereagh-street, and the question is whether we might not keep them there, pending the conversion.
364. How do the Commissioners view the carrying out of a double line in Pitt-street, thus leaving Castlereagh-street free? They prefer their own proposal.
365. Would not a double line in Pitt-street answer as well? As a matter of convenience, I should say yes—that is, as far as the public are concerned; but still the Commissioners think a line down one street and up the other would be the least inconvenient; and if a city railway were made—and it probably will be made, some day—it would be a question as to whether those lines would require to be duplicated.

- R. A. Setright.
25 Sept., 1900.
- Robert Alexander Setright, importer of typewriting materials, Pitt-street, Sydney, sworn, and examined:—
366. *Mr. Watson.*] Will you state your opinion with regard to the proposal before the Committee? I have been about Sydney and suburbs for the last twenty years. To commence with, I think it would be impossible to run a double line of trams in Pitt-street. I understand that the Railway Commissioners are more eager to have a tram in Pitt-street than in Castlereagh-street. There is only one way in which a double line can be run along Pitt-street, and that is by cutting down the pathways. Sydney possesses narrow streets and wide pathways, and I think the only way of constructing a double line in Pitt-street is by cutting 3 or 4 feet of the pathway on each side. At present the pathways are more than wide enough for ordinary business purposes. They are, however, taken up by the people who are out, not on business, but for the purpose of strolling about. As a rule, when business people are in a hurry, they have to walk along the roadway in order to get along quickly. I daresay that an Act of Parliament would have to be passed to enable 2 or 3 feet to be taken off the pathways, and if that were done there would still be plenty of room for the pedestrians. That, coupled with the exercise of strict regulations in regard to the drivers of the general traffic, would enable a double line to be run through Pitt-street. At present there is ample space between the two lines of tramway in George-street. I think we could do with 6 inches less in Pitt-street, and that would make still more room at the sides of the road.
367. In connection with Pitt-street, it is proposed to place the poles at each side of the street, instead of in the centre as in George-street, which will reduce the width between the two lines? I would suggest that the width between the lines should not be as narrow as it is between the steam tram-lines. There should be sufficient width to enable a person to stand, with a certain amount of safety, between two trams passing in opposite directions. It would be a mistake to have the same space between the electric line, as that which we have between the steam lines. Personally, I hailed the approach of the trams in George-street with delight, knowing that they would be a means of doing away with the incessant rattle of the 'bus traffic. A person going along George-street between a quarter to 6 and half-past 6 in the evening, could, formerly, no more talk to a friend in his usual tone of voice than he could fly. One had to yell out like a commanding officer to make himself heard, and that, together with the continual rattle of the 'buses, not naturally gave one a headache. The trams have done away with that. When it was proposed that the poles should be placed in the centre of George-street, I laughed at the idea of them, thinking that the Commissioners should have gone in for what is known as the storage system. It seems, however, that the Commissioners tried the storage system for over a year in Elizabeth-street, and found that there was something wrong in the working of it. I also thought that the placing of poles in the centre of the street would make a "holy show" of the city. When they were first put up, I did not like them, but afterwards I came to the conclusion that they would divide the ordinary traffic in such a way that there would be no more racing amongst the 'busmen. That sort of thing has been stopped. Apart from that, they are a haven for women and children, who are as safe upon the basalt or trachyte ovals at their base, as they would be upon the pathway. They are very useful in that respect, but I do not think they could be used in Pitt-street. It has struck me that it might be wise to run a double line of tramway from the railway station along Pitt-street as far as Bathurst-street. If the 'buses which come down Bathurst-street and turn into Pitt-street could be done away with, the double line along Pitt-street could be extended as far as Park-street. From that point there should be a single line in the centre of the road as far as the Post Office. At Martin-place there should be a loop for the accommodation of the trams going north, and there should be a single line between that loop and Circular Quay. That line could be kept running until the 'buses were driven off the street. At the same time, I do not think they would be driven off, because the tram service along Pitt-street would only accommodate the western suburbs; whereas, the 'bus traffic along Pitt-street is to the eastern suburbs. That traffic would continue, unless the Railway Commissioners commenced to run branch lines when they started the electric service along Oxford-street, to Glenmore-road and other places. My idea is, that upon the branch lines they could use small storage battery trams to take the place of the 'buses. I think they would be used in preference to the 'buses. Personally, I never travel in a 'bus if I can get a tram. The public are in the hands of the drivers, and if, on account of some carelessness, an accident occurs, and a person gets his neck broken, his family can obtain no recompense; because if an action is brought and is won, the owner of the 'buses can go insolvent and clear himself of all liability.
368. Do you think that the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners to construct a single line down Castlereagh-street, and a single line up Pitt-street, can be carried out without any great interference with traffic? I think so, provided the drivers have proper control over the car. At present their business seems to be simply to start and stop the cars. I suggest that at each end of the trams a mirror, about 6 inches by 24 inches, should be fixed, so that the drivers could see behind them as well as in front of them. The mirrors could be constructed so that they would not interfere with their side view to any great extent. The drivers should then be responsible for the working of the tram from the time the guard blows his whistle. In my opinion, the trams running to and from the Railway Station are too high from the

the road. A new cow-catcher has been invented—an ordinary frame with a net—which could be easily fixed on the back of trams. The electric trams should have a board fixed to them, as have the steam-trams, which is let down at the sides, and it almost touches the ground, the result being that if a person falls from them, it is impossible for them to get underneath. The railway cars are simply Juggernauts. When a person is knocked down by them, he has nothing to throw him away, and he is generally run over. If the drivers have proper control over their cars, and if they become possessed of the knowledge that the street does not belong to them, there would be no danger in running a single line along Pitt-street.

R. A.
Setright.
25 Sept., 1900.

369. How do you think it will affect the business people in Pitt-street? It would not affect them at all. It would do them more good than harm.

370. You do not think it would be objectionable to the majority of them? No; and it would be more convenient to the customers. Hundreds of customers who travel by the 'buses would prefer to travel by the trams.

371. Have you noticed any great increase in the traffic of Pitt-street since the George-street line has been constructed? No; I think there has been a slight decrease. At the same time, there are more 'buses, and it is they which take up so much of the room. I believe that when the electric trams are running from Circular Quay to the eastern suburbs, they will do away with a lot of the 'bus traffic. Of course, they will not do away with the Glenmore-road and Woollahra 'buses.

372. Have you any evidence to add in regard to the construction of a tram-line in Pitt-street? My argument is that the tram would not interfere with Pitt-street. There is no necessity for the tram-cars to stop at fixed stopping-places, but only when called upon to stop. In that case, there would be no necessity for them to rush along. They would have to feel their way until they got to Bathurst-street, and then there would be nothing to prevent them going as fast as they liked. If the Railway Commissioners gave the drivers £200, they must go carefully and slowly along Pitt-street, they would not interfere with the traffic.

373. Would not time be saved by having specified stopping-places? I would not like to express an opinion; I have only made a suggestion. As for the Castlereagh-street tram, that is a simple matter; there is nothing to stop a tram going along there. There is only one obstacle, and that is the hotel opposite the "Métropole," which would have to be done away with, so as to cut off the corner. Compared with the steam trams, the accidents in connection with the electric trams are very numerous. My explanation of that is that the steam trams make such an awful noise that they frighten the people in time; whereas the electric trams come along so silently that people are unable to hear them and get out of the way.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

ACCIDENTS ON THE GEORGE-STREET AND NORTH SYDNEY ELECTRIC TRAMS.

(RETURN RESPECTING.)

Printed under No 14 Report from Printing Committee, 11 October, 1900.

[Return prepared in accordance with promise made by the Honorable the Minister for Railways in answer to Question No. 11, in Votes and Proceedings of the 28th August, 1900.]

(1.) *Question.*—Will he have prepared a complete return showing the number of fatal accidents on the George-street and North Shore Electric Trams respectively since the date of opening?

Answer.—George-street Line, 13; North Shore Lines, nil.

(2.) *Question.*—Also the number of accidents reported by the officials in charge of the trams, but which were unattended by fatal consequences?

Answer.—George-street Line, 105; North Shore Lines, nil.

(3.) *Question.*—Likewise the number of fatal accidents, and accidents unaccompanied by fatal results, on the steam and cable trams during the last twelve months?

Answer.—Steam lines—fatal, 13; non-fatal, 83. Cable lines—fatal, nil; non-fatal, 8.

(4.) *Question.*—Will he also state in detail the respective amounts paid on behalf of the Government Tramways Department to the victims of tram accidents, or their representatives, by way of compensation since the inauguration of the electric system, and on the steam-motor lines, during the past twelve months?

Answer.—

RETURN showing amounts paid on behalf of the Government Tramways Department to the victims of tram accidents, or their representatives, by way of compensation (without legal costs), from September, 1899, to August, 1900, both months inclusive.

Names.	Amounts paid.		
	Electric.	Cable	Steam.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Gaffney, Thos.			25 0 0
Fitzsimmons, Mrs.			15 0 0
Golden, Florence	10 0 0		
Biblin, F. W.			10 0 0
Grotjohn, A.			20 0 0
Clarke, Thos.			100 0 0
Wakely, S. J.			15 0 0
Ballantyne and wife		25 0 0	
Conglan, H. J.			150 0 0
Liggins and Arnold, Misses	1 2 6		
Brown & Co.			8 0 0
Smith, Oldroyd			1 0 0
Carried forward...	£ 11 2 6	25 0 0	344 0 0

Names.	Amounts paid.		
	Electric.	Cable.	Steam.
Brought forward ...	£ 11 2 6	£ 25 0 0	£ 344 0 0
Lemaire, Mr. ....	.....	1 15 0	.....
Simpson, H. J. ....	.....	.....	20 0 0
Johnson, J. ....	.....	.....	20 0 0
Sylvester, A. ....	.....	.....	25 0 0
Cooper, W.	7 10 0	.....	.....
Collins, R. A. ....	.....	.....	2 0 0
Donovan, J. and C. ....	.....	.....	40 0 0
Freeman, H. ....	.....	1 6 0	.....
Australian Gas Company...	5 12 5	.....	.....
Foster, G. C. ....	.....	.....	160 0 0
Russell, C. J. ....	.....	.....	40 0 0
Dean & Sons ....	.....	.....	0 15 0
Dalton, Ellen V. ....	.....	.....	8 0 0
McGovely, Mrs. ....	.....	.....	8 10 0
Parle, Jos.	5 5 0	.....	.....
Laves, S. ....	.....	.....	1 2 6
Whitton, G.	7 11 3	.....	.....
Harris, H.	20 0 0	.....	.....
Schields, W. ....	.....	.....	1 10 0
Hickey, M. J. ....	.....	20 0 0	.....
Kain, Jno. ....	.....	20 0 0	.....
Gilsman, P. H.	1 0 0	.....	.....
Maloney, J. G.	3 0 0	.....	.....
Farrell, J. and G. ....	.....	.....	14 6 0
Linton, Mrs. J. ....	.....	.....	2 0 0
Price, Mrs. ....	.....	.....	27 2 0
Walkden, C. ....	.....	.....	16 1 0
Buckley, J. ....	.....	.....	10 16 0
Barker, S.	5 0 0	.....	.....
Stewart, T.	25 0 0	.....	.....
Parkes, G. R. ....	.....	5 0 0	.....
Schoback, Mrs. E. ....	.....	10 0 0	.....
Hunt, Mary ....	.....	10 0 0	.....
Bray, G. ....	.....	.....	7 10 0
Dries, Floden	2 0 0	.....	.....
Cartwright, R. ....	.....	.....	10 0 0
Lawler, W. ....	.....	.....	20 0 0
Young, Jos. and Mabel	.....	.....	21 0 0
Leonard, P. and M.	30 0 0	.....	.....
Macon, C. H.	5 0 0	.....	.....
Ayres, Katie	21 0 0	.....	.....
Davies, B.	2 10 0	.....	.....
Passfield, G. and T.	20 0 0	.....	.....
Chigins and wife ...	1 0 0	.....	.....
Moore, R.	3 5 0	.....	.....
Lane, F.	5 0 0	.....	.....
Little, G. ....	.....	.....	20 0 0
Houston, G. and R. ....	.....	.....	40 0 0
McMahon, J.	6 6 6	.....	.....
Monahan, J. and M.	55 0 0	.....	.....
Freeman, Mrs.	2 13 0	.....	.....
Dobson, Miss A.	15 0 0	.....	.....
Cameron, Mrs. ....	.....	.....	0 15 0
Booth, W. J. ....	.....	.....	1 10 0
McInnes, Revd. ....	.....	.....	0 17 0
Kinsella, D. ....	.....	.....	10 0 0
Palmer, W. ....	.....	.....	5 0 0
King, Mrs. ....	.....	.....	5 0 0
O'Sullivan, M.	80 0 0	.....	.....
Stewart, C. ....	.....	.....	20 0 0
Randal, C.	10 0 0	.....	.....
Leslie, L.	150 0 0	.....	.....
Lawson, Mrs.	450 0 0	.....	.....
Elliott, F., & Co.	17 2 6	.....	.....
Gibbs, —	10 0 0	.....	.....
Lloyd, W.	1 0 0	.....	.....
Carried forward...	£ 977 18 2	93 1 0	902 14 6

Names.	Amount paid.		
	Electric.	Cable.	Steam.
Brought forward ...	£ 977 18 2	£ 93 1 0	£ 902 14 6
Young, Miss ...	1 0 0	.....	.....
Rice, W. ...	.....	.....	75 0 0
Irwin, J. and Ellen ...	.....	.....	20 0 0
Jones, Philip ...	.....	.....	6 0 0
King, Mrs. ...	15 0 0	.....	.....
Young, J. ...	2 5 0	.....	.....
Ogden, W. ...	3 0 0	.....	.....
Wittgenstein, L. ...	15 0 0	.....	.....
Stewart, F. ...	600 0 0	.....	.....
Petters, E. ...	25 0 0	.....	.....
Carnell, F. C. ...	.....	.....	5 0 0
May, Rose ...	15 0 0	.....	.....
Newsom, W. C. ...	10 0 0	.....	.....
Abel & Coy. ...	20 0 0	.....	.....
Nelson, May ...	.....	.....	60 0 0
Barber, T. A. ...	42 19 6	.....	.....
Dean, E. ...	30 5 0	.....	.....
Loveley, W. H. C. ...	.....	8 10 0	.....
Bullock, A. J. ...	.....	50 0 0	.....
Stansbie, Joseph ...	5 0 0	.....	.....
Barker, W. M. ...	6 0 0	.....	.....
Litchford, C. ...	.....	.....	55 0 0
Totals ...	£ 1,768 7 8	£ 151 11 0	£ 1,123 14 6
Grand Total ...	£ 3,043 13 2		

(5.) *Question.*—What claims (if any), and their nature, are pending for damages alleged to have been sustained in connection with tram accidents?

Answer.—There are fifteen claims pending, but as they are *sub judice* it is desired that particulars in connection with them should, at present, be withheld.

1900.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

NEWCASTLE-ADAMSTOWN TRAMWAY.
(RETURN RESPECTING.)

Printed under No. 13 Report from Printing Committee, 27 September, 1900.

[Laid upon the Table of the House in accordance with promise made by the Honorable the Minister for Railways in answer to Question No. 4, Votes and Proceedings No. 42, of the 13th September, 1900.]

(1.) *Question.*—When was the Newcastle-Adamstown Tramway opened for traffic?

Answer.—13th August, 1900.

(2.) *Question.*—What has been the gross revenue received from this line?

(3.) *Question.*—What have been the working expenses?

Answer.—(2 and 3.) The figures cannot be given exactly, as the extension forms part of a section; but the estimated figures of the revenue and working expenses from 13th to 31st August inclusive are as under:—

	£	s.	d.
Working expenses	106	9	5
Earnings	34	14	8